

CITIES STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE

How Local Governments Bring Food Policy
into Practice in the Netherlands



Lara Vita Sibbing

Propositions

1. Adopting a food systems approach can be counterproductive for solving food system issues. (this thesis)
2. The key to real food systems change is not the adoption of a food systems approach but the political will to address food system issues. (this thesis)
3. The PhD process is a function of person and process leading to product but these two first dimensions are underexposed while too much emphasis goes to the latter.
4. Bridging the gap between science and policy starts with scientists joining the table while putting down their papers, and policy makers reading the papers before joining the table.
5. A policy that everyone agrees with is not a good policy.
6. PhD candidates are heroes on a hero's journey.

Propositions belonging to the dissertation, entitled

Cities stepping up to the plate: How local governments bring food policy into practice in the Netherlands.

Lara V. Sibbing

Wageningen, 5 November, 2021

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**How local governments bring food policy into practice in the
Netherlands**

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Netherlands**

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Thesis

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** Stepping up to the plate is an American expression that means taking action when something needs to be done, even when this is difficult. The expression refers to the sport of baseball, where a player steps up to home plate to take a turn to bat.*

Acknowledgements

The only way is up. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, I encountered this instruction on the door of the staircase to my university office. After having worked from my living room for months with the walls slowly closing in on me, the instruction struck me as meaningful much beyond the safe use of a staircase in times of Covid. Indeed, I thought. To finish my PhD with all the downs surrounding it at that moment, the only way was up. And so up I went again, as I had done so many times after so many small and big downs.

Going down is something you can easily do alone. In fact, on a PhD journey feeling down is the easiest thing. Getting back up is a different story. For that, you need others. I therefore owe a great deal of thanks to the many people who pushed, carried, comforted, convinced, questioned, nurtured, affirmed, dragged and guided me to get back up again. And who made sure to be there when victories had to be celebrated.

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powerful women, you also make great dinner companions in the Chianti hills. I also want to thank all the other interviewees who participated in this research, and those I met and who inspired me while working on better food systems together.

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Prologue

The origins of this dissertation lie in something I experienced while completing my master's degree in sustainable food systems. Back in 2013, I was searching for a final internship, when my eye fell on an announcement. The municipality of Ede, The Netherlands, wanted to prioritise policy activities around food and develop a food strategy. But they were facing one big question: *how?* In their announcement, Ede called for an intern who would answer this question, and guide the development of Ede's food strategy. This sounded like an interesting internship. The only problem? The announcement was three months old.

I decided to give it a shot anyway and called the municipality. When I voiced my interest, the policy-maker on the other end of the phone let out a sigh of relief: "we thought we would never find someone". Although I was happy to have finally found an internship, my happiness soon gave way to a mix of surprise and disbelief. How come, I wondered, such an important question had received so little interest?

Four months later, I started my job as one of the first local food policy-makers in the Netherlands. I was struck by the enthusiasm and determination in society to improve food systems, be it through starting urban gardens, teaching children about healthy food, founding farmers' cooperatives, or organizing events about food waste. It made me hopeful to see so many ideas, so many different ways and so many different actors, all working towards the same goal: healthier and more sustainable food.

But one thing kept bothering me. Local governments were not considered as pivotal partners, and their role in all this, again, received little interest. Actors' experiences with their local government were often negative. For improving food systems, actors rather saw local policy-makers and politicians as a hurdle than a helping hand. "What a loss!" I often thought. But how to change it? And what actually *is* the role that local governments can and must play, for achieving healthier and more sustainable food systems? In this dissertation, I seek answers to these questions

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and problem outline

1.1.1. *The emergence of local food policy*

On March 12, 2020, the battle of Albert Heijn was fought in every province of The Netherlands. At least, that is how a viral meme summarized what happened in supermarkets – Albert Heijn is one of them — across the country that day. Following the announcement of a lockdown to fight the new, rapidly-spreading Covid-19 virus, Dutch citizens rushed to the supermarkets to stockpile pasta, potatoes, canned vegetables, and toilet paper. Supermarkets that had been fully stocked one day before, were now half-empty. For most of Dutch people, experiencing these empty shelves was the closest to food insecure that they had ever been (and probably ever will be). For those less fortunate and dependent on food assistance, the hoarding of their fellow Dutchmen had bigger consequences. Foodbanks, which rely on unsold goods from supermarkets, saw their influx dry up and implored grocery shoppers to stop the hoarding, fearing they would be unable to provide food for their clients. After about a week into lockdown, panic buying subsided, and foodwise, things seemed to be back to normal. That sense of normalcy did not last long, as another consequence of the pandemic became apparent. As restaurants and bars were all closed and festivals cancelled, the Dutch were eating a lot less of one of their favourite foods: potato fries. As spring was turning into summer, all those potatoes destined to become fries and widely grown throughout the Netherlands, were ready to be harvested. The result? Desperate farmers had to throw away their crop, as they could not find anyone to sell it to.

The Covid-19 pandemic showed the Netherlands how intertwined our food system is and how vulnerable this could make the nation. Overnight, the Dutch got a crash course on food system challenges. However, what many did not know was that these challenges were nothing new. They had been lurking in the shadows for many years, and the pandemic was simply the flashlight that illuminated them. These food system challenges – highlighted in acute moments of food insecurity and distribution problems – include diet-related disease and malnutrition, climate change, and biodiversity loss. They are faced not just in The Netherlands, but all around the world.

The industrialization of agriculture has led to an increase in global food production by a factor four over the last fifty years (Brondizio et al. 2019). However, these advances have also introduced some paradoxes. Now, although enough food is available globally to feed every single person on the planet (Brondizio et al. 2019), almost two billion adults are overweight, while almost half a billion are undernourished (WHO 2020). Roughly, a third of

the food globally produced never reaches someone's stomach (Gustavsson et al. 2011; FAO 2013), rapid increases in food prices occur (Clapp and Cohen 2009), and one million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction - caused to a great extent by food production (Brondizio et al. 2019). Although there is enough food, the way we produce and consume our food has become unsustainable. To put it boldly: yesterday's solutions seem to have become today's problems. But why?

A key explanation should be sought in the public policies steering local, regional and global food systems. These public policies currently fail to appropriately address the contemporary challenges faced by our food systems (Lang et al. 2009; Candel and Pereira 2017). Food-related policies often are too fragmented, addressing food system challenges separately as siloed issues, and they often contradict each other (Haddad 2003; Lang et al. 2009; Candel and Pereira 2017). For instance, policies stimulating agricultural production do not necessarily foster healthy dietary patterns, and policies pursuing environmental goals might limit farmers' possibilities for producing more sustainably. At the same time, today's food systems are much more complex than the simple farmer-consumer transactions they used to be several decades ago. Today's food systems are complex webs in which interconnected issues span the boundaries of policy fields. The key to improving these systems, according to policy-makers and scholars alike, lies in new food governance approaches. These approaches require that sectoral food-related policies move away from siloed efforts, and that policy efforts are instead aligned into one concerted whole to address food system challenges holistically (Barling et al. 2002; Haddad 2003; Lang and Rayner 2007; Lang et al. 2009; Pinstруп-Andersen and Watson II 2011; Candel and Pereira 2017; Parsons 2017; Hawkes and Parsons 2019).

However, applying an integrated approach is not enough for achieving more effective food governance. The second crucial determinant are the governmental players involved in food governance. Whereas traditionally national and supranational governments have been developing and implementing food policies, scholars argue that for effective food policy-making, local governments are emerging as key players (Pothukuchi and Kaufman 1999; MacRae and Donahue 2013; Halliday 2015; Haysom 2015; Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015; De Cunto et al. 2017; Giordano et al. 2017; IPES-Food 2017a; Halliday 2019, 70; Moragues-Faus and Sonnino 2019). Local governments are close to their citizens; they benefit from knowledge of the place and the proximity to the community; they have the possibility to engage local citizens (Sonnino et al. 2019), and they can develop better-tailored solutions through a more 'place-based approach' (Blay-Palmer et al. 2016). Local administrations are therefore believed to hold the potential for developing and

implementing more effective policies than regional, national or supranational administrations (Barber 2013; Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015). Local governments can do this through “the provision of infrastructure which supports the production and the distribution of food (e.g. roads, markets); the definition of local rules and regulations which shape the demand for food, including through fiscal measures (e.g. public procurements, social protection mechanism, waste management); adequate urban planning to prevent urban sprawling to fertile land and facilitate market access; or local governance mechanisms for sustainable food systems” (Giordano et al. 2017).

Meanwhile, cities around the world have started to engage in food policy efforts. A country where they particularly seem to do so, is The Netherlands. Between 2011 and 2014, multiple local governments in the Netherlands started to publish food strategies (e.g. Gemeente Groningen 2012; Gemeente Den Haag 2013; Gemeente Amsterdam 2014; Gemeente Ede 2015). In addition, in 2016, six local governments signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), an international pact for cities aiming to improve urban food systems. This dissertation therefore focuses predominantly on the Netherlands. A more elaborate introduction to the Dutch research case is provided in section [1.4.2](#)).

1.1.2. The knowns and unknowns about local food policy

Local food policy has been studied widely. The oldest and largest body of literature consists of individual case studies on the development and implementation of single urban food strategies in pioneering cities in North America and the UK (Calori et al. 2017). This body of literature includes studies on Toronto (Blay-Palmer 2009; Fridman and Lenters 2013; Mah and Thang 2013), Baltimore (Bedore 2014; Santo et al. 2014), London (Reynolds 2009), Vancouver (Mendes 2008), Cardiff (Fairchild and Morgan 2007), Bristol (Carey 2013), and Minneapolis (Shey and Belis 2013). A notable exception from a different geographical region, is the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil (Rocha and Lessa 2009), which has been studied for its famous local food policy. A key message throughout this literature is the indispensability of citizen and stakeholder participation for successful food policy-making and governance, as they facilitate the finding of ways to reach a broad cross-section of stakeholders and help devise an urban food strategy (Giambartolomei et al. 2021). An addressed question is for example: “how do you involve people in the process [of developing an urban food strategy]?” (Moragues-Faus et al. 2013, 15). Later, the research emphasis of this literature strand moved beyond single-case studies on food policy development. The scope of the literature broadened to include more comparative research. Scholars compared food policies between individual cities *within* countries, like Italy (Calori

et al. 2017) and Canada (MacRae and Donahue 2013), and *between* countries, like across Europe (Cretella 2016; De Cunto et al. 2017), North America (Ilieva 2017) and across the globe (Sonnino 2016; IPES-Food 2017a; Candel 2019). A last strand within this literature, consists of more practically oriented “guides” on how to develop urban food policies (see for example Moragues-Faus et al. 2013).

A different strand within the local food policy literature emerged on collaborations, governance arrangements, and interactions among societal actors and between local governments and societal actors. The oldest and largest part of this strand focuses on food policy councils (FPCs), which predominantly emerged as (and still is) mostly a North American phenomenon (e.g. Dahlberg 1994; Borron 2003; Clancy et al. 2008; Schiff 2008; Harper et al. 2009; Scherb et al. 2012; Packer 2014; Coplen and Cuneo 2015; Siddiki et al. 2015; Calancie et al. 2018; Koski et al. 2018; Prové et al. 2019; RUAF Foundation 2019). The Toronto Food Policy Council is considered the first food policy council in the world and was developed in 1990 (Blay-Palmer 2009; Cretella 2016). More recently, the focus in this part of the literature has broadened to include a larger variety of local food policy partnerships, networks, and collaborations (Halliday 2015; Moragues-Faus 2017; Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018). These studies address the importance and describe the dynamics of food policy collaborations *within* cities (e.g. Moragues-Faus 2020; Giambartolomei et al. 2021) (including local food policy groups (LFPGs) (Halliday 2015)), trans-local collaborations *between* cities (e.g. Giordano et al. 2017; Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018; Moragues-Faus and Sonnino 2019), and general citizen participation in food governance (e.g. Hebinck 2018; Griend et al. 2019). This literature shows that through city-to-city collaboration, “local governments can adapt and adopt good practices that strengthen their local food systems, which will reap multiplier effects on local economies, societies and the environment” (Giordano et al. 2017, 354) and that such collaborative networks serve as “conduits whereby ideas, concepts and ‘best practice’ are circulated across diverse socio-spatial contexts” (Sonnino and Coulson 2021, 9).

The newest strand in the local food policy literature addresses the assessment of food policies. As local food policy initiatives are rapidly sprouting: the challenge that is becoming more pressing is: how to monitor, measure, and evaluate the actual impact of these policies? In most studies, the authors develop, analyse, or compare tools, metrics, and frameworks, for assessing local food systems and policies (Prosperi et al. 2015; Carey and Dubbeling 2017; Ilieva 2017; Landert et al. 2017; Delaney et al. 2018; Haysom and Tawodzera 2018; FAO 2019; Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019). Other authors conduct in-depth food systems assessments (often testing a newly developed framework) for

individual cities or city-regions, like Cardiff, UK (Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019), Basel, Switzerland (Landert et al. 2017) and Cape Town, South Africa (Battersby 2011). Authors point to the challenges in conducting food system assessments (Moragues-Faus 2020b, 113), such as: i) the lack of a clear definition of what is (and is not) sustainable; ii) the low applicability of global conceptualizations to local decision-making communities; iii) constraints caused by the accessibility of qualitative and quantitative data, and (iv) the diversity of approaches applied at the local level which prevents aggregation of results and measurement of global progress (Tanguay et al. 2010; Carlsson et al. 2017; Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019). A noteworthy mention in this literature is the comprehensive book from Blay-Palmer *et al.* (2020), in which the editors draw the overall conclusion that food systems assessments do not only serve as providing information, but also as processual tools that can help build capacity within communities, provoke food systems thinking, connect actors across scales, and even lead to policy coherence (2020, 234).

1.1.3. *Problem statement*

While the body of local food policy literature is vast, three important research gaps exist. First, the existing literature predominantly consists of single or small-*n* case studies (of mostly metropolises) that often are conceptual or normative in nature. Although today more comprehensive research is being conducted, few systematic large- and medium-*n* assessments of local food policy content have been performed (but see Cretella (2016) and Candel (2019)), especially not without a focus on metropolises and fore-runner cities. It therefore remains unclear how many local governments have actually engaged in developing food policies (especially on the country level) and what choices they make in the design of such policies (Candel 2019). This knowledge gap needs to be addressed. The number of local governments in a country can inform us about the seriousness of the trend of local food policy adoption, while the policy design choices inform us about food issues that are high on governments' agendas as well as the extent to which governments have adopted a food systems approach. Second, most local food policy research focuses on societal stakeholders or on stakeholder-government interactions, while little research uses a public administration lens with an in-depth focus on the dynamics within, and the perspective and role of, local governments. Copious research has stressed that citizen and stakeholder participation in food governance are key, that food policy is a salient issue in society, and that much societal activity on local food policy exists. How local governments engage in food policy beyond agenda-setting, and what choices they make on content and process in their food policies, from a public administration perspective are relatively understudied. The third research gap relates to the two aforementioned gaps. Most local

food policy studies have only addressed processes in separate stages of the food policy cycle, thereby predominantly focusing on either agenda-setting, formulation, or adoption. Few studies have applied a comprehensive approach, studying the *complete cycle* of local food policy-making. Comprehensive insights on local food policy-making from agenda-setting to evaluation within a country are therefore lacking. As a result of these three research gaps, the ways in which local governments bring food policy into practice, and the dynamics within (and role of) local governments on the ground remain underexposed. In the literature, a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the local food policy process on the ground is also lacking.

Also in the Netherlands, it remains unknown to what extent local governments are engaging in local food policy-making and to what extent they are doing this beyond the mere expressing of ambitions. It thus remains unknown if they succeed in bringing food policy into practice in all phases of the policy cycle, namely: agenda-setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation (Howlett and Ramesh 2009, 3rd:12). If Dutch local governments are succeeding in bringing food policy into practice, this could indicate a new policy trend in the Netherlands. Such a trend could be a major change in Dutch food policy-making, which could contribute to overcoming today's pressing food system challenges. The case of how and to what extent Dutch local food policy is emerging, is therefore an important one to learn from. Insights can be a starting point for further research on how to bring food policies into practice and to assess if food policy, when developed and implemented, meets its expectation as the key to overcome food system challenges.

It is important to note that in this dissertation, bringing policy into practice does not refer to implementing food policies on the ground in society. Instead, it refers to local governments realizing the conditions- and engaging in processes that are key for bringing food policy into practice throughout all phases of the policy cycle.

1.2. Objective and research questions

The objective of this dissertation is to better understand how local governments in the Netherlands are bringing food policy into practice; to explore the extent to which this is happening; and ultimately to determine if local food policy is a temporary fad or a sustainable trend. To achieve this objective, I aim to answer the question: ***To what extent do local governments in the Netherlands succeed in bringing food policy into practice?***

To answer this question, four sub-questions guide the research. Bringing food policy into practice beyond the ambitions on the agenda starts with policy formulation and adoption. I therefore set out by investigating the content of local governments' policies, as in their policies, governments indicate their adopted ambitions and goals. Policies therefore provide insight into how issues are addressed (policy formulation) and what issues have made it into formal policies (adoption). The degree to which local governments succeed in bringing food policy into practice depends on the extent to which they manage to integrate food issues across their existing policies on other policy domains (such as health, spatial planning, or economics). Analysing local governments' policies therefore was the starting point of this research, and which was guided by the first research question:

1. To what extent has food become integrated across local governments' policies in the Netherlands?

To bring food policy into practice, it is insufficient to address food issues in policies. Local governments need to also move their policies beyond paper realities. An important prerequisite for successfully realizing this, is institutionalizing food systems thinking within the local government, so that such thinking becomes embedded in the organization. The second research step therefore addresses the institutionalization of food system challenges within the executive organization of a local government. To investigate this process, I focused on one of the food policy forerunners in the Netherlands that has invested considerably in the governance aspect by introducing an integrated food policy approach: the local government of Ede. The second research question is:

2. How and to what extent were food system challenges institutionalized within the local government of Ede?

Local governments cannot bring food policies into practice alone. To do so successfully, they need to collaborate with both public and private actors. However, this is far from an easy endeavour. In the third research step, I therefore investigate how local governments collaborate on agenda-setting, developing and implementing food policy, and what stimulates and constrains this collaboration. I explored this for one of the first trans-local food policy networks in continental Europe: the Dutch City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda. The third research question is:

3. To what extent did the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda lead to genuine collaboration for enhancing local food systems, and what stimulated and constrained this collaboration?

The final step in bringing local food policy into practice is evaluation: assessing the extent to which policies advance their stated aims. To complete the exploration process of local food policy-making in the Netherlands, I therefore investigated the implementation of an indicator framework for local food policy evaluation. As even in the Netherlands local food policy evaluation was a relatively new empirical phenomenon, I broadened the scope to include multiple cities across the globe, studying the case of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact indicator framework. The fourth research question is:

4. What opportunities and challenges did local governments encounter when implementing the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact indicator framework?

By answering these four research questions, I aim to contribute to the local food policy literature by presenting insights into key factors and processes around bringing local food policy into practice beyond the mere setting of ambitions. My specific contribution consists of providing in-depth insights into key processes along the cycle of food policy-making: policy integration, institutionalization, collaboration, and policy evaluation. I also aim to strengthen local food policy-making by providing suggestions for practitioners.

1.3. Key concepts and theories

In the following section I describe how I approach the central concept of this dissertation: food policy. In section 1.3.2. I subsequently explain the four theoretical lenses that I adopted for studying food policy: policy integration, discursive institutionalism, collaborative governance, and policy evaluation.

1.3.1. Food policy

Simply put, food policy is policy that either deliberately or unintendedly influences who gets to eat what, when, how, and with what consequences (Lang et al. 2009, 21). The concept of food policy has changed over time however. In terms of objectives, food policy traditionally addressed food security (Maxwell and Slater 2003), which is the condition “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO 1996). Regarding scope, food policy was considered any policy influencing any of the separate stages or sectors of a food system. Content-wise, it predominantly addressed natural resources and agricultural inputs, and nutrition problems regarding undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies (Maxwell and Slater 2003; Hoop 2015). More recently, the goal of food policy has broadened to sustainable food and nutrition security (Lang et al. 2009), along with chronic dietary diseases, nutrient issues regarding fat and sugar consumption

(Maxwell and Slater 2003), and environmental sustainability issues. Meanwhile, the *nature* of food policy has gained a more systemic character, to which authors refer with terms like holistic or integral (Lang et al. 2009; MacRae and Donahue 2013; Candel and Pereira 2017; Sonnino et al. 2019).

At the heart of this contemporary understanding of food policy, lies the concept of food systems thinking. A food system, is in its most general sense, the aggregate of all food-related activities and the environments (political, socioeconomic, and natural) within which these activities occur (Pinstrup-Andersen and Watson II 2011, 3). Moragues-Faus (2020b, 112) further elaborates, explaining that “horizontally, a holistic food system includes different policy domains such as health and well-being, environment, economy and community development, social and cultural aspects, and education. The vertical dimension refers to all stages of the food system from food production, processing and storage to transport, retail, consumption, and waste”. An even more elaborate and widely embraced conceptualization of the food system comes from Ericksen et al (2008) and Ingram (2009). In their concept, a food system includes, in addition to its activities, its outcomes (Figure 1.1). This conceptualization forms the basis for many other conceptualizations that have been developed since.

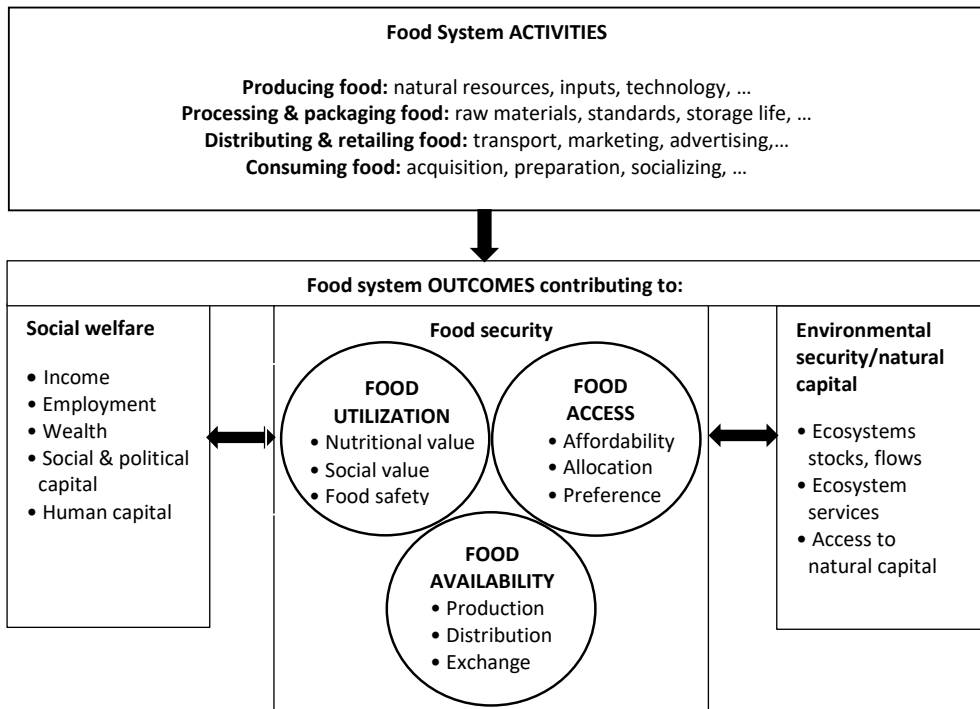


Figure 1.1 The food system concept (Ericksen, 2008)

As a food system contains many feedback loops, it is not linear with a clear beginning and end (although it might seem to begin with primary resources and end with consumption) (Pinstrup-Andersen and Watson II 2011, 3). Instead, a food system arguably begins *and* ends with its outcomes, particularly human health and nutrition, as the availability of resources and efficiency of resources used, and agent behaviour, are all influenced by the outcomes of the food system (Pinstrup-Andersen and Watson II 2011, 3). Food systems thinking, thus, is the idea that how we produce and consume our food should be approached as one system and not as individual components.

The relation between food policy and food systems thinking can be characterized as food policy addressing the policy aspect, within the realm of food systems thinking. Food policy thus entails systemic policies that aim at improving the food system. This makes food a policy field that transcends the boundaries of existing jurisdictions, crosses scales and policy domains, and therefore requires integrated policy approaches and boundary-spanning governance arrangements (Barling et al. 2002; Ingram 2011; Candel and Pereira 2017). While food policies can be developed by different actors, such as NGOs, businesses, food policy councils, or citizen groups, in this dissertation I exclusively focus on policies

developed by governments: *public* food policies. These can address different administrative levels, including the supranational, national, regional and local level. I solely focus on policies developed, adopted and implemented by *local* governments. In this dissertation, food policy therefore refers to *local public food policies*. Local public food policies share the aim of improving the food systems in and around cities or towns. They often have an urban character and follow the boundaries of a local government.

1.3.2. *Looking at food policy through four theoretical lenses*

To study local food policy-making in the Netherlands, I applied four theoretical lenses that are briefly described here and are further discussed in detail within the individual research chapters. First, I adopted a policy integration lens for studying how Dutch local governments addressed – and to what extent they had integrated – food, across their existing policies (Chapter 2). Policy integration has been conceptualized in different ways (Candel and Biesbroek 2016; Cejudo and Michel 2017; Tosun and Lang 2017), but overall it is about creating better coordinated policies. Policy-makers and scholars believe that sectoral policy in itself is insufficient for addressing crosscutting problems (Lafferty and Hovden 2003) and that policy integration can contribute to overcoming governance challenges that result from this pillarization. Scholars argue that problems need to be taken on board by other relevant sectors to address externalities and, possibly, create synergies (Lafferty and Hovden 2003). Ultimately, they expect that realizing more concerted efforts leads to achieving desired objectives more effectively (Jordan and Lenschow 2010; Peters 2015). In Chapter 2 of this dissertation I consider policy integration as a process of integrating concerns related to a certain policy issue across existing local government structures, departments and policies, an approach that is also referred to as ‘mainstreaming’ (Nunan et al. 2012; Tosun and Lang 2017). I conceptualize food policy integration (FPI) as the integration of food system challenges across a government’s policy sectors (Lafferty and Hovden 2003).

Second, I applied a discursive institutionalism (DI) lens to investigate how and to what extent food policy can be institutionalized within a local government organization (Chapter 3). To unravel this process, I took actors and the ideas they convey as the conceptual starting point for explaining institutional change and stability. This starting point forms the core premise of DI. DI belongs to the ‘new institutionalism’ theories and focuses on how institutions are shaped – and changed – by ideas, through discourses, and on how an institutional context again influences (new) ideas through discourses (Schmidt 2008). DI therefore allows for gaining insight in how certain policy ideas and concepts gain legitimacy over others, how struggles over meaning define and change policy issues (Den Besten et al.

2014), and how policy issues become institutionalized within a polity. In Chapter 3 I therefore used DI theory for exploring how ideas shape and influence the institutionalization of food governance ideas within a local government. The specific DI approach followed was that of a “discursive-institutional spiral” (Den Besten et al. 2014). Den Besten *et al.* (2014, 41) describe this spiral as a “process of institutionalization of discourses on the one hand and the opening up of discourses in response to these institutionalization processes on the other”, consisting of an institutionalization phase and a discursive phase which alternate.

Third, I adopted a collaborative governance lens to study how local governments collaborate while developing and implementing local food policy (Chapter 4) and whether they succeeded in realizing genuine collaboration on the ground. Collaborative governance is a governance mode in which multiple stakeholders engage in consensus-oriented decision making (Ansell and Gash 2008). The premise of collaborative governance is that it leads to increased legitimacy of public policies, a more diverse range of solutions, more flexible policies that are better suited to changed circumstances, and to the acceleration of the policy process (van Buuren and Edelenbos 2007). Collaborative governance approaches are typically used for addressing so-called ‘wicked problems’ (Rittel and Webber 1973): problems for which existing policy infrastructure is insufficient (Ansell and Gash 2008). Enhancing local food systems in and around cities is one such wicked problem. To study the key levers for successful food policy collaboration, I applied Ansell and Gash’s (2008) collaborative governance model to analyse both the collaborative process and its outcomes for one of the first trans-local government networks in the Netherlands: the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda.

Last, I used a policy evaluation lens to study the opportunities and challenges that local governments encounter when attempting to assess the extent to which their food policies advance stated aims (Chapter 5). Policy evaluation is crucial for effectively bringing food policy into practice (Halliday et al. 2019, 121). It supports democratic accountability and allows governments to ensure the best use of limited funds by adjusting food policies and programs that are not delivering expected results (Halliday et al. 2019, 121). It also enables governments to present sound evidence of efficacy to support follow-on funding bids or promote ongoing political support following electoral change (Halliday et al. 2019, 121). For evaluating food policy, food systems indicator frameworks are a valuable tool. They provide structure for assessments that are based on scientific evidence, thereby facilitating local governments in their evaluation process. However, “food system assessments face a number of challenges to become effective tools for food system transformation”

(Moragues-Faus 2020b, 111). In Chapter 5, I therefore focused on evaluation from an inductive, empirical perspective, by examining opportunities and challenges that local governments encounter when taking up and implementing an indicator framework.

1.4. Methodology

1.4.1. An exploratory research design and a participatory approach

As local food policy-making in the Netherlands has hardly been studied, I chose to conduct the research presented in this dissertation empirically, through an exploratory research design. Exploratory research aims to explore an area where little is known (Kumar 2014, 13). An exploratory research design is therefore an apt approach to study the uncharted territory of Dutch local food policy-making; it can provide in-depth knowledge about the unique case of the Netherlands.

To gain an in-depth empirical understanding, this dissertation is rooted in a participatory approach. In a participatory research approach the emphasis is on people's engagement, collaboration, and participation in the research process (Kumar 2014, 161). It is

“based on the principle of minimizing the ‘gap’ between the researcher and the research participants and emphasis on increased community involvement and participation to enhance the relevance of the research findings. It is assumed that such involvement will increase the possibility of the community accepting the research findings and, if need be, its willingness and involvement in solving the problems and issues that confront it” (Kumar 2014, 160–161).

The participatory approach adopted entailed combining two roles: local food policy-maker and researcher. I was employed by the local government of Ede, as one of the first local food policy-makers in the Netherlands, right as local food policy started to emerge in the country. I wanted to understand and contribute to this development in practice, as well as to contribute to the food policy scholarship. Kumar (2014, 161) sees this as working at two different levels: 1) the community organizer and 2) the researcher. “As community organizer you seek a community's involvement and participation in identifying community demands and needs, prioritizing them, developing solutions, planning strategies and executing tasks to meet them. In terms of research, your main responsibility is to develop, in consultation with the community, the research tasks and procedures and share research findings with its members” (Kumar 2014, 161).

This dissertation therefore is a collection of studies that all grew from empirical phenomena, predominantly around local food policy in the Netherlands. The specific participative approach adopted differed per study. The research for Chapter 2 was least participatory, and roles were relatively separate (making policy for the local government of Ede and also analysing the policy documents of 32 local Dutch governments). The research for Chapter 3 was strongly participatory, as it addressed the case of the local government of Ede. I conducted the research from within the organization, combining the role of policy-maker and researcher. The methodological section of Chapter 3 describes how I went about this during the research. The third study (Chapter 4) was participatory in the way that I had been one of the founders of the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda and that the local government of Ede was one of the participants of the network. For the research, I became the commissioned researcher for the City Deal network and left my role as participant, while a colleague of the local government of Ede fulfilled the role of participant for Ede. In this way, the researcher and participant roles remained relatively separate. The last study (Chapter 5), though not heavily participatory, offered a different participatory aspect. In this study I interviewed food policy-makers around the world, thereby explicitly taking on the role of a researcher. Nonetheless, being a policy-maker did influence my role as researcher, as it enhanced the data collection process.

1.4.2. Research context

The research in this dissertation is predominantly about the Netherlands. This section therefore provides background information to better understand the Dutch food policy context.

The Netherlands is a decentralized unitary state, in which food policy-related issues have traditionally been addressed at national, provincial and supranational level. This was done through a broad variety of policies, like the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), competition law, food safety regulations, health policies, and environmental policies. For a long time the Netherlands had no overarching national food strategy. In 2014, something noteworthy happened. The Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) published a report in which it recommended the Dutch government to adopt a national food policy for achieving a healthier, more sustainable, and more resilient food system (WRR 2014). Unfortunately, the national government did not adopt the recommendation, and no national food policy was developed (Biesbroek and Candel 2020).

Around the same time, local governments in the Netherlands started to develop food strategies, as was already described in section 1.1.1. To provide some context for the

research in this dissertation, it is important to realize that local governments in the Netherlands do not have many explicit food related competences. They are, however, responsible for a broad range of issues impacting food systems, including zoning, organizing and issuing permits for local initiatives and events, social policy, youth care, housing, infrastructure, and local environmental protection. In addition, local governments are allowed to address any topic they wish, through the 'open housekeeping' principle. This principle entails that local governments can adopt interventions in any field they deem important, as long as this does not conflict with other jurisdictions' efforts. Local governments can make use of this principle to develop food policy and address food system challenges.

1.4.3. Methods of data collection and analysis

The multi-theoretical approach has resulted in the use a range of methods for data collection and analysis. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the research design and methods per research objective. The exact methods of data collection and analysis, as well as reflections on their limitations, are discussed more elaborately in each chapter.

Table 1.1 Overview of research objective, design and methods per chapter

Chapter	Research objective	Research design	Methods
2	To study goals and instruments in policy outputs, to assess how Dutch local governments address food issues in their policies and to what extent they have integrated food across existing policies	Systematic review	Policy document analysis
3	To study interactions between actors, their ideas and discourses, to gain an in-depth understanding of the discursive-institutional spiral process of food system challenges institutionalizing in a local government	Exploratory case study, participatory approach	Interviews, policy document analysis, focus groups, field notes
4	To evaluate the collaborative governance process of a food policy network, to gain insight into key levers for successful collaborative food governance	Exploratory case study	Interviews (2 rounds), field notes
5	To assess practices, opportunities, and challenges local governments encounter in taking up and implementing an indicator framework, to better understand local food policy evaluation opportunities and challenges	Exploratory case study	Interviews, document analysis

1.5. Outline of this dissertation

The main body of this dissertation consists of four chapters, which have been published in (Chapter 2, 3, 4) or submitted to (Chapter 5) peer-reviewed academic journals. Chapter 2 focuses on policy formulation through a policy integration lens and analyses the food-related content in the policies of the 32 largest Dutch local governments in the Netherlands. It analyses the food system challenges these governments address, the goals they set, the instruments they apply, and the extent to which they have integrated food across their existing policies. Chapter 3 addresses how after policy formulation, food governance ideas become institutionalized within a local government, by analysing the case of the local government of Ede through a discursive institutionalism lens. Chapter 4 explores the

collaborative governance process between local governments in their pursuit of healthier and more sustainable food systems. The chapter presents insights on key levers for successful collaborative food governance, drawn from the case of the Dutch City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda. Chapter 5 addresses the opportunities and challenges local governments around the world encountered in taking up and implementing the MUFPP framework, the indicator framework with the largest potential reach among governments at the moment, for evaluating their food policies. Chapter 6 synthesizes the results of all previous chapters, answers the research questions, and presents this dissertation's contributions to the literature. To finalize the last chapter, I reflect on the adopted research approach and present recommendations for scientists and policy-makers.

2. A Comparative Assessment of Local Food Policy Integration in the Netherlands

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Abstract

Local governments around the world increasingly engage in food governance, aiming to address food system challenges such as obesity, food waste, or food insecurity. However, the extent to which municipalities have actually integrated food across their policies remains unknown. This chapter addresses this question by conducting a medium-n systematic content analysis of local food policy outputs of 31 Dutch municipalities. Policy outputs coded for the food goals and instruments adopted by local governments. Our analysis shows that most municipalities integrate food to a limited extent only, predominantly addressing health and local food production or consumption. Furthermore, municipalities seem hesitant to use coercive instruments and predominantly employ informative and organizational instruments. Nonetheless, a small number of municipalities have developed more holistic approaches to address food challenges. These cities may prove to be a leading group in the development of system- based approaches in Dutch local food policy.

2.1. Introduction

Food systems around the world face severe challenges, such as obesity, environmental degradation, food price volatility, and food insecurity. Following on the observation that food is a policy field that transcends the boundaries of existing jurisdictions and policy domains, scholars have advocated better integrated food governance to address these challenges more effectively (Barling et al. 2002; Lang et al. 2009; MacRae 2011; IPES-Food 2017b). Integrated or holistic food governance approaches stress the multifaceted and interrelated nature of food challenges and address them in a concerted manner (Mendes 2007).

Local governments have emerged as prominent actors in food governance, as well described by Roberta Sonnino (2009, 429):

City-governments are trying to achieve what global and national policies have not been able to achieve by establishing new links and new relationships between different stages and actors of the food chain.

A clear example of these emerging local efforts is provided by the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) of 2015, in which 184 cities from across the world have committed themselves to ‘work to develop sustainable food systems that are inclusive, resilient, safe, and diverse’ (MUFPP 2015).

Although the emergence of local food policy is promising, integrated food policy is a relatively new concept with fuzzy boundaries and without a clear blueprint (Candel and Pereira 2017). For that reason, we expect considerable variety in municipalities’ choices with regard to addressing and integrating food challenges. So far, relatively few empirical studies have been conducted on food policy integration at local government level (but see MacRae and Donahue 2013 and Landert et al. 2017). Moreover, the existing food policy scholarship has focused predominantly on efforts at national and supranational levels (e.g., Lang 1999; Pinstrip-Andersen 2000; Marsden 2010; Drimie and Ruysenaar 2010; Termeer et al. 2018; IPES-Food 2016; Moragues-Faus, Sonnino, and Marsden 2017; Candel and Biesbroek 2018). Moreover, most studies that *do* focus on food governance at local level are small-*n* case studies that are conceptual or normative in nature (see for example Blay-Palmer 2009; Rocha and Lessa 2009; Cretella and Buenger 2016; Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015; Hawkes and Halliday 2017); very few comparative and systematic assessments of local food policies have been performed.

With this chapter, we aim to address this gap, thereby responding to the call for more comparative and comprehensive studies of emerging urban food strategies (Sonnino 2009). We do so by presenting one of the first medium-*n* systematic comparisons of policy outputs. We focus our analysis on the Netherlands, which is a good example of a country in which local governments have become more active in local food policymaking in recent years. For example, eight Dutch municipalities have signed the MUFPP, and 12 municipalities have established a network called 'City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda' (2017), which may be considered one of the first national networks in continental Europe in which local governments actively collaborate on food policy issues. The Netherlands therefore serves as a fitting case to explore whether the recent popularity of food policy has been accompanied by actual policy change.

The Netherlands is a decentralised unitary state. Although Dutch municipalities do not have many explicit food related competences, they are responsible for a broad range of issues that have a considerable impact on food systems, including zoning, local initiatives and events, social policy, youth care, housing, infrastructure, and local environmental protection. What is more, municipalities are governed through the 'open housekeeping' principle, which means that a municipality is allowed to address any topic it wishes to.

The chapter is guided by the question: *to what extent has food become integrated across municipal policies in the Netherlands?* To answer this question, we conducted a systematic content analysis of policy documents for 31 large Dutch municipalities (100,000+ inhabitants in April 2017). This analysis was performed by adopting a policy integration perspective, which is further elaborated in the next section.

After elaborating our conceptual point of departure, the chapter proceeds by setting out the methodological approach. Subsequently, our findings are structured along three sections: a description of the dataset, policy goals, and policy instruments. We end with a theoretical reflection, including suggestions for follow-up research, as well as various policy recommendations in our discussion and conclusion.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

Our theoretical point of departure is the concept of *policy integration*. Integrated policy approaches have been developed in response to the shortcomings of traditional forms of organizing government along specialized entities (Tosun and Lang 2017). In the case of problems that crosscut the boundaries of these specialized entities, such forms of governance may result in high degrees of fragmentation and even in policy failure. For that

reason, mitigating the risks of fragmented governance through strengthened policy integration became a key concern for many policymakers (Candel and Biesbroek 2016). This concern especially grew in importance after the emergence of New Public Management reforms – which tended to magnify pillarization – and increased recognition of the ‘wicked’ nature of many of society’s most pressing problems, which could not be solved through the actions of individual policy sectors (Peters 2018). The interest in policy integration thus followed the understanding that sectoral policy in itself is insufficient for addressing crosscutting problems and that these problems instead need to be taken on board by other relevant sectors to address externalities and, possibly, create synergies (Lafferty and Hovden 2003). Food security and associated food system challenges are good examples of such cross-cutting problems (Candel and Biesbroek 2018). Scientists and policymakers increasingly recognize food as a policy field that transcends the boundaries of existing jurisdictions and for that reason requires integrated governance approaches (Lang et al. 2009; MacRae 2011; Candel 2016). The common assumption in the Public Policy literature is that policy integration can contribute to overcoming various governance challenges that result from pillarization, including duplications and contradictions between programs, displacement of problems from one organization to another, an over-emphasis on vertical management, and disabilities to provide integrated services to client groups (Peters 2015, 8–9; Peters 2018). Ultimately, realizing more concerted efforts is expected to result in interventions that are more effective in achieving desired objectives (Jordan and Lenschow 2010; Peters 2015).

The emerging scholarly interest in policy integration has resulted in a variety of conceptualizations (Candel and Biesbroek 2016; Cejudo and Michel 2017; Tosun and Lang 2017). In this chapter, we conceptualize food policy integration (FPI) as the integration of food challenges across a government’s policy sectors (Lafferty and Hovden 2003), an approach that is also referred to as ‘mainstreaming’ (Nunan et al. 2012; Tosun and Lang 2017). This approach is commonly used in the Environmental Policy Integration (Jordan and Lenschow 2009; Lafferty and Hovden 2003), the Climate Policy Integration (Runhaar, Wilk, Persson, Uittenbroek, and Wamsler 2018), and the Health in all Policies literatures (Ollila 2011). The policy integration principle is the same for each of these policy fields: the goal is to incorporate, and, arguably, to prioritize, concerns about issue x (e.g. environment) in non-x policy domains (such as economics, health or spatial planning), with the purpose of enhancing policy outcomes in domain x (Lafferty and Hovden 2003; Candel and Biesbroek 2016). In our study we focus on the outcomes of the policy integration or “mainstreaming” process, by assessing the degree of food policy integration across municipal *policy outputs*.

We hence look at the degree of policy integration at one point in time and do not study policy integration as a process during a longer time period. Policy outputs are the formally adopted decisions of a municipality. They are ‘the direct result of a decision-making process, usually in the form of programs, strategies, or vision documents’ (Knill and Tosun 2012, 29). These outputs are typically designed and adopted in specialized substantive domains or sectors.

To define the boundaries of *what* is being integrated, we start from Ericksen’s (2008) definition of a food system. Following this definition, we speak of FPI in a policy when the policy explicitly targets the functioning of the food system, i.e. at least one of the food system’s activities or outcomes (Figure 2.1).

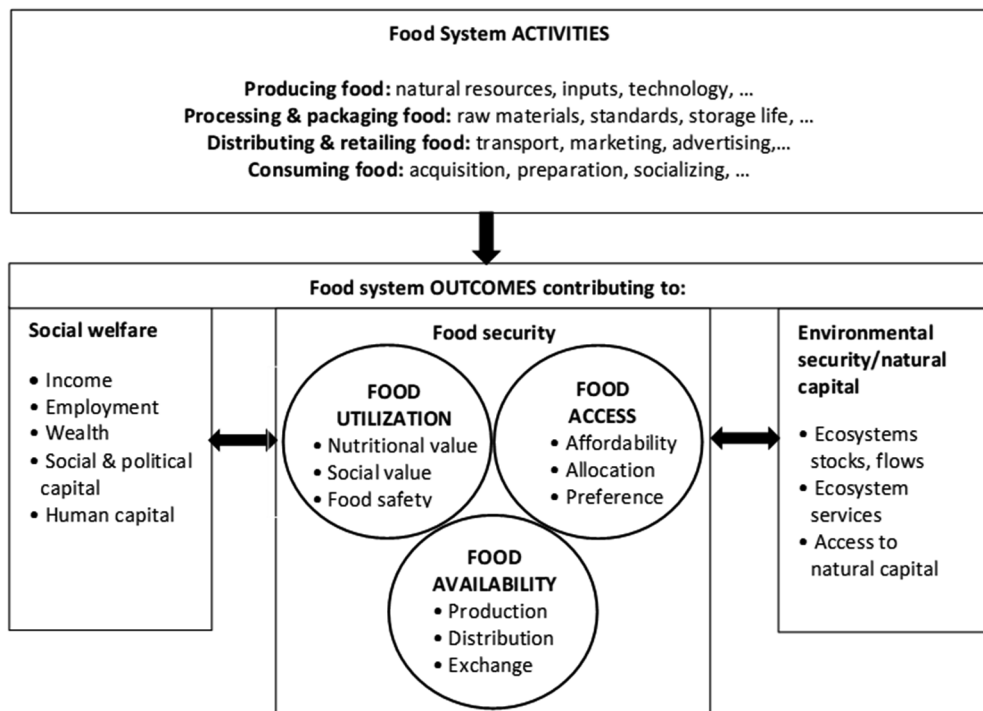


Figure 2.1 The food system concept (Ericksen 2008)

We study FPI in policy outputs along two key dimensions: policy goals and policy instruments (see Howlett and Rayner 2017). The policy goals a municipality sets inform us about the course the municipality aims to follow and the issues that dominate its political agenda. A policy goal is a government’s basic aim or expectation in deciding to pursue (or not) some course of action (Walsh 1994) or ‘the desired outcome that a government aims

to achieve' (Henstra 2016, 497). Goals can be analysed for their content and the degree of targeting. The content involves the substantive issues that a goal addresses. The degree of targeting, or the 'level of concreteness' is commonly conceptualized along three degrees: general abstract policy aims, operationalizable policy objectives, and specific policy targets (Howlett 2011, 17). Our approach to the degree of targeting differs from Howlett's typology on two points. First, we reduced the levels to two: general abstract policy aims and specific policy targets, as it proved difficult to distinguish the intermediate level. Second, we added the category 'main priority' to be able to distinguish the overarching food goal(s) of a policy output, if present. In this chapter, we hence divided goals into main priorities and additional goals. For the latter category we distinguished between general abstract policy aims and specific policy targets.

Policy instruments refer to the interventions employed by municipalities to achieve their food goals. Policy instruments are the recognized tools of government that, one way or another, involve the use of state authority or its conscious limitation (Howlett 1991; Howlett 2005, 31). In this research, we inductively explore the types of instruments that municipalities employ or intend to employ. Importantly, our study is restricted to instruments included in policy outputs; we did not study whether these were actually *implemented*. We subsequently analyse the instrument types using Hood's (1983) NATO model. The NATO model distinguishes four types of policy instruments based on the governing resources on which governments can draw: the information they possess as a central policy actor (nodality), their legal powers (authority), their financial resources (treasure), and the organizational capacities available to them (organization).

2.3. Methods

2.3.1. Data Collection

To assess how Dutch municipalities address food, we conducted a qualitative content analysis of municipal policy outputs. We retrieved documents for all Dutch municipalities with over 100,000 inhabitants ($n=31$, based on number of inhabitants in April 2017) from municipal councils' web-based information systems. In the municipal information system, a municipality displays all its publicly available documents, such as adopted policies, press releases, letters from the municipal board to the council, and municipal council minutes.

We included documents in the data analysis if they: i) were formally adopted by the municipal council (policy outputs such as policies, strategies, or programmes) and ii) addressed the functioning of the food system, i.e. at least one activity or outcome as defined

by Ericksen (2008). Food challenges had to be explicitly addressed as such (i.e. not as health or economic issues). The assumption underlying document selection through the municipal council's information system is that, to be formally adopted (and thus qualify as policy output), any decision has to pass the municipal council and will subsequently be made publicly available. Appendix A provides more detailed information about the inclusion criteria and the list of municipalities reviewed.

We used the exact query: [Food OR Voedsel OR Voeding] to search the municipal councils' information systems. For each municipality, we reviewed the first 100 results, which were sorted on relevance by the system. We reviewed these documents and included them in the dataset if they met the inclusion criteria. All documents were in Dutch. The data were collected in November 2017.

2.3.2. *Data Analysis*

To analyse our data, we developed a codebook (see Appendix A) and coded all documents for policy goals and policy instruments with the program *Atlas.ti* 7. For goals, we coded: i) the issue(s) and ii) the degree of targeting. Issues were coded inductively, and multiple issues could be assigned to the same goal. A quote was considered a goal if the municipality expressed a clear intention to achieve it. Instruments were coded only if the municipality clearly stated the intention to employ them or had already employed them. Consequently, when an intervention was referred to as a possible course of action, it was not coded as an instrument.

2.3.3. *Limitations*

Our methodological choices entail a number of limitations. A first limitation is a possible reporting bias, as the analysis depended on the self-reporting of municipalities about policies adopted. Documents not published in the municipal information system were not included, resulting in a possible under-representation of policy outputs. Second, it was sometimes difficult to determine whether documents had been formally adopted. Wherever possible, we have tried to overcome this challenge by conducting an additional web search for documents with an unclear status and/or by contacting the registry of the relevant municipality. Third, we searched relevant documents for the word 'food', as we presumed that those policy outputs explicitly addressing food challenges would include this term at least once throughout the document. However, there may be policies that target the functioning of the food system although they do not contain the key term food. This could have resulted in a small under-representation of documents from policy domains where food is commonly referred to by other terms. Most notably, agricultural policies

might address ‘food production’, while referring to it as ‘agriculture’. Fourth, documents uploaded as PDFs without text recognition (such as scanned documents) and documents without a time indexation were not included.

2.4. Results

2.4.1. Description of the Dataset

We retrieved 738 policy outputs from 31 municipalities. The final dataset consisted of 93 policy outputs that met the inclusion criteria. This dataset contained outputs from 25 municipalities; this means that the majority (81%) of large (> 100,000 inhabitants) Dutch municipalities set food goals in their policy outputs. Health strategies accounted for the largest share of policy outputs (30%). Other recurring outputs were policies on sustainability, the environment, spatial planning, the economy, and poverty alleviation. Between 2011 and 2014, four municipalities published an integrated municipal food strategy (Gemeente Groningen 2012; Gemeente Den Haag 2013; Gemeente Amsterdam 2014; Gemeente Ede 2015). All policy outputs were published between 2007 and 2017 (Figure 2.2). Between 2007 and 2011, relatively few policy outputs (16%) addressed food. From 2012 onwards, municipalities increasingly addressed food in their outputs; 80% of the policy outputs were published between 2012 and 2017. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether this is a continuing trend, as the number of policy outputs per year kept fluctuating between 2012 and 2017. This fluctuation might be partly explained by election cycles: governments often publish more outputs in the years after elections (2007, 2011, and 2015 in this case). It should also be noted that the number of outputs for 2017 exclude those published in November and December.

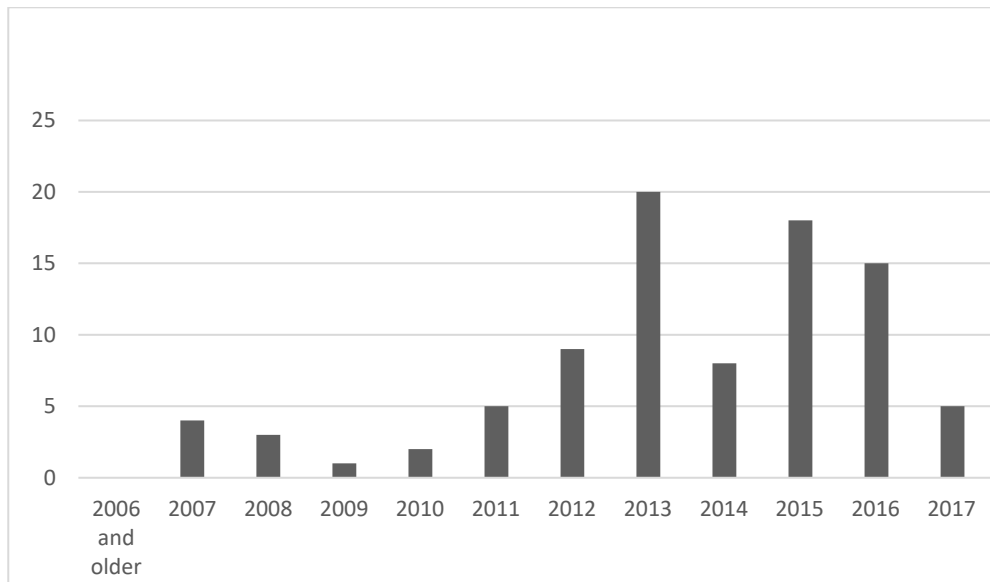


Figure 2.2 Total number of policy outputs published per year

The majority of municipalities addressed food in one or two policy outputs only (median=2). However, various municipalities addressed food in relatively many policy outputs: Ede ($n=14$), Almere ($n=12$), and Amsterdam ($n=12$) having most outputs. Overall, municipalities with relatively many policy outputs also addressed many issues and employed many instruments. Zaanstad, Utrecht, and 's Hertogenbosch are exceptions. On average, municipalities addressed nine issues (median=7). Amsterdam and Ede addressed the most issues ($n=22$) and Dordrecht the least ($n=2$). On average, municipalities employed six instruments (median=4). Again, we found a large variety, with Amsterdam employing the most instruments ($n=21$) and seven municipalities not employing any instruments at all.

Figure 2.3 shows the data aggregated per municipality (see Appendix B). Municipalities that did not address any food issues were excluded from this figure. About half of the municipalities that employed instruments employed fewer than five instruments *and* addressed fewer than seven issues (Figure 2.3). This means that the other half employed more than five instruments *and* addressed more than seven issues (Figure 2.3).

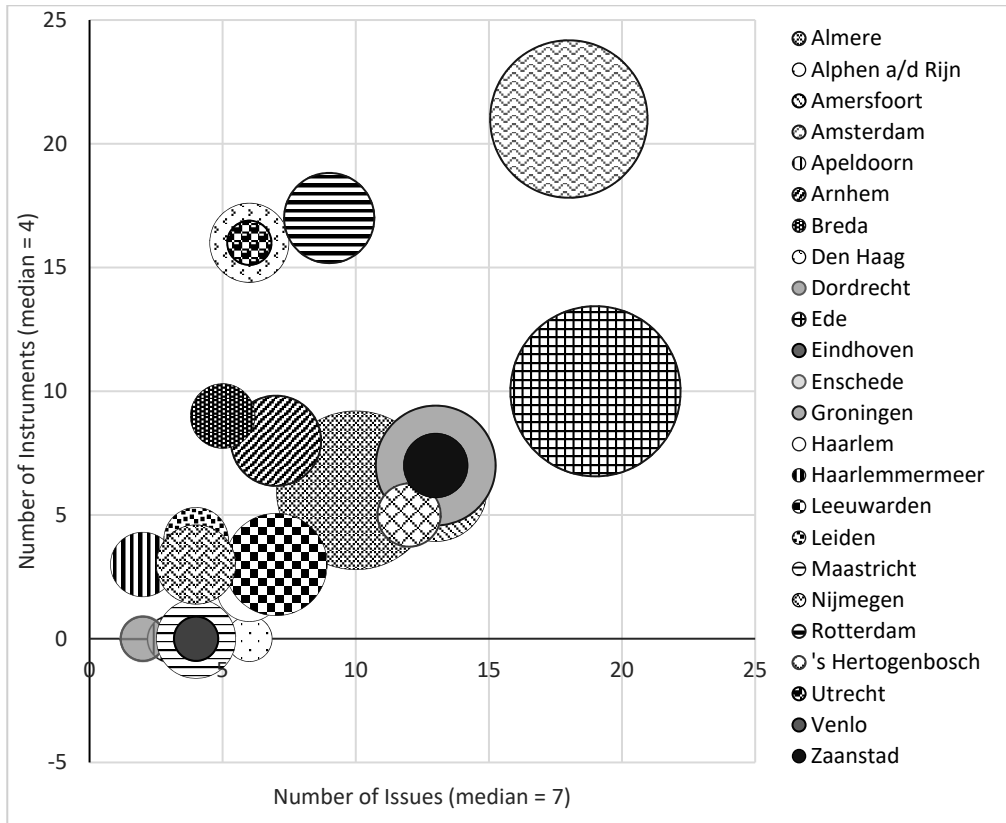


Figure 2.3 Number of food issues and instruments in number of policy outputs per municipality

2.4.2. Policy Goals

Figure 2.4 presents issues and the number of municipalities that addressed them.

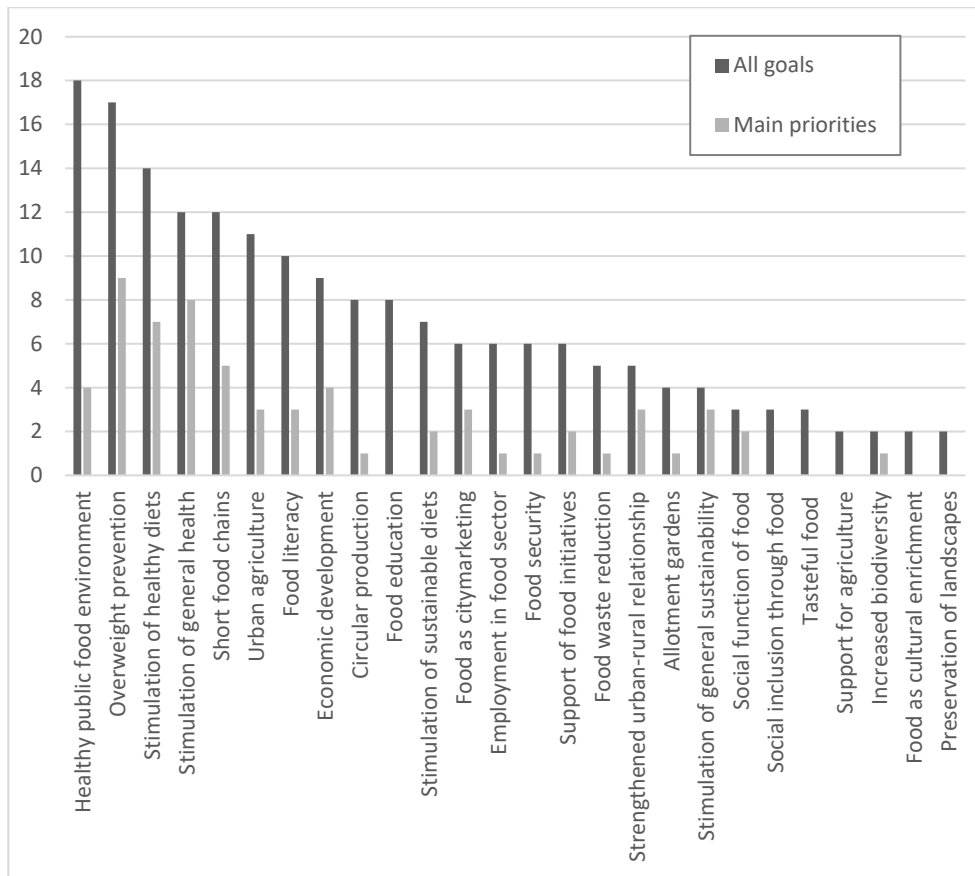


Figure 2.4 Food issues addressed by number of municipalities

Clearly, health can be recognized as the overarching issue that practically all municipalities addressed, focusing both on individuals and on securing a healthy environment. Creating a healthy food environment ($n=18$, 72%), fighting overweight and obesity ($n=17$, 86%), and stimulating the consumption of healthy food ($n=14$, 56%) were addressed by the highest number of municipalities. For example, one of Amsterdam's objectives was to ensure that 'in 2012 the number of overweight and obese children is no longer increasing' (Gemeente Amsterdam 2012). Most municipalities that aimed for a healthy food environment focused on introducing more edible plants in public spaces ($n=11$, 44%). Rotterdam, for example, aimed for 'more edible greenery in neighbourhoods' (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012). Municipalities that aimed to fight overweight and obesity focused most often on children ($n=14$) and on fighting overweight in combination with addressing a change in lifestyle ($n=14$). A second frequently addressed issue was enhancing the production and

consumption of local or regional food: 12 municipalities aimed to shorten food chains, and 11 municipalities aimed to promote or stimulate urban agriculture in and around the city.

The least addressed, on the other hand, were issues with a link to the social or cultural value of food or a link to the environment. Only three municipalities aimed to strengthen social cohesion or to stimulate social inclusion by using the social function of food, and to promote tasty and enjoyable food. Only two municipalities aimed to improve the agricultural sector, the biodiversity, or the landscape in their municipality and use food to culturally enrich their society. Except for social functions of food and biodiversity, municipalities never addressed these issues their main priorities either, another indication that these issues are not top priority in the policy outputs of Dutch municipalities.

The number of main priorities largely follows the same trend as the total of policy goals, though the number of main priorities is consistently lower as they comprise a fraction of the goal total. This explains why six issues were not addressed in any main priorities at all. For example, no municipality had education as a main priority, while it was addressed by eight municipalities when *all* goal types are considered. Remarkably too, all municipalities that addressed the general relationship between food and health did this (at least) in their main priorities.

With regard to the degree of targeting of goals, we found relatively few specific policy targets (26%) as compared to abstractly formulated goals (49%) and main priorities (25%). This means that municipalities state that they 'are going for a certain issue', without setting specific targets. The goal to be achieved often remained vague, as can be observed in an Amsterdam example: 'Healthy food environment' (Gemeente Amsterdam 2015). A specific policy target on the other hand is for instance: 'All Almere children aged 0–12 have breakfast and have a healthy 10 o'clock snack (fruit and water)' (Gemeente Almere 2016).

2.4.3. Policy Instruments

Municipalities employed a wide range of instrument types (Figure 2.5). At the same time, more than a quarter of municipalities (7 of 25) did not mention any instruments at all for achieving their food goals.

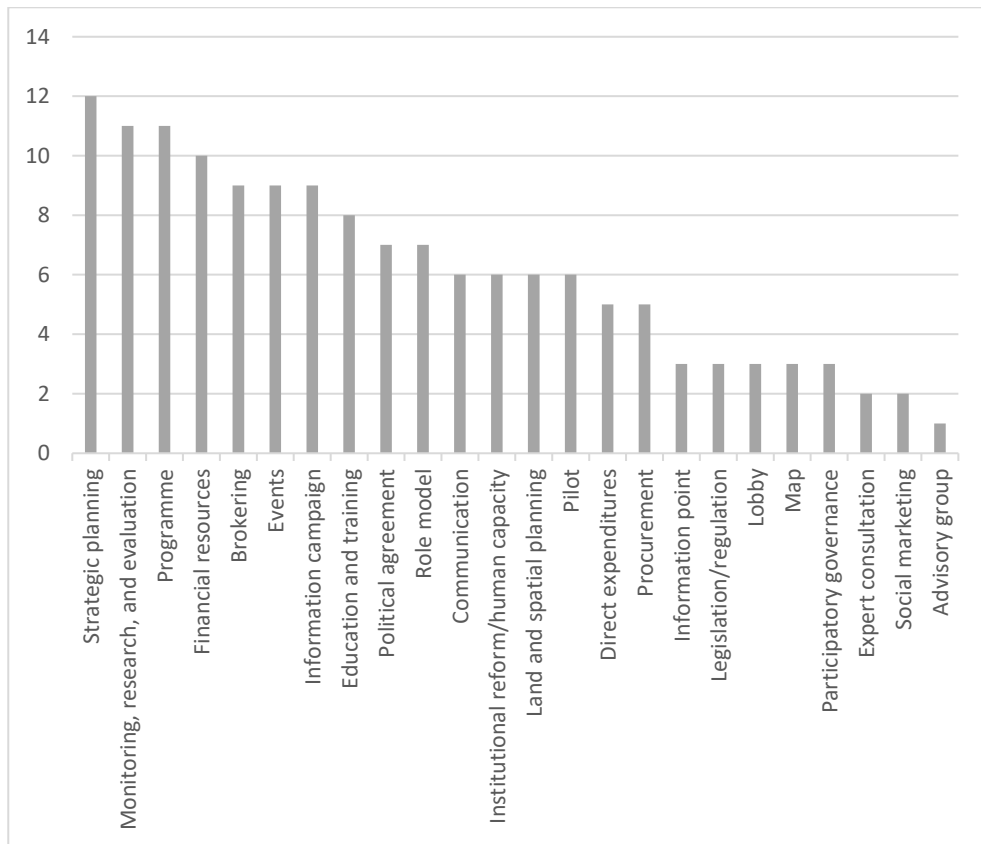


Figure 2.5 Instrument types used by number of municipalities

This means that, although a considerable number of municipalities did aim to achieve certain goals, they failed to state *how* they intend to achieve them. Those municipalities that did not employ any instruments were also the ones with extremely few policy outputs ($n=1$), while addressing few issues (<7). An exception was Maastricht, addressing seven issues in a total of three policy outputs without employing any instruments.

Municipalities seem to use mostly non-legally binding, soft instruments. The most often employed instrument was strategic planning (Figure 2.5). This means that two thirds of the municipalities adopted (new) policies on food challenges or adopted (new) food goals in other policy documents. The municipality of Utrecht, for instance, worked on: ‘Policy on nutrition and exercise at all pre-schools and playgroups: from the urban direction, what has been started and is now in progress will be continued and strengthened’ (Gemeente Utrecht 2012). Second, the majority of municipalities employed the instruments of monitoring, research & evaluation ($n=11$, 61%), programmes ($n=11$, 61%), and the allocation of financial

resources ($n=10$, 55%). Municipalities that employed monitoring and research & evaluation conducted research or tracked their progress in policy implementation, and they might have reported back to the municipal council. The Hague, for example, stated that it evaluated its offer of environmental education for children and incorporated food and local agriculture in this education (Gemeente Den Haag 2013), whereas Almere stated that it conducted research into the possibilities of a central registry for overweight children (Gemeente Almere 2007). Intervention programmes are specifically designed (by health NGOs for instance) with a determined start and end. The Hague, for example, developed the 'What is your style?' programme for youngsters between 8 and 16 years of age who are overweight and not (yet) motivated to do something about their obesity (Gemeente Den Haag 2012).

Half of the municipalities brokered between citizens, entrepreneurs, and other external organizations ($n=18$); organized food events ($n=18$); or organized information campaigns on certain food issues ($n=18$). Rotterdam, for instance, stated that the municipality brokers by organizing network meetings for producers and (potential) customers (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012). Instruments that were employed less, but still by a considerable number of municipalities, were: providing education and training in the form of courses, conferences, or workshops ($n=8$); signing political agreements such as treaties ($n=7$); and using role models to inspire people ($n=7$). The same holds for using municipal communication channels ($n=6$); conducting institutional reform or allocating/increasing human capacity in the municipal organization ($n=6$); applying or changing land and spatial planning ($n=6$); conducting pilot projects ($n=6$); making any direct expenditures on physical items such as buildings or materials ($n=5$); or adapting/using public procurement ($n=5$).

Of the instruments coded, 8 out of 24 were employed by fewer than three municipalities. The adaptation of legislation and regulation with regard to food challenges for example, or the development of a map with food initiatives or an information point for citizens, were rare instruments. Least employed instruments included consulting external experts ($n=2$), using social marketing ($n=2$), or creating advisory groups ($n=1$).

2.5. Discussion

Four main points of discussion emerge from the results presented in the previous section. First, our results show that the majority of Dutch municipalities do not address a wide range of food challenges in their policy outputs and have therefore integrated food challenges to a limited extent only. This finding suggests that most Dutch municipalities probably do not approach food challenges from a systems perspective (see Sonnino et al. 2019). The low degree of FPI is supported by the finding that high-level political documents, such as

coalition agreements and general municipal vision statements or strategies, hardly ever address food challenges. This means that food challenges are not (yet) mainstreamed across a wide range of policy domains, that challenges are not addressed in a holistic way, and that they are probably low on the political agenda in general. Although few similar studies on food challenges in policy documents have been performed so far, these insights correspond with earlier observations about food policy in Switzerland. In Switzerland, food was found not to be a major topic in most of the potentially relevant local policy documents, indicating that food is not integrated well in municipalities' main local policy documents (Moschitz 2018).

Second, our findings demonstrate that, although municipalities do not integrate the full spectrum of food challenges, some challenges, most notably public health and local food, are more addressed than others. Regarding the food system activities in Ericksen's (2008) food system conceptualization, municipalities focus mostly on production (but only small scale, urban) and consumption, while hardly addressing processing & packaging and distribution & retailing. Other authors too found that local governments predominantly address the two ends of the food chain, rather than activities in between (Sonnino et al. 2019). Why this is the case should be further investigated. A plausible explanation is that the ends of the food chain are more salient policy areas for local governments. With regard to food system outcomes, municipalities addressed food security in a broad way. Examples of food security outcomes addressed (as defined in Ericksen's 2008 model) are: production – through urban agriculture –, allocation – through a healthy food environment –, and nutritional value – through healthy consumption. Other challenges addressed were food system outcomes contributing to social welfare (for example literacy, education, and employment). Issues that were addressed the least were food system outcomes contributing to environmental security (for example biodiversity, the landscape, and environmental sustainability). Moreover, municipalities in this study did not have a strong focus on food sovereignty and food justice. To conclude, Dutch municipalities address mostly health and wellbeing, the economy, learning/empowerment, and urban–rural linkages; they do not address community development, the environment, social and cultural aspects, and food-security/social justice. There are several explanations as to why public health and local food are frequently addressed issues. Firstly, health is a well-established local jurisdiction and urban agriculture is one of the traditional urban food issues (Sonnino 2009). Public health and local food production are hence found to be prominent issues in many integrated food policy frameworks (Moschitz 2018). There are also explanations as to why certain issues were not addressed. Sonnino (2009) gives two

reasons why municipalities do not address agricultural issues (other than urban agriculture and local food): first, agriculture is usually seen as an issue that needs to be addressed at higher (national and supranational) governance levels – in policies such as the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – and, second, the conventional definition of ‘urban’ as ‘non-agricultural’ has conceptually distanced food as an urban issue (Pothukuchi and Kaufman 1999; Sonnino 2009). Others have also found this rural–urban divide tendency (Sonnino 2009) in which food production and urban areas are still widely framed as separate spheres (Mendes 2007; Moschitz 2018). Urban areas are conceived of as ‘productive and dynamic places of economic development, innovation, and culture’ whereas rural areas are places of ‘food production, landscape preservation, and energy production’ (Moschitz 2018, 9).

Third, our findings demonstrate that municipalities aim primarily to achieve their goals with soft measures that are non-coercive. We see three possible explanations for this tendency. First, the lack and abstract nature of instruments may indicate that many policies are symbolic, referring to decisions that are never intended to be (fully) implemented and therefore have little or no impact (Edelman 1964). At the same time, symbolic policies can have an important agenda-setting function. This observation is further supported by the high prevalence of abstract goal statements. An alternative explanation for these abstract goals is that many municipalities may not (yet) have any civil service expertise on food systems; a deficiency that potentially results in vague goal statements and few instruments. Second, municipalities may be hesitant to use coercive instruments for fear of allegations of paternalism. Food choices are perceived to be personal, and citizens are believed to interpret government interventions as threatening their freedom of choice. Third, municipalities may simply lack the jurisdictional powers to use legally binding instruments, or they might think of the food policy arena as a national and supranational one. As Mansfield and Mendes (2013, 38) remind us: ‘until recently, food policies have typically been understood to fall within national or global jurisdictions (e.g. agricultural policies, food aid or food safety)’. The use of – mostly informative – soft instruments in Dutch food governance is confirmed by other authors’ findings. For example, also on national level, healthy eating and sustainability measures in the Netherlands are based on information provision (National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) 2017; de Krom and Muilwijk 2018). This does not mean that non-coercive instruments are better than coercive ones though. Non-coercive instruments such as nudging can be very effective in achieving food goals and in reinforcing the effect of other instruments. Empirically, indications of more government intervention (authority) on food can already be witnessed. In the UK for instance, the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (commonly known as the sugar tax)

came into effect in 2018 (HM Treasury of the UK 2018). This is a promising development for the Netherlands as well. At local level, a potential authority instrument could be the use of spatial planning measures, by adjusting zoning plans to foster a healthy food environment.

Fourth, although local FPI in the Netherlands is relatively limited, a couple of efforts seem promising. Although the majority of Dutch municipalities have not integrated food challenges across most of their policies, a small group of municipalities (Amsterdam, Den Haag, Ede, Groningen, Rotterdam) have adopted more comprehensive integrated approaches. Our results therefore suggest that we might be dealing with a group of early FPI adopters. In general, these are the municipalities that also engage in food policy networks: except for one (Venlo), all municipalities in the national network 'City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda' (of which about half also signed the MUFPP) are among the municipalities that address most issues and employ most instruments (Figure 3.1). Several of these cities, such as Amsterdam, provide interesting examples of what is possible in terms of food policy at local level. Amsterdam has adopted an integrated food strategy and has recently employed a relatively hard instrument: a ban throughout the metro system on fast food advertising targeting children (Pieters 2017). With its exemplary role as a capital city, it is imaginable that the more intervening role that Amsterdam is starting to take on will, with time, be adopted by other cities.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has been a start to explore the current extent of local FPI in the Netherlands, starting from the question: *to what extent has food become integrated across municipal policies in the Netherlands?* We conclude with three final reflections. First, we have shown that, although not ubiquitous and often not in a holistic way, various food challenges have been integrated across municipal policies. At the same time, it remains to be seen whether FPI in the Netherlands will prove a continuing trend, or a passing fad. It would for that reason be worthwhile to repeat our study in the future. The emergence of local food system approaches in other countries may prove an important development in this respect; allowing for policy diffusion in the coming years (Sonnino et al. 2019). Second, although we clearly see signs of FPI *on paper* in the Netherlands, it remains unclear whether integrated approaches are also implemented *in practice*; i.e. whether these efforts have moved beyond paper realities. Third, although policy integration has the premise of strengthening the effectiveness of interventions, this assumption remains under studied. Consequently, we do not yet know the potential contributions of improved governance arrangements for addressing food challenges.

To better judge the potential of local governments in the transition towards healthier and more sustainable food systems, more research is necessary. A crucial step would be to complement the research on FPI in outputs with research on FPI in the informal sphere prior to policy adoption as well as the mechanisms contributing to FPI. Secondly, to better understand the results of food policy integration at local level, research needs to be extended from outputs to outcomes to evaluate the actual effects of food policy in society.

To tackle challenges in the food system effectively, we recommend that local governments address food issues holistically, applying a food systems approach. To achieve this, we suggest that municipalities address food issues across a broader range of policy domains. We argue that municipalities need to address the following issues better: socio-cultural issues, environmental issues, issues related to food system activities prior to consumption. Only then can true FPI occur. For municipalities to achieve this, embedding a systemic approach to food in policy entails two fundamental changes: cross-sectoral integration and practical consideration of the ways in which the different components of a food system are interconnected (Candel and Pereira 2017; Sonnino et al. 2019). In addition to symbolic policies, policymakers should develop more substantive policies that generate real impact. To develop these, better targeted goals and concrete mixes of policy instruments are key. Municipalities have to employ more authority-based and treasure-based instruments to advance the policy, as using mostly information and organization instruments limits the degree of intervention a government can apply. For municipalities that want to engage in integrated food governance, municipalities that already apply this approach can serve as a source of inspiration. We therefore recommend starting municipalities to learn from early adapters, as past successes and failures in other municipalities can provide valuable information on how to improve local food governance effectively.

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3. Realizing Urban Food Policy: a Discursive Institutional Analysis of Ede Municipality

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Abstract

To overcome pressing food system challenges, academics and civil society actors have called for the development of integrated food policies. Municipalities have increasingly picked up on these calls by developing municipal food strategies. It remains unclear, however, whether and how these commitments have resulted in a genuine institutionalization of food governance across local administrations. We address this gap through an in-depth study of how food governance ideas were institutionalized in the Dutch municipality of Ede, which is considered a frontrunner in municipal food policy. Drawing on discursive institutionalism, we explore how actors, ideas and discourses mutually shaped the institutionalization process. Our analysis shows that food governance ideas were institutionalized following a discursive-institutional spiral of three stages. First, an abstract food profile discourse emerged, which was institutionalized exclusively amongst a small group of policy makers. In the second stage, the discourse shifted to a more elaborate integrated food policy discourse, which was institutionalized across various departments. Finally, a food system discourse emerged, which was institutionalized across an even broader range of policy departments. Our study suggests that integrated food policy can be institutionalized within a relatively short time span. A food strategy, budget and organizational innovations seem key in this process, although they can also be constraining. At the same time, we conclude that retaining a food policy institutionalized remains challenging, as sudden ideational change may cause rapid deinstitutionalization.

3.1. Introduction

Our global food system faces a wide range of sustainability challenges, such as obesity, food waste and climate change. To address these interconnected challenges effectively, scientists and policy makers have stressed the need for integrated food policy (Lang et al. 2009; MacRae 2011; IPES-Food 2017b; Moragues-Faus et al. 2017; Candel and Daugbjerg 2019). Integrated food policies emphasize the multifaceted and interrelated nature of food challenges, and address these in a concerted manner (Mendes 2007; Sibbing et al. 2019), thereby integrating health, environmental, social, and economic dimensions to realize sustainable food and nutrition security (Lang et al. 2009; Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015). Scientists and policymakers therefore consider food policies key for addressing current policy incoherencies, and for fostering synergies that contribute to sustainability (cf. Mendes 2007; Peters 2015; Candel and Pereira 2017).

In response to these calls, an increasing number of municipalities have started to develop integrated food policies. The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), a voluntary pact signed by almost 200 cities¹ (MUFPP 2018a), is a good example of this emerging commitment (Candel 2019). The engagement of municipalities in integrated food policy is a promising development, as municipalities have the potential to develop tailor-made and possibly more effective policies, as they benefit from their knowledge of the place, the proximity to the community and the possibility to engage local citizens (Sonnino et al. 2019). The urban can be considered a key space to reshape food system dynamics (Moragues-Faus and Carroll 2018) and municipalities could therefore be crucial for leading the way to more sustainable food systems.

A common way for a municipality to start with integrated food policy is by developing a municipal food strategy (Mansfield and Mendes 2013; Cretella 2016; Matacena 2016; Hebinck and Page 2017). The strength of these strategies is that they typically target food systems in a holistic manner, targeting environmental, social, health, and economic issues, as well as their interconnections. At the same time, local food strategies have been shown to mainly serve an agenda-setting purpose. They offer no guarantee for institutionally embedding food governance ideas; i.e. institutionalization in the rules, norms, and beliefs of a municipal organization, in the same way economic or health challenges are embedded (Morgan and Sonnino 2010; Sonnino et al. 2019). Such institutionalization is a crucial step

¹ 20-12-2019

for bringing a food strategy beyond paper realities, as it entails the creation of an infrastructure and the conditions to address food issues in the long term.

In spite of the emergence of a rapidly expanding body of literature on both national and municipal food policies in recent years (e.g. Barling, Lang, & Caraher, 2002; Carey, 2013; Lang, 1999; MacRae, 2011; Mah & Thang, 2013; Mansfield & Mendes, 2013; Mendes, 2007; Rocha & Lessa, 2009; Sonnino et al., 2019; Termeer, Drimie, Ingram, Pereira, & Whittingham, 2018; Yeatman, 2003), the institutionalization of these policies across local administrations has largely remained uncharted territory. In this chapter we therefore focus on what happens inside the local administration to start addressing this gap. We conduct an in-depth analysis of how food governance ideas were institutionalized within a municipality. The institutionalization of food governance ideas within a municipality requires that food comes to be perceived as a crosscutting concern, in need of an integrated governance approach (Peters 2005; Candel and Pereira 2017). This suggests that the development of ideas about the problem(s) and associated (desired) modes of governance are key to understanding institutionalization processes (Den Besten et al. 2014). Focusing on Ede, one of the first municipalities in the Netherlands with an explicit food strategy, we therefore address the question: *how and to what extent were food governance ideas institutionalized within the municipality of Ede?*

To study how food governance ideas institutionalized in Ede municipality, we draw on discursive institutionalist (DI) theory (Schmidt 2008; Schmidt 2010).

3.2. Discursive Institutionalism

Discursive institutionalism has emerged in the early 2000s as part of the wave of ‘new institutionalism’ theories, and distinguishes itself from rational choice, historical and sociological institutionalism by focusing on how institutions are shaped – and changed – by ideas, through discourses and on how an institutional context again influences (new) ideas through discourses (Schmidt 2008). As such, discursive institutionalism takes actors and the ideas they convey as the conceptual starting point for explaining institutional change and stability. Discursive institutionalist approaches allow for gaining insight in how certain policy ideas and concepts gain legitimacy over others, how struggles over meaning ultimately define and change a policy issue (Den Besten et al. 2014), and how this issue was potentially institutionalized within a polity. This makes DI apt for exploring how ideas shape and influence the institutionalization of food governance ideas within local administrations.

In DI, four concepts are central: ideas, discourses, actors, and institutions. Ideas carry the content of a discourse (Schmidt 2008; Den Besten et al. 2014). Two types of ideas exist: cognitive ideas about how things are done (how it *is*), and normative ideas that consist of values and attitudes (how it *should be*) (Schmidt 2008). In practice, cognitive and normative often go hand in hand, making it challenging to draw a clear line between them. Discourse is defined as the communicative process through which actors structure and exchange their ideas, often through contestation with others (Schmidt 2008; Schmidt 2010; Peters 2012, 114; Den Besten et al. 2014). Discourse involves ‘the how, when, why and where’ ideas are conveyed. Actors are the conveyers of ideas, who thereby shape the discourse. Actors change or maintain, through their discursive abilities and communication, the institutional context – i.e. the situated configuration of rules, norms and beliefs (Scott 2014) – of which they are part. They can negotiate about institutional rules, even while using them, and they can urge others to maintain or change the institutional context (Schmidt 2008; Den Besten et al. 2014). They can do this by promoting their ideas at the expense of the ideas of others (Carstensen and Schmidt 2016). While doing so, actors may exert three types of ideational power: 1) power *through* ideas, as the capacity of actors to persuade other actors to accept and adopt their views of what to think and do; 2) power *over* ideas, referring to agents’ imposition of ideas and the power of actors to resist the inclusion of alternative ideas into a policy-making arena; and 3) power *in* ideas, involving established hegemony over opinions, and institutions imposing constraints on the ideas actors are allowed to take into consideration (Carstensen and Schmidt 2016). Institutions, in DI, are both given, as the context within which actors think, speak, and act, and contingent, as the results of actors’ thoughts, words, and actions (Schmidt 2008).

The process through which discourses, actors, and institutions interact may best be thought of as a ‘discursive-institutional spiral’ (Den Besten et al. 2014; see Figure 3.1). Den Besten et al. (2014) describe this spiral as a “process of institutionalization of discourses on the one hand and the opening up of discourses in response to these institutionalization processes on the other”. This spiral consists of two alternating phases. First, expanding constellations of actors reframe existing, and introduce new, ideas, thereby developing a discourse. In a second phase, this discourse narrows down, including and excluding certain ideas, and was (partly) institutionalized in new rules, arrangements, and practices (Lynggaard 2007; Den Besten et al. 2014).

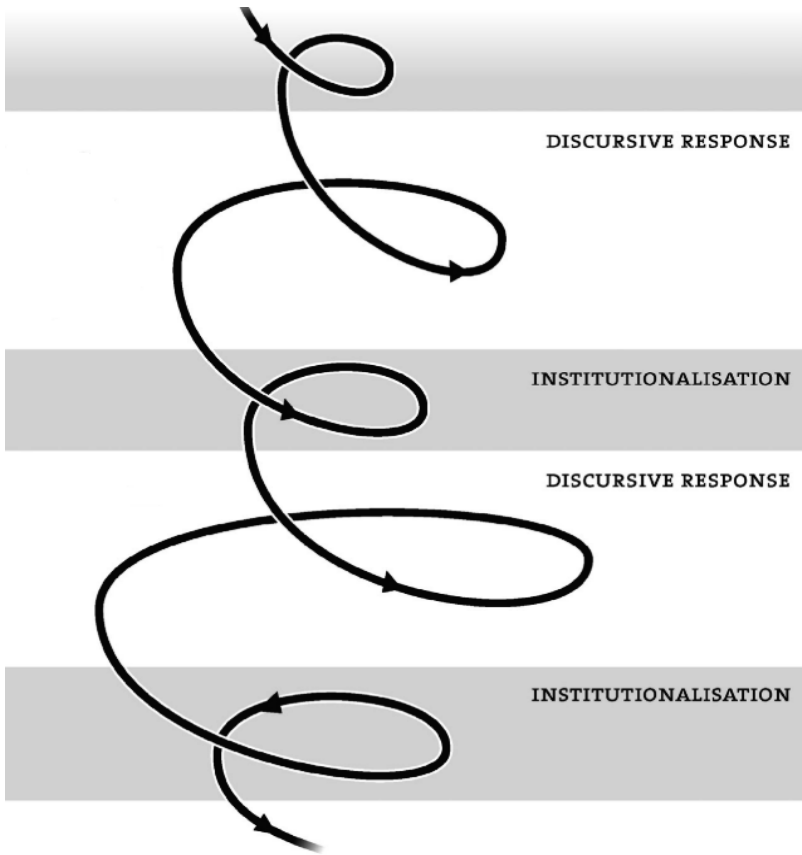


Figure 3.1 The discursive-institutional spiral (Den Besten et al. 2014)

As these two phases alternate, the institutionalized discourse then triggers discussion again, as new actors reframe existing- and introduce new ideas. This discussion again turns into a new discourse, eventually leading to a new instance of institutionalization (Den Besten et al. 2014). It should be kept in mind that the discursive-institutional spiral is a simplified model of reality; in practice institutionalization is not a linear process.

As Ede municipality has made considerable efforts to introduce an integrated food policy approach, we expect a discursive-institutional spiral to have been at work within the municipal organization, with an integrated food policy discourse institutionalizing across a wide range of municipal departments. In practice, this would mean that each department would address the food issues that relate to its policy field, e.g., the health department promoting healthy diets, or the sustainability department promoting food waste reduction. Following Den Besten et al. (2014), we investigated how a discursive-institutional spiral with regard to food governance ideas has developed for the case of Ede and what the

characteristics of this spiral were. We discerned (cycles of) the two phases of the discursive-institutional spiral: i) institutionalization, in which ideas were institutionalized in policy arrangements and social practices, and ii) discursive responses, in which the discourse opens up again, through new actors and ideas.

3.3. Methods

Given the lack of existing scholarship on municipal food policy institutionalization, we conducted an exploratory single-*n* case study, aimed at obtaining an in-depth understanding of the discursive-institutional spiral process. We opted for a participatory approach to be able to study interactions between actors, their ideas and discourses from up close. This means that over the course of the research, the main author was part of Ede's municipal food policy team and made fieldnotes on her observations, while contributing to the municipality's food policy.

Ede has about 116.000 inhabitants (Gemeente Ede 2019) and is one of the largest Dutch municipalities in surface area. In addition to an urban centre, Ede also includes a vast rural area, which is characterized by intensive livestock farming. Ede is part of the FoodValley region: eight adjacent municipalities that harbour a large number of agri-food businesses and agri-food knowledge institutes, such as the University of Wageningen. The Netherlands is a decentralized unitary state, in which food policy-related issues have traditionally been dealt with at national, provincial as well as supranational levels. Until now, no overarching national or provincial food policies have been adopted. Municipalities in the Netherlands do not have many explicit food related competences, but they are responsible for a broad range of issues that impact food systems, including zoning, organizing and issuing permits for local initiatives and events, social policy, youth care, housing, infrastructure, and local environmental protection. Also, municipalities are allowed to address any topic they wish through the 'open housekeeping' principle, meaning that they can adopt interventions in any field they deem important as long as this does not conflict with other jurisdictions' efforts. Municipalities can make use of this principle to develop food policy and address food system issues, though not many of them have done so yet (Sibbing et al. 2019).

Ede is one of the few Dutch municipalities that has addressed a wide array of food-related challenges across sectoral policy efforts through a food strategy (Sibbing et al. 2019). Moreover, Ede has strongly focused on embedding food governance ideas in its organization by using a politically binding governance approach that includes a food program, -team and -alderman (elected official) (Zweynert 2017; MUFPP 2018b). In 2015, the Ede city council officially adopted the food strategy (Gemeente Ede 2015) and in 2017

Ede won an international award for its integrated food policy and governance approach (MUFPP 2018b).

The institutional context under study, we delimited as the municipality's executive organization, consisting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and the civil service. As the executive organization does not operate in a vacuum, interactions with the Ede city council and civil society were included in the analysis when these proved explanatory for the internal discursive institutionalization process. Our analysis covers the period from 2010 through 2018, starting from the first time a food discourse emerged: following the 2010 municipal elections.

We used four data sources: i) field notes from the main author's reflective journal log ($n=88$, collected between May 2017- March 2018); ii) focus group transcripts ($n=3$); iii) policy documents ($n=32$); and iv) additional written sources such as press releases and web pages. As the main author of this chapter works as a food policy adviser in Ede's municipal food team, field notes covered formal and informal meetings with municipal officials, conversations, events and written materials that the main author came across in her daily work. As a second source, three focus groups were organized, each with a different group of municipal officials, to ensure a representative range of perspectives: i) members of the Ede food team; ii) civil servants who collaborated most frequently with the food team (e.g. the sustainability manager and the economic affairs officer); iii) the top management of the municipality (the responsible alderman and two managers). All focus groups were held in 2018, consisted of 3-5 participants, and focused on the development of Ede's integrated food policy and governance approach between 2010 and 2018. The main author of this chapter took on a facilitating role in the focus groups, using five open questions to guide the discussion. Third, to complement the two other data sources, we collected all municipal planning and control (P&C) cycle documents, which comprise three documents per year and two coalition agreement documents in election years. P&C documents provide insight into the main policy course of a municipality. To gain more detailed insight, we also included three specific food policy documents (Gemeente Ede 2012; Gemeente Ede 2015; Gemeente Ede 2017). Additional written sources were consulted to verify findings where necessary.

Texts of field notes, focus group transcripts and policy documents were analysed for evidence of ideas, involved actors and accounts of discursive interactions. Texts were analysed for both their content and their function as meaning-making devices, e.g., communicating policy beliefs (Gillard 2016). We reconstructed discourses, coalitions, rules and, eventually, the different phases of the discursive-institutional spiral, through a

continuous, iterative comparison of the insights obtained through the four data sources. Importantly, we acknowledge that while the main author's engagement as participant-observer gives us a unique perspective, it also creates the potential for bias. When combining the roles of researcher and policymaker, it is key to constantly remain aware of one's positionality as fulfilling two roles simultaneously (Yanow 2007). In participatory research, the way to do this and hence to avoid bias is through reflexivity (Yanow 2007; Moragues-Faus 2020b, 114–115). We therefore performed several reflective practices. First, we followed Yanow (2009, 279) in acknowledging four moments of interpretation: 1; experience, 2; interpretation 3; analysing and 4; reading. Experiences were written down immediately, while interpretation, analysis and reading were done at a later moment to allow the main author to take a step back from the research context again. Second, continuous discussions about data collection and interpretation between the authors were held. Third, we organized individual member checks with the food alderman and three civil servants. Fourth, we presented preliminary findings in the focus groups and used participants' feedback to refine findings and conclusions.

3.4. Results

3.4.1. 2010-2012: *Emergence of the food profile discourse*

The first signs of a food discourse emerging within Ede municipality date back to 2010, with that year's municipal elections marking a clear starting point. For the first time, confessionalist (Christian) parties received a minority of the 39 council seats in Ede, and several new aldermen entered the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. They argued that the municipality needed a future vision to foster its development. This idea was new, as Ede had no tradition of developing overarching future visions. Policy makers from the departments of Strategy & Research and City Marketing subsequently consulted citizens, NGO's, and entrepreneurs. These actors proposed a broad variety of ideas to improve Ede, but the board of Mayor and Aldermen were missing one overarching focus. One of the new aldermen proposed 'food' as the overarching focus, arguing it was both characteristic for the agri-food knowledge-intensive FoodValley region, and something every citizen could relate to. The other members of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen agreed and together they formulated the following aim: food as *the* focus theme to better position, and create a distinctive profile for Ede, by developing the FoodValley region into *the* agri-food centre of Europe. When policy makers from the Strategy & Research and the City Marketing departments also found this idea a good addition to the vision, it became the core of the first food-related discourse. We label it the *food profile* discourse. The use of the English

term *food*, instead of the Dutch term *voedsel*, was characteristic for this discourse, representing the international economic orientation. As this discourse emerged in a rather top-down way, support for it remained limited to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and policy makers from the Strategy & Research and the City Marketing departments. Consequently, though the involved actors might have occupied powerful positions, they did not succeed in conveying their ideas at this stage.

3.4.2. 2012: *The first food discourse being institutionalized in a key policy document*

Following the emergence of the *food profile* discourse, 2012 witnessed a first institutionalization phase, when the discourse was formalized in a new municipal vision document 'Vision 2025: Ede choses food' (Gemeente Ede 2012). This document was officially adopted by the city council and therefore gained a politically binding status. The main ambition of the vision was broad: to become an agri-food top region with a distinctive profile by 2025, particularly focusing on the relationship between food and health, as well as the economic opportunities resulting from fostering the food sector (Gemeente Ede 2012). Shortly after, Ede won the bid to develop the World Food Centre (WFC), an interactive exposition centre about agri-food, which the Board of Mayor and Aldermen used to further legitimize and advocate the *food profile* discourse. A clear example of the food profile discourse can be found in the 'Vision 2025: Ede choses food':

In 2025, FoodValley is *the* agri-food centre of Europe. A top sector in a top region. A new economic engine for Ede. Together with Wageningen UR and many other partners we play our part. FoodValley gives Ede a unique profile within the Netherlands (Gemeente Ede 2012, 7).

At this stage, the *food profile* discourse was institutionalized mainly among the same departments that had been involved in shaping it. Institutionalization therefore remained limited to the beliefs of the Board and civil servants in the involved departments, while no new norms, rules or organizational innovations were adopted.

3.4.3. 2012-2014: *A critical response and a discourse shift*

Soon after the vision document was adopted, the discourse opened up again, as critics, both within the administration and in the city council, argued the *food profile* discourse remained too abstract. A discussion emerged on the concrete goals the food vision's ambition would translate into, and on how to operationalize these. This discussion was mainly held within two parallel groups. A newly formed municipal food workgroup was led by the city marketer and consisted of policy makers from predominantly three strategic departments:

Strategy & Research, Economic Affairs, and Communication. The second group consisted of the highest municipal managers. A variety of potential food goals were proposed, but, at its core, the discussion was about two diverging normative ideas: fostering a stronger, more innovative agri-food business sector on the one hand, versus stimulating healthy and sustainable food and short food chains on the other. A third, more cognitive idea found wide resonance among *all* involved actors and connected them: food as a promising tool for better connecting a wide range of siloed policy efforts.

To add focus and concretize Ede's food ambition, actors involved in the discussion increasingly called for a specific municipal food strategy. In 2013, an intern (this chapter's lead author) and consultants from Wageningen University and Research were therefore asked to develop a strategy. They introduced the new idea of a food strategy as a holistic approach for improving the *food system* in and around a city, a theoretical concept originating from food policy sciences (Cretella 2016). Food system stakeholders and citizens were consulted and introduced a wide range of food related ideas. In 2014, cultural, culinary and local food ideas gained ground in this food strategy discussion, as Ede became Dutch 'capital of taste' that year, which led to a range of events on local food and food culture.

The food strategy process also revealed that becoming *the* agri-food centre of Europe meant something different to actors in each municipal department, when they were consulted to synthesize the proposed ideas into main policy goals. The Economic Affairs department advocated the idea of facilitating the agri-food sector to boost the economy, the Social Affairs department advocated the idea of educating citizens with a small budget on healthy nutrition and of food education for children, and the Spatial Development department advocated the idea of more urban agriculture in neighbourhoods. As the process coordinators wanted a widely supported strategy, all ideas were 'piled up' and no trade-offs were made. Dynamics between the departments were therefore friendly and without power struggles, with a wait-and-see mentality among actors towards this new concept of a food strategy.

The proposed ideas were so manifold and normatively varied, that involved actors agreed to synthesize ideas into the main idea of food as one crosscutting issue with a wide scope, touching upon both economic and social issues, that should be governed through an integrated approach. We call this the *integrated food policy* discourse. It comprised a wide spectrum of policy ideas, ranging from stimulating school gardens, to facilitating knowledge exchange between agri-food businesses, as the Ede food vision document shows:

1. Enhancing the economic strength of Ede: competitiveness with other cities and regions and attractiveness for companies and knowledge institutions, students, visitors (business and touristic) and (future) inhabitants.

2. Enhancing the social strength of Ede: enhancing meeting and connecting, strengthening the bond between city and countryside and facilitating and stimulating awareness around healthy and sustainable food (Gemeente Ede 2015, 12).

Compared to the *food profile* discourse, the *integrated food policy* discourse was less abstract, but much broader in terms of substantive scope.

3.4.4. 2014-2015: A second and more comprehensive institutionalization phase

Following the emergence of the *integrated food policy* discourse, a second, and more comprehensive food institutionalization phase can be distinguished between 2014 and 2015. Upon elections in 2014, the political coalition changed. The new coalition found the food strategy important and wanted to take thorough steps to implement it. Five organizational innovations were therefore introduced: i) the position of food alderman; ii) the adoption of a politically binding food strategy; iii) the allocation of a food budget; iv) a food strategy implementation program; and v) eventually also a food team.

The position of food alderman was a direct outcome of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen's 2014 portfolio negotiations, in which the Board unanimously designated food as a distinctive portfolio issue. The policy issue of 'food' was assigned to a newly elected alderman, which resulted in 'food' receiving a responsible elected official and a stable spot on the municipal agenda. This made Ede the first municipality in the Netherlands with a 'food alderman'. The food strategy 'Visie Food!' was adopted by the city council in 2015, as the final product of the development process that had started in 2013. This made it one of the few food strategies in the Netherlands with a politically binding status (Sibbing et al. 2019). The food strategy reflected the broadness of the *integrated food policy* discourse: goals were manifold (19 goals) and differed greatly in topic and abstractness. The council also assigned a budget of several million euros to implement the food strategy over the course of five years. This budget was drawn from a newly created investment fund, thereby exempting the municipality from – potentially hard – negotiations about reallocating existing budgets, as the (sizable) budget did not have to be drawn from regular municipal finances. The food budget was designated to develop an implementation program for the food strategy and implement it between 2016-2019. The first annual food program was developed in 2015, further concretizing the strategy with sub goals and targets. The

program was developed and managed by the food team, which consisted of a newly hired food program manager, a project assistant and the former intern, who was now hired as a food policy maker. The food team provided the food strategy and program with executive capacity and expertise.

Through these five governance innovations, the *integrated food policy* discourse gained an institutional place in the municipal organization.

3.4.5. 2015-2016: *Internal criticism on the new food discourse*

In 2015 the food discourse opened up again when the food team started implementing the food program they had developed. The team sought collaboration with other municipal departments, such as the Spatial Planning department and the district social workers team. In the broad *integrated food policy* discourse, civil servants from several departments identified particular food governance ideas they could relate to, and adopted these in their own policy domains. However, the *integrated food policy* discourse also encountered resistance among many civil servants that were requested to contribute to implementing the food program. These new actors exercised their power over ideas and voiced three critical ideas: i) the food strategy is unclear, unfocused, and consists of a range of 'piled up' ideas, rather than a concerted whole; ii) 'food' is no pressing policy concern, but rather an elitist city marketing concern, dealing with issues like food festivals and the World Food Centre; iii) 'food' is not a municipal, but rather a national or EU responsibility.

In several ways these ideas led to civil servants not feeling ownership over s and perceiving them as the responsibility of the food team. Primarily, as civil servants perceived the strategy to be unclear and non-urgent, they also found it unclear how food governance ideas linked to their own policy domain. This unclarity was intensified, as the actors advocating the discourse increasingly emphasized the holistic character of the food strategy over its substantial aims. As a result, it was unclear to civil servants what their role were to be in addressing food challenges and what this would imply for their own work duties and routines, resulting in a lack of ownership. This feeling was further strengthened as they felt the food team was imposing on them to address food challenges, instead of involving them in the process and providing them with the assistance and tools to tackle challenges autonomously. In most departments civil servants therefore did not support the *integrated food policy* discourse and did not adopt food governance ideas.

3.4.6. 2016-2017: A discourse shift leading to the third institutionalization phase

In response to the criticism on the food strategy, the food team –meanwhile consisting of seven members– organized a discussion on the main municipal ambition regarding ‘food’ among its members and one of the top managers. This discussion led to a discourse shift, that subsequently resulted in a crucial institutionalization phase in 2017. In the discussion, the team reflected on ‘the higher purpose’ of the food strategy and explicitly agreed that improving the food system, not improving the municipality’s profile, were to be its primary goal. As a result, a new food discourse emerged, stressing the achievement of a healthy and sustainable food system for everyone in Ede, by adopting a food system’s approach. We call this the *food system* discourse. This discourse, initially supported by a relatively small group of actors (the food team) was subsequently institutionalized widely across the municipality through two successive steps. First, the food team formalized it in a food strategy 2.0, in which they synthesized the initial 19 food strategy goals into six concrete and concise sub goals: healthy people, healthy food environment, sustainable food consumption, short food chains, a robust agri-food sector and the use of a food system’s governance approach (Gemeente Ede 2017). This strategy was clear, as food ideas were more elaborate and explicit, including sub goals, targets and indicators. The sub goal *healthy food environment* for instance, was formulated as follows:

In Ede, we are creating a healthy food environment that helps people make healthy diet choices as much as possible. We focus on ensuring a healthy food supply in public facilities, food teaching at every primary school and a public space that stimulates healthy behaviour. Specific examples of this include ensuring healthy food in the hospital or the sports canteen, installing water fountains at school and organizing lessons on how to tend a vegetable patch, and providing edible greenery and urban agriculture in the district (Gemeente Ede 2017).

Subsequently, civil servants in more departments, such as Public Affairs, Real Estate Management, and Rural Affairs, gradually started addressing food governance ideas in speeches, policies, and informal narratives. An attractive factsheet of the new food strategy played a key role, as it served to communicate issues and goals clearly and in this way facilitated civil servants in adopting food governance ideas. Hence, through the more elaborate and specific *food system* discourse, food governance ideas were being further institutionalized in Ede.

3.4.7. 2017-2019: Focus on the continuity of integrated food policy

From 2017 onwards, awareness grew that although integrated food policy had been institutionalized to a considerable extent across the political top and key policy departments, this idea remained vulnerable to possible deinstitutionalization in the future. Organizational innovations had been in place for several years now, and food policy was gaining ground within the municipality. The continuity of these organizational innovations remained delicate though, as the investment fund (covering the resources of the food budget) was to end after 2019 and, consequently, the food budget and personnel capacity had to be reduced. As a result, in 2018 and 2019, the highest municipal managers and the food team continuously discussed how to continue municipal food policy in the future and how to prevent it from losing ground again on the municipal agenda. They introduced two ideas to prevent this from happening, that became prominent in the broader discourse. First, food was to be embedded as a crosscutting policy issue throughout the entire municipal organization, through further adoption by the existing departments. Second, Ede was to retain its acquired position as integrated food policy frontrunner, by continuing to innovate and create societal impact, and through addressing more politically contested issues, such as the protein transition, entailing a shift from meat- to plant-based diets. In 2019, the dominating *food system* discourse therefore shifted slightly again, focusing more on the continuity of integrated food policy in the future.

Actors	Ideas	Discursive phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · New Board of Mayor and Aldermen · Small group of policy makers · Citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ede municipality needs future vision · Food is focus theme to create distinctive profile for Ede · FoodValley should become agrifood top region 	
2012		Institutionalization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Vision document 2025 'Ede chooses food' 		

Actors	Ideas	Discursive response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group with policy makers from different departments Top-level managers Food policy intern Responsible alderman Citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food is an economic versus a social issue Food is tool to connect range of policy issues Food is tool to address social and cultural issues Food policy should have a broad scope and include social and economic goals; using a food systems approach 	
2014-2015		Institutionalization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food alderman Food strategy 'Vision Food!' Food budget Food program Food team 		
Actors	Ideas	Discursive response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food alderman Food team (extended over the years) Civil servants food-related departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food ambition is unclear Food is non-urgent, elitist policy issue Food is no municipal responsibility Food policy is holistic Healthy and sustainable food for everyone in Ede 	
2016-2017		Institutionalization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food strategy 2.0 Discourse adoption in speeches, policies, narratives 		
Actors	Ideas	Discursive response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food alderman Food team Civil servants other departments (initially food-related only, later more broad) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food should be embedded as one crosscutting policy issue throughout municipal organisation Food governance frontrunner position has to be retained More politically contested food issues need to be addressed 	

Figure 3.2 The discursive-institutional spiral of food governance ideas at the municipality of Ede between 2010-2018 (inspired by Den Besten et al. 2014)

3.5. Discussion

In this chapter we aimed to explore to what extent and how food governance ideas were institutionalized within the municipal administration of Ede. Figure 3.2 presents an overview of the different phases and the corresponding key actors and main ideas in the institutionalization process. Four findings particularly stand out as relevant beyond the case of Ede.

First, our study shows that food governance ideas can be institutionalized considerably within a relatively short time span and that institutional innovations play a key role in this process. In Ede, a formal food strategy, associated budget, and organizational innovations such as the creation of a specialized team proved imperative. These institutional changes served to keep food governance ideas on the agenda, formalized their status as a crosscutting policy issue, and guaranteed an organizational ‘home’ within the administration. In this way, food policy efforts could be continued after elections, which have been identified as a disrupting force in previous studies (Yeatman 2003; Rocha and Lessa 2009; Sonnino 2009; Halliday 2015, 95). Our findings correspond with previous calls for institutional reform to sustain integrated food policy efforts (Termeer et al. 2018), e.g., allocating (financial) resources (Morgan and Sonnino 2010; Shey and Belis 2013), the official adoption of a specific food strategy (Mendes 2008), and the creation of specific units, agencies and staff positions (Mendes 2008; Rocha and Lessa 2009; Shey and Belis 2013; Coplen and Cuneo 2015). In Toronto, for example, assigning designated food policy staff in a similar way guaranteed consistent administrative leadership and organizational stability, keeping food system goals on the radar and avoiding lapses in activity (Dahlberg 1994; Borron 2003). In Vancouver as well, the adoption of a ‘Food Action Plan’ provided food policy efforts with an official legal mandate, which subsequently led to the allocation of resources and human capacity (Mendes 2008).

Second, at the same time, our analysis shows that institutional reform resulting in centralization of policy making and implementation can also inhibit the institutionalization across municipal departments, as civil servants may come to see food policy efforts as ‘already being taken care of’, or ‘not my responsibility’. At times, this made food policy in Ede an ‘island’ in the municipal organization, rather than being the desired ‘web’ through which food governance ideas would become embedded in policy domains. It therefore seems important to complement centralizing reforms with mechanisms that keep other parts of the administration involved, e.g., by staffing a food team with civil servants that continue working in existing departments.

Third, somewhat paradoxically, the relatively broad resonance of the food discourse in Ede over time may partly be attributed to its high level of abstraction in the first years. This allowed for a wide range of actors to interpret and identify with the food agenda in line with their own backgrounds. This finding corresponds with previous observations that concepts such as ‘food security’ may come to serve as ‘consensus frames’ (Candel et al. 2014) or ‘coalition magnets’ (Sharma and Daugbjerg 2019). At a later stage, the involvement of these diverse actors contributed to realizing more focus, as they brought in their own ideas and exchanged these with others. Thus, contrary to cities that explicitly developed food policies to enhance food systems outcomes from the start on, such as Bristol (Carey 2013) or Belo Horizonte (Rocha and Lessa 2009), Ede shows that a city does not need to start off with this aim. A municipality can get food governance ideas on the agenda by using a different frame (such as city marketing), while eventually adopting an integrated food policy approach to enhance its food system. At the same time, the abstractness of the discourse at times also proved constraining, as actors came to see the food policy efforts as vague. In an extreme case, this may result in a lacking sense of urgency and ownership, leading to actors becoming resistant and paralyzed (Termeer et al. 2018). We therefore pose that a broad discourse should not be used as an excuse to avoid making clear-cut political decisions; integrative action is not the same as layering a range of issues, but requires setting clear goals and directions.

Fourth, although our study shows that integrated food policy ideas can be institutionalized to a considerable extent within a relatively short time span, it also shows that a food policy can remain relatively vulnerable to possible *deinstitutionalization* in the (near) future. The challenge of retaining integrated food policy efforts has been acknowledged in the literature, e.g., as described by Rocha and Lessa (2009, 396) for the Brazilian city of Belo Horizonte:

While changes in the city administration always bring uncertainties concerning policy priorities, at the food department such uncertainties involve its very existence; the continuation of its integrated food policy. Governments can come and go without questioning the need for an education policy, or a health policy. Food policy is not yet at this level in Belo Horizonte, despite more than 15 years of success. As a consequence, the food department’s staff spend a lot of time rearguing the case for an integrated food policy.

Similar tendencies could be observed in Ede, for which a key reason is that food governance ideas have not (yet) been institutionalized in departments that are responsible for the *delivery* of public services, such as public space maintenance or district work. The

involvement of such departments would help to further embed integrated food policy and would be essential for realizing impact on the ground in cities. A possible way to prevent deinstitutionalization in municipalities would be to adopt food policy as a formal municipal responsibility in local or national legislation. In case of the latter, this would require greater coordination of local food policy mandates at *national* level. Rapidly realizing formal institutions within a municipality, such as written mandates or budgeting requirements, would foster institutionalization too.

Finally, in terms of the theoretical approach adopted in this chapter, we found that the discursive-institutional spiral theory (Den Besten et al. 2014) proved to be useful for studying food policy, as it allowed for the systematic analysis of the underlying dynamics of food policy institutionalization within an administration. As we studied one case only, the key insights discussed above primarily have a *theory-building* function; follow-up comparative studies of local food policy efforts across different contexts would allow for further investigating diversity and similarities in institutionalization processes across administrations. Additionally, it would be valuable to study whether and how such institutionalization processes affect policy implementation on the ground, e.g., in service delivery. Whereas the institutional embeddedness of food policy efforts may be an important prerequisite, it is through the actions of street-level bureaucrats that ultimate target groups come to be affected. What integrated food policy means to *them* and how it shapes their practices largely remains uncharted territory.

For cities interested in food policy we can draw several lessons. First, our study shows that a city does not have to be a metropole to do successful food policy work. While local food policy research has mostly focused on large cities (e.g. Toronto, New York, Belo Horizonte), ours is one of the first analyses of a medium-size city. The hypothesis we derive from this is that governance capacity is a much stronger determinant to a city's successful food policy institutionalization than a city's size as such. Second, to start up food policy initiatives, it seems key to have a few dedicated ideational leaders working within the municipality. This does not necessarily have to result in a full-blown food systems approach from the start. The case of Ede shows that loose agenda items (e.g. a stronger city profile or children's health) can serve as a stepping stone for developing a genuine food systems approach and associated governance agenda.

While scholars and policymakers alike laude food policy as the key to overcome food and nutrition security issues in both developing and developed countries, our study shows that institutionalization is key for bringing food policy beyond paper realities. An integrated food

policy therefore, is only as good as its institutionalization into the government that developed it. Ultimately, we also need to look beyond institutionalization processes, to assess how food policy integration contributes to more effective governance of food insecurity and food system sustainability.

4. The Potential of Trans-local Policy Networks for Contributing to Sustainable Local Food Systems: an Analysis of the Dutch City Deal: Food on the Urban Agenda

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Abstract

To foster more sustainable food systems, collaboration between local governments for knowledge exchange and cooperation is essential. Trans-local food policy networks potentially serve this purpose but their functioning and outcomes remain largely unexplored. We address this gap by analysing collaboration and its outcomes for one of the first trans-local food policy networks in the Netherlands: the City Deal: Food on the Urban Agenda. We use Ansell and Gash's collaborative governance model as an ideal type to analyse the City Deal, drawing on two rounds of semi-structured interviews with civil servants and politicians in 2016 and 2019 resulting in a total of 37 interviews with 49 unique respondents. The collaborative process was a continuous searching and negotiating for roles, goals, and activities, on the one hand, combined with great eagerness among participants to collaborate and improve local food systems on the other. Although this process led to collective identity building and learning, it resulted in limited collaborative action between participants or tangible results on the ground. The main outcomes were the active network itself, which fostered the strengthening of connections, exchanging knowledge, learning, and agenda setting. Based on our findings, we identify five key points of attention for successful food policy collaboration: ensuring stakeholder commitment, striking a balance between a sectoral and holistic focus, avoiding too abstract ambitions, fostering interdependence, and investing in political commitment.

4.1. Introduction

Local governments around the world are increasingly developing food policies to foster more sustainable food systems and tackle issues like food waste, food insecurity, and obesity through a systemic approach. To this end, they collaborate with other stakeholders in their region in local food policy groups (LFPG) (Halliday 2015), like food (policy) councils or partnerships. Many scholars have studied how these *individual* LFPGs were created and what impacts they achieved (Mendes 2008; Blay-Palmer 2009; Bedore 2014; Packer 2014; Santo et al. 2014; Coplen and Cuneo 2015; Koski et al. 2018; Reed and Keech 2019). Others have compared *multiple* LFPGs within a country (Lang et al. 2005; Clancy et al. 2008; Schiff 2008; Scherb et al. 2012; Halliday 2015; Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015; Blay-Palmer et al. 2016; Horst 2017; McCartan and Palermo 2017; Moragues-Faus et al. 2017) or have studied LFPGs (Koopmans et al. 2017; Moragues-Faus and Carroll 2018; Reed et al. 2018) or networks of multiple LFPGs –trans-local food policy networks– *between* countries (Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018).

Contrary to the interest in local food policy groups, so far little attention has been paid to collaborative networks and processes *between* local governments within trans-local food policy networks for enhancing local food systems. Collaboration between stakeholders is key for exchanging knowledge (Halliday et al. 2019, 15). Moreover, collaboration between local governments is necessary as they are constrained by higher-level policies (Clancy 2012; Clancy 2014) and therefore need to join forces. This chapter therefore aims to explore how one such network functions and develops over time, and what factors determine if the network leads to genuine collaboration for enhancing local food systems.

In this chapter, we therefore conduct an in-depth case study of a pioneering trans-local network for enhancing local food systems: the Dutch City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda (hereafter called City Deal). We aim to contribute to the literature on local food policy by answering the question: *To what extent did the City Deal food on the urban agenda lead to genuine collaboration for enhancing local food systems, and what stimulated and constrained this collaboration?*

The City Deal is a Dutch network between twelve local governments, one province, three ministries², and non-governmental stakeholders, intending to contribute to safe, healthy,

² The municipalities of Almere, Amsterdam, Den Bosch, Den Haag, Ede, Groningen, Helmond, Leeuwarden, Oss, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Venlo, the province of Gelderland, and the ministries of Economic Affairs (later Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality); the Interior and Kingdom Relations and; Health, Welfare and Sport.

ecologically sustainable, robust, and accessible food systems in and around cities (City Deal Voedsel op de Stedelijke Agenda 2017). For this chapter, we view the City Deal as a trans-local arrangement intended to foster collaborative governance. A trans-local governance arrangement is an arrangement in which several local or regional governments collaborate. In collaborative governance, multiple stakeholders engage in consensus-oriented decision making (Ansell and Gash 2008) and focus on achieving policy goals together (Blomgren Bingham 2011). Its core premise is that higher degrees of collaboration may result in more effective governance of complex societal problems, such as unsustainable food systems (van Buuren and Edelenbos 2007). We used Ansell and Gash's (2008) collaborative governance model to analyse both the City Deal's collaborative governance process and -outcomes.

We structured the remainder of the chapter as follows. We first review the literature on collaborative governance and specifically elaborate on Ansell and Gash's (2008) model. Second, we explain how we applied this model to analyse collaboration in the City Deal case and sketch the context of the case. Third, we present our findings on the process and outcomes of the City Deal. We subsequently elaborate on factors that seem to stimulate or constrain food policy collaboration and on the potential contributions of trans-local food policy networks for enhancing local food systems.

4.2. Collaborative governance

In this chapter, we consider the City Deal a trans-local network intended to foster collaborative governance for enhancing local food systems. A trans-local food policy network is a network between local or regional governments, typically within one country, with the aim of facilitating peer-to-peer learning, building capacity, supporting research and evaluation, and potentially enabling collective action (Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018). Collaborative governance is a governance mode in which multiple stakeholders engage in consensus-oriented decision making (Ansell and Gash 2008). It distinguishes itself from more traditional modes of governance by its focus on the process of achieving policy goals together (Blomgren Bingham 2011) through discussions, cooperation, collaboration, and consensus-building (Gibson 2014, 49). The premise of collaborative governance is that it leads to increased legitimacy of public policies, a more diverse range of solutions, more flexible policies that are better suited to changed circumstances, and to the acceleration of the policy process (van Buuren and Edelenbos 2007). This is because successful collaborative governance stimulates inclusion and participation, from which the policy process benefits in two ways: diverse stakeholders' expertise, resources, and support are

included (Emerson and Nabatchi 2015a) and more agreement, trust, and understanding between stakeholders is realized (Ansell and Gash 2008). At the same time, many initiatives intended as collaborative governance arrangements often do not seem to develop active collaboration, or develop collaboration only to a limited extent (Bryson et al. 2006). They face three main challenges: speed of the process, contested legitimacy, and hesitancy by government to change (Gibson 2014). Sjöblom and Andersson (2018) warn for example that collaborative governance can contribute to diversity and fragmentation because of competing values and interests among involved actors.

Collaborative governance approaches are typically used for addressing so-called ‘wicked problems’ (Rittel and Webber 1973), that is, problems for which existing policy infrastructure is insufficient (Ansell and Gash 2008), such as natural resource management (e.g. Koontz and Thomas 2006; Memon and Weber 2010; Taylor et al. 2013) and conflict resolution (e.g. Costantino and Merchant 1996). Enhancing local food systems in and around cities is one such a wicked problem. Enhancing local food systems requires integrated food policy, which acknowledges the multifaceted and interrelated nature of food challenges and addresses these in a concerted manner (Mendes 2007; Sibbing et al. 2019), thereby integrating health, environmental, social, and economic dimensions (Lang et al. 2009; Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015). Authors have studied several collaborative arrangements that have been developed to achieve improved food systems, such as Local Food Policy Groups (LFPGs) (Halliday 2015) – including food policy councils— (Schiff 2008; Siddiki et al. 2015; Koski et al. 2018), and trans-local food policy networks (Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018).

Several analytical frameworks for successful collaborative governance have been developed (e.g. Bryson et al. 2006; Thomson and Perry 2006; Ansell and Gash 2008; Provan and Kenis 2008; Emerson et al. 2012). As the model of Ansell and Gash (2008) has proven the most influential (Batory and Svensson 2019), we use this model as our theoretical framework and follow Ansell and Gash’s (2008) definition of collaborative governance as:

A governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets.

This definition is suitable for our case, as the food policy network in our case is initiated by public agencies. Ansell and Gash (2008) found that the process of collaborative governance is cyclical rather than linear and can be interpreted as a (simplified) cycle of face-to-face-

dialogue, trust-building, commitment, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes. Face-to-face communication between stakeholders is necessary for identifying mutual gain together (Ansell and Gash 2008). Building trust is considered key, especially when stakeholders start with a lack of it (Ansell and Gash 2008). The level of stakeholders' commitment is considered critical for the success of the collaboration. Commitment is considered key for developing mutual recognition of interdependence, ownership of the process, and openness to exploring mutual gains (Ansell and Gash 2008). Shared understanding then ideally develops, when stakeholders determine what they can and want to collectively achieve (Ansell and Gash 2008). Lastly, intermediate outcomes are considered key for building momentum. They can feedback into the cycle of trust-building and commitment, thus encouraging the collaborative process (Ansell and Gash 2008).

Three factors are considered to be of particular importance, to constraining or enhancing the collaborative governance process: the starting conditions, the institutional design, and the facilitative leadership (Ansell and Gash 2008). The starting conditions comprise three key conditions at the start of the process: the differences in resources such as knowledge and finances that participants possess; the incentives and constraints on participation participants have, and; the prehistory of cooperation or conflict participants share (Ansell and Gash 2008). Second, for a successful collaborative process, the institutional design of the collaborative arrangement needs to: be participatory inclusive, be exclusive as a forum, have clear ground rules, and include a transparent process (Ansell and Gash 2008). Third, strong facilitative leadership is necessary, as it ensures setting and maintaining of ground rules, empowering weaker participants, facilitating trust-building and dialogue, and exploring mutual gains.

The collaborative process typically leads to outcomes. Ansell and Gash's (2008) model falls short on explaining what the outcomes of the collaborative governance process entail. A common distinction though is between immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes (Bryson et al. 2015), or what Emerson and Nabatchi (2015b) call: outputs, outcomes, and adaptation. Also, outcomes can be processual or content based. Processual outcomes are the outcomes that unintendedly result from the collaboration process, while content outcomes were anticipated and motivated the collaboration (Seitanidi 2010, 121). In this chapter, we compared respondents' *perceived* outcomes and related these to the initial goals of the City Deal. To conclude, Figure 4.1 summarizes Ansell and Gash's (2008) collaborative governance model.

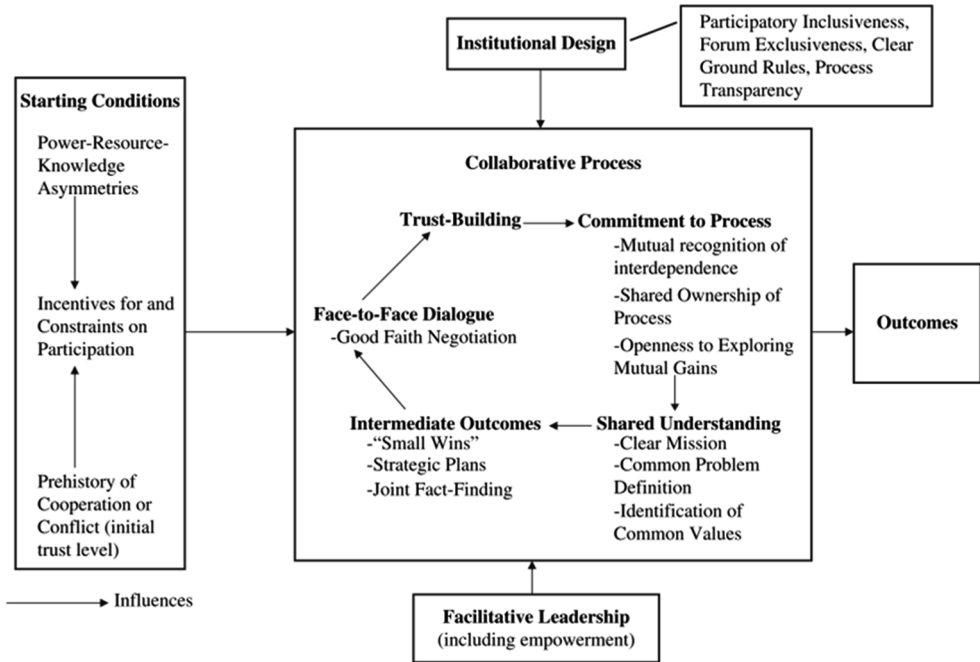


Figure 4.1 The collaborative governance model (Ansell & Gash, 2008)

4.3. Methods

Our study is a case study in which we compared the City Deal's collaborative governance process and its outcomes to Ansell and Gash's (2008) collaborative governance model, to explore key aspects and influencing factors of collaboration in trans-local food policy networks and the main outcomes of trans-local food policy networks. We based our assessment on the City Deal participants' reflections, comparing their expectations before the start of the City Deal to their reflections three years later. Participants were the civil servants who represented their administrations in the City Deal. They were predominantly public policy makers and project leaders in the fields of health, economy, sustainability, or general strategy. We selected the City Deal as our case, as it is one of the first trans-local food policy networks in continental Europe and one of the first national spin-offs of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP); a global pact to enhance local food systems, currently signed by more than 200 cities (MUFPP 2015). This makes the City Deal a unique and therefore suitable case. To reconstruct the collaborative governance process and its outcomes, we conducted two semi-structured interview rounds and consulted field notes,

reports, and press releases. Before the official start of the City Deal, we conducted interviews ($n=18$) with participating civil servants about motivations for participation in-, goals for-, and expectations of the City Deal. Three years later, before the official ending of the City Deal (in 2019), we conducted interviews ($n=15$) with the civil servants again about the collaborative process and the outcomes of it. Each interview was held with the one or two involved civil servants from the participating organization. In the majority of cases these were the same civil servants as interviewed in 2016. In one case, the interview was held with three civil servants. In 2019, we also interviewed three actively involved politicians from participating local governments and the former program manager to gain a broader perspective. This resulted in a total of 37 interviews with 49 respondents. For all interviews, we used an interview guide (see Appendix C. Interview guide for the City Deal collaborative process and outcomes (Chapter 4)), based on Ansell and Gash's (2008) collaborative governance model. Subsequently, interview transcripts were thematically coded for the corresponding collaborative governance variables and compared with the model for analysis.

The main author of this chapter was part of the City Deal in her role as a policy adviser for the local government of Ede, one of the participating local governments. This provided her with the opportunity to closely follow the City Deal's process. We acknowledge that while the main author's engagement gives us a unique perspective, it also creates the potential for bias. Therefore, we performed continuous discussions about data collection and interpretation between the authors and organized a final member check with the City Deal participants.

4.4. Results

4.4.1. *An elaborate preparation*

In 2015, two Dutch local governments took the initiative to unite interested local governments, provinces, and ministries, to further explore how food policies could improve food systems in the Netherlands. In 2014, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy had published a report that recommended that the Netherlands adopt a national food policy (WRR 2014) for achieving a more healthy, sustainable, and resilient food system. However, this report inadequately addressed food policy at the *local* level and the role of *subnational* administrations in food policy. The local governments of Den Bosch and Ede, therefore, aimed to start a City Deal; an agreement between a group of stakeholders to address a specific urban challenge –in this case improving local food systems– for a determined period. City Deals are an instrument of the Dutch Ministry of the Interior to

stimulate sustainable social transitions in cities (Scherpenisse et al. 2017). The ministry of the Interior agreed to the City Deal and in 2016 an extensive collective process was started to prepare for the founding of a City Deal on local food policy as a trans-local governance arrangement: an arrangement between local administrations and other partners to collectively establish a food policy platform, exchange knowledge and experiences, and contribute to- and raise awareness about local food policy.

Over almost a year, participating administrations investigated priorities, incentives, and constraints, and collectively developed goals, organizational structure, and ground rules. The ultimate group of twelve participating local governments turned out to be diverse. They differed in population size, socio-economic character, available budget and personnel capacity, and in local food priorities, experience with food policy, and level of political support for food policy. The City Deal included, for example, the Dutch capital Amsterdam, a highly urbanized city facing obesity issues, as well as the small rural local government of Oss, facing sustainability-related agricultural issues. Also, cities like Rotterdam and Ede already had vast experience with food governance and had even adopted integrated food strategies, while cities like Venlo and Helmond were new to the topic. Incentives to participate were relatively similar among participating local governments: establishing a food policy platform, exchanging knowledge and experiences, and contributing to- and raising awareness about local food policy. Another widely shared incentive among local governments was to promote their own cities or regions and to get in touch with- and lobby the national government for their own interests. They saw the City Deal as an opportunity to advocate for their needs to the ministries and to gain information about the ministries' plans affecting lower administrative levels. Expectations and ambitions among the local governments were high. Among the most-often indicated desired results were tangible results requiring collaboration, such as "healthier food in hospitals", "a European project", or "a project on better distribution of value throughout the food chain". The most common constraints local governments faced to participate were lack of time and lack of organizational and political support.

Eventually, the overarching aim, goals and structure were formalized in a covenant that came to form the base of the City Deal (City Deal Voedsel op de Stedelijke Agenda 2017). The main aim was to contribute to safe, healthy, ecologically sustainable, robust, and accessible food systems in and around cities (City Deal Voedsel op de Stedelijke Agenda 2017). Three goals were pursued:

1. *Establishing a platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration on food policy.*

2. *Investigating the changing role of the government towards a more integrated and more interactive governance approach.*
3. *Identifying "best practices" on food policy, sharing these internationally, and learning from other countries' examples (City Deal Voedsel op de Stedelijke Agenda 2017).*

The organizational structure comprised a coordinating team and four working groups. The four working groups include the *Governance innovation* group, which is a higher-level, cross-cutting group that ensures a holistic approach is adopted, and three thematic working groups; i) *Ecological and economic innovation*, ii) *Regional food systems, fair and short supply chains*, and iii) *Food education, health and social inclusion* (Figure 4.2). Each working group had two coordinating administrations assigned and included all administrations interested in the addressed topic, which resulted in each administration joining one or two working groups. To connect the entire group, all administrations joined the *Governance innovation* group by default. Each local government made a financial contribution between 5000 and 10.000 euros to start the City Deal. With this budget a program manager and secretary would be hired, plenary sessions would be organized, and projects proposed by the working groups would be facilitated.

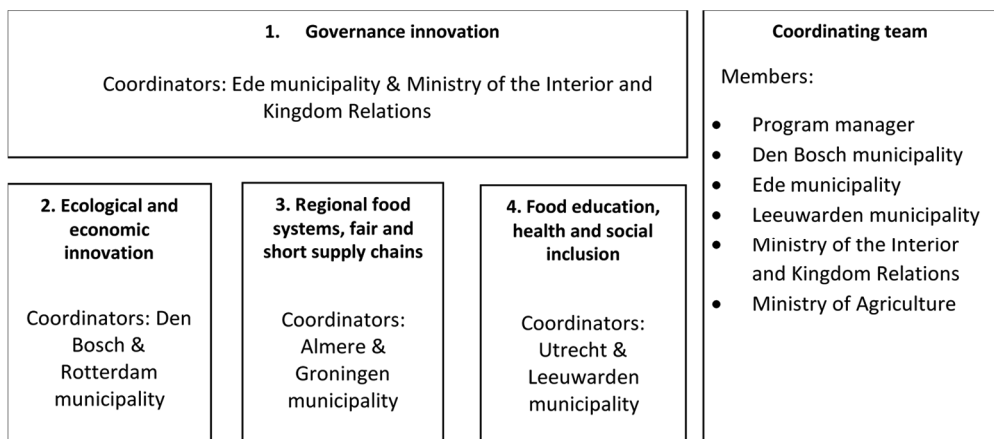


Figure 4.2 The organizational structure of the City Deal

Despite a shared enthusiasm to exchange experiences, there was a notable difference in expectations and commitments from the start. Only later in the process did it became clear that these differences had resulted in broad and, therefore, unclear goals being set at the start.

4.4.2. *An enthusiastic start*

The official signing of the covenant in 2017, marked the launch of the City Deal: Food on the Urban Agenda. For practical reasons, the covenant was only signed by the participating governments. Each administration was to subsequently engage its non-government stakeholders such as farmers, retailers, health care professionals, and nongovernmental organizations to participate. These non-governmental stakeholders were, however, hardly engaged because administrators lacked time and capacity. The role of non-government stakeholders was therefore reduced to participation in the official gatherings, in which they were visited on excursions, invited to share their knowledge and experience, and invited to join workshops. Although they had already met each other several times in the preparation process, for most participating civil servants, both the group of governments and the issue of improving local food systems were new. They were intrinsically motivated though, as they felt the urgency of the issue, and felt the need to be part of this promising intervention to tackle it. Despite participants' differences, the start of the City Deal was therefore characterized by a strong enthusiasm and commitment among all participants, which kickstarted the collaborative process and remained one of the process' main stimuli.

However, in the starting phase of the City Deal, there was also an event that negatively influenced the course of the City Deal's collaborative process. The City Deal was officially signed by all representative elected officials at a national 'food summit' on the future of the Dutch food system. Only elected officials were allowed to join this top-level meeting, while participating civil servants were not. This was a disappointment for the civil servants, while the meeting itself was similarly disappointing for the invited elected officials. At the summit, the elected officials were restricted to merely listening to ministers and CEOs, instead of actively sharing their ideas about local food policy. This event set the tone for the role of the elected officials during the collaborative process of the City Deal; they remained passive during the entire process, while the civil servants ran the network.

4.4.3. *A challenging middle*

When the working groups started to develop their project plans in 2017, it became clear that underneath the collectively developed main aim of the City Deal, ideas about its meaning and the means to achieve it, differed greatly. The City Deal covenant had been an attempt at striking a balance between retaining a holistic food system approach and catering for each organization's priorities, such as healthy food environments or short food chains. When the working groups started to develop more concrete action plans, it turned out that shared understanding existed on an abstract level, but not on specific goals and

means. Key reasons for this were the differences in context, priorities, and expectations between participants. For example, several local governments were predominantly interested in stimulating their food business sector by attracting new food companies, while others were interested in regulations to foster healthy food environments, perhaps excluding certain retailing or food selling companies. Several local governments, therefore, found out that the City Deal did not match their expectations and priorities adequately, which in one case even led to a local government leaving the City Deal. For this government, the financial contribution was high, while output in terms of results, such as concrete projects lagged. The city council therefore did not grant the municipality the budget for the yearly City Deal contribution. The government's policy officers subsequently decided that without political back-up and financial resources it would not be feasible to keep participating in the City Deal. In addition, ambitions in the covenant were manifold, both with regards to content: a range of issues covering the entire food system, as well as process: exchanging knowledge, lobbying, operating internationally, mapping best practices, conducting research, and agenda-setting. As a respondent explains:

Everyone was searching [...]. The topic was too new, so the question was: what is food about? Parking policies, for example, are a lot more clear already (1, 2019)

This made it difficult to translate objectives into actions, both for the general and the working group goals. It, therefore, became challenging to develop shared understanding, which came to constrain the collaborative process.

At the same time, it also became apparent that participants did not feel strongly dependent on each other to achieve their goals. On an abstract level participants perceived collaboration between all administrative levels to be necessary for improving local food systems. On an operational level though, achieving mutual recognition of interdependence was challenging. First, improving local food systems was a rather unfamiliar challenge that differed per city and for which no clear recipe existed. Second, the City Deal was a self-imposed, voluntary challenge with no major financial or legally binding consequences. Participants, therefore, did not depend on each other in the way they do when they need to construct a road that crosses various local governments. As a result, cities invested their energy in what would certainly render benefits; they focused on achieving individual objectives and on positioning their city or region, instead of exploring how they could join forces. One respondent remarked:

But you just saw that people chose their own thing. And subsequently, that the network was meant to take things on collectively, but that people used the network to strengthen their

own position. [...] It would have been nice if we, as City Deal cities, in the collaboration with the ministries, would have collectively made a proposition for the challenges that the ministries discussed in the IBP [network]. That was of course the essence of why you collaborate. And if you would have then said like: "We define ourselves as cities or regions and distinguish ourselves in a specific way", instead of going for your own goals (18, 2019).

This lack of mutual recognition of interdependence, therefore, led to a focus on individual priorities, which inhibited collaboration.

At this point, it also became clear that the lack of commitment of elected officials constrained the collaborative process, while the lack of non-government stakeholders had a positive influence. Elected officials had come to merely fulfil an accountability role, receiving a yearly update on the City Deal's progress. Civil servants lacked time and capacity to engage and empower their elected officials. Commitment among elected officials therefore decreased during the collaborative process. This was aggravated by three rounds of elections in the City Deal hierarchy over three years, which resulted in changes in the political context. One respondent explains how this happened in his local government:

The topic got less attention on the agenda in [name local government], while me and [name colleague] did everything about it. So for us, it was very difficult, because the executive board and the top [management] made a contradicting move (6b, 2019).

The absence of elected officials reduced the network's impact as actions typical for the role of elected officials, like lobbying for changes in laws and regulations, were not performed. On the other hand, the lack of involvement of non-government stakeholders was not considered a problem among participants. Quite the reverse, the government-only character of the network was key to its exclusiveness. Participants appreciated that – different from the many existing food networks and groups– the City Deal was tailored specifically towards governments and facilitated them meeting their governmental peers to exchange and collaborate. Having a network mainly for civil servants –without elected officials and non-government stakeholders– thus had both negative and positive consequences.

After the first year, the City Deal's general leaders changed several times, which led to unstable leadership. This resulted in irregular and unclear communication that weakened the bond between participants. Participants, therefore, became disconnected from the process, and weaker stakeholders were empowered less and represented less. It also resulted in day to day organization being challenging and failed to mitigate competition

between local governments. However, in the City Deal leadership did not depend on one leader. The coordinating team helped to mitigate the constraining effect of the changing leaders as it safeguarded stability. This structure also ensured legitimacy, as responsibilities were shared and leaders were representatives from within the group. The structure of a coordinating team in the institutional design therefore strengthened the City Deal.

Despite the challenges, intermediate outcomes and face-to-face dialogue helped to build and maintain an active network. The City Deal succeeded in producing a wide range of intermediate outcomes, which stimulated the collaborative governance process as they fuelled enthusiasm. These intermediate outcomes ranged from lectures with experts, a video clip, excursions to good-practice examples, an online 'recipe book' with good-practices in food governance, to an opinion piece in a national newspaper. Another type of intermediate outcomes were the City Deal's meetings, in which face-to-face dialogue took place. Plenary meetings contributed to the collaborative process because they were a mix of inspiration, substantive lessons, and the possibility of knowledge exchange and networking and they served to build trust between participants over the years. Participants met twice a year with the entire group in a plenary session and several additional times per year in the working groups. Participants found the plenary sessions well-organized and greatly appreciated the opportunity of directly connecting with their peers, that these sessions offered. The working group meetings and excursions served a slightly different purpose. They inspired participants as they provided them with in-depth experience on topics like a healthy food environment, sustainable food procurement, or shortening food chains. Because of the meetings and intermediate outcomes participants managed to build and maintain an active network, despite constraining factors in the collaborative process.

Another key stimulus in the City Deal's collaborative process was its institutional design, which set clear ground rules and made the City Deal an exclusive forum. One of these rules was, for example, the division across four thematic groups. Each city was to choose between two or three thematic groups to participate in, and for each group, two cities were designated as its daily coordinators. The covenant was key for making the City Deal's ground rules clear, as it defined both rules and players of the game and served to get all players on the same page at the start. The particular strength of the covenant was that almost a year was invested to collectively develop it before starting the network officially, which resulted in the covenant being widely supported. The City Deal was attractive to participants, as it distinguished itself from the wide range of existing Dutch food networks in three ways: by focusing on public governance, uniting all administrative levels, and utilizing a window of opportunity. The focus on public governance and multi-levelness, meant there was finally a

platform where government participants interested in food policy –as opposed to platforms for citizens or entrepreneurs– could exchange ideas with their peers and receive information tailored specifically to them. The City Deal’s exclusivity was further increased by using a window of opportunity. Not only did the publication of the national report raise awareness on food policy in 2015 but the MUFPP had also been signed, and the City Deal fulfilled the need of Dutch MUFPP signatory local governments to implement the MUFPP.

4.4.4. *An end with unexpected outcomes*

Towards the end of the City Deal, in 2019, differences between participants started to play out more and two groups formed. The first group can be characterized as an active, close, core group, of which members generally had more social and economic capital (bigger cities and the higher government levels), while the second ‘group’ consisted of participants that did not have the time and capacity to participate regularly and therefore ‘slipped away’, being mostly smaller local governments. An exception was Ede. Though not a large city, Ede belonged to the active group, as Ede has put considerable effort into food governance, which provided Ede with the capital to play an active role in the City Deal. A key explanation for the split was that leadership in the City Deal became unstable after the first year, which resulted in too little facilitation and empowerment of ‘weaker’ participants. Still, the majority of participants were content with the City Deal. The majority of participants wanted to continue collaborating in one way or another. Some wanted more of a knowledge network where they would meet once a year, while others wanted an active lobby group that would take on pilot projects together. In the end, discussions were going on about how to continue the City Deal.

During the three years of the City Deal, it’s collaborative governance process predominantly led to processual outcomes, while it hardly led to tangible outcomes. According to participants, the main achievement of the collaborative process was managing to turn the network into an active platform, under challenging circumstances. As one respondent points out:

If I think of how difficult it is to realize transitions and of how difficult it is to get new themes –that might not directly lie in the heart of the administrative-political responsibility– on the agenda within organizations, then I think this story [the City Deal] has gotten pretty far (15, 2019).

In other words, the network served to ‘get the right players to the table and keep them at the table’. This active network served to identify motivated local governments, connect all

administrative layers, and strengthen connections. It served to identify local food policy best-practices and facilitate the exchange of food policy knowledge and experiences both among local governments *and* between multiple administrative levels. It facilitated the development of a joint vision on the scope and content of municipal food policy and facilitated agenda-setting on the need for local food policy both within participating organizations and in the Netherlands in general. However, though the City Deal led to collective learning and exchanging, genuinely *labouring* together (*co-labouring*) happened much less. This means the joint undertaking of activities such as lobbying, and working on producing concrete, tangible results on the ground, failed to materialize. The collaborative process, *therefore*, produced few tangible content outcomes, such as joint pilots, campaigns, or adapted legislation.

A respondent says about the achievement of the City Deal:

It feels like we have done a lot of preparing and that the real ‘scoring the goal’ still has to happen (12, 2019).

Figure 4.3 summarizes the key developments and enabling and constraining factors in the City Deal’s collaborative governance process.

Phase	Key collaborative governance developments	Enabling factors	Constraining factors
Preparation (2015-2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventorying and bringing together interested administrations • Developing processual and substantive goals • Developing organizational structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiasm among participants to participate • Diverse group of participants (local, provincial, national), representing wide range of local food issues and covering the entire food system • Development process done collectively, strengthening trust and shared understanding on abstract level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour- and time intensive process, fostering tiredness among participants • Lengthy process (almost one year), fostering impatience among several participants

Start (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signing covenant • Contributing to starting budget • Forming working groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear starting point • Clear group configuration/membership composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of political involvement, reducing impact of network and constraining several participants in contributing to the collaborative process
Middle (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting working groups • Implementing covenant goals • Organizing plenary meetings • Organizing work group meetings • Change in leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil-servant focused network, making network attractive for participants • Face-to-face dialogue at plenary meetings fostering trust-building and fuelling enthusiasm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of shared understanding due to different priorities and expectations between participants, limiting the implementation of goals and projects • Lack of strong leadership, impeding the development of shared understanding • Lack of recognition of mutual interdependence at operational level, leading to focus on individual goals
End (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forming of two separate groups within network • Achieving active trans-local food policy network • Achieving outcomes of: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face dialogue • (Intermediate) outcomes, such as recipe-book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of strong leadership to mitigate splitting in two of group

	enhanced trust between participants, exchange of good practices, higher public agenda position for local food policy
•	Discussing the continuation of network

Figure 4.3 Overview of the collaborative governance developments in the City Deal and the enabling and constraining factors

4.5. Discussion

In this chapter, we aimed to explore what collaboration and its outcomes looked like in the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda and what stimulated and constrained this collaboration. Three findings stand out as particularly relevant beyond the City Deal case.

First, based on our findings, it seems that collaboration in the City Deal was about collective identity-building and learning, rather than about collective working. The collaborative process was about identifying motivated administrations, strengthening connections between administrations, exchanging knowledge and experience, learning about- and developing a vision on local food policy, and agenda-setting for local food policy. Collective working –for example in the form of joint lobbying, and concrete, tangible results, such as joint pilots, campaigns, or adapted legislation or regulations, proved a lot harder to achieve. These findings underpin findings from other authors, who found that both trans-local food policy networks (Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018) and food policy councils (Schiff 2008) serve for agenda-setting, connecting, and building capital. Agenda-setting includes voicing the need for system-wide changes in food governance (Schiff 2008), and normalizing the integration of food into municipal governments’ agendas (Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018). Connecting includes fulfilling a network role across the spectrum of food system interests (Schiff 2008), serving as facilitators in the networking and implementation capacity of other organizations (Schiff 2008), and reducing feelings of isolation among stakeholders. Capital-building includes building credibility and capacity within local governments before formulating policies (Schiff 2008), building capacity to bring diverse voices together to deliberate and identify collective goals (Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018), and providing

legitimacy to stakeholders' efforts. Schiff (2008) summarizes this as food policy councils in general focusing more attention on programmatic and project work rather than policy work.

Outcomes of the City Deal, therefore, were accordingly: predominantly processual, while lacking tangible outcomes on the ground. The nascent nature of the network might be the reason for these processual outcomes, so-called 'collaborative actions' or 'outputs' (Emerson and Nabatchi 2015b), as age is positively correlated to a network's results (Leach et al. 2002). Food policy is relatively new to local governments and logically, preparatory work needs to be done first. In the City Deal, most participants did not even know each other and for many municipal civil servants, it was their first time to formally collaborate. The lack of collaborative actions and tangible outputs might also be a result of the City Deal participants having left this ambition inexplicit, instead of explicitly adopting it as one of the goals formulated at the start. A last explanation for the predominantly processual outputs might be the absence of non-governmental stakeholders in the City Deal. Ansell and Gash (2008) stress the participation of different stakeholders for successful collaborative processes, while hesitancy by governments to change has been found to be an inhibiting factor for collaborative action (Gibson 2014). The absence of non-governmental stakeholders may therefore limit a food policy network's potential to achieve change and concrete results, as forces to counteract governments' hesitancy to change are missing in such a network. The absence of non-governmental stakeholders could even lead to groupthink (Janis 1972), something that might have happened in the City Deal, considering that participants did not perceive the absence of non-governmental stakeholders as a problem. At the same time, when the urgency to 'do something' is felt among administrations, for example, rapidly achieving tangible results on the ground—, there is a risk of 'taking on too much', resulting in the paralyzing of participants (Termeer et al. 2018) which leads to fewer outcomes. However, processual results might form a first step, that allows for collaboration and tangible level two 'outcomes' and level three 'adaptation' (Emerson and Nabatchi 2015b) in the next phase.

Second, we identified two interconnected factors that may be key for fostering collaboration in trans-local food policy networks: ensuring commitment among participants and striking a balance between a sectoral focus and a holistic food systems focus. Commitment among participants is key as it is the fuel of the collaborative process. As long as commitment is high, there is a willingness to find solutions together, despite obstacles. As the City Deal case has shown, commitment can be stimulated by face-to-face dialogue in plenary meetings. A lesson from the City Deal case is that smaller coalition meetings, instead of meetings with the entire network, might offer more potential. In this way, cities can meet

their peers, work on their topics of interest, and be inspired, while not having to engage in too generic meetings, that may temper their enthusiasm.

For successful food policy collaboration both within and beyond the Netherlands, the City Deal case shows that a right balance should be found between a sectoral focus, by letting every participant work on their individual pressing food issues, and a systemic focus, by sticking to a holistic approach that addresses the entire food system. Too much working on preferred challenges may lead to high commitment but no holistic food policy, while a too holistic approach may ask too much of participants, lowering the level of attractiveness of the network. It is also important to keep everyone on board, so that the networks can keep on functioning. Losing commitment is a key threat to collaborative governance, but when every city focuses on their priorities, the so-important holistic character is lost and the network turns into a collection of siloed policy efforts again. Striking this balance can be done via the institutional design at the start of a food policy network, such as the covenant of the City Deal and its preparatory process have shown. A strong institutional design that balances commitment and effectiveness is therefore key for a successful food policy network.

Third, we identified two interconnected factors that proved to be constraining in our case: a lack of shared understanding and a lack of political commitment. Lack of shared understanding about the main aim and goals may constrain a food policy network as it makes the entire collaborative process more challenging. Achieving shared understanding is a common challenge in trans-local food policy networks (Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018), especially with diverse membership and constituencies (e.g. Harper et al. (2009) and Gore (2010)). Our findings show that a lack of shared understanding may be caused by imbalances between participants and abstract food ambitions. Imbalances occur as sustainable food transitions in cities are conditioned by their specific urban socio-ecological configurations and interests (Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015), which can differ greatly. Recognizing the diversity of cities and their relation with their food issues in diverse places is, therefore, the first step for successful food system enhancement (Moragues-Faus and Carroll 2018). Also, abstract ambitions further challenge achieving shared understanding, as they can lead to unclarity about goals, an often encountered problem in food policy groups (e.g. Coplen and Cuneo 2015; Santo and Moragues-Faus 2018).

Lack of commitment among elected officials may constrain a food policy network, as this may make it harder for civil servants to represent their organizations and reduces the impact of the network. Others too, found the consistent involvement of elected officials

and political will (Mendes 2007) to be crucial for successful trans-local food policy networks (Yeatman 2003; Mendes 2007; Sonnino 2009; Coplen and Cuneo 2015; Halliday 2015, 59). A particular risk factor for consistent political commitment is elections, as they may lead to decreasing commitment (Sonnino 2009; Halliday 2015, 95), and to prior commitments of elected officials being abandoned (Yeatman 2003). For the City Deal, elections were a big challenge, but other food policy processes also faced this, such as for the food strategy of Victoria (Caraher et al. 2013) and the Toronto Food Strategy (Mah and Thang 2013). To create support from elected officials, Halliday and Barling (2018, 204–5) have several recommendations. One example is identifying ways to institutionalize food policy under a supportive official by taking into account; the current official's interest and knowledge of food issues, the degree to which the food agenda corresponds to their priorities, and the likelihood of municipal priorities changing (Halliday and Barling 2018, 204–5).

More research on trans-local food policy networks should be conducted in the future to gain more insight into their potential to improve food systems both within and beyond the Netherlands. As our conclusions are based on one case only, more networks should be studied to draw broader conclusions for trans-local food policy networks. In addition, it would be valuable to investigate the perspectives of non-governmental stakeholders in these networks, instead of focusing on governmental actors only. Also, studying collaboration through longitudinal research designs seems a promising future avenue, to find out how collaboration develops and what results a food policy network produces in the long term. The key question here is: do networks also manage to realize *impact* over time, instead of mere outcomes and output?

Based on our findings, we encourage local food policy makers to participate in collaborative arrangements with their peers as these can foster identity-building and learning. Policy makers should keep in mind though that successful collaboration depends on them focusing on shared interests, rather than just their own interests. Forming smaller coalitions within the collaboration on specific issues of shared interest (such as food waste) could be a solution to achieve this.

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5. Assessing what food policies lead to on the ground: exploring opportunities and challenges of the MUFPP indicator framework

Abstract

Local governments around the world are increasingly adopting food policies to enhance their food systems, but the extent to which these policies advance their stated aims often remains unknown. Several indicator frameworks have been developed with the goal of facilitating the evaluation of food policies. However, food policy evaluation in practice remains limited, as cities face challenges in implementing evaluation programmes. Through an explorative case study, we examine implementation opportunities and challenges for the indicator framework with the largest potential reach among governments at the moment: the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact framework. Data, collected from expert interviews, were inductively analysed for evaluation opportunities and challenges. Our analysis confirms that, at present, the value of this indicator framework lies less in the evaluation outcomes themselves, and more in opportunities generated from the process. Such processual opportunities include concretizing policy priorities and goals, creating an overview of data and data gaps, agenda-setting, generating political will, and strengthening connections between stakeholders. In terms of measuring effect, the most common challenge was a lack of data. Other key challenges included: a lack of resources, a lack of stakeholder commitment, a difficulty of adaptation to the local context, and poor data accessibility. The level of evaluation difficulty and evaluation challenges between thematic areas differed: issues related to food production, supply and distribution prove relatively hard for cities to evaluate, while health and governance issues are less challenging. Based on our results, we emphasize the value of approaching evaluation less as a mechanism of accountability and control, and more with a view to acknowledging its processual capacity to improve local food policy-making from the start of the policy process.

5.1. Introduction

Local governments around the world are increasingly developing food policies to enhance their cities' food systems (Moragues-Faus and Morgan 2015; Calori et al. 2017; Cuy Castellanos et al. 2017; Candel 2019). In order to assess the extent to which these policies advance their stated aims, they need to be evaluated. However, this is a challenging exercise (Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019), for several reasons. First, a wide range of policy goals from different policy areas, such as health and economics, have to be assessed in conjunction. In addition, food policies have complex drivers and long pathways to impact (Halliday et al. 2019, 121). Lastly, local governments usually have little experience with food policy evaluation. To effectively evaluate local food policies, consistent evidence-based metrics and standards are needed (Beddington et al. 2012; Tilman and Clark 2014; Landert et al. 2017; Galli et al. 2020). These metrics and standards should then be used for conducting multidisciplinary evaluations (Beddington et al., 2012; Tilman & Clark, 2014) that are based on a food systems approach (Allen et al. 2014), meaning that the food system and the policies influencing it are assessed as one whole, instead of as siloed aspects (Ericksen et al. 2010). Food systems indicator frameworks can serve this purpose.

In recent years, several scholars have written about ways to evaluate food systems and food policies, and multiple food systems indicator frameworks have been developed (Allen et al. 2014; Carlsson et al. 2017; Landert et al. 2017; MUFPP 2018c; Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019) for evaluating food systems and the policies influencing them. Key frameworks include the Holistic Sustainability Assessment method (Landert et al., 2017), the Vivid pictures indicator framework (Feenstra et al. 2005), the City Region Food System Indicator framework (Carey and Dubbeling 2017), and most recently, the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) indicator framework (MUFPP 2018c; FAO 2019). Such frameworks are valuable, as selecting indicators has been identified as the most challenging step in developing and using a local sustainability indicator framework (Verma and Raghubanshi 2018). Another strength of these frameworks is that they allow for standardized assessments based on scientific evidence and therefore make it possible to compare policies. Due to the guiding character, they also provide a structure for assessment, facilitating local governments in their evaluation process.

However, while there is a vast literature on frameworks to assess food systems and their policies, it remains unclear how and to what extent local governments use these frameworks. Moreover, "food system assessments face a number of challenges to become effective tools for food system transformation" (Moragues-Faus 2020b, 111). For instance,

the sheer number of indicator sets and complexity involved in measurement makes them unattractive for real use (Pissourios 2013). A disconnect thus exists between the ready-to-use indicator frameworks, and local governments successfully implementing them in practice (Carlsson et al. 2017).

Given this, in this chapter, we analyse the implementation of indicator frameworks for local food policy evaluation. We first investigate general evaluation practices and the opportunities and challenges encountered in implementing a food policy indicator framework, in order to strengthen future food policy evaluation and food policy-making. In addition, we aim to gain insight into differences between thematic food policy areas to be able to develop solutions for particular evaluation challenges. We selected the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) indicator framework as our case, as this framework currently has the largest potential reach for usage by local governments, among indicator frameworks.

We use a qualitative, explorative case study design to investigate local governments' practices, perceived opportunities, challenges, and differences between challenges in implementing the MUFPP framework. Although *developing* an indicator framework comes with challenges, such as the indicator weighting methods, complexity or over-simplicity in measurement, and lack of a theoretical base (Verma & Raghubanshi, 2018), our study exclusively focuses on challenges in *taking up* and *implementing* a framework. As the MUFPP framework is relatively new and local governments have only recently started to implement it, evaluation, in this chapter, refers to governments exploring, designing and setting up an evaluation process, and not to an established and continuous evaluation cycle.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. In the next section we elaborate on food policy evaluation and on the MUFPP indicator framework. In the third section we elaborate on the explorative case study research design, and our approach for the data collection and inductive analysis. Section four presents the results, elaborating on the main characteristics of implementing the MUFPP framework, evaluation opportunities, challenges, and the differences in challenges between food policy issues. Section five discusses these opportunities and challenges, while section six concludes the chapter.

5.2. The MUFPP indicator framework

Policy evaluation is crucial for effective food governance (Halliday et al., 2019, p. 121). On the most basic level, it supports democratic accountability and allows governments to ensure the best use of limited funds by adjusting policies and programmes that are not delivering expected results (Halliday et al., 2019, p. 121). It also enables governments to

present sound evidence of efficacy to support follow-on funding bids or promote ongoing political support following electoral change (Halliday et al., 2019, p. 121). In a more indirect way, but not less important, it enables comparison between cities (Landert et al., 2017) and allows *other* local governments to identify actions that have had impact, and to replicate those (Halliday et al., 2019, p. 121). The application of indicators to gather information is the most important step of indicator frameworks (Verma & Raghubanshi, 2018). However, this is far from easy (Howlett and Ramesh 2009, 3rd:183). In this chapter we therefore inductively explore the challenges, but also the opportunities that local governments encounter in implementing the MUFPP indicator framework.

The MUFPP framework was developed to facilitate the MUFPP signatory cities, which currently are over 200³ cities who commit themselves “to encourag[ing] interdepartmental and cross-sector coordination at municipality and community levels, working to integrate urban food policy considerations into social, economic and environment policies, programmes and initiatives” (MUFPP 2015, 2). It was developed between 2016-2019, as “despite the growing number of urban food initiatives in many cities, a key challenge expressed by MUFPP signatory cities is measuring the impact of these policy processes and initiatives” (FAO, 2019). The rationale behind the MUFPP framework was to “develop a common framework, that somehow could be an instrument to be tailored by the cities, according to their needs” (Interviewee 3). As such, the purpose of the monitoring framework is:

- 1) to serve as an instrument for identifying food-related policy and programme priorities;*
- 2) to illustrate the extent to which “desired changes” are happening and how impactful such changes are;*
- 3) to evaluate gaps in policy advancement and resource mobilization, and reveal overall urban food systems improvement (if measured periodically); and,*
- 4) to foster collaboration between municipal departments, stakeholder groups and national governments for addressing food system challenges systemically (FAO, 2019).*

The framework includes outcome areas, recommended actions to achieve the intended outcomes, and the framework’s core: a list of 44 indicators for monitoring improvement in the achievements of cities’ expected outcomes (FAO, 2019). The indicators were developed

³ On 11-01-2021

through a consultative process with MUFPP signatory cities. To facilitate the implementation of the framework, methodological guidelines were developed for each indicator. The indicators are divided over the six thematic MUFPP areas (Table 5.1) and are organized into two main groups: 1) self-assessment binary indicators that look at the presence (or absence) of a specific item and/or policy; and, 2) quantitative Indicators useful for measuring percentages, absolute numbers and/or rates that address progress against specific baselines (FAO, 2019).

Table 5.1 The MUFPP thematic areas and examples of indicators

MUFPP thematic area	Example indicator
1. Governance	1. Presence of an active municipal interdepartmental government body for advisory and decision-making of food policies and programmes (e.g. interdepartmental food working group, food policy office, food team).
2. Sustainable diets & nutrition	7. Minimum dietary diversity for women of reproductive age.
3. Social & economic equity	18. Percentage of food insecure households based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).
4. Food production	25. Number of city residents within the municipal boundary with access to an urban (agricultural) garden.
5. Food supply & distribution	34. Existence of policies/programmes that address the reduction of GHG emissions in different parts of the food supply chain (e.g. processing, storage, transport, packaging, retail, cooking, waste disposal etc.).
6. Food waste	41. Total annual volume of food losses and waste.

5.3. Methods

As the first research step, we attempted to identify the MUFPP signatory cities engaging in food policy evaluation. We selected:

1) all cities that had been involved in the participatory process of developing the indicator framework (FAO, 2019, p. 4);

2) cities with good practices on evaluation, listed on the MUFPP good practices webpage (MUFPP, 2020); and,

3) cities indicated to us as engaging in evaluation, by the MUFPP pact secretariat.

This resulted in a total of 22 cities. Upon contacting the local governments with an interview request, we received responses from 14 cities. There were subsequently included in the research:

- Austin (U.S.A.)
- Belo Horizonte (Brazil)
- Birmingham (U.K.)
- Bordeaux (France)
- Curitiba (Brazil)
- Ede (The Netherlands)
- Ghent (Belgium)
- Lucca (Italy)
- Milan (Italy)
- Quito (Ecuador)
- Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)
- Toronto (Canada)
- Washington D.C. (U.S.A.)
- Windhoek (Namibia)

Between July and November 2020, a total of 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted digitally with each local governments' policy officer responsible for food. In two cases (Curitiba and Lucca), two policy officers were interviewed together as they shared responsibilities. In one case (Windhoek), two food policy officers were interviewed separately. We used an interview guide for all interviews. In one case (Quito), the interview questions were answered by e-mail. The interviews focused on policy evaluation experiences, and evaluation opportunities and challenges perceived or expected by the policy officers. Most of the interviews were in English, with two exceptions in Portuguese, one in Spanish, and one in Dutch. To gain a broader perspective, we also conducted interviews with two experts from the MUFPP technical team, who had been involved in developing and piloting the MUFPP indicator framework in the cities of Antananarivo, Quito, and Nairobi. We also consulted food strategies, local evaluation reports, and presentations held at MUFPP gatherings for background information, and to verify information from the interviews where necessary.

Interview transcripts were thematically coded for:

- 1) general evaluation practices;
- 2) perceived evaluation opportunities; and
- 3) perceived evaluation challenges, using an inductively developed codebook (Appendix D).

We also coded for differences between subthemes following the six thematic areas of the MUFPP indicator framework (i.e. food governance, sustainable diets and nutrition, social and economic equity, food production, food supply and distribution and food waste). During this phase we coded for: 1) level of evaluation difficulty (relatively easy or relatively difficult); and, 2) differences in challenges between subthemes. One of the practitioner interviews with the main author of this chapter in her role as a policy-maker for the municipality of Ede. Analytical bias was prevented through double-coding by one of the co-authors.

The approach used in this chapter comes with several limitations. First, though we have aimed to identify all local governments using the MUFPP framework, there may still be MUFPP cities using the framework without there being documentation to identify them, as often evaluation efforts happen informally. Also, there might be non-MUFPP signatory cities using the framework. This means our study includes a smaller scope than the cities actually engaging in food policy evaluation using the MUFPP framework. Second, our sample (and the MUFPP signatory cities in general) consists predominantly of American and European cities, and we are thus aware that our results are biased towards the American and European context. Third, our interview data depend on the perspective of individuals. To overcome the potential weakness, food policies, evaluation reports and presentations were consulted for gaining a broader perspective and to triangulate. In addition, it should be noted that we only included the perspectives of civil servants, as they are the ones operationalizing the framework. Including the perspectives of elected officials who are politically responsible, or other stakeholders, was beyond the scope of the chapter. In the light of these limitations, the findings in this chapter should be viewed as an exploration of food policy evaluation efforts and experiences, rather than as a comprehensive assessment of local food policy evaluation worldwide.

5.4. Results

5.4.1. *Local implementation practices*

The overall picture from our data shows that because the implementation of the MUFPP framework was in an initial stage, it had a strong pioneering character among the local governments studied. As an interviewee explained about attempting to use the framework: “We undertook this as one of the first cities, with the intention of just learning as we go. We didn’t know what the purpose at the end was actually, but we did it” (Interviewee 2). All governments we studied had started an evaluation process, and were either (preparing for) designing an evaluation, determining indicators, mapping data sources, collecting data, or multiple of these activities. However, none of the governments had a complete and continuous policy evaluation cycle in place (yet); although a few cities, such as Belo Horizonte (Brazil) were advanced in their evaluations.

All local governments used the MUFPP indicator framework in their evaluation efforts, but the extent to which they did and the approach used, differed. While some governments had taken the framework as a starting point and had adapted a number of indicators to their own context, others saw the framework as a valuable tool to fine tune the evaluation they had already started independently. The evaluation efforts focused predominantly on project and activity level –like the number of initiatives or participants in a project– and not on outcome or impact level. The evaluation subject –food policies–, was divided into two types. The majority of local governments made use of one holistic food strategy; an overarching framework that explicitly sets out integrated food policy efforts across an administration’s sectors, possibly in interaction with broader governance networks (Candel 2019). Others used a range of different policies addressing a variety of food system components.

All local governments encountered a range of challenges that inhibited the continuation of completion of the evaluations. Nevertheless, interviewees emphasized the importance of evaluation, as one interviewee elucidated: “I believe that if the indicator framework of Quito’s agri-food policy starts to be measured more responsibly, evidence will be generated so that the issues addressed have a greater presence in city planning, and funds will be allocated to overcome their current situation” (Interviewee 1). The early experiences with implementing the MUFPP framework provide several insights on the perceived opportunities and challenges encountered.

5.4.2. Opportunities of the MUFPP indicator framework

Our study suggests that the value of implementing the MUFPP framework for local governments could predominantly be found in the opportunities generated by the process. The most often mentioned opportunities included: 1) generating awareness and political will through generating an evidence base; 2) better defining policy priorities; 3) providing an overview of data and data gaps; and, 4) strengthening connections (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Key opportunities perceived by local governments

Opportunity	Description	# out of 17 interviewees	Cities* * The total number of cities per opportunity is lower than the number of interviewees, as interviewees also include the FAO and RUAF experts
Evidence	Generating evidence through monitoring to put or keep food policy on the political agenda and/or for continuing food policy work/raising awareness for food policy	7	Belo Horizonte, Birmingham, Ede, Rio de Janeiro, Toronto
Concretizing	Better defining a city's food policy work, identifying priorities and concretizing policy goals through engaging in monitoring and evaluation	6	Birmingham, Ede, Ghent, Milan, Quito
Overview	Gaining insight into available data and data gaps in a city through monitoring and evaluation	6	Ede, Ghent, Rio de Janeiro, Toronto
Connecting	Using monitoring and evaluation (attempts) to strengthen connections between different departments and/or stakeholders	4	Belo Horizonte, Bordeaux, Toronto

Alongside process, implementing the framework effectively served for agenda-setting and generating political will as it helped in building up an evidence base (though predominantly

consisting of activity-based evidence). For example, using indicator frameworks for benchmarking, was referred to by several interviewees as a key opportunity. A civil servant explained: “in the context of political appetite and support, being able to go: “well, we’re ranked 10th in the world”, is very important” (Interviewee 11).

Second, implementing the framework helped local governments to (better) define their priorities and to concretize their food-related policy goals. The moment governments started to evaluate their goals, they found out how abstract or how concrete their objectives were. Implementing the MUFPP framework therefore forced governments to discuss and concretize their goals once indicators had to be selected. As one interviewee explained: “indicators are a tool to help you shine light on your priorities” (Interviewee 4) and the primary value of indicator frameworks is “to give you a framework to benchmark what you are doing, rather than actually monitor progress” (Interviewee 11). A member of the MUFPP technical team summarized this opportunity of the MUFPP as: serving as “a framework to think” (Interviewee 4).

Third, implementing the MUFPP framework helped governments to create an overview and to gain more insight into their policies and data, as an example from Toronto shows:

For us the value was that in the process of populating indicators, it was very telling what we as a city have accessible information and data on, and what is not so easy to access. So that was a finding in itself that I found very valuable. You know, missing a lot of information on food production and distribution in our city, to me signalled a very big gap. [...] That signalled to us that we needed to do more on that (Interviewee 2).

For the local government of Ede, implementing the framework served for unravelling a mismatch between data availability and policy goals:

So in terms of agriculture, we found out that what we wanted with our policy was more sustainable agriculture, but what we were measuring as a municipality, in a different department, in a different monitor, were data on economic output and jobs, and not on sustainability and innovation” (Interviewee 5).

Fourth, evaluation served to strengthen connections, both between departments *within* the local government, and between the local government and external stakeholders. For example, the framework was used as a vehicle to engage departments and other stakeholders in collaboration for conducting an evaluation. An interviewee even argued that evaluation and monitoring were *needed* to mobilize actors (Interviewee 9). She gave the example of quantifying policy impact: “I think it is good to do this because it will involve

the universities more that are working in Bordeaux. So it will be an excuse to ask them and to work with them” (Interviewee 9).

Lastly, through all the aforementioned opportunities, implementing the MUFPP framework contributed to thinking about sustaining food policy in the long(er) run. It forced local governments to think ahead, as an example illustrates: “You can see how the framework exercise actually really forced us to think about not only: what do we have right now, but also: what do we need in order to do our work strategically in the future?” (Interviewee 2). However, in order to achieve this, “the framework should be adapted to the planning and policy formulation process. If it is disconnected from this policy process, probably it is not that useful. Then it’s just an exercise” (Interviewee 3).

5.4.3. Key challenges in taking up and implementing the MUFPP indicator framework

While the MUFPP indicator framework offered opportunities, local governments also encountered a variety of challenges in implementing the framework. Table 5.1 demonstrates all challenges listed by at least one in four interviewees.

Table 5.1 Key challenges encountered by local governments

Challenge	Description	# out of 17 interviewees	Cities* * The total number of cities per challenge is lower than the number of interviewees, as interviewees also include the FAO and RUAF experts
Availability	Lack of data, including lack of data of sufficient quality, appropriate scale or appropriate aggregation	10	Austin, Birmingham, Lucca, Milan, Quito, Rio de Janeiro, Washington D.C. Windhoek
Resources	Financial resources, capacity, expertise, or organizational infrastructure for evaluation lack or are poor	8	Austin, Birmingham, Ghent, Quito, Rio de Janeiro, Toronto, Windhoek

Commitment	Engaging stakeholders including government officials to collaborate and participate in evaluation is challenging	7	Austin, Curitiba, Lucca, Milan, Quito, Rio de Janeiro,
Accessibility	Data are inaccessible, and local government depends on other stakeholders for data	7	Birmingham, Bordeaux, Ghent, Rio de Janeiro, Windhoek
Adaptation	Adapting the MUFPP indicator framework to the local situation is challenging	7	Birmingham, Ghent, Milan, Rio de Janeiro, Toronto, Washington D.C., Windhoek
Priority	Awareness on the importance of and/or priority given to monitoring and evaluation lacks or is poor	6	Austin, Ede, Ghent, Quito, Rio de Janeiro, Toronto
Impact	Food policy is being evaluated on programmatic level and not on outcome or impact level, making it hard to assess impact and effect	6	Belo Horizonte, Birmingham, Bordeaux, Curitiba, Ghent
Continuation	Realizing a sustainable evaluation cycle over time, instead of occasional snapshots is challenging	5	Austin, Ede, Toronto

By far the most often encountered challenge was a lack of data, indicated by ten out of seventeen interviewees. Over one third of the interviewees even indicated it to be *the* most important evaluation challenge. The lack of data manifested in various forms, including a lack of data of sufficient quality, data on the right scale and data that is appropriately disaggregated. Public food system data on a lower geographical scale than national level often did not exist, probably as at local level “the scope at which you are going to measure is so small that it costs a lot to measure things and that you cannot draw clear conclusions from it.” (Interviewee 7). With *private* data on the other hand, a problem was that data were only available on a too *small* scale, i.e. on private project or initiative level.

The second most encountered challenge was a lack of resources, indicated by almost half of the interviewees. This includes the more obvious lack of financial resources, time, capacity, and organizational infrastructure, but also a lack of expertise. An interviewee explains for example that: “we need to have people that can read the framework and understand the framework.” (Interviewee 13).

Three challenges were identified by seven interviewees; commitment, accessibility and adaptation. Engaging stakeholders to commit to, collaborate for, and participate in evaluation, was challenging. This does not only hold for external stakeholders, but also for departments *within* a local government. As an interviewee explains: “The biggest challenge right now for me, working in food policy in the city, is trying to get departments to care about the issues that we care about. And so my job is to kind of cheerleader.” (Interviewee 12). The challenge of data accessibility entailed that in some cases data was actually available, however not accessible for local governments. An interviewee articulates: “most data about food is in the commercial space, it is very difficult to get access to that” (Interviewee 11). Also, local governments sometimes depended on the cycles of other agencies collecting the data, such as a ministry of agriculture, which made evaluation dependent on external actors. For example, one local government had to wait three months to receive information on social inclusion from a third party. A key challenge of adapting the MUFPP framework to the local context was that indicators were subject to different ways of interpretation, which made it difficult to apply them and to collect appropriate data.

Both assessing impact and a lack of priority were listed as challenging by six interviewees. Assessing impact and effect was challenging as food policy was predominantly being evaluated on programmatic level –such as the number of initiatives or participants in a project— and not on outcome or impact level. As an interviewee explains: “We took care of the actions, of the amount of progress, the current state within political programs. However, their impact, we still don't have” (Interviewee 15). Another interviewee pointed to the complexity of the food system as a challenge in assessing impact, as requires complex analysis.

The complexity of the lack of priority or awareness on food policy was aptly summarized by an interviewee:

How do you organize it to make it gain as much weight as possible within your city? I think that's the most important question. Because international frameworks are nice. Ultimately, however, it is about keeping food on the agenda and be able to move forward. (Interviewee 7).

In some cases, the lack of priority manifested from the start of the policy process, while in other cases this only became clear when other, more pressing, issues came along. A good example is the Covid-19 pandemic. Almost all interviewees indicated that the pandemic shifted priorities, resulting in less attention for food policy evaluation. An interviewee explains about repeating the evaluation:

We did have the plans to do this, even like a twelve month follow-up. But what ended up happening within our government is that the potential budget cuts really limited resources and time we could put into that. And now looking forward to 2021, Covid is really taking our mind and thinking off of this more robust monitoring and evaluation (Interviewee 2).

Sustaining long-term continuity of the evaluation process was the last challenge indicated by more than one in four interviewees. For measuring food system change, indicators need to be measured repeatedly, for example annually or biannually. However, realizing data collection in the long term was found to be challenging. An interviewee referred to an internal discussion, where practitioners asked themselves: “How does this become a living document, as opposed to simply a checklist? [...] How do you ensure that each year you go back and re-examine and reanalyse where you are?” (Interviewee 12). A key threat to evaluation continuity were shifting priorities upon electoral changes. In one case for example, the official who had received training in using the MUFPP indicator framework was transferred to a different office after local elections. A last threat for achieving a long term, stable evaluation cycle, lay in the adaptation of metrics:

Every year we have a better idea of: OK, we should ask this question, instead of that question. Or, we should get the data at this scale, instead of that scale. So, over the last couple of years, we’ve had adaptations almost every year, and this of course has implications for how well you can track how things are going. (Interviewee 5).

Local governments thus encountered a broad variety of challenges in using the MUFPP indicator framework.

5.4.4. Differences in evaluation difficulty and evaluation challenges between food issues

Over two thirds of the interviewees indicated that differences in evaluation challenges exist between MUFPP food policy subthemes such as food waste, health, and food production. Food production, food supply & distribution, and food waste, were most often indicated as relatively challenging to evaluate (Table 5.3). Governance, and sustainable diets & nutrition were most often mentioned as relatively easy to evaluate (Table 5.3). It should be noted

that not all interviewees could indicate whether subthemes were easy or difficult to evaluate, as they found they lacked sufficient evaluation experience.

Table 5.3 Differences in level of difficulty and challenges between subthemes

MUFPP subtheme	# of interviewees that indicated evaluation as relatively:	
	Difficult	Easy
<i>Food production</i>	7	1
<i>Food supply and distribution</i>	5	0
<i>Food waste</i>	5	2
<i>Social and economic equity</i>	2	1
<i>Governance</i>	2	4
<i>Sustainable diets and nutrition</i>	4	7

The evaluation of food production issues was considered relatively difficult for several reasons, including: food production being beyond local governments competences; data availability being biased towards productivity instead of sustainability; definitions being unclear and interpretations differing on concepts like ‘local food’, ‘urban agriculture’ and ‘agroecological production’; and, a lack of data available and disaggregated at local scale. An interviewee explains:

For the vegetable gardens, when we were discussing urban agriculture in Belo Horizonte, we had to have a good debate to define what would be a food production unit. [...] Are you going to count an apartment garden? Are you going to count a vegetable garden on a roof? Will you count a vegetable garden that is at least two blocks? A soccer field? (Interviewee 17)

Evaluating issues related to food supply and distribution was experienced as challenging because of: food supply and distribution being beyond local government competences; the definition of short food chains being unclear; which data to use for assessing the relationship between urban and rural being unclear; and, food flows being difficult to trace. Food waste was challenging to evaluate because it was a relatively new area, and data collection was therefore complicated. An exception was Milan though, which had an

elaborate food waste monitoring system. Social and economic equity issues were generally perceived as neither easy to evaluate, nor difficult. Challenges related mostly to a bias in economic data towards economic output, and a lack of data available at the appropriate scale. A relatively easy issue within social and economic equity as indicated by two interviewees, was food security. They indicated their governments had long traditions in addressing food security as a policy issue and therefore also had the experience and infrastructure for monitoring and evaluating it. Another relatively easy subtheme to evaluate, as indicated by interviewees, was governance. Reasons given were that for governance: a long policy history existed; MUFPP indicators for governance were binary; and governance is a clear government competence. The only aspect indicated as challenging in the evaluation of governance, was governance being a politically sensitive issue, as it is something a government can be held accountable for.

Issues related to sustainable diets and nutrition were identified as easiest to evaluate by the cities. Reasons given as to why this was the case included: health and food security having a long policy priority history; high quality data being available; health being a priority issue; and, food policy being accommodated in the department of health. These established areas (health and food security) seem easier to evaluate than relatively new areas:

For some things there is already a longer tradition of measuring things, such as in healthcare. Figures have been monitored there for quite some time, quite thoroughly. Things more to do with sustainable consumption are more difficult to define. (Interviewee 7)

While health and food security proved easier to evaluate for historic reasons, more challenging were the cross-cutting domains. More specifically, difficult areas of evaluation included: defining sustainability criteria and integrating those into health and consumption metrics; consumption issues being politically sensitive (e.g. the transition towards the consumption of less animal-based and more plant-based proteins); and, consumption-data collection methods being complex. The latter is the case as these are often based on self-reporting and as they may embarrass respondents who suffer from food insecurity, as an interviewee explains: “They will have to trust you so much that they can tell you that you know I'm sitting here, but I only eat one meal a day, or sometimes I only eat the second day.” (Interviewee 15).

5.5. Discussion

In this chapter we explored the taking up and implementation of a food policy indicator framework: the MUFPP framework. We investigated implementation opportunities,

challenges, and differences between these challenges encountered by local governments. Several lessons can be learned from the MUFPP case.

A first lesson is that, currently, the value of implementing the MUFPP framework predominantly lies in the opportunities generated from the process itself and less in the process' outcomes. Based on our results, implementing the MUFPP framework to date has served less as a tool for gaining insight into the effectiveness and efficiency of their food policies and for verifying if their policy objectives have been achieved. Instead, it has provided processual opportunities including: better defining policy priorities, providing an overview of data and data gaps, agenda-setting, generating political will, and strengthening connections (both between departments within a local government; and between the local government and external stakeholders). Our findings are aligned with those of Battersby (2020) insofar as the MUFPP indicator framework performs three crucial steps in local food policy evaluation: 1) understanding why the data have gaps; 2) understanding both what the existing data reveal and what they obscure and why; and, 3) identifying what data are required to help local governments address their full mandates regarding food.

Local food policy evaluation is a process that helps governments discover their priorities, identify their goals, and map their data landscape. The selection of indicators, for example, can clarify the goals a city actually wants to achieve and can help governments in developing and improving their food policies. We therefore emphasize the importance of approaching evaluation less as a mechanism of accountability and control, while better recognizing its processual capacity to improve local food policy making from the start of the policy process. This finding is underscored by Blay-Palmer et al. (2020, 234) who conclude that these assessments do not only serve as providing information, but also as a processual tool that can help build capacity within communities, provoke food systems thinking, connect people across scales, and even lead to policy coherence. However, some critical reflections on this conclusion should be made. It is possible that processual benefits were prominent in our data because we targeted practitioners, and did not include the views of politicians. In addition, the given that local governments were early in the evaluation process, it is not surprising that the processual benefits are the most concrete outcomes.

A second lesson is that local governments encounter a variety of challenges when implementing an indicator framework. Two challenges are particularly important for maturing food policy evaluation: the lack of relevant data and the lack of outcome and impact assessment. Data gaps are problematic because they represent more than a mere lack of data. Battersby (2020) argues for the African context, that challenges for embedding

food systems governance in local governments are all connected by a fundamental relationship between governance and data informed by deeply entrenched beliefs about the food system and food security. Such beliefs are reinforced by data collection, aggregation and analytical decisions, which are in turn informed by the underlying beliefs. This leads to reinforcing feedback loops that entrench existing systems and make it exceptionally hard for new perspectives on food systems to emerge and gain traction in policy (Battersby, 2020). For example, the ways in which food security has been framed in Cape Town, has shaped what data were gathered and how these were disaggregated and interpreted (Battersby, 2020). While the paucity of relevant and accessible data is commonly identified as one of the most important challenges in implementing urban sustainability indicator frameworks and in advancing food policy agendas (Verma and Raghubanshi 2018; Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019; Battersby 2020; Sonnino and Coulson 2021), it is worth zooming in on the specific explanations regarding local food system data. The literature provides several plausible explanations. First of all, “historically, urban governments have not been mandated to collect data on their food systems, as neither food systems nor food security governance has been recognized as part of their competencies” (Battersby 2020, 101). Second, lack of data is likely to be more pronounced at the urban, rather than at the national or regional level, because the necessary data are often only available on supra-urban levels (Landert et al., 2017). Third, food policy data are rarely disaggregated to the local level (Sonnino & Coulson, 2020). Fourth, ‘statistics’ tend to prioritise what the state wants to know, leading to indicators being engrained in established governance trajectories (Sonnino & Coulson, 2020). This shows a ‘spatiality’ mismatch between “data generation and its (incongruous) relationship with policy formulation and decision-making processes increasingly being emphasised at the ‘local’ scale” (Sonnino and Coulson 2021, 10). Local governments therefore “depend on proxy data to build a narrative from contingent data that were collected for other reporting purposes” (Battersby 2020, 101). Lastly, a plausible explanation is the early stage food policy evaluation is in, making it uncharted and therefore sensitive territory for governments, and leading to data collection not being in place yet. Another key challenge for the maturing of local food policy evaluation is moving the assessment of progress from what Moragues-Faus & Marceau (2019) call activity-based indicators, to outcome-based indicators. Measuring progress in food policy now seems to happen mostly at activity and process level and not (yet) at outcome or impact level, thereby assessing the effects of a policy and establishing causal links between the policy and its effects (Knill & Tosun, 2012, p. 175). Measuring these latter two levels is more challenging. Blay-Palmer et al. (2020, 242) point out that “regional and smaller scales appear to provide the most useful information for policymaking and action,

while national and global approaches may add important comparative overarching perspectives through a broader context.” Our study further nuances this conclusion, in that there also lies a risk in small-scale data being of a too small scale, hence being too activity-based (for example: the number of citizens that have participated in a local food waste event), making thorough assessment of food systems change difficult.

A third lesson from our study is that thematic food policy areas differed in the challenges and the level of evaluation difficulty encountered. The multi-dimensionality of sustainable food security and thus of food policy is considered one of the biggest challenges in measuring it (Haysom and Tawodzera 2018). Our study shows that within this multi-dimensionality, local food policy evaluation cannot be treated the same for each thematic area and some areas require more attention than others. It seems that for more established areas, with a longer tradition of policy work and data collection (such as health), more data are available, than for newer areas. We identified that areas requiring most attention are food production, consumption, distribution, and food waste. A common thread through all themes was the challenging area of sustainability. This is mainly because of differing interpretations as to what sustainability entails, a conclusion that is also drawn in the literature (Carlsson et al. 2017) (Carlsson et al. 2017; Verma and Raghubanshi 2018; Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019). Food waste is in general also a difficult area for collecting data (Halloran et al. 2014). This might be due to data not being collected and not being easy to collect, as waste data often do not distinguish between food waste and organic non-food waste. Areas that need less attention include health, and governance. Health was easy because of long policy traditions. Other authors too, found that it was relatively easy to monitor the decrease in the number of overweight or obese people, while it was more difficult to measure changes in the number of jobs in the local food economy (Moragues-Faus and Marceau 2019). For governance, an explanation as to why this was is because the indicators themselves were more easy as they were binary, while most other indicators were not. This does not mean that binary indicators (i.e. Yes/No) should be preferred over non-binary ones though. While binary indicators are valuable because they are more easily and can be used for assessing thresholds, in reducing the indicators to a mere “yes” or “no”, one loses the complexity and diversity that exists in practice. Binary indicators should therefore be used with care.

A last lesson from this chapter is that governments were too late in thinking about and implementing monitoring and evaluation. Most of the governments did not adopt a monitoring and evaluation plan from the start and only initiated evaluation when their food policies had been implemented for some time. This includes conducting a baseline

measurement. Setting a baseline was also found to be a neglected area of indicator assessments by other authors (Verma & Raghubanshi, 2018). Starting monitoring and evaluation earlier presents several opportunities. Implementing an indicator framework seems to help shed light on the data that are available, and therefore the information a city has, the processes in place to collect data, the policies in place, the work done in certain areas and therefore ultimately, the real priorities of your local government. It therefore points out the food policy areas that require attention. Finding out what data are available is an important step in policy evaluation, that indicates the focus points in the whole of the local government's policies, as compared to the food policy's focus points only. It can therefore show where the gaps are between real emphasis and emphasis on paper, and what thus needs to be worked on. Implementing an indicator framework should therefore also be seen as method of food policy improvement instead of a way for checking if results have been achieved. Carlsson et al. (2017) point out that it is essential for actors to preliminarily agree upon what they want to achieve and how to achieve it, as this provides a foundation for selecting, developing, and combining appropriate tools, including indicators. We want to point out that, as we have outlined above, this also works the other way around: discussing indicators can deepen the discussion on the definition of priorities and can hence concretize policy content. Local governments thus need to find a balance between, on the one hand, setting abstract ambitions at the starting phase to foster agenda-setting and policy adoption, and on the other hand, taking up evaluation early to concretizing goals early in the policy process. Aiming for detail and concretization in the beginning can slow down the start of the policy process and hinder agenda-setting, while addressing evaluation too late in the policy process can lead to consensus frames floating along without concretization, thereby making policies less effective.

In order to advance local food policy evaluation it is key to investigate how to move beyond programme and activity evaluation, and realize outcome, impact, and effect evaluation. The investigation of useful complex indicators that address multiple co-benefits (Blay-Palmer et al. 2020, 240) and thresholds (scientifically determined or policy goal based) on these levels is key (for a national level example, see Gustafson et al., 2016). In addition, the over-population of indicators (44 in the MUFPP case) calls for a simplification of food policy indicator frameworks. Even though indicator frameworks can be based on a "pick and choose" principle, a smaller set of headline indicators would have several advantages, including: making it easier for cities to apply the framework; making it easier to communicate to the general public; increasing comparability between cities (Hák et al. 2016). The question to ask then becomes: "what combination of indicators would signal

that food system sustainability is being achieved?” (Blay-Palmer et al. 2020, 248). With this recommendation we want to point to the flipside of the call for more place-specific indicators and participatory indicator development (see for example (Blay-Palmer et al. 2020, 237)), as this can theoretically improve the quality of the assessment, but it can strongly reduce usability as it makes evaluation more laborious, complex, and less comparable. Balancing “the need to capture all facets of sustainable food systems dimensions and, at the same time, be simple enough so that indicators are functional” is key (Blay-Palmer et al. 2020, 240).

5.6. Conclusion

If we really want to change our food systems and make more healthy and sustainable, we also need to change the way we define and measure the success of those food systems. As Stone (2011, 188) puts it: “Measures imply a need for action, because we don’t measure things except when we want to change them or change our behaviour in response to them. To call for a measurement or survey of something is to take the first step in promoting change”. With this chapter we hope to have contributed to exploring ways for doing so.

6. Discussion, reflections and conclusions

This dissertation started from the observation that our local, regional, and global food systems face severe challenges influenced by the public policies steering them. To overcome these challenges and achieve healthier and more sustainable food systems, scholars and policy-makers alike have high expectations of local governments engaging in food policy. However, when I started this research, it had remained unknown to what extent local governments are currently engaging in food policy-making beyond the mere expressing of ambitions. This means that it remained unexplored if local governments succeed in bringing food policy into practice in all phases of the policy cycle, namely: agenda-setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation. If local governments would manage to successfully do so, and on a large scale, it could mean that food policy is becoming a serious and sustainable trend instead of merely a passing fad. This would change food governance for good and could be a key to more sustainable future food systems.

In this dissertation I sought to gain insight into policy-making by local governments throughout the complete policy cycle and the extent to which this is happening in the Netherlands, one of the local food policy fore-runners in the world. I aimed to answer the research question: ***To what extent do local governments in the Netherlands succeed in bringing food policy into practice?***

Each chapter of this dissertation addressed one of four research questions:

1. To what extent has food become integrated across local governments' policies in the Netherlands? (Chapter 2)
2. How and to what extent were food system challenges institutionalized within the municipality of Ede? (Chapter 3)
3. To what extent did the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda lead to genuine collaboration for enhancing local food systems, and what stimulated and constrained this collaboration? (Chapter 4)
4. What opportunities and challenges did local governments encounter when implementing the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact indicator framework? (Chapter 5)

In this concluding chapter, I bring together the most important findings into a discussion and reflection on bringing local food policy into practice. In section 6.1, I answer each of these questions and end with answering the main research question. In section 6.2, I elaborate on the main contributions to the literature of my dissertation. In section 6.3, I reflect on the methodological choices made in this research and on the participatory approach that I adopt. In section 6.4, I present recommendations for researchers aiming to

conduct future research on local food policy, and in section 6.5, I present three key recommendations for food policy-makers. In section 6.6, I draw final conclusions.

6.1. Synthesis of the research: answers to the research questions

6.1.1. *RQ1. To what extent has food become integrated across local governments' policies in the Netherlands?*

Bringing food policy into practice beyond the ambitions on the agenda starts with policy formulation and adoption. In these phases, local governments need to address food issues and integrate them across their existing policies. So far, it has remained unexplored to what extent local governments are doing this. Through the first research question, I therefore aimed to investigate how local governments in the Netherlands (“municipalities”) address food issues, and to what extent they have integrated these across their existing policies. In chapter 2, I adopted a policy integration lens and systematically analysed policies of large Dutch municipalities. I showed that most municipalities integrate food to a limited extent only, predominantly addressing health and local food production or consumption. Municipalities set abstract goals, often without accompanying policy instruments. These instruments are mostly non-coercive, including informative and organizational instruments. Nonetheless, a small number of municipalities have developed more holistic approaches. They address a broad variety of food challenges in a concerted manner.

The chapter presents several insights about municipal food goals. Thematically, some food system challenges are more addressed in goals than others. The thematic areas most often addressed are health and local food, including goals such as realizing a healthy food environment, fighting obesity, shortening food supply chains, and promoting urban agriculture. Rotterdam, for example, aims for ‘more edible greenery in neighbourhoods’ (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012). Least addressed issues are related to community development, the environment, culture, food security and social justice. Regarding the different stages of the food chain, municipalities mostly address issues at both extremes of the chain: production (though only small scale and urban), and consumption. Consequently, municipalities hardly address issues in the middle of the chain, including processing, packaging, distribution and retail. In terms of formulation, the municipal goals to be achieved mostly remain abstract. Amsterdam, for example, aims for a ‘Healthy food environment’ (Gemeente Amsterdam 2015). A more specific policy target on the other hand is: ‘All Almere children aged 0–12 have breakfast and have a healthy 10 o'clock snack (fruit and water)’ (Gemeente Almere 2016). Municipalities often emphasize certain issues, but fail to concretize abstract goals by setting specific targets.

Municipalities that set food goals, frequently fail to state *how* they intend to achieve these as they do not list policy instruments. The chapter also demonstrates that when municipalities *do* list the instruments, they intend to employ soft measures (such as conducting research, providing training, or implementing communication campaigns) and seem hesitant to use coercive instruments (such as legislation or zoning plans). This lack of instruments in combination with the abstractly formulated goals may indicate that local food policies are predominantly symbolic - referring to decisions that are never intended to be (fully) implemented and therefore have little or no impact (Edelman 1964).

Most Dutch municipalities that address food issues do not address a wide range of challenges. This means that municipalities usually do not cover the entire food system and that they integrate food across existing policies to a limited extent. It thus seems that the majority of Dutch municipalities do not approach food challenges from a systems perspective. Nonetheless, a small group of municipalities (Amsterdam, Den Haag, Ede, Groningen, Rotterdam) have developed more holistic approaches to address food system challenges. They address a wide range of challenges across the food system. These municipalities may prove to be a leading group in the development of system-based approaches in Dutch local food policy.

6.1.2. RQ2. *How and to what extent were food system challenges institutionalized within the municipality of Ede?*

To bring food policy into practice, it is insufficient to address food issues in policies alone. Local governments need to move their policies beyond paper realities. A prerequisite to achieve this, is to institutionalize food governance ideas across governmental departments. In chapter 3, I therefore unpick how food governance ideas are institutionalized within the executive organization of a local food policy forerunner: the Dutch municipality of Ede. Drawing on discursive institutionalism, I explore how actors, ideas and discourses mutually shaped the institutionalization process.

The chapter shows that, in Ede, food governance ideas were institutionalized following a discursive-institutional spiral of three stages. First, an abstract *food profile* discourse emerged, which addressed food as a tool to create a stronger city profile, and which was institutionalized exclusively amongst the Board (comprising the Mayor and Aldermen) and a small group of policy-makers from the Strategy & Research and the City Marketing departments. Second, the discourse shifted to the less abstract, but much more broadly *integrated food policy* discourse, which was institutionalized across various departments.

Finally, a *food system* discourse emerged, which was both holistic and concrete, and which was institutionalized across an even broader range of policy departments.

The case of Ede demonstrates that food policy can be institutionalized considerably within a relatively short time span (around ten years) and that several factors are crucial in this process. To start up food policy initiatives, it seems key to have a few dedicated ideational leaders working within the local government. These leaders can advocate for stand-alone agenda items (such as children's health, or a stronger city profile) that can be used as a stepping stone for developing a holistic food systems approach and an associated governance agenda. Consequently, a government does not have to adopt a full-blown food systems approach from the start. In *keeping* food policy institutionalized, institutional innovations play a key role. Such innovations include, for example, a formal, politically binding food strategy; an associated budget; and the creation of either a specialized food team or the position of food alderman. These innovations serve to keep food governance ideas on the agenda, formalize their status as a crosscutting policy issue, and guarantee an organizational 'home' within the government. It should be kept in mind though that these innovations can result in more centralized policy-making and implementation, performed by a small designated group of actors. As civil servants may subsequently come to see food policy efforts as 'already being taken care of', or 'not my responsibility', this centralized policy-making can also *inhibit* institutionalization across local government departments. Lastly, the analysis of the case of Ede—one of the first analyses of a medium-size city on the topic— suggests that governance capacity is a much stronger determinant to a city's successful food policy institutionalization than a city's size. Chapter 3 thus shows that a city does not have to be a metropole to do successful food policy work.

The chapter also shows that while institutionalizing food policy within an organization is far from easy, *keeping* it institutionalized is particularly challenging. In chapter 3, I present several ways to help prevent local food policy from de-institutionalizing. A first way is to institutionalize food governance ideas beyond policy-making departments, across departments responsible for the delivery of public services (e.g., public space maintenance and district work). In addition to further embedding food policy, this would contribute to realizing impact on the ground. A second way is to rapidly realize formal institutions within a local government, such as via written mandates or budgeting criteria. A last, but more complicated way, is to adopt food policy as a local government responsibility through local or national legislation.

6.1.3. RQ3. To what extent did the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda lead to genuine collaboration for enhancing local food systems, and what stimulated and constrained this collaboration?

To successfully bring food policy into practice, local governments need to collaborate with other actors. Through the third research question, I explored how local governments collaborate on developing and implementing food policy within a food policy network. In chapter 4, I used Ansell and Gash's (2008) collaborative governance model to explore what collaboration and its outcomes looked like, and what stimulated and constrained the collaboration process. I studied one of the first trans-local food policy networks in continental Europe: the Dutch City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda. In the chapter, I show that collaboration in the City Deal seemed to be more about collective identity-building and learning, rather than about collective working. Therefore, the outcomes of the City Deal were predominantly processual and lacking tangible, on-the-ground impacts.

The collective identity-building and learning that the City Deal collaboration fostered included identifying motivated administrations; strengthening connections between administrations; exchanging knowledge and experience; learning about (and developing) a vision of local food policy; and agenda-setting for local food policy. Collective working, such as setting up a joint lobby, or developing and implementing joint programs, appeared harder to achieve. As a result, it was also challenging for the City Deal members to realize concrete, tangible results such as joint pilots, campaigns, or adapted legislation.

I distilled two interconnected factors that fostered collaboration in the City Deal and that may foster collaboration within other trans-local food policy networks: 1) ensuring commitment among participants and 2) striking a balance between a sectoral focus and a holistic food systems focus. Commitment among participants fosters collaboration because it forms the fuel of the process. As long as commitment is strong, participants are willing to find solutions together despite obstacles. In chapter 4, I show that commitment can be fostered through face-to-face dialogue in plenary meetings. However, I also show that meetings between small coalitions might also be effective and perhaps even more effective in fostering commitment, as in this way, participants can work more concretely on their preferred food issues with their interested peers. A second key factor for successful local food policy collaboration seems to be the balancing of a sectoral (deep) focus and a systemic (broad) focus. This entails that participants need to both work on individual food issues (that are most pressing for them), and that they apply a holistic approach in which all participants collectively address the entire food system. A too-strong emphasis on individual issues may

lead to high commitment but to siloed food policy work, while a too-holistic approach may reduce individual benefits and therefore lower the attractiveness of the network. Networks can address this balance in the institutional design at the start of their collaboration, for example, by adopting both small, thematic working groups and broad, overarching work groups.

I also distilled two interconnected factors that particularly seem to have constrained food policy collaboration in the City Deal network and that may constrain collaboration within other trans-local food policy networks: 1) a lack of shared understanding and 2) a lack of political commitment. A lack of shared understanding about the main aim and sub-goals is often caused by imbalances between participating organizations with respect to (financial) resources, power, and knowledge (Ansell and Gash 2008). The City Deal case shows that a lack of shared understanding can particularly be caused as perceptions about food issues and how to address them can differ greatly between local governments. A highly urbanized city might want to address obesity issues, while a small rural local government might want to address sustainability-related agricultural issues. A lack of shared understanding can subsequently inhibit collaboration in a food policy network, as it affects all aspects of the collaborative process and consequently impedes the process as a whole. The City Deal also shows that a lack of commitment among elected officials can constrain a food policy network, as this can confine civil servants' leeway to act; limit the network's agenda-setting and advocacy potential; and lead to the network's course of action deviating from voters' preferences. Consequently, a lack of commitment among elected officials can limit a network's impact.

6.1.4. RQ4. What opportunities and challenges did local governments encounter when implementing the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact indicator framework?

Through the fourth research question, I aimed to provide insight into local food policy evaluation, as assessing the extent to which policies advance their stated aims is the last step in bringing food policy into practice. In chapter 5, I identified the opportunities and challenges that local governments encounter when taking up and implementing the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) indicator framework to evaluate their food policies.

I show that at present, implementing the MUFPP framework is more useful for refining policy content, than for assessing policy effects. This suggests the MUPP framework serves less as a tool for gaining insight into the effectiveness and efficiency of cities' food policies and for verifying whether policy objectives have been achieved. Instead, it predominantly provides the following processual opportunities: concretizing policy priorities and goals;

creating an overview of data and data gaps; setting agendas; generating political will; and strengthening connections both between governmental departments and between the local government and its external stakeholders.

Local governments encounter a variety of challenges when implementing the MUFPP indicator framework. Two challenges stand out as particularly important for maturing food policy evaluation: the lack of relevant data, and the lack of outcome and impact assessments. Currently, among MUFPP cities using the indicator framework, many data gaps exist. Data are not available on the right scale, are not aggregated in the right way, or are simply not available at all. Data gaps are particularly problematic as they represent more than a mere lack of data (Battersby, 2020). Entrenched beliefs about food systems are reinforced by data collection and analytical decisions, and in this way beliefs and biases in data collection sustain each other, thereby constraining system change (Battersby, 2020). Collecting and unlocking data to evaluate food policies' (new) goals are thus crucial. Based on the results of Chapter 5, the second key challenge for maturing local food policy evaluation is moving the assessment of progress from what Moragues-Faus & Marceau (2018) call activity-based indicators, to outcome-based indicators. In the cities in which the MUFPP indicator framework is used, measuring progress in food policy currently happens mostly at process and activity level and not (yet) at outcome or impact level. The latter would be necessary to assess the effects of a policy and establishing causal links between the policy and effect (Knill and Tosun, 2012, p. 175).

Chapter 5 also shows that both the level of difficulty and the nature of the evaluation challenges differ between thematic food policy areas, such as food waste, health, and food production. This means that local food policy evaluation cannot be treated similarly for each thematic area and that some areas require more attention than others. The areas that require the most attention seem to be food production, consumption, distribution, and food waste. The areas that require the least attention seem to be health and governance. It also seems that more established thematic areas, with a longer tradition of policy work and data collection (such as health) are easier to evaluate than newer areas, as more data are available.

Last, the MUFPP case suggests that governments start monitoring and evaluating their food policies too late. Most of the governments using the MUFPP indicator framework neither adopted a monitoring and evaluation plan from the start nor conducted a baseline measurement. They only started monitoring and evaluating once their food policies had been implemented for some time. Without addressing evaluation promptly in the policy

process, goals can remain abstract and unclear, thereby carrying along implicit, conflicting ideas. Discussing *how* to monitor and evaluate goals, and discussing the appropriate indicators, can deepen the discussion on the definition of priorities and can hence concretize policy content.

6.1.5. *Answering the main research question*

With this dissertation I aimed to answer the main research question: ***To what extent do local governments in the Netherlands succeed in bringing food policy into practice?***

Taken together, the four research chapters show that throughout all stages of the food policy cycle, local governments in The Netherlands –especially in large cities– are succeeding in bringing food policy into practice beyond the mere expressing of ambitions. In each individual chapter, I show ways of how local governments are doing this for specific policy cycle phases. I therefore argue that food policy could be characterized as becoming a trend among local governments.

At the same time, my research illustrates that local food policy is still fragile. First, on a national level, the number of local governments engaging in food policy currently remains small, and the number of governments with a genuine systemic view of food systems – connecting issues such as health, economics, and the environment – is even smaller (chapter 2). Second, local governments that *are* bringing food policy into practice struggle in sustaining this in the long term. They encounter a variety of challenges that I summarize into three overarching ones. The first challenge is limited institutionalization. This entails the limited institutionalization of food policy into existing ideas, norms, rules, and beliefs of local governments and societies, which makes food policy prone to de-institutionalization. The second challenge is policies being too abstract and lacking urgency. By piling-up too many issues in a policy without listing instruments to achieve the goals, policies become broad, abstract and depoliticized, which turns them into toothless tigers. This is not just a challenge for policy formulation. Abstract goals and policies also hinder institutionalization, collaboration, and evaluation, as they can lead to a lack of shared understanding and perceived urgency for food system challenges among stakeholders. The third challenge is related to the second. In unhealthy and unsustainable food systems, there is an overemphasis on the holistic character of policy (processes) and an underemphasis on policy content. Local governments often focus too much on using a systems approach, which leaves the formulation of the policy problem and the ways to address it under defined. These three challenges need to be addressed to strengthen local food policy.

While a food systems approach has been lauded as the way to achieve healthier and sustainable food systems, my dissertation shows that an overemphasis on food systems thinking can also be counterproductive. Governments can come to overemphasize the holistic nature of the food policy and the policy process, thereby leaving the substantive policy problem and necessary policy course underexposed and under defined. The food systems approach can even serve as an excuse or a justification to leave policy content under defined. This can lead to the depoliticization of food system issues as the systems approach draws away the focus from the policy issues themselves, while it emphasizes the relation between these issues. While the adoption of a systems approach thus fosters the development of *holistic* policies, it also carries a risk of these policies becoming merely *symbolic* and hence not sufficiently effective to achieve real change.

6.2. Contributions to the literature

Throughout the research chapters of this dissertation, I have presented various theoretical contributions to the local food policy- and public administration literatures. In this section, I elaborate on three overarching contributions of my research: 1) connecting the study of food policy to theory formation in the study of public administration, 2) advancing the analysis of local food policy-making beyond agenda-setting and policy formulation, 3) applying a systemic, medium-*n*, comparative research design for studying local food policy.

My first and most important contribution is connecting the study of food policy to the formation of theory in public administration, thereby adding to both the local food policy- and the public administration literatures. Overall, my contribution entails that I deepened the understanding of local food policy-making by- and within local governments, by applying public administration theories to food policy-making in several ways. This is key for advancing the study of local food policy, as previous food policy research has left the variables and ideas about policy change under-conceptualized (Candel and Daugbjerg 2019). Primarily, I introduced a relatively new policy field -food policy- to the policy integration literature (chapter 2). While previous policy integration research predominantly focused on Environmental Policy Integration (EPI) (Lafferty and Hovden 2003; Jordan and Lenschow 2010), Climate Policy Integration (CPI) (Runhaar et al. 2017), and the 'health in all policies' approach (Ollila 2011), I presented one of the first studies on Food Policy Integration (FPI). In this study, I develop a conceptualization of FPI, as the integration of food challenges across a government's policy sectors (Lafferty and Hovden 2003), which I base on the approach of 'mainstreaming' (Nunan et al. 2012; Tosun and Lang 2017). I further conceptualize FPI, by applying the concept of food systems thinking (Ericksen 2008) to

define the boundaries of *what* is being integrated in local government's policies. In my policy integration study, I also connect policy integration and food policy to policy analysis, by analysing FPI along the two key components of policies: goals and instruments (Howlett and Rayner 2007).

I further connected the study of food policy to the formation of theory in public administration, by connecting the theories of institutionalization (chapter 3), collaborative governance (chapter 4), and policy evaluation (chapter 5) to the study of food policy. I showed that the discursive-institutional spiral theory (Den Besten et al. 2014) is useful for studying food policy, as it allows for the systematic analysis of the underlying dynamics of food policy institutionalization within a (local) government (chapter 3). I also showed that collaborative governance theory is helpful for analysing the functioning of food policy networks, as it can be used to identify factors that stimulate and constrain a food policy collaboration process and its outcomes (chapter 4). A last way in which I connected the food policy and public administration literatures is by studying the application of indicator frameworks of holistic policy at local level. This has been one of the first medium-*n* studies on food policy *evaluation* at local level (chapter 5).

My second contribution consists of introducing an innovation to the food policy literature. I advanced the analysis of local food policy-making beyond the stages of agenda-setting and policy formulation, and I provided comprehensive insights into the *complete* food policy cycle by combining the insights from all policy stages. Taken together, the research chapters of the dissertation provide comprehensive insights into a broad range of processes in food policy-making, including policy adoption, institutionalization, collaboration, and evaluation. This type of research is crucial for advancing the study of local food governance, as studying how food policy is brought into practice does not stop at analysing the processes around *developing* policies on paper, and as policy stages cannot be seen separately from each other.

My last scientific contribution entails one of the first systemic, medium-*n*, comparative content analyses on local food policy (chapter 2). Previous local food policy research has predominantly been single-*n* and has focused on experiences and practices of forerunners (mostly metropolises). My study was one of the first that went beyond single- and small-*n* best-practice cases and systematically analysed local food policy efforts on country level. This study was also innovative in being one of the first that systematically investigated policy content to address the level of formalization and adoption of local food policy. This type of systematic, medium-*n* studies is key for advancing the study of local food policy as it goes

beyond merely revealing individual best-practices of local governments. Instead, systemic, large and medium-*n* studies can provide insight into the extent to which local food policy is a trend on a larger scale (regional, national or supranational), the level of support this trend receives, and ultimately the sustainability of the trend.

6.3. Reflections on the research

6.3.1. Reflections on the symbiosis between science and policy-making

The research in this dissertation is characterized by a strong empirical focus and a participatory research approach. This resulted in a symbiosis of science rooted in practice and policy-making based on science. My experiences as a policy-maker helped in collecting rich data and provided additional background information that both served to improve the quality of my research and deepen the understanding of it. At the same time, being a researcher allowed me to share and apply insights both from my own research and from the scientific literature, to strengthen policy-making both in the local government of Ede and beyond. A strength of my research lies in the broad mix of methods used to conduct this participatory-oriented research. Instead of using participatory methods only, I combined participatory methods, such as organizing focus groups, and taking fieldnotes, and non-participatory methods, such as reviewing literature and a systematically analysing policy outputs.

The participatory approach benefitted the research in the following ways. First, it helped to develop well-fitted research methods, and allowed for a relatively easy data collection that led to high quality data. As a policy-maker, I understood the local decision-making processes and the local government context, which allowed me to better align my research methods with the subjects under study. It also allowed me to access data and interviewees more easily, as I knew my way around local governments' (digital) infrastructure and I often knew the key players to interview and sometimes knew them personally. In interviews, being a policy-maker allowed me to reach a deeper layer than would have been possible, would I have been a researcher only. This provided rich data and worked as follows. As I was familiar with- and understood the interests and needs of the interviewed policy-makers, they were more open. In addition, I was able to share my own experiences, which made the interviews more reciprocal and fostered interviewees openness even more. The general disposition of interviewees was open and interested. They seemed to feel their context was well understood, and I was able to share insights and good practices at the end of the interviews.

Second, the participatory approach seems to have led to a relatively high societal impact as it engaged practitioners, and insights were immediately shared and applied in practice. Being a policy-maker constantly prompted my own thinking on how local practitioners could use the studies' insights on the ground. For example, in the interview requests I sent around for one of the studies, I offered to share insights from other cities (with permission) with the interviewees. Interviewees often expressed how valuable they found it to be heard and to have their thinking prompted. As one interviewee articulated: "You know, it's been quite useful to speak to you. You're facing many of the same challenges we are. That to me actually is very encouraging" (Interviewee 2, Chapter 5). Also, several times, I linked interviewees to each other, so they could exchange experiences and lessons. Another way in which I reached out to make research insights accessible was through broader communication. I gave numerous presentations, elevator pitches and guest lectures. I organized lunch meetings, events, and wrote blog posts. I also used more creative ways of communication, such as a factsheet based on personas, and a musical fairy-tale based on my entire dissertation, which I performed in several webinars.

Third, I was able to provide unique in-depth insights into local governments bringing food policy into practice. Much local food policy research has been focusing on either societal stakeholders or on interactions between these stakeholders and governments. I have added to the local food policy literature by providing in-depth insights into dynamics within the executive organizations of governments. This type of research is needed as governments are crucial players for changing food systems, while at the same time, they remain understudied. Compared to other stakeholders, the local government holds a huge potential in fostering the transition to more sustainable food systems, as compliance with government regulation is difficult to avoid.

6.3.2. *Limitations*

Throughout the research chapters, I have discussed various methodological limitations. In this section I further elaborate on three overarching limitations. First, although my research is about public food policy-making at the local level, I predominantly addressed the executive realm, while hardly addressing the political realm. Local administrators – in the Dutch context that is the members of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen of a municipality — were studied to a limited extent only. City councils and individual council members, were not studied at all. I made this choice for two reasons. Primarily, after the politicians have set the ambitions, the civil servants are the ones who bring food policies into practice. The executive level is therefore the level to investigate when studying how and to what extent

food policy is being brought into practice. The second reason relates to the participatory approach adopted. My role as a policy-maker during this research offered the opportunity to closely interact with other policy-makers, thereby studying them from up close. Being a policy-maker and a researcher, while studying politicians would be even more complicated in terms of separating different roles and would have increased the risk of a conflict of interests. However, the executive and political realms are closely related in local food policy-making. The political realm, the interplay between the political and the executive, and the interplay between the political, the executive, and the societal realm should therefore be studied in the future.

Second, I predominantly addressed local food policy-making in one country: the Netherlands. Caution is therefore required in extrapolating conclusions to other countries, especially where the political and institutional-organizational context differs. In general, The Netherlands has relatively favourable conditions for bringing local food policy into practice, as a relatively rich country with a strong bureaucracy. In addition, physical distances between local governments in The Netherlands are small, which facilitates collaboration and learning from peers. The findings from this dissertation should therefore be interpreted as coming from a relatively favourable context. The need remains to systematically study local food policy-making in other countries, especially under more adverse conditions.

Last, while a participatory research approach provides a unique perspective, it also creates the potential for bias. The researcher can lose objectivity and distance to the community under study and collect and interpret data in a desirable way, while the community under study can come to provide socially-desirable data. My role as a policy-maker therefore could have made me identify too close with other policy-makers, and they could have provided the answers they thought they wanted me to hear. When combining the roles of researcher and policy-maker, one therefore has to constantly remain aware of one's positionality as fulfilling two roles simultaneously (Yanow 2007). Positionality is the combination of an individual's world view and the position they adopt about a research task and its social and political context (Foote and Bartell 2011; Rowe 2014). To keep this awareness, one needs to be reflexive and "interrogate the effects of their social location across research interactions" (Soedirgo and Glas 2020, 528). In the relatively more participatory studies of this dissertation (chapters 3, 4, and 5), I therefore adopted reflective practices and applied these in four moments of interpretation: experience, interpretation, analysing and reading (Yanow 2009, 279). To further avoid bias, all studies were conducted in collaboration with other scholars, with whom I continuously discussed data collection and interpretation. As a

last way to avoid bias, I performed member checks with the interviewees for the chapters based (among other sources) on interview data.

6.4. Recommendations for future research

In the separate chapters of this dissertation, I have made various suggestions for future research. In this section, I present three future research directions that follow from the dissertation as a whole: 1) in-depth studies on the political dynamics around local food policy, 2) studies on the societal impact of local food policies, 3) longitudinal research on local food policy-making.

First, researchers need to study the role of politicians throughout the local food policy cycle. In this dissertation, I have made a start with unravelling local food policy-making *within* governments. However, the scope of my research was delimited to predominantly include the executive realm. Studying the political realm was beyond the scope of the research. Local governments' executive organizations do not operate independently though. They are being governed by elected officials. These politicians greatly influence food policy-making throughout the policy cycle and can hence greatly influence whether and how healthier and more sustainable food systems are realized. It is thus crucial to better understand how politicians shape food policy-making. Researchers particularly need to address the following: how politicians influence getting and keeping food issues on the local political agenda; what motivates politicians' to push or not push certain food policy agendas; how the political will to advocate for food issues can be stimulated or inhibited; and how politicians can use their power to institutionalize food policy and sustain it in the long run.

Second, to better understand what food policies lead to on the ground, research needs to move beyond bringing food policies into practice, to the outcomes and effects of these policies in society. On the ground, policies do not always generate the effects they were intended to have, and huge differences between formulation and implementation can exist (Yanow 1996; Knill and Tosun 2012, 155–156). To assess food policy outcomes and effects, an important avenue for future research is the perceived effects of food policies among their target groups. Another avenue is whether and how food policy institutionalization processes affect policy implementation – such as service delivery – on the ground. After all, it is through the actions of street-level bureaucrats that citizens come to be affected. What food policy adoption means to street-level bureaucrats and how it shapes their practices largely remains uncharted territory.

Third, more longitudinal research on local food policy-making needs to be conducted. The research in this dissertation was exploratory in nature, which led me to adopt a systematic review and exploratory case studies. In this approach, I went beyond cross-sectional studies. In chapter 3, I followed the case of Ede for eight years, and in chapter 4, I interviewed participants both at the beginning of the City Deal and three years later. However, developing food policies, achieving policy change, and realizing impact on the ground, take time. The developments and effects of local food policy-making in the long term, should therefore be studied with longitudinal research designs and methods. At the moment, how food policy processes develop over time, and what their long term implications are, remains unexplored.

6.5. Recommendations for practitioners

In this section, I present three recommendations for local food policy-making in practice: 1) create more concrete substantive food policy content, 2) show more political leadership, and 3) further institutionalize food policy, both in and beyond existing governmental institutions. These recommendations are relevant both for civil servants and politicians.

In this dissertation, I have shown that local food policies are often abstract and do not include policy instruments (chapters 2, 3, 4). This renders policies are relatively symbolic and thus incapable of achieving real policy change (Edelman, 1964). My first recommendation is therefore that new food policies need to be more concrete, and existing policies need to be concretized. This means combining both clear choices and a holistic approach, while avoiding symbolic policies and siloed policy efforts. I argue that a policy is not good if everyone agrees with it. More substantive policies – with a clear policy course and concrete goals, sub-goals, and targets - are therefore needed. Problems, goals, and instruments have to be more clearly defined with more emphasis placed on the policy content and less on the holistic approach and integrated policy process. Realizing this requires using a stronger theoretical base for food policy development within existing frameworks. These can be specific food policy frameworks, such as the MUFPP pact and indicator framework, or more general policy frameworks. To further concretize food policies, more policy instruments need to be listed, and better balanced instrument mixes need to be adopted. Governments need to employ more authority-based and treasure-based instruments to balance the current predominant nodality- and organization-based instruments (Hood 1983). Another process that can further help to concretize food policies is to incorporate evaluation from the start of the policy process, as this can help refine policy goals (chapter 5). Caution is required, however, as getting stuck in the details at the start of

the policy process can hinder agenda-setting. Local governments therefore need to balance setting abstract ambitions that foster agenda-setting with taking up evaluation early to concretize goals (chapter 5). A last point of attention for concretizing policies is that this does not mean that food policies and food policy processes should be rigid. For a policy to be effective, the policy course, goals, and instruments need to be closely monitored and adapted when situations change or insights progress.

The second recommendation is that, to achieve food systems change on the ground, more political leadership is required. While this research shows that there are promising developments in local food policy in the Netherlands, a key inhibiting factor is the lack of political leadership and the disconnect between the executive and the political realm. Currently, within local governments, the policy-makers with expertise in addressing food system challenges primarily take the lead in developing and implementing food policies. In those processes, politicians remain relatively absent. The urgency of local food policy often remains unclear, and, along all stages of the policy cycle, politicians are not committed. Politicians can show leadership in several ways. First, they need to politicize food system challenges more, by shifting the emphasis of the food policy narrative from the holistic (but depoliticized) nature of the food system, to the pressing policy issue of unhealthy and unsustainable food systems. They also need to better illuminate food policy as a key instrument for addressing a wide range of other pressing policy issues, such as public health and climate change. Another task for politicians is to reframe food policy as taking responsibility instead of as being patronizing or controlling. Lastly, politicians need to collaborate and form coalitions with their fellow local politicians to increase leverage. For example, in the spring of 2021, the governments of Amsterdam, Ede, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht jointly requested the minister of Public Health to provide them with adequate policy instruments for creating healthy food environments in their cities (Nieuwsuur 2021).

The third and last recommendation is that, to be sustainable in the long term, food policy needs to be embedded beyond people (politicians and policy-makers) and paper (policies), into ideas, norms, rules, and beliefs of local governmental institutions, to survive changes and especially to survive elections. The continuation of food policy cannot depend on political will only. This would leave food policy too fragile, as political views and therefore the political agenda of a local government can change rapidly, especially upon elections. Elections may lead to decreasing commitment (Halliday, 2015, p. 95; Sonnino 2009) and to prior commitments of elected officials being abandoned (Yeatman, 2003). Food policies therefore need to be institutionalized within local governments' organizations. Institutional

innovations are key in this process, as they serve to keep food governance ideas on the agenda, formalize their status as a crosscutting policy issue, and guarantee an organizational 'home' in a local administration (Chapter 3). An important discussion point regarding institutionalization is whether food policy needs to be centralized in the form of a food department within a government. The key here lies in balancing deep work on food policy, while mainstreaming it in the organization at the same time. While local governments need to avoid that food policy becomes an 'island', a specific team or department can help ensure that food system challenges are embedded in existing departments, such as embedding food waste in the municipal waste service department. Another way to do this would be to appoint a coordinator, who advocates for food policy issues, the bigger picture of sustainable food systems, and who functions as a central contact point. A last way to foster institutionalization is through innovations outside the sphere of influence of a local government that are disconnected from the election cycle, and can thus bridge elections. A food policy council, civil society networks, or local ambassadors, are such examples. However, for genuinely institutionalizing food policy into existing institutions, local governments have limited instruments. The genuine institutionalization of food policy, therefore, requires that the national government acknowledges food policy as a legal responsibility of local governments, such as is also the case for public health policies.

6.6. Final conclusions

The overall aim of this dissertation was to better understand how local governments in the Netherlands are bringing food policy into practice and to explore if this is a temporary fad or a sustainable trend. I have shown that local governments are bringing food policy into practice throughout the policy cycle in a variety of ways. The first conclusion of my dissertation can therefore be summarized by its title: in the Netherlands, cities are stepping up to the plate. They are taking action.

However, bringing food policy into practice and sustaining it proves challenging. One widespread challenge that stands out particularly is the countereffect of applying a holistic, or systems approach. Focusing too much on the holistic approach in developing and implementing food policies, leaves the content underexposed and weakens the policy. Clear-cut choices are as important as addressing food systems as a whole though. We not only need policies that go beyond siloed policy efforts, those policies must not be toothless tigers either. The second main conclusion of my research is that local governments need to think harder about content, clear choices and concretization, instead of focussing on

process, comprehensiveness, and holism. Only in this way can local governments' policies truly become effective.

To realize food policies that combine a holistic approach with concrete, clear choices, we need political leadership. It is time for the politicians both on local level and on other government levels to step up to the plate. After all, despite the many policy efforts, on the ground, food systems often remain unhealthy and unsustainable. The vulnerability of these systems has been illuminated again by both the Covid-19 pandemic and the Dutch nitrogen crisis. Political leadership to change food systems on the ground is needed more than ever.

Epilogue

At the start of this research, I believed that holistic policies and co-creating policies with citizens were key for realizing healthier and more sustainable food systems. During my graduate work and in the early days of my career as a food policy-maker, I had learned that food system challenges were often addressed as siloed issues. In classes on human nutrition, I learned about the nutritional benefits of eating fish, but in animal sciences classes I learned that the seas were nearly depleted. I therefore got excited to learn about the concepts of integrated food policy, holistic food policy, and food systems thinking – integrating a range of disciplines to approach food as one boundary-spanning issue. I was completely captivated by the idea that these concepts were valuable tools to overcome contemporary food system challenges.

However, over the last five years that I worked on this dissertation, I slowly started to lose my appetite for holistic thinking. The further I got into this research, the more I started to see the flipside of this thinking and of the food systems approach that is based on it. I learnt that holistic thinking is often insufficient to solve policy issues and that even worse, it can actually be counterproductive. We should acknowledge holistic thinking for its power to overcome contradicting policy aims and we should certainly not make the mistake to dismiss the holistic approach altogether. However, this PhD has taught me that we need to remove the hyper focus from holism in food policy-making and use more caution when applying it. I learned that in trying to avoid food policies that are incoherent, detached, and contradictory, the pendulum can also swing too far and create a new problem: weak policies that lack political responsibility.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Data collection and analysis protocol (Chapter 2)

Replication materials are available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.17632/ymgpzzc973.1>

This data collection protocol has been inspired by the protocol of Lesnikowski et al (2018).

Phase 1: policy output search

The objective of the first phase was to collect all municipal documents that intentionally target the functioning of the food system. Documents were collected for all Dutch municipalities with >100.000 inhabitants (n=31, based on number of inhabitants in April 2017). The defining feature of a policy intentionally targeting the food system is whether any of the below activities or outcomes are explicitly addressed:

Food system activities:

1. Producing food
2. Processing and packaging food
3. Distributing and retailing food
4. Consuming food

Food system outcomes contributing to:

5. Food security
 - Food utilisation
 - Food access
 - Food availability

(Ericksen 2008)

We collected municipal documents that have been formally adopted by a city council (policy outputs). We excluded all non-policy outputs, such as press releases. We retrieved policy outputs from municipal councils' information systems (Raadsinformatiesysteem (RIS) in Dutch). The assumption underlying the selection of documents from the RIS is that to get adopted, any decision has to formally pass the municipal council and will then be made publicly available. All documents until 30-10-2017 were included, using the same time range for all documents. The following search strategy was used to identify relevant policy outputs:

1. Via Google, navigate to municipal council information system of municipality; the "raadsinformatiesysteem" (RIS) by entering search query: "[name municipality] raadsinformatiesysteem". The vast majority of municipalities use the program "NOTUBIZ" for their RIS. RIS can be recognized by "NOTUBIZ" lay-out and logo.
2. Search RIS for documents referring to "food"* (see Figure 2).
3. For the first 100 hits: download all policy outputs (e.g. strategies, plans, adopted motions, adopted amendments, board letters to the council) that contain search terms and comply with policy output inclusion requirement.

Food strategies that do not appear in the RIS themselves, but are listed in the decision list of municipal council meeting minutes, are added to the dataset.

Documents that are prerequisites for policies, but are not actual policies, are also excluded.

4. Save all downloaded policy outputs to google drive synchronized folder "[name municipality] policy outputs". If document does not mention adoption year, then include year in title of saved file (document titles are usually automatically generated by RIS, for example: document 1 or type=pdf).
5. Documents for which it is uncertain whether they belong to one of the two categories are saved in a separate folder "[name municipality] doubt documents". These documents are categorized at the end of the data collection process, by investigating the document more thoroughly, using additional information from the municipal website, the internet in general, or by contacting the municipal registry office. Concept policy documents for which it is uncertain if there is a definitive policy output document are also saved in this folder to check at the end of the data collection. If an error occurs when opening a document, the name and date of the document are saved in the excel search log to check later.
6. At the end of the data collection process, a duplicate check is done with the application 'duplicate finder app' and all duplicate files are deleted.

* Exact query in RIS system:

Search term: [voedsel OR voeding OR food]

Time range: until 30-10-2017

Sorting mode 'relevance' is used (this is the default mode)

The screenshot shows the 'Zoekresultaten' (Search results) page of the RIS system. At the top, the search term 'voedsel OR voeding OR food' is entered in the 'Zoekwoorden' field, with a 'ZOEKEN' button and a link to 'Minder opties'. Below this, there are several filter sections. The first section contains checkboxes for 'besluitenlijsten', 'evenement', 'Dossiers', 'Moties, Amendementen en Toezeggingen', and 'Raadvragen'. The second section has dropdown menus for 'Vergadercategorie:' and 'Zoek op spreker:'. The third section has dropdown menus for 'Documenttype', 'Partijen', and 'Beleidsveld'. The fourth section has input fields for 'Zaakcode', 'Rubriek', and 'Geolocatie'. The fifth section has a 'Zoek op thema:' input field and date pickers for 'Van:' (dd-mm-jjjj) and 'Tot:' (30-10-2017).

Figure 2. Image of RIS search function (NOTUBIZ) with exact query.

Policy output inclusion requirements

1. Policy output explicitly targets the functioning of the current or future food system and therefore the primary outcome of food security (availability, access, utilization and the stability of these three factors over time).

Policy output grounds for exclusion

1. Policy output does not address the functioning of the food system and therefore the primary outcome of food security (e.g. policy output with reference to food that addresses feed for animals or plants or “non-Food”).
2. *Policy statement or policy is still in the proposal or planning stage.* A policy output must have been formally adopted by the municipal council.
3. *Policy output only includes actions taking place at another level of government or outside government.* Local governments sometimes participate in regional or national-level initiatives, but if this action is being led at another level of government or by a non-governmental partner then it is to be excluded.

Included

- Vision documents
- Strategy documents
- Amendments (to an already adopted policy)
- Policy outputs where the municipality is a co-author together with other parties (public or private (for example: a regional vision document developed by several municipalities))
- Approaches/activity programmes

Frequently occurring documents that were excluded

Documents that form the prerequisite for policy/are no policy outputs

- Annual accounts/financial statements
- Interim reports
- Budget documents
- Framework policy documents
- City council programs/agreements
- Motions
- (Rejected) council proposals
- Initiative proposals
- Minutes of municipal council meetings without decision list
- Studies conducted/reports by consultancy agencies commissioned by the municipality
- Responses to council questions by members of board of mayor and aldermen
- Municipal council committee documents
- Evaluation documents
- Monitoring/progress reporting reports/effect reports
- RIS webpages without documents
- Memos
- Formal commitments
- Reactions of the board of mayor and aldermen including commitments, elaborations, reactions to initiative proposals.
- Disposals of motions
- Board of mayor and aldermen proposals for notification to city council
- Annotations

Documents not addressing functioning of the food system

- Food referring to alcohol (stimulant, not food)

- Food referring to food production in the far past (for example: archeological reports about hunters and gatherers or medieval times)
- Food referring to the name of a company (for example: Bernell Food)
- Food referring to the general description of a business category (such as in a standard description of an eating venue or a type of company, for example: <https://groningen.raadsinformatie.nl/document/4905533/1#search=%22voedsel OR voeding OR food%22>)
- Implementation of the new beverage and hospitality law (DHW) from 2013
- Crisis strategies (compulsory to address the provision of primary necessities of life (food, drinking water, utilities), standardized in crisis documents

Documents authored by other stakeholders than the municipality

- Authored by sublevel (district) councils of a municipality
- Authored by the municipal audit committee
- Authored by the municipal health service
- Authored by the center for environmental education

Phase 2: content analysis

In the second phase we conducted a ‘content analysis’ to explore goals and instruments targeting the functioning of the food system in the selected policy outputs. Firstly, we coded policy outputs for 5 indicators (see Table 1: ‘codebook’ for more detailed information):

Descriptive

1. Municipality name
2. Year of adoption

Interpretive

3. Goal focus area
4. Goal abstraction level
5. Instrument type

The following coding protocol was used:

1. Upload documents identified in data collection phase 1, that comply with inclusion criteria to *Atlas.ti* 7 for coding.
2. Per document assign codes of the descriptive indicators to first page of document.
3. Go through each document using the Atlas search function for the key terms Voedsel, Voeding, Food.
4. For each key term match, read corresponding paragraph and assign codes for indicators ‘Goal focus area’, ‘Goal abstraction level’ and ‘Policy instrument type’, where they apply. If document does not contain any goals targeting the functioning of the food system, it is excluded from analysis. If policy output addresses food-related societal challenges exclusively (e.g. urban food strategy), then entire document is read and coded.
5. When coding is complete, transfer data to Excel and analyse.

Table 1 Codebook

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
Municipality name	Name of the municipality authoring the policy output document.	Open	The Hague	RIS (document collected from municipality's RIS)	
Year of adoption	Year policy output was adopted, as deduced from publication date in document.	2017	2013	Entire document: publication year as stated in document.	If publication year and adoption year differ, then adoption year is taken into account.
		2016			
		2015			
		2014			
		2013			
		2012			
		2011			
		2010			
		2009			
		2008			
		2007			
		2006 and older			

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
Goal focus area		Agriculture	Supporting/stimulating modern, sustainable, innovative agricultural businesses. (Urban food strategy, Ede)	Policy goals throughout entire document (sentence or paragraph level in paragraphs/chapters that address the functioning of the food system); quotations are same as for variable 'goal abstraction level'.	Non- exclusive, codes developed inductively.
		Biodiversity	Strengthening biodiversity. (Urban food strategy, Groningen)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Circularity	<p>Close cycle via composting</p> <p>In 2030 the circular idea goes without saying. The cycle of garden waste and vegetable waste can for a large part be closed. This waste does not leave the city, but it is locally converted into compost and used again in Amersfoort. In the short term we are going to experiment with composting projects in various neighbourhoods (Community composting). This is possible at the petting zoo, at the allotment garden complexes and at urban agriculture locations, in this way, we make use of the existing infrastructure. The participants get free organic compost as a reward. (Green vision, Amersfoort)</p>		
		Consumption healthy	<p>All Almere children aged 0-12 have breakfast and have a healthy 10-o'clock snack (fruit and water). (Program plan "healthy youth in a healthy city". Almere)</p>		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Consumption sustainable	So that the number of young people who are open to sustainable living, eating and moving increases. (Youth Floriade start document, Almere)		
		Cultural enrichment	There are more food-related activities in the centre: there is a local market and / or a shop with local products in the centre; there are local products in restaurants; the number of events related to Food has grown. ('Lively centre' program, Ede)		
		Economic development	A contribution to strengthening of the regional economy. (Urban food strategy, Groningen)		
		Education	Encourage that in 2020, 50% of schools in Ede to participate in food education projects. (Urban food strategy, Ede)		
			More educational visits to farms. (Urban agriculture strategy, Rotterdam)		
			Facilitate that in 2020 it will be possible for every child in Ede to use school gardens for at least one year. (Urban food strategy, Ede)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Employment	Stimulating and facilitating that the economic food cluster can develop strongly, so that the employment in the Ede food sector develops more strongly than nationally. (Urban food strategy, Ede)		
		Food security	The distribution of food to households that qualify according to the regulations of Haarlemmermeer municipality, that run the risk of having insufficient and/or inadequate food at their disposal. (Subsidy policy framework, Haarlemmermeer)		
		Food waste	Food waste in the catering industry has been reduced to a minimum in Leiden. The "kitchen of Leiden" (see hereafter) has become a concept that stands for the careful/prudent handling of food. (Leiden sustainable 2030)		
		Gardens	Stimulate school gardening, allotment gardening (Urban agriculture strategy, Rotterdam)		
		Healthy environment	Amsterdam wants to be a healthy, vital city with a sustainable and healthy food		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
			environment. (Urban food strategy, Amsterdam)		
			More edible greenery in neighbourhoods. (Urban agriculture strategy, Rotterdam)		
			We will stimulate schools more to achieve the 'Healthy School' vignette. Many schools are already working on health in their own ways. For example by stimulating healthy eating or performing a bullying protocol, but it is even better to tackle this in a structural, integrated way. (Local health policy, Amersfoort)		
		Health general	Healthy living: We stimulate healthy activities with regard to exercise and nutrition and make connections between these activities. (Neighbourhood action plan, Arnhem)		
		Initiatives	Bring together and coordinate urban food initiatives. (Urban food strategy, Groningen)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Landscape	Vital countryside (cultural heritage, preserving landscapes with farms). (Urban food strategy, The Hague)		
		Literacy	Increasing knowledge about, awareness around and use of healthy and sustainable food among residents. (Urban food strategy, Ede)		
		City marketing	Strengthen Groningen's role and position as an agro-food city (Vision and strategy bio based economy, Groningen)		
		Overweight	The relationship that we as Amsterdammers have with food is more than just based on consumption. For the municipality healthy food is an essential part in the fight against obesity, food festivals enrich the cultural character of the city, a food distribution centre like the Food Centre provides jobs. (Urban food strategy, Amsterdam)		
			In 2012 the number of overweight and obese children has not increased anymore. (Sports plan, Amsterdam)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
			Promoting healthy behaviour among residents of the three neighbourhoods and in this way contribute to the reduction of avoidable health differences. (Health strategy: working together on health, Tilburg)		
		Short chains	A local, healthy and affordable offer of food is brought closer to the consumer and made more visible. (program plan "healthy youth in a healthy city", Almere)		
		Social function	Strengthen the social connection in districts, neighbourhoods and streets. (Urban food strategy, Groningen)		
		Social inclusion	Meaningful daytime activities We use urban agriculture more for meaningful daytime activities. There are opportunities here for people with a distance to the labour market to do meaningful work and broaden their network. (Green vision, Amersfoort)		
		Sustainability general	A contribution to a more sustainable city. (Urban food strategy, Groningen)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
Goal abstraction level	Level of abstraction of the policy goal(s). A policy goal is the basic aim or expectation a government has in deciding to pursue (or not) some course of action (Walsh 1994)	Taste	Enjoying', taste and experience, fun and education, discover and enjoy. (Green vision, Amersfoort)		
		Urban agriculture	Stimulating and facilitating that in 2020 there will be more than thirty urban agriculture initiatives in the municipality of Ede. (Urban food strategy, Ede)		
		Urban-rural	A strengthened relationship between the city and farmers and horticulturists in the region. (Urban food strategy, Amsterdam)		
		Abstract policy aim	Healthy food environment: (Implementation plan healthy weight, Amsterdam)	Policy goals throughout entire document (sentence or paragraph level in chapters, addressing the functioning of the food system); quotations are same as for variable 'Goal focus area'.	Exclusive, codes developed deductively from source (Howlett 2009, 17).
		Specific policy target	Children (75%)/youngsters (70%)/adults(70%) eat vegetables at least 6 times a week. (Local health policy, Nijmegen)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Main policy aim	Amsterdam wants to be a healthy, vital city with a sustainable and healthy food environment. (Urban food strategy, Amsterdam)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
Instrument type	Instrument types. Instruments are the techniques a government uses to attain its goals, the 'HOW' (Walsh 1994).	Advisory group	<p>Urban working groups</p> <p>In order to carry out the activities and achieve the results, urban work groups -in which we ask both public and private partners to participate- are set up for three aspects. The other activities are assigned to an officer, who puts JOGG on the agenda mainly through existing meeting groups, and who provides coordination.</p> <p>The three urban working groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group connection care-prevention, with the aim to monitor the chain agreements made, to create awareness among care partners, to monitor the supply and to carry out a pilot to introduce additional measurements and evaluation moments. • Working Group Outreach <p>Parents low SES -9 months - 4 yrs: this working group makes an action plan and develops a strategy to better reach this target group.</p>	Policy instruments throughout entire document, referring/linked to policy goals addressing the functioning of the food system	Non-exclusive, developed abductively from source (Henstra 2016; Lesnikowski et al. 2018).

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy and Communication Working Group JOGG: this working group discusses the strategy on how we can communicate about JOGG in Utrecht, in connection with the context (other programs, neighbourhoods) and gives advice/ thinks about applying social marketing in the neighbourhoods. (Program plan healthy weight 2012-2014, Utrecht)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Brokering	Innovating in that centre is done by bringing together education, business, government and citizens. The GWIA supports the start-up of projects, connects parties, seeks funding and offers physical research and innovation facilities. (BL Healthy Youth in a healthy city program plan, Almere)		
		Communication	Tips and stories about healthy lifestyle in the municipal newspaper, the municipal TV program and on social media. (AAGG Implementation Plan 2017, Amsterdam)		
		Direct expenditures	Realizing so-called taste tables (picnic-like tables). At these taste tables, which are used by producers/sales points of regional products, purchased regional products can be consumed immediately. (Implementation program 'The soul of Brabant', 's Hertogenbosch)		
		Education and training	At the Amsterdam Healthy Food Conference, state of the art knowledge and insights will be revealed by leading scientists and		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
			experts (AAGG Implementation Plan 2017, Amsterdam)		
		Events	Food Event: A food event will be organized for low-income children in Amsterdam in 2017. (AAGG Implementation Plan 2017, Amsterdam)		
		Role model	Use role models that inspire young people to a adopt a healthier lifestyle (AAGG implementation plan 2017, Amsterdam)		
		Expert consultation	In 2010 we asked the British author Carolyn Steel to translate the vision that she developed in her book "The Hungry City" for a food-based rethinking of the relationship between the city and the region, to the local situation of the City and the its surroundings. (Urban food strategy, Groningen)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Financial resources: funds, grants and subsidies	Neighbourhood and courtyard gardens are very suitable for producing food, fruit and flowers close by. Residents are encouraged to set these up together, among other things through the subsidy scheme "Sustainability by neighbourhoods in The Hague". (Urban food strategy, The Hague)		
		Information campaign	The Hopla! Campaign was set up to encourage the youngest children to eat healthy and exercise a lot (municipal approach to obesity of the Hague youth 2006-2009, The Hague)		
		Information point	Municipal contact point urban agriculture in Sustainable The Hague. Linked to Duurzaam Den Haag, an urban agriculture employee is employed for one year as of 1 September 2013. Initiators can go here with questions and ideas and information/advice about locations, regulations and (im)possibilities, financing opportunities and if necessary quickly get in touch with the right people/organizations in the city		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
			or within the municipality. (Urban food strategy, The Hague)		
		Institutional reform/human capacity	To appoint a (temporary) official, who investigates which efforts are needed to give more attention to healthy nutrition in general -and malnutrition in particular, among the elderly, in daily practice. To also increase the action perspective among professionals in the field -such as district nurses, welfare workers, district team members, but also caregivers- the municipality thinks of developing a directive with clear steps in signalling, task division and follow-up. (Implementation program 'Vital City, Rotterdam)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Land and spatial planning	The municipality helps with the search for suitable locations, preparation of the ground and advice with the construction. (Urban food strategy, The Hague)		
		Legislation/regulation	Action: the municipality adjusts rules that impede the growth of urban agriculture; if the municipality is responsible for this. Where the rules of other governments are hindering, these authorities are urged to adjust them. (Urban agriculture strategy, Rotterdam)		
		Lobby	Together with the FoodValley Region, Ede contributes to the European lobby, especially around the theme of food. (Urban food strategy, Ede)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital urban agriculture map <p>The information on urban agriculture will be further developed on the website of duurzaamendenhaag.nl at the end of 2013 and in the first quarter of 2014, an urban agriculture map will be placed on this site where current projects and initiatives in The Hague will be made visible. With the help of a tool, the site informs users about follow-up steps, regulations, co-financiers and access to required knowledge. Furthermore, information is available to consumers about sustainable regional products available in the city and region. Initiators themselves can place information on the website. (Urban food strategy, The Hague)</p>		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Monitoring, research and evaluation	<p>In 2013/2014 the offer of municipal nature and environmental lessons will be evaluated and updated. In these lessons the theme (healthy) food and urban and regional agriculture will also get a place, in line with the goals of the Healthy Weight program. Thereby, the preparation of nutrition- and cooking lessons are included. There are a several initiatives in this area (Cooking School, Higher Hotel School, Morgenstond - cooking with children and study on FISH, see p. 13) that are excellent to link to the nature and environmental education offer of the municipality. (Urban food strategy, The Hague)</p>		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Participatory governance	Involve youngsters themselves in the action plan We find it important to involve youngsters themselves. In this way we want to increase the effectiveness of the projects and hence increase the chance that a healthy lifestyle becomes normal for more and more young people, also on the long term. We are still looking for a good way to do this and also present this question to the youngsters themselves. This may result in a 'young (editors)council'. (Health implementation plan, Amsterdam)		
		Pilot	Pilot Jamie Oliver's cooking class (Aanpak gezond gewicht Uitvoeringsplan 2015-2018, Amsterdam)		
		Political agreement	On October 14, 2014: is the Arnhem urban agriculture manifesto was offered to the mayor and the alderman responsible. (Agenda current state of affairs, Arnhem)		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Procurement	<p>Healthy sports climate</p> <p>Sports and exercise are good for body and soul. In collaboration with the GGD, among others, we also pay attention to other aspects of a healthy lifestyle, such as nutrition in various sports and exercise programs. We want to set the right example within the sport itself. The Healthy Sports Canteen is a good example to tempt athletes and visitors into more healthy eating and drinking behaviour. Together with, among others, the Nutrition Center and NOC * NSF we are working on a healthier food and drink offer in sports canteens. Municipal sporting events where youth up to the age of 12 are actively involved or where the audience consists of 25% youth must be free from advertisement for unhealthy products. This means: those products that children find attractive. (Sports vision, Amsterdam)</p>		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
		Program	For youngsters between eight and sixteen who are overweight and who are not (yet) motivated to do something about their obesity, there is the guidance program 'What Is Your Style?' (WIJS), which has been developed together with health insurance companies and the The Hague university for applied sciences. (Public health vision 2012-2014, The Hague)		
		Strategic planning	Something new is the Utrecht food strategy, which links up with the public interest in producing and consuming food. Here, too, there are various possibilities for the healthy weight approach. (Program plan healthy weight, Utrecht)		
		Social marketing	Social marketing Thinking as a marketer and thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the target audience in order to ultimately achieve certain behavioural goals for that target audience, that's what social marketing is all about. Utrecht experiments with this and implements the principles of		

Code	Definition	Code options (Atlas coding)	Example	Source of information	Extra info
			social marketing in the local situation. (Program plan healthy weight, Utrecht)		

Appendix B. Overview of results per municipality (Chapter 2)

List of municipalities reviewed (all Dutch municipalities >100,000 inhabitants)

1.	Amsterdam	21.	Leiden
2.	Rotterdam	22.	Maastricht
3.	Den Haag	23.	Dordrecht
4.	Utrecht	24.	Ede
5.	Eindhoven	25.	Alphen aan den Rijn
6.	Tilburg	26.	Leeuwarden
7.	Groningen	27.	Alkmaar
8.	Almere	28.	Emmen
9.	Breda	29.	Westland
10.	Nijmegen	30.	Delft
11.	Apeldoorn	31.	Venlo
12.	Haarlem		
13.	Enschede		
14.	Arnhem		
15.	Amersfoort		
16.	Zaanstad		
17.	's-Hertogenbosch		
18.	Haarlemmermeer		
19.	Zwolle		
20.	Zoetermeer		

Table 2. Overview of results per municipality (municipalities without goals excluded)

Almere			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
12	Circularity	Food security	Events
	City marketing	Health general	Financial resources
	Consumption healthy	Health general	Monitoring, research and evaluation
	Consumption sustainable	Overweight children	Political agreement
	Food security	Overweight lifestyle	Program
	Health general	Urban agriculture	Strategic planning
	Healthy environment	Edible greens	
	Healthy environment	General	
	Healthy environment	School food	
	Overweight children		
	Overweight general		
	Overweight Lifestyle		
Alphen a/d Rijn	Short chains		
	Urban agriculture		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
1	Biodiversity	Short chains	No instruments
	Education general		
	Landscape		
	Short chains		
	Urban agriculture		
	Urban-rural		

Amersfoort			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
5	<p>Agriculture</p> <p>Circularity</p> <p>Education general</p> <p>Gardens</p> <p>Health general</p> <p>Healthy environment school food</p> <p>Initiatives</p> <p>Landscape</p> <p>Overweight general</p> <p>Short chains</p> <p>Social inclusion</p> <p>Taste</p> <p>Urban agriculture</p>	Overweight general	<p>Brokering</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Land and spatial planning</p> <p>Map</p> <p>Political agreement</p> <p>Strategic planning</p>
Amsterdam			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
12	<p>Circularity</p> <p>City marketing</p> <p>Consumption healthy</p> <p>Consumption sustainable</p> <p>Economic development</p> <p>Education general</p> <p>Employment</p>	<p>Circularity</p> <p>Consumption healthy</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Food waste</p> <p>Health general</p> <p>Healthy environment general</p> <p>Initiatives</p>	<p>Program</p> <p>Monitoring, research and evaluation</p> <p>Education and training</p> <p>Financial resources</p> <p>Brokering</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>information campaign</p>

Food security	Literacy	Strategic planning
Food waste	Overweight children	institutional reform/human capacity
Health general	Overweight general	Pilot
Healthy environment edible greens	Short chains	Legislation/regulation
Healthy environment general	Sustainability general	Participatory governance
Healthy environment school food	Urban agriculture	Direct expenditures
Initiatives	Urban-rural	Procurement
Literacy		Events
Overweight children		Information point
Overweight general		Lobby
Overweight Lifestyle		Political agreement
Short chains		Expert consultation
Sustainability general		Land and spatial planning
Urban agriculture		
Urban-rural		

Apeldoorn		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Instruments
1	Consumption healthy Health general Literacy	No instruments

Arnhem		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Instruments

4	Consumption healthy Consumption sustainable Education general Food security Healthy environment edible greens Healthy environment general Literacy Overweight children Overweight lifestyle	Overweight children	Brokering Education and training Financial resources Land and spatial planning Monitoring, research and evaluation Pilot Procurement Program
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Breda			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
2	Consumption healthy Consumption sustainable Healthy environment Edible greens Overweight children Overweight Lifestyle Short chains	Consumption healthy Consumption sustainable Overweight children Overweight Lifestyle Short chains	Brokering Communication Events Information point Monitoring, research and evaluation Participatory governance Program Role model Strategic planning

Den Haag			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
3	Consumption healthy	Consumption healthy	Brokering

	Economic development	Economic development	Communication
	Gardens	Gardens	Direct expenditures
	Healthy environment school food	Healthy environment edible greens	Education and training
	Overweight children	Overweight children	Financial resources
	Overweight general	Overweight general	information campaign
	Overweight Lifestyle	Overweight lifestyle	Information point
	Urban agriculture	Urban agriculture	institutional reform/human capacity
			Land and spatial planning
			Map
			Monitoring, research and evaluation
			Pilot
			Program
			Role model
			Social marketing
			Strategic planning

Dordrecht		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Instruments
1	Literacy	No instruments

Ede		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Instruments
14	Agriculture	Events

Circularity	Consumption healthy	Financial resources
City marketing	Consumption sustainable	Information campaign
Consumption healthy	Economic development	Land and spatial planning
Consumption sustainable	Health general	Lobby
Cultural enrichment	Literacy	Monitoring, research and evaluation
Economic development	Short chains	Program
Education farm	Social function	Role model
Education general	Urban-rural	Strategic planning
Education School gardens		
Employment		
Food waste		
Healthy environment general		
Healthy environment school food		
Initiatives		
Literacy		
Overweight general		
Short chains		
Social function		
Social inclusion		
Urban agriculture		
Urban-rural		

Eindhoven

# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
1	Gardens	Healthy environment school food	No instruments

Healthy environment school food Social function Urban agriculture			
Enschede			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
1	Healthy environment General Overweight children Overweight Lifestyle	No Focus areas (main aims)	No instruments
Groningen			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
7	Biodiversity City marketing Economic development Food security Food waste Health general Healthy environment Edible greens Healthy environment general Initiatives Literacy Short chains Social function Sustainability general Urban agriculture	Biodiversity City marketing Economic development Health general Healthy environment general Initiatives Social function Sustainability general	Expert consultation Financial resources information campaign institutional reform/human capacity Monitoring, research and evaluation Political agreement Strategic planning

Haarlem			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
2	Consumption healthy Economic development Food security Health general Sustainability general Urban agriculture	Consumption healthy	Financial resources Pilot
Haarlemmermeer			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
2	Food security Overweight children Overweight Lifestyle	No Focus areas (main aims)	Financial resources Monitoring, research and evaluation Program
Leeuwarden			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
5	Circularity Education general Employment Health general Healthy environment Edible greens Healthy environment general Healthy environment school food	Health general Healthy environment general Overweight general Short chains	Events Pilot Program

Overweight children
Overweight general
Short chains

Leiden			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
2	Economic development Education general Food waste Overweight children	No Focus areas (main aims)	Education and training Events Information campaign Role model

Maastricht			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
3	Consumption healthy Healthy environment Healthy environment Edible greens Healthy environment general Literacy Overweight children Overweight general Overweight Lifestyle	No Focus areas (main aims)	No instruments

Nijmegen			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
3	Consumption healthy Health general	Overweight lifestyle	Brokering Events

	<p>Healthy environment Edible greens</p> <p>Healthy environment General</p> <p>Overweight Children</p> <p>Overweight Lifestyle</p>	institutional reform/human capacity
Rotterdam		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)
4	<p>Consumption healthy</p> <p>Economic development</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Healthy environment Edible greens</p> <p>Healthy environment General</p> <p>Initiatives</p> <p>Literacy</p> <p>Overweight General</p> <p>Overweight Lifestyle</p> <p>Short chains</p> <p>Urban agriculture</p>	<p>Economic development</p> <p>Health general</p> <p>Healthy environment general</p> <p>Overweight general</p> <p>Brokering</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Education and training</p> <p>Events</p> <p>Financial resources</p> <p>information campaign</p> <p>institutional reform/human capacity</p> <p>Land and spatial planning</p> <p>Legislation/regulation</p> <p>Lobby</p> <p>Map</p> <p>Monitoring, research and evaluation</p> <p>Political agreement</p> <p>Procurement</p> <p>Program</p> <p>Strategic planning</p> <p>Role model</p>

's Hertogenbosch			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
2	Circularity Consumption sustainable Cultural enrichment Economic development Employment Food waste Healthy environment General Initiatives Short chains Taste Urban agriculture Urban-rural	No Focus areas (main aims)	Brokering Direct expenditures Events information campaign Strategic planning

Tilburg			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
2	Consumption healthy Overweight Children Overweight General Overweight Lifestyle	No Focus areas (main aims)	Education and training information campaign Program Strategic planning

Utrecht			
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)	Instruments
1	Consumption healthy	Consumption healthy	Advisory group

Education General	Brokering
Education School gardens	Communication
Gardens	Direct expenditures
Health general	Education and training
Literacy	Financial resources
Overweight Children	institutional reform/human capacity
Overweight Lifestyle	Monitoring, research and evaluation
	Participatory governance
	Pilot
	Political agreement
	Procurement
	Program
	Role model
	Social marketing
	Strategic planning

Venlo		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)
1	Circularity City marketing Healthy environment Edible greens Short chains	No Focus areas (main aims) No instruments

Zaanstad		
# of policy outputs	Focus areas (all goals)	Focus areas (main aims)
2	Circularity	City marketing Direct expenditures

City marketing	Healthy environment general	Education and training
Consumption healthy	Literacy	information campaign
Consumption sustainable	Sustainability general	Monitoring, research and evaluation
Economic development	Urban-rural	Political agreement
Employment		Procurement
Healthy environment Edible greens		Strategic planning
Healthy environment General		
Literacy		
Short chains		
Social inclusion		
Sustainability general		
Taste		
Urban-rural		

Appendix C. Interview guide for the City Deal collaborative process and outcomes (Chapter 4)

Interview question policy maker 2016	Interview question policy maker 2019	Question	Description	Condition/Dimension	Variable
1. What amount of money can you contribute to the City Deal? 2. What knowledge can you contribute to the City Deal?	1. What was strong and less strong about the starting conditions of the City Deal?	Are there differences between actors in resources, knowledge and power at start? What are actors' motivations to join this City Deal?	Differences between actors in resources, knowledge and power present at start Actors' motivations to join collaboration	Power-Resource-Knowledge asymmetries Incentives for and constraints on participation	Starting conditions
1. What is your organization's motivation to join this City Deal? 2. What are the expected benefits for your organization? 3. What are the constraints on your participation?	1. How was the relationship between you and other stakeholders prior to the City Deal?	What trust level is there between actors?	Initial trust level between actors before start of collaboration	Prehistory of cooperation or conflict	
1. Have you collaborated before with members of this City Deal? 2. How did the collaboration go? 3. How would you describe the formal and informal relationships among City Deal members prior to the initiative?					

	<p>1. What was strong and what was less strong about the City Deal's institutional design?</p> <p>2. Do you think relevant stakeholders were missing in the City Deal?</p> <p>3. Did you feel your input was being taken seriously when decisions had to be taken?</p>		Actors have access to collaboration forum	Participatory inclusiveness	Institutional design
	<p>1. Why was the City Deal a relevant network to join for you?</p> <p>2. How does the City Deal relate to other forums? Is there duplication/overlap with other networks?</p>	Do actors perceive the City Deal as an exclusive, unique collaboration?	Forum is interesting enough to join/other forums available	Forum exclusiveness	
	<p>1. What do you think about the organizational structure as adopted in the City Deal text?</p> <p>2. How do you look back at the working groups and working in them?</p> <p>3. What were the ground rules of the City Deal in your opinion and do you think they were followed throughout the City Deal period?</p>	<p>What do actors think about initial rules?</p> <p>What about division in clusters?</p>	Initial rules on how to behave during collaboration	Clear ground rules	
	<p>1. Were decision making processes in the City Deal transparent and accessible to you?</p>	Were processes transparent for actors?	Actors have access to the collaboration's decision-making processes	Process transparency	

	<p>1. What was strong and less strong about leadership in the City Deal?</p> <p>2. Has the leadership changed since the start of the City Deal? How?</p> <p>3. Have the leaders empowered the group?</p> <p>4. Have the leaders connected the group?</p> <p>5. How was dealt with conflict among members?</p>	<p>Was there strong leadership in the City Deal?</p>	<p>Leaders actively perform leadership activities to enhance collaboration</p>	<p>Leadership activities</p>	<p>Leadership</p>
	<p>1. What was strong and less strong about the collaborative process in the City Deal?</p> <p>2. How would you describe the current level of trust among members?</p> <p>3. Has this level of trust changed over the course of the City Deal?</p> <p>4. What caused this?</p>	<p>Did actors in the City Deal trust each other?</p>	<p>Actors trust that other actors will refrain from opportunistic behaviour</p>	<p>Trust-building</p>	<p>Collaborative process</p>
	<p>1. Did you feel committed to the City Deal?</p> <p>2. For which aspects of the City Deal did you feel responsible?</p> <p>3. How do you experience the level of commitment among the members?</p> <p>4. How would you describe the level of commitment of your organization to the process?</p>	<p>Did actors feel ownership towards aspects of the City Deal?</p>	<p>Involved actors feel ownership towards initiative</p>	<p>Commitment</p>	

	<p>1. What do you understand the City Deal objective to be in practice?</p> <p>2. Do you think all City Deal members had the same understanding of this objective or were there differences?</p>	<p>Was there a shared understanding between actors about the objective of the City Deal?</p>	<p>The actors agree on what they collectively want to achieve</p>	<p>Shared understanding</p>	
	<p>1. What were the most relevant content and processual outcomes for your organization that the City Deal achieved?</p> <p>2. What were most important content and processual outcomes for the City Deal as a whole, that the City Deal achieved?</p>	<p>What were most relevant content and processual outcomes the City Deal achieved?</p>	<p>Intermediate outcomes the collaboration has produced (content and processual)</p>	<p>Intermediate outcomes</p>	
	<p>1. Are you satisfied with the face-to-face communication in the City Deal, in terms of frequency and quality?</p> <p>2. Was geography a hindrance to meeting?</p>	<p>Was the face to face communication between actors good in terms of frequency and quality?</p>	<p>Thick 'real life' communication between involved actors</p>	<p>Face-to-face dialogue</p>	
	<p>1. To what extent do you feel the initial objective of the City Deal has been achieved?</p> <p>2. What outcomes did the City Deal achieve?</p> <p>3. What is the most important outcome achieved for you, for your organization, and for the group in total?</p> <p>4. What non-tangible outcomes did the City Deal achieve?</p>	<p>Has the City Deal collaboration achieved its intended objective and what other outcomes did it lead to?</p>	<p>Achievement of the collaboration's intended objective and other processual and content outcomes</p>	<p>Intended objective and outcomes</p>	<p>Outcomes</p>

	5. Have there been any unintended outcomes?					
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Appendix D. Codebook (Chapter 5)

Code (non-mutually exclusive)		Description	Example quote
Perceived opportunities			
Concretizing		Better defining a city's food policy work, identifying priorities and concretizing policy goals through engaging in monitoring and evaluation	So I felt like that was very useful to us in our thinking. To even begin to tackle: how to look at a food system as a whole? And how we are impacting it as a city?
Connecting		Using monitoring and evaluation (attempts) to strengthen connections between different departments and/or stakeholders	I think it is good to do this because it will involve the universities more that are working in Bordeaux metropole. So it will be an excuse to ask them and to work with them. So maybe it will help us to work together better.
Evidence		Generating evidence through monitoring for putting or keeping food policy on the political agenda and/or for continuing food policy work/raising awareness for food policy	I believe that if the indicator framework of Quito's agri-food policy starts to be measured more responsibly, evidence will be generated so that the issues addressed have a greater presence in city planning, and funds will be allocated to overcome their current situation.
Overview		Gaining insight in available data and data gaps in a city through monitoring and evaluation	This exercise is useful to point to what you're city currently has, even just from a data point of view, like what is it your city collects, and what information is at your fingertips for decision-making or planning.
Perceived challenges			
Accessibility		Data accessibility lacks/is poor, or local government depends on other stakeholders for data	Because most data about food is in the commercial space, it is very difficult to get access to that.
Adaptation		Adapting the MUFPP indicator framework to the local situation is challenging	So the first challenge was to adapt it to the situation of Milan. To understand what kind of indicators to describe a topic.

Availability	(high quality) data availability lacks or is poor. This includes data on the right scale (often too high) or right aggregation is missing	And one of the challenges with the food system is the complete paucity of data. There is very very limited data in the UK, at local authority level, on food production, transformation, consumption. It just doesn't exist in the public domain space.
Causality	Differentiating between aspects of effects on the ground that are due to the policy and aspects caused by other factors is difficult	And how we can show that this action has led to this impact: the causality.
Collection	Data collection is complicated/laborious/time consuming/expensive	The tricky thing with food systems is: it is really complicated because food touches so many different things. Food is not just a thing. It's an aggregation of a whole lot of different things
Commitment	The mobilization of people/engaging stakeholders to participate in/collaborate for evaluation is difficult	And the third and most difficult aspect is: to make the framework be used by the technical officers, and to be used by the political level.
Continuation	Realizing a sustainable evaluation over time, instead of occasional snapshots is challenging	I think the continuation or the sustainability in terms of really being able to measure or evaluate progress over time is something very important and challenging, because you see often that the evaluation aspect is being ditched or not being done, it's one the first things that people let go off when the situation gets a bit more tricky. Like now in terms of COVID-19.
Definition	Definitions of the to-be-measured-goals turn out unclear or ambiguous	What we have also come up against is that some things are not clearly defined, such as local food and short chains. What is that then? Local consumption? What is sustainable consumption?
Impact	Food policy is being evaluated on programmatic level and not on outcome or impact level, making it hard to assess impact	We have activity data rather than outcome data. That is one of the biggest challenges.
Influence	A local government's sphere of influence to improve the food system is limited, while the local government will be held accountable if it evaluates	What we are not completely able to do is to take into account urban food production, because that implies political negotiation with the state government. It is

		<p>something outside our sphere of influence. It is more complicated than creating policies regarding students, or hospitals.</p> <p>As we are at such an early stage, political sensitivity is the biggest challenge, irrespective of the area which will be evaluated. Although the other issues mentioned [data availability, resource availability] will be difficult too.</p>
Politics	The political context constrains the evaluation process or creates bias by steering the evaluation towards politically favourable outcomes	
Prioritization	Opinions differ about prioritization of indicators and prioritization of data collection	<p>I think the hardest part is making choices internally. Because within the possibilities and the means that we have, we cannot measure everything now, at this moment. And I think making choices there, that might be the hardest part. We have not really succeeded in that so far. To really knock it off: we start with this and let it grow like this. To set priorities.</p>
Priority	Awareness on the importance of and/or priority given to monitoring and evaluation lacks or is poor. Either from the start, or when a more important issue comes a long (like COVID-19).	<p>It takes a lot of effort to collect and bring that together. And we may be with two people full-time on food, but you should actually have one person full-time to mainly do the monitoring. And sometimes that is something that is neglected or that is not really given priority.</p>
Resources	Financial resources, capacity, expertise, organizational infrastructure, for conducting monitoring and evaluation lack or are poor	<p>I think the key gap is time. With that I probably mean capacity. Particularly for high income countries this is not a burning platform, compared to the other things we have got to deal with. I think that's difficult.</p>

Summary

Food systems around the world face severe challenges, such as environmental degradation, food price volatility, and food insecurity. A key explanation should be sought in the public policies steering food systems. These public policies currently fail to appropriately address contemporary food system challenges. The key to improving food systems, according to policy-makers and scholars alike, lies in new food governance approaches. These approaches require that sectoral food-related policies move away from siloed efforts, and that policy efforts are instead aligned to address challenges holistically. Scholars also argue that for effective food policy-making, local governments might be the key players. These governments are close to their citizens. They benefit from knowledge of the place and the proximity to the community; have the possibility to engage local citizens; and can develop better-tailored solutions through a more place-based approach.

In this dissertation, I aim to: better understand how local governments in the Netherlands are bringing food policy into practice; explore the extent to which this is happening; and ultimately determine if local food policy is a temporary fad or a sustainable trend. I answer the question: ***To what extent do local governments in the Netherlands succeed in bringing food policy into practice?***

To answer this question, four sub-questions guide the research.

1. To what extent has food become integrated across local governments' policies in the Netherlands? (Chapter 2)
2. How and to what extent were food system challenges institutionalized within the municipality of Ede? (Chapter 3)
3. To what extent did the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda lead to genuine collaboration for enhancing local food systems, and what stimulated and constrained this collaboration? (Chapter 4)
4. What opportunities and challenges did local governments encounter when implementing the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact indicator framework? (Chapter 5)

I apply four theoretical lenses: policy integration, discursive institutionalism, collaborative governance, and policy evaluation. As local food policy-making in the Netherlands has hardly been studied, I chose to conduct the research presented in this dissertation empirically, through an exploratory research design. To gain an in-depth empirical understanding, the research is rooted in a participatory approach. This entails combining two roles: local food policy-maker and researcher. This dissertation is a collection of studies

that all grew from empirical phenomena, predominantly around local food policy in the Netherlands.

In chapter 2, I aim to investigate how local governments in the Netherlands address food issues, and to what extent they have integrated these across their existing policies. Bringing food policy into practice beyond the ambitions on the agenda starts with policy formulation and adoption. In these phases, local governments need to address food issues and integrate them across their existing policies. So far, it has remained unexplored to what extent local governments are doing this. I adopt a policy integration lens and systematically analyse policies of large Dutch municipalities. I show that most municipalities integrate food to a limited extent only, predominantly addressing health and local food production or consumption. Municipalities set abstract goals, mostly without accompanying policy instruments. These instruments are predominantly non-coercive, including informative and organizational instruments. Nonetheless, a small number of municipalities have developed more holistic approaches to address food challenges. These municipalities may prove to be a leading group in the development of system-based approaches in Dutch local food policy.

In chapter 3, I investigate how and to what extent food policy commitments result in the institutionalization of food policy across a local government. To bring food policy into practice, it is insufficient to address food issues in policies alone. Local governments need to bring food policy into practice beyond paper realities, and a prerequisite for this is institutionalizing food governance ideas across governmental organizations. In chapter 3, I unpick how food governance ideas are institutionalized within the executive organization of a local food policy forerunner: the Dutch municipality of Ede. Drawing on discursive institutionalism, I explore how actors, ideas and discourses mutually shaped the institutionalization process. I show that food policy can institutionalize considerably within an organization over a period of only ten years and that organizational innovations and ideational leaders are key in this process. I also show that while institutionalization is far from easy, *keep* food policy institutionalized is particularly challenging.

In chapter 4, I explore how local governments collaborate on developing and implementing food policy within a food policy network. To successfully bring food policy into practice, local governments need to collaborate with other actors. I use Ansell and Gash's collaborative governance model to explore what collaboration and its outcomes look like, and what stimulates and constrains this collaboration. I study one of the first trans-local food policy networks in continental Europe: the Dutch City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda. Chapter 4 shows that food policy collaboration in the City Deal seems to be more about collective

identity-building and learning, rather than about collective working. This collective identity-building and learning includes identifying motivated administrations; strengthening connections between administrations; exchanging knowledge and experience; learning about – and developing a vision of – local food policy; and agenda-setting for local food policy. Two interconnected factors seem key for fostering collaboration within trans-local food policy networks: 1) ensuring commitment among participants and 2) striking a balance between a sectoral focus and a holistic food systems focus. Two interconnected factors that constrain food policy collaboration are 1) a lack of shared understanding and 2) a lack of political commitment.

In chapter 5, I aim to provide insight into local food policy evaluation, as assessing the extent to which policies advance their stated aims is the last step in bringing food policy into practice. I identify the opportunities and challenges that local governments encounter when taking up and implementing an indicator framework to evaluate their food policies. I conduct an exploratory case study of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) indicator framework. In the chapter, I show that, at present, implementing this framework is more useful for refining policy content than for assessing policy effect. I also show that some thematic food policy areas, such as food waste, health, and food production, require more attention than others and that maturing evaluation requires moving from activity-based towards outcome-based assessment.

In chapter 6, I synthesize the five chapters into an overarching conclusion and answer the research question: throughout all stages of the food policy cycle, local governments in The Netherlands –especially in large cities—are succeeding in bringing food policy into practice. I argue that food policy could be characterized as becoming a trend among local governments. At the same time, the findings of my dissertation illustrate that this trend is still fragile. On country level, relatively few local governments are engaging in food policy efforts, and those engaging are facing big challenges in sustaining their food policies in the long run. For food policy to become a sustainable new governance approach at local level throughout the country, these challenges first need to be overcome. Three overarching challenges can be distilled from the research that need to be addressed for strengthening local food policy. These challenges manifested as follows: 1) an overemphasis on a holistic policy character and policy process, coupled with an underemphasis on the policy content and problem of unhealthy and unsustainable food systems; 2) too-abstract food policies that lack urgency; 3) limited institutionalization of food policy into existing ideas, norms, rules and beliefs.

Cities in the Netherlands are bringing food policy into practice. They are stepping up to the plate. At the same time, much of the food and many of the food systems around us are still far from healthy and sustainable. Food system change is thus needed more than ever. While a food systems approach has been lauded as the way to achieve this, my dissertation shows that it can also be counterproductive. Governments can come to overemphasize the holistic nature of the food policy and the policy process, leaving the substantive policy problem and content underexposed and the necessary policy course under defined, thereby depoliticizing the policy problem. The systemic focus can even serve as a *justification* to leave policy content under defined. This leads to holistic, but symbolic policies that are not sufficiently effective to achieve real change.

Scientists, policy-makers, and politicians need to think harder and make choices about content instead of process, leading to policies that both go beyond siloed policy efforts *and* beyond toothless tiger policies. We need local food policies that combine a holistic approach with concrete, clear choices. For that, we need more political leadership, both on local level and on other government levels. It is therefore time for the politicians to step up to that plate.

Samenvatting

Voedselsystemen over de hele wereld worden geconfronteerd met grote uitdagingen, zoals de aantasting van het milieu, volatiliteit van voedselprijzen en voedselonzekerheid. Een belangrijke verklaring moet worden gezocht in het overheidsbeleid dat deze voedselsystemen stuurt. Dit overheidsbeleid slaagt er momenteel niet in om de hedendaagse uitdagingen op het gebied van voedselsystemen adequaat aan te pakken. De sleutel tot het verbeteren van voedselsystemen ligt volgens beleidsmakers en wetenschappers in nieuwe benaderingen van voedselbestuur. Deze benaderingen vereisen dat sectoraal voedsel gerelateerd beleid niet meer uitgaat van verkokerde inspanningen, en dat beleidsinspanningen in plaats daarvan op elkaar worden afgestemd om uitdagingen holistisch aan te pakken. Wetenschappers betogen ook dat lokale overheden wel eens de hoofdrolspelers kunnen zijn voor effectief voedselbeleid. Deze overheden staan dicht bij hun burgers. Ze profiteren van kennis van de plaats en de nabijheid van de gemeenschap; ze hebben de mogelijkheid om lokale burgers te betrekken; en ze kunnen beter op maat gemaakte oplossingen ontwikkelen door een meer plaatsgebonden aanpak.

In dit proefschrift beoog ik: beter te begrijpen hoe lokale overheden in Nederland voedselbeleid in de praktijk brengen; te onderzoeken in hoeverre dit gebeurt; en uiteindelijk te bepalen of lokaal voedselbeleid een tijdelijke hype of een duurzame trend is. Ik beantwoord de vraag: ***in hoeverre slagen lokale overheden in Nederland erin om voedselbeleid in de praktijk te brengen?***

Om deze vraag te beantwoorden, zijn vier deelvragen richtinggevend voor het onderzoek.

1. In hoeverre is voedsel geïntegreerd in het beleid van lokale overheden in Nederland? (Hoofdstuk 2)
2. Hoe en in hoeverre zijn voedselsysteemuitdagingen geïnstitutionaliseerd binnen de gemeente Ede? (Hoofdstuk 3)
3. In hoeverre heeft de City Deal Voedsel op de Stedelijke Agenda geleid tot daadwerkelijke samenwerking ter versterking van lokale voedselsystemen, en wat stimuleerde en remde deze samenwerking? (Hoofdstuk 4)
4. Welke kansen en uitdagingen kwamen lokale overheden tegen bij de implementatie van het Milan Urban Food Policy Pact indicator raamwerk? (Hoofdstuk 5)

Ik pas vier theoretische lenzen toe: beleidsintegratie, discursief institutionalisme, collaboratief bestuur en beleidsevaluatie. Omdat de ontwikkeling van lokaal voedselbeleid

in Nederland nauwelijks is bestudeerd, heb ik ervoor gekozen om het onderzoek in dit proefschrift empirisch uit te voeren, via een exploratief onderzoeksontwerp. Om diepgaand empirisch inzicht te verwerven, is het onderzoek gebaseerd op een participatieve benadering. Hierbij worden twee rollen gecombineerd: lokale voedselbeleidsmaker en onderzoeker. Dit proefschrift is een verzameling studies die allemaal voortkwamen uit empirische verschijnselen, voornamelijk rond lokaal voedselbeleid in Nederland.

In hoofdstuk 2 onderzoek ik hoe lokale overheden in Nederland voedselvraagstukken adresseren en in hoeverre ze deze hebben geïntegreerd in hun bestaande beleid. Het in de praktijk brengen van voedselbeleid voorbij agenderen begint met het formuleren en vaststellen van beleid. In deze fasen moeten lokale overheden voedselproblemen adresseren en integreren in hun bestaande beleid. Tot nu toe is nog niet onderzocht in hoeverre lokale overheden dit doen. Ik hanteer een beleidsintegratielens en analyseer systematisch het beleid van grote Nederlandse gemeenten. Ik laat zien dat de meeste gemeenten voedsel slechts in beperkte mate integreren, voornamelijk met betrekking tot gezondheid en lokale voedselproductie of -consumptie. Gemeenten stellen abstracte doelen, veelal zonder bijbehorende beleidsinstrumenten. Deze instrumenten zijn voornamelijk niet-dwingend, zoals informatieve en organisatorische instrumenten. Niettemin heeft een klein aantal gemeenten meer holistische benaderingen ontwikkeld om voedselproblemen aan te pakken. Deze gemeenten kunnen een kopgroep blijken in de ontwikkeling van systeemgerichte benaderingen in Nederlands lokaal voedselbeleid.

In hoofdstuk 3 onderzoek ik hoe en in hoeverre voedselbeleidsverplichtingen resulteren in de institutionalisering van voedselbeleid binnen een lokale overheid. Om het voedselbeleid in de praktijk te brengen, is het onvoldoende om voedselkwesties in beleid alleen aan te pakken. Lokale overheden moeten voedselbeleid in praktijk brengen dat verder gaat dan de papieren realiteit, en een voorwaarde hiervoor is het institutionaliseren van ideeën over voedselbeheer binnen overheidsorganisaties. In hoofdstuk 3 ontrafel ik hoe ideeën over voedselbestuur worden geïnstitutionaliseerd binnen de uitvoeringsorganisatie van een voorloper op het gebied van lokaal voedselbeleid: de Nederlandse gemeente Ede. Op basis van discursief institutionalisme onderzoek ik hoe actoren, ideeën en discoursen het institutionaliseringsproces wederzijds vormen. Ik laat zien dat voedselbeleid binnen een organisatie in een tijdsbestek van slechts tien jaar aanzienlijk kan worden geïnstitutionaliseerd en dat organisatorische innovaties en ideële leiders hierin centraal staan. Ik laat ook zien dat, hoewel institutionalisering verre van eenvoudig is, het geïnstitutionaliseerd houden van het voedselbeleid bijzonder uitdagend is.

In hoofdstuk 4 onderzoek ik hoe lokale overheden samenwerken bij het ontwikkelen en implementeren van voedselbeleid binnen een voedselbeleidsnetwerk. Om voedselbeleid met succes in de praktijk te brengen moeten lokale overheden samenwerken met andere actoren. Ik gebruik het samenwerkingsmodel van Ansell en Gash om te onderzoeken hoe samenwerking en de resultaten hiervan eruit zien, en welke factoren deze samenwerking stimuleren en beperken. Ik bestudeer één van de eerste translokale voedselbeleidsnetwerken in continentaal Europa: de Nederlandse City Deal Voedsel op de Stedelijke Agenda. Hoofdstuk 4 laat zien dat samenwerking op het gebied van voedselbeleid in de City Deal meer lijkt te gaan over collectieve identiteitsopbouw en leren dan over collectief werken. Deze collectieve identiteitsopbouw en leren omvatten het identificeren van gemotiveerde overheden; het versterken van verbindingen tussen overheden; het uitwisselen van kennis en ervaring; het leren over - en visie ontwikkelen op - lokaal voedselbeleid; en het agenderen van lokaal voedselbeleid. Twee onderling verbonden factoren lijken cruciaal voor het bevorderen van samenwerking binnen translokale voedselbeleidsnetwerken: 1) zorgen voor betrokkenheid bij de deelnemers en 2) een evenwicht vinden tussen een sectorale focus en een holistische focus op voedselsystemen. Twee onderling verbonden factoren die de samenwerking op het gebied van voedselbeleid belemmeren, zijn 1) een gebrek aan gedeeld begrip en 2) een gebrek aan politieke betrokkenheid.

In hoofdstuk 5 beoog ik inzicht te geven in de evaluatie van lokaal voedselbeleid, aangezien beoordelen in hoeverre beleid leidt tot het behalen van de gestelde doelen, de laatste stap is om voedselbeleid in de praktijk te brengen. Ik identificeer kansen en uitdagingen die lokale overheden tegenkomen bij het opnemen en implementeren van een indicatorenraamwerk om hun voedselbeleid te evalueren. Ik voer een verkennende case study uit van het Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) indicatorenraamwerk. In het hoofdstuk laat ik zien dat de implementatie van dit raamwerk op dit moment nuttiger is voor het verfijnen van beleidsinhoud dan voor het beoordelen van beleidseffecten. Ik laat ook zien dat sommige thematische beleidsterreinen op het gebied van voedsel, zoals voedselverspilling, gezondheid en voedselproductie, meer aandacht vereisen dan andere en dat het verder brengen van evaluatie een verschuiving vereist van een beoordeling op basis van activiteiten naar een beoordeling op basis van uitkomsten.

In hoofdstuk 6 breng ik de vijf hoofdstukken samen tot een overkoepelende conclusie en beantwoord ik de onderzoeksvraag: in alle stadia van de voedselbeleidscyclus slagen lokale overheden in Nederland - vooral in grote steden - erin om voedselbeleid in de praktijk te brengen. Ik beargumenteer dat voedselbeleid kan worden gekarakteriseerd als een

groeïende trend onder lokale overheden. Tegelijkertijd illustreren de bevindingen van mijn proefschrift dat deze trend nog kwetsbaar is. Op landelijk niveau zijn relatief weinig lokale overheden bezig met voedselbeleid, en degenen die erbij betrokken zijn, staan voor grote uitdagingen bij het handhaven van hun voedselbeleid op de lange termijn. Om voedselbeleid een duurzame nieuwe bestuursaanpak op lokaal niveau in het hele land te laten worden, moeten deze uitdagingen eerst worden overwonnen. Uit het onderzoek kunnen drie overkoepelende uitdagingen worden gedestilleerd die moeten worden aangepakt om lokaal voedselbeleid te versterken. Deze uitdagingen manifesteerden zich als volgt: 1) een te grote nadruk op een holistisch beleidskarakter en het beleidsproces, in combinatie met te weinig nadruk op de beleidsinhoud en het probleem van ongezonde en niet-duurzame voedselsystemen; 2) een te abstract voedselbeleid zonder urgentie; 3) beperkte institutionalisering van voedselbeleid in bestaande ideeën, normen, regels en overtuigingen.

Steden in Nederland brengen voedselbeleid in de praktijk. Tegelijkertijd zijn veel voedsel en voedselsystemen om ons heen nog verre van gezond en duurzaam. Veranderingen in voedselsystemen is dus meer dan ooit nodig. Hoewel een voedselsysteembenadering wordt geprezen als de manier om dat te bereiken, laat mijn proefschrift zien dat zo'n benadering ook contraproductief kan zijn. Overheden kunnen de holistische aard van voedselbeleid en het beleidsproces te veel benadrukken, waardoor het inhoudelijke beleidsprobleem, de inhoud en de noodzakelijke beleidskoers onderbelicht blijven, waardoor het beleidsprobleem wordt gedepolitiseerd. De systemische focus kan zelfs dienen als rechtvaardiging om de inhoud van het beleid te weinig gedefinieerd te laten. Dit leidt dan tot een holistisch, maar symbolisch beleid dat niet voldoende effectief is om echte verandering te bewerkstelligen.

Wetenschappers, beleidsmakers en politici moeten beter nadenken en keuzes maken over inhoud in plaats van over processen, zodat dit leidt tot beleid dat zowel verder gaat dan verkokerde beleidsinspanningen alsook verder dan papieren tijgers. We hebben lokaal voedselbeleid nodig dat een holistische benadering combineert met concrete, duidelijke keuzes. Daarvoor hebben we meer politiek leiderschap nodig, zowel op lokaal niveau als op andere regeringsniveaus. Het is tijd dat politici deze handschoen oppakken.

About the author

Lara Sibbing was born where city and countryside meet, at the edge of the Dutch capital Amsterdam, on September 24th 1990. After finishing secondary school at the Spinoza Lyceum, she obtained a BSc degree in Animal Sciences from Wageningen University, including an exchange semester at ESALQ University, in Brazil. She subsequently obtained an MSc degree in Sustainable Food and Agriculture from Wageningen University. During her MSc studies Lara learned that the key for improving food systems are human decisions, which prompted her to develop a focus on food policy and politics.



During her MSc internship, Lara developed a food strategy for the municipality of Ede, and she subsequently started working for Ede as a food policy maker. Soon thereafter she started her PhD research on local food policy, in cooperation with Ede municipality and the Public Administration and Policy group of Wageningen University. As part of her PhD, Lara conducted commissioned research for the Netherlands Ministries of Economic Affairs (EZ) and the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK), and she participated in the Horizon 2020 project 'ROBUST'. Lara currently works independently, providing advice, conducting research and telling stories about food policy. She aims to integrate science, policy and society for better food systems. Beside her passion for food policy, Lara enjoys exploring the world by bike, learning new languages, baking bread and discussing politics over a glass of wine.

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List of publications

Sibbing, Lara V. 2021. Making it concrete and making it stick: two steps for local governments to make food policy work. Food Action Cities. <https://foodactioncities.org/articles/dutch-municipalities-making-food-policy-work/>

Sibbing, Lara V., Jeroen J.L. Candel, and Catrien J.A.M. Termeer. 2021. The potential of trans-local policy networks for contributing to sustainable local food systems: an analysis of the Dutch 'City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda'. *Urban Agriculture and Regional Food Systems*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/uar2.20006>

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Hubregtse, Lydia, and Lara V. Sibbing. 2018. How Ede Municipality Developed a Tool to Monitor Improvement of the Local Food System. *Urban Agriculture Magazine*: 37.

TSP certificate

Lara Vita Sibbing

Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS)

Completed Training and Supervision Plan



Wageningen School
of Social Sciences

Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
A) Project related competences			
Writing PhD proposal	-	2016-2017	6
Classics in Public Administration and Political Science	NIG	2017	4
Qualitative Data Analysis with Atlas.ti	Erasmus University	2017	1
ECPR Summer school Budapest: ethnographic methods	ECPR	2017	4
Sustainability governance PhD day	WUR	2017	1
Two PhD writing retreats	WUR	2018-2019	2
B) General research related competences			
Brain training	WGS	2016	0.3
WASS Introduction course	WASS	2016	1
Scientific writing	WGS	2017	1.8
Reviewing a scientific paper	WGS	2018	0.1
<i>"A Discursive Institutional Analysis of Urban Food Policy Integration"</i>	ECPR conference, Wrocław, Poland	2019	1
		2019	1

<i>"Evaluating the City Deal 'Food on the Urban Agenda': The harvest of three years of collaboration"</i>	MUFPP 5 th annual gathering and mayors summit, Montpellier, France			
<i>"How multi-level food policy networks can improve local food systems: evaluating the Dutch City deal: Food on the Urban Agenda"</i>	9 th AESOP-Sustainable Food Planning conference, Madrid, Spain	2019	1	
<i>"Evaluating local food policy with the MUFPP indicator framework: opportunities and challenges"</i>	15 th International European Forum on System Dynamics and Innovation in Food Networks conference, online	2021	1	
Reviewed a scientific article for a journal	-	2021	0.5	
C) Career related competences/personal development				
Masterclass Systemisch Leiderschap	Young Club of Rome	2016	2	
Supervision of two interns	WUR	2016-2017	2	
Teaching (Guest lectures and workshops)	MSc, BSc, and professional courses	2016-2021	1	
Consultancy study ministry of Economic affairs	Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ)	2017	2.8	
Start to teach	WGS	2020	1	
Total			34.5	

*One credit according to ECTS is on average equivalent to 28 hours of study load

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