INHERIT

Success Factors, Barriers and Future of Intersectoral Cooperation

A Qualitative Evaluation of Twelve INHERIT Case Studies

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

INHERIT, a project funded under the EU Horizon 2020 research programme (2016-2019), aims to identify, investigate and promote effective intersectoral policies, interventions and innovations that enable and encourage healthier, more sustainable and equitable behaviours and lifestyles. Many policies and practices that influence how we live, move or consume have the potential to lead to a 'triple-win': improving health while reducing negative environmental impacts and social and health inequities.

To reach the project's aims, several steps have been taken. First, opportunities for change across Europe that could facilitate the design and implementation of more 'triple-win' policies and practices were explored and presented in a literature review, the INHERIT Baseline Report (Staatsen et al., 2017). In parallel, the INHERIT Model was developed as a tool to think about and navigate the complex, multi-sectoral challenges of health, environment and equity, while taking behaviour and lifestyles into account (van der Vliet et al., 2018). Subsequently, inspired by the Baseline Report and INHERIT Model, promising practices throughout Europe were identified that offer potential triple-win solutions. These practices can be found in the INHERIT Database. From the database of promising practices, INHERIT partners selected 15 promising practices in the areas of living, moving and consuming as Triple-Win Case Studies. In the INHERIT Implementation Report, detailed descriptions can be found of all the INHERIT case studies (N= 15), among which are the 12 case studies that have been qualitatively evaluated (Anthun K.S., 2019). During 18 months, these case studies were further implemented and underwent several evaluations: qualitative evaluations of process (12 case studies), quantitative evaluations of health impacts (9 case studies) and/or a cost-benefit evaluation (4 case studies).

The results of the quantitative evaluations are described in 'Report on Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluations of Impacts and Benefits of Nine INHERIT Case Studies' (Report D5.2) and the results of the cost-benefit analyses will be presented in September 2019 in 'Cost-Benefit Analysis of Four INHERIT Case Studies' (Report D5.3). This report (D5.1) describes the results of the qualitative process evaluation of 12 case studies.

Definition and goal of intersectoral cooperation

Based on the definitions by Kirch (2008) and the WHO (2018), we defined intersectoral cooperation as cooperation between partners from different sectors that allows actions to be taken that are more effective or efficient than actions taken alone by the different sectors. We defined it as a broad term, comprising cooperation between:

- Parties from different sectors (such as health or environmental sectors);
- Parties from private and public sectors;
- Parties from different types of institutes or organisations (e.g. NGO's);
- Parties from different levels of government (neighbourhood, community, local, regional, national);
- Professionals and citizens.

The goal of intersectoral cooperation is to bring actors from different parties together to achieve mutual understanding on an issue, negotiate, and implement mutually agreeable plans for tackling the issue or challenge. Each cooperation partner brings distinctive assets to the table, which can be combined in a productive manner to solve complex problems. The 12 case studies that have been evaluated comprise of different types of cooperation parties (see Appendix 2 for a description of participating cooperation parties per focus group).

1.2 Aim and objectives

While recently more and more integrated policies are in place, most of the current policies and practices are still sectoral and fragmented, focusing on one topic at the time. A more coherent, integrated and systematic approach, placing a healthy environment at the centre of such an effort, with common ambitions and goals is important for a transition to healthier, more sustainable and equitable lifestyles. This requires the creation of an enabling environment for intersectoral action, and new governance and business models that support it (Staatsen et al., 2017).

Current and future challenges of health, sustainability and equity are complex and multi-sectoral and require intersectoral cooperation to allow for solutions that are more efficient. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasises the importance of interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) in order to improve both the lives of (all) people and the world they live in (United Nations, 2015). It is widely agreed that action across sectors in an integrated whole-of-society or systems approach is needed to create synergies (Morton et al., 2017, Marmot and Bell, 2018). Thus, working intersectorally is vital when aiming to achieve or accelerate progress in achieving the SDG's. Previous studies that have studied facilitators and barriers of intersectoral cooperation stem from the field of public health or health promotion, and some studied health inequalities or health and sustainability (WHO, 2018, Public Health Agency of Canada, 2007, Harris, 1995, Wagemakers et al., 2010, Storm, 2016, Graham et al., 2018). To our knowledge, intersectoral cooperation in triple-win initiatives from different domains (living, moving, consuming) has not been evaluated before. Studying and evaluating cooperation processes in these initiatives can provide insights for policy-makers and practitioners to organise and ensure effective intersectoral action to reach the SDG's and the triple-win of improved health, environmental sustainability and equity.

Intersectoral cooperation processes have been studied in 12 different case studies in 10 European countries, by conducting multiple focus groups from October 2018 to March 2019 (see Table 2 for case study descriptions). The goal of these process evaluations was to collate qualitative information from implementers and stakeholders, to provide further insight into factors that help ensure successful implementation of intersectoral initiatives, by looking into what elements were supportive or posed barriers for inter-sectoral cooperation. The aim was to gain a more complete, detailed image of (intersectoral) cooperation processes by gaining insight into the underlying factors (including behaviour), processes and experiences driving cooperation. In addition, we aimed to build capacity and motivation for future cooperation.

2. Research methods

In this section, we describe the research methods used to conduct the qualitative evaluation of the twelve case studies, including the use of focus groups and Appreciative Inquiry. In addition, the research design is presented, consisting of four steps that involve central coordination by the RIVM and local organisation and reporting of the focus groups by INHERIT partners. Moreover, the twelve case studies and involved INHERIT partners are introduced. When we talk about INHERIT partners, we refer to those partners that were responsible for local organisation and reporting of the focus groups (see Table 2 for an overview of all responsible INHERIT partners and Appendix 1 for more detailed information about each partner). Finally, data analysis methods are described, including the analytical framework code tree used.

2.1 Qualitative method: Focus groups

To explore intersectoral cooperation processes, experiences and perspectives of different types of stakeholders and of different types of case studies, a qualitative research method in the form of focus

groups was employed. Focus groups are particularly useful when aiming to generate and evaluate a discussion about a topic that requires collectives views and meanings (experiences, beliefs) that lie behind those views (Nyumba et al., 2018). Conducting focus groups instead of individual interviews permits interactive discussions and group dynamics that allow thorough explorations of specific topics (Peek and Fothergill, 2009). In addition, focus groups can aid the development of new streams of thought among the participants, which was considered useful as the focus was not solely on gathering data about what happened in intersectoral cooperation processes of the various case studies, but also on determining what steps could be taken to improve future cooperation. Moreover, having cooperation partners come together to jointly discuss facilitators, barriers and the future of their cooperation seemed to suit the topic, as cooperation itself is a group process.

2.1.1 Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry informed the methodology used in this qualitative evaluation (Cooperrider et al., 2003). Appreciative inquiry is a strength-based (or asset-based) approach to data gathering. Instead of focusing on problems and what is going wrong, it focusses on questions such as "what works well around here, and how can we do more of it?" It uses a deep understanding of moments when we have been at our very best as a launching point for future action and helps people identify what they want to see more of, to create a shared vision of the future and to make that vision become reality. As INHERIT is a future oriented project exploring new ways to generate healthy and sustainable behaviour, this approach seemed particularly suitable.

Appreciative Inquiry creates a momentum for change by talking about what goes well and what could be done in the future (Bushe, 2007). Research has shown that people who experience positive feelings are more flexible, creative, integrative, open to information and efficient in their thinking (Isen, 2000). In addition, a ratio of more positive than negative talk is related to the quality of relationships, cohesion, decision-making, creativity and overall success of various social systems (Fredrickson and Losada, 2005). In Table 1, the most important principles of Appreciative Inquiry can be found (Whitney and Cooperrider, 2011).

Table 1: Most important principles of Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry Principle	Details
Constructionist Principle	Reality, as we know it, is a subjective vs. objective state and is socially created through language and conversations
Simultaneity Principle	The moment we ask a question, we begin to create a change: "the questions we ask are fateful".
Poetic Principle	Teams and organisations, like open books, are endless sources of study and learning. What we choose to study makes a difference. It describes- even creates- the world as we know it.
Anticipatory Principle	Human systems move in the direction of their images of the future. The more positive and hopeful the image of the future, the more positive the present-day action.
Positive Principle	Momentum for (small or) large-scale change requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding. This momentum is best generated through positive questions that amplify the positive core.

Source: Whitney and Cooperrider, 2011.

Regarding our subject of cooperation, the constructionist principle inspired us to work with images and stories, such as "how did this cooperation begin, how did it develop to what it is now". The simultaneity principle means that inquiry creates changes. This means that when talking about what cooperation should look like, what is important and what is currently going well, people gain insights in potential actions that contribute to cooperation, allowing them to act upon these insights.

2.1.2 Twelve case studies, twelve focus groups

A total of twelve focus groups have been conducted from October 2018 to March 2019, meaning one focus group was conducted for the qualitative evaluation of each case study.

Table 2 shows an overview of the case studies, indicating the INHERIT partner in charge of each focus group, and a brief description of the case study. Full names of INHERIT partners are available in Appendix 1.

Table 2: Overview of the 12 case studies that were qualitatively evaluated

	12 case studies qualitatively evaluated		
Case study	**INHERIT area***	**INHERIT partner****	**Brief description**
Voedseltuin (Food Garden)	Consuming	RIVM[1], Netherlands	A food garden that produces ecologically sustainable vegetables and fruit, working with volunteers with a distance from the job market
Gardening with Green Gyms for Meat Free Monday	Consuming/Green Space	UCL[2], United Kingdom	Two sustainable practices combined in a London primary school: meat-free Monday initiative and a Green Gym school garden
GemüseAckerdemie	Consuming	CSCP[3], Germany	Educational program that strengthens the relationship between children and nature, while increasing child's knowledge of food origins
Ghent en Garde: STOEMP initiative	Consuming	Gezond Leven[4], Belgium	The STOEMP initiative, as part of the Ghent en Garde food policy, is a network that brings good (healthy and sustainable) food initiatives together in the city of Ghent.
PROVE	Consuming	ISCTE-IUL[5], Portugal	A program to create close links between consumers and producers of agricultural products to promote consumption of seasonal fruit and vegetables
Restructuring residential outdoor areas	Living – Green Space	FOHM[6], Sweden	Involving residents to restructure one of the most deprived areas in Stockholm to a more attractive and green outdoor environmental area
Restructuring green space	Green Space	RIVM[1], Netherlands	Green space neighbourhood park intervention in a low-income urban area in Breda
Sustainable schools in public schools	Consuming	UAH[7], Spain	Sustainable food in public nursery schools in Madrid, advising parents and training school kitchen personnel to raise awareness in families
Place Standard Tool Latvia, Riga	All areas	Riga City Council[8], Latvia	Applying the PST to assists professionals and communities in identifying what works well and what needs improving within a local community, bringing public health, inequalities, environment together in order to create a healthy neighbourhood (Riga)
Place Standard Tool Macedonia	All areas	IJZRM[9], Republic of Macedonia	Applying the PST to assists professionals and communities in identifying what works well and what needs improving within a local community, bringing public health, inequalities, environment together in order to create a healthier neighbourhood (Karposh)
Urban Cyclers	Moving	CUNI[10], Czech Republic	An urban cycling app to promote sustainable mobility by supporting and motivating self-regulated behavioural change
Eco Inclusion	Energy Efficient Living	BZgA[11], Germany	A training for refugees to help them save energy in their homes, using a peer-to-peer principle (Pforzheim)

*INHERIT Area: INHERIT work explores the areas of living (green space and energy efficient housing), moving (active transport) and consuming (food and food production)
**Full names of INHERIT partners are available in Appendix 1

2.1.3 Participants

Only individuals who had been active in the cooperation process of each case study were invited to take part in the focus groups. In each focus group, at least one policy maker, one implementer and a target population representative were expected to be present, to make sure perspectives from these different groups were represented. Focus groups aimed to gather five to eight participants, the ideal size of focus groups for non-commercial topics (Krueger, 2014). This size also allows everyone to share insights and yet the group is large enough to provide diversity of perceptions. In Appendix 2, the cooperating parties that participants represented are shown for all focus groups, together with the amount of participants per focus group. Participating numbers ranged from 4 to 9, with an average of ± 6 participants. Total number of participants was 76. Some case studies were more about cooperation between different disciplines, others more on cooperation between professionals and citizens, and few others about cooperation between the private and public sector. In five focus groups, representatives of citizens were present. In all focus groups, implementers of the case study were present. In ten out of twelve focus groups, there were representatives of public administration (city council, municipality), from various sectors or levels (e.g. departments of public affairs, city development, equal opportunities, management). Four focus groups included researchers.

2.2 Research Design

This qualitative study followed a 4-step approach, with central coordination and analysis by the RIVM, and local implementation and reporting of the focus groups by INHERIT partners. See Figure 1 for an overview of the four steps. In the remainder of this section, these steps will be explained.

Figure 1: Schematic overview of all four qualitative evaluation steps and processes
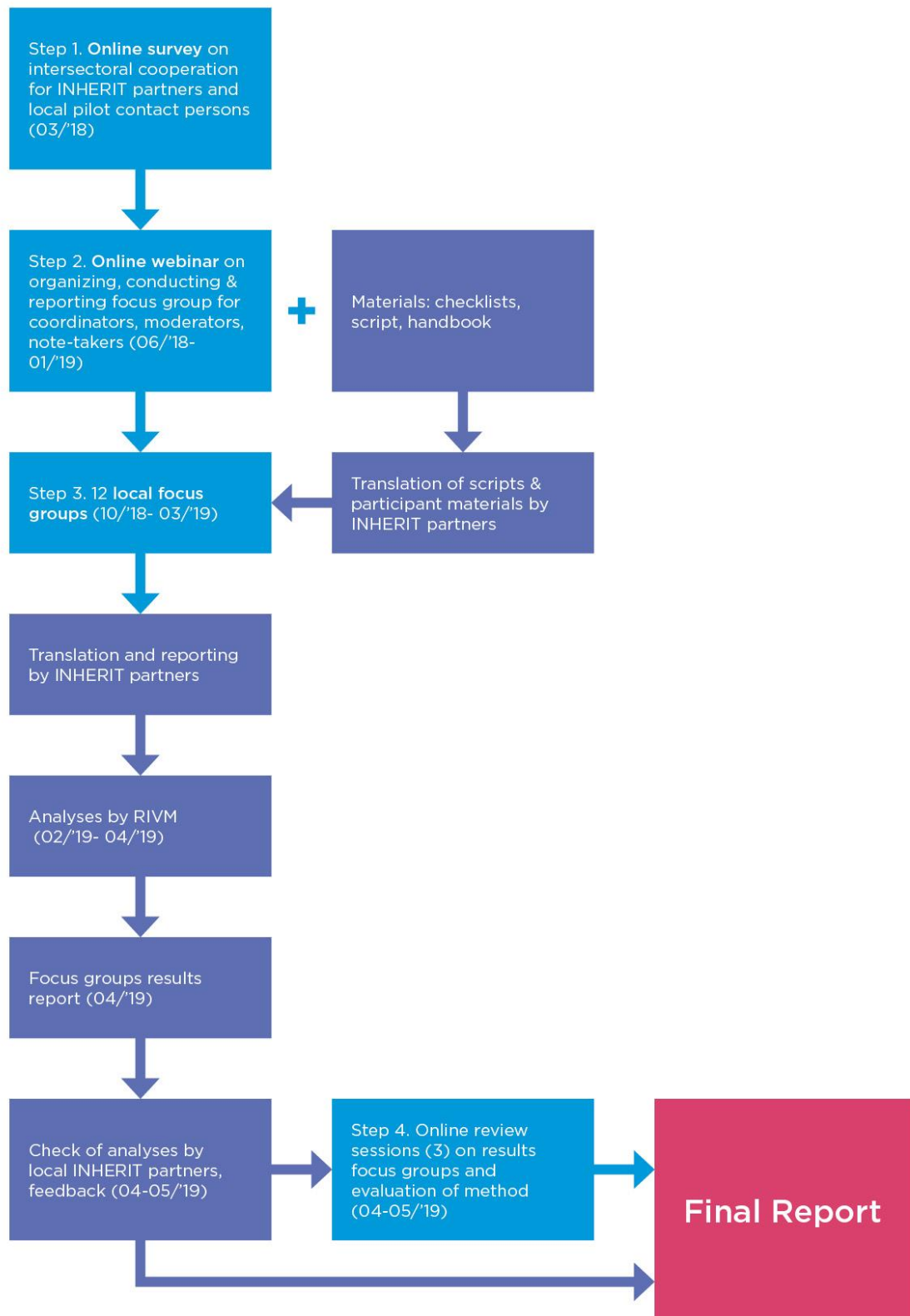
2.2.1 Step 1: Online survey

The first step involved INHERIT partners (and their case study contact person) filling in an online survey. This online survey served three goals. The primary goal was to provide RIVM with an overview of what stakeholders should be considered to take part in the focus group. The secondary goal was for RIVM to gain an overview of when focus groups could be conducted (Figure 1, step 3). Finally, the third goal of this survey was to involve case study contact persons in the evaluation process from the very beginning, and to have some initial insights into expected cooperation facilitators and barriers. Results will not be described in this report, they were used for setting up step 2 (the webinar and handbook) and developing the questions of step 3 (the focus group).

2.2.2 Step 2: Online webinar and handbook

The next step involved a webinar. All responsible project partner coordinators, note-takers, moderators were expected to attend this webinar, which took place in April 2018. This webinar aimed to build a shared level of capacity to organise, conduct and note down the focus groups.

In addition, we developed and distributed a handbook that complemented the webinar. The goal of this handbook was to enable the RIVM team and INHERIT project partners to organise, perform and report the focus groups in a consistent, comparable way, generating data that could be analysed in a similar fashion by the RIVM team. Moreover, theory and application of Appreciative Inquiry in the focus groups was explained, as it was important that the coordinator, moderator and note-taker of all focus groups knew what appreciative inquiry was and how to apply it, and why RIVM had chosen this approach to inspire and guide the focus group. Theoretical information about the COM-b behavioural system was included as well. The RIVM also organised separate talks with the focus group coordinators to see if everything was clear, and discuss questions or problems.

The handbook contained several practical documents for coordinators, moderator and note-takers (INHERIT partners translated the documents if needed):

- Scripts for moderator, note-taker and INHERIT partner coordinator (3)
- Note taking form & coding sheet participants (digital/paper)
- Participants sign-in list
- Participants informed consent form (one for each participant)
- Special attention topic sheet on the COM-b for moderator and note-taker (2)
- Checklists of necessary arrangements and actions (2) (one for moderator, one for coordinator)

INHERIT partners were expected to arrange the following materials:

- Audiotape recording material (& back-up)
- Sticky notes and pens for all participants
- A reward (optional) for participation

2.2.3. Step 3: Local focus groups

As already mentioned, focus groups were conducted by local project partners. Focus groups took place in the countries were the case studies were implemented, using the native language. Figure 2 summarises the roles needed to conduct the focus groups. For all focus groups, moderators had a research background. Some were from (INHERIT partner) universities, others from INHERIT partner institutes.

Figure 2: Key individuals involved in focus groups and their roles
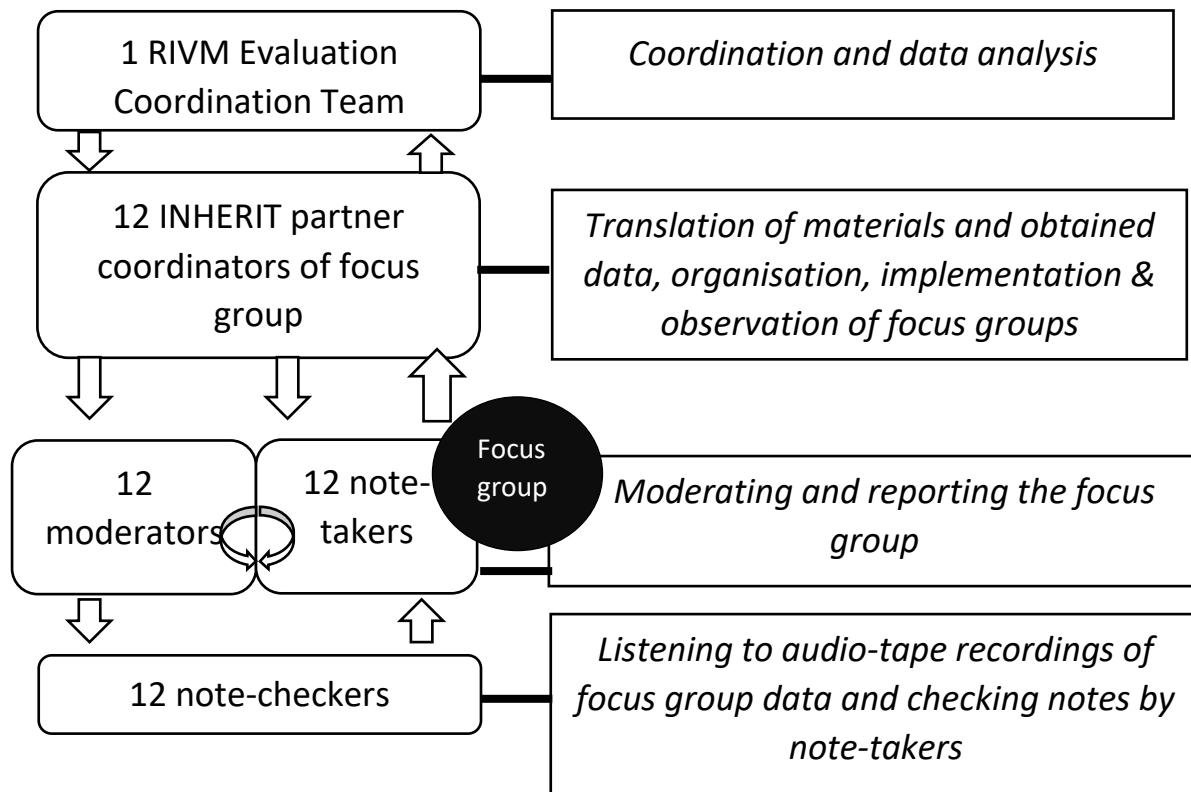
The focus groups were planned to last between 1.5 to 2 hours, of which approximately 80 minutes were used for the evaluation of intersectoral cooperation (including warm-up questions and wrap-up). About one hour was spent on the core questions. See Table 3 for the structure and suggested timing of core topics and questions to be discussed during the focus groups. In the case of two questions, besides discussions, participants were first asked to write their input on sticky notes before starting the plenary discussion. This was done as a means to receive input from everybody. INHERIT partners were given the opportunity to add further questions (30 minutes maximum), such as questions to evaluate the effect of the case study or to evaluate further non-intersectoral cooperation aspects. These data were not analysed by the RIVM team and are not included in this report.

Table 3: Structure and suggested timing of core topics and questions to be discussed during the focus groups

Structure and timing of topics during focus groups	
Topic	Questions
Start and development of the cooperation (±10 minutes discussion)	"How did the cooperation/project start?" "How did it develop to where it is now?" "What contributed to the cooperation process?"
Core (success) factors of the cooperation (±15 minutes) (use of sticky notes and discussion)	"What are the core factors that make this cooperation happen, that energised and inspired cooperation?" "Describe a peak experience in (intersectoral) cooperation in [project X], when you felt really engaged and motivated"
Barriers, challenges, missing in the cooperation (±15 minutes discussion)	"How could the cooperation have been?" "What would you change if you could change anything in this cooperation? What could it still become?"
Future of the cooperation (±15 minutes) (use of sticky notes and discussion)	"Where do you want to be between now and a certain period, what does this future look like? If your dream is X, what would you want to have accomplished in Y years?" "What are possible options (actions, projects) to reach this and enhance cooperation in the future?"
Wrap up, summary (±5 minutes)	"Of all things discussed, what was most important to you?"

Preferred seating arrangements can be seen in Figure 3. The note-taker was suggested to be seated separately overlooking the table, enabling a good view of all participants. Participants of the focus groups were suggested to sit around a table to allow them to see and hear each other properly.

Figure 3: Preferred seating arrangements for all focus groups
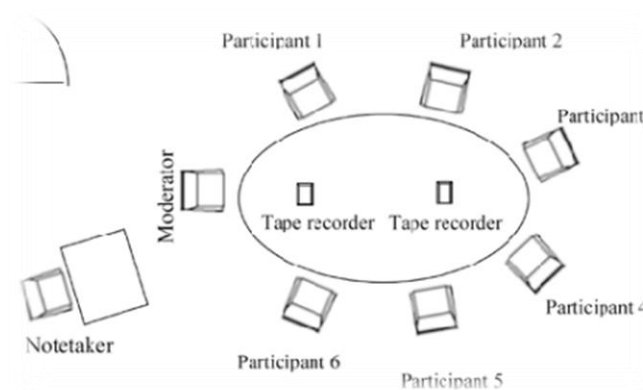
Source: Wong, 2008

The INHERIT partners were expected to note down the discussions of the focus groups. During the focus groups, an individual played the role of note-taker, using a predefined template. Tasks of the note-taker were to write down what all participants said and note observations about atmosphere or tone of voice. Immediately after the focus group, moderator and note-taker had a debriefing session to improve notes. In addition, a note-checker who was preferably present at the focus group, listened

to audio recordings to check the notes and, if needed, to improve them. Potential changes were discussed between the note-taker and the note-checker until an agreement was reached. Since focus groups were held in the local native language, notes were translated to English by INHERIT partners, and send to the RIVM team, who then analysed the reported data.

2.2.4. Step 4: Online review sessions

INHERIT partners were invited to take part in a review session, using an online meeting software program. Due to clash of agendas between the INHERIT partners, three review sessions were conducted in the end. These lasted between of 1 and 1.5 hours. The goals of these review sessions were to evaluate the methods used (how did partners experience doing focus groups using our material and applying the Appreciative Inquiry approach to qualitative research?) and to check whether the themes that were extracted from the focus group reports accurately represented the (reporting of) the focus groups. Coordinating INHERIT partners were asked if any important themes were missing, what their impression of the themes and structure was, and what important messages should be highlighted in the report. Coordinating INHERIT partners from ten out of twelve case studies were present. Two INHERIT partners were unable to attend the online review sessions and they provided their input digitally.

2.3 Data analysis

2.3.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was selected as method for data analysis. Thematic analysis is about searching across data to find repeated patterns of meaning. It can be used with any analytical framework as it is not bound to any pre-existing theoretical framework. We followed the proposed phases for thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (Braun and Clarke, 2006): familiarizing with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the report.

2.3.2 Analytical framework

For the thematic analysis, we used deductive, top down coding with further emerging themes being considered. This entailed that we used an analytical framework to organise the data into codes and the codes into categories. See Figure 5 for this thematic framework code tree. The code tree was used to create a structure in the data that was helpful for summarizing and reducing data in a way that could support our research questions. Coding was done using MS Word. This framework was developed based on existing literature on intersectoral cooperation and on the COM-b behavioural system (Michie et al., 2011). The COM-b system embedded in this wheel consists of three behavioural determinants that influence each other and behaviour: capability, motivation and opportunity (See Figure 4). Capability is about having the necessary knowledge and skills. Opportunity is about having a facilitating context or (social) environment, which provides resources, place and time to perform certain behaviours. It includes interpersonal relationships, influences, social clues and norm. Motivation entails all the brain processes that energise and direct behaviour, it is about attitudes, emotions and habits, but also about conscious decision-making, intentions or goal setting. These three determinants and actual behaviour influence each other (see Figure 4). For example, when someone has a positive attitude towards cooperation, and consciously decides to start cooperating more, capability to cooperate may increase. Which determinant(s) is (are) relevant and important to change, depends on the behaviour to be changed in question. In our case, we are considering effective cooperation behaviours among stakeholders from different sectors.

Figure 4: The COM-b behavioural system
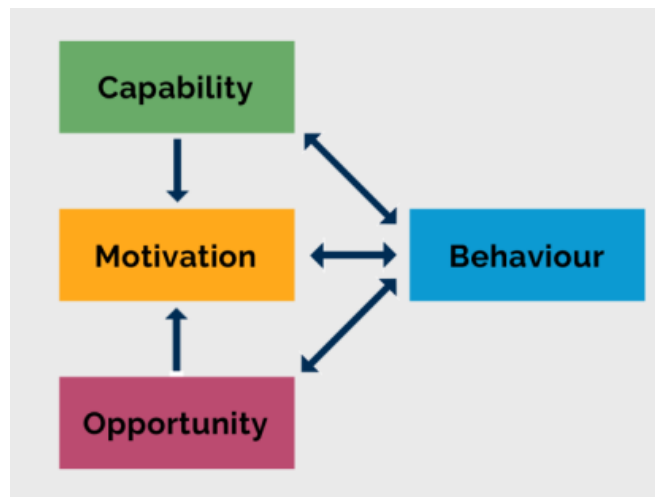
Michie et al., 2011

The analytical framework code tree was also based on six conditions for effective intersectoral cooperation (Harris et al., 1995): necessity, opportunity, capacity, relationships, planned action and sustained outcomes. Moreover, codes build on other existing literature on success factors and barriers of intersectoral cooperation, such as the WHO report on Multisectoral and Intersectoral Action (WHO, 2018) and the coordinated action checklist by Wagemakers et al (Wagemakers et al., 2010). This checklist exists of the following elements: 1) suitability of the partners, 2) a task dimension (agreements, successes, function well, evaluate and adjust), 3) a relationship dimension (open communication, constructiveness, willing to compromise, deal with conflicts, loyalty), 4) a growth dimension (goodwill and involvement of organisations, willing to recruit new partners), and 5) a visibility dimension (external relationships maintained, seen as reliable and legitimate by external relations, good image, continuation). These different aspects and factors have been merged and incorporated in the analytical framework code tree, with the COM-b as main structure. As can be seen in Figure 5, the different factors that were identified in previous literature have been categorised as being either related to capability, opportunity or motivation. Thus, these three behavioural determinants are used as main themes.

This section described the methodological approach used to qualitatively evaluate twelve case studies. In following sections, first the results from the qualitative evaluation are presented (Section 3), and subsequently discussed (Section 4), comparing findings to existing literature on intersectoral cooperation, and discussing benefits and limitations of our methodological approach. Finally, implications of findings will be discussed.

Figure 5: Analytical Framework Code Tree Intersectoral Cooperation
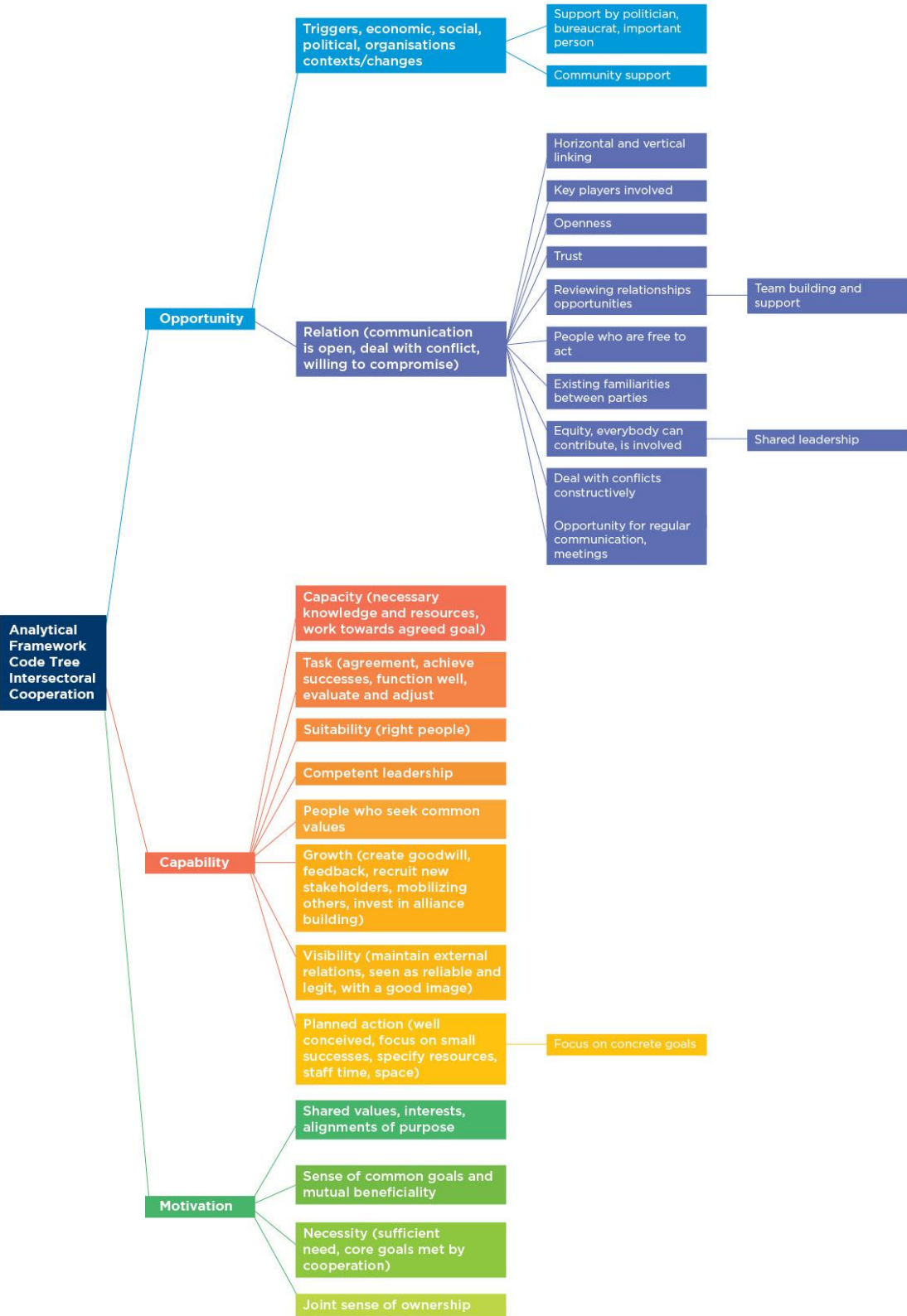
3. Results

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, results from the qualitative evaluation of the case studies are presented. This section follows the structure as presented in the thematic mind map, containing all (sub-) themes (see Figure 6). After describing influential factors for the start of the cooperation (Section 3.2), the COM-b model (See Figure 4) is used to structure the results, starting with capability (Section 3.3), followed by motivation (Section 3.4) and opportunity (Section 3.5). For each COM-b element, themes related to success factors, barriers and future plans are described. In addition, themes related to citizen participation and engagement (Section 3.6) are described. In Section 3.7, the most important elements as stated by participants during the focus groups are presented, together with input from INHERIT partners during the online review session, and observations from individual focus group analysis.

Table 4 provides an overview of the names and abbreviations of all focus groups, together with a short summary of the key themes discussed in each focus group. Throughout the results section, for each theme, the focus groups are described in which this theme was identified (using the abbreviation of the focus groups as presented in Table 4). Subsequently, the theme is illustrated by a set of representative quotes from different focus groups. The style of quotes differs between the focus groups, due to differences in reporting of focus group discussions (some have used more detailed level of quotes, whereas others have used a more paraphrasing approach). In addition:

- If there was a need to clarify elements in the quote, this has been indicated by [ed: clarification].
- If participants mentioned the name of other focus group participants, these names have been replaced by their pseudonym (for example P1).
- At some occasions, part of the quote has been deleted to show the most relevant parts of the quote, and deleted parts are indicated by […].

Table 4: Summary of most important elements per focus group (also described in more detail in Section 3.7)

Focus group (abbreviation)	Key facilitators, barriers and future plans themes
PST Macedonia (PST M)	Facilitators: interest, committed major and municipality and project coordinator (right suitable people and political support), compatibility of project and municipality program, results and success of implementation Barriers/Future: activity should be better planned beforehand (and not during summer), awareness should be raised on importance of tool, and municipality needs to increase communication and meeting with citizens (to generate trust)
PST Riga (PST R)	Facilitators: The tool itself to promote intersectoral work and thinking Presenting results generated interest in tool by municipality Barriers: Engaging citizens more and their understanding of PST limited Future: Usage of results, implement tool elsewhere, involve and activate citizens
Restructuring Green Space (RGS)	Facilitators: enthusiastic partners, long-term cooperation, common vision, long-term breath, open attitudes and dialogue. Taking citizens seriously. Large investments in citizen engagement/ reaching them Barriers: Ownership and maintenance of park by residents Future: create more ownership among residents (plans included neighbourhood events, more communication, management group of residents) Other plans included a food picking/harvesting route through the park
Sustainable Food in Nursery Schools (SFN)	Facilitators: right people with shared goals (regarding infant development and health), seeing necessity of cooperation, with existing familiarity and a holistic view on food, opportunity to exchange (a uniting platform to share experiences). Support by municipality and support for learning about healthy sustainable food Barriers: dialogue with politicians, low staff and uncertain budgets Future: long-term planning, involve and motivate all stakeholders, sharing and meeting. Training stakeholders
Eco Inclusion (EI)	Facilitators: trustworthy cooperation with good personal relationships and familiarity, trust and reliability. Flexibility of project to adjust to local needs. Appreciation and satisfaction of stakeholders who share common goals and are committed. Involving partners that know the target group (peer-based approach) Barriers: time, resources (now limited due to project framework) Future: more time, multipliers with an official link to institutions they represent. Involvement of additional partners, reaching out to children/young people as separate target group
PROVE (PR)	Facilitators: Visibility of the project, trust between consumer and producer and between cooperation partners who saw necessity, mutual benefits. Meeting up was important Barriers: low attractiveness of rural areas and inadequate funding at this stage of the project which leads to need to improve financial independence of producers Future: more marketing, need to improve management platform, and more cooperation strategies to increase publicity and brand consolidation
Restructuring Residential Areas (RRA)	Facilitators: having clear goals and agreements, assigned leader, applying for funds together, looking over property borders (seeing the area as a whole), with shared interests, long-term cooperation meant familiarity between partners. For citizen involvement, direct conversations, using existing contacts and seeing the value of citizen participation Barriers: funding and municipality capability to cooperate with property owners. Contacts and communication should have taken place earlier Future: Creation of ownership, continued cooperation, remaining priority and funding

Focus group (abbreviation)	Key facilitators, barriers and future plans themes
Urban Cyclers (UC)	Facilitators: right people who were open, thought intersectorally about topic of transport, common values and mutually beneficial goals, existing familiarity Barriers: some partners did not give priority to cooperation, difficulties to find mutual benefits among application developers, political/legal contexts, stakeholders who were protective of own work or did not acknowledge each other properly Future: more cooperation through technical possibilities, boost mutual cooperation, meeting- up with partners. Disseminate results more
Voedseltuin (FG)	Facilitators: mutual trust and respect, being open, with confidence and trust in other parties, long-term vision, patience. Common goals, support from municipality with whom a cooperation was set up based on equal partnerships. Meeting, sharing stories and results. Right people who know each other's field and each other Barriers: need for more structural subsidies, scepticism from outsiders towards social entrepreneurship, short-term rental contracts for food garden area Future: pilot to expand and test hybrid business model (with funds from public, private and collective sources). Acknowledgement of societal value of their cooperation chain, and financing rewarding it
Gardening with Green Gyms and Meatless Mondays (GGMM)	Facilitators: understanding of everybody's goals, shared motivation by benefits for children, motivated cooperation partners, positivity of project, seeing success. Meeting up Barriers: lack of time, should have been a clearer understanding at start regarding expectations, communication between the research and the facilitation sides Future: ambitions for Green Gyms in every school and taken up in school curricula
GemüseAckerdemie (GA)	Facilitators: sitting together and regular reflection, short-way, personal communication, meeting up. Supporting role of Ackerdemia, motivated and enthusiastic partners Barriers: long-term engagement and coordinators (among teachers and mentors at this specific school) Future (specific to school studied in focus group): project to be carried outwards, remaining momentum while developing routine Kick-off meetings, better (beforehand) contact and communication (for this specific school) and involving older people as mentors (intergenerational idea)
Ghent en Garde: the STOEMP initiative (ST)	Facilitators: right people who are open and listen, agreements, regular reflection and adjustments, working in concrete groups, setting clear goals. Active contribution by the city (but as equal partner). Meeting up Barriers: political element created some struggles Future: growth and expand (to include for-profit sector), more visibility and awareness of the project by outsiders, more citizen participation

Figure 6: Results mind map with key themes in 12 focus groups
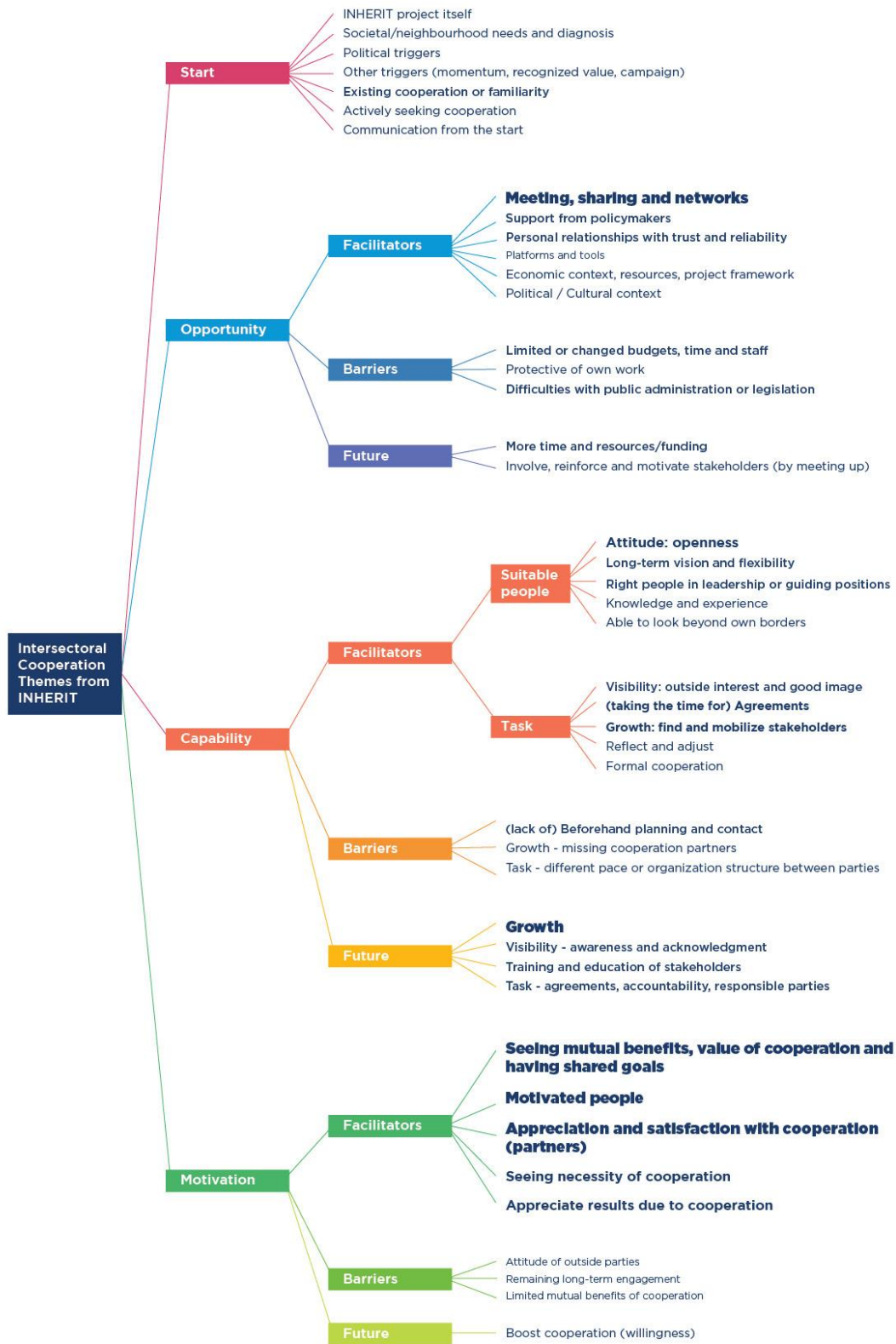
Note: In this figure, more prevalent themes are visualized in a larger font size/ in bold.

3.2 Start and development of the cooperation process (initiation)

Participants of the focus groups were first asked about the start and development of the cooperation. They were asked to describe how the cooperation started, how it developed to where it was at the time of the focus group meeting, and what contributed to that process. Both triggers of the cooperation and facilitators of starting the cooperation were mentioned, which are discussed in this section.

3.2.1. Triggers and facilitators to start the project and cooperation

INHERIT project itself

In four focus groups (PST M, PST R, GGMM, EI), the INHERIT project was the direct cause of intersectoral cooperation; it allowed piloting of the case study, and stimulated cooperation between the different stakeholders to start the case study.

"Enthusiasm for the [ed: INHERIT] project was vital to set the pilot up, and common agendas (health, environment)." — GGMM

Actively seeking cooperation

In some case studies, cooperation was actively sought. For GGMM, two practices were combined, and to accomplish that, partners were actively approached. When a working group of ST discovered another group in the city was working towards the same goals, they contacted the group and started working together. In EI, stakeholders approached the right organisation and already known partners for the project, and the municipality of FG actively sought cooperation partners.

Existing cooperation

In some focus groups, (EI, RRA, FG, SFN, UC, RGS) existing contacts or long-term established cooperation were explicitly mentioned as contributing to the start of intersectoral cooperation. In two case studies (PR and RRA), (inter)national experience and contacts inspired the design of the program or cooperation. PR was inspired by French experience with short circuits of local production and consumption. RRA followed an internationally used cooperation model (BID, Business Improvement District) from Gothenburg.

"The different actors involved in the project already knew each other from past projects. The existing contact served as a starting point and essential basis." —EI

"I already knew a lot of players, P1 and me are both field workers. P1: you have transferred to the other side. P2: I first worked at the municipality and now I have transferred to the field. I already know a lot of players in the city, and along the way we ended up talking." —FG

Political triggers

In a couple of focus groups (SFN, ST, FG), political triggers were mentioned. Cooperation for SFN was triggered by the Milan Food Policy Act, which meant that schools had to deal with changes in rules regarding healthy and sustainable food. For ST, an alderman for health demanded a large health-related topic that was relevant for all neighbourhood health centres, and food was selected as a suitable topic. The cooperation in the green-social chain (of stakeholders) of FG was facilitated by an alderman.

"Suddenly an alderman gave us a face, who came to all our initiatives, a kind of platform. We thought, we matter. That has had quite a lot of impact on a lot of initiatives." —FG

Societal or neighbourhood needs and diagnosis

For several case studies (RGS, RRA, EI, PR), there were societal or neighbourhood needs or problems that triggered the cooperation. For RGS, the restructuring of a park in the middle of a deprived

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neighbourhood was initiated by several stakeholders to tackle social problems and negative image of the neighbourhood. Residents had a wish of having a green area. For RRA, problems in the outdoor environment of the neighbourhood were a trigger. For EI, initiation was triggered both by the arrival in 2015 of a large group of refugees in the city and the desire to implement a project where there was an actual problem that needed to be solved. The problem diagnosis of farmers 'surpluses triggered the start of cooperation for PROVE. Cooperation between Urban Cyclers and the municipality were started because of a need to improve the cycle application.

> *"In Järva in general, it [ed: problems in neighbourhood] is so obvious that everyone works in the same direction."* —RRA

> *"At that time, the first thing we did was a diagnosis. To understand the state of farming, how was the local production. And what we found was actually, our farmers had production, but they didn't have a way to drain their production."* —PR

Other triggers (momentum, recognised value, campaign)

A trigger for initiation of the social-green chain in FG was that participants felt it was the right time for cooperation (it was the right momentum). For UC, a main engine of cooperation was a cycling campaign called "Bike to Work", which has been started by an NGO. For PR, the originality and distinction of the project attracted stakeholders, and participants mentioned the promotion of the project (increasing visibility) as a contributing factor to the development of the project.

> *"There is energy, it has to happen now. It is good if all social entrepreneurs go and do something together. That everything together has led to it."* — FG

Communication from the start

PST M participants mentioned that it was important to have clear communication and goal clarification at the start, to make partners see the connection and opportunity for mutual benefits and intersectoral cooperation. An RGS participant mentioned that they were talking to each other from the start, and in GA, the importance of direct contact was emphasised.

In addition, in several focus groups, it was mentioned that clear communication should have been done from the start in order to facilitate better cooperation (see also Section 3.4).

> *"Short ways work better (short, direct, spontaneous contact/questions."* — GA

3.3 Capability

3.3.1 Capability – facilitating factors

Capability- facilitating factor subthemes were:

- Having the right, suitable people as cooperation partners, with knowledge and experience, who are open, have long-term vision and flexibility, and are able to look beyond own borders. Also having the right people in leading or guiding positions.

- Task- related: having the ability to function as a group, including agreements and tasks (formal cooperation), having the ability to mobilise new stakeholders, and creating goodwill (growth), having a good image, being seen as reliable and legit, maintaining external relations (visibility).

Suitable people

Knowledge and experience

In several focus groups (PST M, EI, FG, SFN), the competence of those involved was mentioned. As contributing factors, PST M mentioned having cooperation partners who are experienced and competent. EI participants mentioned having capable people who can deal with pitfalls. FG participants mentioned several times that it is very much about having the right people, who are strong enough to undertake action, who get along, and who speak each other's language.

"Experienced, professional employees of municipality contribute to effectiveness and efficiency."
—PST M

"You can connect those worlds, we have been in those worlds and that is not something every initiative has. It is something, bigger value, knowledge, experience and people who like to puzzle. We can talk with everybody, all layers." —FG

Attitude: openness to cooperate

Having cooperation partners who are willing and open to intersectoral cooperation and other perspectives, was mentioned in many focus groups (PST M, PST R, UC, FG, RGS, SFN, GA). These partners included a mayor, municipality staff, or application designers.

"I think that it is the Mayor as a leader, who is always willing and open for cooperation and new initiatives and has the ear for new ideas and suggestions, which is the core factor for such cooperation." —PST M.

"It would never be so good from a regular supplier. If the boys weren´t enthusiastic and not open to debate, such a good thing wouldn´t arise." —UC

A long-term vision and flexibility

Participants from RGS, RRA, FG, GA, ST, SFN emphasised the relevance of having a long-term vision, patience, and being flexible, patient and able to deal with challenges. In addition, remarks made by stakeholders demonstrated their flexible attitudes.

"Long-term collaboration- work together patiently for a long time." —RRA

"Public buying processes are complex and results don't appear in the short term. It is impossible to control right away, you need to give entities time to implement." —SFN

Ability to look beyond own borders

The ability of cooperation partners to think broad and beyond their own sectoral borders, was mentioned as a contributing factor to the intersectoral cooperation in UC, FG, RRA. For example, UC participants had a broad view of bicycles being a means of transport, not merely meant for sports.

"You need people at the government that think and look over sectors, and that are committed to facilitate small initiatives." —FG

"Property owners not only see to their own property boundary; the entire district needs to develop positively according to them." —RRA

Right people in leadership or guiding positions

In several focus groups (PST M, RRA, ST, SFN, RGS, GA), stakeholders explicitly mentioned the importance of a suitable person in a leading position. For PST M, this included having a willing and open mayor. For RRA, it meant having an assigned person with responsibility, because "*work must be led from somewhere*". ST participants mentioned that they had a good leader that kept everything on track, and they had an outside party who guided the group and their discussions. An SFN participant mentioned that the guiding party offered great support and gave the opportunity to learn about

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healthy and sustainable food. For RGS, a process supervisor was important for the cooperation process. In the GA focus group, the suitability of a guiding mentor in one of the schools was seen as facilitating factor.

"It helps to have an outside party who can present an objective view. She guided the policy group and discussion as well. She is able to work remotely and has the experience to show for it. She adds some culture to the group: how do you learn to listen to another's opinion." —ST

Task
A ST participant summarised many elements of *task* when stating, *"There was a concrete goal: we had a budget for the campaign, we had a shared purpose, we could put a face to the project, and there was a clear outside interest in STOEMP."* —ST

Formal cooperation
In several focus groups, stakeholders mentioned having a formal or official cooperation group (PST R, FG, ST). PST R created a health council working group to promote intersectoral cooperation, and FG had a board merge with the work activation centre, and they also share revenues. However, FG participants were explicit about cooperating but still remaining separate smaller organisations in order to be flexible and independent. Others had agreements to cooperate, such as in ST between the city of Ghent and an NGO promoting health goals of Flanders, and for PST R between the Riga city council and a research company.

"Work activation centre and food garden have also become intertwined, we have a cooperation agreement and we both work for both organisations." —FG

(Taking the time for) Agreements
Having agreements on roles and responsibilities and clarity on goals was mentioned as facilitating intersectoral cooperation in several focus groups (RGS, RRA, ST, FG). For example, having clear and short-term frameworks helped discussions between professionals and residents on the design of the green area for RGS.

"Proper anchoring - common goals and methods. Everyone pulls in the same direction and knows what issues to work with." —RRA

"It was touch-and-go at first, and we discussed our goals and wishes extensively. What are our goals? We took our time to discuss this, which really shows." —ST

Reflect and adjust
The importance of reflecting on what has been done and ways to move forward was mentioned in three focus groups, as either something that was being actively done, or that should be done more in the future (ST, GA, RGS).

"Every step of the way, we consider our outset and evaluate how to move forward." —ST

"The process is ongoing, so much can still be done. Now is perhaps the time to see where we are now and what are we going to do with the next step and that there is room for it." —RGS

"Sitting together and regular reflection is very important, should be repeated." —GA

Growth
In four focus groups (EI, GGMM, ST, SFN), participants mentioned that they had successfully found and engaged stakeholders in the cooperation process, facilitating growth of the project or intersectoral cooperation.

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"It is very brave to initiate this process. You must constantly look for alliances, coordinate strengths, teams, alliances… and creating new ones." —SFN

"The peak experience is getting school engagement, because that is really hard to do." —GGMM

Visibility

In five focus groups (PST M, PST R, ST, FG, PR), participants made mentioned the positive reactions and outside interest when sharing or presenting the (results of the) case study to outsiders as a positive element. For FG, sharing stories and making visible what the value of the cooperation chain was for the city, was considered very important by several participants. In addition, PR participants mentioned international visibility and awards as peak experiences in cooperation.

"Positive reactions of colleagues in various sectors and their interest in and attention at the presentation of the project in the initial phase, their wish to get introduced to the project and participate in it." —PST M

"Also, when we launched this project, we presented it to the Health Board for all departmental directors. They were interested in seeing the results of this project, which is a positive indicator." —PST R

"But also due to television exposure, there were other people who started to appear. We had to start first for others for them to see that it works." —PR

3.3.2 Capability - barriers

Several themes emerged from the focus groups regarding barriers of intersectoral cooperation. How could cooperation have been, what could be different? Barriers mentioned relating to capability or task include having different organisation paces or structures, missing cooperation partners and lack of planning and contact before the start of the initiative.

Different pace or organisation structure between parties

Having different working paces or organisation structures could sometimes create barriers between cooperation partners (RRA, SFN, FG).

"However, the real estate industry is generally slower than the allowed time frame for the financial support …, so keeping the schedule is a challenge with the support." —RRA

"Social movements often are faster than law making, and this is the case. That many schools have far more advanced criteria than the municipal rulings." —SFN

Missing cooperation partners

Participants (RGS, EI, PR) mentioned that some cases of cooperation did not take place or that important potential cooperation partners were missing from the cooperation. For RGS, this was the health side. For EI, these were the housing associations and schools (during implementation of the project, the idea rose that schools should be included to reach refugee children and youth). For PR, an important funding party had stopped active cooperation and funding. In addition, at the focus group itself (UC, RGS), certain cooperation partners were missed.

"The attendance of entities like ADREPES was no longer possible, there's no marketing of PROVE like it used to be, there's no such an involvement as there was before and so there was some

disengagement of some entities to the attendance because the attitude is that of "now you manage it." —PR

(Beforehand) planning and contact

In several focus groups (GGMM, GA, PSTM, EI, RRA), participants indicated that more (beforehand) planning and agreements, and more contact and communication from the start could have been done.

"In the future, long-term planning and agreements could improve project processes." —EI

"In general, we [ed: municipality] meet when we need to coordinate ourselves, e.g. in cases where property owners and the district administration have planned things at the same time. I feel that we often come in too late in the process. There is potential for improvement." —RRA

"Maybe we should have linked up more at the start. I was first worried that Meat Free Monday was about "vegan propaganda" but I have learned so much about the project, Would have been great to have more time to plan together with P8 … that's really helpful." —GGMM

"Kick-off would be useful, so that coordination team goes to school together with mentor; introduction of mentor; creating commitment; short communication channels important." —GA

3.3.3 Capability - future

Capability themes regarding to the future mentioned most often were growth and visibility. Other themes that emerged related to capability/ task were to engage in more (beforehand) planning and contact, to have more training and education of stakeholders and to work on agreements, roles and responsibility.

Growth

Growth emerged as a theme in more than half of the focus groups (PR, SFN, GGMM, ST, PSTM, PSTR, EI, GA, RGS). Participants stated that they would like to expand the case study to other places, such as other nursery schools and involving a powerful network (SFN), or in schools and curriculums (GGMM). Other would like to include market places and new channels to reach consumers (PR) or involve local business more (ST). PST M and PST R would like to use the Place Standard Tool more or in other places. An EI participant wanted to involve new partners, and a GA participant wanted to carry the project outwards. RGS participants wanted to expand the park by a picking and harvesting route, making connections to the local school and municipality. FG participants envisioned an experiment or pilot status from the municipality in order to grow.

"Say, if we would get 5 years to realise our ideal in cooperation with the municipality, which would also get the time and involve entrepreneurs: the chain idea could move forward. Development of the chain, platform and business model of social entrepreneurship = action research. You would get a bit more time and support, that would be a top story, at both sides, and you can learn from it as well." —FG

"I think a dream would be if 50% of the population be PROVE consumers and the issue of catering to restaurants. And have more producers, not intermediaries or pseudo producers who buy in the market and sell to others as own production" —PR

Visibility

Participants from half of the focus groups (PST M, FG, UC, PR, ST, RGS) indicated a wish for more awareness and/or acknowledgement of the project and the work they have done. Some also gave possible ways of accomplishing this, such as making the cooperaction more formal (PST M), increasing visibility by presenting how application data helped (UC), and increasing brand awareness (PR, ST).

"My opinion is that with a view of even more successful cooperation in this or in other municipalities, the Municipality Mayor should emphasise that the results and recommendations from analysis with PST will be incorporated in a future program for the operation of the Municipality. Thus, cooperation will be understood as more formal and obligatory." —PST M

"I think it is very important to strengthen the brand PROVE. The standardisation of the brand in the national system" —PR

"I want to increase visibility. To have the STOEMP label, or brand, appear in even more activities. Not just within specific organisations or services, but to really have it come to life." —ST

Training and education of stakeholders

In half of the focus groups (FG, PR, GA, EI, SFN, GGMM), the wish to train or education certain stakeholders was expressed. An FG participant had a particular wish to combine different educations to create an education for green social work. In other focus groups, participants wanted training of farmers on PROVE aspects (PR), or training for older people to become mentors (GA), training refugee children to be multipliers of energy efficiency education (EI) or educating technicians on sustainable food (SFN). In addition, a GGMM participant suggested training teachers to increase willingness to cooperate.

"Education! In 3 years' time, I would like to have a campus in collaboration with a university of applied sciences: NVH. Also includes green social work. In education there must be pre-sorting on these kinds of initiatives." —FG

Task

In a couple of focus groups (PST M, RGS, FG, PR), wishes for agreements, accountability and responsibility among all stakeholders were expressed. RGS participants would like to have agreements on responsibility and roles in the future, including creating more ownership among residents.

"It is also a matter of responsibility, the municipality has laid out and financed and to put it boldly, stops there. Who is then the owner to put 2.0 on the map? If nobody does something, nothing happens. Somebody has to get up and mobilise and brings parties together. If you do not have someone with time and space, then it just does not happen." —RGS

"From the government, to participate as a cooperation partner, but that also other parties from Rotterdam such as funds as there. So not being the only one, so that there is no dependence on the municipality." —FG

3.4 Motivation

3.4.1. Motivation – facilitators

The focus group participants mentioned the following facilitators of intersectoral cooperation that are linked to motivation: seeing mutual benefits or having shared goals, appreciation of the cooperation

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or stakeholders, having (intrinsic) motivation for the project or cooperation, and appreciating the results of the cooperation.

Seeing mutual benefits, the value of cooperation and having shared goals

In ten out of twelve focus groups (PST M, RGS, EI, SFN, PR, RRA, UC, FG, GGMM, ST), seeing the value and mutual benefits of cooperation and having common goals and values emerged. This theme appears to be the most common facilitator of cooperation across case studies. A PST M participant mentioned that when partners understand the mutual benefits of cooperation, barriers are removed. There was a fit between the INHERIT project and the municipality program for PST M, and between the INHERIT project and local needs for EI. For SFN and GGMM participants, having common goals and values regarding benefits of the target group, children, was a clear facilitator of cooperation. For UC participants, the common goal was having more cyclists, for RRA, the common interest was to create safe areas with better quality.

"It was the confluence and sensibility, I also think it has to do with people sharing objectives, you can feel you are forming a group." and *"…It is important to keep in mind that we do all this for the kids, particularly the smaller knowing that it is here where habits are formed."* —SFN

"Everybody had in mind common goals regarding the children's interest - that is the heart of the project." —GGMM

"It is about the same mind-setting. If we did not have the same foundation (both value and practical basis), cooperation would not work so well. It's good for everyone, we all want more cyclists." —UC

RGS and ST participants mentioned the value of taking the time to set goals together. Whereas ST participants made sure that stakeholders were on the same wavelength when setting goals, FG participants actively sought like-minded cooperation partners.

"That we really wanted to do it together. We sat down with passionate people, who thought together: "How can we make this a success?" There was an atmosphere of 'we are really going to do it that way'." —RGS

"We are on the same wavelength when it comes to vulnerable groups, though, which isn't always easy in groups of this size. (…) There was a lot of emphasis on this when setting the goals." —ST

Appreciation and satisfaction with cooperation and cooperation partners

Participants in several focus groups showed appreciation of the cooperation and/or cooperation partners (PST M, UC, RGS, SFN, FG, GA, EI, GGMM, PST R). For example, noticing enthusiasm (UC), willingness (PST M, ST), or receiving support (SFN, GA) from cooperation partners was a motivating factor for participants.

"The intersectoral cooperation in projects of this type is motivating in its own right." —PST M

"We appreciate that the cooperation is bilateral and supportive." —PST R

"The motivation was that the Application1 team are enthusiastic people for our thing, they have skills and work professionally." —UC

Seeing the necessity and added value of cooperation

In multiple focus groups (SFN, PR, RRA, UC, FG, ST), participants expressed seeing the necessity of intersectoral cooperation. For example, PR participants recognised the need to include the municipality, as they best knew the local population.

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"One has noticed a problem and concluded that we have to deal with it widely to access the problem. The district needs to cooperate with many actors - not just the municipality and property owners, but also shop owners/traders and local associations / civil society. Citizens do not perceive administrative boundaries but see the district as a whole." —RRA

"Policy, scientific knowledge, and the field of work are all integrated in the STOEMP working group. It's a combination of different expertise and points of view, which means 1 + 1 = 3." —ST

"There are lots of synergies, but we can miss experiences if we do not cooperate." —SFN

Appreciation of results due to cooperation

Seeing results and success from intersectoral cooperation efforts appeared to be a motivating aspect for participants. In several focus groups (RGS, UC, FG, GA, ST, PR), this was mentioned as a peak experience of cooperation. For some, the cooperation led to a product of which participants were proud, for example a park for RGS, or an improved application for UC. For FG, seeing the personal impact the cooperation had on inhabitants was motivating. For GA and ST, it was motivating to see the impacts on children.

"Proud to be part of this process. When I see what runs through the park here in the summer, I literally get goose bumps. Nice to see how the park is now being used." —RGS

"For example, two-way paths have been created thanks to the data and our cooperation. I understand it as a success of our cooperation." —UC

"And then I realised, we are, together, very big. Not in mass and performance indicators, but together we have a lot of personal impact, and we make the difference together with and for the inhabitants." —FG

Motivated people

Participants' accounts from many focus groups (UC, PST M, RGS, RRA, EI, FG, SFN, GGMM, GA, ST), suggested that cooperation partners were (intrinsically) motivated and highly enthusiastic about the project and cooperation. Quotes show that participants experienced enthusiasm, co-ownership, willingness, and passion. In some cases, these attributes were also noticed amongst cooperation partners.

"It's exceptional: we all feel like co-owners of the project. Everyone feels involved, despite the fact that we all came in at different times." —ST

The more implied we are, the more interest we have, it started as a duty but now it is us that want to go further." —SFN

"It was very obvious that everybody wanted it to happen was the first core factor. The second is that the passion of everyone, is another factor to making it happen." —GGMM

3.4.2 Motivation - barriers

Participants did not mention many motivation-related barriers. Themes referred to attitudes of outside parties, long-term engagement and not having enough mutual benefits.

Participants from two focus groups indicated to have encountered negative attitudes, of municipality employees towards the PST (PST M) or of outsiders such as welfare directors or municipality workers towards social entrepreneurs like themselves (FG).

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"There were some employees who did not approach the PST seriously, with not all sectors cooperating to the same extent." —PST M

"The field of welfare directors who look at our type of initiatives as cowboys. The response from the social sector at these presentations: you are working on 'low hanging fruits'. We have to do the hard work. Kind of competition." —FG

Other motivation-related themes that were only mentioned in one focus group were a decline in long-term engagement (GA), having limited mutual benefits and low priority for more cooperation (UC).

"…but something also engagement levels diminish over time." —GA

"Initially great willingness, but close coordination difficult in the long run." —GA

"We tried to find cooperation, "we tried to figure out how we could be mutually beneficial, but it's not so simple to start a closer collaboration among applications, and the user groups of these applications do not overlap so much." —UC

"The NGO is great that it does what it does […] but things somehow work, so no change will happen, it's not a priority for them when it works and it's not a priority for us (time loss, a large investment)." —UC

3.4.3 Motivation - future

Future themes related to motivation were not as prevalent as facilitators related to motivation. Motivation themes regarding what is needed for the future to improve cooperation were related to increasing willingness to cooperate (intersectorally) and deepen cooperation. In addition, participants highlighted the need to engage or create ownership among citizens.

Boost intersectoral cooperation (willingness)

In several focus groups (ST, RRA, UC, PR), participants stated having the wish to boost intersectoral cooperation (and willingness to cooperate). A ST participant stated the need of thinking beyond sectors, and others mentioned that cooperation had to remain and be strengthened (RRA), or to be deepened, with better-integrated work (UC). An RRA participant mentioned that a sense of co-creation and joint ownership should be developed through cooperative places. For PR, perceived proximity between farmers and consumers could be increased.

"In general, I think there should be better integration between us (Application1 team) and the NGO. The NGO is great, but it keeps technological components, which are terribly expensive to maintain. There is a need for more cooperation through technical possibilities." —UC

"We need to think beyond the sector. We need to make sure sustainability becomes a reflex in all health-related matters." —ST

3.5 Opportunity

3.5.1. Opportunity – facilitators

Larger themes related to opportunity that emerged from the focus groups were having personal relationships, with trust and reliability, and having networks or sharing opportunities. Other large themes were having political or municipal support and meetings with cooperation partners or having larger gatherings with stakeholders. Having a tool or platform to facilitate cooperation was important

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in several focus groups. Further themes emerged, such as time, funding, project frameworks, and economic context.

Personal relationships with trust and reliability

It appeared that an important contributing factor to successful cooperation was having interpersonal relationships where there was personal communication, trust and reliability (PR, EI, FG, GA, UC). Existing familiarity contributed to cooperation for some of the case studies, as did having the opportunity to share knowledge and experiences. A related contributing factor was using (existing) networks. For PR and EI, trust and reliability were found to be especially important.

"At the beginning of a project you have big goals and plans and wish for success, even if it often turns out differently. However, the reliability of the partners is particularly important in this context. Through reliable project partners, whom you can trust, you get committed to it, so that problems could also be overcome." —EI

"First, a statement, that trust is the word of the year." —PR

Support from policy makers

Being supported or stimulated by policymakers was considered a facilitating factor by participants from different focus groups (EI, ST, PST M, SFN, FG). A ST participant felt political pressure as being an advantage, and an EI participant also mentioned municipality demand as making the project meaningful. Others considered the received support from policy makers such as the mayor (PST M) or the municipality (FG, SFN) to be helpful.

"The political pressure was an advantage, as it kept things moving: it gave us deadlines to meet. It wasn't all positive, of course, but this was definitely an advantage." —ST

"The real conditions and the large demand in the municipality make the project so meaningful and important." —EI

"I also must say that higher instances have at least been permissive, which is not a small aid, in this sense." —SFN

Meeting, sharing & networks

Being able to share experiences, and having different meeting modalities were mentioned as peak experience and contributing to cooperation for SFN and PR. For PST M, SFN and FG, having a suitable network or using existing networks to create new partnerships were mentioned as contributing factors to cooperation. In many focus groups (PR, FG, GGMM, ST, SFN, RRA, RGS, PST M), meeting up with cooperation partners was considered a peak experience and a core factor contributing to cooperation. These meetings varied from large gatherings and national meetings or events, to small work group meetings and meeting cooperation partners. Participants seemed to find these meetings particularly inspiring, motivating, informing and improving of cooperation.

"Learning communities, for me have been the best experience…we share experience, learn all together." —SFN

"Important that there are forums where you meet." —RRA

"Peak experience… I have 2 if I can. Meeting partners has been great, because it materialises from idea to something that can happen." —GGMM

Platforms and tools

Three case studies (PR, PST M, PST R) centred around tools or platforms that brought different sectors together. PROVE cooperation was organised to connect online platforms of promoters, consumers and farmers. For SFN participants, a platform that allowed sharing experiences was a valuable facilitator of cooperation. PST Macedonia and PST Riga were about implementing the Place Standard Tool (a well-known tool that has been applied primarily in the UK).

> *"Exchange spaces such as Mares and learning communities, sharing is very important, to solve doubts and is related to what we spoke about of creating a community."* —SFN

> *"The PST questionnaire touches themes that concern everybody, which means that an opportunity and room for a holistic approach, for cooperation and proactive conduct of all stakeholders are opened."* —PST M

> *"In this list we see that all areas – public transport, security, nature, culture – are covered. All this is in this tool and in the survey – so each department has an interest."* —PST R

Economic context & resources

Some opportunity themes referred to having an economic context (crisis) that facilitated attracting cooperation partners (farmers) (PR) and having funds or financial incentives appeared to motivate participation (SFN, EI, RRA).

> *"Do not forget that we've been in a crisis at work level, so some of them had some familiar goods that were abandoned. They talked with us because they saw in there an opportunity."* —PR

> *"The point about resources is also important: you got involved because the project*
>
> *was professionally set up and you knew that the resources were available."* —EI

Political/Cultural Context

In several focus groups (RGS, ST, FG) it appeared that the specific cultural context was facilitating of the cooperation. For RGS, this was the citizen participation, which was a common working method for the municipality. The active participation of the city was seen as a facilitator for ST. An FG participant mentioned having a participatory society as being important for transferability of the case study.

> *"Is also the strength of Breda, this is a basic way of working. The resident is on the move. You can say something to the council with an idea."* — RGS

> *"The city's active participation reflected a kind of evolution to me, as well. I'm somewhat old-school, so it's interesting to see this evolution to a more participative way of thinking."* —ST

Project framework

For EI participants, having a project framework helped getting things done.

> *"Project as a framework provider with specifications for the time frame. Deadlines are not bad at all to get things moving. Without the pressure of time, a lot of things can sometimes remain unfinished."* —EI

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS							
PST M	Place Standard Macedonia	**EI**	Eco-Inclusion	**FG**	Food Garden (Voedseltuin)		
PST R	Place Standard Riga	**PR**	PROVE	**GGMM**	Gardening with Green Gym and Meat Free Mondays		
RGS	Restructuring Green Space	**RRA**	Restructuring Residential Areas	**GA**	GemüseAckerdemie (Vegetable Academy)		
SFN	Sustainable Food in Nursery Schools	**UC**	UrbanCyclers	**ST**	Gent en Garde: The STOEMP initiative		

3.5.2 Barriers – opportunity

The largest barriers related to opportunity were having limited or changed budgets, time, and staff. Other barriers regarding opportunity were lack of acknowledgement or being protective of own work, difficulties with public administration or legislation.

Limited or modified budgets, time and staff

Having limited or modified budgets, time and staff emerged as a theme in a great number of focus groups (EI, PR, SFN, RRA, FG, ST), either to growth or continuity of the case study (and cooperation in it). For FG and SFN, not having structural funding was considered a barrier. For PR, funding was decreased, creating tension between producers and implementers as partners had different ideas about how to fund the initiative in the future. For SFN, limited staff and subsidies provided barriers to make change happen. For GGMM, EI and ST, time presented a barrier.

"One of the things I insist the most it is the independence and proactivity of the producers to financial alternatives by holding them accountable. It is necessary for a private investment that has to be supported by the farmers. They [ed: the farmers] *had everything for free through 10 years. So, they get used to it."* —PR

"We have low amounts of staff. These changes need workforce, and we often lack it." —SFN

"I think that's what our main constraint was – time. This project happened because of the research element, we wanted to show policymakers that this can be useful, and that's why we needed to do the research. But cooperation means that we needed to come together… I think that's a key issue in terms of time." — GGM

Protective of own work

In a couple of focus groups (UC, FG, SFN), a barrier that emerged was other parties being protective of their own work, and the lack of acknowledgement by other parties.

"It is difficult to find open spaces [ed: linkages] *due to insecurities and fear. People must overcome the fear of finding others who know more than they do."* —SFN

"What I've got to know this world, there are many organisations that are heading to the same goal, but every organisation protects their things a little bit." —UC

"You have to want to grant the other parties something. I have noticed that this can be difficult sometimes. I want to be named first, but if you work together, sometimes that just is not the case. Let somebody else shine. You contribute to the whole. For us, that has become a way of working." —FG

Difficulties with public administration or legislation

In several focus groups (ST, SFN, UC, RRA, PST M), cooperation with public administration or politicians was considered a difficult activity, due to various reasons.

"The municipality's organisation has not been equipped in finding appropriate forums and how to join and collaborate. It is a large organisation with different administrations, where the information does not always reach everyone or end up in the right place. It's a challenge." —RRA

"We worked with 2 different aldermen, one for health and one for sustainability. And that was difficult. Because of the political aspect, it seemed everyone wanted to use the topic to their own advantage, as election day was fast approaching." —ST

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS							
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"A bit of a problem is that politicians and people see the problem that the bikes stand in the streets" and they are no longer interested that there is no infrastructure. And they will look for reasons why this is not feasible." —UC

A related issue was problems with legislation. UC and FG participants mentioned barriers due to legislation. For FG, legislation barriers made it harder to get permits and structural contracts for the garden area.

"We are struggling with legislation. In other countries, they can make more restrictions (given by legislation). We cannot restrict competition by law (we have no restrictions, licenses by law). There will be many bike sharing bicycles here. More and more operators contact us. Let's see how it will work." —UC

3.5.3 Opportunity - future

Future wishes regarding opportunity are strongly related to the identified opportunity barriers.

Time and resources

For the future, participants (EI, FG, RRA, PR, GGMM) wished for more time and (different types of) resources. For PR, the capacity of producers to become financially independent was considered important. An RRA participant voiced the wish for policy-driven, annual funds for to implement specific measures. FG participants wished for more integral financing (instead of many different small subsidies) and they were working towards a hybrid business model (See quote below).

"One third collective (social capital, work, inhabitants), one third public, one third private/market finance. A hybrid, integral business model. Partly from the market and partly collective. Now you often are one or the other, and it almost does not exist that you are all three at once. That is my mission. If it succeeds, you can easily make appointments. Than the municipality would say, I participate for one third with that piece. Now it is seen as a whole, and you have to categorise." —FG

Involve, reinforce and motivate all stakeholders (by meeting up)

For the future, participants of PR, UC, EI, SFN voiced the wish to involve, reinforce and/or motivate cooperation among stakeholders. Some suggested meeting up as a means to accomplish this. PR participants referred to the importance of the support from the municipality or other entities, which would help with legitimacy of the project.

"It's a question whether it is time to meet with the municipality and to talk about (and agree on) a common strategy, how we will push the city district 1, push on those and those, and so on." —UC

"It is different businesses being approached by a farmer or being approached by an ADREPES and by a city council …We have no legitimacy to reach a producer, without this support, and say "you did not behave so well."" —PR

3.6 Citizen participation

Involving, engaging and participation of residents or the target group was a topic of discussion in more than half of the case studies (RRA, PST R, PST M, EI, SFN, GGMM, RGS). As this is a specific type of cooperation, the main themes relating to facilitators and barriers are described separately in this section. In Figure 7, the main themes are presented.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS							
PST M	Place Standard Macedonia	**EI**	Eco-Inclusion	**FG**	Food Garden (Voedseltuin)		
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RGS	Restructuring Green Space	**RRA**	Restructuring Residential Areas	**GA**	GemüseAckerdemie (Vegetable Academy)		
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Figure 7: Main Themes Citizen Participation
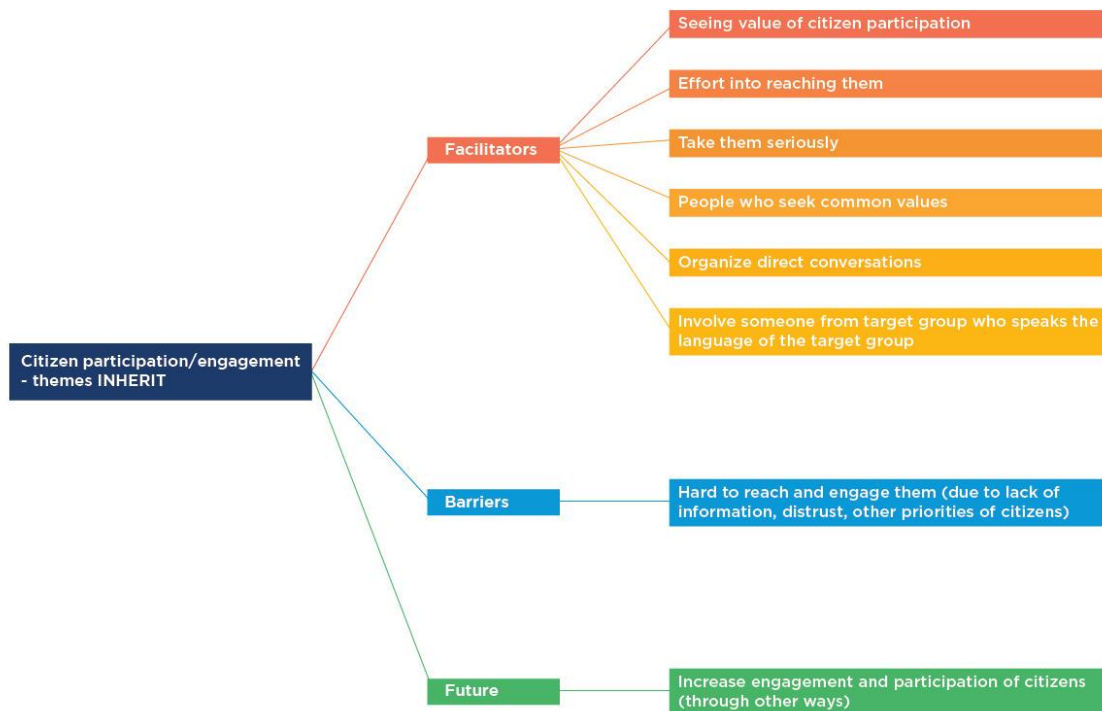
Facilitators regarding reaching and engaging citizens
Seeing its value

Several focus group participants appreciated and saw the value of resident or target group engagement. For RRA, it started as a funding requirement from the funding organisation, but it was also an added value to the project.

> "*What was nice was the cooperation with residents.*" —PST R

> "*For financial support from NBHBP* [ed: National Board of Housing, Building and Planning]*, it is a requirement that residents are involved and that the project is carried out during a relatively short time period.*" —RRA

> "*The process of working actively with the residents prior to refurbishing came from NBHBP's requirement for resident participation in order to be granted support, and the property owner wanted to continue working in this way even without support from NBHB.*" — RRA

> "*From our side, we see that it becomes better when you engage residents and strengthen a common sense of ownership.*" —RRA

> "*Taking ownership of the task, after they've (the children) been taught it. You can see the thrill. That gives me the thrill of seeing them.*" —GGMM

> "*I am looking for the gems* [ed: active residents] *in the neighbourhood. That we* [ed: municipality] *give the first push.*" —RGS

Reaching citizens

RGS participants put in a lot of effort to reach residents through multiple channels (also going into the neighbourhood and talking to them), and a PST R participant mentioned that they were going into the neighbourhood to activate neighbourhood alliances in the region. For PST R and RGS, it was believed that resident participation could be triggered by problems or worries, where some residents come into action.

> *"It seems to me that activity is triggered by the problem environment- then people become very active, try to express their opinion and organise, and also become partners with organisations."*
> —PST R

Take citizens seriously

Both PST M and RGS participants mentioned the importance of making citizens feel that they are being taken seriously, and citizens should see that their input is being used. For RGS, the park was actually a wish of residents that was realised. A ST participant emphasised that residents should not be underestimated, and a participant from PST M mentioned that the municipality must look at citizens as cooperation partners, not as opponents.

> *"We did very literally what people asked, that was sometimes exciting, to design with residents. The question was whether it was feasible to realise their contribution* [ed: their wishes for the design]. *But it worked."* —RGS

> *"What also helped, people saw their input back in the design. What I contribute, something is also done with it."* —RGS

Invite residents to dialogue

Both RGS and RRA participants mentioned direct contact and dialogue are important, to change resident's attitudes and increase ownership. However, a participant from RRA warned not to overwhelm residents and use existing dialogues as entry points.

> *"You have to show <as a professional> your face, that makes it easier. I am looking for the gems in the neighbourhood. That we give the first push."* —RGS

> *"Initiating connection, were also deep in the district for a long time. With that you have also organised a piece of ownership for that park. Therefore, now also a success remains, because it feels a bit as if it were theirs."* —RGS

> *"We have resident/tenant dialogues to produce a basis for what can be done within the property boundary."* —RRA

> *"When we met the resident group in the beginning, there was an upset atmosphere and they planned protests against the property owner. But after the dialogues and participation, they became positive."* —RRA

Involve peers with same linguistic and cultural background

EI mentioned two factors for involving the target group (refugees): speaking the language of the target group and having someone from the target group itself in the team.

> *"Another advantage was that the employees also included Arabic-speaking people."* —EI

> *"The concept of peer teaching makes a lot of sense, because people from the same social group know best what people need, for example, there are no barriers due to cultural differences."* —EI

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Barriers regarding reaching and engaging citizens

Several focus groups indicated that reaching, engaging or creating ownership among citizens was a difficult task. Participants of RGS and EI mentioned the issue of reaching target groups and creating ownership (RGS) among residents.

"Hard to reach in this neighbourhood, because of the composition of the neighbourhood, for example, who do not speak the language or who are busy with surviving." —RGS

"And ownership. I would have liked it when the neighbours had walked with the lawn mower through the park. People are enthusiastic and happy, but management of maintenance is a bridge too far." — RGS

For PST R, limited understanding of the tool by citizens presented barriers to engage citizens. Another barrier for PST R was that citizens may feel reluctant to engage because they do not see the benefits of doing so, or that it will change things, and/or they may distrust the process. Also, in Eastern European countries, participatory approaches such as the PST are not common and citizens may not be used to participate. For EI, this issue of distrust (at first contact) of refugees was also mentioned. A ST participant mentioned the difficulty of engaging in participative work with the target audience.

"The socially inactive people were characterized by a lack of understanding of the scale of assessment, and they had difficulty of evaluating these 14 place standards on a seven-point scale." —PST R

"Hard to engage citizens, even by gift cards they do not want to participate or show up to discussion. It seems they do not believe the study could bring a real benefit." —PST R

"Basically, citizens lack credible information that something can change if they engage." —PST R

"Many of the refugees were afraid of contact and worried that somebody would want to palm something off on them." —EI

"The real participative work with the target audience is more difficult."—ST

Future steps in engaging citizens

Participants in several focus groups (PST R, RGS, PST M, SFN, ST) stated that in the future, they would like to increase and find better ways to engage and cooperate with citizens. Regarding attitudes, a PST M participant mentioned that the municipality should not look at citizens as opponents and an SFN participant made a similar remark about not seeing families as a barrier when introducing more sustainable foods in schools. An ST participant emphasised that the target group needed to be taken into account in project steps. Regarding specific plans, PST R participants wanted to try to activate neighbourhood alliances in neighbourhoods, and RGS participants suggested to organise a management group of residents, or to use a monthly neighbourhood event or neighbourhood garden, in order to increase engagement and ownership among residents. An SFN participant suggested educating parents to take away doubts.

"For ownership more communication with residents and organisations and trust is needed." —RGS

"If this tool is to be piloted in the future, it would be useful to involve an active community of local residents." —PST R

"Do not look at citizens as opponents, and problems should be resolved and resolutions sought in common effort." —PST M

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3.7 Most important elements per case study

This section describes the most important facilitators, barriers and future plans of individual case studies. Per case study, first the discussions from the focus group on the question "what was the most important of things discussed?" are described, followed by prevalent barriers and facilitators based on the analysis of the overall focus group discussions. Finally, perceptions that INHERIT project partners provided during the online review sessions is described.

Food Garden (FG, Netherlands)

The most important elements according to participants and the moderator of the Food Garden focus group were: mutual trust and respect in cooperation, being open and having the confidence and trust in the other party, having a long-term vision and patience. In addition, for the future, participants emphasised the need for financing and acknowledgement of these type of initiatives and their societal value, development of their hybrid business model and having more partners in cooperation. Finally, being agenda setting and not merely reacting to existing political agendas (being pro-active).

A highly prevalent theme for the Food Garden regarding core factors and capability was having the right people there with suitable skills (thinking across sectors, understanding each other's worlds and perspectives). Regarding motivation, cooperation partners had common goals and shared values, and appreciated and saw the necessity of the cooperation. With regards to opportunity, important themes were having support from municipality, and equal partnerships between municipality and other parties. Meetings and sharing experiences and results were core facilitators of cooperation.

Barrier themes were resources (need for more structural subsidies and hybrid revenue model required lot of own resources), scepticism from outside parties regarding social entrepreneurship, short-term rental contract for the food garden area (causing insecurity). For the future, major themes were resources (integral sustainable financing opportunities), acknowledgement (of societal value of cooperation and of hybrid business model with different funding sources) and different role agreements (municipality as more equal partner instead of commissioning party).

Restructuring Green Space (RGS, Netherlands)

Participants mentioned the enthusiastic cooperation partners to be the most important aspect, together with their joint conclusion that there was still room for improvement of the park. It was considered important to have open attitudes and dialogues and taking residents seriously. Actions by the professionals should have support among residents. Designing a park is not the end stage, it is an ongoing process, and should be managed by some responsible party. For the future, more ownership among residents needs to be created.

The major facilitators for Restructuring Green Space were having suitable people; with long-term vision and patience, flexibility and common goals. Participants appeared satisfied and proud regarding results. Meeting and seeing cooperation partners that were enthusiastic was motivating.

Barriers were related to reaching residents, engaging them and creating ownership among them. For the future, plans were made to increase this, including organizing a reunion with all professionals and residents, more communication, monthly neighbourhood events, and organizing a management group of residents).

The INHERIT project partner emphasised the long history of cooperation and the importance of creating and maintaining ownership among residents regarding the green space and investing in people (empowerment) before investing in the physical environment (incl. green space). The absence of certain cooperation stakeholders (such as the residential organisation) was considered as disappointing.

Place Standard Tool Macedonia (PST M, Macedonia)

For PST Macedonia focus group participants, the moderator summarised the discussed core factors as: interest of the mayor for the project, interested and committed municipality employees, commitment of project coordinator, compatibility of the project with the municipality work program, result and success of implementation of the tool. In future, the activity should be better planned beforehand and not be conducted in summer (due to holiday season in municipality).

The major facilitators for PST Macedonia appeared to be having the right suitable people who are motivated, who see mutual benefits and appreciate the cooperation (partners). Another important facilitator was having political support.

A barrier was the timing in the summer, as there was no permanent municipality staff present. In the future, awareness should be raised on the importance of the tool, and the implementation should be better planned and managed. Also, participants suggested that the municipality needed to increase communication and meeting with citizens.

The project partner mentioned as important factors the communication between cooperation partners, citizen appreciation of the tool and their participation, and participants were motivated by the international aspect of the INHERIT project. For the future, the public administration should increase confidence in citizens, citizens need to see that results are implemented to generate trust.

Place Standard Tool (PST Riga, Latvia)

The question on most important themes discussed was not addressed during the focus group.

The major facilitating factors for PST Riga were the Place Standard Tool itself as it allows looking at a place with an intersectoral perspective, the presentation of results to the municipality as it increased their interest in the tool. Important barriers included engagement of citizens and lack of understanding of citizens of the PST. For the future, the most important element was usage of results, implementing the tool at more places, and involving and activating citizens. According to the project partners, the presentation of the results to the municipality and the satisfaction of citizens to be invited were important. Citizens normally did not have the possibility to meet each other (limited social opportunities in the target area).

GemüseAckerdemie (GA, Germany)

The most important things concerning the cooperation discussed according to participants was sitting together and regular reflection, communication in short ways, exchanging, kick-off meetings for mentors beforehand. For the future, the project (for this specific school discussed in focus group) should be carried outwards, remain momentum while developing routine (for this specific school).

The major facilitators for GemüseAckerdemie were the role of Ackerdemia as an organisation, as they provide all the frameworks, having the right suitable people who are committed (for example, a mentor, somebody that not all schools have), enthusiastic teachers, a motivating factor was seeing success among the children. The support by GemüseAckerdemie was an important facilitating and appreciated factor (they brought in all the materials and advice), as was the personal and short way communication, and meeting in person. Barriers were related to long-term engagement and coordination (among teachers and mentor at this school). For the future, a kick-off meeting, better (beforehand) contact and communication (for teachers and mentor of this school) and involving older people as mentors were suggested.

According to the project partner, the role of GemüseAckerdemie as organiser, networker and initiator was very important as they provided material and support. Key facilitators were different competences, coming together and matching well, and having a motivated school and supportive Akerdemia, the organisation behind the project GemüseAckerdemie.

Eco Inclusion (EI, Germany)

According to participants, the most important aspects were trustworthy cooperation, due to familiarity and trust and reliability. The flexibility of the project framework with adjusting/tailoring to needs of city was considered a decisive guarantee of success.

For the future, project extension and sustainability of the project were mentioned. The moderator summarised the main factors for cooperation as having good contacts, bonds and reliable, stable partners, and the various frameworks in which Eco Inclusion was embedded. If they could have done something differently, they would integrate more partners and multipliers. They would also appreciate seeing more self-initiative from multipliers. For the future, the project should continue, with multipliers having an official link to the institutions they represent and allow more time for the project to settle and develop.

The major facilitators for Eco Inclusion identified from focus group data were having the right, suitable people who were committed and reliable, appreciated the cooperation and partners, existing familiarity, which increased trust. For target group participation, it appeared facilitating to involve those that know the target group and have the same linguistic and cultural background (peer-based approach). Barriers were related to the project framework, which was limited in terms of time and resources. In addition, there were some difficulties in establishing a trustful first contact with refugees (which was linked to the fact that refugees could not immediately recognise who the peer multipliers were when approached for the first time (they did not wear an official badge that showed their link to the municipality). In the future, participants would like more time and resources, long-term planning and follow-up meetings and growth/visibility of the project. They would like to involve housing and landlord associations as partners and engage children/young people more systematically into training and explore potential cooperation with schools for this purpose, as they learned later that children were receptive and interested.

Ghent en Garde: the STOEMP initiative (ST, Belgium)

A participant of this focus group mentioned that the project should start cooperating with other sectors such as the for-profit sector, and another participant mentioned that also the focus group itself was important as a way to gain knowledge and learn from other partners.

The major facilitators for STOEMP were having the right people who are open and listen, and having agreements, regular reflection and adjustments, working in concrete groups, and having set clear goals. In addition, appreciation of the cooperation and the network, seeing the necessity of cooperation and being willing to cooperate were also indicated. The city contributed actively but as an equal partner. Meeting up often was seen as facilitating. A barrier for STOEMP was the political element, which created some struggles. For the future, important themes were growth and expansion of the project (to other sectors such as for-profit), visibility and awareness (e.g., having the label or brand appear more in activities, and increase awareness of the existence of the project). In the future, there was also stated a need for thinking about and working with the target audience.

The political interest, having health, sustainability and equity domains together and the intersectoral cooperation were important according to the project partner.

Gardening with Green Gyms and Meatless Mondays (GGMM, United Kingdom)

Participants of this focus group mentioned that the most important cooperation elements as discussed in the focus group were understanding everybody's objectives and goals, benefits to children (such as access to outdoor, inspiration), positivity of the project, and affirmation and demonstration of impact and measurement of benefits of outdoor learning. The moderator summarised the focus groups' most important discussion points as the cooperation being a positive experience for people, and seeing children inspired. What could have been differently was to have better knowledge of expectations beforehand, and to have more time as the project was not part of the curriculum. For the future, it would be beneficial if the project would become part of the curriculum (as currently, teachers had to fit the project into everything else they had to teach).

The major facilitator for Gardening with Green Gyms and Meatless Mondays were having (intrinsically) motivated people who are willing to cooperate and who see mutual benefits and share interests and common goals. Seeing success among the children was a very motivating factor. Meeting up was considered a peak experience in cooperation. Most important barrier was a lack of time, and for the future, more clarity and agreements from the start (between researchers and implementers), a better understanding of the purpose of the work to be done and better communication were desired. For the future, growth was mentioned, with green gyms in every school and taken up in school curricula.

The project partner considered the commitment of the main stakeholders, the shared values and caring for each other as important. The main barrier were the restrictions regarding time and funding.

PROVE (PR, Portugal)

A participant mentioned that PROVE needs an upgrade regarding marketing and support to the management platform, for which an exploration of what investments were needed was being done. In the future, there needs to be guiding and training for farmers on technical aspects of the platform. An important barrier is that there are currently not enough resources to support farmers and check if they comply with the methodology to ensure quality. A participant mentioned that city councils should be included in project promotion, to increase legitimacy towards farmers.

The main facilitators for PROVE were the visibility of the project, partners seeing necessity of cooperation, having trust between cooperation partners who experience mutual benefits from the cooperation, meeting up and large gatherings. Important barriers were the tension between producers and implementers regarding financing of the initiative due to changes in the funding and resources of the project. For the future, important themes were increasing visibility through marketing and brand consolidation, increasing cooperation strategies and growth, the independence and pro-activity of producers towards financial alternatives, the need to improve the online management platform and technical support for producers, and improving quality assessments and certification.

Project partners mentioned as most important factors: starting with a diagnosis of the problem situation and acting upon it, the confidence and trust PROVE could provide to both consumers and producers, meeting up, and the change in funding and resources which was there for eight years. Now producers must increase financial independence.

Restructuring Residential Areas (RRA, Sweden)

Participants indicated that the most important of the discussed topics were related to what should have been done differently: how to interact better and how to be equipped better, how to find out what is going on at an earlier stage. One participant mentioned a benefit of the focus group being hearing what has been done and hearing other's point of view. For the future, a participant stated the need to continue cooperation for the development of the district.

The main facilitators were task-related: having agreements, allocating an assigned leader, applying for funds together. In addition, stakeholders were able to look over own property borders and saw the area as a whole, they shared goals and interest, knew each other already for a long time (since 2006-2007 when the cooperation started). Regarding citizen involvement, having one-to-one conversations between professionals and citizens, using existing contacts and seeing the value of involving residents facilitated. Barriers were related to funding (funding from one party ended), and the municipality's capability to cooperate with property owners. Cooperation partners would have had earlier contact and communication if they could change anything. For the future, they emphasised the importance of increasing ownership, continued cooperation, remaining priority and funding.

The project partner mentioned that having problems worked as a trigger, which made everybody work in the same direction, as well as having stakeholders that saw the value of engaging residents.

Sustainable Food in Nursery Schools (SFN, Spain)

Participants indicated that is it important to have a holistic view on food (being healthy, sustainable, related to education and habit building, human right), and opportunity to exchange experiences between partners. School staff should be supported to work together to further improve menus and feel ownership of change. For the future, long term planning is needed, including political implication, multi-sectoral and horizontal cooperation (e.g. within the schools) and budget.

The main facilitators for Sustainable Food In Nursery Schools were having and finding the right people with shared goals who knew each other for a longer time, growth (look for alliances), and having support for learning about healthy sustainable food. In addition, acknowledgement of the necessity and appreciation of the cooperation and partners was an important facilitator, as was having intrinsically motivated people, and a city council that made processes flexible and open to change.

Seeing results motivated. Sharing experiences, learning communities, and having a platform on which to share experiences facilitated cooperation as well.

Barriers included the lack of dialogue with politicians, being understaffed and not having a fixed, certain budget. For the future, growth, involvement and motivation of all stakeholders was considered an important step, as was educating stakeholders (including the parents of children).

According to the project partner, the high involvement and willingness to learn things that could be used to improve the development of the infants, was most important.

UrbanCyclers (UC, Czech Republic)

Participants mentioned that they would like to meet up with each other (this had not happened often before). In addition, a participant mentioned that in future, analysis on what has been achieved should be spread in the future to present results.

The main facilitators for UrbanCyclers were having the right people, who are open, think intersectorally about the topic (of transport), appreciating positive results of the application, having common values and mutually beneficial goals, appreciation and seeing necessity of cooperation, and knowing each other (existing familiarity). Barriers identified were: some partners did not give priority to cooperation, difficulties finding mutual benefits among applications, the political/legal context (e.g. public procurement rules), having stakeholders who are protective of own work or who do not acknowledge one another. For the future, raised actions were boosting mutual cooperation, (amongst others through technical possibilities), increasing visibility by presenting results (e.g. how data helps), and meetings.

4. Discussion

4.1 Goals of the evaluation

INHERIT aims to identify and promote effective intersectoral policies, interventions and innovations that enable and encourage the uptake of more sustainable, healthier and equitable living, moving and consuming practices. Intersectoral cooperation is essential when dealing with such complex challenges. The goals of this process evaluation were to collate qualitative information from implementers and stakeholders of twelve selected case studies to provide further insight into factors that help ensure successful implementation of inter-sectoral initiatives. This has been done by looking into what elements were supportive or posed barriers for intersectoral cooperation. Another objective of the evaluation was to promote future cooperation of the case studies, by discussing future goals and how to reach them. The focus of this qualitative process evaluation was thus not solely on gathering data about what happened in the various case studies, but also on determining what steps could be taken to perform even better in the future. Despite the wide variety of case studies from different domains and countries, a set of overarching themes were extracted from the twelve focus groups.

In the remainder of this section, we compare our results to earlier literature on intersectoral cooperation. We start by discussing facilitators, followed by barriers, factors relating to the start and future of the cooperation and a separate section on citizen participation. Subsequently, benefits and limitations of the methods used are discussed, including using an Appreciative Inquiry- inspired stepped approach and conducting focus groups.

4.2. Overarching themes

4.2.1 Facilitators of cooperation

The most important facilitators of intersectoral cooperation appeared to be related to motivation levels of the cooperation partners: most focus group participants saw the mutual benefits of cooperation with other partners, they shared common goals and they valued cooperating and saw the necessity of cooperating. Other often mentioned facilitators related to the partners themselves were having an open attitude and long-term vision, flexibility and having personal relationships in which people feel they can trust and rely on one another. Other facilitating factors were having cooperation agreements, and being (or making sure to be) known and acknowledged by the outside world and by important stakeholders. Particularly significant for the INHERIT case studies was that facilitators were often people- and value-oriented: participants saw the motivation and competence of partners as vital facilitators of cooperation, and they appeared intrinsically motivated to make the initiative and cooperation successful. These findings suggest that when setting up intersectoral cooperation, an important recommendation is investing in personal relationships and having common goals, to ensure all stakeholders see the necessity of cooperating and experience the cooperation as pleasant. In addition, meeting face-to-face with cooperation partners was experienced as very valuable: it contributed to understanding each other and each other's goals, and making agreements. These meetings were often mentioned as being peak experiences in cooperation and seem especially important for the INHERIT case studies. Thus, when planning and conducting intersectoral cooperation, stakeholders should make sure to include (and plan for) enough opportunities to meet up in person, to allow personal relationships to grow and to be and remain on the same page.

Regarding opportunities, having support from policy makers or the municipality was considered very helpful. In some focus groups, the political or economic context was explicitly mentioned as affecting cooperation. For example, for PROVE, the economic crisis was a facilitator, as they could offer farmers a way to sell their product surpluses. This is interesting, as previous research showed that context and culture are critical determinants of success of intersectoral initiatives (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2007).

Our results mostly agree with the facilitators identified in the INHERIT literature review report (Staatsen et al., 2017). These factors included having clear and common objectives, building trust, persistence, ensuring continuity, and ensuring long-term funding opportunities. In addition, facilitators included having the support of a governmental body, as well as dissemination of information and evidence to both field workers and policy makers. Our findings generally fit earlier literature (Danaher, 2011, Wagemakers et al., 2010, WHO, 2018, Public Health Agency of Canada, 2007). Several of our identified facilitators of cooperation matched items from the Coordinated Action Checklist for community health promotion (indicated below between brackets) (Wagemakers et al., 2010). For example, facilitators related to satisfaction of the partners with cooperation (suitability), having agreements on goals and planning in the partnership (task), open communication (relation), succeeding in mobilizing others (growth), and having a good image (visibility). Dealing with conflicts constructively (Wagemakers et al., 2010) was not explicitly mentioned in our focus groups, which could mean that our case studies did not experience conflicts, or that they did experience conflicts but dealt with it appropriately and did not mention it, or it was not mentioned because we did not explicitly asked participants about conflicts. Our findings also agree with the conditions of success as identified by the Public Health Agency of Canada: having an identified need to work together, the required capacity (skills, knowledge), a relationship with trust and respect, being like-minded, planned action with clear agreements, and roles and responsibilities (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2007). Several facilitators identified in a more recent mapping exercise across EU region case studies by the WHO (2018) match our results, among which are having a long-term impact focus, political support, and having clear co-benefits among partners.

The WHO also found that a working culture of governing jointly and openness of the system to allow learning and implementation of new mechanisms, but also having an environment that encourages risk, creativity and innovation was facilitating. Whilst some of our case studies mentioned participative public administration bodies or a public administration flexibilising its processes, participants did not explicitly discussed contexts that encouraged risks or creativity, with the exception of the Food Garden. However, this does not necessarily mean they did not experience such context. When these factors were discussed, discussions were focused more on the people who dared to take risks or be creative, and not about a potential context facilitating this behaviour.

The facilitators identified in this evaluation are very similar to those found in the existing literature. Graham et al. stated there is "*a knowledge base to share on "what works" in multisectoral collaboration*" (2018). That being said, our study shows that the known elements for successful intersectoral cooperation can also be applied in initiatives where health, environmental sustainability and equity are being targeted to reach a triple-win.

4.2.2 Barriers for cooperation

Regarding barriers for intersectoral cooperation, less commonalities between focus groups could be identified, with various types of barriers mentioned in the different focus groups. However, there were some main themes. The largest barrier theme, discussed in more than half of the focus groups, was related to not (or no longer) having enough budgets, time or staff for the project, which resulted in limited opportunities to meet up, to fulfil set goals or growth of cooperation. This fits earlier literature stating the need for sufficient and sustained resources to allow intersectoral cooperation (Danaher, 2011). Moreover, some focus groups showed difficulties in cooperating with public administration or difficulties due to legislation. To tackle both the issue of having enough and suitable resources and allowing adequate cooperation with these types of multisectoral initiatives, we believe public administrations should transform from sectoral towards more intersectoral departments, which may better allow them to change their sectoral subsidy structures into more integral subsidy options. Besides budgets, time appeared to be a prevalent barrier in several case studies, often related to the INHERIT project timeframes, which demanded the implementation and the evaluation of case studies being conducted within a tight schedule. When lacking these external conditions, it can be a challenge to make sure necessary processes for cooperation take place. Another prevalent barrier was a lack of (beforehand) planning and contact between cooperation partners, and in many focus groups, participants indicated that they would have liked to have better and earlier communication with each other. A lack of political will or commitment and a lack of resources and coordination were also mentioned as important barriers in earlier literature (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2007, Danaher, 2011, WHO, 2018)

However, other barriers that the WHO (2018) described, such as the inability or failure to identify co-benefits, ambiguous use of language and entrenched siloed thinking, where not –or only to a very limited extent- identified in our focus groups. Our focus group participants appeared to share common goals and values and they saw the necessity of cooperation with other sectors to reach their goals. They also did not mention language barriers or misunderstandings due to jargon. This could be due to our selection of triple-win case studies in which intersectoral cooperation was already happening. Barriers related to motivation were not mentioned often, and if they were mentioned, they were very focus group specific, and often related to motivation of outside parties. For example, public servants who thought negatively about social entrepreneurs. A potential reason that fewer barriers emerged compared to facilitators was that the selected twelve case studies were all promising practices in which cooperation processes and results were generally quite positive, and those who attended the focus groups were above-averagely motivated for the project and the cooperation. In addition, results could have been different if case studies were included that experienced more difficulties or challenges in cooperation. Moreover, using Appreciative Inquiry could have resulted in fewer discussions on barriers. This is discussed in Section 4.3.1.

4.2.3 Start and future of cooperation

For some case studies, the INHERIT project was a direct cause of starting the project and intersectoral cooperation. For others, there were political or environmental triggers or a need to solve an identified clear problem. Having a shared concern or issue and a shared interest in this issue, helps in achieving a consensus on the approach to take, facilitating cooperation (Danaher, 2011). Facilitating factors for starting the project were inspiration from international experience, existing familiarity or long-term

established cooperation, partners who actively sought cooperation, and who had clear communication from the start. This corresponds to findings by the WHO, who found early engagement of co-operators and open communication facilitated cooperation (2018). In addition, these facilitating factors are in line with findings of the Public Health Agency of Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2007), who describe the importance of investing in alliance-building processes by working towards consensus at the planning stage. One of the conditions of effective intersectoral action is that parties have developed a strong relationship, which is clearly defined and based on trust and respect (Harris, 1995, Danaher, 2011). This corresponds with our finding that long-term established cooperation and good relationships between partners facilitated cooperation.

For the future, important themes that emerged were growth and visibility: in more than half of the focus groups, participants stated the desire to expand their cooperation (including more partners) or project to other places, or to make it more structurally embedded (for example in school curricula). Identifying plans to monitor and sustain outcomes were described as conditions for effective intersectoral action (Harris, 1995). Our participants generally did not discuss ways of monitoring or evaluating outcomes and were focused more on how to improve or expand the project or cooperation. This could be due to the questions asked during the focus groups, which focused more on the processes and contributing factors to cooperation, and future desires, and less on outcomes of the cooperation. Worth mentioning however, is that participants often mentioned successes as peak experiences that motivated them. This corresponds to earlier literature showing that successes (especially those in the beginning of projects) can increase commitment of partners to continue cooperation (Danaher, 2011). In addition, especially prevalent was the wish of participants for acknowledgement and awareness by outside parties, participants wanted their work to be known and valued by outside parties. Several focus groups discussed the wish for more time and (different types of) resources in the future (which closely relates to the identified barrier of lacking resources). Half of the focus groups indicated a wish or discussed plans to boost the cooperation (by deepening or strengthening it) and cooperation willingness by engaging all stakeholders. To accomplish this, meeting up was a commonly proposed method. Other future wishes that emerged were to have more training and education of stakeholders and to work on agreements on roles and responsibility.

4.2.4 Citizen participation and engagement

More than half of the case studies involved citizen participants and engagement. Citizen participation is widely acknowledged as being valuable and yielding multiple benefits, such as generating actions that are closer to public-preferences and supported by citizens, building trust and gaining legitimacy (Irvin and Stansbury, 2004).

As Baum concluded in a chapter on citizen participation, citizen involvement may be discouraged by public organisations and citizens vary in their confidence that they have the political or intellectual authority to take part (Baum, 2015). From the focus groups of these case studies, it appeared that participants saw the value of citizen participation and expressed the importance of taking citizens seriously (and making them feel being taken seriously) and of having direct conversations with them.

However, reaching, engaging and/or increasing ownership amongst citizens was found to be a difficult task. For some case studies, such as the Place Standard Tool Macedonia and Place Standard Tool Riga, this can also be related to cultural aspects, as citizen participation is quite new and innovative in

Eastern-European countries. This could mean that both professionals and citizens need to get used to citizen participation in this kind of projects, making the first steps more difficult. Those who explained why this was a difficult task, mentioned amongst others a lack of trust (Eco Inclusion), or citizens having other priorities (such as having enough income, Restructuring Green Space), and a lack of places where citizens can meet (PST Riga). This latter reason connects to findings by Romeo-Velilla et al (2018), who found that poor access or lack of community venues could contribute to perceived (dis)empowerment of citizens in disadvantaged areas. Findings regarding distrust are in line with earlier studies that found that citizens in disadvantaged areas may adopt distrustful attitudes towards governments or public officials (Berman, 1997), which provides a barrier for citizen engagement. The highly motivated professionals in Restructuring Green Space were ambitious in improving the park but also recognized that first, they needed to find out what the residents wanted themselves. Participants in five focus groups indicated that they wanted to increase citizen participation in the future, and some participants had concrete ideas about how to do this (for example, by activating neighbourhood alliances, a monthly neighbourhood event or educating them). Another way of effectively engaging target groups may be using a peer-based approach, for example with peer-to-peer education (Eco Inclusion).

4.3 Benefits and limitations of the methods used

4.3.1. Appreciative Inquiry and Focus groups

To evaluate the 12 case studies, we chose doing focus groups instead of individual in-depth interviews, to bring cooperation partners together and allow for interactive discussions and group dynamics to occur, and to facilitate the development of new (joint) streams of thought about the future of the cooperation (Peek and Fothergill, 2009).

We have used an approach inspired by Appreciative Inquiry (AI), an asset-based approach that focuses on what works well and how to do more of it in the future (Cooperrider et al., 2003). This approach thus fitted both the goals of evaluation and stimulation of future action. A common criticism is that it ignores issues and problems. However, there is room for negative experiences and practice has shown that these do emerge when using AI but are dealt with from a reframed perspective. So instead of dwelling on these negative experiences, participants are asked to think about what they are missing, and what creates the gap between what they see and what they want to see, and how to close that gap (Coghlan et al., 2003, Bushe, 2007). Results of the INHERIT focus groups demonstrate this effect of using AI: more themes emerged relating to facilitating factors (what works well?) than to barriers (what could have been?). However, when discussing what should be done in the future to reach ambitions, additional barriers (and how they should be targeted) emerged. Thus, the AI approach did not prevent discussions on negative aspects and barriers, but it did shift attention towards how aspects that were not going well before, could (or should) be done different in the future. Others who used AI in evaluation experienced the same: both successes and improvement points came up in discussions (Michael, 2005, Wagemakers et al., 2010).

Cultural differences may also have played a role. The cultural contexts of the different focus groups differed as they were situated in Western-, Southern- and Eastern European countries. Whereas in some cases, AI actually helped to overcome an otherwise problem-focused mind-set, for others (for those who find it hard to talk about issues, or for those that were quite positive about the cooperation), AI might have made it harder to talk about barriers and challenges in the cooperation,

despite explicitly asking participants. A related topic raised during the online review sessions that relates to doing focus groups instead of individual interviews, is that of social desirability. Participants may have found it harder to talk openly and share negative views in a group in which most participants shared positive views. Related to this topic, in an AI approach focus group, it might be harder for those focus groups where there were clear (political) hierarchies or power imbalanced relationships between stakeholders (for example, where one of the participants was the subsidizing party such as a municipality employee).

Focus group: an opportunity to reflect and plan
Doing focus groups instead of individual interviews (as stated in the project proposal) when evaluating cooperation processes turned out to be particularly valuable, as it brought cooperation partners together and provided an opportunity to jointly evaluate and identify future ambitions and potential actions. Appreciative Inquiry, being an action research method, was very useful for this, as it did not only focus on what went well, but also how to do more of it in the future (Troxel, 2002). Statements from several focus group participants show that the focus group discussion fostered new ideas for the project and cooperation, and that the focus group created an opportunity to reflect. For example, Restructuring Green Space participants made plans to implement a harvesting route through the neighbourhood park, and to have a small-scale reunion to boost communication with residents. Participants from Urban Cyclers indicated that they were going to meet with cooperation partners. Gardening with Green Gyms and Meatless Mondays, STOEMP and Sustainable Food in Nursery Schools participants reflected that the focus group helped them understand each other better.

4.3.2. Stepped Approach
The stepped approach of qualitative research, with central coordination and analysis, but local implementation of evaluation by INHERIT partners, minimised travelling between the widely spread INHERIT case studies. Therefore, it allowed for a relatively resource-efficient way of conducting international focus group research, while incorporating steps to ensure quality of data such as intensive preparation, supervision and support. Detailed instructions were provided using a manual, several checklists and an online webinar, to ensure partners could organise, conduct, report and translate the focus groups in a similar fashion. Discussions during the online review sessions showed that these instructions were appreciated and that they were found very useful by project partners.

Despite these instructions, there remained some differences between the focus groups in terms of length of focus group, the time spent on each question, the amount of off-topic conversations, the level of moderating experience of moderator and detail of reporting. This resulted in differences in the amount, quality and richness of input from each case study. These differences are also linked to the extent to which a case study fitted the topic of the qualitative evaluation. Whereas some case studies fitted the aims of the evaluation very closely, others did not (yet) have high levels of intersectoral cooperation, had only recently begun cooperation, or were more about interdisciplinary- than intersectoral cooperation (for example, cooperation between teachers and mentors on the same school). In addition, during the online review sessions, some project partners indicated that the broad questions may have resulted in less rich data. This variance in fit seems unavoidable when developing similar, broad focus group questions for such widely varying case studies. Moreover, our pragmatic approach meant we could not combine data analysis and data collection to achieve data saturation. This may have resulted in some missing information from focus groups that would have otherwise

been acquired. A limitation of the used stepped approach might be that the analyst was not present at all the focus groups (only 1 out of 12), which was simply not feasible due to language barriers and the amount of travelling this would have required. This resulted in missing some focus group contexts and atmospheres that could have enriched data analysis. Another issue was that original focus group notes had to be translated to English by project partners, which may have caused some richness of the data to be lost. In addition, translation quality in terms of grammar and expressions varied, which may have led to interpretation errors. Furthermore, project partners most likely knew the cultural and policy context better. The RIVM team did not have this knowledge, making focus groups notes harder to understand. An important benefit of the chosen approach, however, was that all participants could express themselves in their native language, enhancing the richness of the data. Moreover, partners were asked to check the results of the data analysis in order to make sure the results still grasped the focus group discussions.

Despite these limitations, the focus groups have yielded very valuable insights in (intersectoral) cooperation processes.

Reporting style

Due to time and budget restrictions, verbatim transcription of focus group data was not feasible (this would have meant transcription and translation of those transcripts). Therefore, note taking combined with audiotape checking and expansion afterwards was the chosen reporting method. In the case of thematic analysis in which common themes are sought, verbatim transcription is not always necessary (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006).

Analytical framework

We used a code tree as a framework to analyse data deductively, meaning that we have looked at the data with specific research questions and through a certain perspective. To make sure that using the framework that we fitted onto the data did not result in missing important themes, we allowed additional themes to emerge from data and supplement the code tree. In addition, we organised online review sessions and allowed project partners (who were present at the focus groups and knew the data) to check and provide their perspectives on representation of the themes. From these online review sessions, it was concluded that we captured the major themes, and there were no missing themes. In addition, in Results Section 3.7, the most important elements of each individual focus group discussion according to focus group participants, our INHERIT partners, and the RIVM research team are described.

A new element compared to earlier literature is the fact that we used the COM-b elements of Michie et al. (2011) as the main categories in our analytical framework. In our experience, the benefit of using the COM-b is that it provides insights into what behavioural elements are important for intersectoral cooperation. Changing any behaviour, either of individuals or groups, involves changing capability, opportunity and/or motivation. When aiming to improve intersectoral cooperation between a group of stakeholders, using the COM-b helps by providing insights into where possible points for improvements lie, and which elements should remain or be strengthened enable improvements in the cooperation.

Comparison between type of cooperation and different INHERIT areas

Some case studies were about cooperation between sectors (intersectoral), some concerned cooperation between different disciplines (interdisciplinary), others focused more on cooperation between professionals and citizens, and a few were about cooperation between the private and public sector. Comparing focus groups with these different types of cooperation did not yield additional insights. This was also the case when comparing focus groups from the different INHERIT areas of living, moving and consuming. This latter comparison was harder to make because there were many case studies from consuming, and several from living- green space, but only one from moving, and one from living- energy efficient housing.

Missing stakeholders

Despite great efforts and timely planning of project partners and the research team to gather all relevant stakeholders, on a few occasions, important stakeholders were missing from the focus group due to cancellations, packed agendas, and one no-show. Furthermore, in some focus groups, participants indicated that they missed certain stakeholders (who were accidentally overlooked when inviting participants). For example, in Restructuring Green Space, participants missed input from the residents themselves, who were active in the neighbourhood and wanted a green spot. This may have resulted in missed input or perspectives, which could have affected our results. However, despite busy agendas, cancellations and some missed participants, all twelve focus groups were able to take place with a group size between 4 and 10 participants (see Appendix 2 for participant totals per focus group).

5. Conclusion & Implications

This qualitative evaluation of intersectoral cooperation in twelve (potential) triple-win case studies shows that for successful intersectoral cooperation, it is necessary to have common goals, shared values and a common need for cooperation (and to recognise this necessity). Cooperation partners should be open, have a long-term vision and patience and relationships between partners should include trust and reliability, with clear agreements. Finally, meeting up and receiving support from public administration contributes to cooperation. Barriers that need to be tackled include having inadequate resources, a lack of (beforehand) planning and communication, and difficulties in cooperation with public administration.

Policymakers should facilitate initiatives that work intersectorally, for example, by changing sectoral subsidy structures into more integral subsidy options. Public administrations could enhance intersectoral cooperation within their own (often still sectorally structured) organisations, e.g. by appointing an intersectoral working group, or by appointing people who go into the field and function as bridge builders, bringing perspectives and people from public administration and other organisations (or citizens) together. Specific to citizen participation, effort has to be put into how to effectively reach and engage citizens, or to spread knowledge on how to do this, since citizen participation and engagement was found difficult amongst many of our focus group participants.

Suggested future steps voiced by our focus group participants related to boosting intersectoral cooperation, by expanding and including more stakeholders, or by engaging present stakeholders more. Often meeting up was the suggested strategy to do this. Beforehand planning of meetings in which partners can align, reflect and adjust could be an effective strategy to ensure time and resources to meet up. Future wishes were also to increase awareness and acknowledgement of the initiatives, together with more time and resources to improve and expand the initiatives and cooperation processes, and to have more clarity on roles and responsibilities. Regarding citizen participation, plans were made to engage citizens more, for example, by having monthly neighbourhood events. In addition, seeing the value of citizen participation and taking the input from citizens seriously should be stimulated.

Often, approaches that work in one country or context do not necessarily work in another country or context. The current study has generated a richness of data from case studies spread out over different European regions, cultures and contexts. In addition, the case studies differed in terms of topic (food consumption, green space, active travel, energy efficiency). All case studies cooperated in an interdisciplinary and/or intersectoral manner and common facilitators and barriers to intersectoral cooperation have been identified among these case studies, that all aim to achieve the triple win of improved health, sustainability and/or equity. This variety adds to the robustness of our findings. Overall, most of our identified facilitators and barriers are quite similar to those found in earlier literature, and despite the varying nature and context of the different case studies, many similarities between case studies were identified. This implies that existing checklists on intersectoral cooperation contain useful elements to include when developing and implementing triple-win initiatives.

Cooperation with other sectors is essential when aiming to achieve the interlinked Sustainable Development Goals and improve the lives of all people and the world they live in (United Nations, 2015). Insights from this study can be used as a starting point to develop effective intersectoral cooperation, which is essential when aiming to reach the triple-win of improved health, environmental sustainability and equity.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: INHERIT partners who were involved in organizing, conducting and reporting the 12 focus groups

[1]RIVM: National Institute of Public Health and the Environment, https://www.rivm.nl/en;

[2]UCL: University College London, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/;

[3]CSCP: The Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP): https://www.scp-centre.org/;

[4]Gezond Leven: The Flemish Institute for Healthy Living, https://www.inherit.eu/about/consortium/partners/gezond-leven/;

[5]ISCTE-IUL: Lisbon University Institute, https://www.iscte-iul.pt/;

[6]FOHM: Swedish Public Health Agency, https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/ ;

[7]UAH: University of Alcala, http://www3.uah.es/sccs/ ;

[8]Riga City Council, https://inherit.eu/about/consortium/partners/RIGA/ ;

[9]IJZRM: The Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Macedonia (IJZRM): http://iph.mk/;

[10]CUNI: Univerzita Karlova (Charles University) (CUNI), https://www.czp.cuni.cz/czp/index.php/en/;

[11]BZgA: Federal Centre for Health Education, https://www.bzga.de/home/bzga/

Appendix 2: Organisations or roles represented by participants

Focus group	Participant total	Organisations or roles of participants	Duration of cooperation
Eco Inclusion	9	- 2 BZgA: Federal Centre of health education - 3 Multipliers (who train refugees in energy efficiency, among which 1 draughtsman) - An institute for urban planning and social research (who conducted training courses) - NGO Managing director: subsidiary of city and active in employment, qualification and placement of disadvantaged young people and adults. - City of Pforzheim employee: managing level - City of Pforzheim employee: project coordinator and integration manager	New cooperation, initiated for INHERIT project. Between the City of Pforzheim, the private sector and the city-owned non-for-profit organisation, there was a longstanding cooperation in previous projects).
Gemüse Ackerdemie	5	- 3 Teachers of an inclusion school for children with physical or psychological disabilities - Mentor (supports teachers and works with children) - Regional coordinator GemüseAckerdemie	GemüseAckerdemie and teachers have been cooperating for several years, the volunteers only half to one year
STOEMP	7	- Researcher: Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food - Ghent en Garde employee - NGO that promotes health - NGO that promotes plant- based eating - Health promotor of a community health centre - Municipality (sector: welfare, equal opportunities, health and families) - Municipality (sector: department for equal opportunities)	STOEMP started in 2017 with these partners from the FG and has been expanding with more partners since then
Gardening with Green Gyms and Meatless Mondays	9	- Research Associate - Research Associate, helped developing project - Work Package Lead INHERIT - Senior Project Officer on schools and community education project, delivers Green Gym - Participant who helps facilitating the intervention Project officer TCV (TCV : The Conservation Volunteers are taking action every day to reclaim London's Green Spaces) - Managing Director of Green Gym for TCV - Campaign Manager of Meat Free Monday - Teacher who works on the project - Head teacher of School	New cooperation, initiated for INHERIT project
PROVE	6	- PROVE consumer - PROVE farmer - PROVE implementer - Regional development unit - 2 Municipality employees	Cooperation exists for several years

Focus group	Participant total	Organisations or roles of participants	Duration of cooperation
Place Standard Tool Macedonia	8	• Director of elementary school • Parent of school children representative • Local administration: sector of public affairs • Finance sector • Sector for social affairs and development sector • Sector for environmental protection and energy efficiency, • 2 Municipality councillors	New cooperation, initiated for INHERIT project
Place Standard Tool	7	• Inhabitant representative • INHERIT project coordinator • Assistant of project coordinator • 2 Researchers • Riga City Council strategy monitoring section representative • Policy maker of Riga city development and strategy planning department	New cooperation, initiated for INHERIT project
Restructuring Green Space	5	• Youth organisation • Community center employee • Main developer park • 2 Municipality (sectors: social neighbourhood maintenance and physical neighborhood maintenance)	Cooperation for several years
Restructuring Residential Areas	4	• Urban planner company (CEO) • Project manager of Property owner cooperation (POC) in Järva • Analyst of district administration of Stockholm municipality, Landscape advisor of district administration of Stockholm municipality	Cooperation for several years
Sustainable Food in Nursery Schools	7	• Implementer • School director • Expert in nutrition • Kitchen services provision • Consumer's cooperative member • Ecological products distributor • City hall technician	Cooperation for several years
Urban Cyclers	4	• 2 Company of mobile application1 • Bicycle sharing company • Municipality	Cooperation for several years. Project had already started before being selected as INHERIT case study but has been developed further
Food Garden	5	• Director of Food Garden • Director of work activation centre • Director of catering organisation by women with distance from job market • 2 municipality employees	Cooperation for several years
Total number of participants in 12 focus groups = 76			