Collaborative Governance - Theory and Lessons from Israel

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**Preface**

This collection of articles emerged from the work of a research group at the Yaakov Hazan Center for Social Justice and Democracy of the Van Leer Institute, which investigated collaborative governance during the period 2015-2018. The collection is the third and last of a trilogy that was written at the Van Leer Institute on regulation, privatization and collaborative governance. The trilogy examines the evolving role of the State as a result of the far-reaching changes in democracy and public administration.

The group included about twenty scholars in various disciplines: sociology, political science, law and regulation, public management and policy, and others, and this book is the main product of their discussions and research. In addition, meetings were held with the managers and initiators of projects that are representative of the various types of collaborative governance, with the goal of understanding what is being done in the field and the possibilities that are implicit in these projects. The book therefore is an expression of both the theoretical approaches in the research on collaborative governance in its various forms and the insights arrived at by the group. The authors in the book were partners in the group’s work, although unfortunately it was not possible to include contributions from all of the partners. We wish to thank those who took part in the workshop and contributed greatly to this book.

This book is the first to look at the mechanism of collaborative governance in the Israeli context and in Hebrew. The book combines theories of collaborative governance and empirical examples of its use in four main areas of government activity and includes five sections: the democratic context and the administrative mechanism, primarily from the perspective of federal government; collaborative governance in local government; collaborative governance in the regulatory domain; civil society in the context of collaborative governance mechanisms; and finally examples of collaborative governance in the Israeli context.

The writing of the various chapters assumed two main questions: are the collaborative governance arrangements promoting public values, and are they more democratic?

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**Introduction**

Collaborative governance is defined as activity or strategy in the public domain that brings together stakeholders in various sectors during the formulation of policy and its implementation. Collaborative governance initiatives can originate from any of the players, but the main entity driving the process is a government unit (see the full definition below). The goal of objective is that, by means of a formal framework, the various players will arrive at decisions that are based on consensus or at least broad agreement (Ansell and Gash 2008). Various models have been proposed in the research literature that map the entities and components that influence the workings of these frameworks. Among these models are those that take a broad view of collaborative governance activities, while others have a narrower perspective that emphasizes the uniqueness of the phenomenon. For example, Emerson et al. (2012) is an integrative model and can be located somewhere between the broad and the narrow extremes; the model is built on the mutual dependence between context, dynamics and action. In the literature, there is criticism of the concept’s degree of innovation and the implications of using it. For example, to what extent do these arrangements weaken the representation of various groups in a democracy and to what extent do they lead to a more successful implementation of processes?

The increasing interest in collaborative governance has various explanations, including a response to the New Public Management reforms alongside the development of democratic-normative processes that seek to strengthen the connection between policy formation and the public.[[1]](#footnote-1) On the practical level, interest is focused on the added public value that this arrangement can generate; on the theoretical level, it is focused on conceptualization and on the administrative and political implications of these arrangements (in domains such as education, environmental protection, employment, etc.). Our approach in this book is that collaborative governance should be discussed on both the theoretical and practical levels. This chapter constitutes the basis for the discussion and is divided into two parts: in the first, we present the development of the concept, its various definitions and its critiques in the literature; in the second, we present the definition developed by the research group and the principal theoretical questions it examined, which are the thread that runs throughout the book, and we describe the structure of the chapters.

1. **Collaborative governance: The concept and its development**
   1. The context: Processes and changes in public administration and policy

The concept of collaborative governance is located within the domain of conceptualizations that characterize discourse in the modern era. This domain includes concepts such as citizen participation, participatory government, policy networks, network governance, joined-up governance, whole-of-government, etc. The perspective we will present here—after examining various relevant definitions—views collaborative governance as a strategy and/or activity that is led by a public authority (on the state or local level) that combines stakeholders from various sectors, with the goal of formulating and implementing policy based on a broad consensus on public issues.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The processes of change that have taken place in public administration are the manifestation of a gradual and cumulative process of development. Since the end of the 19th century, public administration has—at least in theory—followed the Weberian model, according to which the modern State’s mechanisms of authority are based on clear rules, hierarchal structures, a functional division of responsibility and specialization. Despite the attempts to bring about change within the bureaucratic framework (scientific management principles, the theory of human relations, changes in budgeting processes such as ZBB, etc.) from the 1980s until the end of the 1990s, there have been changes that have tried to transform the characteristics of bureaucracy. These changes have led to what is known as the New Public Management reforms, which some refer to as the post-bureaucratic era. These reforms are characterized by, among other things, the adoption of management techniques from the business sector, including a desire to manage State affairs in such a way that citizens will receive a return on their money, by means of, among others things, reducing the size of the public sector (privatization); reliance on outsourcing; development of measurements of performance; and viewing the public as a “customer” of the public sector. In response to these changes, models with more democratic administrative characteristics began to be adopted starting from the early 2000s and continuing until today. These include a change in perspective from “customers” to “citizens”; the strengthening of trust as a basic component of the activity within and between organizations; cooperation between the various players; strengthening of the ethical element of policy; emphasis on a holistic approach and the consolidation of government following the fragmentation that has occurred.[[3]](#footnote-3)

These trends in public administration are in addition to the change in approach that also occurred in the research into public policy and the transition to an approach that emphasizes the concept of “governance” rather than “government.” The outcome has been the formulation of public policy by means of discourse between relevant players, where the State is one of the players as opposed to being the only one. These changes, resulting from globalization and individualization processes and the weakening of State institutions that led to a kind of “institutional vacuum” or “hollow State,” changed the status of expertise and knowledge, and they generated a change in the design of policy in such situations. Policy was now formulated on the basis of discourse and negotiations between players rather than a hierarchal model as in the past. For example, it now included the adoption of soft power methods for navigating the network of various players.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The change in the way that policy processes are designed also affects the tools used by governments and leads to a weakening of the use of coercion (Salamon 2002; Howlett 2014). An example is the growing importance of policy tools that emphasize coordination, discourse and dialogue between groups (Delcon 2006). These soft tools become increasingly relevant with the changes that are occurring in the role of the State.[[5]](#footnote-5) Instead of reliance on a rigid hierarchy and economic markets as mechanisms for controlling society, there is a shift to models of governance by means of policy networks (Bevir 2012). Accordingly, research into public administration and policy has begun to emphasize the importance of collaboration and allowing diverse voices to be heard in the process of policy formation. These trends constitute an infrastructure for the growth of collaborative governance (herein: CG).

* 1. Collaborative governance: Definitions

Researchers identify the sources of the concept of collaborative governance in a variety of theories and disciplines: political science, public administration, public policy, sociology, economics, etc. and define it as interdisciplinary in nature (Willians 2012; Emerson et al. 2012). Since there is no widely agreed-upon definition,[[6]](#footnote-6) we will briefly present three approaches in order to understand the range of definitions—from narrow to broad.

Ansell and Gash (2008) define collaborative governance as: “A governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets” (Ansell and Gash 2008, p. 544). In other words, it is a formal arrangement in which stakeholders communicate with one another in a deliberative and multilateral process. The stakeholders share responsibility for the policy outcomes since they are directly involved in the formal decision-making process within the forums of government agencies. This is an important point even if at the end of the day the responsibility is that of the State, as in the case of regulation (Ansell and Gash 2008). Ansell (2012) lists six components of collaborative governance: (1) the initiative is that of a public agency; (2) it includes non-government players; (3) the participants are involved directly in the design of policy rather than serving only as advisors; (4) the forum is formally organized and meets collectively; (5) it aims to reach decisions by consensus even if a consensus is not in the end achieved; and (6) the focus of collaboration is on public policy or issues of public administration.

Ansell provides the following examples of collaborative governance arrangements: (a) management of collaborative planning processes; (b) councils (partnerships) in the domain of water resources (watershed councils) and (c) regulatory negotiation (reg neg). In addition, Ansell and Gash (2008) build a model for understanding the emergence of collaborative governance processes. Its components include: pre-conditions (asymmetry in power relations, resources and information; the incentives for participation; and the history of collaboration between the players), the institutional context, the leadership that drives the process and the outcomes of the process.

Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh (2012) present a definition of collaborative governance that makes it possible to include a broader range of players: “The processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished.“ (p. 2). This is a broader definition since it does not relate only to arrangements that are the initiative of the State. Second, it includes informal arrangements and third, it also involves arrangements based only on State players, such as joined-up government, community initiatives and intergovernmental collaborative structures (Emerson et al. 2012, p. 3; Emerson and Nabatchi 2015). Furthermore, they propose the examination of collaborative governance regimes (CGRs), which are defined as “ “ (Emerson and Gerlak 2014, p. 769). According to them, these regimes include institutional arrangements, procedures and behavioral norms that create a solid basis for collaboration. Within the context of CGRs, they look at the context in which the process takes place, i.e. the political, constitutional, socioeconomic, environmental and other conditions, which influence the creation of CGRs and their methods of operation (Emerson and Nabatchi 2015). Similarly, and in contrast to Ansell and Gash (2008), Emerson et al. (2012) focus less on the internal elements that create the conditions for collaboration, and more on the following three main elements: a. principled engagement;[[7]](#footnote-7) b. a shared motivation that is based on mutual trust, understandings, legitimacy and commitment; c. the capacity for joint action. They emphasize the importance of the systemic perspective that leads to variation between CGRs. They list various components that affect the products of collaborative governance in a circular manner, including: the context of the system, the motives, the dynamics of cooperation, the outcomes produced by the joint action, the results and the feedback and adaptation process. One of the interesting differences between the aforementioned definitions is that Ansell relates to CG as one of several types of government strategies and wonders whether this format of activity is superior to the adversarial or administrative methods (Ansell 2012); Emerson et al. (2012) point out that this format of activity is chosen only when *public goals cannot be achieved in any other way*. An interesting question is therefore whether CG is an alternative and additional format of activity or are there perhaps situations in which public goals cannot be achieved without it.

In contrast to them, Vinogada-Gadot (2009) expands the concept of collaborative governance and emphasizes the importance of nurturing cooperation in order to strengthen governance. He points to the need to combine the strengthening of governability with government performance in order to strengthen democracy and the implementation of liberal values. According to him, there is a need to link the administrative approaches to humanistic social ideology (p. 29). He claims that in order to achieve these goals, states in the modern era must emphasize collaborative public administration, which will strengthen the cooperation with and between government institutions, professional agencies, citizens as individuals and as groups and the business sector (Vigoda-Gadot 2004, p. 709). He also claims that this activity will balance the approach that views response to the desires of citizens by way of centralized action since the method that characterized the New Public Management trends left the citizens passive. As a result, we should encourage processes that “ “ (Vigoda-Gadot, 2009, p. 152). Vigoda-Gadot also claims that although these trends are not new and have already been discussed by other researchers—who emphasized the importance of cooperation with the business sector and the third sector in encouraging State and community initiatives and citizen participation—this trend is an emerging reform and therefore currently more important. Like Vigoda-Gadot, John Wanna (2008) proposes a broader view of CG. In that opening of a chapter that describes the growing trends of collaboration in Australia, he defines collaboration as “ “ (Wanna 2008, 3). According to him, global trends have also started to affect Australia, such that cooperation is growing both horizontally (within government ministries and between organizations in their environment) and vertically (between the various levels of government and of organizations in their environment). The government has become a facilitator of various initiatives: cooperation within the government, between district governments, between the government and non-governmental bodies and between the government and citizens. The modern era is therefore characterized by collaborative governance as the government’s *modus operandi*, which brings players together in the processes of policy design and implementation. According to him, there has been a change in the Australian government’s discourse and the idea of collaboration reflects a new era in government activity (Wanna 2008 p. 5-7).

* 1. A conceptual map: collaborative governance and other concepts

Two questions are considered in what follows: What is the source of the concept? And what is its place relative to other concepts? Ideas of partnership and inclusion of players is not new (Ansell 2012). Already in the agora of the Greek city-state, players from various sectors were included in decision-making processes (Stone 2008). Lowi (1979) described the “iron triangles” as systems of links between government agencies, Congressional committees and interest groups. Later theories, such as the Network Theory and the theory of the Advocacy Coalition Framework,[[8]](#footnote-8) also point to the importance of having a diversity of players in the realm of policy. These together constitute the conceptional and practical framework for the current discussion of CG, on which we focus here. On the question of when the concept of CG first came into use, researchers are divided. Thus, for example, Ansell and Gash (2008) claim that the concept developed during the previous two decades. In contrast, Emerson and Gerlak (2014) claim that the concept was first used in the 1970s in order to describe cooperation between departments in the domains of education and health. McGuire (2006) claims that CG expressions already appear in the foundations of the federalist regime in the US which called for cooperation, and its manifestation can also be seen in the implementation of programs in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In contrast, Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) were among the first researchers to describe the collaborative nature of public administration. It appears that the disagreement between researchers is also the result of the lack of an agreed-upon definition of CG, namely whether it should be defined narrowly or as a broader perspective of cooperation.

Wanna claimed that the concept came into use already in the 19th century in the discussion of institutional development in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. During this period, the concept was treated as a kind of fundamental norm that symbolizes altruism, social liberalism, collectivism, mutual aid and later on scientific management and interpersonal relations. The explanations of collaboration may emphasize the theoretical/pragmatic side of working relations with another entity and/or the normative/material side that emphasizes the effort to include and the development of relations of trust. Collaboration was primarily presented as, at the very least, a desirable component in political, social and economic life.

It is possible to characterize CG relative to similar concepts on two levels: the first distinguishes between the concepts by means of a continuum or hierarchy of government activities (Ansell and Gash 2008) while the second involves the distinguishing them over a range of different types of cooperation (Nabatchi 2012; Keast and Mandell 2014). It should be mentioned that there are concepts that are viewed as having the identical meaning. We will not present the meanings of the various concepts, but rather will discuss them in relation to the concept of CG.

There are a variety of concepts in the literature that express the importance of cooperation and coordination between stakeholders and between and within various government agencies. Thus, for example, the concept of joined-up government (JUG) and the later development of the concept of whole-of-government (WOG)[[9]](#footnote-9), which express the need for government agencies in the modern era to work in a coordinated and holistic manner with players both inside and outside the government, by blurring the organizational boundaries in order to achieve policy goals, implement desirable programs and provide superior services. This concept relates to both internal cooperation within the government (vertical cooperation between the government’s various levels) and horizontal cooperation (between networks that include players within the government and between the government and other sectors) among stakeholders (Rhodes 2000; Christensen and LÆgreid 2006). These concepts hint at the broad envelope that led to the development of strategies such as CG.

Ansell and Gash (2008) distinguish between CG and other concepts, such as corporatism, associational governance, policy networks, public-private partnership, etc. They claim that the concept of corporatism, in contrast to CG, is more an expression of partnership between leading organizations in the spheres of the labor market and their interaction with government agencies. The concept of associational governance requires the inclusion of non-profit organizations, in contrast to CG that can include citizens but not necessarily non-profit organizations. The concept of policy networks also involves structures of cooperation between stakeholders that include government agencies and players from other sectors, although these can be non-formal, while CG refers more to a formal framework of cooperation. Finally, public-private partnership (PPP) often expresses a way to achieve coordination, though not necessarily the creation of cooperation in the sense of CG, which is consensus-oriented (Ansell and Gash 2008, p. 547-548). However, according to the aforementioned, here again there is no consensus among researchers. Andonova (2010), for example, relates to public-private partnerships as a type of joint governance between government and non-government players. For her, the concept relates to processes of institutionalization of hybrid authority that emerges in the international arena beyond the traditional forms of interaction between State players and players outside the State, and it differs from types of interactions that were used in the past, such as consulting, lobbying or contracts (Andonova 2010; p. 26). Ansell and Gash also identify other concepts that have a similar meaning, including participatory management, interactive policy making, collaborative management and stakeholder governance.

Another distinction between the various concepts is derived from the variation in types of cooperation.[[10]](#footnote-10) Keast and Mandell (2014) suggest viewing these concepts as a kind of spectrum with cooperation at one extreme, collaboration at the other and coordination somewhere in between.

**Cooperation:** This concept describes a system of relations that is usually short-term, informal in nature and based on a voluntary desire to take part in order to achieve a shared objective. The organizations remain independent and each chooses in which area to cooperate with the other. Such a system of relations is characterized by low levels of tension and risk (Keast and Mandell 2014, p. 11-12).

**Coordination:** This concept relates to mechanisms that create closer and more formal connections between the various players in the system. Coordination takes place when there is a need to coordinate between people, activities and systems in order to achieve a goal or carry out a certain predetermined task. The organizations remain separate but together contribute to achieving an agreed-upon outcome. The creation of coordination is not dependent on the goodwill of the various players but rather on the goal and the mandate and therefore the relations are more formal and require greater commitment and agreement to give up some autonomy (Keast and Mandell 2014; p. 11-12).

**Collaboration:** This concept involves more stable and long-term relations than the other two. The relations are characterized by a high level of mutual dependence that exists to some extent also in the other concepts, but in the case of collaboration emphasis is placed on the importance of the relations being bilateral. The partners understand that they need one another in order that the activity be effective and that only marginal changes will not be sufficient. The participants need to be able to develop new ways of thinking and behavior and to be open to changes in the existing relations, in terms of both operations and services. The collaborative network’s goal therefore is not simply to develop problem-solving strategies but also to achieve strategic synergy between participants which will in the end lead to innovative solutions (Keast and Mandell 2014; p. 12-13).

Researchers have suggested that the three concepts represent different points on a continuum of integrative mechanisms, which differ in their intensity and their formality. The difference between them is therefore related to the following questions: 1) What is the contribution of the participants to this unique partnership? 2) Who are the players that take part? 3) What is required of them (time, resources, change, etc.)? 4) What is the extent of mutual dependence?

Many researchers have examined the challenges in creating cooperative arrangements, particularly in the case of political arrangements.[[11]](#footnote-11) Thus, for example, Booher (2004) describes a number of challenges: to find an arena that will facilitate cooperation, collaborative activity , the creation of trust and communication between the various players; to understand the necessity of managing situations in which there is uncertainty related to the issue and that decision making takes place in complex and controversial environments; to understand that in some cases joint activity is necessary since one entity cannot solve the problem alone and therefore the players must act together in order to find an agreed-on solution; and finally to create trust between players, which is the main challenge (Booher 2004, 32-34). Expanding on these challenges, Booher claims that CG is a democratic and pluralistic challenge that calls for the inclusion of partners from various sectors in society and that it requires the modification of the organizational structure to the emerging needs and must deal with a shortage of economic resources (Booher 2004, 41-43).

* 1. Critiques of the concept of collaborative governance

The source of the positive view of CG is the desire to bring players together in activity that is meant to produce benefits for many and promote public interests (Ansell et al. 2017). It is meant to provide a response to the changing role of the State, the complexity of problems and the other challenges mentioned above. However, alongside this perspective, there are researchers who also express concern at the rush to embrace partnerships because they have become fashionable (O’Flynn 2008). Collaboration has become the holy grail—the best way to do everything—even though its benefit is not always clear cut and there is not much research demonstrating its effectiveness (Ansell 2012). Furthermore, it is often the case that those who claim they are involved in collaborative governance are in fact creating process of coordination and cooperation, rather than arrangements of collaborative governance which call for reciprocity, consensus, formal discussion, etc. (O’Flynn 2009). In addition, participation is dependent on the fulfillment of pre-conditions, such as the level of trust in the local government institutions and the faith in the willingness of other players to act in reciprocity (Lubell 2004). Thus, for example, a fundamental lack of agreement with respect to the character of the information is liable to adversely affect the ability to hold a discussion of the problem’s source and solution (Weible 2008).

It may also be that the collaboration is not beneficial. Research in the domains of health and social welfare in Britain found that collaboration strengthens access to services, reduces fragmentation and duplication in the supply of services and leads to the development of integrative services. However, it was also found to have faults, such as the channeling of resources to less important needs; the diversion of attention from the supply of core services and responding to the needs of citizens; and overemphasis on the promotion of cooperation at the expense of improving services. Thus, partnership sometimes generates results that are important in the eyes of professional agencies but which are not necessarily in line with the order of priorities or needs of users (Rummery 2006).

Therefore, the critique of the concept and its use expresses a concern that CG is liable to remain an unrealized ideal or that it may not improve the situation as a result of a variety of factors, such as:

* It is beneficial only as a last resort when nothing else has worked;
* It involves a process that may be more expensive in terms of resources;
* It is liable to create a symbolic policy that will be a result of the need to respond or to calm the partners without taking into consideration other elements (Lubell 2004; Bhan 2014);
* There is a concern that collaboration will bring about a “unification of the agencies” as a result of the need to respond to a political interest;
* In the ideal situation, collaboration creates a consensus on the action that needs to be taken; however, there is a concern that consensus will be achieved on the basis of the lowest common denominator or based on compromise (Bhan 2014).

In conclusion, it is claimed that even if there is a need for collaboration, the main and still unanswered question is how to promote successful collaboration (Feldman 2010). Based on Booher (2004), there are a number of conclusions that can be drawn with respect to CG: First, it is an appropriate method for dealing with challenges faced in the modern era. This challenge not only has implications for outcomes but also for the creation of faith that it is possible, that it can lead to innovation and that it can supply better information for decision making. Second, it is not an appropriate method for every social problem. Its use is complicated and therefore it is worthwhile only in cases where it is called for and necessary. Third, the method requires professional skill. Not every phenomenon that is viewed as CG is indeed that. If that is not understood, there may be repercussions and it may have been preferable to avoid its implementation in the first place. The perception of senior officials in the organizations and of community leaders and their willingness to create the conditions for collaboration/partnership (such as by means of training) are of critical importance. Even if such processes are successful, it is still difficult to change the old ways of government (Booher 2004, 43-45).

1. **Collaborative governance in this book**

2.1 Collaborative governance: Its definition

The definition used in this book relies on the aforementioned three definitions, although especially that of Ansell and Gash (2008). During the work of the research group, Professor Gal Nur formulated a modular definition that is intended to provide a multi-level view of collaborative governance, ranging from the advanced, which includes all of its components, to intermediate combinations that include only some them.

**Advanced corporate governance** which includes all the of the following components (most of them according to Ansell 2012):

*Predisposition*

1. Aimed at achieving a public goal.
2. Activated when there is a chance of creating public value that cannot be achieved in another way.[[12]](#footnote-12)

*Character*

1. Involves a governance arrangement.[[13]](#footnote-13)
2. One or more public agencies (the State, a government ministry, a government company, a local authority, etc.) engage or are willing to engage non-state stakeholders.
3. The initiative can come from any of the participants.

*The policy formulation and decision-making process*

1. Formal.
2. Collective.
3. Deliberative.
4. Aimed at building a consensus, strengthening trust between the participants and sharing of expertise and knowledge.[[14]](#footnote-14)

***Implementation***

1. Responsible for budget decisions.
2. Implements public policy or manages programs or assets.

We believe that the predispositions (1 and 2 above) are necessary conditions for collaborative governance. The definition clearly adopts a necessary condition according to which the goal be publicly oriented and therefore the overall responsibility for the arrangement is that of a governmental entity. Therefore, this is the difference between this definition and more expansive ones, which view any initiative with multiple stakeholders as collaborative even if the goal is not publicly oriented. The second predisposition includes both an empirical component and a normative component. With regard to the former, the objective is to define the concept of collaborative governance in a way that will connect to the practical world. When the government is the initiator, collaborative governance is usually the default from its perspective, since it recognizes that it provides the best chance of achieving a public goal that cannot be achieved in another way. This assumption does not necessarily hold with respect to other participants. From the normative standpoint, the objective is to capture the idea that the collaborative governance arrangement is one of many possible arrangements. Furthermore, in view of the challenges it presents, collaborative governance should be implemented in the absence of a more suitable arrangement.

The third and fourth elements relate to the central role of the public agency. Since this is a collaborative arrangement, its goal is to implement policy in practice. Thus, it differs from many other worthwhile joint arrangements that have a different goal, such as creating public discourse, providing advice, ascertaining the opinions regarding a particular policy or increasing cooperation and trust between the various participants. Moreover, the centrality of the public agency means that the final democratic responsibility remains with the public authority in these arrangements as well.

The fifth element states that other participants—social or business organizations—can be initiators, but collaborative governance, which includes the responsibility of a public authority, is dependent on the willingness of public representatives to engage a variety of non-state stakeholders and to transform the formal and deliberative discourse in a way that will achieve the public goal. In other words, it is the public’s representatives that must transform an initiative in the social and civil domain into an arrangement of collaborative governance that includes public responsibility.

The sixth to ninth elements relate to the components to be found in most definitions of collaborative governance. The idea that an arrangement be formally anchored is meant to create a certain level of institutionalization. The arrangement must be collective, inclusive and deliberative in order to ensure its democratic nature and to achieve a consensus, to whatever degree possible, among the partners. Therefore, it combines various voices that are relevant to the issue and which may not have taken part previously in policy making processes or policy implementation or that their opinion was treated as advice only. The building of trust between participants is a critical component in the implementation of collaborative governance arrangements. The sharing of expertise and information is meant to strengthen learning processes and initiatives,[[15]](#footnote-15) which constitute one of the main reasons to use these arrangements. They also point to the need for collaborative governance to overcome the tendency of a public bureaucracy—and essentially any organization—towards secrecy and maintenance of a monopoly in their domain.

The inclusion of the implementation process (the tenth and eleventh elements) differentiates our definition from most others that include only collaboration, discourse, inclusion of experts and the influence on policy and on decision making in the occurrences of collaborative governance. Nonetheless, our definition assumes that it is the desire of all the participants that the collaboration not end with the implementation stage and that the true test consists of decisions regarding budgeting, implementation and execution.

In conclusion, the added value of the definition is, in our opinion, that it is modular and makes it possible to map processes over a continuum. Accordingly, in most of the events presented in the book, as in the real world, only some of the components of the definition are manifested and in many cases the initiative is in an early stage, based on the assumption or the hope that it will develop into collaborative governance at a later stage. Therefore, an additional advantage of the definition is that it can used to examine a variety of initiatives and to present their stages of development, and to compare them to other relevant initiatives and also over time.

* 1. **Collaborative governance: A mechanism for the realization of public values and/or democratic arrangements?**

There were two questions at the core of the book and the discussions: Do collaborative governance arrangements help to promote public values and are they more democratic?

The main advantages of collaborative arrangements lie in the belief that they can support the application of public values and can strengthen democracy.[[16]](#footnote-16) Public administration organizations are required to promote public values more effectively than in the past.[[17]](#footnote-17) In order to achieve these values, Stoker claims that public administration must be involved in the steering of networks that represent diverse interests and whose goal is to define public values, which includes the implementation of deliberative, adaptive and inclusive processes (Stoker 2006). In other words, he suggests enhancing the political process within administrative organizations which will strengthen the democratic mechanisms of these processes.

There are various definitions in the public policy literature as to the nature of public values, some which are more expansive in nature (Kelly, Mulgan and Muers 2002) and others which are more practical. However, to a large extent public values are a product of the collective, multidimensional and politically mediated expression of citizens’ preferences, which is redefined in an ongoing process by means of social and political interaction.[[18]](#footnote-18) Therefore, the main question in this book is whether or not collaborative governance arrangements help to promote public values? In other words, are these arrangements indeed creating such a discourse, which engages stakeholders from among the public and achieves decisions that are optimal from its perspective?

Collaborative governance as a governance arrangement represents a challenge to the classic role of the State and the traditional views of the role of its public administration. Thus, for example, there is concern that the process of promoting public values as defined above is liable to erode the accepted mechanism of representative democracy in favor of internal mechanisms where it is unclear who they are representing. Furthermore, there is concern that the institutionalization of mechanisms of this type will give preference to the principle of response at the expense of the State’s essential coercive roles or of long-term planning (Rhodes and Wanna 2007; 2009). Finally, these arrangements represent a challenge to the classic view of the responsibility of publicly elected officials or public employees, and certainly with respect to accountability. The question of accountability raises a variety of questions, such as who is responsible and for what and how he bears that responsibility (Behn 1998). Formally, and in the narrowest sense of accountability, any arrangement that is adopted—even if formally anchored according to the definition of a collaborative governance arrangement presented here—is subject to the basic fact that publicly elected officials and their representatives are responsible for public policy. They have the obligation to justify every action and implementation. Furthermore, the concept of accountability has a broad meaning which has become synonymous with good governance, in which government institutions respond to the desires of citizens. Thus, while we require due process and responsiveness to the desires of the citizen, we view the institutions of the State as being responsible for the quantity and quality of the services it provides to citizens. The demands of responsibility for government actions and good governance are not identical to the responsibility of representatives of the private sector, the third sector and the fourth sector (social businesses) in the partnership, which is to their owners (Bovens 2006).

Therefore, how is it possible to implement arrangements of collaborative governance that will successfully realize public values that do not weaken and perhaps even strengthen democratic processes that preserve public responsibility?

The writers in this book were asked to examine the effect of collaborative governance arrangements on public values and on their meaning for democracy. In the concluding chapter, we will suggest answers to the question of whether or not collaborative governance contributes to public and democratic values for the benefit of Israeli society.

* 1. **The structure of the book**

The book has five sections:

The first section deals with the democratic elements of collaborative governance.

**Gail Talshir** asks whether democratic collaborative governance weakens or strengthens democracy and whether its theoretical proximity to participatory democracy empowers it or in fact positions them both as activities that weaken the State’s centrality. The chapter briefly presents models of democracy on the one hand and the anchoring of the civil service within democratic theory on the other and critically examines whether there is convergence between a theory of participatory democracy and a perspective of collaborative governance. The uniqueness of collaborative governance lies in its attempt to create democratization of the regime core and not just processes in civil society. However, it appears that collaborative governance will become a new paradigm only if it creates renewed public value for the civil service, the public and the State. This will require a centralized/professional ethos, with a sense of public service on the one hand and a commitment to acting in the public interest on the other, in addition to a change in organizational culture to one of cooperation based on trust, a sense of duty and an approach of intra- and extra-organizational dialogue. This will facilitate a renewed contribution by collaborative governance to the legitimization of democracy.

**Ronen Gofer** claims in his article that collaborative governance is part of the general sharing trend, to which deliberative democracy also belongs. Common to both are the principles of sharing, participation, transparency, accessibility, discourse, etc. This chapter carries out a comparison between them, as theories and as practices, with the goal of improving and honing their practice. In addition, and in contrast to deliberative democracy, the democratic theory underlying collaborative governance is not sufficiently clear and the second goal of the comparison is to expose it. Although some researchers identify the theory of participatory and/or deliberative democracy as democratic theories that correspond to collaborative governance, Gofer shows that the model most resembling CG is the “regulated multi-cultural democracy” model which is characterized by formal/institutional regulation by mechanisms for the involvement of stakeholders in the formation of policy and in decision making, which themselves are characterized by relatively low representativity and judicial process and lead to compromises that are characteristic of negotiating processes.

**Lihi Lahat and Neta Shar-Hadar** conclude the section with an examination of public administration organizations and attempt to answer two questions: In which situations can public values be promoted by the use of collaborative governance mechanisms? And what are the environmental conditions, as manifested in policy style and organizational culture, that encourage the development of collaborative governance initiatives? On the basis of the theoretical discussion and the development of a typology of various situations that relate to the dimension of agreement over facts and values in various policy domains, the authors present those situations in which it is of benefit to use these arrangements as opposed to those in which they have no relative advantage and perhaps may even cause harm when adopted. In order to illustrate the various situations, the researchers present examples from the Israeli reality, including immunization programs, the integration of the Arab population within the labor market and the policy toward labor immigrants. They conclude with an understanding that the main advantages of these arrangements are to provide new knowledge and to create a more ethical order of priorities, which could not have been achieved in other ways.

The second section deals with collaborative governance in local government:

**Varda Shieffer** writes about one element of collaborative governance, namely the process to create consensus and its fragility in view of the gap between the legal and bureaucratic frameworks on the one hand and the egalitarian and “soft” arrangement of collaborative governance on the other. As part of the research, the hypothesis was presented that the framework of collaborative governance and in particular the idea of consensus that underlies it will make it possible for some of the power in the realm of local education to be divided between the central government and the local government, which will be accomplished through discussion rather than conflict between the levels of government. The formation of a consensus improves the trust between partners in the process and produces legitimacy that we believe will facilitate a collaborative governance arrangement that will be involved in the formulation of local education policy without the need for controversial legislative processes. It was found that the collaborative governance models that have been created by the various local authorities are of the harmonic type proposed in the literature according to which consensus produces policies that will lead to a solution of the diagnosed problem. The research finds that the establishment of collaborative governance arrangements indeed generates processes of redistribution of power and positions in the local authorities that were examined. However, the lack of supporting legislation as well as the hierarchal structure and bureaucratic processes that characterize the central government weakened the stability of the consensuses achieved and increased the chance of conflict. The chapter focuses on consensus-formation processes in the creation of collaborative governance and their connection to the legal framework and bureaucratic structures that guide them.

**Kassam Altzraiyya and Rotem Bressler-Gonen** examine the role of collaborative governance on the local level and in particular its role in a minority society. They claim that it is currently unclear to what extent collaborative governance is useful to a minority society and in what way. The research focuses on efforts to promote women’s employment in the Arab-Bedouin society in the Negev by means of collaborative governance. These efforts illustrate how a society that encounters complex challenges arising from, among other things, a lack of trust in the local government institutions and the huge effort required in order to bring about change can in fact find a solution in the mechanism of collaborative governance. The local authority constitutes a mediating force and enables numerous entities to come together for the long term and to promote local initiatives. Such initiatives would not have been successful without the connection created by the local authority between the various governmental and civil society entities. In this research, we will demonstrate how collaborative governance enables the local authority in a minority society to unite the various entities and to promote public goals.

The third section examines regulation and collaborative governance:

**Motti Tallias** examines the connection between collaborative governance and regulation and the way in which the principles of collaborative governance are manifested in the development of regulatory thinking. Collaborative thinking is used in various policy domains and also in the regulatory regime, which is responsible for deciding on regulatory rules and enforcing them, using models that can be called collaborative regulation. The use of collaborative regulation is emerging against the background of continuing criticism of the traditional regulatory method of directives and control. The proposed change in direction includes cooperation between regulators and relevant stakeholders and in that spirit various models of collaborative regulation have developed. Notwithstanding the close connection between collaborative regulation and collaborative governance, they are discussed separately. The chapter examines the connection between the two: the common basis for their emergence and the developing presence of the component of collaboration in regulatory theory, including the place of collaborative regulation in the theory of voluntary regulation.

**Edna Harel Fisher** takes a different viewpoint in examining the tension between the collaborative governance approach and the world of governmental regulation. In a previous article, she examined the problems accompanying the institutional use of the approach in creating regulation. In this article, she looks at the regulatory domain in Israel as being a collaborative framework to create regulation, with reference to the principles of the regulatory domain, the situation in other countries and international regulation. It is in fact in this domain, in which the partnership and collaboration of stakeholders is fundamental, that the government of Israel has tried to limit the characteristics of collaborative governance, as part of the effort to strengthen the globalization of the Israeli economy. Harel Fisher examines these changes and their potential implications against the background of, among other things, the processes and insights in other countries and in relation to international regulation.

The fourth section examines the place of civil society in collaborative governance arrangements:

**Michal Almog-Bar** examines cross-sector partnerships, which constitute a distinct form of collaborative governance and which is of growing interest to governments, civil society organizations, foundations, philanthropists and business organizations. These partnerships are perceived as one of the main ways of solving social problems and promoting innovative social projects and as a necessary and desirable strategy for dealing with complex public challenges. The chapter critically examines the place and role of civil society organizations in cross-sector partnerships and the reciprocal relations that are emerging between these organizations and organizations in the government sector as part of the network of cross-sector partnerships. This is accomplished by presenting and discussing the findings of research carried out in Israel in recent years on the activity of civil society organizations in cross-sector partnerships.

**Inbar Horowitz and Michal Rom** describe the 5X2 initiative in Israel that operates according to a collective impact model in order to promote scientific excellence in education, as a case study of collaborative governance. They present a story of the initiative’s creation and activity, which was the first to apply the collective impact approach in Israel. This approach defines the guidelines for systemic activity to solve complex social problems by means of a unique partnership between a variety of stakeholders. The story of the initiative is described along a timeline and emphasizes the development of collaborative governance mechanisms and their characteristics within the context of the initiative’s activities. In addition, it describes the process to create relationships and trust between the players in the three sectors, which constitute the basis for promoting collaborative governance mechanisms and their ability to operate successfully.

The fifth section presents two cases that illustrate collaborative governance:

The first presents the case of collaborative governance in Kiryat Malachi through the story of Tsion Regev, who is the manager for corporate social responsibility in the Gazit Globe company, while the second case involves regional collaborative governance in the domain of environmental protection in Ramat Hanadiv, which involves the story of Naomi Appel, the director of the Partnership for Regional Sustainability.

The **concluding chapter** looks at the contribution of the book to the theory of collaborative governance. The chapter will primarily present the implications of the discussions in the various chapters with respect to the main research questions that we began with: Do collaborative governance mechanisms promote public values? And can they contribute to democratic processes? More specifically, we will examine the following questions: What are the implications of these arrangements for public administration? Which democratic theory does it strengthen and which does it weaken? Is it possible to promote democratic collaborative governance mechanisms? Can collective governance contribute to a future model that provides a solution to the weakness of public administration following the New Public Management reforms? And finally, under what conditions is it worthwhile to promote collaborative governance mechanisms?

This chapter will provide a theoretical and empirical summary of the various chapters in the book and will suggest questions that remain open and which are worthy of future discussion.

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1. Booher 2004; Keast and Mandell 2014; Vigoda-Gadot 2004; 2009; Wanna, 2008; Williams, 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ansell 2012; Ansel and Gash 2008; Emerson et al. 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dunleavy et al. 2006; Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011; Stoker 2006; Vigoda-Gadot 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Baker and Stoker 2013; Hajer 2003; Rhodes 1994; 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rhodes 1994; 2000; Bevir 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ansel and Gash 2008; Emerson et al. 2012; Williams 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. They point out that in order to solidify the principles of engagement there are four processes carried out as part of the interaction between the partners: disclosure, definition, deliberation and decision. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ansell et al. 2017; Koppenjan and Klijn 2004; Sabatier 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. A term coined by the British researcher which is similar in character to joined-up government (see Christensen and LÆgreid 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Emerson and Gerlak 2014; Keast and Mandell 2014; O’Flynn 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Bryson et al. 2015; Getha-Taylor et al. 2018; Huxham 2003; Innes and Booher 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This sub-section is based on Emerson et al. (2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The emphasis on governance is meant to distinguish between collaborative governance and arrangements with a different main goal, such as the creation of public discourse or increased cooperation between various participants. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Denhardt and Denhardt 2000; Klijn et al. 2010; Leach et al. 2013; Leach and Sabatier 2005; Putnam 1993; 1995; Ran and Qi 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Crosby et al. 2017; Leach et al. 2013; Leach and Sabatier 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Bryson et al. 2014; Crosby et al. 2017; Nabatchi 2012; Sørensen and Torfing 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Bryson et al. 2014; Nabatchi 2012; Stoker 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Moore 1995; O'Flynn, 2008; Smith 2004; Stoker 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)