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Making sense of multilevel governance and governance coordination in Brazil: The case of the Bolsa Verde Programme

Michael Kull[a,b], Jarkko Pyysiäinen[b], Giovanna Christo[c] and Stamatios Christopoulos[d]

[a]Nordregio, Stockholm, Sweden; [b]Luonnonvarakeskus, Helsinki, Finland; [c]Centro Universitario Curitiba, Curitiba, Brazil; [d]UN Environment Pacific Office, Apia, Samoa

ABSTRACT
Brazil is an example of a challenging governance context par excellence: continental size, multi-levelled governance structures and diverse administrative cultures meet with ambitious, large-scale policy needs and objectives. The multilevel governance approach is applied here to analyse implementation and governance coordination of the Bolsa Verde Programme (BVP). Through a close reading of the narratives told by three programme officials – and zooming in on jointly exercised governance functions known from the metagovernance approach – we analysed how BVP's programmatic governance coordination was made sense of. The analysis showed that our interviewees were well aware of the shortcomings of the governance coordination in BVP, understood as rather hierarchical, centrally driven and often tackling challenges of vertical multi-actor coordination in a reactive ad-hoc manner. However, since the implementers have been able to creatively and skilfully solve governance coordination challenges, possibilities for developing more systematic and inclusive (meta)governance approaches seem feasible.

KEYWORDS Brazil; multilevel governance; governance coordination; metagovernance; Bolsa Verde Programme; narrative analysis

Introduction

Governance of sustainable development (SD) policies requires the integration of multiple sources of knowledge and has to involve actors from different scales and sectors of society who understand, manage, and benefit from services (Groot et al., 2002; Hall, 2008; IUCN, 2011; Primmer and Furman, 2012; UNDP, 2012b). SD governance comprises of a wide array of established institutional actors, novel and interlinked governance arrangements, which together should ultimately result in the implementation of collectively acceptable SD principles. This is conditioned by different (and sometimes

conflicting) background understandings and rationalities, value orientations, interests and commitments cutting across multiple governance levels. Priorities must be deliberated and the perceptions of different parties negotiated in a dialogic setting.

Brazil is an example of challenging SD governance setting par excellence. Multi-levelled governance structures meet ambitious, large-scale SD policy needs and objectives. In a country of the size of Brazil, federally structured and composed of states with their own specific administrative cultures, the implementation of federal policies is particularly challenging (Almeida, 2005; Afonso, 2007; Leite and Fonseca, 2011; Bichir, 2013). The multilevel governance (MLG) approach – originally developed to analyse policy-making in the European Union (EU) (Marks, 1993) and evolving 'as almost the *über*-concept of the two decades spanning the millennium' (Bache et al., 2012: 1) – is applied in this paper to approach SD governance structures and functions in the Federative Republic Brazil, using Bolsa Verde Programme (BVP) as an example.

This paper answers to a call by MLG scholars to focus on the interconnectedness of the two distinctive types of MLG – type I and type II – instead of maintaining the binary divide between them (Bache et al., 2012, 2016). The MLG approach is suitable for considering the distinctive systemic characteristics of type I and type II (Hooghe and Marks, 2003; Bache et al., 2012; Kull and Tatar, 2015). Kull and Tatar (2015) note that type I MLG reflects a more federal or quasi-federal arrangement with delimited dispersion of authority, while type II MLG, in contrast, and according to Bache (2008: 27) stands for governing arrangements in which 'the jurisdiction of authority is task-specific, where jurisdictions operate at numerous territorial levels and may be overlapping'. To understand the interconnections of the two types, and the dynamics of how the latter is embedded in the former, we look for evidence of jointly exercised functions that would fuse type I and type II governance modes. The search for such joint-functions is informed by ideas developed under the metagovernance approach (Jessop, 2003; Sørensen, 2006; Meuleman, 2008; Christopoulos et al., 2012; Derkx and Glasbergen, 2014). Combining MLG with metagovernance has proven conceptually useful (Jessop, 2004) and serves to outbalance some of the conceptual weaknesses of the MLG approach (Kull, 2014; Christopoulos et al., 2016). Consequently, and by choosing the BVP as our empirical case approached through a combination of MLG and metagovernance, we analyse the reasons behind some of the core problems emerging in MLG systems, including incomplete information, inter-jurisdictional coordination, coordination of networks on decision-making and policy-formulation, or decision-blocking by higher-level administrations (Bache et al., 2012).

The article focuses on the perspective of public sector representatives, in the form of an analysis of the narratives told by three key civil servants

responsible for or closely involved in the implementation of the BVP.[1] We thus pose and address the following research questions:

(1) *The BVP's programmatic governance.* how is MLG coordination narrated by our interviewees? This question concerns general programme operation.
(2) *The manifestation of jointly exercised governance functions in the BVP.* how do the joint governance functions – as the interface where MLG type I and MLG type II potentially meet – manifest in the narratives? Do they manifest in terms of (a) concrete and coherent examples of jointly exercised governance functions, (b) challenges, ambiguities or problems concerning the joint functions and the governance interface, or (c) an absence of accounts of joint governance functions and type II MLG altogether?

TSection one contextualizes our empirical study of BVP and contains a short synthesis of Brazilian federalism and the governance of social policies. Section two outlines the underlying conceptual assumptions through (a) critically synthesizing the MLG and metagovernance approaches and (b) suggesting how the latter can contribute to some of the conceptual shortcomings MLG scholars recently discussed (Bache et al., 2012; Milio, 2014; Kull and Tatar, 2015). Section three describes our method and the process of data collection. Section four features a theoretically informed analysis of the narratives told by key public sector representatives closely involved in the implementation of BVP. We close with a discussion of how MLG functions in Brazil and in our case and how different metagovernance elements and governance coordination unfold.

Federalism and MLG in Brazil – context and nature of the Bolsa Verde Programme

The trajectory of Brazilian federalism

The Brazilian Federation was created in 1889. Brazil is a republic with three levels of government; the central level comprising the Federal Government, Federal ministries and the State ministers, the intermediary level composed of 27 states and the Federal District and a local government level with more than 5500 municipalities (IBGE, 2015). Unlike many federations, the Brazilian case is a three level system, including municipalities. As an integral part of the federation, there is a long tradition of municipal autonomy and little control of states over local questions; however, the capacity of municipal governments to implement policies and raise their own resources is highly differentiated, whereas the states have relatively scarce legislative capacity despite collecting the largest tax volumes (Souza, 2005).

The Brazilian Federation was not a result of conviction of the people in general, but rather decided at the highest levels of authority (Castanhar,

2003). Souza (2002) provides a sound analysis of Brazilian federalism through accessing its trajectory. She shows that Brazil has moved along a continuum of federalist relations, from an 'isolated' federalism in the early republican days via centralization during the military regime and towards political and financial decentralization because of re-democratization (Souza, 2002).

The 1988 Constitution set in motion a significant decentralization of revenue and political power towards the subnational governments (Souza, 2002; Castanhar, 2003). Additionally, multiple and competing power centres started to coexist. Furthermore, the creation of vertical networks among and across the Federation and multiple levels of government was fostered – among States, between municipalities and the federal government, as well as between the federal executive and the legislature (Souza, 2003). In a nutshell, during the democratization process, states and municipalities have gained more political and financial autonomy. Federalist reforms, on one hand allowed for political innovation at the subnational level, while, on the other hand, introduced an element of institutional uncertainty into an already potentially unstable situation (Samuels and Abrucio, 2000; Castanhar, 2003).

During the 1990s, other social actors, such as NGOs and private companies, started to participate in public policies while in parallel States were undergoing reforms (Silva, 2014). According to Silva (2014), Brazil saw the emergence of a cooperative-competitive federalism, which has its origin in the federal constitution and is replicated through a political process, which involves the Union, states and municipalities.

Brazilian federalism and social policies

In Brazil, social policies are characterized as universal competencies, accentuating the problem of definition of responsibilities among federal entities, leading to remarkable asymmetries in different regions (Palotti, 2009). Implementation is characterized by the dilemma of ensuring political integrity and autonomy of different government levels and, simultaneously, coordinating actions to achieve common purposes (Palotti, 2009). In such a setting, Arretche (2000) and Abrucio (2005) see two main consequences for the decentralization of social policies: (1) capacity transfer among government levels is through the adherence of subnational level, which has the autonomy to choose its participation in determined social policy programs; (2) bargains between different federal entities influence the pace, coverage and boundaries of the decentralization of specific social policies.

In this context of vertical and horizontal coordination challenges the 1998s Constitution opened the path for wider participation and strengthened municipalities. Most of the social policies were decentralized to contain participative elements (Souza, 2005). However, while municipalities retain a certain

degree of autonomy in managing and funding policies, they find themselves embedded in nationally defined regulatory contexts (Arretche, 2014). Arretche (2014), discusses the Bolsa Família Programme[2] (BFP) as an example of a centrally framed programme, where eligibility criteria are defined by the central government. Although implementation and delivery of benefits is decentralized and through municipalities,[3] the general and over-arching decisions, including the selection of beneficiaries, are centralized at the federal level (Bichir, 2013). Thus, there is no intra-national variation neither concerning beneficiaries' benefits nor access to the programme (Bichir, 2013). National standards and monitoring capacities are established through national framework laws. The Single Registry for Social Programs and the Index of Decentralized Management (*Índice de Gestão Descentralizada*), are mechanisms of federal coordination: the first standardizes who can and cannot participate in the programs, the second regulates the transfer of federal resources to subnational levels. These mechanisms are meant to allow the federal government to implement coherent local actions through national directives for the programme (Bichir, 2013).

Leite and Fonseca (2011) add that although programs such as the BFP predicted decentralization coupled with coordination among different governance levels, this did not happen in a practical way. Afonso (2007) argues that the federal government tends to engage directly with the local governments (municipalities) while decreasing the participation of state governments. Senna et al. (2007) complement that the BFP was to have decentralized coordination, including the three levels of government in addition to non-government organizations. Yet, in a practical way, the programme created a new direct relationship between federal and local government, excluding state governments from participation (Senna et al., 2007).

Bichir (2013) sees this as a 'significant centralization' and closely related to the evolution of these programs in Brazil.[4] Bichir also stresses that centralization was to ensure the achievement of specific goals – as increased coverage and targeting – but had adverse effects on integration with other programs and policies.[5] While decentralization of funding generally increased the local government expenditure capacity, state governments did not profit from reforms (Lima, 2007; Leite and Fonseca, 2011). Ferreira, Jimenez and Holzer (2011) see a risk that federalism plays a dual role when promoting such welfare state policies. Almeida (2005) brings forth a very important point in this context: the justification of centralization by federal authorities, for example, how to efficiently tackle extreme poverty while avoiding the patronage of the programs by local elites.[6] The latter point, as will be seen in our analysis, will also move to the fore in the case of the BVP.

Since their first inception, the income transfer programs in Brazil have moved from punctual pilots in a few municipalities to extensive replication

accross the country and via numerous a programs, such as our case, Bolsa Verde.

The Bolsa Verde Programme

Despite the wealth of natural resources, livelihoods in the rural areas are under extreme poverty pressures: Brazil has the single largest concentration of rural poverty in Latin America and the largest number of poor rural people in the Western Hemisphere.[7]

Since late 1990s, Brazil has achieved considerable development results in reducing poverty and inequality, and extending basic services, while also dramatically expanding protected areas network in the Amazon (UNDP, 2012a; MMA, 2013). While forest management aims to protect and conserve nature in a balanced way, using the forest as a source of income for poor families can be controversial, creating a challenge for interaction between conservation, social inclusion, and welfare.

Considering the challenges of eradicating poverty in rural areas while simultaneously encouraging the conservation of natural resources, the Brazilian federal government launched the BVP in 2011. Our interviews with the programme coordinator showed that, compared to other social programs, such as the BFP, where more time was invested for deliberation with different sets of actors, the BVP was set up quickly and in a more technocratic manner. Less effort was put into deliberation with third parties on goals and objectives. Furthermore, in terms of implementation, the rationale of the operation was to boost uptake and execute cash transfers to lift recipients above the poverty line before adding capacity building and the environmental component. Hence, this logic is much in line with Bichir arguing that the centralization of social programs at federal level was to achieve specific goals, including increased coverage and targeting.

The BVP focuses on groups in extreme poverty, who live in social-environmental regions of priority,[8] for example, National Forests, Extractivist Federal Reserves, Sustainable Development Federal Reserves, and Environmentally Distinctive Agrarian Reform Settlements. The BVP aims at enhancing the livelihoods of families who already perform environmental conservation activities and who are responsible for the conservation of green areas and their environmental services. The main objectives of the BVP are to:[9]

(1) Encourage ecosystems conservation (maintenance and sustainable use),
(2) Promote citizenship and improve living conditions,
(3) Raise income of the poor who engage in nature conservation,
(4) Encourage participation of recipients in environmental, social, technical and professional capacity building activities.

The Federal Ministry of Environment (MMA) is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the BVP.[10] The MMA follows instructions of a Steering Committee, which, in accordance with specific legislation (Decree 7575/2011), defined the areas to be included in the programme. The main responsibility to identify potential beneficiaries is with Incra[11] and SPU[12] and in the specifically defined areas of their operations. In addition to environmental conditions[13] there are three social conditions that must be fulfilled for families receiving support. Families must (i) live in extreme poverty; (ii) be registered in the Federal Governments Single Registry of Social Programs (CadÚnico – the registry of the BFP) and; (iii) be beneficiaries of the BFP. The latest available figures published online[14] show a total of 48 793 registered families.

Approaching MLG through a metagovernance – framework

The term MLG was suggested by Marks (1993). To date, research on MLG covers a great number of policy fields and extents to polities beyond the EU. Hooghe and Marks (2003) further conceptualized MLG by differentiating between two types of MLG. Type I MLG comprises stable and solid forms of governance structures, stretching from supranational level (e.g. EU institutions), via the nation-states down to sub-national levels including municipalities. Additionally, functional structures are created to solve specific policy-problems (type II MLG). The latter, 'new governance' structures, are embedded within the former, and both types co-exist. Hooghe and Marks (2003) identified several key systemic characteristics of both types summarized in Table 1.

Other MLG scholars (Bache et al. 2012) remind one that the distinction of these two types has been widely accepted. Yet, they make a strong argument in favour of moving the research focus onto the interconnectedness of the two types and challenge the maintenance of this binary divide. Micro-analyses focused on the interconnectedness of both MLG types helped to get closer to the core problems occurring in systems of MLG, including accountability, incomplete information, coordination, interest-group capture, corruption, coordination of networks engaged in decision-making and policy-formulation or decision-blocking by higher-level administrations.

Table 1. Type I and type II MLG and key systemic characteristics.

Type I MLG	Type II MLG
General-purpose jurisdictions	Task-specific jurisdictions
limited number of jurisdictional levels	Presence of many jurisdictional levels
System-wide, durable architecture; that is, reforms do not change the basic structure of the jurisdiction	Flexible design according to functional needs; can be easily dissolved after tasks are fulfilled
Non-intersecting membership	Intersecting membership

Source: Adopted from Hooghe and Marks (2003).

MLG and governance coordination in Brazil, particularly regarding new emerging governance structures, such as the BVP, are analysed in this article by focusing on governance joint-functions developed under the *meta-governance* approach (Jessop, 2003; Sørensen, 2006; Meuleman, 2008; Christopoulos et al., 2012; Derkx and Glasbergen, 2014). Metagovernance has various scholarly definitions and meanings, commonly featuring the idea of enhancing 'governance of governance', that is, improving coordination of heterogeneous governance arrangements comprised of multiple territorial levels, actor/stakeholder groups and rationalities of governance (Jessop, 2003; Sørensen, 2006; Derkx and Glasbergen, 2014), and commonly entailing mixes of hierarchical, market, network and/or self-organized governance (Meuleman, 2008). Moreover, several studies (Bortel and Mullins, 2009; Engberg and Larsen, 2010; Jessop, 2011; Christopoulos et al., 2016; Challe et al., 2017) have argued and shown that metagovernance can achieve results for SD.

In a metagovernance setting and only ideally, the state (local, regional, national levels of government) and entities above the state level (intergovernmental organizations) create the regulatory frameworks and are jointly accountable and responsible for policy-implementation. Importantly, the state should also support the empowerment of weak(er) actors. Ideally, private actors contribute to the definition and construction of regulatory and self-regulatory frameworks, norms or codes of conduct or 'fill gaps of lack of implementation by governments' (Visseren-Hamakers and Glasbergen, 2007: 408). Metagovernance scholars view and conceptualize policy enactment and implementation as essentially communicative, collaborative processes among a wide pool of actor groups. Importantly, the different actors involved in metagovernance have joint functions in addition to their own specific roles and functions.

In our case, the MMA is part of the overarching type I meta-structure (MLG type I). In its function as the BVP coordinator, the MMA is also part of new governance arrangements (type II MLG). On the one hand, MMA has very broad roles and functions in the implementation of environmental policy in Brazil as part of type I MLG. On the other hand, and in relation to programs such as the BVP, MMA has own specific functions (e.g. coordinating), but also shares functions with other governance actors (e.g. agencies, NGOs, etc.). From a conceptual point of view, in this MLG setting comprising features of both type I and type II MLG, a study of both shared and own independent functions serves to better understand the interconnectedness of the two types.

The functions that are exercised together, that is, joint functions, are of core interest in this article. The conceptual distinction of the joint functions elaborated in other studies (e.g. Christopoulos et al., 2012; Challe et al., 2017) serve us to analyse the actor dynamics and relationships within the BVP and to

zoom in on governance coordination. Successful exercise of these joint functions would reflect the case-and area-specific needs and opportunities in relation to a specific policy or programme. According to metagovernance theorizing, this fusion holds the potential to make the implementation of policy programs more effective, efficient and democratic.

The metagovernance themes that we analyse in this article are amenable for discussion in an interview situation and prompt concrete stories about programme implementation:

- Deliberation on appropriate choices in governance and policy-making
- Provision of and access to information and knowledge
- Coordination of collective action
- Mediation

These themes, applied in other studies before (e.g. Christopoulos et al., 2012, 2016; Challe et al., 2017), help us look into concrete storytelling about programme implementation. Furthermore, through these themes, we seek to capture the coordination dynamics between the two MLG types and then analyse the multiple dispositions of MMA as a core actor in charge of the BVP and how it acts as a metagovernor.

Materials and methods

Narrative approaches focus on the systematic study of how people make sense of actions, events, experiences and intentions – including their own as well as other people's actions – through stories and story-telling. Narratives serve as means of making sense, (re)presenting and communicating complex actions and events in an intuitively understandable and accessible form, as coherent formulas of sense-making, organized from the perspective of meaningful relations between protagonists, other actors, their goals, intentions and relationships (Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1988; Czarniawska, 2010; Riessman, 2016). In this article, we apply narrative analysis to make visible

- how key civil servants in charge of governing and implementing the BVP make sense of the MLG coordination of the programme, and
- whether both MLG types are narrated and fused as integral elements in their stories.

In other words, our analytical focus lies in tracing, whether and how the interface between MLG type I and type II, and the associated governance joint functions and relations, manifest in the story-telling prompted by the interviews.[15]

The broad umbrella of narrative approaches comprises several traditions, methodological approaches and analytical techniques; here we follow a narratological 'actantial model' as developed originally by Greimas (1983) and applied later as an analytical approach within humanities, social sciences and organizational studies (e.g. Franzosi, 1998; Polkinghorne, 1988; Søderberg, 2003). According to the actantial analysis, the narrative material studied (e.g. interview texts) is analytically broken down into six 'actant' categories.[16] The actantial analysis aims to identify these six categories from the stories and, importantly, the relations between them (Greimas, 1983; Søderberg, 2003). This provides the analyst with the 'raw plot' of the narrative, that is, a simplified storyline structure, where the essential form of the actants and their relations are made visible (Table 2).

In the analysis of the accounts of BVP, narrative approach is used to analyse, first, whether a one-sided or balanced and integrated functioning of MLG types I and II is reflected in the way the actants (e.g. objects, subjects, helpers and opponents) are constructed. For instance, is the MMA posited as the sole key subject or sender, or perhaps also as a helper of other subjects, senders or receivers in the different phases and functions of BVP implementation? Is a coherent and unified object constructed for the BVP implementation, or do we perhaps see a 'split' between objects associated with type I and type II MLG (and their respective subjects)? Second, by comparing the degree and nature of convergence/divergence between the narratives told by three different interviewees, we can see the extent to which a coherent narrative has been formed and shared among the programme implementers and authorities. If the narratives, and the ways in which MLG types and joint functions are portrayed, would diverge significantly, it would indicate that the 'metagovernor's' perspective on governance coordination is (still) varied and fragmented, and a coherent account of the programme's MLG logic remains yet to be formed.

Since we are interested in analysing in detail the qualitative sense-making patterns via a narrative analysis, we have chosen an in-depth reflection of a few, appropriately selected narrative accounts.[17] Correspondingly, we chose three key individuals from the public sector to be interviewed – in English.

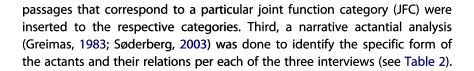**Table 2.** 'Actantial' analysis and basic 'actant' categories in the context of governance joint functions.

'Actant' category	Guiding question and the 'actant'
Object	How is the object, or goal, of this joint function constructed?
Subject	Who or which types of actors are viewed as the subjects pursuing the object?
Sender	Who or what are the senders in charge of initiating the pursuit?
Receiver	Who or what are the receivers benefiting from the accomplishment of the mission?
Helper	Who or what are the actors and situations facilitating the pursuit of the mission?
Opponent	Who or what are the actors and situations complicating the pursuit of the mission?

All interviewees were closely involved in the implementation of the BVP and represented different institutions at the core of the BVP institutional architecture (see the appendix).

From a narrative point of view, it often is a valid and analytically justified choice to study narrative sense-making in one or a few narrative accounts only, as narrative inquiry focuses closely on *particular* cases and their contexts of production (Young, 1989; Wortham, 2000; Shenhav, 2005; Riessman, 2016). Already one narrative can represent a theoretically meaningful and relevant case, serving thus as an empirical *specimen* of a theoretically interesting phenomenon or event; and when the selection of the narrative case to be studied is thus done on the basis of its theoretical relevance, the validity and generalizability of the analysis are not related to questions of statistical generalization, for example, but concern rather the generalization of a *possibility* of the particular phenomenon as revealed by the context-sensitive and detailed qualitative analysis (see Peräkylä, 2016). In the case of this article, the analysis seeks thus to illustrate whether and how MLG types (and their fusion in crucial governance joint functions) are manifested, and can be made sense of by our interviewees, in the narratives told about the implementation of BVP. This can be meaningfully studied based on three appropriately selected narratives; even one detailed single-case narrative might be enough to study the *how* aspect of narrative manifestation, but three interviews allow us to do some comparative triangulation between the narratives as well.[18]

In terms of data collection, our empirical method was based on semi-structured interviews that addressed the operation and challenges of the BVP, especially from the perspective of governance coordination and metagovernance joint functions. The interview questions dealt, first, with issues related to BVP more generally, its set-up process, successes, challenges and future prospects as experienced by the interviewees, and moved then to discuss more specific metagovernance themes related to deliberation on appropriate choices in governance and policy-making, coordination of collective action, provision of and access to information and knowledge, communication, and cooperation between various actors and stakeholders.

The narrative analysis of the interviews proceeded in three consecutive steps. First, in case of interviews A and B, the interviews were recorded and transcribed (interview C was received in a written narrative form). Second, the three narrative accounts were then re-organized and divided into four sub-stories according to the four selected 'joint function categories': (1) Deliberation on appropriate choices in governance and policy-making; (2) Provision of and access to information and knowledge; (3) Coordination of collective action; (4) Mediation. These four 'mini-stories' were further condensed into narrative 'synopses' preserving all narratively meaningful actantial elements and their relations but leaving out narratively irrelevant text sequences (Riessman, 2007). This second step resulted in a narrative matrix, where narrative

passages that correspond to a particular joint function category (JFC) were inserted to the respective categories. Third, a narrative actantial analysis (Greimas, 1983; Søderberg, 2003) was done to identify the specific form of the actants and their relations per each of the three interviews (see Table 2).

Results

This section is organized into four sub-sections, each describing the particular way the metagovernance theme or 'JFC' manifests in (or remains absent from) the interviews. This includes analysis and comparison of the narrative actants with which the metagovernance theme is accounted for in the context of BVP implementation. We begin each sub-section with a description of the general idea of the JFC in question, its relevance for BVP and a summary of main findings revealed by the narrative analysis. After that, we describe the manifestation of the JFC in the narratives in more detail, in terms of the narrative actants constructed in the three narratives. The distinctive features of the narrative storylines are illustrated with quotations from each interviewee.

Deliberation on appropriate choices in governance and policy-making

The joint function and the summary of its essential manifestation. Deliberation refers to the communication and negotiation processes through which the actual means for policy and programme objectives are decided and the practical issues concerning policy implementation and its governance agreed. Deliberation can take place at the beginning of a policy cycle, when a policy programme is designed and planned. Policy programme launch and implementation are also important phases where deliberation is needed, especially if obstacles are encountered and require problem-solving actions. *In summary:* The importance and need of deliberation as a joint governance function in and for BVP is recognized in the narratives of the interviewees, but is generally portrayed as having followed rather hierarchical mode and thus remained within the conventional type I MLG. As such, deliberation is also portrayed as insufficient to address the range of governance complexities at stake, especially in the planning phase but also throughout the project.

　　Manifestation of deliberation in the narrative analysis. In the case of BVP, the pre-programme deliberation phase is portrayed as having remained short and substantially limited in comparison to other programs launched by the Brazilian government (e.g. *Bolsa Família*, *Brasil sem Miséria*, etc.). Challenges of the deliberation process were cited in the narratives told by all three interviewees. Depending on the interviewee and his or her perspective on the programme implementation, the foci – and challenges – of deliberation efforts were variably connected to programme design and planning, programme

content and objectives in the course of implementation, or shared implementation practices and principles among the variety of actors involved (Table 3).

The narrative elements and the storylines concerning deliberation are closely aligned in all three narratives. Concerning the 'object' of deliberation, all three interviewees emphasize objectives that concern programme content, programme implementation and the achievement of a shared understanding of the programme's substantial issues. The deliberation about programme's substantial issues receives a prominent role during the implementation phase, since possibilities for pre-programme deliberation and preparation have been limited. According to interviewee A:

> The implementation of the Bolsa Família program was easier than Bolsa Verde […] since there was then more time to plan the program. Consequently, the Bolsa Família program has more stability than Bolsa Verde.

The picture of the BVP's deliberation activities as focused on coping with substantial programme issues and general questions about operational implementation is further reinforced when looking at the way the 'subject' of deliberation is constructed by the interviewees. In the narratives A, B and C the subject is rather uniformly presented as the core network of programme actors and implementers, consisting of the key institutions involved in programme implementation. All three storylines present the deliberation activities as concerning the *internal* programme operation rather than relation and impact of the programme vis-à-vis target populations, stakeholders or regional or societal development at large. The subject of deliberation is

Table 3. Deliberation on appropriate choices in governance and policy-making.

	Interview A	Interview B	Interview C
Object/ function	Programme planning, preparation and implementation	Definition of an agreement on the programme content, as well as the policy implementation process	Operationalization of programme objectives and realization of policy implementation activities (e.g. accessing the areas)
Subject	Governmental institutions and agencies implicated	The three governmental institutions implicated	Governmental institutions and agencies implicated
Receiver	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Sender	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Helper	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*	Steering Committee of BVP; Situation monitoring *of Brasil sem miséria* programme
Opponent	Short pre-programme preparation time; Uncertainty about the continuity of BVP in the future; Differences in federal-state level and regional admin. cultures and procedures	Different background understandings about the programme between institutions; Lack of communication between institutions	Bureaucratic process for inclusion of families in the programme; Continuity of environmental conservation after the programme period

thus portrayed as more or less confined to the network of core programme actors (mostly horizontal coordination among federal-level actors) and not particularly emphasizing a broader, type II MLG understanding of the subjects of deliberation.

All interviewees indicate challenges for effective deliberation are posed by the programme's complicated governance structure and/or the differing and bureaucratic administration procedures and institutional cultures. However, their stories differ slightly with respect to the construction of the opponent viewed as the main source of obstacles. Interviewee A highlights the role of the short pre-programme preparation time as an opponent. Interviewee B emphasizes the role of differing background understandings and lack of communication between the institutions involved:

> A big governance challenge is related to difficulties and complexities of the governance process, which is quite unclear in my view. Three institutions are involved in the execution of the program. Their understandings of the program are not unified. Indeed, one deficiency of the program is the lack of communication between actors and institutions.

Further, according to interviewee B, a successful implementation of the BVP in the future is conditioned by further decentralization and more intensive involvement of municipalities to the implementation process. Viewed from the perspective of MLG and BVP governance coordination, these accounts portray deliberation instances as relying largely on established MLG type I functioning, with only limited reference to MLG type II functions. Finally, interviewee C attributes main needs, and difficulties, of deliberation to the logistics of accessing families in distant places and the bureaucratic process of including them to the programme. However, he is the only one of the interviewees who develops a clearly distinguishable 'helper'-category. In his account, the Steering Committee meetings of the BVP and the 'Situation Rooms of Monitoring'[19] occasions of the *Brasil sem Miséria* programme have proved useful in tackling the problems related to the bureaucratic and logistically challenging inclusion process.

Provision of and access to information and knowledge

The joint function and the summary of its essential manifestation. The act of deliberation requires that both the coordinator of a policy ('metagovernor') and stakeholders involved in the implementation process have *access to relevant information and knowledge*. Furthermore, for a policy to be legitimate and to achieve acceptance by the groups affected by the intervention (and the general public at large, including the taxpayers), information of policy and its goals must be provided and accessible. These internal and external information and knowledge flows are the subjects of the analysis in this section. In the Brazilian context, with the BVP covering a programme area

of 312 500 square kilometres in 1015 territories, the provision of information is a very demanding task. The receiving families and the potential BVP target population are naturally a crucial target group of information and knowledge provision activities. The success of the programme greatly depends on the ability of the programme implementers to communicate an accurate, under-standable and appealing narrative about the programme to the target popu-lation. Access to the families is critical in terms of programme outreach, implementation and actual registration of the families including for environ-mental trainings.

In summary. The importance and need of information provision as a joint governance function is recognized in the narratives, as is the considerable challenge of executing this in practice, both externally (regarding the recipi-ents and targets) and internally (regarding the actors involved in the pro-gramme). Consequently, the scope of this JFC in BVP is portrayed as quite limited as it is primarily attributed either to the top-down information pro-vision from the programme authorities to the recipients, or to the provision and exchange of information within the programme's operational network, with a view to improving programme operation and consistency. In both cases information provision is portrayed primarily as resorting to MLG type I logic.

Manifestation of provision of and access to information in the narrative analy-sis. Both the importance and the difficulties related to the task of reaching the target families are saliently reflected in the narratives of all three interviewees (Table 4).

In all three narratives, the communication and information provision *from* the programme actors *to* the recipient population is narrated as the main storyline. In terms of the narrative 'actant' categories (Table 4), all intervie-wees rather consistently view that central 'object' of information and knowl-edge provision activities is either *the improving of the impact of the programme* or *programme implementation* as such. This is understandable: if information about the programme does not reach the recipient popu-lation, the programme cannot have any impact in the first place. Secondly, regarding the 'subject' actant, *the network of programme authorities and implementers* is consistently constructed as being responsible for these com-munication and information provision activities in all three narratives. This rather straightforward, target-oriented one-way picture about the communi-cation activities is emphasized further in narratives A and C, where the reci-pients are posited as the 'receivers' of the communication activities. This further highlights the dominant storyline: programme authorities and imple-menters are positioned as the subjects sending information and the target population and families are those who receive information. The narrative elements of this dominant storyline are illustrated in the following excerpt by interviewee C:

Table 4. Provision of and access to information and knowledge.

	Interview A	Interview B	Interview C
Object/ function	Improving the operation and impact of the programme (quality and quantity)	Improving the operation and impact of the programme in general; committing audience more generally to support the programme	Implementation of the programme in target areas
Subject	The network of actors involved in the BVP (with the initiative of programme coordinators)	The programme as a 'collective actor'	The programme implementers in the field (especially in the communities)
Receiver	Receiving families	*Not explicitly articulated*	Receiving families
Sender	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Helper	Potentially NGOs and research community, for example, in upcoming seminars	The alternative media	*Not explicitly articulated*
Opponent	*Not explicitly articulated*	Complicated programme governance; lack of communication between programme implementers; traditional media	*Not explicitly articulated*

Through the visits, for example by Incra, the program is first explained to the families, and second, the program conditions, rights and duties of each party are clarified. It is always clarified that the family does not lose the benefits from other programs, notably Bolsa Família, if they join the Bolsa Verde Program. After these conversations, the families, who are interested in participating in the program, would sign the term of conditions, given that they agree on the conditions and rules.

Another storyline visible in the narratives focuses on the communication and provision of information *within* the network of programme authorities, implementers and stakeholders. Since the programme is an initiative of extensive size and scale, covering a vast, multifaceted programme area and involving a multiplicity of implementing authorities and stakeholders, the forming and internalization of a consistent and unitary narrative about the programme and its implementation is a challenging task. Such an internal complexity and challenges of 'internal' communication, knowledge provision and institutional learning are reflected in all three narratives. Common to the three constructions of such a storyline are 'actantial' building blocks where, first, 'object' is related to the improvement of the programme's (internal) operation and, second, 'subject' is conceived of as the network or collective body of programme authorities and stakeholders (Table 4). In addition, in the most elaborated storyline of this type told by interviewee B, *complicated programme governance* and *lack of communication between programme implementers* are explicitly posited as the 'opponents'.

A third storyline can be detected concerning the 'provision of and access to information and knowledge' – category. It is articulated clearly by interviewee B, and hinted by interviewee C. It concerns the role and stance of the wider 'societal' audience, even public opinion, as conducive to the success potential of the programme. In terms of the 'actants' used to articulate the storyline, interviewee B posits the general goal of *committing audience more generally to support the programme* as the 'object'. In other words, she sees as crucial that also the wider audience receives valid information about the programme and learns about its potentials and progress. In this respect, she views the 'new' and 'old' media as playing important, instrumental roles. The new media is represented narratively as a 'helper' that can be used to spread information and knowledge favourable for the programme. The old media, such as traditional local newspapers, in turn, is represented as an 'opponent' that is prone to represent the programme and its objectives in a critical light, and as potentially being in line with the interests of powerful societal actors, such as big farmers. Interviewee B sheds light on this ambivalence thus:

> New media, such as blogs or Facebook are important for us to spread information and to communicate with different stakeholders, such as NGOs. Old media, such as local newspapers can be critical as most of the time the information and views they provide about the program is not favorable. Instead, their stance is rather supportive of the position of traditional big players, such as big farmers.

Coordination of collective action

The joint function and the summary of its essential manifestation. The category of *coordination* is closely interlinked with the previously analysed categories of deliberation and provision of information. Successful coordination presupposes and utilizes activities of these previously described categories, but it cannot be reduced to them. Coordination requires a responsible agent/actor (a 'metagovernor') from whose unifying perspective coordination is practices, steered, and monitored. The category of coordination, as constructed in the analysed interviews, concerns internal programme implementation activities and their repercussions with the target population, that is, enhancing the operation of the programme.

In summary. The importance of coordination of collective action for BVP is recognized, but is portrayed in rather hierarchical and centralized terms; the federal government and the steering committee being recurrently portrayed as the key subjects and also helpers in coordination activities. As such, coordination is portrayed as being driven by conventional type I MLG but, and perhaps therefore, having encountered obstacles, notably due to differing orientations and perceptions between governance levels and vast geographical distances, further complicating routine coordination actions.

Manifestation of coordination of collective action in the narrative analysis. Zooming in on the three narratives and the 'actants' constructed in them, we see, first, that the 'object' of coordination is commonly described as management and communication to ensure sufficient coherence of implementation within the multi-levelled programme (Table 5).

Even though the three descriptions point towards rather similar coordination activities, each interviewee has a fairly unique formulation for the 'object' of the coordination activities. The formulations can be seen as reflecting the interviewees' status and role in the administrative structure of the BVP. Interviewee A (representative of the governmental body responsible for the programme) portrays the tackling and solving of collaboration problems and the construction of common understanding and agreement as the core function. Interviewee B (representing an implementing agency), attributes the core function to practical implementation, that is, tailoring of region-specific coherence and agreement-seeking on region-specific policies. Interviewee C (representing another implementing agency), attributes the core function to the operationalization of programme objectives for implementation.

Interviewees A and C narrate the BVP steering committee as a central subject responsible for coordination and monitoring, while interviewee B

Table 5. Coordination of collective action.

	Interview A	Interview B	Interview C
Object/ function	Tackling and solving collaboration problems; constructing common understanding and agreement, reaching out to/accessing families	Tailoring and agreement on region-specific policies; clarifying programme implementation and background understandings of the implementers	Operationalization of programme objectives for implementation, inclusion, reaching out to families
Subject	Steering committee members; Federal government	Executors/implementers of the programme (three institutions)	Steering Committee of the BVP; Situation Monitoring of the 'Brasil sem Miséria' programme
Receiver	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Sender	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Helper	Federal government	*Not explicitly articulated*	Steering Committee of BVP; Situation Monitoring of the 'Brasil sem Miséria' programme
Opponent	Differences in federal-state level and regional admin. cultures and procedures; 'Coronelismo', favouritism	Big regional difference between the programme target areas; Different background understandings about the programme between institutions; Lack of communication between institutions	Accessibility to and logistics in programme areas; Continuity of environmental conservation after the programme period

describes it more generally as the ensemble of authorities from the main implementing institutions. The most notable difference regarding these 'subject' constructions is interviewee A's explicit reference to the federal government as being in the decisive position and ultimately responsible for the programme's coordination activities.

A careful look at the narrative constructions in the 'helper' category reveals a similar pattern in storylines: Interviewee A refers explicitly to federal government actions as conducive to the coordination function and to the solving of its challenges, whilst interviewee C constructs the 'helper' at the level of programme implementation, where jointly exercised and shared activities within the steering committee are helpful in coordination.

Turning finally towards the narrative category of 'opponent', we see, first of all, that all three interviewees perceive the issue of coordination as laden with (potential) challenges and obstacles that may complicate coordination. The coordination challenges are not necessarily a matter of conflictual relations among actors and institutions, but may be rather unintentionally occurring events and situations in the course of the 'public administration business-as-usual'. Various coordination challenges were viewed as rather typical by the interviewees, due to big differences in cultural and political administration orientations at the federal state, state and local levels, and due to the complexity of the programme as such. Moreover, logistical challenges were seen as typical due to the vast geographical distances, characteristic of the programme's operational area.

According to interviewee A,

> a major governance challenge is related to the differences in political administration orientations and procedures at the level of the states. Also in the Amazon region, there are big, problematic differences between the various areas.

Interviewee B adds that

> [...] in the Amazon region [...] authorities are trying to work together with the municipalities to determine which areas have more deforestation, violence, poverty and to come up with an estimate of the regional differences and potential measures.

Sometimes the challenges quoted under the 'opponent' category may culminate into bigger obstacles or problems. A noteworthy 'wicked' challenge for coordination that came up by Interviewee A, is 'coronelismo' or the change of favours, or corruption occasionally complicating the tasks of coordination trickling down to the local levels.[20]

Mediation

The joint function and the summary of its essential manifestation. The persistently recurring, problematic or conflictual encounters cannot be addressed

fully by acts of routine coordination between the BVP programme coordinator and the implementing agencies only. They need to be tackled and solved in participatory governance arrangements and through acts of *mediation* reaching beyond the levels of government responsible for coordination and implementation, to include local government (e.g. municipalities), civil society and the interests and expectations of the receiving families.

In summary. Instances of mediation commonly figure in the narratives as serving important functions of problem-solving and reconciliation, and as involving a broader network of actors and agents, often beyond the core group of programme authorities and implementers. The object of the mediating actions is typically constructed as oriented to tackling the complexities of multi-levelled programme operation, mobilizing task specific expertise beyond the federal government and reconciling differences in background understandings between actors and institutions, but could also be constructed as oriented to coping with challenges posed by conflictual relations between actors and institutions. Thus, joint mediation functions are portrayed as fusing MLG type I and II modes, even if they are typically portrayed rather as reactive ad hoc instances than systematically designed procedures incorporated into the programme design.

Manifestation of mediation in the narrative analysis. All interviewees acknowledge the need for mediating activities beyond 'ordinary' programme coordination, and all see that the general object of mediation is oriented to improving the multilevelled programme functioning, implementation and outreach (Table 6).

Although the interviewees generally acknowledge that mediation is one of the core functions of the programme coordinator ('metagovernor'), they also see that the BVP programme involves a broader network of 'external' actors as 'subjects' of mediating actions of crucial importance for the functioning of the programme. Taking a closer look on the construction of narrative 'subjects' of mediation, interviewee A stresses that the interface between the programme recipients and public sector is a site where mediating actions of NGOs, universities and public and private service providers are crucial:

> […] the cooperation among governance actors includes also some informal modes of cooperation. Some NGOs operate very closely with the public sector. One specific NGO is developing the environmental methodology for the trainings and a new monitoring methodology in partnership with a university. The parties are engaged in a continuous dialogue to inform about the state of the program.

NGOs and universities are viewed as acting as mediators between the state/ public sector agencies and operating at multiple levels of governance; for instance, they can provide important task specific expertise lacking from the core group of federal actors and agents. NGOs and universities are also

Table 6. Mediation.

	Interview A	Interview B	Interview C
Object/ function	Governance, cooperation and mobilization of expertise across multiple levels (inclusive governance), at times also informal forms of cooperation	Mediation for increasing the outreach of the programme (and improving the position of the families as 'producers')	Mediation to improve Implementation of the programme and collaboration in federal-level activities
Subject	Mediators between the public sector and recipients: NGOs; University; Public and private extension services	Favourable/supportive instances of local administration in the programme areas as crucial gatekeepers; 'Civil society', public and private sectors in the programme areas; The alternative (social) media	Federal agencies, for example, city managers of the single register
Receiver	*Not explicitly articulated*	*The receiving families implicated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Sender	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Helper	Federal government	*Not explicitly articulated*	*Not explicitly articulated*
Opponent	*Not explicitly articulated*	Local administration suspicious towards the BVP; traditional media; aggressive 'market forces'	*Not explicitly articulated*

viewed as (supportive) links between the target population and the public sector, through the provision of training and information activities. While federal-level programme authorities are not implementing the BVP on the ground, NGOs and 'civil society' act as mediators and collaborators in logistical issues and in accessing the river communities.

Whilst interviewee A emphasized the role of NGOs and various public and private actors, interviewee C, in turn, has a slightly different and more hierarchical take in his narrative. He sees that the operationalization of the various programme objectives requires mediating actions of different federal agencies and across different levels of government. Interviewee B, in turn, emphasizes the role of local administration and municipalities, on the one hand, as mediators, but on the other hand, also as gatekeepers between programme and local recipient populations. For interviewee B, the alternative (social) media functions as an important mediator through information distribution; media has – in principle – also the capacity to influence the formation and spreading of suspicious and/or favourable attitudes towards the programme at local level, as well as more generally.

The 'gatekeeper' role played by local and municipal actors, as well as the traditional media, are reflected in narrative B also through the way they are constructed as potential 'opponents' for the programme's mediation functions (Table 6). In this connection, interviewee B touched also upon the more general and difficult question concerning the potential of 'capacitating'

the recipient families beyond mere monetary transfers and developing a more egalitarian and sustainable position vis-à-vis the markets, so that the families would not necessarily remain in the position of mere producers easily exploited by 'market forces'. The possibility of facilitating production- and marketing-oriented mediating forms of self-organization was raised as a potential solution to the problem, but the question concerning the means ('mediators') with which to address these issues in practice, such as particular forms of training, was left open and something to be possibly explored later in the programme's life-cycle.

Discussion: governance coordination and metagovernance in the light of the narrative analysis

The narrative analysis served to uncover how our interviewees made sense of governance coordination in the BVP in terms of concrete and coherent examples of jointly exercised governance functions, as well as typical challenges, ambiguities and problems related to them. Overall, the construction of the 'actants' and their relations in the narratives painted a fairly consistent picture about hierarchical, federal state-driven programme governance.

The 'objects' of the governance joint functions, derived from the metagovernance approach, were typically constructed as oriented to ensuring the internal programme operation and fulfilment of the (formal) programme objectives – including the reaching out to the families of the target population and enrolling them in the programme. According to this dominant narrative pattern, the 'subject' was presented either as comprised of the broad network of federal-level public programme actors and agencies, or more narrowly in terms of the core group of officials at the level of the coordinating ministry (MMA). In more general terms, the 'subject-object' -dynamic was rather hierarchical and remained largely within the confines of type I MLG (operating along the established hierarchical procedures and jurisdictions).

This dominant pattern, however, was only part of the story. The 'subject' of the joint functions was not limited to federal-level actors but included variably also a broader pool of actors, from the levels of regional and municipal government/administration, civil society and private sector. This broadening of the subject category was evident especially in narratives about 'mediation' and mediating joint activities, needed to tackle various governance challenges. Roughly summarized, the 'subject-object' relation in the case of 'mediation' was narrated as more encompassing and in less hierarchical terms, especially in situations where mediating actions were needed, either because of the complexities of programme implementation, problems of multi-levelled coordination or needs to involve specific expertise or capacity beyond the core actors at federal level. A case in point was the way in which NGOs and universities were portrayed as acting as mediators at the

interface between the target population and the public sector, through the provision of training and information activities.

Commonly cited actantial 'opponents', and challenges of coordination where mediating actions often proved useful, were, first, the multiplicity of different administrational and regional cultures and background understandings (characteristic of the vast BVP programme area) and, second, the geographical, natural and cultural obstacles complicating the concrete reaching out to the target populations and families. In attempts to tackle these challenges, programme actors at federal level were presented as 'helpers' but, importantly, also as actively collaborating with and receiving crucial further help from the mediating actors, such as NGOs, local administration, public and private sectors, and the new media. These mediating actors provided help, for instance, in solving logistical problems, developing ways to reach the target population and developing the environmental trainings for programme recipients.

Taken together, the narrative actantial analysis painted a rather consistent picture of the BVP governance as oriented to ensuring the internal coherence of programme implementation and enrolling the recipients to the programme. This relatively straightforward picture of programme governance, where formal implementational efficiency was emphasized, was reflected also in the limited consideration devoted to questions concerning the 'senders' (e.g. who can be considered as the authors and principals of the programme) and 'receivers' (e.g. who or what can be considered as ultimately benefiting from the programme) of BVP. Notions of receivers referred merely to the recipient families or to the protection of their living environments in general, but these themes were not much elaborated or problematized. This general picture of the governance of the BVP is understandable, since the possibilities for pre-programme planning and multi-levelled deliberation have been limited. In that sense, the programme has had to solve governance issues and problems ad hoc while at the same time trying to prove its feasibility and 'value' by demonstrating that it can meet its official targets (measured in numbers of registered recipients).

Some differences in the construction of the actantial relations were nevertheless identified between the narratives. For instance, the interviewees variably touched upon the relations of the BVP to the Brazilian society more generally. In this respect, interviewee B told, unlike interviewees A and C, that there is commonly felt suspicion towards the objectives and feasibility of the BVP, both at the local level as well as in the society at large. She also raised explicitly the question about the potential of the programme to contribute to capacitating the recipients beyond mere monetary transfers, with regard to a more egalitarian and sustainable position vis-à-vis the markets upon which they are often dependent on. Another example was the role of the media and regional/local administration, which were portrayed variably as potential mediators that could function either as helpers (new media,

collaborative administration) or opponents (traditional media, suspicious administration) of the BVP.

The fact that we did not uncover significantly diverging narratives is understandable also from the perspective of the relative similarity of the actor positions of our interviewees. All of them were representatives of a central implementing organization or agency at the federal level; in that respect they all obviously have an 'insider' perspective from a viewpoint at the federal level, even if their organizations and positions therein are functionally differentiated and thus bear also important differences. Interesting further analysis could compare these perspectives with actors representing regional/state and municipal levels, as well as civil society and private sectors. And, of course, the recipient families, as well as the non-eligible population living in the programme areas.

Conclusions

In this article, we discussed the practical implementation and governance coordination of the Brazilian BVP, as an example of globally topical SD interventions that aim at environmental, social and economic improvement. The BVP was planned as an instrument to transfer money to the population living under the poverty line and to steer behaviours towards more environmental sustainability. Through narrative analysis and utilizing elements known from the metagovernance approach, we analysed the BVP's programmatic governance and particularly the manifestation of governance coordination in the narratives.

Similar to other income transfer programs in Brazil,[21] type I MLG is the predominant governance type in the BVP. The programme operates in a centralized, fairly hierarchical system, where the federal government is the main decision-making level, responsible for resources management and implementation of the programs. Political authority at federal level has been important to set the framework conditions under which the BVP can take place and is organized. The MMA acts as the metagovernor and governs at a distance. Our analysis reveals that there is some level of adaptability and flexibility, too. However, *mediation* is the only metagovernance theme where the BVP escapes the dominant logic of type I MLG and presents signs of type II MLG and a fusion of the two types. Through mediation, reaching beyond the levels of government responsible for coordination and implementation, local governments, civil society and the interests of the receiving families get included. Mediation is needed to tackle the complexities of multi-levelled programme operation, mobilizing task specific expertise beyond the federal government and to overcome different understandings between actors.

The programme authorities have sought assistance from NGOs and public and private stakeholders. NGOs are needed, for instance, to assist in spreading

the word about the programs, to create ownership of policy (bringing it to the 'ground') and to provide scale-specific knowledge to policy-makers by also raising awareness of regional specific peculiarities.

The narrative analysis revealed both the importance and challenges of multilevelled governance coordination. Coordination across these different levels of governance and vis-à-vis a wide network of actors emerged as one of the core functions of the programme coordinator (Unit of Sustainable Rural Development within the MMA). The coordinator was dependent on a broad network of actors to implement the programme and to find solutions to challenges related to different background understandings, lack of communication or conflictual perceptions between different actors and stakeholders.

While the municipal level figured in the narratives variably as opponents/gatekeepers (Bache 1999) or helpers and mediators, the state level was almost completely absent. This observation concerning conflictual local-federal relations and municipal opposition to federal programs is not a novel one. Almeida (2005) notes that federal authorities have sought to avoid patronage exploitation by local elites when implementing social programs and tackling extreme poverty. Concerning the 'absence' of the state level and as one of the core features of Brazilian federalism, Souza (2005) reminds us about little control of states over local questions and the long tradition of municipal autonomy. In addition to the relationships of different governance levels in the federation (a governance structure resembling MLG type I), the relationship between federal government, the states and municipalities in new emerging and task-specific jurisdictions and programs (MLG type II), such as the social programs including the BVP, have their specific momentum. As Afonso (2007) observes, the federal government tends to engage directly with local governments while simultaneously decreasing the participation of state governments. Senna et al. (2007) add that whilst coordination was foreseen in programs such as the BFP, in practical terms, a new direct relationship between federal and local governments emerged, excluding state governments from participation.

Our findings confirm these observations. While our interviewees do not explicitly tell about systematic and coherent fusion of two MLG types, our narrative analysis provides new lessons learned concerning governance coordination.

First, governance coordination is typically portrayed as occurring as a reaction to implementation challenges and problems observed 'on the way', instead of providing a more systematically and programmatically designed space for bringing together actors from various levels and spheres of governance.

Second, the interviewees seem well aware of the shortcomings of governance coordination in BVP, understood as rather hierarchical, centrally driven

and often tackling challenges of vertical multi-actor coordination in a reactive ad-hoc manner.

Third, interviewees realized the limits of top-down/hierarchical implementation and flexibly adapted to reach the set goals (e.g. enrollment of families).[22] This took place through mediation and involving NGOs and universities as mediators and as links between public sector and the target population. The implementers creatively and skilfully solved governance coordination challenges.

Mediation changes the governance coordination logic (interface of MLG type I and type II) from simple transmission of information (unidirectional, from top to down) towards bi-directional consultation between programme authorities NGOs, private sector and the target population. However, the consulting party (MMA) still frames the issues.

Concerning the ideal of a democratic and efficient metagovernance approach, more genuinely interactive participation would be the next step – governance coordination based on a partnership in which citizens, stakeholders, experts and/or politicians actively engage in (policy) debate. Possibilities for developing such a more systematic and inclusive (meta)governance approach seem feasible.

However, in a geographically, institutionally and culturally vast and fragmented setting, as in the case of BVP, the integration of governance modes is obviously not an easy task and determined by both structure/operation of Brazilian federalism on the one hand, and the political will of the people ultimately in charge of how programs such as the BVP are implemented and eventually developed further.

Notes

1. Narrative inquiry focuses on particular narrative cases and their contexts of production. It is often justified to analyse narrative sense-making even in one or a few narrative cases only (Young, 1989; Wortham, 2000; Riessman, 2007, 2016). Since the general interest in narrative analysis lies in making visible how certain events or actions are, and can be, made sense of in narrations, already one case (rich in meaning and theoretical relevance) can form a sufficient data corpus for such a purpose. In our case, the narrative forms and constructions concerning complex multilevel governance coordination in the BVP can be meaningfully studied based on three narrative accounts from appropriately selected key informants (see also Materials and Methods section).
2. The *Bolsa Família* program is a federal program created in 2003, designed to fight poverty and inequality. Families with a per capita income of up R$154/month ($49), receive financial benefits and to access basic social rights – health, food, education and social assistance (MDSA, 2015). In March 2017, 1 360 794 families received a financial support of around R$178 ($56) per family (MDSA, 2017). The BFP's 'infrastructure' facilitates the implementation of other targeted programs, such as BVP (UNDP, 2012a).

3. Municipalities can enrol the target population in the centrally-managed Single Registry for Social Programs (*Cadastro Único*), but the entitlement decision is exclusive with the central government.

4. See also Almeida (2005).

5. Some Brazilian states started to adopt own income transfer programs, such as the 'Renda Cidadã' (Citizen Income) implemented in the state of Sao Paulo. For a critical analysis and relation to BFP see Leite and Fonseca (2011).

6. Kerstenetzky (2009) emphasizes in this connection – and as a response to critique against the federal level – that programs such as the BFP must not be seen as a social policy only benefitting parts of the population; they should rather be understood as an integrating and developmental policy to leverage more extensive support.

7. These estimates stem from IFAD and are available at http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/country/home/tags/brazil.

8. Socio-environmental regions of priority are conservation areas in the different Brazilian biomes, and according to MMA Ordinance 126/2004.

9. President Rousseff highlighted the program's contribution to improving the Brazilian 'model of growth' Particularly women were to be empowered as they 'will have an income that will allow them to pursue forest management, receive an income from it, and guarantee that she is remunerated for preserving the forest' (Green Grant Ingles: 5).

10. Considering that Brazil retains 54% of forest areas globally, the potential impact of a program aiming at integrating different aspects of SD to promote forest preservation, rural development and social inclusion, can be tremendous. Understanding the governance mechanisms and MLG coordination behind BVP provides us with valuable information for revising such programs as well as for the design of new SD programs in general.

11. INCRA stands for *Instituto Nacional de Colonizaçao e Reforma Agrária* (National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform).

12. SPU stands for *Secretaria do Patrimônio da União*. The Department of Heritage Union is under the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management and has regional arms in all states. These governmental institutions are set up to administer the 'nationals own property and land of sea, areas of permanent preservation, indigenous lands, national forests, land, property, border areas and in common use' (see http://patrimoniodetodos.gov.br).

13. Environmental conditions are the percentage rate of vegetation defined for the area under consideration and defined as suitable for practicing sustainable land use. Important is also whether the area is restricted or limited usage allowed.

14. See http://www.mma.gov.br/desenvolvimento-rural/bolsa-verde/item/9141 (last accessed 29 March 2017).

15. As we hypothesized in our research questions, the policy-making logic characteristic of the Brazilian federal regime might imply that MLG type II would play only a marginal role in governance coordination and therefore potentially remain invisible in the narratives.

16. The actants are not necessarily limited to human actors only but can also include other types of actors, forces, events or abstract entities.

17. This analysis is based on the perceptions of central actors from the public sector and focuses on the operation of the program. Follow-up studies could complement the picture from the perspective of other central actor groups and, importantly, the populations affected by the BVP.

18. In addition to the semi-structured interviews with these interviewees, our interview data corpus includes a follow-up group discussion with six key members of the BVP project team representing the central ministries and authorities involved. The follow-up group discussion was organized to discuss our interpretations and issues that raised further questions based on the initial interview analysis. This interview was conducted on 26 February 2014 with six participants from the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger.

19. The 'Situation Room of Monitoring' is a periodic meeting designated to discuss and validate the information about the Programs and to come to a structural evaluation of restrictions, challenges and actions. See http://www.brasilsemm iseria.gov.br/gestao-e-acompanhamento/EstruturaDeMonitoramentoBSM02. jpg/view.

20. See also Almeida (2005) and Kerstenetzky (2009).

21. A rich body of literature on re-centralization analyses hierarchical governance structures in income transfer programs and social policies in Brazil. Almeida (2005) notes that new initiatives and policies fighting extreme poverty re-introduced centralization in decision-making, resource management and implementation. Licio (2012) shows that states and municipalities act only in the implementation of the BFP program and did not participate in the formulation of program goals. According to Cavalcante (2001) the Bolsa Familia Program originally envisaged a sharing of management tasks not only between government actors, but also with non-government actors. However, as summarised by Almeida (2005), a centralized management model emerged and the federal government controls and manages implementation and financing. Municipalities are central actors in program implementation, supported by state governments (Licio, 2012).

22. Bichir (2013), too observes a significant centralization of decisions on national programs of income transfer and to ensure the achievement of specific goals, such as increased coverage and targeting.

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Disclosure statement

At the time of project conceptualization and research Dr. Christopoulos was serving as a Programme Analyst with the United Nations Development Programme whilst at the

time of publication is serving as a Programme Management Officer with UN Environment. Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
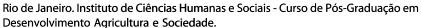
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Appendix. Interviewees and their function in implementing the BVP

Interviewee	Affiliation	Function in BVP	Interview method
Interviewee A	Ministry of the Environment	Key civil servant from the governmental body responsible for programme implementation and coordination	Phone interview
Interviewee B	*Federal Heritage Department (SPU/MP)*[a]	Key civil servant from implementing agency	Live interview
Interviewee C	National Institute of Colonization and Agricultural Reform (INCRA)[b]	Key civil servant from implementing agency	Written answers to posted interview questions

[a]SPU/MA administers the BVP locally in territories inhabited by traditional peoples and communities, most of them being riverine families living in the Amazon State. SPU/MA also administers the BVP in parts of *Pará, Acre, Amapá and Maranhão*. SPU/MA is located at the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management.

[b]INCRA has administrative responsibility of the BVP in so-called environmentally distinctive settlements with the Forest Settlement Projects, Agro-Extractivist Settlement Projects and Sustainable Development Projects as the main actions under INCRA ruling. INCRA is located at the Ministry of Agrarian Development.