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**DEVELOPMENT OF A SOCIAL SERVICE IN A MULTI-PARTY
NETWORK**

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän pro gradu-tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli tutkia monen toimijan sosiaalipalvelukehittäjäverkoston toimivuutta ja sen toimivuuteen vaikuttavia tekijöitä. Aihetta lähestyttiin erilaisten teoreettisten kokonaisuuksien kautta, joiden avulla saatiin luotua tutkimukselle pohja. Viitekehys tutkimukselle luotiin yhdistäen erilaisia teoreettisia aihealueita verkostoista, verkostojen johtamisesta ja palveluista.

Tutkimuksessa korostuu motivaation, yhteisen, tarpeeseen perustuvan tavoitteen, sitoutumisen ja orkestroinnin merkitys verkostotoiminnassa hyvän lopputuloksen aikaansaamiseksi.

Tutkimuksen empiirisessä osuudessa tehty kvalitatiivinen case-tutkimus keskittyy tiettyyn verkostoon, joka on kehittänyt Kaakkois-Suomen alueelle uudenlaista sosiaalipalvelua liittyen henkilökohtaiseen apuun. Verkosto on monen toimijan verkosto, jonka jäsenet edustavat erilaisia tahoja ja organisaatioita. Tutkimuksen perusteella verkosto on toiminut hyvin ja tehokkaasti ja saanut luotua toimivan sosiaalipalvelun. Verkosto tukee kirjallisuuskatsauksessa löydettyjen tekijöiden, kuten verkosto-orkestroinnin, sitoutumisen ja yhteisen päämäärän, vaikutusta verkoston toimintaan ja lopputulokseen.

ABSTRACT

The objective of this master's thesis was to find out the functionality of a multi-party network that has been developing a social service. The aim was also to find out what kinds of elements affect on the functionality of a network. The topic was approached through different theoretical entireties. The theoretical framework of the study was created by combining different areas from services, networks and network management.

The study highlights the importance of motivation, mutual, need-based goal, commitment and network orchestration in multi-party network cooperation in order to get good end-results.

The empirical part of the study was a qualitative case study of a network, which has been creating an innovative social service to personal help. The network is a multi-party network with members representing different organizations and backgrounds. Based on the study the network has been working well and effectively, and has been able to develop a functioning social service. The case study supports the findings recognized from reviewed literature, like network orchestration, commitment and mutual goal, and their affect on the functionality and the results of the network.

FOREWORDS

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Above all I would however like to dedicate this thesis to my high school curator, who once told me "*with your numbers it is stupid to even dream about studying economics in a university*".

Wasn't so stupid after all, huh?

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Karoliina Kosonen

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1 INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the functionality and results of a social service development network consisting of multiple parties. The regional network has been developing a centre of personal help in the Southeast Finland since 2009. The study begins with a literature review covering the main areas of interest of the study in order to provide a general understanding of the topic. After the literature review the case of the study will be presented, as well as the empirical part of the study. In the final chapters the results of the study will be analysed, discussed and compared with the theoretical background. Also some areas for future research and focus will be given.

This study is a part of the Comnet-project at Technology Business Research Centre and the case company is Socom Ltd. The study is written due to the writer's own interest but is also ordered by Socom based on their requests.

1.1 The background of the study

The public sector is responsible for organizing different kinds of social welfare services to the citizens of municipalities, and social services include services for all age and people groups in different stages of live. Organizing these services doesn't necessarily mean producing them too, but it can also mean buying them from private or third sector actors or other municipalities or providing them in collaboration with other municipalities. Networks are essential in social welfare and healthcare services as often municipalities collaborate with each other or with private sector actors in order to be able to provide social welfare and healthcare services effectively.

Socom Ltd. (Kaakkois-Suomen Sosiaalialan Osaamiskeskus Oy, from now on referred as "Socom") is a local actor providing and coordinating social services in the Southeast Finland. Socom is one of the eleven regional social sector knowledge centres (osaamiskeskus) in Finland and their main purpose is to create a functional and stabile collaboration network between the practical social welfare work, research and teaching and municipalities and other service providers. Social sector knowledge centres are open networks that arise from the needs of local cooperation. The administration is light, which ensures flexible and innovative actions. Socom is owned and financed by the municipalities of Southeast Finland. (Socom 2011a)

The need for the centre of personal help and the preparation of it began in autumn 2007 as a part of disability work development unit (vammaistyön kehittämisyksikkö) of Southeast Finland. At that time there had begun a national process about the change in the law for the disabled people, however the content of the amendment was yet unknown, but there had been thoughts that the change would somehow relate to personal help. At that time, 2007 - 2008 the need for a centre of personal help began to be understood in the Southeast Finland. One reason for the need was the fact, that organizing personal help had become a very time-consuming and demanding task in the offices where the services for the disabled were handled; social workers had to use a lot of time on finding assistants for the disabled and the disabled could not find assistants or did not know how to work as their employer. This has led to a situation, where social workers felt like they did not have enough time or expertize to help in issues relating to for example working as an employer of an assistant or salary issues. A lot of work time was taken by tasks that did not really belong to the social workers at all. The situation was difficult and the social workers were not pleased with it. The disabled were unhappy as well, as they had difficulties in finding and hiring assistants and getting accurate information about their tasks as an employer.

This situation led to the idea of a centre for personal help, where would be a professional employee, who was focused on these issues only and would be able to help the disabled people better in finding assistants and helping them in issues related to working as an employer of the assistant. This service would be offered to all the disabled people who were entitled to get personal help by the law in the municipalities of Southeast Finland. In the year 2009 there finally was a change in the law regarding the disabled people. This change in the law added extra pressure to the municipalities, as after the change the right for personal help became subjective to the people, who are entitled to get it. However, the law does not say how the personal help should be organized, so the municipalities can either produce them by themselves or buy them as a service from private sector or third sector. (Turunen 2011a)

Before this collaboration in the Southeast Finland there had been discussions about a national project, which was coordinated at the time by national disability organizations, and there was hopes of getting an own centre of personal help to the Southeast Finland as a result of this national project. This however did not work out as there was difficulties getting the financing, so the people in the Southeast Finland decided to start creating personal help by themselves and Socom began to coordinate the actions for developing the centre of personal help to the Southeast Finland. Along this development the so-called Henkka (coming from the Finnish words "henkilökohtaisen avun keskus") was born and it has been an on-going project since the beginning in 2009 and now the piloting time is about to end. Henkka is one of the end results of the development network, and Henkka started operations in 2009 with one employee; relatively soon after the preliminary idea of this kind of service. Henkka-model will become a part of social services from the beginning on 2012, so this was a good time to make external assessment about the functionality of Henkka-network in order to provide them with objective information about the case and to get deep understanding about how the development network has been working and why. (Turunen 2011a)

The empirical part of the study was carried out using a qualitative research method as a form of personal interviews. The case study focuses on service development process, and more elaborately to the network, which has created the service. The case network is a good example of a service development network in the field of social and healthcare service sector, where a multi party network is collaborating closely in order to create something concrete and innovative in a form of a new type of service. This is also a good example of a service development process, where the end users of the service have been active members of the development network.

1.2 Introduction of the case

This study is based on the experiences of a network collaboration developing a social service for the disabled who are entitled to get personal help. This network is relatively new and it hasn't been studied before so this study will provide unique information about this case. However, the findings of this case can contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon by providing understanding of the elements and factors needed in order to build an effective, well-functioning multi-party network to develop a (social) service. Similar approach and patterns are likely to occur and work equally well in compatible networks.

Henkka is the centre of personal help in the Southeast Finland. The end-users of Henkka are disabled people, who need personal assistants and guidance in issues relating to working as an employer of the assistant. Henkka-network is the development network behind Henkka, which has been developing personal help in the Southeast Finland area. The network consists of the people representing the municipalities of the Southeast Finland, disability organization representatives and members who are representing the end-users of the service. The operations of Henkka are

coordinated by Socom, which was presented briefly in the previous chapter. The objectives of Henkka are to;

- Find and organize assistants for short- and long-term work
- Help the disabled person to work as the assistant's employee helping him with the relevant issues
- Help, guide and familiarize personal assistants to the work
- Develop the education services of the assistants with other parties.

In a nutshell the aim of Henkka is to make it easier for the disabled person to get help and on the other hand to find and educate the assistants to help the disabled people. Henkka works as a link between the disabled people and their assistants and provides help and assistance to both parties. The aim is to make the administrative issues easier so that the assistant and the disabled person can focus on the personal help above all and not waste time on trying to find out all the things related to employer-employee relationship and responsibilities. According to the interviewees, there has definitely been a need for a service like Henkka. The operations of Henkka started in 2009 and the model is now stabilizing after a piloting period. In December 2011 there were 229 disabled employers and 272 assistants in the register maintained by Henkka. The number of the disabled who have the right for personal help in Southeast Finland was 400 in December 2011, so a big part of them still hasn't registered to Henkka even though more than a half is. The development network behind Henkka will no longer exist after 2011. (Henkka 2011; Socom 2011b)

Henkka was definitely based for a purpose and it has proven to be needed. There was a development network of the services for the disabled people in the Southeast Finland, and in the 2007 - 2008 in their discussions arose a mutual need for developing personal help in the area. At that point there was information that the law will change, but the content

of the change was yet unclear. In 2009 the Finnish law of disabled people then changed and the right for personal help became subjective. This added pressure to the municipalities, which were now obliged to offer personal help to the people who were entitled to have it. The law does not however define how the help should be organized.

Prior to this network and Henkka, the parties of the network operated more or less independently; the disabled had the main responsibility of getting assistants and working as their employers, each municipality had more or less own ways and different resources of helping the disabled to get personal help, and organizations were working independently helping their members. The disabled felt this task especially demanding, as it was difficult to find professional assistants and to find out different issues related to working as an employer. This led to a situation where the disabled contacted the social workers of their municipality asking for help, or they contacted the people who worked in disability organizations. The people they contacted were not specialists in these issues either, so basically every party felt it was too demanding to be a professional in issues related to personal help.

The services of Henkka are available for the disabled people living in 15 different sized municipalities in Southeast Finland; Kouvola, Kotka, Hamina, Miehikkälä, Pyhtää, Virolahti, Imatra, Lappeenranta, Lemi, Luumäki, Parikkala, Rautjärvi, Ruokolahti, Savitaipale and Taipalsaari. The services of Henkka are available for those who have the right for personal help according to the disability service law 8 c § and are able to work as their personal assistant's employers. The services are also available for personal assistants and people who are interested to work as an assistant for a disabled person (Kaakkois-Suomen henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen toimintasuunnitelma 2010 - 2011). The aim of Henkka is to provide similar service for the disabled people and their assistants in all these municipalities and coordinate actions.

Now after the piloting period is over, the network, which has been creating personal help service in the Southeast Finland along with other issues related to the disabled, will come to an end, but Henkka will continue as one of the end results of this network. The fact that the network does not officially exist anymore creates challenges for the future of Henkka and that has been considered in this thesis as well.

1.3 The purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out the functionality of the network that has been developing personal help on the Southeast Finland, Henkka-network, the affects of the network and also a little bit about the future of Henkka without the existence of the network behind it. The coordinator of the development network behind Henkka, Socom, has set a clear objective to find out, why Henkka-network has been considered of being a successful network (from their perspective) which has been able to create something very needed and useful, so the purpose is to find out the opinions of the members of the development network about the network collaboration. Networks in different contexts have been studied a lot but the focus has not been in service development networks, so this study is able to provide interesting and fresh information about the phenomenon.

The purpose is to provide Socom interesting and useful information about how the development network behind Henkka has been working and why, and how the members of the network look at the cooperation that has been going on during the last years.

The main research question of the thesis is:

- **What are the elements of a well-working multi-party service development network in social sector?**

Sub questions of the thesis are:

- **How has the service been developed and what have been the main drivers for developing the service?**
- **How has the development network been working and what elements have affected on the functionality of the network?**

1.4 The structure of the study

The study consists of theoretical part and empirical part, which are combined together in the final chapters of the study where the results of this case are analysed and discussed and the key findings are presented. The structure of the study is presented more elaborately in table 1.

In the first chapter, the background, purpose, goals and limitations of the study are presented to express what is being studied and why. Chapter 2 provides a theoretical background for the study. The chapter focuses on two main areas; networks and social services. Social services are being introduced mainly from the marketing perspective, providing basic understanding about social services and services marketing, combining this all to understanding about social services marketing. Also basic understanding about how social services are organized in Finland will be provided. The theory chapter also focuses on networks and network management, in order to provide understanding about networks in this context. The idea of this theory chapter is to provide theoretical background of these two topics, which are combined into network-approach in social services providing, social services networks.

In chapter 3 the research process will be explained in more detail, providing information about the data collection and the interviews. Also the interviewed people will be presented briefly. Chapter 4 will present the findings of the interviews by theming them into most significant categories

that arose from the interviews. In Chapter 5, the analysis of the interviews will be discussed and the research questions will be answered. In the final chapter all the other chapters will be drawn together to provide deep understanding about the case and analysing the main end results of the study. Also some future research areas will be presented.

Table 1. The structure of the study.

INPUTS		OUTPUTS
Background and purpose of the study	CHAPTER 1	Structure of the study, goals and methods
Theory of services, networks and network management	CHAPTER 2	Understanding about social services networks
Description of the research process	CHAPTER 3	Research method in more detail, introduction of the interviewees
Findings	CHAPTER 4	Analysis of the empirical part
All the previous chapters	CHAPTER 5	Analysis, discussion and comparisons to theory, conclusions and suggestions for future research

For this kind of research, there is not a ready-made, existing theoretical starting point. Therefore the theoretical input of the study has been created by using relevant literature of three main topics; networks, services and network management, as this study can be categorized as

being in the centre of these three. From these large topics, few parts were selected into more careful consideration, which were relevant for this study. The theoretical framework represents the motives, practices and benefits of a multi-party network and the best outcomes that can follow if all the pieces click together based on this study. First, the motives and benefits for networking are presented. The idea is to present what factors work as motivators towards network collaboration and what benefits are expected to get from network collaboration, compared to a situation where an organization is working independently. Also theory of networks in general will be discussed as well as issues relevant to social service development.

After the main reasons for networking have been presented, networking is focused on as a process. Network management is being discussed focusing mainly on network orchestration. The idea is to clarify, how the benefits can be achieved and how networks can be created and managed effectively.

As the case is from a social and healthcare sector, this will be taken into consideration by providing basic understanding about how social services are organized in Finland. Public and private sector will be introduced as well as their roles in providing social services. Services in general and customer's role in service development will be taken into discussion, as the case is about developing a service for a certain customer group.

Finally, the best practices and outcomes based on combining theory and the studied case are presented as the end result as a combination of the theoretical and empirical parts of the study. The idea is to recognize the relevant issues from the theory, which are significant to this case and with them to create understanding about how a multi-party network in social and healthcare sector can work effectively and what are the reasons for good outcomes. The theoretical framework of the study is presented in figure 1.
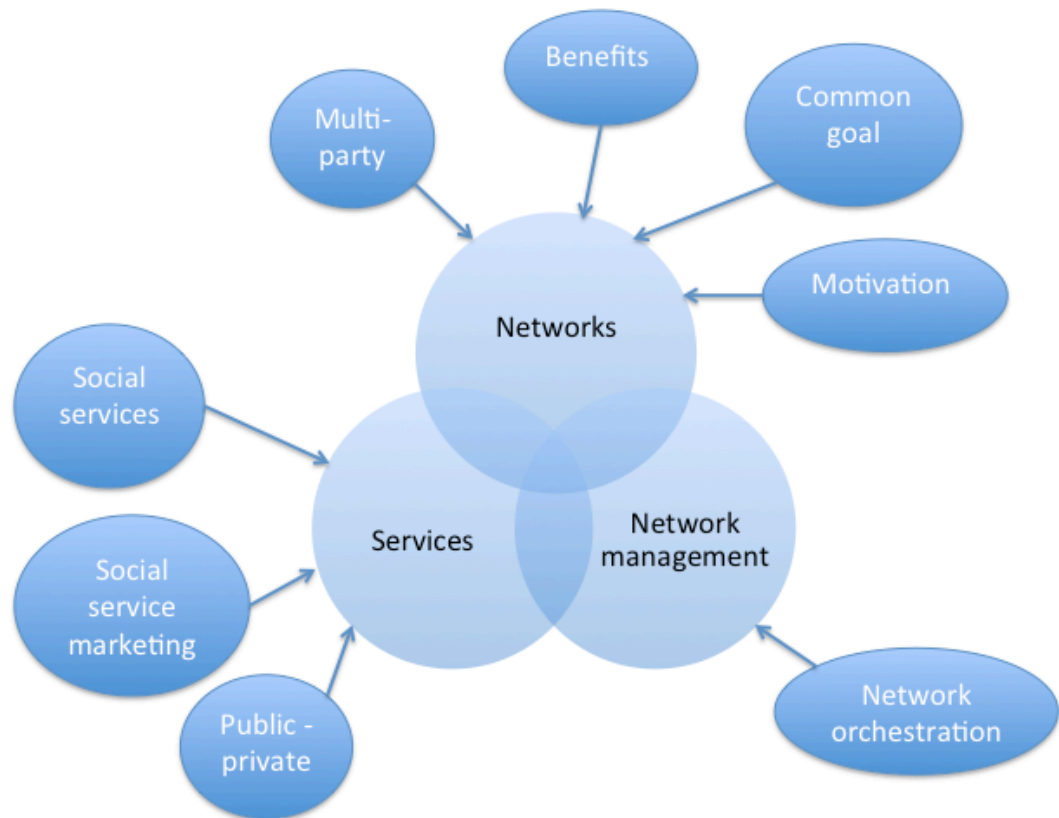
Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the study.

1.5 The limitations of the study

This study will be limited to be considering only Henkka-network, so other networks or areas of Socom will not be taken into account in this study. The same development network has been working before the creation of Henkka and with other issues too, but this thesis focuses mainly to the operations of the network from 2007 onwards, when the network started to think about the centre personal help in the Southeast Finland. Thus this study will limit only to the development of personal help services in the Southeast Finland. However, one of the areas of interest being if similar kind on network approach could be used to other things as well.

This study it not supposed to be a customer satisfaction-survey about the operations and services of Henkka, but to find out how the development

network behind the service has been working, how Henkka has been developed and why and how has the collaboration between the members of the network worked. Thus the end-user perspective is not in the focus in this study. Henkka itself as a service will be discussed a bit, but the main focus of the thesis is in the development network behind Henkka.

1.6 Key concepts

In this sub-chapter some of the most important concepts and definitions to this study are presented in order to provide a basic understanding about the discussed themes.

Social services and personal help

Social services are services, which the municipality is responsible for taking care of. These services are listed in the 17th of the social welfare law. The municipality can produce the services independently, buy them from another municipality or a private sector or produce them together with other municipalities. Personal help is a part of the social services for the disabled people. According to the law regarding the disabled, municipality is responsible for organizing the services of personal help to the disabled who have the right for these services; people with severe disabilities who can't perform daily tasks alone. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2011; Assistentti.info 2011)

Networks, multi-party networks and nets

'Network' is a structure of different nodes connected to each other by specific threads and each node is bound together with many others in different ways through its relationships (Håkansson 1997; Håkansson & Ford 2002). Provan et al. (2007) see network as "a group of three or more organizations connected in ways that facilitate achievement of common

goal". They enhance the importance of working together to achieve the common goal and also see network as a multi-party network instead of a dyadic relationship.

Möller & Rajala (2007) make a difference between 'networks' in general and 'intentional business networks', calling the latter 'nets', 'value nets' or 'strategic nets'. According to them, different kinds of nets demand different kinds of management. They also state that the underlying value producing system is essential to any business net and that the level of determination of the system is the key characteristic of the value system. Möller, Rajala and Svahn (2004, 29) differentiate 'nets' from any general networks of organizations by saying that nets are built intentionally and they are goal-oriented, they have goals that direct the operations of the net and all the members have their own goals too and also the members of the net have their own roles and responsibilities.

Also Niemelä (2002, 12) makes a difference between 'net' and 'network' by stating, that the other is technical, the other social; in other words, they mean the same thing but the different sides of it and they need to be together in order to be effective, without each other they are incomplete.

Multi-party networks are networks with multiple actors, more than two. This offers a lot of opportunities, as there is more relevant information available. Multi-party networks are different to dyadic networks and require a different kind of management. Multi-party collaboration is needed when creating something innovative. (Silvennoinen 2008, 48 – 54)

Networking

'Networking' means the different cooperation models of companies and organizations, where different parties can participate at the same time (Pirnes 2002, 7). The intensity of the cooperation can vary from voluntary cooperation to clearly set norms and rules. Cooperation is also interaction

between persons, and many times personal relationships are the base for cooperation (Pirnes 2002, 14). 'Networking' is a process, where the knowledge, skills and values of the cooperation organizations are combined to actions that generate added value (Tsupari, Nissinen & Urrila 2003). 'Networking' and is not just any collaboration; networking means committing to mutual goals, which requires sharing relevant information and skills. (Valkokari et al. 2009, 59)

Networking is a way to grow own operations and to improve financial conditions and also to improve competitiveness. (Hallikas, Karvonen, Lehtinen, Ojala, Pulkkinen, Tuominen, Uusi-Rauva & Virolainen 2001, 15)

Network orchestration

Network orchestration is a process of management of a network to work to achieve a common goal. Dhanaraj and Parkhe (2006) define a hub being the one in the network who hold power and prominence. Orchestration means that the starting point is always creating added value to the customer (Wallin 2009, 26).

Network orchestration is not just internal process management, but it is the design and management of networks that work together to achieve a common goal. Setting up a network is not enough, but it requires orchestration as well and someone has to play the role of the orchestrator in order for the network to work effectively and not turning into a unmanageable chaos. Orchestrator can also come from outside the network as dedicated. (Wind, Fung & Fung)

2 SOCIAL SERVICES NETWORKS

The following chapters introduce the theoretical background for the study. The theoretical discussion consists of two main areas; networks and social services. Networks are discussed in general providing information about different types of networks and then the main motives for networking and benefits of networks are presented. Also network management will be discussed. Social services are discussed in general to provide a basic understanding about how social and healthcare services are organized in Finland and also theoretical background for services will be discussed. The roles of the public and private sector are introduced and one focus area is on the customer's role and the quality of the service. These two main focus areas are combined into one topic, social services networks, which is the framework for the study as the case comes from the field of social and healthcare services.

	Product	Service
Private	1	2
Public	3	**4**

Figure 2. Theoretical positioning of the study I.

The figure 2 above presents the theoretical conversations around products and services and private and public sector from network perspective. Majority of the network literature can be placed to square 1; typically networks are discussed from the viewpoint of a production company in a private sector. Square 2 is somewhat familiar area, as there is information available of service network in the private sector. Squares 3 and 4 are less known at the moment and square 4 is the area this study focuses on, so themes "public" and "services" are in the focus in this study. Gathering relevant information from other squares will provide theoretical understanding for this approach.

2.1 Services marketing in social sector

Service is something that can be sold and bought but something you cannot touch; services are intangible, which is the main difference between a physical product and a service. However, in many cases some concrete things are related to services; it is impossible to get a haircut without scissors and it is impossible to rent a car without a car. There are numerous services available for customers, everything from restaurants and banks to social and healthcare services to religious actions. As there is a large diversity of services, the service organizations and the resources vary a lot too. When buying a service, the customer seeks for benefit – the customer wants transportation from one place to another or someone to clean the house. When talking about services marketing, the benefit for the customer comes from a service, even if there were some products used to help the customer to get the wanted benefit. After all, both products and services offer benefit for the customer. (Ylikoski 2000, 18 - 21)

It should be noted that not only service organizations offer services to their customers, but production-based companies too. Then again service organizations use physical products alongside the services. All companies offer services to the customers, even if the core of the business was in products; added services can be for example maintenance and repair services. Companies have begun to understand the strategic value of the services and the possibilities services can offer when aiming at continuous competitive advantage. It is also important to understand that customers do not look for products or services, but they seek solutions that are beneficial for them. (Grönroos 2001, 24 – 27)

Services have four special characteristics; services are intangible, inseparable, heterogenic and perishable. All these special characteristics create challenges for the service industry and they have an affect on marketing and production. For a customer it is difficult to assess the

quality of the service, as it is *intangible*. It is also difficult to know in advance what the service will be like. *Inseparability* means that the service is provided and used at the same time. The customer can affect on the end results of the service and the effects of the service can be seen afterwards. *Heterogeneity* means that the quality of the service changes; a haircut is different when the hairdresser changes and service in the restaurant is likely to be different during the busy lunch hour. As services are produced by human beings, the quality control is difficult; it is also difficult to make sure that the quality of the service is the same as promised in an advertisement. Then again there is an advantage; heterogeneity offers room for tailoring and custom made services. Services are *perishable*; they cannot be stored or produced in advance like physical products. Therefore it is difficult to prepare for changes in demand. (Ylikoski 2000, 21 – 26). The main differences between physical products and services can be seen in table 1. The four characteristics of services can be clearly seen from there too as well as other significant differences, like the value creation process.

Table 2. Differences between services and physical products. (Adapted from Grönroos 2001, 81)

Physical products	Services
Concrete	Intangible
Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Production and distribution separate from consuming	Production, distribution and consuming happen at the same time
Thing	Function or process
Core value produced in a factory	Core value produced in an interaction between the buyer and the seller
Customers do not (usually) take part in the production process	Customers take part in the production process
Can be stored	Can not be stored
Ownership changes	Ownership does not change

Social services are services like any other services; the service provider provides service to the end user, who has a need towards the offered service. Services for the disabled fulfil all these special characteristics of services so from that perspective they are like any other services, only the target group of these services is very limited and special. However, social services for the disabled people have different characteristics because of the nature of the services and the end-users. The disabled really need different kinds of services to be able to live somewhat normal life; the services they need are essential to them. They do not always have the possibility and freedom to choose how or where to get the personal help services from, but they have to get them. Also the basic assumption is, that the quality of life of the disabled is worse than the quality of life of the normal people, which creates an illusion that the disabled people need the services in order to improve their quality of life. These kinds of services have another side too; not all service providers seek maximum profit, as these services have to be provided by the municipality by the law. In the next sub chapter social services are discussed from the viewpoint of a customer's role and services marketing.

2.1.1 Customer's role in social services

Traditional marketing saw customer in one single role only; customer was a passive receiver of the service and the one who paid for the service (Storbacka & Lehtinen 2001, 82). Some 20 years ago the social sector concentrated on developing new services, expanding operations and establishing new jobs; there was no interest towards the opinions of the customer, who was seen as an obvious object of the service. As time passed, customer began to be seen as an actor with feelings, not only someone who receives the service without a doubt and questioning. The public service sector started to understand, that the customer could have opinions about the used service and therefore the customer might be able to participate in the improving of the service. Customer feedback and

customer satisfaction surveys started after the realization of the customer's value. (Pohjola 1997, 169-170)

In the 1990's the assessment of the service system and the services itself became more popular. The interest was no longer solemnly on the results and effective processes related to services, but also in the opinions of the customers about the service. From that on the aim of the social and healthcare services was to assure the quality of life for their customers, including disabled people. (Nouko-Juvonen 1999, 19)

Because the customer's opinions have been highlighted in the assessment of the service quality, there have been different tools developed for it (Nouko-Juvonen 1999, 21). The customer should be seen as a partner of the service process also from the perspective of quality assessment and feedback method (Salmela 1997, 122). In the renewals of the Finnish public administration one focus is on customer's perspective, meaning that the role of the citizens as customers should be taken into consideration when making changes, also in the social and healthcare services sector (Vartiainen 2009, 172). However, the citizens and the ones that actually need the services are being forgotten until the late stages of renewals so the possibilities of them to affect on the decision-making and renewals are still slim (Vakkuri 2009, 209).

Then again the quality of the service might not be easy to define. In many cases the improving of the quality is mentioned as an internal goal of the company, but it might be unclear what does the quality of the service actually mean. The company must define quality in a same way as the customer does and it should be remembered, that the quality is important in a way that the customer experiences it. (Grönroos 1990, 61)

Customer's experience of the quality of the service is not only based on for example technical issues, but also the interaction between the customer and the service provider plays a big role in the experience of the quality

from the customer's perspective (Grönroos 1990, 61). It is difficult for the customer to assess the services due to the fact that services are intangible; when there are not any concrete features, the customer does not know what he is buying (Ylikoski 2000, 84).

If customers have the freedom to choose where they get the service from, it naturally adds pressures to the service providers, as every service provider must have customers in order to continue business. Therefore the service providers have the need to listen to the customers and focus on providing customer oriented service. This leads to a competitive situation with other service providers and again adds pressure to other service providers to focus on better quality too. (Salmela 1997, 104-105)

The aim of social welfare and healthcare sector is to create customer-oriented services instead of production oriented. The level of success in this matter varies a lot, but in general it can be said, that the private sector has been able to achieve this goal better than the public sector. However, there is potential for development in the private sector as well. When creating positive experiences for the customer, one key thing is customer-oriented service. (Ojantola 2010)

In organization level the building of successful services requires knowledge of the customer needs and even forecasting the needs in advance. Services should also be truly and flexibly demand-based, not supply-based. Success factors for organizations are also individual customer perspective and a customer service spirit. Social welfare and healthcare services are always based on contact between people, so not only the quality of the service itself, but also the quality of the personal contact has an affect on the experience of the overall service quality. (Ojantola 2010)

The decision-making process of the organization is more effective, when it is based on information from the customer. This is especially important for

service organizations, as they must know their customer segment thoroughly by communicating with them in order to recognize new needs. However the needs are not always easy to recognize. Therefore recognizing the hidden needs has become an important factor in the process of creating added value to the customer. (Wallin 2009, 35-36)

Today the disabled are not only receiving social services but are in fact creating value with the service providers. The service providers place value to the opinions and ideas of the customers and collaborate with them in order to offer better service; the customers are always the experts in their field, when thinking about social services for example. The customer has a lot of information and experiences of the service and with that experience the customer can be very valuable to the service provider.

2.1.2 Service dominant logic of marketing – co-creation of value

Nowadays in marketing the customer is not only seen as the receiver of service or value, but a co-creator of value. The customer cooperates with the company in order for them both to create value. Today the customers are very aware of quality and demand it too. Companies cannot think that whatever they provide, the customer will buy; not anymore, as customers are very active in searching information and demanding better quality and service. According to Mäkelä (2002, 16) the cooperation between the customer and a familiar seller has become a key thing and knowing the customer's needs directs the product development process. Customer relationship is so central nowadays, that it can be called a capital of the company.

In the public sector services the customer is not only the end-user of the services, but also the one who is financing and maintaining them, and therefore customer can be seen as a partner in the service process, not only as a receiver of the service (Salmela 1997, 109). If the customer is only seen as the end-user of the service, it would be easy to think that only

the operations of the service provider are significant and therefore the role of the customer is only to find and use the right product. (Salmela 1997, 109)

The same kind of thinking can be seen in the social welfare and healthcare services too, as people are demanding better service. The entrance of private actors to the field has been increasing rapidly and the main driver for this has most likely been the growing expectations of customers. The private sector actors have seen a possibility in the field and therefore entered there rapidly – this is one example of a similar situation to any other business area.

There are two logics in marketing which define the aspects of value creation, both from their own perspectives. These two logics are called goods-dominant logic and service-dominant logic. Service-dominant logic enhances the role of the network and customer as creators of value, whereas the goods-dominant logic mainly focuses on firm and a supply chain. In goods-dominant logic the purpose of value is to increase wealth for the firm, whereas the service-dominant logic focuses on increasing adaptability, survivability, and system wellbeing through service of others. According to service-dominant logic all exchange is somehow based on services; goods as they are not enough, but different services are needed with them in order to create value, and goods are actually only means of delivering and creating value. According to goods-dominant logic, the firm is the sole creator and distributor of value and the task of the customer is to receive and use the value. Service-dominant logic has a totally different approach, as customer is the co-creator of value. This engagement of the customer in value creation will likely be one of the trends in the future of marketing. (Vargo et al. 2008) The different characteristics of these two logics are compared in more detail in the Table 3.

Table 3. Goods-dominant vs. service-dominant logic on value creation. (Vargo et al. 2008)

	Goods-dominant logic	Service-dominant logic
Value driver	Value-in-exchange	Value-in-use or value-in-context
Creator of value	Firm, often with input from firms in a supply chain	Firm, network partners, and customers
Process of value creation	Firms embed value in "goods" or "services", value is 'added' by enhancing or increasing attributes	Firms propose value through market offerings, customers continue value-creation process through use
Purpose of value	Increase wealth for the firm	Increase adaptability, survivability, and system wellbeing through service (applied knowledge and skills) of others
Measurement of value	The amount of nominal value, price received in exchange	The adaptability and survivability of the beneficiary system
Resources used	Primarily operand resources	Primarily operant resources, sometimes transferred by embedding them in operand resources-goods
Role of firm	Produce and distribute value	Propose and co-create value, provide service
Role of goods	Units of output, operand resources that are embedded with value	Vehicle for operant resources, enables access to benefits of firm competences
Role of customers	To 'use up' or 'destroy' value created by the firm	Co-create value through the integration of firm- provided resources with other private and public resources

When considering the studied case, the idea of service-dominant logic is clearly present, goods-dominant logic not so much. The end product of the case network is a service, and the value is created via multi-party network. The disabled, who can be considered as the customers in this context,

have their own ideas about good service and the service providers are interested to know this in order to provide better service and to have satisfied customers. In this case the customers are co-creating the value alongside with the firm as the customers have also been developing the service alongside with the service providers as a part of the network.

The development of services is often faster compared with the development of physical products, and it often involves making existing services better. Services are difficult to test beforehand and competitors can copy a service easily. A key thing in development of service is the production process; services are produced and consumed at the same time and the end-user of the service is involved to the process too. The importance of innovativeness is high in service production companies, and an atmosphere that encourages novelties is important too. New service launching is significant, and the ideas and experiences of the customers shape the future of the service in the market. (Kinnunen 2003, 29-30)

It is rare for service development to set goals or strategies. The people who are developing the service are typically the ones who will be providing it too, so services are being developed with own work, customers are not typically involved to the development process. (Kinnunen 2003, 31)

Kinnunen (2003, 40) states that ideas for new services are typically born in the heads of the employees, who have seen a need and came up with an idea to fix it. Also customers' needs can start a development process for a new service, as well as the needs of the business partners. This case proves these points to be true; the development of Henkka began from the needs, which had been noted by the employees, and also customers were unsatisfied to the current situation.

2.2 Social services in Finland

Social welfare means all the actions mentioned in the 13th section of the social welfare law that each municipality must take care of. Social services are listed in the 17th section of the social welfare law. In addition, the municipality is responsible of developing social conditions and removing social defects in general. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2011) The law empowers and requires the municipality to organize different social services to the citizens, but the law does not define the way of organizing the needed social services. The law leaves it to the municipality to decide how they will organize these services, meaning that the municipality does not have to produce the services by itself, but it can collaborate with other municipalities or buy services from the private or the third sector (meaning for example societies/organizations). This is essential as municipalities are of different size and not all are able to produce the required services by themselves. When buying the services from the private sector, the municipality must make sure that the quality standards of the service are appropriate, and the quality of the bought services has become an important area to focus on for the municipalities. (Holma, Outinen, Idänpään-Heikkilä & Sainio 2001, 63-64)

The municipality is responsible for organizing the services mentioned below (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2010b);

- Social work
- Emergency social services
- Home services
- Informal care support
- Housing services
- Institutional care
- Family care
- Rehabilitation
- Services for children and families
- Services for older people

- Disability services
- Substance abuse work and services.

This thesis focuses mainly to the disability services and that will be the only area that will be discussed in more detailed. Other areas of social welfare services are not in the central focus, but social services in general will be discussed.

Social services relate to every citizen nowadays and social services affect different stages of life as can be seen from the list above. The term social service was born in 1960's when the renovation of the system began. Even though the term is rather young, the actions itself come from history. Social welfare system in Finland offers services for everyone regardless of age or status, and social services have a significant affect on our daily lives. (Taipale, Lehto, Mäkelä, Kokko, Muuri & Lahti 2006, 104-105)

Social services for the disabled people are usually carried out using the general social and healthcare services and the main purpose of these services is to maintain the equal position of the disabled people and their full participation in the society. (Taipale et al. 2006, 134)

There are three ways of organizing personal help; employee-model, service vouchers and municipality operations or purchased service. Henkka serves those customers, whose personal help is partly or fully organized with the employee-model.

Services provided by the public sector are facing a lot of pressures in the near future, as citizens on municipalities are unsatisfied with the present way of organizing the services and set new challenges to the quality of the services. The service provider must simultaneously produce more services and to provide them better and more individually to the citizens. This requires a lot of innovations, where preferably the citizens would be planning and developing the public services. There is a demand towards

providing better service with lower resources, so the productivity of public services has to be focused on more carefully. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2011)

Social and healthcare sector has been judged by fragmented and ineffective development projects, which do not connect with the daily actions. Even if the results of the projects have been good, they have not been taken into action, not to mention the spreading of them. (Tekes 2008)

2.2.1 Role of the public sector as a service provider

The public sector can be defined as follows; "*it is the part of national economy providing basic goods or services that are either not, or cannot be, provided by the private sector. It consists of national and local governments, their agencies, and their chartered bodies. The public sector is one of the largest sectors of any economy*." (WebFinance 2011a)

The role of the public sector has traditionally been seen as stable, unchanging institution that has very little to do with making business. 'Profitability' or 'competition' are not usually the words that are related to public services. This is however changing, as the role of the public sector is evolving to more dynamic and the public sector services are no longer taken as given and public sector faces similar challenges than any other organizations. (Riege & Lindsay 2006)

The public sector is responsible for organizing and providing social services as it was stated earlier; the public sector has a pressure to organize the required services. The municipality has four alternative ways to organize the services required by the law; 1) producing services independently, 2) producing services with another municipality, 3) being in a federation of municipalities which provides services or 4) buying services from another municipality, federation of municipalities or organizations of

private service providers. The municipalities produce majority of the social services by themselves. (Taipale et al. 2006, 90-92)

The municipality may have different motives to buy the service; the municipality might have a lack of expertize, lack of resources, or it might be more profitable to buy the services instead of producing them. It can also be better for the customer to buy the service, as the customer can have a long-term relationship with the service provider, it might be easier for the customer when thinking about distances and customer may get a better freedom of choice. (Holma et al. 2001, 64)

Social welfare and healthcare services is the biggest single expenditure of the municipalities and the majority of the total cost of these services is covered by taxes. Other means of financing these services are the assets that the municipality collects itself or financial support from the state. (Taipale et al. 2006, 95)

According to Pirnes (2002, 65), the reason for the development of organizations in public sector and the services of cities and municipalities might be the need for cost-efficiency. For example part of the social welfare and wellbeing services are under pressure, as in the future the volume will grow but the resources will diminish. Thus not only companies but also public organizations need to renew all the time and keep up with the development. In this sense public organizations can be seen similar to traditional companies even though their main focus might be different.

The social welfare and healthcare sector is under a lot of change. The role of the public sector as a service provider is diversifying and the possibilities for the private sector actors enlarge accordingly. At the same time there are more pressure towards providing these services effectively because of the increase of costs and the service needs. Also these services are facing a lot of public interest and political passion, as social welfare and healthcare services are in the center of a welfare state.

(Ojantola 2010) All in all, social welfare and healthcare services are a central part of the society, and more and more focus is paid on how they are organized and how they should be organized. The citizens are easily criticizing these services and are also demanding better services in all social welfare and healthcare sectors.

The developing, using and spreading of innovative models is one key problem in the communal sector: new models are being developed individually in municipalities, but the using is still problematic and also there are problems relating to the assessment of new models and innovative processes. Also, not everyone wants to share the information but rather keeps it inside. Attempts to take big steps can also fail because of political reasons, the lack of practical perspective and also because of the uncertainty and the long duration of the project. (Melin 2007) In this sense the problem might be the lack of willingness to take risk or the lack of interest towards renewing. Also, in order for development projects to work, they should be well defined and they should have a tight schedule. According to this statement, the communal sector is very careful in taking big steps and therefore innovative development projects might easily fail or not begin at all.

The voluntary collaboration between municipalities has become more common since the 1990 and there have been different forms of collaboration. The collaboration between municipalities is common, but sometimes problematic. Bigger cities might feel like they are left to do all the work and the smaller municipalities just get the benefits without involving to the project. Then again smaller municipalities might feel that the bigger cities do not care about them and therefore their position in any collaboration is insignificant. Also, the goals might not be clearly defined and the organization model can be very stiff. Sometimes the interpretation of the need and significance of the collaboration just do not match and it creates problems. Also, municipalities can have competition between them. All these problems can lead to a situation, where no one has the

interest to start collaboration between municipalities, so it isn't always easy to start creating a network consisting of different municipalities. These problems can however be overcame in many situations by effective management. (Sotarauta & LInnamaa, 1999)

2.2.2 Role of the private sector as a service provider

The private sector can be defined as follows; "*It is the part of national economy made up of private enterprises. It includes the personal sector (households) and corporate sector (companies), and is responsible for allocating most of the resources within an economy.*" (WebFinance 2011b)

The private sector complements the public sector as a social services provider. The public sector is responsible for organizing social services, but private sector can be the one actually providing the services to the end users. The private sector in social services has been growing fast since the 1990's. Private sector actors are present in all social services sectors including services for disabled people, however it isn't the biggest sector where private sector companies operate. (Taloudellinen Tiedotustoimisto 2009)

In 2004, private service providers produced ¼ of all social and healthcare services in Finland and the number has been growing, so the affect of the private sector is notable in social welfare services. The need for private services is growing. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2010a)

2.2.3 Public-private partnership in the social sector

Social services are public services and public services can be produced by public and private organizations. Public and private services can be further divided by using a criterion if they are profit-seeking organizations

(companies) or non-profit organizations. Public organizations can be either of these. (Ylikoski 2000, 27)

Both public and private sectors have been described in more detail in the previous sub-chapters. However, in the Finnish social welfare system these two often collaborate and public-private collaboration is an essential part of social services. This is a way of combining resources and making sure that the public sector is able to provide the citizens with social services of the needed standard. The boom of the private sector actors during the last years may be explained by the fact that social services have been recognized as being like any other services, which need to fulfil the needs and wants of the customer. Public-private collaboration may be the answer for providing good-quality service for customers, who now have the opportunity to choose the service provider.

According to Melin (2007), the municipalities will purchase more and more services from the private sector as their own resources are simply not enough to provide services, and also because of the increase in cost-effectiveness requires new models and processes to the service providing. The public-private partnership offers a possibility to create innovations and to produce more customer oriented services. Public-private partnership in social and healthcare sector can change a lot in organizations, which have used to provide social services for the citizens without the need to worry about competition or major changes in the field.

2.3 Role of networks in providing social services

Networks in business life have been studied a lot during the last decades. Networks can be seen as an essential part of organizations today, and in many industries it is difficult to cope without any network collaboration in today's competitive market environment; networks are even seen as key factors to success. Not every organization has the resources to do

everything by itself and thus collaborating with other organizations is required in order to stay in the competition. In order to provide a good service for the end user, which at the end of the day is the main purpose of every network, networks are almost obligatory. Even a big company cannot anymore produce everything it needs, but it can focus on its core skills and buy the needed components from an external party (Mäkelä 2002, 17).

Some basic definitions of networks were already given in chapter 1.4. It is however difficult to give a comprehensive description of networks, as there can be so many different kinds of networks as well as definitions. Every network is tailored based on the situation and the need and networks also change as the environment changes. (Mäkelä 2002, 18) Every network is a unique entity formed by its members and history (Möller, Rajala & Svahn 2004, 11). However, according to these different definitions presented above, networks are something that do not just exist as they are; they are formed for a purpose, they have a goal and they require management in order to achieve their goal. Networks are always unique.

Strategic network is a network, that has a certain goal and each member has a role and responsibility. These kinds of networks require management, and the so-called hub firm has an important role as the builder and the manager of the network. (Möller 2003)

Gulati (1998) defines strategic alliances as "*voluntary arrangements between firms involving exchange, sharing, or co-development of products, technologies, or services.*" He also broadens the view of dyadic alliances to larger networks. According to Das and Teng (2000) "*Strategic alliances are voluntary cooperative inter-firm agreements aimed at achieving competitive advantage for the partners.*" Four essential components that have been in the focus on the theory of alliances are rationale, formation, structure and performance.

Alliances can also be horizontal networks formed with competitors and the aim is at better market coverage and competition power together. By combining resources both competitors get advantages without losing their own position. Competitors can also focus on creating new technology and therefore speed up the development of new markets. (Möller, Rajala & Svahn 2004, 23).

The discussion of alliances and strategic networks is quite similar. The most important reason between these theories is that the discussion about alliances mostly focuses on relationships between two actors, whereas strategic networks discussion includes many members to a relationship, so it sees networks as structures formed by multiple parties and therefore is more relevant to this study as the case is a multi-party network.

Development network is a horizontal network, which' aim is to ensure the exchange of relevant information, ready-made solutions and innovative ideas between the members of the network by sharing information which is based on experiences. Development network enhances the learning aspect by creating trusting relationships and increasing good communication inside the network. (Ståhle, Smedlund & Köppä 2004)

Innovation network is a network with different kinds of members; small, large, private, institutional. In innovation network the links between the members cross the borders of clusters and hierarchies. In multi party network the complexity increases which enables innovations; one of the tasks of an innovation network is to create new information. (Ståhle et al. 2004) Then again Möller & Rajala (2007) determine innovation network as a "*relatively loose science and technology-based research networks involving universities, research institutions, and research organizations of major corporations*". These networks are not primarily business networks.

According to these definitions the studied case network is something between a development network and an innovation network, as the

members are heterogeneous and the aim of the network was to create a new service solution. Then again information sharing was also crucial in this case, so there are elements from both types of networks.

Network relationships are central survival and success factor in today's competition. In order for the network cooperation to be productive, there are few requirements; 1) clear, mutual vision, 2) mutual benefit, 3) clear business model and clear strategy, 4) justified dividing of the benefits, 5) trust and open communication, 6) appreciation towards the know-how of the partners and the usage of it, and 7) commitment through mutual actions. Trust and commitment require work and often conquering obstacles will build trust gradually. Successful processing of difficult issues strengthens the relationship between the members of the network and after one difficult issue that was conducted successfully, it is easier to proceed to the next challenge. (Partanen 2011) There has been growth in the amount of horizontal and multi-dimensional networks, which are formed with competitors, research institutes and public sector actors. These kinds of networks are focused on creating new businesses. (Valkokari et al. 2009)

Traditionally networks have been related to subcontracting; a company collaborates with another in order to produce a product. A big company might buy some components that require specific skills from a smaller company. The point of view is no longer that limited, as today the collaboration between companies can also be related to research, product development, marketing and even human resources utilization. The forms and goals of networks can be various which creates challenges to the research related to networks. (Lehto & Valkokari 2003, 4)

Value network means the sum of the added value, that the organizations of the network create. The value chain of products can be seen as a long production chain starting from the raw materials and ending to the ready-made products that are available for customers. The value chain of

services can be seen similar, but instead of tangible goods there are mostly intangible goods. Value chains can be vertical or horizontal or a combination of these two. For example social welfare and healthcare services could be produced better than before and with lower expenses by adjusting the principles of networking skills. The effectiveness of networking skills is based on speed, flexibility and minimizing the friction, meaning that when the organization reacts fast, more flexible and with less friction to the needs of the customers and the new challenges of the markets, it will be more effective. (Pirnes 2002, 34, 48, 64)

The underlying value creation system is essential to any business net (Möller & Rajala 2007). According to Tsupari et al. (2003), networked actions between two or more parties is purposeful, long-term, continuous and regular collaboration, collaboration in the key processes, interactive and trustful and strategic partnership, that develops the skills of all parties. According to them, the fundamental purpose of network collaboration is to produce value to the end customer with other organizations. Successful integration into value network requires the company to know the needs of the end customer and to recognize their own centre expertise, to know its part in the production of value and to know how to connect its skills to the centre skills of the other actors in the network. Value is then built in an input-output-process.

Even though public organizations are somewhat different to traditional organizations, they do share similarities. Public organizations might have the pressure to be more cost-effective and therefore the organizations need to develop all the time. For example in the future more social welfare and healthcare services should be produced with smaller resources; very similar situation to the need for renewal and cost-savings of any companies. Also the public organizations have to renew their basic operations all the time, as they can't step aside from the development. It can be said that continuous renewing is essential not only to companies but also to public organizations. (Pirnes 2002, 65)

2.3.1 Motives for networking

Companies and organizations can benefit from networking when they do not have the resources, skills or possibility to do something individually. Networking can help organizations to do something they couldn't do alone (Niemelä 2002, 21). Industrial and service companies often realize that it is impossible to offer a complete offering to the customer alone and that it might be more efficient and effective to find a partner and work together to be able to serve the customer well enough (Grönroos 2001, 62). By networking with other companies and organizations they can concentrate on their core skill but also benefit from the core skills of the others. However, motives for networking can be various.

One motive for networking is the need for change. According to Wallin (2009, 47 - 48) there are three main reasons for starting a change, which is based on mutual needs; it can begin from a crisis, it can be based on a vision of a better future or it can begin from a feeling, that things could be better. The need for change can be dramatic change in the law for example or simply a feeling of a possible better outcome.

A company network has the possibility to react better to the needs of the markets regarding speed, flexibility, quality and cost-efficiency compared with an independent company (Lehto & Valkokari 2003, 4). When combining resources it is easier to face challenges and overcome difficult situations. With combined resources it is possible to do something that a one company alone wouldn't be able to do. (Mäkelä 2002, 21)

With the help of a network it is possible to find the relevant information and perspective from all the available information. Also, the larger the network, the better are the possibilities to get information also from people coming from different branches of industry. Multi-party collaboration is needed when creating something innovative. Network collaboration creates different information and ideas to be utilized in achieving mutual goals.

The key issue is trust between the members of the network. (Silvennoinen 2008, 48 - 54)

One central motive for networking is to get competitive edge in the market, but network collaboration can also be based on learning from the other members of the network, as strategic networks can be seen as structures, which learn and create new information. Strategic reasons for networking are also risk sharing and utilizing new technologies and knowledge. (Lehto & Valkokari 2003, 6).

As the development moves forward, organizations have to answer to the needs and hopes of a customer fast and precisely. This requires adopting of customer-oriented pattern and this requires new kind of value-net thinking. As a prerequisite these organizations must develop cooperation and networks. This can also be seen in the social welfare and healthcare sector; traditional models are being criticized and according to the critique the customers have no power or say at all, but instead the public sector only thinks about economies of scale and therefore forgets the customer itself. This creates challenges for the social welfare and healthcare sector and the situation sounds similar to any business sector. (Pirnes 2002, 11-12)

Möller et al. (2004, 24-26) make a generalization of the aimed benefits by dividing them into five categories; 1) increasing functional effectiveness, 2) increasing functional flexibility, 3) market power and expansion of market area by combining resources, 4) developing business processes and offering and 5) creating new technologies and businesses. The first three goals can be achieved by combining and coordinating prevailing resources and skills. The two last goals are based on creating and sharing new knowledge.

As a conclusion, the main motivator for networking arises from a need to do something differently than before, the current situation is not working as

wanted anymore. This can be realizing the fact, that the organization does not have enough skills or resources to do something, or it can also be related to new product or service development, which is impossible to do alone. Many times this is due to competitor's operations. A motivator for change can also be a vision of better future and an idea that things could be done better. Accessing new information can be a motivator too, as well as the possibility to learn from others – sometimes learning is the main motivator in fact. Also, getting a better position in the market motivates organizations as well as the need and want to offer better service for the customers.

2.3.2 Benefits of networking

There are various benefits for a company to work in a network compared to a situation, where the company operates individually without the help of the network. In this chapter the main benefits for networking are presented. The expected benefits also work as motivators for companies to network. By networking a company can get resources and skills that it needs but is impossible to get alone. (Grönroos 2001, 61-62)

There has been a rapid growth in the amount and variety of networks that companies seek to create. The benefits of networking can be related to cost efficiency, high and standardized quality, the combination of products and services, new product development, entering new markets, competition power, renewing of business processes and new businesses. (Möller, Rajala & Svahn 2004, 8). In the studied case many of these have been motives and expected benefits of networking; cost efficiency and quality have especially been in the focus, then again entering new markets hasn't been a motive, as the network - and therefore the operations of the developed service - has been regional.

There are two main motives for networking from the perspective of the company. By organizing the relationship more effectively, the companies seek cost benefits. On the other hand motives can be related to increasing the volume of business by new business operations or though better market share. (Ebers 1997)

According to Jarillo (1988), one of the most significant benefits of networks is the availability to react fast when the environment changes. This is a benefit to networks compared to stiff, vertically integrated systems. This readiness to react is based on partly entrepreneurial spirit and partly because of the fact, that in smaller, strategically independent units the decision-making is closer to the members of the network. Networks offer benefit of specialization and variety generation. (Kogut 2000)

The benefits of multi-party networking can be related to information sharing, sharing of costs, achieving critical mass, achieving synergy benefits, developing new businesses or improved credibility. Cooperation can be very unofficial, "learning from others"-type, or it can be very strategic, so there are many forms of networking and the benefits organizations want to achieve. Learning always relates to network and can actually even be the main reason for networking. Learning can also be a "side-product" of other, more important benefits. (Varamäki 2010)

There are some core processes in inter-organizational networking; defining and maintaining the membership of the network, decision making and conflict resolution, managing the information flow and assuring that knowledge is available for every member of the network, motivation and commitment to join and remain in the network, sharing of benefits and risks and relationships between the individual members of the network. (Bessant & Tsekouras 2001).

2.3.3 Networks as social structures

After all, organizations are social structures, which build as a result of the behaviour of the people. The structures, systems, strategies and goals give directions to the behaviour of the individual people in a way, that the result is coordinated actions. It is essential for the performance of the organization, how people commit, motivate and behave in the organization. (Vesalainen 2006, 51) The more developed the trust between organizations and individuals is, the better can be the cooperation between them. Trust is also essential if aiming at committing to mutual actions and to make flexible operations possible (Grönroos 2001, 62; Niemelä 2002, 20). Also, when the interaction, information transfer and learning between organizations and individuals are solid, the tighter is the relationship between them and the connection is beneficial for both. The results of the cooperation are estimated to be good, when the actors of the organizations recognise the framework, share a similar idea of the content of the cooperation and understand each other's. Interaction is a central thing that can help in building the trust; trust enables a better quality interaction and a high-quality interaction creates trust. (Vesalainen 2006, 54 - 56)

When the personal chemistries work well, the benefits of the network can be seen very fast and obstacles can be won even if they felt impossible at first. Collaboration can also be learned, and when the possibilities of the network are clear and interesting for all the members, it can steer the collaboration effectively. (Mäkelä 2002, 71) In this sense the social factors in networks can't only be left to a coincidence, as personal relationships play a big role in the success of the network cooperation. It is easier to focus on the case and deal with difficult issues, when the personal chemistries work well between the members of the network. Then again when everyone sees the possibilities of the network collaboration, the members might concentrate on mutual goal instead of the negative issues and that way build trust and commitment. In this study one of the

interviewees felt like sometimes there had been small problems between some municipalities of Southeast Finland, but in Henkka-network those municipalities were working together very well as they shared the same goal. A clear, realistic and beneficial goal can make organizations collaborate in a network very effectively.

Networking skills means the new organization of processes and it is essential to understand, that the achieved benefits can belong to every organization. Almost all organizations can benefit from networking skills, but in reality only few have realistic chances to do so. (Pirnes 2002, 47)

"*The base for building a company network is a promising and inspiring view of possibilities, which at the same time is based on careful research and strong knowledge*", Mäkelä (2011, 31) states. This means that at the same time there should be careful research work done, the interesting possibilities alone are not enough.

From 1950's onwards the meaning of commitment, motivation, values and organization culture have been recognized in organization theory. Researches have shown that when the social relationships get better so do achievements and performance even if the working conditions were made worse at the same time. (Vesalainen 2004, 26)

2.4 Network management and network orchestration

Networks require management in order to be effective. Management can be done in different ways. Network management aims at getting new members to the network, activating existing members to participate, finding new ways of collaborating and maintaining the fluency of the collaboration. It also means operating in a certain situation. It is possible to have many managers in a network but it still doesn't mean that all the members have equal amount of power. (Sotarauta & Linnamaa 1999)

According to Valkokari et al. (2009, 59) different types of network require different kind of management. They divide networks into three main types; basic business networks, business renewing networks and new business creation networks. If goal-directed networks are to be effective, they need to be managed and governed (Provan et al. 2007).

Vesalainen (2004, 11) sees network management focusing on interorganizational relationships. The development of these relationships can't only be managed by a single party, but it should happen through mutual actions. By mutual actions the network is created. Network management is essential, as not many organizations are able to operate without well-working, border-crossing business operations, partner relationships and mutual commitment to ensure the satisfaction of the end customer (Lipasti 2007, 52). To be successful, network management requires a lot from the manager; there must be a feeling of mutual destiny or at least commitment to mutual rules and goals. An added challenge is the fact that in many case the members of the network are located in different places. Creating and maintaining mutual vision, sharing and acquiring customer knowledge, developing mutual procedures and creating flexibility and rapidness through trust are issues that are highlighted in managing. (Lipasti 2007, 53 - 54)

Leading a significant strategic change is challenging in any situation, not to mention a situation where the change affects on many organizations, like suppliers, product development partners or similar. Toyota has been successful compared with American car manufacturers. Toyota has been able to renew their product portfolio rapidly and to improve their operations. More importantly, they have been able to combine designing, production and supply chains to work as a team and commit to the success of the Toyota cars, even though majority of the members of this chain are not part of Toyota company. This is a good example of engaging business partners and therefore creating benefit for all of them. (Lipasti 2007, 47 - 49)

This study concentrates on *network orchestration* from network management area. Therefore it will be discussed more detailed next.

According to Wallin (2009, 22) a base for business operation from the perspective of orchestration is to create added value to the customers and to the members of the network. Orchestration is needed, when resources from outside the organization are needed in order to get the best possible results. Orchestration means, that everything begins from the aim to produce added value to the customer and in many cases organizations need partners to do this (Wallin 2009, 26). However, creating an orchestrated ecosystem is not simple (Wallin 2009, 63).

Orchestration is always related to the situation, as the orchestrator must take into account the level of the members of the network and to operate within the current situation. The personality of the orchestrator plays a role too; the orchestrator must be able to be the manager and make sure that everyone can concentrate on their special skills. Orchestrated ecosystem is based on the trust between the members, which builds up gradually. (Wallin 2009, 21, 65)

According to Dhanaraj and Parkhe (2006), *"the first task of the orchestrating involves ensuring knowledge mobility"*. They define this *"as the ease with which knowledge is shared, acquired, and deployed within the network"*. The information shouldn't stay only within an organization, but the relevant knowledge should be shared with the members of the network, as otherwise significant value can't be created. According to them, the centres of many networks are the so-called hub firms, which have an important role in the formation, growth and success of their networks; the process of managing networks and the members of the networks is important in leading networks that gain value. Hub firms also play different role compared with peripheral actors, by which Dhanaraj and Parkhe (2006) mean all non-orchestrating members of the network. They also highlight the heterogeneity of the members of the network. The ability

to orchestrate network means collecting all the pieces together for a well-organized entity (Lipasti 2007, 99). Provan et al. (2007) state in their research that the lead organization is the one coordinating decision-making and activities and is in charge of maintaining internal relationships. This study has an assumption that the hub (or an orchestrator) has an active role in the building and leading of a target-oriented network.

Jarillo (1988) states, that in strategic networks the hub firm has a special relationship with the other members of the network and those relationships are close to hierarchical relationships. The fact that the orchestrator has a better overall view of the situation than the other members, gives the orchestrator authority. The orchestrator has an access for information from different sources and it is actively in touch with the members of the network. This information is then used for the mutual benefit of the ecosystem; this is why an orchestrated ecosystem is better compared to a loose supplier network. (Wallin 2009, 66)

When developing new technologies or businesses, the focus is on creating and controlling the development network. The business is typically new not only to the members of the network, but also to the customers and the whole industry, therefore it is essential to create vision that is interesting for other organizations also and to have a functional development network. A well-working development network requires a culture, which includes strong coordinating and guidance but also creating and sharing of new knowledge inside the network. (Möller et al. 2004, 40)

The framework of orchestration has three main elements; 1) there must be a lot of information processed with the members of the network to support decision-making process, 2) it must be accepted, that despite the first element, decision are made in an uncertain environment and 3) it must be ensured that the atmosphere within the ecosystem is trustful (Wallin 2009, 24). There are also five factors in order for the ecosystem to succeed; vision, customership, offerings, commitment and mutual strengths. Four

first ones are essential in providing competitive offerings to the customer. When building an ecosystem, the only way to achieve mutual long-term benefits is that the members do not think about their own, short-term benefit. (Wallin 2009, 65)

3 RESEARCH SETTINGS

The research was carried out using a qualitative research method. The data was collected by half-structured interviews and the answers were analysed and based on that information the research questions were answered. In the following subchapters the research method, the studied case and data collection are described in more detail.

3.1 Qualitative research and case study

The research method used in this study was qualitative method, as the aim was to collect interviewees' opinions about the case, the research is not so much about a large amount of answers but more about the quality of the answers. Qualitative research method suits for this study better than quantitative, as the aim is not to make statistical analysis but to collect data, which is based on the knowledge, skills and opinions of the interviewees'. The interviewees were active members of the studied case network so they were expected to be giving vast, informative answers.

Qualitative research is based on describing real life from a perspective that reality is varied. The idea in qualitative research is to study the phenomenon comprehensively. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2003, 153) In qualitative research, the research is holistic data collection where a person is used as a way to collect data and the case is seen as a unique so the data is handled accordingly. Also, the study plan is formed as the research proceeds and the overall research process is flexible and can be changed. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 155). The data can be either primary or secondary; primary data is the data that the researcher collects, secondary data is an already existing data collected by someone else (Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 173). The data used in this study was primary data collected for the purpose of this study.

The central methods or qualitative research are observation, text analysis, interview and transcribing (Metsämuuronen 2000, 14). In qualitative research the results are not presented in a numerical form, but the idea is to analyse topic and understand the phenomenon. The data is qualitative, which typically means information, which is written or spoken by people. In qualitative research the aim is to understand the research subject. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2000, 181; Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 168).

In qualitative research the amount of the data doesn't have a straight affect on the success of the study, but the data is supposed to help the researcher. The aim is not only to collect data, but also to use it and with the help of the data to build theoretically lasting viewpoints. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 62) This means that the data can be rather small, as long as the information from it helps to continue and carry on the study. The data can be small as long as it gives deep insights to the studied phenomenon. It is typical for qualitative research to collect data, which enables observations from various aspects. (Alasuutari 1994, 74)

In qualitative analysis the data is seen as an entirety (Alasuutari 1994, 28). There are two main phases in the research, which are the producing and explaining the observations (Alasuutari 1994, 41). The aim of qualitative research is to understand the person and find explanations to his behaviour, choices and opinions (Taylor Nelson Sofres 2006).

In scientific research the observations of the empirical research are never seen as the results, but more like clues that help to go behind the observations. The observations are seen as clues, as they are being examined only from a single, explicitly defined aspect. (Alasuutari 1994, 68-69)

Case study is a form of qualitative study, where a certain case is studied. It is typical for qualitative research that the collected data is observed as a observations from one or few cases which were chosen to be studied, so

there is always features of case-study (Alasuutari 2008). Almost every qualitative study is a case study and case study can be seen as a key strategy for collecting the data in qualitative method (Metsämuuronen 2000, 18).

This study is a case study, as there is a single network in the focus of the study and the aim is not to make general assumptions of networks but to focus on the certain one.

3.2 Data collection

The data for the empirical part of the study was collected by personal interviews, which were executed face-to-face except for one interview, which was conducted by using e-mail due to schedule difficulties. The interviews were carried out during October 2011 and November 2011 and the durations varied from 30 minutes to more than an hour. The interviewees were nominated by Socom in a way, that all the interviewees had exceptionally good information about the case and all of the interviewees had been active members of the network from the very beginning. All the interviewees except for one, felt like they were able and the right persons to participate in the study and participated gladly. The one interviewee felt like she was not the right person to answer to these questions but was still able to provide some answers. There were 16 interviewees nominated originally, two of them were unable to participate, so 14 were actually interviewed. The interviews were executed in pairs or individually.

The interviews were *half-structured* (or *theme interviews* as they can also be called), meaning that the questions were the same and were asked in the same order, but there were no alternatives for answers. This way the person can answer according to his own ideas, and he is not given alternatives or any guidance to what the answer should be. This way it is

possible to collect honest opinions and ideas about the phenomenon. This kind of interview is the most used in qualitative data collection and when used well, it can be an extremely effective method as the researcher is able to direct the interview without controlling it totally. Interview is almost the only way to collect the meanings and interpretations that people have given to certain issues and by interview it is possible to complement other methods. It is also less time-consuming than for example observation. However, interviews provide indirect information as the answers are based on the assessment that has been reconstructed by the interviewee. This can be a problem in some cases, for example when researching a highly complex technical issue. Interview also becomes less reliable when the research is about something in the past; people tend to forget things and their stories have gaps. (Koskinen, Alasuutari & Peltonen 2005, 104-106)

The interview questions were designed in collaboration with Socom representatives who had the hope of studying more deeply the functionality of the Henkka network. Socom had some topics they wanted to cover with this study and the interview questions were made keeping these in mind. For the interviews of this study, the questions were designed to be the kind that the interviewee had to describe and give a lot of examples about the asked topics in order to collect little stories about the topic. This way the interviewee was not put in to a box, but he was able tell the things he felt were related to each question and nothing relevant was lined out by giving answer alternatives. The answers were hoped to be extensive and informative. However the possible downside of this type of questionnaire is that the interviewees tell things, that aren't really related to the question or do not provide very holistic information. In this case the problem was more to keep the interviewees in the topic, as they sometimes very easily started to talk about things related to Henkka, but not to the development network behind it. Generally half-structured interview worked well in this case and with these questions it was possible to collect various information. Half-structured interview gave the interviewee's the freedom to give answers they felt were the most

important ones. Koskinen et al. (2005, 107) state that interview becomes less reliable when time goes by and researched issue is in the past. In this study it was not a significant problem as the network had been operating only some years and according to the interviewees they did not have difficulties in remembering the time of the beginning of the network.

3.3 The interviewees

14 people were interviewed for this study. Nine of the interviewees represented the civil servants of the municipalities (Eksote, Imatra, Hamina, Kotka, Kouvola, Virolahti-Miehikkälä, Pyhtää), three the secretaries of disability organizations and the people from local associations, and two interviewees represented the end-users of the network, the disabled people who work as their assistant's employers. Even though there were kind of two different perspectives to Henkka represented, there was only one question form used, as the two representing the customer perspective had been active in the development of the centre of personal help and had been active members of the network just like all the others. These two interviewees were able to give insights to the life of a disabled person, who needs these kinds of services and as they also had been developing these services in cooperation with the other members of the network, their role was far from only being the end-user and receiver of ready-made services. This gives interesting information about creating value with the customer, as Henkka is a perfect example of this kind of a service. The question form can be found from the appendices. The original question form in Finnish is appendix 2, the translated question form in English is appendix 3.

The interviewees are presented in table 4. They have been given anonymous names and some relevant information to this study about their background and experience is presented.

Table 4. The interviewees

	Title	Relevant experience
Person A	Assistant's employer	Long experience of being an assistant's employer, longest relationship 8 years. Currently has 4 assistants.
Person B	Assistant's employer	Has been working as an assistant's employer for 16 years.
Person C	Director of disability services	Long experience of social work, work with the disabled and personal help.
Person D	Responsible social worker in disability services	Long experience of social work, few years of experience from the social work with the disabled.
Person E	Director of disability services	5,5 years experience of disability work, has not been the main focus area before.
Person F	Social service worker	No experience of disability work, but long experience of social work in general.
Person G	Manager of disability services	10 years experience of disability work.
Person H	Former social service director	Responsible of disability services, long experience.
Person I	Social secretary	Social worker (disability work) for 10 years.
Person J	Social instructor	6,5 years experience of disability work.
Person K	Local association representative	Long experience and knowledge of the problems the disabled face.
Person L	Local association representative	Long experience and knowledge of the problems the disabled face.
Person M	Disability organization representative	Lot of experience and knowledge of the problems the disabled face.
Person N	Director in social services	Lot of experience of social work.

3.4 Data analysis

The interviews were first recorder and then transcribed after the interviews. At that point it was already easy to see the similarity of the answers and after writing through the first few interviews it became very clear what issues have been important in the operations of the network.

The analysis of this study started by searching for relevant information and clear themes from the transcribed data. From early on it was clear to see the same patterns and themes repeating from one interview to another. This made the analysis easier and more straightforward as the variation between different interviews was very small and there weren't any significant differences to be seen.

4 FINDINGS FROM THE CASE NETWORK

The overall situation of the case network is that all the interviewees felt like the network has been working well, the members have been committed and interested in developing the centre of personal help together and they have succeeded in doing so, as the centre of personal help is now working in the Southeast Finland. It was almost impossible to find any negative issues relating to the operations or the functionality of the network, so obviously all the members of Henkka-network share mutual feelings and working in the network has been a positive experience for all the members. All the interviewees seemed to share almost identical opinions towards the discussed areas in many cases, and their answers to the questions were similar along the way.

In the next sub-chapters the most important themes of the study will be presented. These themes were clear based on the interviews and these areas have also been covered in the theoretical part of the study. Covering these themes will help to provide comprehensive answers to the research questions, which will be presented later on in the study. The citations have been translated from Finnish to English.

4.1 Commitment and mutual goal

Commitment was discussed in the theoretical part of the study and many authors had recognized it being an important element with positive effects in network operations. Commitment of each party of the network was seen as a crucial issue in the actions of the network. Interviewees saw, that all the parties were committed to this development work, which showed as their efforts and willingness to participate in meetings. Although all the people involved were busy in their daily jobs, they found time to participate to these Henkka-network meetings, and that was seen as a sign of commitment and mutual interest. Then again the level of commitment is

difficult to measure, and according to Person E "*no matter how high was the level of commitment, the results were still the same for everyone*". But generally the members of the network felt like other members had been committed and according to one interviewee this showed as the willingness to take time for the meetings. This citation however illustrates the possibility to free riding in this kind of multi-party network; the wheels keep rolling even if someone is missing. It is for the network to decide how much absence is acceptable and does it actually make a difference; if things keep moving and in schedule, does it matter if all the members can't always participate.

"Depends on the municipality. In smaller municipalities with fewer employees it is obviously more difficult to take time to meetings. Always someone was missing, but I feel like people wanted to read the notes and have tried to come to the meetings when possible." (Person C)

Why were these people committed to the network operations according to the interviewees? There can be many answers. One key thing is likely to be the fact that each member believed, that this network will create something very useful to their daily jobs and therefore they were willing to participate to the development even though it took their time. They were able to tell about the problems they face and give ideas for making things better. This has proved to be true according to the interviewees, as Henkka has given good results already now and all of the interviewees felt like there had definitely been a demand for this kind of service. The members of the network had seen in their daily jobs the workload caused by organizing personal help and they were committed that they can create something that will take pressure away from the municipalities and therefore will give good results. Now that Henkka is working, the interviewees said that their workload has eased and that they have definitely noticed the importance of Henkka already now. The network members were committed to this project as they all felt like their role in the development process was important, they were all equal and they were

able to make a difference. One interviewee said, *"I can say that the group is very equal." (Person A).* As this citation comes from assistant's employer it is even more valuable and proves that the customer's representatives were equal members of the network just like any others.

"Yes, it (developing from the practical needs and based on them) has been the only way that this has became… so that I can see it today in my job, that some task has moved to someone else. The benefits can be seen." (Person J)

"People have been committed, because we have been able to create so much good, that it can be seen in own workplace, that it makes own work easier, I think it has had an effect on committing to the network". (Person C)

Clear, mutual vision and mutual benefit are needed in order for the cooperation to be productive (Partanen 2011). Also the vision must be mutual and it has to be made sure, that everyone understands it in the same way (Mäkelä 2002, 32). The interviewees felt like they really had a mutual goal in this network and everyone was interested in developing the same issues, and it was easy to discuss about the issues and to start developing the centre of personal help. All the members of the network believed that this centre would bring benefits to all, and therefore they were willing and committed to develop this service together. The phrase *"Nothing is more powerful than believing, that it is possible to create something new and significant"* (Lipasti 2007, 85) is very much true in this case. According to the interviewees, the original goal has been achieved.

"It was the mutual… when the need came from the practise, the things we should develop, and the goal was formed from that too, and now the goal has been achieved so far, that now it is possible to continue and develop more." (Person J)

"We had a similar, quite clear goal and I think that has been achieved."
(Person M)

"We very much shared the same goal. We had same ideas about the content of the work." (Person A)

"The goal was to improve the lives of the disabled people. The goal was clear from the very beginning." (Person L)

Why was the goal clear for everyone even though no one mentioned that the goal was "forcefully" formed and modified? These citations clearly indicate that all the members were involved in the network focusing on the same goal. Because they had a clear goal they were able to concentrate on achieving that goal from the very beginning. It seems like all the members of the network had been thinking about these issues on their own and when they had the possibility to work things together, it did not actually need that much work to set up the objectives and goals – the starting point for this network collaboration from that viewpoint was close to perfection. Major advantage here was that all the members seemed to have been convinced of the advantages the result of the network would offer them if developed and organized properly. When the goal is clear it is easy to work together and this case proved that to be true. However the concept of commitment was not so clear for everyone; part of the interviewees said that everyone has been committed, but then again some of the interviewees said that not everyone was always participating to the meetings and so on. It is also difficult to measure the level of commitment and decide what is enough.

Starting collaboration in a network must be based on mutual needs (Wallin 2009, 47). In this case commitment and mutual goal were consequences of mutual needs. The members of the network told, that there had been similar problems all around the Southeast Finland; the social workers did not have enough time or skills to take care of the issues relating to the

personal help. On the other hand, the disabled people who had the right to get personal help, had difficulties in finding personal assistants and working as their employer. These problems had been recognized in different municipalities and among customers. Therefore the problems were the same for all the parties, who participated to the development network. As the problems were the same, they all had motivation to fix the problems. Therefore they were committed in working together in order to create something new that would be beneficial for all.

4.2 Motives for working in a development network

Working in a network always requires time and resources from each member and in order to stay in a network, members must feel like they are getting something back in return. Most interviewees were members of the network simply because of their work, but still no one felt like it was difficult or unpleasant to be involved with the development of the centre of personal help; many of them said, that it had been a pleasant experience and that they were happy to be a part of the network and some expressed their sadness due to the fact that the network no longer exists as it was.

What have been the main motives for working in this development network and taking part actively? As stated in the previous chapter, the members of this network were willing and eager to develop a new service together, as they all believed the service would be needed and would offer benefits to all when working. So definitely mutual goal and mutual, expected benefits have been major motives in this case.

When asked about why the person / the organization they represented hasn't left the network at some point, the answers varied a bit but they all had something similar;

"It still is the mutual goal and the reforming and development are meaningful, there has not been any reason to quit. It has been meaningful, not just mandatory work." (Person J)

"Because I definitely want to develop this as much as I can, and if I can bring even something to this, why wouldn't I?" (Person A)

"It is part of my job and I also like to be in the network." (Person I)

"I got a lot from there and I was also able to share my expertize. This is a way of life for me." (Person K)

Some of the interviewees seemed to have a true passion towards this development work and they felt important to be involved and offer help with their expertize. The assistant's employers and the organization representatives especially felt like it was very important to be a part of the network – feels like they had more emotions involved too. Then again some of the interviewees were part of the network as a part of their job, but also those members were happy to be in the network and no one had wanted to quit at some point.

Working in a network requires effort from each member and they have to make time for the things needed in the network. All the interviewees felt like they had got positive things back from this network. In this case all the interviewees felt like the operations of this network had brought benefits to them as well and that the benefits can be clearly seen. No one felt like they had been giving their efforts to the network but did not get anything back, vice versa.

"This has been very interactive to both ways." (Person L)

"It has been a tough couple of years for me and my calendar has been very booked, but now I'm seeing the results of this all." (Person J)

One motive for networking is the need for change. According to Wallin (2009, 47-48) there are three main reasons for starting a change, which is based on mutual needs; it can begin from a crisis, it can be based on a vision of a better future or it can begin from a feeling, that things could be better. All these can be proved to be true in this case. The whole development process begun from two sources; there was a mutual need that had been recognized widely and also the change in the law. The change was definitely based on mutual needs, there was a vision of a better future and also strong feeling that things could be done better.

Networking is a way to grow own operations and to improve financial conditions and also to improve competitiveness (Hallikas et al. 2001, 15). This statement is probably more important in "traditional business", but here growing operations was not a key motivator, as the geographical area of this network was limited to Southeast Finland. Therefore conquering the whole country was never in the focus, but more to develop the services in the Southeast of Finland and try to develop a well-working model for personal help services in that limited area. Similarly competitiveness hasn't been too significant, as the operations were somewhat secured as the case is about social and healthcare sector. However, by combining resources the municipalities of Southeast Finland can affect on the entrance of private sector actors to the market. A regional centre of personal help is obviously less vulnerable against competition as it operates in many municipalities offering the same services for all the customers.

4.3 The structure of the network

It is important to have the right assembly; there must be enough expertize to resolve challenges and to recognise and create new opportunities (Lipasti 2007, 205). The case network consisted of the social workers - with different kinds of positions - of the municipalities, the disabled people

who work as their assistant's employers and the representatives of different disability organizations. The interviewed people generally had long experience of social work and also work with the disabled people, with only few exceptions. The interviewees felt like this was essential in the case of developing Henkka, as they had knowledge of what the life of a disabled person really is and what are the biggest problems for the disabled people, who need personal help. All the interviewees felt like it was important that people who have first-hand knowledge of the issue, are the ones developing services around it; the interviewees felt like it was extremely important to develop this service from "down to up" and not vice versa. The social workers of the municipalities also knew the problems from their side and knew what tasks were difficult for a social worker to do.

"Yes it has obviously been important as I know what I have had to do as a social worker, and some tasks should have been done somewhere else than in the social work." (Person G)

"It was good that they had people with different disabilities in the network, they were able to tell about their disabilities. It was important to listen to the disabled people instead of just giving orders from somewhere above." (Person M)

Many interviewees came to the network as a part of their work and some were asked to join the network by Socom and majority of the interviewees' had been in the network from the very beginning. Only few interviewees had joined later on to the network. It seems that the building of the network was successful, as the members represented different backgrounds varying from the disabled people to people who are responsible of the services for the disabled in their own municipalities. Many of the members had been working with the disabled on a daily basis so they knew the problems and the areas that should be developed. The social workers knew the problems from both the customer's perspective but also from the social worker's perspective; they knew what tasks were difficult or even

impossible for the social workers to perform in their daily jobs regarding personal help. The development was customer-oriented but also employee-oriented in a way.

When asked about the reasons for developing personal help, the answers were similar but they had some variation. Some interviewees felt like the change in law had been important reason, but others felt like the mutual need for doing these issues better were the main motivator for this network collaboration.

"No municipality had enough resources to develop this by themselves and also the amount of customers in each municipality was so small, that no one had interest to do this alone. The need arose from the change in the law in 2009." (Person F)

"We had this network for developing services for disabled so the development of personal help felt natural to be included to this network when the change in the law came, where the representatives of the municipalities were already together. Socom has had an active role and the municipalities sent the people who were the best experts in the issues so that it is possible to create an adequate entity." (Person C)

"I remember that the social workers felt important that they were able to discuss these issues together and interpret new law together. I also saw that people were excited to create new together; it is easier to do together than alone. People felt like it was important to be involved in the development process." (Person H)

4.4 Customer's role

Customer's position and role in the service development was discussed in the theoretical part of the study and was recognized as being important in

service development, also in the social sector. It was possible to see the change that has happened in service industry and also in social services during the last decades; today the service providers appreciate the customer's opinions and as the competition in this area too gets more intense, customer's opinions can become a competitive advantage and even a necessity for service providers. In social services it hasn't always been like this so it has been a significant change in the industry in general. The development of the centre of personal help has been very customer-oriented from the beginning; this could be seen throughout the interviews. The other main reason for developing the centre of personal help was the difficult situation of the customer, so the starting point for the development was customer-oriented. The interviewees told that the main reasons for developing the service was to ensure similar services for the disabled people despite the municipality they live in, but then again the development was also made thinking about the tasks of the social workers.

"I think the most important task is somehow to make sure that the customers get standardised and right kind of service. And also supporting employees is one important task." (Person C)

"I also see ensuring the quality as an important task." (Person D)

"…all services should begin from a customer, that the customers get similar service despite the municipality they live in." (Person I)

"I think that customers can trust on the answers they get from Henkka to be truthful." (Person M)

"Customers in different municipalities are equal despite the municipality they live in. Especially in smaller municipalities where one social worker in responsible of everyone from babies to the elderly, it is difficult to concentrate on one customer segment." (Person G)

"We have this will and want that all our customers are equal, that they get the same service despite the municipality they live in." (Person C)

In many cases it feels like the organizations claims to develop their operations based on customers needs but in reality it doesn't always happen. In this case it was evident to see that the developers of Henkka really felt this way and it was not only great words; the position and the rights of the customer and the quality of the service that the customer gets were definitely the most important issues for them. One reason for this might be that with satisfied customers the operations of Henkka will be secured, the municipalities and the funders of the initial project can be proved that the project and the development has really been effective and reasonable. The members of the network had a motivation to develop a good, well-working service from the very beginning and satisfied customers were focused on from the start. The next citation illustrates this thinking and will perfectly;

"We want to make life better for the disabled people" (Person L)

Customers do not want products or services, but they seek for benefits that they get via products and services (Grönroos 2001, 27; Ylikoski 2000, 21). So the main task of services is to offer benefit for the customer, and in this case the main benefits the customer get are the service from a professional person who helps to find an assistant, accurate, right information, assistance and quick help in problematic situations. One benefit is also that the customer doesn't have to find out all the things related to working as an employer, but the professional staff at Henkka will do it for him and provide guidance.

Customers were active parties in developing this service. The two assistant's employers, who were members of the development network, felt it was important that they were able to represent the customer's voice. They had the most relevant experience to this development work and

therefore they were able to provide valuable information to the network, while developing the service they actually use as well.

"I think the input and information we have given has been necessary, how else would they know how these things work." (Person A)

"The operations have been very customer-oriented from the beginning." (Person A)

"We knew the problems and the solutions to them, I'm sure it has helped (in the development process)." (Person B)

"Yes, it works well. The personnel in the centre of personal help listens to us and aims at improving operations." (Person B)

4.5 The role of the network orchestrator

The role of Socom as a network orchestrator was one of the key findings of the study, even if it was not directly asked in the original questions. This however arose in many interviews and therefore it was discussed more. Several interviewees stated that without the efforts of Socom, this network would have never been so effective and well working. Socom was the coordinator of this network, so Socom's role was to prepare different issues and collect information from different sources; this was seen very important action by the majority of the interviewees, as they felt like no other member of the network would have been able to do this. Interviewees felt like it is essential to have a hub operator, like Socom, someone who keeps all the strings in their hands. Because of the orchestrator, things kept moving forward all the time, and it was easy for the other members of the network to utilize the information provided and prepared by Socom.

"It is so easy for us because there is an orchestrator, as Socom is the one starting these things, it is very easy to get involved as we don't have to be the one making the first move." (Person F)

"Many municipalities are ready to join, but it requires that's there is a party who takes things forward. And Socom is not just any party, but an expert. Socom made all the preparations." (Person J)

"This has been very well led from Socom, all the time." (Person I)

One interviewee (Person H) felt like it would have been totally impossible to create a service like this without the help of Socom as a coordinator. The interviewee felt like the municipalities would not have been interested in this kind of service development if it were only the employees of the municipalities and organizations suggesting and developing it. Socom is owned by the municipalities of Southeast Finland and in a way a neutral organization, which was seen important; specific organizations are only focused on a certain disability type, like blindness, but Socom has the responsibility to concentrate on disabilities in general. Also, when Socom was the coordinator of the project, the municipalities took the project more seriously and participated with a different attitude and expectations. One interviewee stated that even if the will and the need for this service were there, it still requires someone who begins to coordinate actions, preferably an external party. Then again according to another interviewee; "*We would have been able to do this but in a different form*" *(Person E).* No one questioned the important role of Socom when thinking about the success of this network in its current form.

The next citation is very illustrative when talking about cooperation between different municipalities;

"It is difficult for any municipality to place itself above others and act as an orchestrator, we are careful not to step on each others' toes." (Person F)

Why was Socom so important as the orchestrator in this case? Municipalities and organizations on their own are careful and maybe unable to make any major changes or development alone. Especially organizations have a difficult position as they usually focus only on one disability type; it is difficult to get the municipality interested in a development project, if it only focuses on a very limited group of people. In this kind of network the voice of the disabled people really had power too. One disability organization representative (Person M) felt like municipalities do not always take organizations alone very seriously. Therefore for them it was a good opportunity to participate in a multi-party network and that way collaborate with municipalities too as the orchestrator was someone as powerful as Socom. Socom was an expert too, so not just any orchestrator.

"Socom is there for the needs of all municipalities, it is a neutral party."
(Person C)

4.6 Social aspect of network collaboration

Personal relationships have a big affect on the functionality of the network as it was stated in the theoretical part of the study, as networks always are structures formed by individuals. Generally speaking, it seems natural that when people know each other, it is easier to work together too, and the interviewees said this too; the ones who knew other members of the network beforehand, said it was naturally easier to work together too and collaboration was more effective as they already knew other members' opinions. Some of the members of this network had been working together before this development project, and said that it was easy to continue with familiar people as they had had successful cooperation before. So part of the members of this network had positive experiences from another network, which gives a good starting point to a new project. But then again

the ones that did not know the other members of the network so much beforehand, did not feel like it had been a problem at all. So even though everyone was not familiar with everyone, it did not make it more difficult to collaborate. According to some interviewees, even before this official network, the people in the Southeast Finland had been active in exchanging information and brainstorming together.

"Even before this project, we have had this spirit, that we have always been in contact to other municipalities and asked about how they deal with some issues and tell them what is going on in our city." (Person C).

So there had been a culture of collaboration even before any official networks and therefore it was easy to work in an official network from the very beginning. The interviewees also felt that it was important that through this network they had got to know new people and thus developed their own personal networks.

"It had an affect that I knew the people, it was easy to contact people and bring in own ideas. When the names have faces it is easier to contact people." (Person L)

"There were new faces too, but I didn't think that was a problem at all, as we all shared the mutual goal and we were all in the same boat. But generally in this area people got along very easily with strangers too." (Person J)

"I don't know (if it had an affect)… It is work and work is done with the people who are involved." (Person G)

Especially the representatives of smaller municipalities felt like it was very important and meaningful to be a part of this kind of network, as they now have a lot of new colleagues in the other municipalities who they can turn to regarding work issues. Sometimes the work might me lonely especially

in smaller municipalities, and many of the interviewees felt that it was important to get support from other people too, even to issues that were not related to this project. Official collaboration has formed unofficial networks and collaboration too and that was seen as an important outcome of this network too.

"This network has increased the communication in the area, we have formed an own network and have become colleagues." (Person J)

"It has been good that we have got to know people." (Person L)

"I have always had positive feelings towards these networks with many municipalities and what I have been involved it has been rewarding, especially if you work in a small municipality, you get peer support and colleagues there. It is good to work with other municipalities." (Person G)

In this collaboration the mutual goal and similar vision were more important elements to the success of the network than the familiarity of the members, even though the ones involved in another network before said that it was easy to work in this one because of positive experiences from the previous network. Obviously it is easier to work with familiar people, but in this case it seemed to be other elements too that made working more effective and effortless; shared problems, mutual goal, similar vision, same ideas of the future and same values.

"This has been one of the very well-working networks. We knew each other, cooperation was easy, everyone had the same goal, and there was no need for big discussions." (Person H)

Trust was mentioned to be an important element in successful network collaboration by many authors (Silvennoinen 2008, 54; Grönroos 2001, 62; Niemelä 2002, 20). Even if trust was not directly asked and discussed about in the interviews, all the answers gave a hint that there has been

mutual trust between the members of the network and everyone has been worth the trust, even if it was not directly discussed about. Trust has been one of the enhancing factors for the network's success and good operations and results; the members have been able to trust that the other members do their share and communicate openly and truthfully. The members also trusted on each other's expertise and valued different opinions and perspectives and therefore were able to create a holistic service system.

Decision-making process in the network worked well along the way, which once again is a sign of good personal chemistries and similar ideas of the development work. The interviewees stated that they never had problems in making decisions, things were discussed thoroughly and they always reached a solution that everyone was satisfied with.

4.7 Challenges in the network cooperation

Interviewees were also asked about challenges in the network cooperation and they were able to name only some, which is a very positive sign. Generally timetable issues were seen as a challenge in the network cooperation; sometimes interviewees have found it difficult to have time to all the things related to the network cooperation. Also the members of the network worked in different municipalities, so sometimes travelling to the meetings was difficult or even impossible. No one mentioned any other issues being challenging in the network cooperation, so it seems that the network has been working well in general and the members have been involved actively and things have moved forward in good mutual understanding in general. The cooperation has been relatively easy as the interviewees were unable to state any major challenges in the network cooperation.

"One challenge is that we come from different places, so where the meetings are and how much travelling they require. Obviously that is how things are nowadays and you can't help it, but sometimes it is impossible to participate in the meetings, unfortunately, as the travelling takes so much time." (Person G)

"There has always been challenges, that always someone notices, that someone else is trying to increase own benefit, but those situations have always been discussed through and solved. I haven't seen major, unsolvable situations." (Person F)

"I can't remember any challenges." (Person D)

Why were the members of the network unable to name any big challenges? Once again, the lack of major challenges in the network cooperation enhances the fact that all the members of the network shared the mutual vision and the mutual goal was clear. Therefore the members were committed to achieve the goal and were ready to concentrate on effective network cooperation. Personal chemistries have seemed to work well too as no one mentioned personal relationships has caused any challenges. Also the communication in the network has been clear and open.

4.8 The future of Henkka

At the last part of the interview the questions focused on the future of Henkka. These questions were asked in order to find out what kind of ideas the interviewees had about the future, now that the development network does not operate anymore. The answers about the future of Henkka were similar as well, so the members of the network still share similar opinions towards the developed service. All the interviewees felt like there had been a real need for this kind of service and the benefits of

the service have already been clear to see. The social workers stated that their workload has diminished and that after Henkka they have had more time to concentrate on the tasks that actually belong to them. They felt like it is easy to tell the customers to contact Henkka.

The future of Henkka was seen promising. In order for the service to continue, it requires customers, financing from the municipalities and good workforce and also the fact that the service to be proper and what it was supposed to be. How does Henkka get and maintain customers? Customers must trust that they will get help from Henkka and benefit of being in Henkka's register. This requires information to the disabled people about the operations of Henkka, so that they know what it is about and how can it help them. Also the service must be good, fast and truly helpful.

How do municipalities keep financing the centre of personal help? To ensure the financing from the municipalities, Henkka must work effectively, show the benefits to the municipalities, get customers and keep developing. Henkka also has to answer to the need it was originally developed to answer to. So these two needs – getting customers and getting financing – are actually achieved by similar means.

"It is important that the representatives of the municipalities are directing the actions of Henkka, so it doesn't stay still and what problems arise, they have to find ways to solve them." (Person F)

"I hope it will continue and if something new is needed, hopefully the municipalities will finance it. For the time being I see this promising." (Person M)

"As stabile as anything can be, this is." (Person E)

Some challenges for the future of Henkka were also mentioned;

"If we pay for something, the same amount should be saved from somewhere else. It shouldn't add expenses. It never works this way though." (Person E)

"The biggest challenge is to find the right balance and that the time is used on right things." (Person D)

"Probably the financing from the municipalities (is a prerequisite for Henkka to continue)" (Person I)

"Good service and financing from the municipalities" (Person N)

"I think marketing, you can always improve the awareness of this service." (Person B)

The economical aspect can be seen here and it is a concern for the future of Henkka. The municipalities who finance Henkka must benefit from that; if they pay for someone else to take care of something, it should be seen in their office, meaning that the social worker of a municipality who used to deal with issues related to personal help, does not do it anymore. This offers benefits as time is used on more important tasks in the social service office. Financial aspect was not an important theme of this study but it still is an important factor in this case when thinking about the continuation of Henkka. Henkka does not exists without funding and it does not get any funding if it does not work well and offer benefit for the municipalities and customers. This has most likely been a motivator to develop the service as well as possible, so that there wouldn't be a room to say that these kinds of development projects are waste of resources.

Balancing supply and demand was also seen as a challenge, as in the current situation there is not always enough assistants when needed by the disabled. Especially difficult is the situation where a disabled needs an

assistant only part time or only for few hours occasionally. This is difficult to organize so that should be one focus area in the future.

4.9 Lessons learned

The interviewees were asked what had been learned from this kind of network collaboration. In this case the learning aspect has played a big role and has been an important outcome of the network collaboration. An ideal situation in any network collaboration would be that the members could identify the positive and negative aspects of that collaboration, continue using the positive ones and try to improve the negative ones. In this case the answers were very positive and there were different things that the interviewees felt were important lessons learned from this collaboration. These comments prove that this network collaboration has given added results to the original goal, which was to set up a centre of personal help. Not only that, but other positive affairs have been achieved too – and can be continued to use in the future.

"We have learned a lot about network collaboration in general, these have been big processes and they give base for process working." (Person C)

"We have learned that you have to have patience, things don't happen just by clicking fingers" (Person D)

"This collaboration has given an opportunity to affect on own work, network collaboration has strengthen own expertise." (Person J)

"Well that together, ability to cooperate… that you can work this way. And it is, that if someone says that there will be 38 municipalities in Finland in the future, it is the kind of development work that will help in the future, when these models already exist. And once again I say that it depends a lot of the orchestrator." (Person I)

"We have generally learned that this kind of network collaboration can create a concrete end result. Network collaboration can create a concrete service model." (Person E)

"Lessons have been these, that we can erase defects that have been somewhere and that we can get well-working solutions and develop things." (Person B)

"We have learned that collaboration is power and together is it possible to achieve things that would be impossible to do alone" (Person J)

"We have noticed that when centralizing things, it is easier to work and it works better. The benefits of combining resources." (Person A)

"We can erase defects that have been in operations somewhere and can get well-working solutions and develop more. (Person B)

This network really highlighted the positive side of network collaboration as the interviewees found many positive aspects that have been learned along the way. Obviously as collaboration has been easy, it was easy to say that collaboration is power, which is definitely true. Especially the smaller municipalities would have been in a weak position if they alone had started to develop a service like this, not to mention the disability organizations. The citations above enhance the idea that by working together it is possible to get good results for everyone and achieve something that would be impossible to do alone.

Why have the experiences been so positive to all the members of the network? The answer to this can be found from the previous chapters throughout the study. To put short; the members of the network were committed to this network and interested in creating something new and very needed. The members shared similar vision and mutual goal and

were determined to make this work. The network has been very goal-oriented.

The interviewees were also asked about how is it possible to create need-based-networks in the future and where does the impulse come from. The general answer her was that in many cases these types of network arises from needs. When people talk together and tell about their problems, many times other people share similar problems and therefore it is possible to start creating solutions together. Then again it might be difficult for a single social worker to start developing anything alone, therefore meetings with other social workers always help. Also, an orchestrator or a coordinator is needed in order to actively start development networks.

"When someone comes up with a good idea, people very easily get interested and want to join. It can begin from something very small." *(Person A)*

"From the collaboration I think… but an orchestrator is also needed." *(Person I)*

"Developing new things often begins from informal conversation where problems are discussed and it can lea to a situation where we think together how things could be done better. We need to have those people who will take it forward who start to think about how to develop good ideas. Of course we needed Socom for this." *(Person H)*

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The public sector is in a change and new challenges have an affect on the social welfare and healthcare sector too. This case showed that public sector benefits significantly of a cooperation that crosses municipality-borders. Municipalities have difficulties providing all the services by themselves and the cooperation between municipalities was seen as the future of social welfare services. This case focused on a network that has created a service, which is then sold to the municipalities. So instead of producing the personal help services independently, all the municipalities in the southeast Finland can now buy them from Henkka, the centre of personal help.

The case represents the public social welfare and healthcare sector, fitting to square 4 in figure 3 as the case was about a service development too. The case network does not represent a typical network. Many times in the literature networks are discussed from the point of view of a production network and the relationships are often for example supplier-buyer-relationships or represent a situation, where companies invest the same amount of money in order to develop a good which they can sell and divide the profits – square 1 in figure 3. Also, the main aim of this network was not to expand to other geographical areas, which often is a motivator for networking.

	Product	Service
Private	1	2
Public	3	**4**

Figure 3. Theoretical positioning of the study II.

This was not an example of a "typical" network as it was stated above. However, many similarities with the literature can be seen. Commitment, mutual goal, mutual needs and so on were the most important issues in this network. In the literature networks are built for a purpose, and it was the case here too; the members of the network had similar problems and needs and their ideas of the result were similar. The members alone were unable to improve operations, but by combining resources they all got benefits and the collaboration was successful. The benefits of this kind of collaboration are however difficult to prove, compared to a situation with a physical product for example. Here the main benefits were the time saving of the social workers and the reducing of their workload, the possibility to focus on the main tasks, and from the customer's perspective to get accurate information and professional help in difficult situations, all from a one place.

As a conclusion, the development network behind Henkka has been working well from the very beginning due to the fact that the members shared the same problems, they had mutual vision and shared goal and everyone was sure that by developing this service well it would offer benefits for all. In this study well working means the functionality and the achieved goals of the network based on the interviews. The interviewed members of the network had positive attitude towards the network collaboration and they had positive experiences of working in this network. Some of the interviewees had been working in a network with other members of this network beforehand, so it made working in this network easier and has certainly had an affect on the functionality of this network. However, the ones who didn't know other members beforehand didn't see that as a problem at all. Generally speaking the members have been committed to this network and have participated gladly and actively and have given their input. The members of the network shared a similar vision and the goal was clear for everyone involved to the development of Henkka; all the members had a mutual need and therefore everyone was

interested in creating a new service, which would offer benefits to everyone.

Seems like the network was also built very well, as not only the employees of the municipalities were involved, but also the representatives of different disability organizations and the disabled people too had been involved in the development process of Henkka. The network had members with different backgrounds and it was essential to have disabled people involved in the development work too; that has probably been one of the biggest advantages of this network, as the disabled people were able to provide the other members of the network with information only they could know. Also the social workers of the municipalities knew what it was like to work with the disabled, what were the problems and how could a centre of personal help. Also the mutual, shared will to create this much-needed service has worked as a driver in this case. The members of the developing network believed, that if they had this kind of service in the Southeast Finland, it would be beneficial for all the organizations the members represented.

There was not even the slightest hint of any negative tension between the members of the network, so the personal and social factors between the members were also proved to be fine. This is important and the social factors of working in a network can't be forgotten, as they do have an affect on the atmosphere and the results of the network too. In this network the members had very positive opinions about the functionality of the network and they were happy to have been involved.

5.1 The main results of the study

In chapter 4 the most important findings of the study were presented as themes. In this sub-chapter the focus is only on the main research

questions and brief answers to them will be given based on the overall analysis.

The objective and also the main research question of this thesis was;

What are the elements of a well-working multi-party service development network in social sector?

According to Hallikas et al. (2001, 15) the success factors of a network are trust, openness, tight communication, compatible information systems and a mutual vision of the future. In this case the importance of mutual vision of the future was very clear to see. All the interviewees had very similar thoughts about the future, so in this network the vision has been clear and mutual for all from the very beginning. Also openness and trust between the members was clear to see as the overall collaboration had been effective and effortless.

Every service network should provide the best possible service to the customer. In this case it is evident, that the development network behind Henkka has been working well, the network cooperation has been successful and the good-quality, equal service for the customers had been a key issue when developing the service. The members of the network felt that it has been easy to collaborate in this network and create together a new service model. Based on the analysis of the interviews there are few main reasons. First, the need for this service was evident for all the members of the network. They all had recognized this mutual problem related to organizing the personal help in municipalities. Also the change in the law had an affect, and the members realized that something has to be done. Second, the members of the network shared a mutual vision of the service they were about to develop and more importantly they had a similar, clear goal that everyone wanted to achieve.

Also, the structure of the network has been very functional in this case. There were different aspects being present in the network coming from people with different backgrounds. It was probably the social workers of the municipalities who were the obvious members of the network, as they had first-hand information of what it is like to work with the disabled people, what are the problems in organizing personal help from both their and customers' perspective. As one of the reasons for this development was the reducing of the workload of the social workers, they obviously had to be a part of the development process too. The people who represented different organizations were also able to provide important information about the disability type that their organization focused on. Essential to the success of this network has also been the active participation of the end-users of the service. An assistant's employer has been in the development network since the beginning, and it has definitely been extremely important. The assistant's employer was able to provide the customer perspective, as he was actually the one needing and using these services.

The role of a network orchestrator has also been essential according to the interviews. Socom's role as a network orchestrator was seen very important, even necessary. The interviewees' felt that it would have been impossible, or at least extremely difficult, to do this without Socom being the orchestrator.

As a conclusion, a successful service development network must share a mutual vision about the future and have a clear goal based on mutual needs, the network must have members representing the relevant aspects needed for a comprehensive end-result and a network also needs an orchestrator who is in charge of the overall functionality of the network. The key results of the main research question are also presented in table 5.

Table 5. The main research question and the key results.

Question	Key results
Main research question; What are the elements of a well-working multi-party service development network in social sector?	* Mutual vision and clear goal
	* Similar needs based on recognized problems
	* The important role of a network orchestrator
	* The want to offer good quality service for customers
	* The variety of the network members with different backgrounds
	* Good relationships between the members of the network and commitment to the network operations

The sub-questions were formed in a way that they support the main research question. The first sub-question was;

How has the service been developed and what have been the main drivers for developing the service?

The service has been developed based on real needs and problems, which were the main drivers for developing the service. In this network it was important that the ideas and needs for development did not just come from an authority from far above; it was the people, who had worked with the issues of personal help and seen the related problems every day, who had the possibility to improve not only their own, but also their customers position. The disabled were taken into the development network as equal members and they had the possibility to affect to the end results by providing information that would have been impossible to get from any other source. The representatives of different disability organizations were taken into the development work too and it was a sign for them that their

work is important and that it does have a purpose. One organization worker stated that prior to this collaboration there had been difficulties in the collaboration with municipalities, but with the help of this network that became easier too. The development was carried out by combining information from different sources, thinking about best practices to solve the existing problems and to erase defects, and by setting a clear goal, which was understood and accepted by the whole network.

The development has been very customer-oriented too, as the end-customer of the service has been kept in mind throughout the development process. The members of the network were truly interested about the quality of the service and about the needs of the customer and wanted to create the best possible service for the disabled who need personal help. Also, customer representatives have been developing the service, which is a clear sign of committing to customer's needs and improving the quality of the service.

One important finding here is that the network must represent all the relevant organizations/parties to the service, which is being developed. Because of that the end-result will be more perfect. If a development network only consists of few homogeneous members, the outcome will more likely be imperfect. In this case the outcome would have been incomplete, if for example there was not a person to represent the disabled people in the development network. As mentioned before, in this case the network was built in a way that there were different opinions being present, as well as people from different kind of organization. This way there was not only the municipality view, but also different organization representatives participated in the development process of Henkka, as well as the end-users.

The key results of the first sub-question are presented in table 6.

Table 6. The first sub-question and the key answers.

Question	Key results
First sub-question; How has the service been developed and what have been the main drivers for developing the service?	* The service was developed based on recognized needs and problems
	* The service was developed in a heterogeneous multi-party network; the members represented relevant views from the perspective of the developed service and end-result -> more perfect end-result
	* The service was developed because of the difficult situation of both social workers and the disabled

The second sub-question was;

How has the development network been working and what elements have affected on the functionality of the network?

The answer to this question was clear. The collaboration between the members of the network has been good from the beginning and there hasn't been any major issues regarding the collaboration and all the members said it has been a positive experience in general. The network has been working well from the beginning. Why? The reason for this has been covered in the previous chapters; all the members shared similar experiences about the problems related to personal help, they had a mutual goal and vision and a strong will to improve things. The members of the network were eager to create a new service that would offer benefits for all – they had the possibility to drive their own benefit, which turned out to be mutual benefit, win - win.

Main motivators for working together in this network were, as mentioned before, mutual goal, similar vision, similar needs. When thinking about

what motivated all these different members to work together, one of the most important reasons must be that all the members felt like they were equal despite their background or professional position. Everyone had the possibility to tell opinions and everyone had a possibility to affect on all the decisions and there was an atmosphere of trust and openness. The members felt like it was important to be a part of this network as they were able to discuss about the problems they face on a daily basis and based on their experiences to come up with solutions to the recognized problems; the fact that they felt this was an important project has motivated the network to perform even better. The members of the network also felt like they were equal and everyone had possibility to speak out.

The functionality of the network was good. All the members had possibility to give their input to the network in form of different information and practices, everyone was equal and decision were made democratically. One reason for the functionality was definitely Socom. In this case the role of Socom as an orchestrator was essential when thinking about the success and the outcomes of the network. Socom was an objective party that had expertize and knowledge of the relevant topics. Socom was able to provide the other members of the network with accurate, relevant and necessary information and based on that information the network was able to develop the service and make decisions. The members of the network felt like this kind of outcome would have been impossible to achieve without the important role of Socom. The importance of the orchestrator is highlighted when there are many parties in the network. It might be difficult for any member to position itself above others or to take the lead, but when an external orchestrator is being nominated, it is easy for the members to participate to the network. Especially when municipalities are working together, they are very careful not to step on each other's areas, so some other party is needed to be the orchestrator. In this case the interviewees felt like it would have been impossible for any other member of the network to find the resources to be the orchestrator of this network.

Socom was able to get different kinds of parties interested and involved in the development process, but on the other hand Socom was "nominated" to be the orchestrator. Either way, Socom's role as the orchestrator has been crucial for the success of this development network.

The key results of the second sub question are presented in table 7.

Table 7. The second sub-question and the key answers.

Question	Key results
Second sub-question; How has the development network been working and what elements have affected on the functionality of the network?	* The network has been working well and has been goal-oriented from the beginning
	* Main motivators to good collaboration have been; mutual vision, clear goal, similar needs, possibility to make a difference on daily operations, possibility to discuss problems and solutions, atmosphere of trust and openness
	* Socom's role as an orchestrator was important
	* In cooperation between municipalities it is important to have an external orchestrator
	* Socom had the possibility to prepare different issues for the network to be discussed
	* The project was taken more seriously because of the active involvement of Socom as an orchestrator
	* The members felt like they were equal

5.2 The validity and reliability of the study

The study can be seen reliable and valid, as all the interviewees had exceptionally good knowledge of the studied case. The results of the study will also benefit them, so that should have motivated the interviewees to

give truthful answers. The research questions were considered carefully in collaboration with Socom. The answers were mainly similar between the interviewed people, so the answers should be reliable and give a truthful idea of the researched case network. Almost all interviewees had been active members of the development network since the beginning, so they definitely had first-hand information about the functionality of the network. The study can be seen as valid, as the study answers to the research problems.

In the interviews the questions were generally understood well and there was no need to explain them too much, although sometimes the interviewees started to tell about the functionality and the services of Henkka, not about the Henkka-network as it was supposed to. In some cases the interviewees also mixed these things together and did not really know how to answer from the perspective of the developer. A challenge in the interviews sometimes was, that the interviewees very easily started to think about the questions only from the perspective of the end user instead of the perspective of a network member developing the service. That's why some of the answers were quite different to the answers of the other interviewees, but then again their answers provided interesting information anyway even though it was not always related to the main focus area.

5.3 Suggestions for future research

This study has given an insight to one of the service development networks coordinated by Socom and provided a lot of new information about the functionality of this network based on the experiences of the network members. One interesting issue to study in the future would be the future of Henkka without the network behind it. So far everything looks good, but how are things after a year or two, when there isn't a network to coordinate and develop personal help? The interviewed people felt like the most important thing in order for Henkka to be able to continue is the

financing of the municipalities, and in order to get that, Henkka has to work well and prove that it is a beneficial investment. However proving this to the municipalities might be difficult.

It would be interesting to study the role of the customer in the decision-making process of a service development. This case proved that the development process had been customer-oriented as it was stated by both developers and customers (who also were developers), but there would be a room to study more detailed about the real affect of the customer's opinions to the development work of a new service to find out what is the realistic possibility of the customer to affect on the end results. This kind of approach could also be used to other network of Socom, which works with a different customer group. It would also be interesting to study the role of a customer in social service development compared to the role of a customer in any other service development. This kind of comparison would give answer to the question if the development process is any different when the customer group changes or does the customer group have an affect to the service development process at all.

It would also be interesting to adjust similar kind of network approach to some other customer group instead of services for disabled people. Would it work equally well in any area of social services? In this study the interviewees felt like the target group of the developed service, the disabled, did not have an effect on the way the service was developed in a network, but then again the interviewees did not really have experience of networks from other fields than social welfare environment. Comparing social welfare networks to some "hard-business" networks would be interesting to study in the future – are there really differences, or is it all the same.

Also the future of borders crossing cooperation in the social and healthcare sector could be studied more, as well as the public private partnership in the social and healthcare sector from the point of view of a

new service development. It would be interesting to study what are the role of both public and private sectors in innovations in this sector and how has the rapid growth of private sector actors affected on social services, the providing of them and the developing of them.

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Appendix 1: Cover letter for the interviewees in Finnish (original)

Hei,

Olen Karoliina Kosonen, Kauppatieteiden opiskelija Lappeenrannan Teknillisen Yliopiston kauppatieteellisestä tiedekunnasta. Teen opintoihini liittyvää pro gradu – tutkimusta, jonka empiiriseen osuuteen tarvitsisin Teidän apuanne. Pro gradu-tutkimukseni liittyy Lappeenrannan teknillisen yliopiston tutkimuskeskuksen (TBRC) Comnet-projektiin, jonka tarkoituksena on selvittää kompetensseja ja verkostoja organisaation menestystekijöinä.

Pro gradu-tutkimukseni tapausorganisaationa on Kaakkois-Suomen Sosiaalialan Osaamiskeskus, Socom, jonka puolesta mukana hankkeessa ovat Niina Turunen ja Tarja Myllärinen. Jos Teillä on kysyttävää liittyen muihin, kuin akateemisiin yksityiskohtiin, voitte olla yhteydessä Niina Turuseen.

TUTKIMUKSEN TAVOITE

Pro gradu – tutkimus tehdään Socomille ja tarkemmin pro gradu – tutkimukseni käsittelee henkilökohtaista apua Kaakkois-Suomen alueella kehittäneen verkoston toimintaa. **Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää henkilökohtaista apua kehittäneen verkoston toimintaa,** vaikutuksia ja tulevaisuutta ja tämän selvittämiseen tarvitsisin juuri Teidän apuanne haastattelun muodossa. Tutkimuksen tavoite on asetettu Socomin puolesta, joten tarvetta näiden asioiden selvittämiseen on. Tutkimustulokset hyödyttävät Henkilökohtaisen avun keskusta ja yleisemmin Socomia.

OSUUTENNE TUTKIMUKSESSA

Teidät on valittu asiantuntemuksenne takia vastaamaan kysymyksiin Socomin Tarja Myllärisen ja Niina Turusen toimesta. Haastattelukysymykset käsittelevät roolianne Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen valmisteluvaiheessa ja toiminnassa, toiminnan nykytilaa ja vaikutuksia sekä tulevaisuutta. Vastaukset tullaan käsittelemään luottamuksellisesti, eikä vastaajien nimiä tulla yhdistämään vastauksiin, vastaukset siis käsitellään työssä anonyymisti. Vastaajien nimet tulevat esiintymään työssä listauksena, mutta ei liitettynä vastauksiin.

TUTKIMUKSEN TOTEUTUS JA HAASTATTELUPYYNTÖ

Toivon, että teillä on aikaa ja kiinnostusta osallistua tähän tutkimukseen. **Haastattelut suoritetaan mahdollisuuksien mukaan kasvotusten tai puhelimitse.** Tulen ottamaan Teihin yhteyttä tarkemman haastatteluajan ja –paikan sopimiseksi viikon sisällä. Haastattelun arvioitu kesto on noin yksi tunti ja haastattelut pyritään suorittamaan lokakuun 2011 aikana.

TUTKIMUSTULOSTEN ESITTELY

Tulen esittelemään tutkimustuloksia Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen ohjausryhmälle, sen lisäksi tuloksia tullaan osittain esittelemään Socomin 10-vuotisjuhlassa 24.11.2011.

Jos teillä on jotakin kysyttävää pro gradu - tutkimukseeni liittyen, voitte olla yhteydessä joko minuun tai Kaisa Henttoseen (KTT/LUT School of Business), joka on pro gradu – tutkimukseni 2. tarkastaja ja toimii Comnet-projektissa projektipäällikkönä.

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Karoliina Kosonen
Karoliina.kosonen@lut.fi

Appendix 2: Interview questions in Finnish (original)

TAUSTATIEDOT

1. Kerro hieman itsestäsi ja roolistasi Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen toiminnassa?
   Kuinka kauan olet toiminut osana kehitysverkostoa?
   Miten päädyit mukaan kehitysverkostoon?

2. Tunsitko muita verkoston jäseniä ennen verkoston muodostumista? Onko sillä ollut vaikutusta toimimiseen verkostossa? Voit kertoa esimerkin jostakin tietystä tilanteesta.

3. Mitä kokemusta sinulla oli vammaispalveluista ja henkilökohtaisesta avusta ennen toimimista tässä verkostossa?

4. Mikä oli mielestäsi tärkein syy sille, että henkilökohtaista apua lähdettiin kehittämään Kaakkois-Suomen alueella (muutama vuosi sitten)?

HENKILÖKOHTAISEN AVUN VERKOSTON TOIMIVUUS

5. Mikä on mielestäsi Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen tärkein tehtävä?

6. Kuvaile henkilökohtaista apua kehittäneen verkoston käynnistämisvaihetta. Miten yhteistyö toimi, millaista alkuvaihe oli?

7. Mitä käynnistämisvaiheen jälkeen tapahtui, miten verkoston toiminta vakiintui ja jatkui?

8. Oliko verkoston toiminnassa heti alusta lähtien jotakin erityistä? Voit antaa esimerkin jostakin tietystä tilanteesta.
   -Hyvät / huonot asiat

9. Onko verkostoyhteistyössä tullut vastaan haasteita? Jos, niin millaisia, ja kuinka ne selvitettiin? Kerro esimerkein.

10. Onko toiminnan aikana tullut eteen kriittisiä käännekohtia? Anna esimerkkejä.
    - Ulkoinen paine
    - Muut toimijat?
    - Asiat, joihin verkosto itsessään ei ole voinut vaikuttaa?
    - Sekä negatiivisia että positiivisia käännekohtia?

11. Millaisena koet tämän verkoston toimivuuden? (Millaisissa tilanteissa verkosto toimii hyvin, millaisissa huonosti?) Anna esimerkkejä.

12. Minkälaista päätöksenteko verkostoon liittyvissä asioissa on? Kerro esimerkki jostakin tilanteesta, esim. ongelmanratkaisusta tai uuden asian käsittelemisestä.

13. Minkä takia olet itse / edustamasi jäsenorganisaatio on yhä mukana toiminnassa? Minkä takia ei ole vetäydytty kesken pois?
        - Hyötytekijät/motivaatio verkostomaiseen toimintaan?
        - Verkoston vaatimukset suhteessa saavutettuihin hyötyihin?

14. Onko tällainen verkostomainen toiminta mielestäsi hyvä tapa organisoida henkilökohtaisen avun palveluja usean kunnan tarpeisiin? Jos tämä tapa taas ei ole hyvä, mikä vaihtoehtoinen tapa toimisi?

HENKILÖKOHTAISEN AVUN VERKOSTON VAIKUTUKSET

15. Onko henkilökohtaista apua kehittäneen verkoston toiminnalle asetettu alussa tavoitteita ja onko nämä tavoitteet saavutettu? Miksi/perustele.

16. Onko Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen toiminnassa jotakin erikoista vain siksi, että kyse on nimenomaan vammaispalveluista, vai onko sillä mielestäsi merkitystä?

17. Miten arvioisit vastaavan toimintamallin toimivan jonkin muun asian ympärille kootussa yhteistyöverkostossa? Perustele.

18. Mitä henkilökohtaista apua kehittäneen verkoston toiminnasta on mielestäsi opittu?

HENKILÖKOHTAISEN AVUN KESKUKSEN TULEVAISUUS

19. Millaisena näet Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen tulevaisuuden? Kuinka toiminta jatkuu, kun virallista kehittämistyön verkostoa ei enää taustalla ole?

20. Onko mielestäsi Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen toiminnassa joitakin erityisiä kehityskohteita? Entä haasteita?

21. Mitkä ovat mielestäsi Henkilökohtaisen avun keskuksen toiminnan jatkumisen edellytykset?

22. Henkilökohtaista apua kehittänyt verkosto luotiin tarpeeseen. Miten tiettyyn tarpeeseen luotavia verkostoja saataisiin tehokkaasti perustettua tulevaisuudessa? Miten tarpeita havaitaan, vai toimiiko ulkopuolinen impulssi aina aloitteentekijänä?

Appendix 3. Interview questions in English (translation)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Please tell a little bit about yourself and your role in the development
   network?
   > How long have you been a part of the network?
   > How did you end up being a part of the network?

2. Did you know other members of the network prior to this network? Did it
   have an affect on working in the network? You can give an example of
   a situation.

3. What kind of experience did you have about disability work and
   personal help before this network?

4. What was the most important reason why the development of personal
   help began in the Southeast Finland?

THE FUNCTIONALITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

5. What is the most important task of the centre of personal help in your
   opinion?

6. Describe the beginning of the network. How did the collaboration work,
   what was the beginning like?

7. What happened after the beginning, how did operations stabilized and
   continued?

8. Was there something special in the network collaboration from early
   on? You can give an example of a certain situation.
   > -Positive/negative

9. Has there been challenges in the network collaboration? If yeas, whet
   were they like and how did you sole them? Give examples.

10. Has there been any critical turning-points during the operations of the
    network? Give examples

11. How do you feel the functionality of the network? In what kind of
    situation the network works well/unwell) Give examples.

12. What is the decision-making process like in the network? Give
    example for example from a problem-solving situation or a situation,
    where new issues have been discussed.

13. Why are you / the organization you represent still in the network? Why haven't you quit at some point?
    - Benefits/motivation to network collaboration?
    - The demands of the network vs. The achieved benefits?

14. Is this kind of network operation good way to organize personal help services to many municipalities? If not, what other way would work better?

THE AFFECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

15. Has there been goals set to the network in the beginning and have these goals been achieved?

16. Is there something special in Henkka / the network behind it only, because the service is for disabled people or does it make a difference?

17. How would you think similar model would work in a collaboration network focusing on another issue/customer group?

18. What has been learned from the operation of this network?

THE FUTURE OF HENKKA

19. How do you see the future of Henkka? How do the operations continue now that the development network behind it doesn't exists anymore?

20. Do you think there are some areas that should be developed in Henkka? Any challenges?

21. What are the requirements to the continuation of the operations of Henkka?

22. This network was created based on needs. How would it be possible to create similar, needs-based, networks effectively in the future? How are the needs recognized, does there always have to be an external impulse?