
Basic Systemic Network Functions



- **Integration:** To what degree does the network system achieve to integrate its members? What are the incentives to become a member? By what means do the already involved members strengthen integration? How far do the members identify themselves with the network system and its main purpose? What are they ready to invest? What are the reasons for reaching out and inclusion or for distance and exclusion?
- **Boundaries:** What makes the difference to be a member of the network compared to an actor outside of the network? How does the network system define its boundaries? (space, locations, membership, attributes of members, contributions, capacities, performance profile, etc.)
- **Relations (systemic coupling):** How do the involved actors shape relationships and interactions? To what degree are they aware of how to shape loose/tight relationships inside the system, based on functional purposes? How do they ensure equality of access to information? By what means do the members strengthen exchange and interaction? To what extent they contribute to knowledge sharing and joint projects?
- **Products and benefits:** To what extent do the members expect a cooperation rent? Are they able to identify common products that emerge from the diversity of the members? What are the benefits produced by the network? Who benefits? How is the cooperation rent shared among the members?
- **Centrality:** To what degree is the system organized around a single or a few central actors? Are there tendencies to monopolize and control information flows and interactions? Are the members aware of potentials and challenges of a (de)centralized system?
- **Contingency:** To what extent are the members able to develop and debate different options of action? Are there incentives to explore alternatives to the present state of the network system and its products? To what degree is dissent and deviating behaviour accepted? How do the involved actors deal with critical voice and exit?
- **Governance:** How participative are decision-making and steering in the network system? Is there a functional coordination mechanism in place? Is coordination perceived as a service to the overall network? To what degree decisions are accepted and implemented?
- **Auto-reflexivity:** To what degree do the involved actors analyse and reflect upon the development of the network system? Is there enough time and opportunity for debate on systems development? Are there mechanisms in place for periodic reflection on systems development and the changing environment of the system?