

COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL

# The Internal Development of Honduran Human Rights CSOs

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An Exploratory Study of the Internal Development of Honduran Civil Society Organisations, Working in the  
Area of Human Rights, Through Collaborating with Danish Development Organisations.

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# Abstract

## Den Interne Udvikling af Honduranske Menneskerettigheds CSOer

### Et Eksplorativt Studie af den Interne udvikling i Honduranske Menneskerettigheds Civil Samfunds Organisationer Gennem Samarbejde med Danske Udviklingsorganisationer

Specialet tager sit udgangspunkt i problemformuleringen: Hvilken indvirkning har samarbejdet med danske udviklingsorganisationer haft for honduranske menneskerettigheds CSOer? Altså, hvordan de honduranske CSOer har udviklet deres organisations interne kapaciteter, efter samarbejdet med danske udviklingsorganisationer.

Formålet med specialet er, at bidrage til diskursen om hvordan succesfuld udvikling kan evalueres i udviklingslande. Ideen er at se bort fra de traditionelle evalueringsteknikker der almindeligvis fokuserer på hvordan partnerorganisationer i udviklingslande konkret bidrager til udvikling i deres kontekst, og som oftest bliver målt på opfyldelse af bestemte mål og indikatorer. Således forsøger specialet at undersøge et overset område i samarbejdet mellem honduranske CSOer og danske udviklingsorganisationer; partnerorganisationernes egen interne udvikling.

Specialets teoretiske base er institutionel teori, der bl.a. beskriver hvordan organisationer agerer i forskellige kontekster, hvordan organisationers omgivelser påvirker og hvordan organisationer kan påvirke deres egne omgivelser. Denne teoretiske base blev valgt for at kunne analysere hvordan de honduranske CSOer har ageret i løbet af samarbejdet med danske udviklingsorganisationer, hvordan deres omgivelser har påvirket dem og hvordan de har kunnet påvirke deres omgivelser.

Specialets metode er baseret på Steinar Kvaales semi-strukturerede interviews. Denne metode blev valgt for at kunne indsamle dybdegående data vedrørende de Honduranske CSOers udvikling. Således er specialet empiriske grundlag interviews med tre informanter. Informanterne er repræsentanter for honduranske CSOer eller danske udviklingsorganisationer.

Disse interviews, samt de følgende resultater og analyse bliver fremført i en struktureret form ved hjælp af seks parametre, der alle vedrører de honduranske CSOers udvikling af deres organisations kapacitet, der kan relateres til de danske udviklingsorganisationer tekniske bistand: 1. Officiel institutionalisering 2. Fortalervirksomhed 3. Inter-institutionelle links 4. Administrering af personale 5. Administrering af

finansielle midler 6. Administrering af projekter. De seks parametre blev alle valgt på baggrund af deres vigtige betydning for Honduranske CSOers udvikling, jævnfør gennemgang af institutionel teori og Danidas målsætninger for samarbejde med CSOer i udviklingslande.

Spicalet konkluderer, at der har været en betydelig udvikling i de Honduranske CSOers interne kapaciteter efter at have samarbejdet med danske udviklingsorganisationer. Specifikke dele af den interne udvikling har været lettere identificerbare end andre. Ligeledes har specifikke dele af den interne udvikling været lettere identificerbare vedrørende deres direkte relation til samarbejdet med danske udviklingsorganisationer.

På baggrund af resultaterne af dette studie, foreslås der flere implikationer for videre udvikling af akademisk og praktisk arbejde. Først og fremmest har institutionel teori været en interessant og brugbar teoretisk base. At se nærmere på organisationers interne udvikling læner sig op af moderne ideer i udviklingsarbejde der vedrører bæredygtighed og lokalt ejerskab. Rammen for analysen af organisationernes udvikling, de seks parametre, synes at være brugbar for evalueringer af lignende typer organisationer, ligesom det endvidere kunne være interessant at kombinere institutionel teori med udviklingsteori i fremtidige studier.

# Foreword

The path to the completion of the present master's thesis has been challenging to say the least. There have been several difficulties that, during the elaboration of the project, have had to be overcome. Challenges of various sorts, being academic, practical or personal, have affected the process.

Spending several months in Tegucigalpa, Honduras makes a Dane accustomed to all possible forms of the sense of security, understanding the problematic situation the country finds itself in. Living in gated neighbourhoods, driving in cars with tinted windows, walking the streets with an ever-present paranoia, are just some of the "issues" the affluent of this country live with. The large majority of the country's population, the poor, are of course not privileged enough to have these luxury "issues" to deal with.

Even though this present master's thesis is only a drop in the ocean of studies of international development assistance, the main idea behind the study, was to bring something new to the table. It is the sincere hope of the author that it can, in some way or form, help the process of improving the country's state, especially the horrific state of daily and seemingly institutionalised violations of human rights.

I would like to thank the representatives from international, Danish, and local organisations in Tegucigalpa, who have given me a lot of inspiration and have been actively involved in the collection of data. I would also like to thank my guidance counsellor for guiding the process of the elaboration of the thesis.

# Introduction

Honduras is one of the most impoverished and least developed nations in the western hemisphere, with 66 per cent of the population living below the poverty line (UNDP 2012) (WB 2012). During the recent years, homicide rates have increased significantly, rising from 42 per 100.000 people in 1999 to 91 per 100.000 in the latest report from 2011 (UNODC 2012). This makes Honduras the most violent country in the world, with neighbouring El Salvador trailing at 69 per 100.000, when using, as it is commonly done, the homicide rate as an indicator of the overall level of violence in countries where reliable statistics usually are scarce.

On June 28<sup>th</sup> 2009, then President Manuel Zelaya was ousted in what the international community unanimously called a coup d'état. This event, along with the political aftermath has thrown the country further into an even deepened state of insecurity, uncertainty and violations of its citizen's basic rights (Amnesty 2012).

In the annual report from 2011, Amnesty (2011) sums up the human rights situation in Honduras by noting: "Freedom of expression came under attack. Little progress was made in repairing the damage to human rights protection and the rule of law that followed the 2009 coup. Impunity for human rights violations by military and police officers persisted. Human rights defenders were subject to intimidation". In the annual report from 2012, Amnesty (2012) sums up the human rights situation by noting: "Several people were killed in on-going land disputes in the Aguan region. Forced evictions left hundreds of campesino [peasant farmer] families homeless. Impunity persisted for human rights violations by the military and police, including those committed during the 2009 coup d'état. Human rights defenders continued to be subjected to intimidation."

Human Rights Watch (2013) characterizes the situation in the country in the following way: "Honduras made very limited progress in addressing the serious human rights violations committed under the de facto government that took power after the 2009 military coup, despite efforts by the human rights unit in the attorney general's office to investigate abuses, and the 2011 Truth and Reconciliation Commission report documenting those that occurred. Violence and threats by unidentified perpetrators against journalists, human rights defenders, prosecutors, peasant activists, and transgender people remain serious problems. Perpetrators are rarely brought to justice."

During the recent years, the international community and scholars alike have become more aware of the importance of civil society organisations (CSOs). Locally based CSOs are now seen as crucial to assisting progress in developing countries, as an effective development effort requires the dedicated involvement of

local actors. This is the case in all parts of development works, from food security to human rights. CSOs can play the role as the organizer and promoter of the citizens' wishes and demands, encouraging direct participation from the populace, or they can serve as watchdogs, shedding light on injustices and promoting a just and fair society (Tegen 2004)(Keim 2003).

Denmark, Denmark's development cooperation (Danida), and Danish development organisations, support the work of local CSOs around the world, in Latin America and in Honduras. This collaboration is a way in which two distinct organisations from two different parts of the world, with dissimilar organisational cultures and institutional settings, work together for a common goal.

## **Problem Statement**

The problem statement derives from conversations with representatives from both Honduran CSOs and Danish development organisations about how their work is being evaluated. What surfaced was a view from both sides that their efforts to contribute to the development of civil society and their target groups are generally being evaluated by their accomplishment of certain goals, objectives and indicators agreed upon in a logical framework. The logical framework has become a global standard for formulation and follow-up on development projects and programmes and is often a condition for obtaining financial support from donors. The logical framework being a tool mainly for results-based management is mostly focused on the accomplishment of the expected achievements proposed, but not focusing on the underlying process, a process of high importance. The critique of the Logical framework is being shared by various scholars; among those is Bakewell (2005).

By looking at these critiques, and through the initial conversations with actors in the local context of development works in Honduras, the impression was that a lot of aspects are lost, by being focused mostly on reaching certain indicators agreed upon, and not focusing on the process of the development work itself, done by the organisation. The process itself, the internal impact and the accompanying experiences that are learned by the organisations, surged as an area that was relatively untouched. As such, it was found as an interesting topic to embark on, and a topic that could contribute to the discussion of how we evaluate development works in the future.

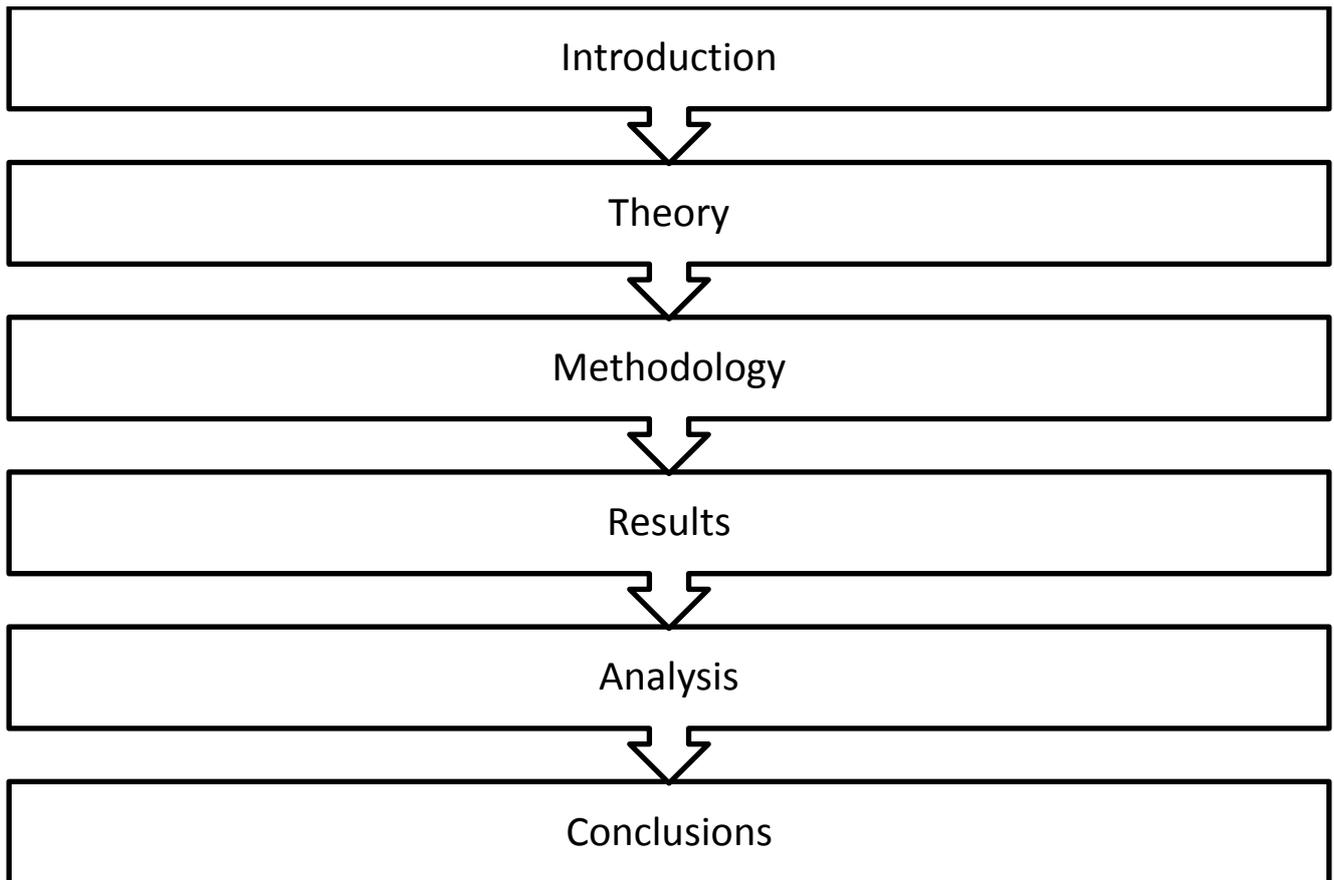
**Problem statement:****What impact has the collaboration with Danish development organisations had upon Honduran CSOs working in the area of human rights?**

The study intends to determine what have been the internal development and impacts in Honduran CSOs working in the area of human rights through collaborating with Danish development organisations. The focus will be on how the various institutional processes of Honduran CSOs has developed and evolved throughout the period in which there has been an established link to Danish development organisations. There will be an emphasis on how technical assistance provided by Danish development organisations has helped Honduran CSOs work and prosper for the better in their proper context and setting i.e. how has the Honduran CSOs developed as organisations during the years of collaboration?

Through interviews with key informants, the empirical data will be analysed in relation to the theories proposed, and used to determine whether and where there has been an impact after years of collaboration. The process of collaboration itself and the following internal institutional impact on the local Honduran CSO has a potentially great, but often hidden value, if Danish development aid is normally measured by the way the technical and financial assistance develops and affects the population, group, or area of focus, but not the organisation itself, that works on local grounds to complete the project or programme in question. The study therefore seeks to propose, through interviews with key actors and analysing the internal development and impact in the Honduran CSO, a new way to look at how development work can bring about positive outcomes.

**Thesis Overview**

With the introduction and the definition of the problem statement being the first, the present study will go through six sections. The second section is the theoretical section where there will be a review of institutional theory, a discussion of the theories chosen for the study, and the theories relation to the research setting. The second section will also contain a more practical part that will help guide the construction of relevant research questions. The third section contains the methodology and the philosophy of science that will lead towards the elaboration of the framework for the interviews conducted. The fourth section contains the results from the interviews, i.e. quotations and sum ups. In the fifth section, the data gathered in the interviews will be analysed in relation to the theoretical framework. The sixth and final section will contain the concluding statements along with the implications of the study.



## **Limitations**

The study will not focus on the direct impact of the economic assistance in the collaboration between Danish organisations and Honduran CSOs. That is, the direct funding of Honduran CSOs by Danish development organisations, which is also usually a major part of the collaboration, will not be a part of the study. The investigation is therefore not an attempt to determine whether Danish international development funds have been used properly, and will not dissect the use of funds by the Honduran CSOs.

The study will not focus on any specific programmes or projects the two types of organisations jointly have undertaken. It is not the programmes or projects themselves that are under the loop. As such, the study will not be a review of a specific experience of collaboration in a certain programme or project where the two types of organisations actions will be analysed. The study does not have the purpose of being viewed as an evaluation of a specific partnership between two specifically named organisations from Denmark and Honduras. Neither is it intended to dissect the communicational and cultural issues that might occur when the two types of organisations collaborate.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The study intends to gather the learned experiences, and seeks to define what has been the internal development and impact for the Honduran CSOs after a period of collaboration with Danish development organisations. It is expected that the present study can contribute to the discourse of international development assistance, not only in partnerships between Danish development organisations and Honduran CSOs working with the topic of human rights, but also in partnerships with CSOs from other countries, working with a different theme, under a different mandate, but still intending to contribute to a constructive improvement of developing countries. As such, the audience of the study is not only the specific types of organisations, working with human rights that will be treated in the research setting. The audience encompasses a wider segment as it is not limited to the few organisations that will form part of the research setting.

The research setting of the present study is the following:

1. The Danish development organisations that, according to official documents, can be characterized in the following way:

Danish development organizations financed by the Danish state through Danida or by private donors. These organizations have an often fixed set of values and aims they have to live up to in order to obtain the funds for supporting CSOs technically and financially in developing countries. The Danish development organisations that will be focused on in the present study are the ones who by financial and technical assistance support CSOs with a focus on human rights in Honduras.

The Danish development organisations could have an interest in the present study as it seeks to propose a new way of evaluating how their work can impact their partner and potential partners with a different set of factors and with a different focus.

2. The Honduran CSOs that, according to official documents, can be characterized in the following way:

Honduran CSOs working in the field of human rights, dependent on assistance from not only Danish, but also other donor organizations from other countries that have similar objectives in their support for civil society in developing countries. They usually work in a very difficult and interchangeable reality regarding the institutional and political difficulties that exist in their proper country.

The Honduran CSOs could have an interest in the present study as the results of the study should clarify what their organisation have to gain from entering in a partnership with Danish development organizations.

3. Students and scholars of international development are not a part of the research setting, but they are, however, a part of the audience:

Students and scholars of development work and organizations in this field could have an interest in the present study as it seeks to propose new ideas on how to evaluate partnerships between the Danish development organisations and Honduran CSOs. The study can be used as a reflective tool on how Danish development organisations impact the local CSOs and that could contribute to the discussion on how to evaluate these partnerships.

# Theory

The first objective of the literature review and the theoretical considerations, which is to be presented, is to facilitate the creation of relevant research questions. The second objective of the theoretical base is to create a frame of analysis that later can be used in the context of the present study. After having reviewed the literature of institutional theory in recent years, and having researched what could be considered crucial to the development of the Honduran CSOs, the end should be relevant research questions on how Honduran CSOs have developed, after having collaborated with Danish development organisations, and facilitating the frame of analysis for the findings in the study.

## Literature Review - Institutional Theory

The institutional theory was chosen as it seemed to be of high relevance when considering how organisations change and develop. The literature review regarding the topic provides the underlying thoughts on institutional environments and on the various types of evolution organisations might go through. As such, the literature review will serve as the theoretical base for the study.

Institutional theory attends to the deeper and more resilient aspects of social structure. It considers the processes by which structures, including schemas, rules, norms, and routines, become established as authoritative guidelines for social behaviour. It treats how these elements are created, diffused, adopted, and adapted over space and time, and how they fall into decline and disuse (Scott 2004).

Trevino et al (2008) argue that even though institutional theories should be more applicable in explaining organisational behaviour in developing countries than in developed countries, there seems to be little research in the institutional setting of developing countries. They also argue that although organisations manage their actions and evolve through a variety of processes, institutional research and theory often start with the idea that different types of institutional development fit into a clear framework of processes with matching outcomes.

Casson et al (2010) argue that institutional quality itself is determined by lack of equity in a society. Their basic thesis is that inequitable economies develop exploitative and inefficient institutions. They argue in this context that democracy matters because it contributes to setting up institutions that guarantee equal

opportunities for all. However, unfair wealth distributions can block the emergence of effective democracy because it makes redistribution too costly for the elites in power. In particular, the relationship between political democracy and inequality is important, because inequality shapes, and is shaped by, political institutions.

One of the most recognized frameworks regarding institutional theory would be that of Scott (1995). His research divides organisational decision making into three institutional pillars or components that influence how organisations evolve; cognitive, normative and regulative. These three pillars have later been described as three dimensions; governmental policies (regulative), widely shared social knowledge (cognitive), and value systems (normative) Kostova (1997).

The regulative components of an institutional environment are “the existing laws and rules in a particular national environment that promote certain types of behaviours and restrict others” (Kostova 1997:180). The process itself is identified as coercive through rules, boundaries, laws and regulations.

The cognitive components of an institutional environment are “schemas, frames, inferential sets, and representation that affect the way people notice, categorize and interpret stimuli from the environment” (Kostova 1999:314). The cognitive component of an institutional environment leads to isomorphism of activities via processes that encourage imitating patterns of activities that have strong cultural support (Scott 1995).

The normative components of an institutional environment are “social norms, values beliefs and assumptions that are socially shared and carries out by individuals” (Kostova 1997:180). The normative component defines what is appropriate for society’s members, e.g. when institutions as educational systems, religion or government promotes a certain way of behaviour, even in absence of legal or other sanctions (Scott 1995).

Scott (2001) later argues that institutional environments provide meaning and stability to social behaviour, shaping and constraining organisational actions, and that institutional influence are exerted on organizations through rules and regulations, normative prescriptions, and social expectations.

Kraatz & Block (2008) argue that organisations facing conflicting institutional demands operate within multiple institutional spheres and are subject to multiple and contradictory regulatory regimes, normative orders and cultural logics.

Pache and Santos (2010) note that organisations are increasingly subject to conflicting demands imposed by their institutional environments. This makes compliance impossible to achieve, because satisfying some

demands requires defying others. In facing conflicting demands, they suggest that organisations develop strategic responses.

Oliver (1991) offers a typology of strategic responses that vary in organisational resistance from passive conformity to proactive manipulation. She identifies different strategic responses that organisations enact as a result of the institutional pressures that are exerted on them. Five strategic responses to institutional processes are proposed that varies from a passive to an increasingly active strategy. Each of these five strategies has three of their proper accompanying tactics on how to apply the chosen strategy:

The strategy of acquiesce with the tactics of habit, imitate or comply. Habit exemplified by following invisible, taken for granted norms. Imitate exemplified by mimicking institutional models. Comply exemplified by obeying rules and accepting norms.

The strategy of compromise with the tactics of balance, pacify or bargain. Balance exemplified by balancing the expectations of multiple constituents. Pacify exemplified by placating and accommodating institutional elements. Bargain exemplified by negotiating with institutional stakeholders.

The strategy of avoid with the tactics of conceal, buffer or escape. Conceal exemplified by disguising nonconformity. Buffer exemplified by loosening institutional attachments. Escape exemplified by changing goals, activities, or domains.

The strategy of defy with the tactics of dismiss, challenge or attack. Dismiss exemplified by ignoring explicit norms and values. Challenge exemplified by contesting rules and requirements. Attack exemplified by insulting the sources of institutional pressure.

The strategy of manipulate with the tactics of co-opt, influence or control. Co-opt exemplified by importing influential constituents. Influence exemplified by shaping values and criteria. Control exemplified by dominating institutional constituents and processes.

The theory of institutional isomorphism by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) discusses the way organisations become more alike. DiMaggio and Powell identify three mechanisms through which institutional isomorphism occurs; coercive isomorphism that stems from political influence and the problem of legitimacy, mimetic isomorphism responding from standard responses to uncertainty, and normative isomorphism associated with professionalisation.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) propose a series of hypothesis that predict isomorphic change in organisations. Even though the hypotheses normally would be used to guide quantitative research, they will still be put forward because of their importance as theoretical base for the present study.

According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983) the first set of predictors are at the organisational-level and propose how the organisations themselves are prone to institutional isomorphism. The first two treat coercive isomorphism, the next two treat mimetic isomorphism, and the last two treat normative isomorphism:

The greater the dependence of an organisation on another organisation, the more similar it will become to that organisation in structure, climate, and behavioural focus.

The greater the centralisation of organisation A's resource supply, the greater the extent to which organisation A will change isomorphically to resemble the organisations on which it depends for resources.

The more uncertain the relationship between means and ends the greater the extent to which an organisation will model itself after organisations it perceives to be successful.

The more ambiguous the goals of an organisation, the greater the extent to which the organisation will model itself after organisations it perceives to be successful.

The greater the reliance on academic credentials in choosing managerial and staff personnel, the greater the extent to which an organisation will become like other organisations in its field.

The greater the participation of organisational managers in trade and professional associations, the more likely the organisation will be, or will become, like other organisations in the field.

The second set of predictors is field-level predictors that propose how a certain fields as a whole, are prone to institutional isomorphism. The first two treat coercive isomorphism, the next two treat mimetic isomorphism, and the last two treat normative isomorphism:

The greater the extent to which an organisational field is dependent upon a single (or several similar) source of support for vital resources, the higher the level of isomorphism.

The greater the extent to which the organisations in a field transact with agencies of the state, the greater the extent of isomorphism as a whole.

The fewer the number of visible alternative organisational models in that field, the faster the rate of isomorphism is in that field.

The greater the extent to which technologies are uncertain in a field, the greater the rate of isomorphic change.

The greater the extent of professionalisation in a field, the greater the amount of institutional isomorphic change.

The greater the extent of structuration of a field, the greater the degree of isomorphism.

## **Theoretical Considerations**

The theoretical considerations will now follow the literature review and describe why the theories proposed have been chosen and what the theories will mean for the study. A selection of the theoretical viewpoints will be presented so as to pinpoint how the theories can help shape the study.

The point made by Trevino et al (2008) in which they propose that institutional development should be applicable in the context of developing countries, as there would be a better possibility of relating the institutional theories to the internal development, seems important as it would be vital to determine if the institutional frameworks really are usable in the context of the present study.

The three institutional pillars proposed by Scott (1995) and Kostova (1997), the cognitive, regulative and normative are interesting in the way they propose various institutional influences that are exerted upon organisations. It seems opportune to research how the three institutional pillars have influenced and which of the three institutional pillars have had most effect on the internal organizational development of the Honduran CSOs. Also, it would be important to analyse if or how the Honduran CSOs themselves have been able to influence the institutional pillars of their environment. In these contexts, the three institutional pillars are, as such, important to use as an analytical frame.

The thoughts regarding conflicting institutional demands proposed by Kraatz & Block (2008) and Pache and Santos (2010) links directly to the framework of strategic responses proposed by Oliver (1991). Organisations finding themselves in situations with conflicting demands would have find way to deal with

these circumstances. Therefore, researching which types of strategic responses have been used to overcome these institutional demands would also be important as a point of analysis.

Another significant part of the analytical basis of the study relies on the framework of institutional isomorphism by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) with its way to predict how organisations become more alike. This framework with its series of predictors will be important as a tool for analysis as the influence exerted on the Honduran CSO by the Danish development organisation might be directly linked to institutional isomorphism and that the collaboration itself could result in institutional isomorphism. The Honduran CSO could after years of collaboration with Danish development organisations, if not become more like its Danish counterpart, then act accordingly to their desires.

So as to recap, the analytical frame of the study relies on the following theories: Trevino et al (2008) and the question of applicability of institutional theories in developing countries. The three institutional pillars; cognitive, normative and regulative proposed by Scott (1995) and Kostova (1997). The issue of conflicting institutional demands proposed by Kraatz & Block (2008) and Pache and Santos (2010) and the relating strategic responses proposed by Oliver (1991). Lastly, the predictors of institutional isomorphism proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and the way in which organisations become more alike.

## **Research Setting - The Theories' Relation to the Development of Honduran CSOs**

The literature review and the theoretical considerations will in the present section be related to the research setting, that is, the environment in which the Honduran CSOs find themselves. Their institutional environment will be analysed based on preliminary assumptions linking the research setting to the theories gone through. Possible imagined outcomes, i.e. the internal development of the Honduran CSO, caused by the collaboration with Danish development organisations will also be proposed. This is all in order to reach research questions that would be as relevant as possible.

Following the thoughts of Pache and Santos (2010), the Honduran CSOs working with human rights, are subject to conflicting institutional demands by their surroundings. In their proper context, they would be subject to their country's unstable political scene and an extremely violent society, lately symbolised by the following events: The coup d'état in 2009, where now ex-president Manuel Zelaya was ousted. The technical coup in 2012, where four Supreme Court justices were unconstitutionally removed from their

posts (Human rights watch 2013). The country of Honduras currently holds the record for being the most violent country in the world (UNODC 2012). Lawyers and other professionals working for the promotion and protection of human rights are assassinated regularly (Amnesty 2012). These situations and events have increased the number of human rights concerns and made the quest of protecting and promoting human rights in the country extremely difficult. These realities will have an impact of their institutional environment and the strategic responses they apply in order to overcome them.

On the other hand, when Danish development organisations enter partnerships with CSOs in developing countries, a number of objectives, goals and indicators of achieved goals are agreed upon between the two parties. The various factors in the agreements are presumed to be achievable in the situation in which the Honduran CSO is at the moment of agreement.

The conflicting demands that occur in an institutional environment as the human rights field in Honduras could make compliance with the demands of the Danish development organisation on one side, and the country's unstable political and violent situation on the other, difficult to achieve. If it is seen to be hard to continue the carrying out of a project agreed upon because of the country's situation, the Honduran CSO will at times have to defy some demands, in order to satisfy others. According to Pache and Santos (2010), in an institutional environment like this, the Honduran CSO will develop strategic responses to deal with their situation they exist in.

The strategic responses with accompanying tactics proposed by Oliver (1991) are important to consider when discussing how the Honduran CSO has developed. The chosen strategic response to institutional pressure could determine to what extent the collaboration between the Honduran CSO and the Danish development organisation has been successful. Have they applied an acquiescing strategy in order to comply with the institutional pressures or have they applied a manipulative strategy in order to influence or control the institutional pressures?

According to Scott (2002) the institutional influences and demands on the Honduran CSOs would be exerted through rules and regulations, normative prescriptions, and social expectations, the three institutional pillars; Regulative, normative and cognitive. Also, referring to Kraatz & Block (2008), and assuming that the Honduran CSOs are facing conflicting institutional demands, they are subject to contradictory regulatory regimes, normative orders, and cultural logics. This view is shared by Pache and Santos (2010)

The regulative component i.e. the rules and regulations the Honduran CSO has to comply with could be the laws set by the Honduran government. The Honduran government might levy certain sets of rules and

regulations in order for the Honduran CSO to be considered an official institution and to be able to function legally. On the other hand, the Danish development organisation also sets certain rules and regulations in order for the Honduran CSO to achieve technical and financial assistance.

The normative prescriptions, social expectations and cultural orders that influence how the Honduran CSOs act and behave, could be set by the Honduran society as a whole, and within the norms of the sphere of human rights in the country and region. The national and regional media along with public opinion could have an effect on the development of the Honduran CSO as they need to be responsive to their local normative and cultural context. On the other hand, the Danish development organisation could pull in another direction, as they are responsive to their proper mandate and evolving international agreements on human rights.

Taking into account the fragile democratic institutions that exist in Honduras the thoughts of Casson et al (2010) are very relevant. That could mean that the process of institutionalization of the Honduran CSO are not easy accomplishable.

Institutional isomorphism as proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) could play a large part in the way the Honduran CSOs have developed. The predictors presented in the literature review could all in their own way be important to look at. Therefore, the predictors will be related to the proper research setting and suggestions of how the CSO could have developed will be proposed:

The Honduran CSO should have come close to desired requirements of the Danish development organisation if there is a strong dependence on financial and technical assistance. If the Honduran CSO only receives assistance from few development organisations or if the partnership is especially strong with the Danish organisation and accounts for a large and important part and the assistance they receive, there will be a larger probability of institutional isomorphism. If this is the case, the Honduran CSO will change its organisational structure, climate and behavioural focus to resemble that of the wishes of the Danish development organisation.

The Honduran CSO should model itself and have developed more to the likings of their Danish counterpart if there exist a large degree of uncertainty and ambiguity in the relationship between means and ends and the regarding the goals of the Honduran CSO. If the political environment of promoting and protecting human rights in Honduras is problematic, and if it is difficult to see which direction and focus they should apply in their mission and vision of human rights in the country, the Honduran CSOs should strive to apply similar goals as organisations they perceive to be successful, these would then presumably be Danish development organisations.

The Honduran CSO should become more like other organisations in the field of human rights if there is a large dependence on managers and staff, and participation in professional associations in the field of human rights. If the Honduran CSO has a large quantity of personnel that have academic credentials (doctors, lawyers, social studies, psychologists) and a focus on human rights, and if these professionals circulate with other likeminded in human rights forums, alliances and networks are formed, and there will be a larger probability of institutional isomorphism.

The Honduran CSOs in the field of human rights will be more prone to institutional isomorphism if the availability of funding and technical assistance from international development organisations is very limited, and because of that, only a small number of organisations with relevant resources available can set the agenda with their proper thinking and perspectives. If the Honduran CSOs in the field of human rights have direct access and can establish dialogue with the various state departments with the objective to promote and protect human rights in the country, the chance of institutional isomorphism increases.

The Honduran CSOs in the field of human rights are more prone to institutional isomorphism if there are very few visible organizational models, and no evident alternative model as how to restructure the organisations. If a large variety of technologies, i.e. the methods, practices, and options to protect and promote human rights are uncertain and difficult to encounter, there is a greater chance of institutional isomorphism in the field of human rights.

The Honduran CSOs in the field of human rights are more prone to institutional isomorphism if there is a great extent of professionalization and structuration in the field. If there is an ambient of professional people and structured actions, institutional isomorphism is more likely to occur.

## **Danida - The Strategy for Danish Support to Civil Society in Developing Countries**

The Danida views of what to focus on in terms of developing CSOs are brought forward so as to get additional knowledge of how the Honduran CSOs should develop according to Danida. These views will accompany the theoretical basis in the construction of relevant research questions.

In “The strategy for Danish support to civil society in developing countries” (Danida 2008), the goals for Danish development organisations are established by the Danish foreign ministry as a guideline for

collaboration with CSOs in developing countries. The strategy states: “The long term overarching objective of Danish civil society support is to contribute to the development of a strong, independent and diversified civil society in developing countries.”

In order to complete the long-term objective, Danida proposes nine strategic goals with subsequent goals for assisting the development of civil society organisations in developing countries:

1. Promotion of a vibrant and open debate nationally and internationally

- Denmark will, together with civil society actors, endeavour to promote a vibrant and open debate on poverty reduction, nationally and internationally.
- Denmark will work for the establishment of a better framework for civil society’s participation and work in developing countries in relation to, for example, national legislation, cooperation processes and public financing.
- Denmark will contribute to ensuring the involvement of civil society in the implementation and further development of the Paris Declaration<sup>1</sup>, nationally and internationally.

2. Promotion of a representative, legitimate and locally based civil society

- Denmark will strive to encourage civil society organisations to apply relevant principles from the Paris Declaration in their work, such as local ownership, use of and adaption to local systems, harmonization and coordination of efforts, and results-orientation.
- Denmark will place greater emphasis on civil society organisations in development countries working with standards for good governance, sensible division of labour, popular foundation and inclusion of target groups in decision-making processes.
- Denmark will support a diversity of civil society organisations, so as to ensure that the need and circumstances of many different groups can be addressed.

3. Promotion of capacity development, advocacy work and networking opportunities

- Denmark will, in cooperation with civil society organisations, emphasize capacity development, and that civil society actors in developing countries assume full ownership and independent responsibility for preparing and implementing activities.

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<sup>1</sup> The Paris declaration was adopted in March 2005 by more than 100 countries and international organisations, which committed them to increasing the effectiveness of development aid. The declaration focuses particularly on national ownership and adaptation to the recipient country’s strategies, plans and systems as well as harmonization of donor cooperation. This is designed to ensure a more result-oriented development assistance and mutual accountability between donors and recipient country.

- Denmark will promote the involvement of civil society organisations in advocacy work – locally, nationally, regionally and internationally.
- Denmark will support the capacity of civil society organisations to establish, develop and participate in national, regional and international networks.

#### 4. Promotion of focus on rights

- Denmark will strengthen cooperation with civil society organisations seeking to ensure the implementation of international conventions and declarations concerning human rights, such as rights for woman, children, and people with disabilities, indigenous people and other particularly vulnerable population groups.

#### 5. Promotion of flexible and relevant interventions in fragile states and institutions

- Denmark will, in fragile situations, work to foster cooperation with local, Danish and international civil society organisations on promoting human rights, stabilisation efforts and services as well as conflict prevention and reconciliation efforts.
- Denmark will contribute to ensuring flexible conditions enabling civil society support in fragile situations to be adapted to difficult working conditions, and will create a better transition between short-term humanitarian action and long-term development assistance.

Strategic goals 6 through 9 in “The strategy for Danish support to civil society in developing countries” propose how the Danish development organisation themselves should act and contribute to a prosperous environment for collaboration with civil society in developing countries. These goals are therefore not explainable as how these can be interpreted for Honduran CSOs working with human rights. Nevertheless, in order to understand how Danida sees the premises for both parties in order to obtain productive collaboration, it can be argued that it is important to not only understand the strategic goals proposed for CSOs in developing countries, but also the strategic goals for the Danish development organisations.

#### 6. Promotion of civil society support in Danish bilateral and multilateral assistance

- Denmark will strategically and proactively promote the goals and principles for civil society support in development cooperation and in dialogue with partners in programme countries.
- Denmark will work for the involvement of relevant civil society organisations in the planning, formulation, implementation and monitoring of official bilateral assistance.
- Denmark will apply principles and goals in the civil society support in connection with the on-going engagement in multilateral contexts.

#### 7. Involvement of Danish civil society organisations in development assistance

- Danish civil society organisations will also in future be involved in the implementation of the goals of this strategy. This requires that the organisations:
  - Set clear targets for, and regularly assess their contributions to, promoting local ownership in the partnerships with civil society organisations in developing countries.
  - Set clear priorities for their interventions with respect to country focus, sector and partner choice, with a point of departure in their professional competencies.
  - Strengthen their results-orientation, including evaluation of the impact of activities in relation to the achievement of this strategy's long term objective.
  - Set clear goals for, and regularly assess the strengthening of their popular foundation and networks in Denmark

#### 8. Collaboration with other stakeholders

- Denmark will support the initiatives promoting dialogue and cooperation between civil society organisations and the business community as well as other actors, such as research institutions, media and political parties.
- Denmark will, through collaboration between the ministry of foreign affairs, other donors and civil society organisations in Denmark and in the developing countries, promote harmonization and adaptation of reporting tools and methods of funding.

#### 9. Goals and results

- Denmark will, through collaboration between the ministry of foreign affairs and Danish organisations, strengthen results-orientation of the activities implemented in support of civil society development.
- The ministry of foreign affairs will report on progress in relation to the above strategic goals.

Each of the first five strategic goals regarding how CSOs in developing countries should be supported and how they should develop will now be directly linked to the context of the Honduran Human rights CSOs. This is still in order to reach relevant research questions by combining this more practical approach i.e. the Danida goals for CSO, with the more theoretical basis reviewed earlier.

According to strategic goal 1 of Danida:

The Honduran CSOs should have developed their capacity to promote the constructive and positive discourse of the promotion of human rights on a national and international level.

They should have gained and improved their access to the national government and public financing for human rights programmes, and bettered cooperation with other institutions and organisations with a stake in the promotion of human rights.

They should have contributed to the discourse of strategies that promote effectiveness, national ownership and harmonisation of donor cooperation so as to better development programme results and accountability between donor organisations and Honduran civil society.

According to strategic goal 2 of Danida:

Other than contributing to the continued discourse of the Paris declaration, the Honduran CSOs should have applied relevant principles from the said declaration in their proper processes so as to better programme results. As mentioned, these principles include; focus on local ownership, local systems, harmonisation and coordination of efforts with other stakeholders involved in the protection and promotion of human rights.

The Honduran CSOs should have bettered the standards in their own organisation for good governance, planned division of labour, support of the public and involvement of programme stakeholders in decision making.

According to strategic goal 3 of Danida:

The Honduran CSOs should have developed and improved their capacity to carry out projects and activities with focus on human rights. Projects and activities, which before required assistance from Danish development organisations, should now be executed without Danish involvement. As such, similar projects or activities should now be planned and carried out on their by themselves, hereby assuming ownership and responsibility of said project or activity.

The Honduran CSOs should have increased their involvement in the promotion and protection of human rights towards relevant authorities; municipalities, human rights ombudsman, national government, and regional and international human rights stakeholders (Amnesty, Association for Prevention of Torture etc.).

The Honduran CSOs should have created many more inter-institutional connections with likeminded stakeholders in the area of human rights, and thereby increasing their participation in human rights networks in Honduras, Central/Latin America and the rest of the world.

According to strategic goal 4 of Danida:

The Honduran CSOs should have enhanced their capacity to promote the international conventions and declarations regarding human rights so that the Honduran state complies with these.

According to strategic goal 5 of Danida:

The Honduran CSOs should have developed and enhanced their capacity to mediate on various levels in situations of conflict in the country. They should also have improved their capacity to focus and create well-planned transitions between short-term and long-term projects and activities.

## **Research Questions**

The specific research questions will be directly related to the problem statement, the purpose of the study, and will be clearly linked to the topic and limited to a single idea and focus per question. The literature review, theoretical considerations and Danida goals will be used to justify the importance of various parts of internal development of Honduran CSOs.

The purpose of the research questions is to help investigate the problem statement profoundly. The problem statement is, for the sake of repetition, the following:

**What impact has the collaboration with Danish development organisations had upon Honduran CSOs working in the area of human rights?**

The research questions will divide and separate the problem statement into sub-questions, so as to make the investigation directed towards different and specific important sub-parts of the problem statement. They will all focus on a specific issue or part of the development the Honduran CSO supposedly has gone through. That is, they will focus on the supposed impact in distinct parts of the internal organisational practices in the Honduran CSOs. The underlying reasons for proposing each and every one of the research questions will be grounded in the theoretical considerations and the goals of Danida. That will justify why proposing the research questions are relevant for solving the problem statement.

The research questions that have appeared to be of importance are the various ways of which the Honduran CSO could have developed. These research questions will also be referred to as parameters. The parameters are distinct, and are all areas which should be view as crucial to the development of an organisation, more specifically, a Honduran CSO working in the area of human rights.

The six parameters are the following:

1. Official institutionalisation
2. Political advocacy
3. Inter-institutional linkages
4. Management of staff
5. Management of projects
6. Management of funds

In the next section, an explanation of what is meant by the parameters will be provided in order to reach a clear understanding of the wording. The research questions will thereafter be related to Danida's goals and the theoretical framework in order to justify each one. As a consequence of this, all six of the research questions will be related to the practical perspective which is presented by Danida, and the theoretical perspective which is the theoretical background.

As such, the six research questions will be proposed in the following way, each with their proper parameter to be researched:

1. **What has been the impact upon the Honduran CSOs, from collaborating with Danish development organisations, regarding official institutionalisation?**

Official institutionalisation refers to the CSOs capacity as a recognised organisation with legalised and formalised agreements and procedures that could make the appearance and presence of the CSO more professional.

Danida's strategic goal 2 mentions the importance of the CSO improving its standards of good governance and basing its work in popular support. Putting an emphasis on local ownership and adaptation to local systems could mean an increasing professional appearance of the CSO.

Improving the CSO's official institutionalisation seems as a matter to be taken into account when considering the regulative institutional pillar, which treats the laws and regulations that are levied upon the

Honduran CSO. Investigating which type of strategic response the Honduran CSOs have used in order to accommodate the institutional demands they are exposed to, also makes this research question very relevant.

**2. What has been the impact upon the Honduran CSOs, from collaborating with Danish development organisations, regarding political advocacy?**

Political advocacy refers to the CSO's capacity to approach government branches and other relevant national and international institutions in order to promote their cause. This could be with the goal of drawing attention to a certain human rights violation, or seeking to promote the approving of laws protecting human rights.

Danida's strategic goal 3 mentions advocacy work as being of high importance. Strategic goal 1 mentions the importance of promoting the discourse and debates nationally and internationally, and participating in the improvement of national legislation. Strategic goal 4 mentions the significance of the CSO ensuring the implementation of international conventions and declarations regarding human rights.

Their capacity to conduct advocacy can be linked to the idea of institutional isomorphism, when considering the increased probability of isomorphism when organisations interact with state agencies.

The normative institutional pillar plays its part in choosing the present research question as advocacy efforts are linked to the way in which institutions promote certain behaviour. The Honduran CSO could actually have a say in shaping the normative orders in society regarding human rights issues, by conducting effective advocacy.

**3. What has been the impact upon the Honduran CSOs, from collaborating with Danish development organisations, regarding inter-institutional linkages?**

Inter-institutional linkages refer to the CSOs capacity to network with likeminded organisations and institutions that also have a stake in the protection of human rights, thus contributing to the creation of an environment for the sharing of strategies, approaches and experiences.

Danida's strategic goal 3 mentions the importance of improving the capacity to establish, develop and participate in national, regional and international networks. Strategic goal 5 also mentions the significance

of fostering cooperation with other CSOs being local, national or international, in order to promote and protect human rights.

The inter-institutional linkages are key to consider as there is an increased probability of institutional isomorphism when organisations interact with other likeminded organisations in a field, through associations and the likes. The cognitive component of an institutional environment in itself could also lead to isomorphism through processes that encourage imitating patterns of activities within the sphere of human rights organisations.

#### **4. What has been the impact upon the Honduran CSOs, from collaborating with Danish development organisations, regarding management of staff?**

Management of staff refers to the CSOs capacity to hire and maintain professional employees, and to assure their development and contribution to the organisation's overall progress and wellbeing.

Danida's strategic goal 3 mentions the importance of having standards for a sensible division of labour in the CSO and that their employees apply the relevant principles from the Paris Declaration such as harmonisation, results-based orientation and coordination of efforts.

The question of the improvement of their management of staff relates to isomorphism as academic credentials and professionalisation in staff as likely to result in isomorphism.

The better trained, the easier they will be able to adjust to their institutional environment, and accommodate the contradictory regulatory regimes, normative orders and cultural logics that could exist when working in a Honduran reality, while simultaneously having to adhere to the rules and regulations of Danish development organisations.

#### **5. What has been the impact upon the Honduran CSOs, from collaborating with Danish development organisations, regarding management of projects?**

Management of projects refers to the CSOs capacity to develop new, plan and carry out projects in a timely and organised manner, so as to assure the success of their projects and programmes.

Danida's strategic goal 3 mentions the importance of developing the capacity of the CSO to assume full ownership and independent responsibility for preparing and implementing activities.

The evolvement of the CSOs capacity to manage projects can be related to the conflicting institutional demands of the projects they embark on as they will have to accommodate certain needs and objectives that might change over time.

The institutional isomorphism plays a part in choosing the present research question as developing new projects might be directly linked to a particular aim of the Danish development organisation.

**6. What has been the impact upon the Honduran CSOs, from collaborating with Danish development organisations, regarding management of funds?**

Management of funds refers to the CSOs capacity to manage their use of financial resources in order to reach the best possible overall outcomes with the budget available, and their ability to obtain new funds for future projects.

Danida's strategic goal 1 mentions the importance of establishing frameworks for the obtaining of funds.

The way the CSO has developed their financial capacity has to do with the conflicting institutional demands that they might find themselves having to adjust their activities to. Funds might be scarce, but at the same time the funds will be divided between various activities that each will accommodate a certain demand, and hereby choosing a specific strategic response.

The way they have developed, or at least adjusted their financial focus could be related to the idea of institutional isomorphism, if the way they use their funds have been determined by the requests of the Danish development organisations.



# **Methodology**

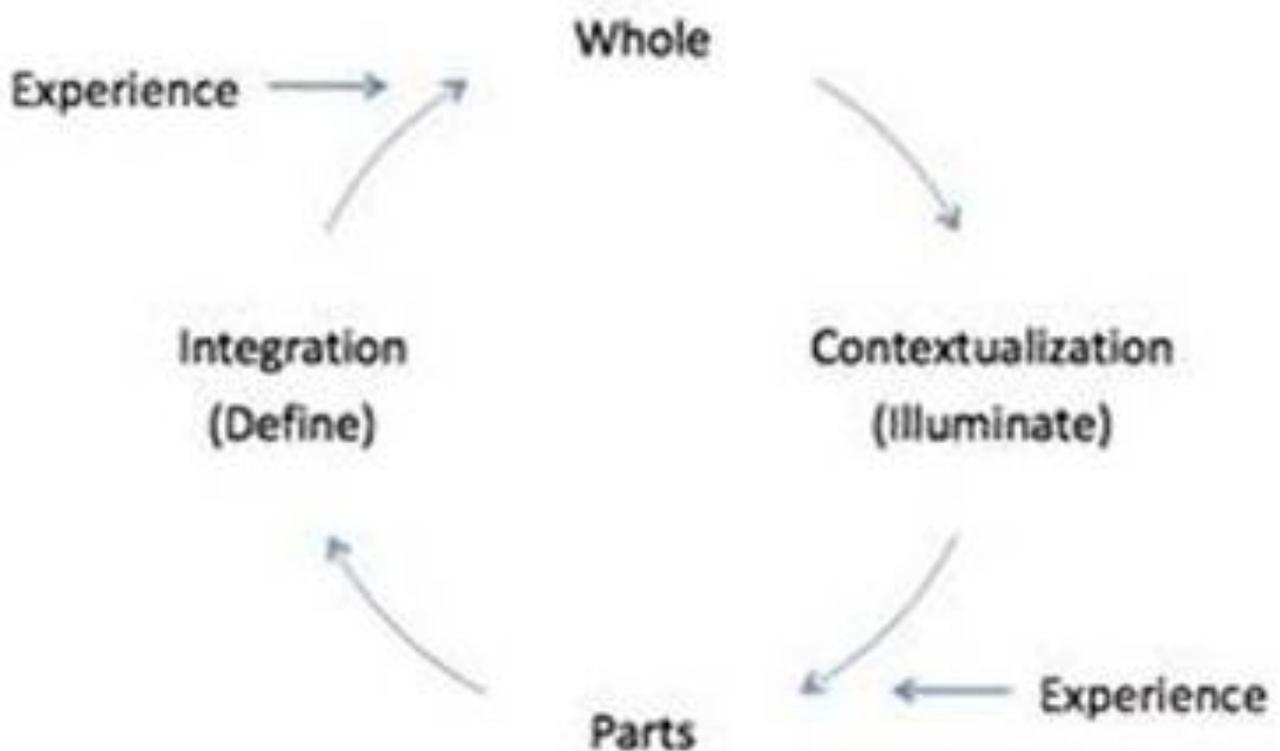
The present section will first present the philosophy of science; the underlying thoughts of how to consider approaching the present study. Then, the concrete method of how to obtain the empirical data will be proposed along with a detailed description of the entire process.

## **The Philosophy of Science – Hermeneutics**

The present study uses various theoretical ideas in order to reach relevant research questions that will guide the study and then be used to answer the problem statement. The theoretical views have a basis in the human science that seeks reason through understanding and interpretation of human activity and the products of these activities. The theoretical standpoint of the study can therefore be defined as being hermeneutic (Collin 2003).

Generally it can be said that hermeneutics can be understood as a description of how we understand reality through our interpretation of it. In order to comprehend and gain knowledge, it is important to have common understandings as language, culture and community. Hermeneutics seeks to understand the human part of reality, and this understanding is viewed as a science in itself. In order to assure that this science is accountable and scientific, the work of interpreting ones research must be done methodological and arise from certain criteria of understanding. In this, the hermeneutic circle plays an important role (Langergaard 2006:126-127).

The hermeneutic circle is about understanding and interpretation in a characteristic circular movement, where you move circularly between an understanding of specific parts and the issue as a whole. The hermeneutic circle demands that interpretation takes place in a methodical motion that moves forward through the relationship between the specific parts of information, through defining and integrating it into the issue as a whole hereafter illuminating and contextualizing and creating a better understanding of the two (Langergaard 2006:128-129).



Bontekoe, R. (1996:4).

In the present study, the circular hermeneutic structure will be used to analyse the orations in the interviews. The purpose being analysing and interpreting the specific parts of the orations in order to get a better understanding of the issue as a whole, that is, how collaboration with Danish development organisations has developed the Honduran CSOs' internal organisational practices.

## Method

Having the hermeneutic circle as the base of thought, the present study will use qualitative interviews in the framework of Steinar Kvale. Kvale (2009) proposes seven phases which have to be considered when conducting research interviews.

### 1. Thematising

According to Kvale (2009) it is important to be fully aware of what the purpose of the research interviews is, what it is about, and why it is important.

In the present study, the primary purpose of the research interviews is to clarify, what has been the internal impact on the Honduran CSOs working with human rights, after having collaborated with Danish development organisations. It is important to do research in this topic as it seems to be a neglected part of how we assess collaboration between the two types of organisation. The information that will derive from the interviews will be analysed and the impact of the collaboration will then be determined.

## **2. Designing**

The purpose of discussing the design is to clarify the methods that will be used to answer the problem statement and the research questions. According to Kvale (2009), the design of the study affects the planning of the procedures and techniques of the study. The design of the study is the combination of approaches that will be used in collecting, analysing and interpreting data.

Remembering the hermeneutic circle and approach, the qualitative interview has been chosen as the method in which the data will be collected. Quantitative questionnaires were quickly dismissed as it would seem to be impossible to extract sufficient information from the interviewees. Apart from that, questionnaires are designed without the possibility of asking further into interesting considerations from the participants.

The qualitative interview fits the study as it gives the interviewee the opportunity to expand deeply on a certain topic that he or she find particularly interesting without being confined to a standardised questionnaire. Just as the interviewee, the interviewer will also have the option of exploring deeper into topics of specific interest to the study.

## **3. Interviewing**

The interviews will be semi-structured explorative interview using an interview guide that will focuses on the various parameters found to be specifically important in theoretical considerations and in the literature review. The interview guide will serve as a checklist that will make sure that all the important topics are touched upon.

The interviews will take place at the interviewees' workplace, as to create an ambience as relaxed and comfortable as possible for the participants. A Dictaphone will be used to record the data.

Kvale (1996:145) proposes six quality criteria for an interview. It will be sought to accomplish the following suggestions in order to enhance the quality of the interviews.

- The extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers from the interviewee.
- The shorter the interviewer's questions and the longer the interviewee's answers, the better.
- The degree to which the interviewer follows up and clarifies the meanings of the relevant aspects of the answers.
- The ideal interview is to a large extent interpreted throughout the interview.
- The interviewer attempts to verify his or her interpretations of the subject's answers in the course of the interview.
- The interview is 'self-communicating' – it is a story contained in itself that hardly requires much extra descriptions and explanations

Kvale (1996:133-135) has identified nine types of questions asked in qualitative interviews. These will be kept in mind during the interview:

- Introducing questions: 'Why did you...?' or 'Can you tell me about...?'
- Follow up questions: 'What did you mean...?' or 'Can you give more detail...?'
- Probing questions: 'Do you have any examples?' or 'Could you say more about...?'
- Specifying questions: 'What happened when you said that?' or 'What did he say next?'
- Direct questions: Questions with a yes or no answer
- Indirect questions: In order to get the interviewee's true opinion.
- Structuring questions: 'Moving on to...'
- Silence: Suggesting to the interviewee that you want them to answer the question.
- Interpreting questions: 'Do you mean that...?' or 'Is it correct that...?'

The interviewees will be selected by a criterion that assures they have relevant knowledge regarding the topic, have a credible response and can provide the information that is needed in order to answer the problem statement and the research questions.

Kvale (2009) argues that in a typical study using interviews, the usual numbers of informants are between five and twenty-five, in order to obtain enough information. In this particular study, the number of accessible informants might only reach five, which still would reach the required amount. Choosing few interviewees for the study will make it possible to dig deep into the interviews that will be conducted, giving an explorative style of interview.

There will not be many possible informants that would have sufficient knowledge about the present topic, as the collaboration between Danish development organisations and Honduran CSOs working in the area of human rights is not that widespread. Other issues, such as political interest, inaccessibility and suspiciousness might also play a part in not being able to find a large amount of interested informants. For that reason, there will also be the possibility of the informants remaining anonymous. Even though it might lower the credibility of the study, it is seen as a necessary mean to obtaining access to informants.

Two types of interviewees will be searched for and focused on:

The first type of informant is a representative from a Honduran CSO working in the area of human rights. The informant should be high-ranking from the organisation, such as a director or at managerial level. The informant should have had worked for preferably ten years in the organisation in order to assess the internal development of the organisation over a considerable period of time. The informant should have had experience in direct collaboration with Danish development organisations. That is, the representative should be the person in his or her organisation who has been in charge of the projects or programmes that have taken place with technical assistance from Denmark.

The second type of informant is a representative from a Danish development organisation. The informant should have a high-ranking position in the organisation, at managerial level. The informant should have had preferably ten years working for the organisation, or another similar organisation, with strong ties with Honduras, in order to assess the internal development of the Honduran counterparts over a longer period. The informant should have had experience with direct collaboration with Honduran CSOs. That is, the representative should be the person in his or her organisation who has been in charge of the projects or programmes in which they have worked with Honduran CSOs.

#### **4. Transcribing**

For the purposes of this study, it has been decided to not transcribe the complete interviews but to only present the quotations that are found to be of specific interest. These quotations will be presented in the results section and thereafter analysed in the analysis section. The original idea was to make the interviews accessible as sound-files, but with the issue of informants' anonymity, it was chosen not to make them available.

There are other reasons for the mentioned approach. The most significant is that in the present study, it is the content of the answers to the questions that are of most importance. It is the actual said meaning of

the answers that are of interest, and not the nuances of the wording that might occur. If the study had the objective of analysing the nuances or differences in the wording or sounding of the answers, transcribing might be more useful, as there would be a need to analyse and clarify the interviewees' answers precisely. The other reason for not transcribing is that the practice could seem out-dated as new technologies have made it easier to collect and share the data from interviews, such as cds, sound-files and the internet as a whole.

## **5. Analysing**

The analysis will start with the principles of the hermeneutic circle. The circular motion where the interpretation of the acquired information in the interview goes round through four phases as described above in the philosophy of science.

When analysing the answers to the questions proposed in the interviews, the theories covered in the theory section above will be referred to. The theoretical considerations were first used to construct relevant research questions and to help create the guideline for the interviews. In the analysis section, the theoretical background will set the frame for the analysis of the results from the interviews, where the data collected will be related to the theory.

## **6. Verifying**

An important part of the study will involve verifying the answers in the interviews. There will have to be a focus on the generalisability, reliability and validity of the interviews in order to assess the results.

There will be an assessment of the generalizability of the data collected in the interviews. Is it possible to conclude that the informants' answers are truly representative of how the Honduran CSOs have developed? Do the results create a clear picture of how the development has been? Given that the informants only represent a small representative part of the collaboration between Danish development organisations and Honduran CSOs, it will be a challenging task to determine whether the data collected is generalisable.

There will be an assessment of the reliability and validity of the data collected in the interviews. The informants might be prone to speak more positively about the impact the collaboration has had, and exaggerate about the degree to which there has been a development in their organisation. This is especially

an issue in the interviews with the representatives of the Honduran CSOs, as they might be inclined to enhance the positives and diminish the negatives, because they might subconsciously wish to maintain a good relationship with the Danish development organisations. This seems an important issue to take note of in verifying the data collected, because in the representative of the Honduran CSO's point of view, the relationship between the two parties could be perceived to be at stake.

The fact that Honduran CSOs usually collaborate and receive technical assistance from other organisations, countries and development agencies could make it difficult to assess if the development and impact in the Honduran CSO are caused specifically by collaboration with Danish development organisations. This poses a very important risk to the generalisability, reliability and validity of the interviews as it could be difficult to separate the organisation's various activities and separating the impact of different counterparts. This is an issue that should be taken into account when verifying the data from the interviews.

## **7. Reporting**

The findings of the study, that is, the answers to the questions proposed at the interviews, should be put forward in an easily accessible and readable manner. The results should be communicated in a way that takes the whole pre-work into account and delivers the findings in an accordingly manner.

The results from the interviews in the present study will be presented in a graphic form that relates directly to the research questions proposed. The reason for this choice is to give the findings of the study as much clarity as possible. It can be argued that visual and graphic forms of delivering the results enhances the possibility of a clear understanding for the reader of what has been found in the study (Svenson 2012).

## **Interviews**

The present section will describe how the interviews will be conducted. The main focus points of the interviews will be put forward, along with language considerations, and a guide for how the interviews will progress.

## **Focus points**

The six research questions i.e. the parameters will have three focus points. These three focus points are being proposed in order to get a clear view of the CSOs development through the years of collaboration:

- How was the capacity before collaboration with Danish development organisations?

The first focus point seeks to determine the state of the Honduran CSO before collaboration was initiated and have a picture of the starting point of the CSO's development. What is sought here is a past characteristic description of the organisation.

- During the years of collaboration with Danish development organisations, what has the collaboration meant for the progress of the Honduran CSO?

The second focus point seeks to determine the progress throughout the years of collaboration. What is sought here are characteristics or aspects of the progression that can be attributed to the collaboration.

- How is the capacity now, after having collaborated with Danish development organisations?

The third focus point seeks to determine the state of the Honduran CSO at present day. This is in order to get a picture of the end point of the development of the CSO. What is sought here is a current characteristic description of the organisation.

The focus points proposed will serve, first of all, as a way to keep the interviews structured. The parameters will all be subject to these three focus points, so as to determine the development and progression in each of the six parameters. Secondly, the focus points will be used to present the results in an orderly and structured manner.

## **Language considerations**

The questions to the representatives of the Honduran CSOs will be proposed in Spanish. Quotations and key-points of their answers will figure in Spanish, and will be thereafter summed up in English. The questions to the representatives of the Danish development organisations will be proposed, summed up and analysed in English.

## **Introduction**

The interview will start by setting the stage and briefing the interviewee. A letter was sent out describing the main purposes of the study (see annex), but also to make the informant feel comfortable and guide them toward providing answers as relevant and usable as possible. It is also a way of explaining the idea behind the study, as well as its purpose. If the interviewee has any questions about the study or the interview itself, they will be encouraged to ask at this point.

It will be explained that the interviewee should, during the whole of the interview, intend to only focus on the collaboration with Danish development organisations, and try to separate it from collaboration with other institutions and organisations.

The format of the interview will be explained: The six parameters will be the thematic basis for this format, and the three focus points will serve as the phase basis. One at a time, the parameters will be proposed, with the objective of the interviewee to characterise each of the three the focus points in each parameter.

The question of confidentiality also appears here. The informant will be able to choose if he or she wants to be anonymous. If the informant chooses to be anonymous, it will have an effect on the background section of the interview, as those questions will not be published in the study.

## **Background**

The background of the interviewee will be sought to be clarified. Questions about the background of the organisation for which the interviewee is a representative will be proposed. Questions about the background of the collaboration of the CSO will also be asked. Regarding the background section, it will be sought to assure that only questions of the highest importance to the study are asked. This is to assure the feeling of security of the informant.

Regarding the personal information of the informant, it is found to be unnecessary to ask somewhat intimate questions about name, age, as it does not it is not necessary for the overall purpose of the study. The questions regarding the organisation will bring forward the following: mission, vision, year of initiation of organisation. The questions regarding the collaboration with Danish development organisations will bring together the following: year of initiation of collaboration with Danish development organisations, share/part of the CSO that the Danish development organisation assists.

## **Parameters**

Each of the parameters will then be gone through in an equal way, in order to facilitate an easy understandable structure of the interview. It will then be intended to cover the six parameters in a sequential manner, one by one.

During the interview, it is the intention to rely mostly on four types of questions Kvale (1996) proposes: The first type is the introducing question which intends to get the interviewee started with each parameter. In order to get the interviewee to elaborate, if the answer to the introducing question is insufficient, a follow-up question will be used. If there is a point of specific interest in the answer given, a probing question will be used so as to get an even more detailed answer. If there surfaces a difficulty in understanding an answer, an interpreting question will be used in order to extract the exact meaning.

Taking one of the six parameters as an example; political advocacy, the interview will seek to obtain information of the parameter regarding the three focus points: How was the capacity to conduct political advocacy before collaboration with Danish development organisations? During the years of collaboration with Danish development organisations, what has the collaboration meant for the progression of the capacity to conduct political advocacy? How is the capacity to conduct political advocacy now, after having collaborated with Danish development organisations?

The start of the examination of each parameter will begin with an introducing question, for example; can you tell me about the capacity to conduct political advocacy before collaboration had begun? A follow up question could then be used as to extract more information; can you give more detail? A probing question could be applied if there is a point of specific interest than needs to be exemplified; do you have any examples? With difficulties at understanding the answer, an interpreting question could be used to clarify; do you mean that? This exact practice will then be repeated with the two next focus points regarding political advocacy, and afterwards with the other five parameters.

## **Specific questions**

What year was your organisation founded?

What length of time have you worked at the organisation?

What is your organisation's mission?

What is your organisation's vision?

When did your organisation start to collaborate with Danish development organisations?

Can you tell me about the capacity regarding "parameter X" before collaboration had begun?

During the years of collaboration with Danish development organisations, what has the collaboration meant for the progress of "parameter X" for the Honduran CSO?

Can you tell me about the capacity now regarding "parameter X", after having collaborated with Danish development organisations?

## Results

The results are derived from the interviews with the relevant participants. Quotes will be used to show examples of the exact wording of the answers to the six parameters. The answers to the questions will then be summed up. Even though it was the goal to find at least five informants, in the end, it was only possible to have three informants, partly due to lack of access and due to lack of time. Two of the informants are representatives from Honduran CSOs and one is a representative from a Danish development organisation. The interviews were held in locations across Tegucigalpa, Honduras, May 2013. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and one hour.

Informant 1:

Representative from Honduran Human Rights CSO

Has been in the organisation since it was founded

CPTRT – Centro de Prevención, Tratamiento y Rehabilitación de Víctimas de la Tortura

Organisation founded in 1995

Collaboration with Danish development organisation RCT – now Dignity Institute - started in 1996

Informant 2:

Representative from Honduran Human Rights CSO

Has worked for 11 years in the organisation

ASJ – Asociación para una sociedad más justa – Revistazo.com

Organisation founded in 1998

Collaboration with Danish development organisation DanChurchAid started in 2001

Informant 3:

Representative from Danish development organisation

Anonymous

### **Technical issues**

Technical issues has made direct quoting impossible in certain parts of the interviews as the dictaphone used had flaws that was not apparent until after the interview. The sound-file was silent and obscure. This is the case in three of the parameters in the interview with informant two; inter-institutional linkages, management of staff, management of funds.

### **Official Institutionalisation**

#### **Quoted from interview with informant 1:**

*“Ahora somos una organisation reconocida, tenemos personería jurídica y capacidad convocatoria.”*

*“Se logró tener personería jurídica. Antes de eso, no se hablaba de la tortura. El gobierno no lo había reconocido, y en el momento que nos reconoce la personería jurídica, está reconociendo la tortura. Ósea, que la organización danesa en este caso fue bien importante en la lucha por los derechos humanos y la lucha contra la tortura. Antes de eso, no había una lucha contra la tortura porque era un tema muy delicado, sobre todo por los regímenes militares.”*

*“Ahora somos una organización muy reconocida, estable y con crecimiento.”*

Informant one expressed that there have been a process of legitimisation and proliferation of the CSO, with an approved legal status, the CSO becoming more well-known, and with a greater capacity to convene fellow actors. At the present point in time, the CSO is stable, recognised and continues to grow. With the assistance of the Danish organisation and with the official recognition of the CSO as an actor in the area of human rights, the possibility for the CSO to advocate for the protection of human rights and eradication of torture has grown significantly, and that before the collaboration had begun, human rights and torture were not topics discussed in Honduras.

**Quoted from interview with informant two:**

*“Todo el mundo tiene de referente [revistazo.com](http://revistazo.com) como un ente que puede influir, como una instancia en la comunicación que sí es considerada y es respetada. Nos hemos vuelto una revista que es accesible a todo el público, ósea, nos han visto crecer como una revista que con el transcurso del tiempo, nos miran tanto tomadoras de decisiones como la gente beneficiaria nuestra de otros proyectos, que sienten que a través de [revistazo.com](http://revistazo.com) se pueden visibilizar violaciones a derechos humanos o se pueden tomar en consideración temas que otros medios de comunicación no han tomado a profundidad”*

*“Entonces, en el transcurso del tiempo la revista ha ido evolucionando, y también ha ido mejorando, no solo su imagen como revista sino también como un medio alternativo donde se ponen temas que en otros medios de comunicación no.”*

Informant two expressed that during the years of collaboration, there has been a constructive development in the appearance of ASJ and [revistazo.com](http://revistazo.com). They are now more respected and considered an important player, both by decision-makers and the focus groups they reach out to, and for whose cause they speak. [Revistazo.com](http://Revistazo.com) now take on human rights issues that no other organisation focus on, being a niche in the field. There are now certain issues that are widely known, publicised, acknowledged, accessible to all, and being taken serious by all.

**Quoted from interview with informant three:**

*“Normally you require that they comply with the local legal system here in Honduras, the new NGO law, which has been discussed and approved, and in which civil society and NGOs have participated quite a lot”*

*“Ten years ago it was common practice and commonly accepted also [less “by the book” procedures], norms and standards have become more severe, not only because of government, local laws, but also because of EU procedures, internal procedures, for example, Danish aid have to comply with humanitarian accountability in partnerships, which implies that all the humanitarian projects and development projects have to comply with accountability and transparency standards, not only we as international agencies, but also our partners.”*

Informant three expressed that the Honduran CSOs have had a positive effect on the laws they themselves have to comply with. These approved laws and regulations have made it possible to appear as a more professional and serious players. It was noted that a decade ago, CSOs were less compliant with rules and

regulations, and that as requirements for them have become stricter, they have had to increasingly focus on compliance so as to receive assistance.

## **Political Advocacy**

### **Quoted from interview with informant one:**

*“Antes no había un enfoque nacional sobre la tortura. Con este trabajo, se aprobó el OPCAT<sup>2</sup>, se aprobó la creación del NPM<sup>3</sup>, se aprobó CONAPREV<sup>4</sup>, que ya son instituciones establecidas por el estado, reconocidas por el estado, y además compartidas con la sociedad civil. La incidencia del CPTRT y las organizaciones danesas fue fundamental para la aprobación de estas instituciones. También se ha incidido en la aprobación de leyes, la reforma de leyes, leyes relacionadas con el sistema de la cárcel, la creación del instituto penitenciario, reformas a la ley policial. También se logró un mejor trabajo con el subcomité internacional contra la tortura.”*

*“[La colaboración] Nos ha abierto puertas para que el estado tome interés a nuestras demandas, siendo una organisation europea. Hemos visitado con ellos a altas autoridades, la vicepresidenta de la república, ministros. Cuando ellos visitan el país logramos visitar autoridades. En esa manera se hace incidencia también.”*

Informant one expressed that from the starting point of collaboration, the success of their political advocacy has increased a lot, with a variety of important landmarks as evidence. The presence itself, with representatives from Danish development organisations along with representatives from the Honduran CSO in joint advocacy ventures, has increased the probability of successful interventions and receiving serious attention. During the years of collaboration, in a focus area that before received little attention from government branches, the approval and ratification of various new institutions, laws, treaties protecting human rights are now evidence of a fruitful collaboration.

### **Quoted from interview with informant two:**

*“Sí puedo decirte que con el apoyo de DanChurchAid, nosotros, la revista, empieza a hacer más incidencia”*

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<sup>2</sup> Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture

<sup>3</sup> National Preventive Mechanism

<sup>4</sup> Comité Nacional de Prevención contra la Tortura, Tratos Crueles, Inhumanos y Degradantes

*“Tenemos un tipo de incidencia en donde todos los entes del estado podían vernos, sabían lo que estábamos escribiendo”*

*“Revistazo.com es la cara publica de la organisation, entonces con la cara publica la imagen nuestra como asociación se refleja a través del trabajo que revistazo.com tiene, y obviamente la gente no tuviera la impresión que tienen de ASJ y de Revistazo.com, si no hubiera atrás de nosotros personas que creyeran fielmente en nosotros.”*

Informant two expressed that their ability to conduct advocacy had increased after having collaborated, and that the collaboration with the Danish development organisation is a direct cause of that. Revistazo.com, being the public face of ASJ and being focused on communication, with the joint-effort to improve the organisation’s influence in the field, their reach to government authorities has improved significantly.

**Quoted from interview with informant three:**

*“Yes, I think that some positive change has been achieved, nevertheless, you always have to ask yourself if that can be attributed to our actions or if it something that naturally has happened because of context and other actors, not only the international agencies but also other things happening. If I make that distinction, I might say 50/50”*

*“It started with a very naïve interpretation of how you can do policy influencing, evermore constructing on more knowledge and feeling of how power relations work, communication processes etc.”*

*“[CSOs are] still putting a voice up denouncing injustice etc. but really doing advocacy with an effective influence is really a long road ahead.”*

Informant three expressed that from a starting point with a very naïve focus, Honduran CSOs have gone through positive changes in the way they conduct advocacy, even though they still might only denounce injustice and not really conduct advocacy with very effective outcomes. It also seems difficult to determine whether this change, really has to do with support of the Danish development organisation, or if it is due to other external factors.

## **Inter-Institutional Linkages**

### **Quoted from interview with informant one:**

*“Compartimos experiencias sobre las visitas de cárceles, instrumentos para lograr mejor investigación, y sobre todo se logró compartir experiencias con otros países latinoamericanos. En eso ayudó mucho la visión de la organización danesa. Se ha compartido muchas experiencias con ODHAG<sup>5</sup>, pero también con Ecuador, se ha compartido experiencias con otros países, Africa, Europa.”*

*“La plataforma de la prevención de la violencia está en cada uno de los países centroamericanos; Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador.”*

*“Ese vínculo ayuda también a abrir relaciones, por ejemplo, hemos tenido trabajo con la fiscalía de los derechos humanos, Hemos tenido trabajo con el mismo CONAPREV. Entonces, claro, todo eso inevitablemente nos ha abierto muchas relaciones, tanto a nivel del estado, como a organismos internacionales.”*

Informant one expressed there has been several linkages provided by the vision and assistance of the Danish development organisation. Linkages that has made the sharing of experiences and tools for investigation possible between other likeminded organisations, not only in Honduras and Latin America, but also from Africa and Europe. The collaboration has helped create violence prevention platforms for human rights discussions in the Central American countries. Links have also been established with international human rights organisations, as well as important national agencies that promote human rights.

### **Informant two:**

Informant two expressed that ASJ, being an entity that itself has various focuses, has become better at linking their various projects to Revistazo.com. They also have, due to their increased visibility and official institutionalisation, made links with other local CSOs that work in the same context, in order for them to use Revistazo.com as a reference and a common place to link each other's work together.

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<sup>5</sup> Oficina de Derecho Humanos del Arzobispado de Guatemala

**Quoted from interview with informant three:**

*“Linking up to networks became a buzz-word in 2000 and onward, especially around the term advocacy, because we want to have joint advocacy. It does not serve a purpose if you have one small organisation doing advocacy on a national policy. For that, you need joint advocacy by likeminded organisations, but also by organisations that have a mission that attributes to that kind of policy.”*

*“[A created CSO network] had capacity building, they had analysis sessions, invited specialists and shared their experiences together. That is also really what we see as one of the necessary roles that should be played by a network.”*

*“[A created CSO network] has had its ups and downs, you can’t say it was on that level ten years ago and now it is better, I think it has gone up, it has declined, then gained a little bit. It is not something constant; it’s not something that has been incremental from start until now. It has had its crises, but then they see that there is some context and things happening at a certain time in the level of government, which make them join together again and take action. It’s mostly action-reaction.”*

Informant three expressed that inter-institutional linkages was focused upon from the year 2000 and onwards and that the network they have helped build, has facilitated various types of exchanges between the Honduran CSOs. The process of the development of the inter-institutional linkages has not been linear, but rather intermittent. It has been subject to the changing scenarios they find themselves in, scenarios in which they are usually reacting to events, and not acting with anticipation before they occur.

## **Management of Staff**

**Quoted from interview with informant one:**

*“Hemos tenido talleres internos, capacitación interna como organización, pero también tenemos talleres compartidos con otros organismos nacionales, y también con organismos internacionales. Hemos recibido capacitación de la personal danés. Hemos tenido una gran transformación del personal. Me refiero en cuanto a las experiencias médicas que hemos compartido con los médicos y psicólogos. Hemos tenido asesoría técnica, administrativa, financiera, capacidad de gestión. Todo esto ha sido hecho conjuntamente con ellos y con otras organizaciones. Ellos mismos nos han dado referencias a asesoría a donde canalizar las capacitaciones, material informativa. Además han venido equipos técnicos a trabajar con nosotros.”*

*“Antes teníamos más limitaciones, teníamos más problemas, nuestro conocimiento era más limitado. Con estas relaciones se ha ampliado la visión del CPTRT. Se ha transformado la institución, porque sí necesitamos el conocimiento. En el curso algunos de los personales se han capacitado obviamente.”*

*“Es definitivo [el efecto de la colaboración]. Educación técnica, educación en el campo de la comunicación, y educación en el campo de proyectos.”*

Informant one expressed that the Danish development organisation has helped the CSO capacitate and develop their staff. At the beginning there were many limitations regarding the capabilities of the staff, though now, due to the collaboration, they have facilitated training in various areas, such as technical and health approaches, communication, medicine, administrative, financial and project management. The staff of the Honduran CSO is now fulfilling their job at a higher level. This has been accomplished, apart from the direct training and work with the Danish development organisation, by the workshops that have been held internally in the organisation, with other Honduran and international organisations.

**Informant two:**

Informant two expressed that through a year-long process of capacitation provided by the Danish development organisation, their staff have been trained in various aspects that has made them more professional than before. The first couple of years the organisation was active, it was based on volunteers and there was no formal structure. Now the organisation has full-time employees.

**Quoted from interview with informant three:**

*“Sometimes I see NGOs as very closed environment; they exchange personnel. You see people going around within likeminded NGOs, they are growing their experience, seeing things from different perspectives of different NGOs.”*

*“Mostly in connection with advanced NGOs, they can do capacity building for their people, which in many cases can lead to the staff going through a trajectory of levels of consciousness and awareness about certain problems. There is an upwards career path for those people”*

Informant three expressed that the CSO environment in Honduras feels like one big interlinked family, with staff changing positions in different CSOs enabling them to see things from various perspectives. This, combined with capacity building, has led to continuous staff development.

## **Management of Funds**

### **Quoted from interview with informant one:**

*“En un inicio se ha centrado la capacidad de gestión ante ellos, pero en el proceso, ellos mismos han exigido que se amplíe la capacidad de gestión con otras organizaciones financieros, ya sean europeos, ya sean de cualquier lado. Ellos han sido importantes ante la comunidad europea.”*

*“Ha habido capacitación técnica para la gestión financiero. En la manera de que ya esa capacidad está desarrollada. Tenemos la capacidad de hacer gestión ante cualquier institución.”*

*“Lo que podríamos decir es que realmente la organisation danesa ha sido muy estricta en el manejo de fondos siempre. Tenemos una auditoria nuestra, auditoria local a nivel nacional, y tenemos una auditoria internacional, y tenemos la visita de los auditores, me refiero a la auditoria de los daneses.”*

*“Cada vez más hemos tratado de hacer lo más posible para que las actividades sean más efectivas, más eficiente y más eficaces. También en los criterios que tratamos de usar para que los fondos sean mejor utilizados. Eso tiene que ver con la capacitación y también con la ética y la transparencia. En eso sí hemos aprendido también tener mejores relaciones y mejores exigencias. Sí se puede decir que se están utilizando con mayor eficiencia, efectividad y eficacia.”*

Informant one expressed that their management of funds have improved after having collaborated with Danish development organisations. At the same time, they have also been directed towards other sources of funding from other organisations. The strictness imposed by the Danish development organisations in their management of funds has been a significant factor in the development of their capacity. There has been a continuing improvement in the effectiveness of use of funds, because of the continuing development of criteria of ethics, transparency and efficiency.

### **Informant two:**

Informant two expressed that the funds they have received throughout collaboration have always been used properly to fulfil the objectives that had set out to reach. But with an increase of the influx of funds, they have been able to do more and improve their work.

### **Quoted from interview with informant three:**

*“The tendency has been that international organisations have become more demanding and interdependent with the stronger and professional NGOs on the national level. Community organisations have difficulties getting access to funds, whether is it directly by a donor, or indirectly by an NGO who is working with them, so that the donor funds the NGO or co-fund the NGO and community organisations. Even then, lots of community organisations depend a lot on volunteerism and the little funds they get, they will spend relatively efficient.”*

*“Most of it [the funds] gets in the pockets, but not negatively, of local staff of those NGOs, restaurants, and people who rent capacity building sites, the buses that transport people to the workshops, all the field visits for monitoring and coaching in the field, which isn’t bad, but it’s costly because you need a car and you need viaticos<sup>6</sup>. So, most of the budget goes to those things.”*

Informant three expressed that over the years, the Danish development organisation has become more closely linked with the stronger Honduran CSOs. At the same time, this means that the smaller and less professional CSOs in the local communities depend on volunteerism and spend the funds they receive relatively efficient. However, even though the informant does not see it as something negative, a large part of the funds the CSOs receive goes toward the more practical and logistical processes.

## **Management of Projects**

### **Quoted from interview with informant one:**

*“Primero ha existido un respeto mutuo con las organizaciones danesas, ellos toman en consideración las iniciativas locales, y se desarrollan conjuntamente.”*

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<sup>6</sup> Travel allowance

*“Antes estábamos entrados únicamente en tortura, pero ahora tocamos tortura, tocamos tratos crueles, inhumanos y degradantes, tocamos la violencia de género, y tenemos un trabajo en comunidades. Estamos también enfocados en prevención de la violencia, que es un rango que inevitablemente tiene que ver con la tortura también.”*

*“Es definitivo [el efecto de la colaboración]. Educación técnica, educación en el campo de la comunicación, y educación en el campo de proyectos.”*

Informant one expressed that the Danish development organisations have respected the local context regarding human rights, and that they always take into consideration and use the local initiatives as a base for jointly developing the work of the Honduran CSO. There has been direct training for improvement in their project management. From managing projects that were focused only on torture, they have now broadened their focus to include other forms of human rights issues, such as gender violence and community work with a focus on violence prevention.

**Quoted from interview with informant two:**

*“Hay ocho proyectos en la organización, y todos han ido surgiendo en la medida de la necesidad del país y las necesidades que la misma organización ha identificado unos vacíos en otras organizaciones de derechos humanos”*

*“Revistazo.com tenía cuatro ediciones al año con investigaciones profundas. Desde el quinto año cambia un poco la temática, teníamos investigaciones profundas, pero también teníamos temas de actualidad, una revista más activa. Actualmente, revistazo.com tiene temas también de actualidad pero ya con artículos no mensuales ni semanales sino casi de forma diaria”*

Informant two expressed that their projects have continued to evolve with the changing necessities of the country and where they have found holes in other similar organisations' projects, they have tried to fill them. Revistazo.com has also evolved, from only being a quarterly publication, is now an interactive forum that is updated almost every day. They have changed from only having profound investigations, to now supplementing them with current news about human rights issues in the country.

### **Quoted from interview with informant three:**

*“There are very competent NGOs with competent staff that can start a project. Some of them do that in association with international organisations like us. Even then, they still depend quite a lot on certain capacities we have if we can organise where they can’t”*

*“The ones, who have had more exposure to international debates regarding exchange of knowledge and project management, are more aware that a project is only a very small episode of a larger change project in which the processes are not linear, they are complex.”*

*“They work, are they are very adaptive because mostly they know that the project won’t work like it’s planned. They are the first ones to defend that the project should work as it was planned, and also the first ones to justify if a project has not worked as it was planned. They are not that willing to systematize on it, and say; OK let’s plan but still be aware beforehand that things might not work, and have formulated indicators and processes of measurement that gives us the opportunity to learn along the way and adapt in an agreed way on the path that we will be taking, not putting the end goal as something final and definite, but as something that gives direction. So that is something that is in the process of negotiation and on which our different styles and interpretations of how you should manage a project, and how the project should be embedded within the local change processes.”*

Informant three expressed that the Honduran CSOs are still dependent on the organisational skills of the Danish development organisation when it comes to starting projects. The CSOs who have been most exposed to international organisations are also the ones who have become better at project management. The way that the projects are constructed and carried out are still, however, not fully satisfactory, as the focus on reaching indicators and the inability to adapt to new opportunities are still a hindrance to the carrying out of better and more successful projects.

### **Summary**

The following table seeks to sum up, characterise and facilitate an easily understandable way of how Honduran CSOs have developed, after collaborating with Danish development organisations. Each of the six parameters will be described with regards to the three focus points; before collaboration, the process itself, and after collaboration.

<u>Before Collaboration</u>	<u>Process</u>	<u>After Collaboration</u>
<b>Official Institutionalisation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal status unrecognised</li> <li>• CSO unknown</li> <li>• Low capacity to convene</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legitimization</li> <li>• Proliferation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved legal status</li> <li>• CSO well-known actor</li> <li>• High capacity to convene</li> </ul>
<b>Political Advocacy</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights not discussed</li> <li>• Laws, treaties, institutions regarding human rights not approved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint advocacy ventures with Danish development organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights discussed in Honduras</li> <li>• Laws, treaties, institutions regarding human rights approved</li> </ul>
<b>Inter-Institutional Linkages</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few inter-institutional links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Danish development organisation facilitating spaces for creation of links</li> <li>• Sharing of experiences and technical tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well established links with other organisations</li> </ul>
<b>Management of Staff</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limitations in capacity of staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct training by Danish development organisations</li> <li>• Workshops with other actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff with a wide range of capacities</li> </ul>
<b>Management of Funds</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low efficiency in use of funds</li> <li>• Few sources of funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strict requirements for use of funds</li> <li>• Search for new sources of funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective use of funds</li> <li>• New sources of funds encountered</li> </ul>
<b>Management of Projects</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrow focus in projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide focus in projects</li> </ul>

## **Analysis**

The analysis of the results in the interviews will now be presented. Each of the parameters will be put forward with the objective of analysing the results of the interviews in relation to the theoretical framework, i.e. the different theories discussed earlier.

Paying homage to the hermeneutic circle, it is important to analyse the newly acquired information from the interviews in order to integrate it in the whole of the hermeneutic circle, thereby contextualising the results.

### **Official Institutionalisation**

When looking at the way the CSOs have developed their official institutionalisation with the assistance of Danish development organisations, they have had to take into account the regulative institutional pillar and its effect on their institutional environment. They have managed to obtain legal recognition in a country where organisations with a mission and a focus not always appreciated by government branches, can have difficulties in being recognised.

There has been a development that can be related to the normative institutional pillar. The fact that the CSOs have become more recognised and visible in the space they find themselves in, has made it possible to increasingly affect the social norms and values that are socially shared in the country, by promoting the human rights discourse.

In obtaining the legal status, their strategic response can be said to be acquiesce with the tactic of comply. With the mission of being recognised as a legal entity in the country, this strategy has been the only available option as it has been necessary to comply with the rules, laws and regulations in Honduras. On the other hand, the fact that they have actively sought influence on the NGO law recently passed, a law that affects their legal status, their strategic response could be said to be the strategy of manipulate, with the tactic of influence.

The Honduran CSOs have increased their adherence to norms and standards of the international organisations, among those, the Danish development organisations. This can be related to the notion of institutional isomorphism as it can be argued that the process of structuration in the field of human rights

protection has made them go through normative isomorphic change making their official institutionalisation resemble that of the wishes of the Danish development organisations.

## **Political Advocacy**

The development of the Honduran CSOs capacity to conduct advocacy can have an effect on all three pillars of their institutional environment. By becoming more influential actors in the field of human rights, they could have the ability to actually change the environment they find themselves in.

They now have sufficient influence through their advocacy efforts to actually affect the regulative pillar of their institutional environment by effectively promoting the passing of laws, rules and new human rights institutions that now exist in Honduras. They have the ability to now influence the coercive processes that through rules, boundaries, laws and regulations promote certain types of behaviour and restrict others. These behaviours are then influencing the way human rights issues are treated by the government branches, so as to create a legal framework in which human rights are respected in Honduras.

They now have the ability, through their advocacy efforts, to change the normative component of their institutional environment by effectively influencing the social norms, values, beliefs and assumptions that are socially shared. The advocacy initiatives they embark on could make government promote normative behaviours that lead to human rights violations becoming socially unacceptable in society.

The widely shared social knowledge or cognitive component of their institutional environment has been affected by their advocacy effort. By promoting a peaceful society and respecting human rights, the way people notice, categorise and interpret stimuli, could have been changed by the way that their advocacy activities encourage the imitation of patterns that have an increasing cultural support; a cultural support for a Honduran society where the violation of human rights are not accepted.

It is well worth noting that informant three has a different view on how the Honduran CSOs have developed their advocacy efforts. Even though the Honduran CSOs have developed their capacity to conduct advocacy, it is questionable if their improved advocacy capacity is really effective, if they really accomplish something from their efforts, or if they have just become more noticeable. If this is the case, then the institutional environment might have been too resilient to impact. Even though the regulative pillar might have been possible to affect, by the approval of laws, it might not go much further than that. The compliance with the laws and actual upholding of laws, which have more to do with the normative and

cognitive components of the institutional environment, could be seen to be too resistant to change for the positive.

As the CSOs in collaboration with the Danish development organisations, actively have sought to gain influence in the political scene in Honduras, the strategic response that the CSOs have applied to the institutional environment can be said to be the strategy of manipulate with the tactic of influence. However, given the difficulties of conducting advocacy in a delicate topic, it can be said that they also have used the strategy of compromise with the strategies of balance or bargain when negotiations for the approval of laws have been conducted.

The idea of isomorphic change comes into play as one of the predictors propose that if the Honduran CSOs transact with state agencies, have ambiguous goals and an uncertain relationship between means and ends, they will be more likely to go through change that will make them resemble the wishes of the Danish development organisations. As it was noted in the interview with informant one, the CSOs have had successful experiences with their advocacy efforts when embarking on joint advocacy ventures with Danish development organisations. This could lead one to make the conclusion that the focus of the Honduran CSO has come to resemble that of their Danish counterpart, when the chance of successful negotiation with state agencies are bigger when they combine their advocacy efforts.

## **Inter-Institutional Linkages**

When informant three speaks of the high importance of creating inter-institutional linkages between the Honduran CSOs, it is because they have a louder voice as a unified group of organisations compared to just one, it relates directly to their improved capacity to influence the normative and regulative components of their institutional environment. Joint efforts are seen to be crucial when Honduran CSOs seek to influence the rules and regulations in the regulative pillar, while it is equally important when considering the capacity to affect norms and beliefs in the normative pillar.

The cognitive institutional pillar of the institutional environment the Honduran CSOs exist in is being altered when they create links with other likeminded institutions. By joining together with other likeminded organisations in various activities, such as technical training and advocacy efforts, the shared social knowledge within the area of human rights in Honduras has been developed in the way that the CSOs perceive their environment.

The theory suggests that a big influence from the cognitive component of an institutional environment stimulates isomorphism, such as joining together in processes of collaboration, which will essentially make organisation become more alike. The process of structuration in the field of human rights CSOs could be seen as an example of institutional isomorphism, when they join in networks, thereby improving their own structure. When the Danish development organisations have been vital in facilitating the creation of these networks, another example of institutional isomorphism occurs as the Danish development organisation has been able to mould and direct the Honduran CSOs in the way that they perceive most adequate. This could be considered coercive isomorphism as the Honduran CSOs will be dependent on the Danish development organisation for guidance.

In the interview, informant three states that when the Honduran CSOs form inter-institutional linkages, it is mostly based on action-reaction. If the reason for linking up with likeminded organisations and gathering in networks is because of specific events that seem opportune to respond by group measures, but otherwise distancing themselves from the networks, the strategic response to an institutional environment, as such, could be said to be a combination of two approaches. The strategy of avoid with the tactic of conceal when they are not using the links, and then applying the strategy of manipulate with the tactic of influence when they wish to have a say in the event that has made them become active in the network again.

## **Management of Staff**

With the continued capacitation and increasing professionalisation of the staff in the Honduran CSOs, it can be argued that the normative component of their institutional environment has been altered as the more professional personnel would be of higher quality, thereby evolving the norms that are shared in the institutional environment.

When the Honduran CSOs, in collaboration with the Danish development organisations, train their staff in the various areas that exist within an organisation of this kind, it can be seen as a strategic response to institutional pressures they have been under. The application of the strategy of compromise with the tactic of balance seems as the approach that has been used, as they have tried to balance the expectations of multiple constituents. This could especially be occurring when there has been direct training by Danish personnel; a training that would have to be put into their proper context in Honduras, hereby being under two simultaneous and different pressures.

It can be argued that there has been a degree of institutional isomorphism when discussing the development of the capacities of their staff, as there has been an increased reliance on academic credentials in their personnel. This normative type of isomorphism would make the institutional processes of the Honduran CSO resemble that of the Danish development organisation, as the informants note that the Danish development organisations have been directly involved in the capacitation of their staff.

## **Management of Funds**

The way the Honduran CSOs have increasingly become more effective in their use of funds can be related to the way they have been influenced by the regulative component of their institutional environment. As the Danish development organisations have been very strict in their management of funds, levying certain criteria upon them, they have had to adhere to those regulations in order to receive more or continued funds for their work in the area of human rights.

The strategic response to the institutional demand laid upon them regarding their management of funds comes into play, as the obtaining of funds is an absolutely necessary input in their work. Not being in a situation where demanding would be a reasonable way of approaching the obtaining of funds, the strategic response could be that of the strategy of acquiesce with the tactic of comply. They will have seen it to be essential to comply totally with the requirements of the Danish development organisation.

However, as it is noted in the interviews, if a lot of the funds received goes towards the more logistic and practical parts of their work, rather than directly working for the promotion of human rights, even though logistical and practical expenses are obviously needed, they might have had to cover those activities under mandates more directly linked to human rights. This strategic response would then be the strategy of avoid with the tactic of conceal, as they in a slight way, would have to conceal their nonconformity.

As the Honduran CSOs have had a great financial dependence on the Danish development organisations, institutional isomorphism has made the Honduran CSOs resemble the wishes of Danish development organisations. They have been assisted when approaching other sources of finance, which would lead one to conclude that in the collaboration between the two types of organisations, the Honduran CSO has changed its focus to accommodate the wishes of the Danish development organisations.

## **Management of Projects**

It seems like the respect that the Danish development organisations have had for the local context in which the Honduran CSOs work is symbolic of the respect the Danish development organisations have had for the local normative and cognitive institutional components of the topic of human rights in Honduras. The Danish development organisations could have acknowledged that trying to influence those two components is not an easy task to accomplish. Still, having guided the Honduran CSOs in a way that has made them broaden their focus in projects could be seen as a way to stimulate changes in parts of these two institutional pillars that they find to be of importance.

In changing and accommodating their focus in the projects to an extent that has seen the Honduran CSOs develop a lot during the years, there could be talk of a strategic response to the institutional demands that on one hand encompasses the local institutional pressures in Honduras, and on the other, the pressures from the Danish development organisation. This strategic response would be the strategy of compromise with the tactics of balance and pacify, as it seems like the Honduran CSOs have sought to balance the expectations of multiple constituents and also placating and accommodating institutional elements.

Their broadening of focus in projects could be seen to be a case of institutional isomorphism as the Honduran CSO might be inclined to develop projects that the Danish development organisation sees as opportune. When the Honduran CSO view the Danish development organisation as a success and as having a format which they will strive to obtain, the CSO will go through isomorphic change because of their wish to become like the organisations they perceive to be successful.

## **Conclusions**

This final section will seek to reflect on the decisions made during the study along with debatable issues, hereby determining the credibility. It will be sought to conclude on the major findings of the study, and to suggest some implications the findings of the study might have.

### **Credibility**

Two main issues will be gone through in the verification of the credibility of the study; the question of the choice of the institutional theory as a theoretical framework, and the credibility and generalisability of the answers from the informants.

Part of the theoretical considerations treated the question of the applicability of institutional theory in the context of the institutional environment in developing countries; whether or not institutional theory were fit to predict certain actions taken by organisations in this institutional setting. The study seems to prove that institutional theory is fit to apply in this context when analysing how organisations evolve, how an institutional environment affects organisations, and how organisations might seek to affect their proper institutional environment.

Development theory was another theoretical base that maybe could have been used. Focusing on how organisations in the area of international development evolve. But when the focus of the study has been the internal development of organisations, and not the organisations effect on its exterior surroundings, institutional theory seems as the right choice.

One could argue that it seems hard to conclude whether the results from the interviews are reliable enough for them to provide for an academic analysis, and if the results from only three interviews are really representational for the internal development of all human rights CSOs that has had collaboration with Danish development organisation.

The informants in the interviews could have several reasons, being political, financial, personal or others, for why they might not always give their honest opinion, which could make them provide answers that might not be exactly representative of how they have perceived the impact of the collaboration. One issue is the large dependence from the Honduran CSO on financial support from the Danish development organisation. This could have made the informants statements become slightly more positive and describe

the technical assistance they have received as more important than it might actually have been. Even though it was clarified to the informants that the study in no way intended to thoroughly revise the Honduran CSOs' compliance with the wishes of Danish development organisations, they might still have seen the interviews as a situation where the more positive image they could give, the better for themselves. The fact that the results from the interviews with the representatives from the Honduran CSOs are more positive than the results from the interview with the representative from the Danish development organisation, i.e. defining the impact of collaboration as greater, is an example of this exact matter.

The issue informant three brings up, about the difficulty in defining how much of the development of the Honduran CSOs is actually due to the collaboration that they have had with Danish development organisations, or how much of the development is due to external factors that might still would have occurred if the collaboration had not been present, makes it hard to define whether the impact in the Honduran CSOs are directly linked to the collaboration.

Finally, even though relatively few interviews were conducted, it seems reasonable to assume that the results from the interviews are generalisable for other cases of collaboration between the two types of organisations. As the links between Honduran CSOs and Danish development organisations also are few, it could be argued that the interviews conducted still represent the overall views from other examples of collaboration. The fact that the collected data from the interviews with the two representatives from the Honduran CSOs resemble each other, supports this argument and also makes the choosing of few informants seem as the right choice, as these few informants were able to expand deeply on issues of special interest during the interviews. However, it can be argued that having conducted interviews with more informants, at least five, would have made the empirical part of the study more substantial, which then could have made the results and conclusions more credible.

## **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that Danish development organisations have had a significant impact in the internal development of Honduran human rights CSOs. Certain parts of the internal development of the Honduran CSOs have been made more easily identifiable than others, regarding whether the impact has been significant, and whether it has been caused directly by the collaboration with Danish development organisations.

The six parameters chosen as the thematic division of the problem statement in order to have a clear and defined vision of the parts of the internal development of the Honduran CSOs, seems to have been the right choice for the present study. The six parameters have made presenting the interviews, the results, and the analysis structured and comprehensible for all interested parties in the study; the informants, the author and the readers. Conducting the study in this way has made it possible to focus clearly on these parameters and to extract data that now can facilitate conclusions to the problem statement and the research questions.

There has been a significant impact in the official institutionalisation of the Honduran CSOs. With the assistance of Danish development organisations, the CSOs have gone through an important process of institutionalisation that has made them become more professional and become more recognised actors. The collaboration with Danish development organisations has been crucial in the positive change as they actively have been supporting the process of their official institutionalisation.

There has been an impact in the capacity of the Honduran CSOs to conduct advocacy by a process of capacitation and joint advocacy ventures. The passing of laws and creation of institutions regarding human rights would be considered indications of this. Still, the study has difficulties in concluding whether their advocacy efforts actually have become more effective, or if the positive impact has been limited to the mere organisational capacities. It is also difficult to confidently conclude whether the success would have happened without involvement of Danish development organisations.

There has been an impact in the capacity of the Honduran CSOs to establish inter-institutional linkages. With the involvement and guidance of Danish development organisations, the Honduran CSOs have linked up with likeminded organisations in order to promote the discourse of human rights. Establishing networks being a point of success, maintaining the networks and links created could however be seen as a point where there would be room for improvement, as it seems that the continuous maintenance of these links and networks are, at times, troublesome.

There has been an impact in the Honduran CSOs' capacity to manage staff through the years of collaboration with Danish development organisations. This has happened partly because of the training and capacitation the staff of the Honduran CSOs that has been provided by the Danish development organisation, but also through internal workshops and an increased capacity to take on paid and more qualified employees. Therefore, the actual impact that can be directly related to the Danish development organisations has been significant.

There has been an impact in the Honduran CSOs' capacity to manage funds. As the requirements for obtaining funds from Danish development organisations have become stricter, the Honduran CSOs have had to accommodate to this change and develop their capacity accordingly. Their capacity to encounter new sources of funds has also increased, which is partly related to processes of technical assistance and collaboration with Danish development organisations.

In certain areas, there has been an impact in the Honduran CSOs capacity to manage projects. The projects they embark on have become more profound and have expanded to cover various areas of human rights, by the guidance of the Danish development organisations. However, there seems to be room for further improvement when discussing the development of their capacity to adjust their projects to new opportunities or challenges that might occur in the process of a certain project.

## **Implications**

The findings of the study have several suggestions for, not only future collaborations between locally based CSOs in Honduras working in the area of human rights and Danish development organisations, but also other types of collaboration between resembling organisations in similar contexts.

The idea of examining the internal development of a recipient organisation, and using the findings as a criterion for successful development assistance is one of the constructive suggestions of the study. When focusing development assistance on capacitating civil society, the sole idea of including a focus on the internal development of the organisations that represent civil society, and not only concentrating on the organisations' work in its proper field, seem as a way forward that is very interesting to pursue.

The findings of the present study prove that there is a lot to be learned by examining the internal development of CSOs. This approach, along with the findings of the study can easily be linked to current buzz-words in development discussions such as sustainability and ownership. By impacting and developing the organisational capacities of various areas of locally based CSOs, the postulation would be that they are on the road to become sustainable entities with the end goal of assuming full ownership of their organisational engagements.

The six parameters proposed could in future collaborations serve as a framework for measuring impact, possibly combining it with the earlier mentioned logical framework. Parameters could be added or

removed depending on the context, but it seems that the parameters chosen would serve well as a framework for many types of organisations working with development.

The Honduran CSOs working in the area of human rights could use the present study as a reflective tool on how collaboration with Danish development organisations has developed them. At the same time, the study can be used as a way to gain knowledge on what the CSOs have to gain from entering in collaboration with Danish development organisations.

The Danish development organisations could use the present study to reflect on how their technical assistance and collaboration affect the internal development of their partner organisations. It could also be used to develop new areas of focus, learning in what areas there need to be a larger focus, and in what areas the collaboration have been most successful.

Scholars of various types of development work could use the frameworks that institutional theory presents. Combining institutional theory with development theory would be a potential way of furthering scholarly studies. In this way, the study could promote a new perspective to the academic discourse.

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## Annex: Letter to Representatives of Honduran CSOs

Tegucigalpa, el 19 de abril de 2013

Estimado Señor,

En el proceso de elaborar mi tesis de maestría de comunicación empresarial internacional en la universidad de Copenhague, Dinamarca, estoy buscando personas claves para cooperar con la investigación, que al momento se llama “El desarrollo de las ONG trabajando en la materia de derechos humanos”.

Se solicita que usted tenga parte en la investigación como entrevistado. La entrevista se enfocará en la cuestión clave: ¿Qué ha sido el impacto en su organización tras haber colaborado con organizaciones danesas? Bajo esta cuestión clave quedan varios parámetros como por ejemplo; el desarrollo de la institucionalidad de su organización, capacidad de hacer incidencia política, gestión de empleados y otros. Como tal, cada uno de los parámetros servirá para aclarar el impacto de la colaboración es su propio aspecto.

Cabe mencionar que la investigación no es una evaluación específica de la colaboración entre la organización suya y una organización danesa como tal. Es más un intento de juntar las experiencias de los impactos e investigar qué ha sido el aprendizaje de la colaboración. Así que mi deseo es que la tesis que elaboraré pueda apoyar futuras colaboraciones entre los dos tipos de organizaciones; ONG hondureñas trabajando en la materia de derechos humanos y organizaciones danesas trabajando con el desarrollo en la sociedad civil en Honduras.

Las entrevistas durarán media hora y tendrán lugar al fin del mes de abril. Si usted no desea que figure su nombre o el nombre de su organización en el proyecto, no será ningún problema. Favor de comunicarme si le interesa tener parte de mi tesis. Agradecería mucho su voluntad.

Atentamente,

Martin Larsen