Inclusiveness in a Multi-Stakeholder Initiative in the Burmese Garment Sector

The case of the Danish multi-stakeholder initiative the 'MYPOD' project

MASTER THESIS

M.Sc. BLC Business and Development Studies

Authors:

Alessio Guidolin (107512)

Andreas Theodor Åkerman Nielsen (9060)

Christoffer Andersen (30163)

STU count: 278,229

Supervisor: External Lecturer Rajiv Maher

CBS Copenhagen Business School
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

Abstract

Multi-stakeholder initiatives are increasingly seen as a legitimate form of governance thus as a solution to many issues regarding development. As much literature suggests, there are many potential issues related to multi-stakeholder initiatives including power imbalances between partners, particularly between Western and developing country partners. However, there are some aspects of MSIs that remain unaddressed such as the role of the donor agency and the importance of common cultural backgrounds and previously shared experiences amongst only some of the actors. The purpose of our thesis is to investigate the dynamics of collaboration between the Danish 'cluster' of partners and the local Burmese partners in a multi-stakeholder initiative in the garment sector in Myanmar. The initiative is funded by a Danish donor and we therefore place our focus on the consequences this power bias has for the inclusiveness of local partners and their interests. Qualitative interviews with the Danish partners in the MYPOD project constitute our data set and provide us an understanding of the Danish actors' views on the remaining partners and the donor agency. Our findings map out mechanisms that have a negative impact on inclusion and thus the legitimacy of a multi-stakeholder initiative. These include exclusion of local and weaker partners in the decision-making process as well as strict restrictions defined by a donor. The thesis is relevant for stakeholders contemplating to initiate an MSI. Consequently, it provides a set of recommendations for different stakeholder types within the Burmese garment industry.

Table of content

Abbreviations

3F - United Federation of Danish Workers

AaU - Aalborg University

BIF - Business Innovation Facility

CMP - Cut, Make, Pack

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

DIEH - Danish Ethical Trading Initiative

DRC - Democratic Republic of Congo

EU - European Union

IGO - Intergovernmental Organisation

ILO - International Labour Organization

MSI - Multi-Stakeholder Initiative

NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation

SLORC - State Law and Order Restoration Council

SMEs - Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

SPDC - State Peace and Development Council

YTU - Yangon Technical University

Chapter 1: Introduction

The rise of the garment industry in Myanmar has created inclusive growth opportunities for the country. The Burmese labour-intensive and export-oriented garment industry, showed remarkable growth in the late 1990s. As a result, the total garment export of Myanmar grew from 2.5% in 1990 to 39.5% in 2000 (Kudo, 2010). This qualifies it as the largest exported goods of the country. Additionally, Myanmar displays some locational advantages for garment factories. From a corporate perspective, an acknowledged competitive advantage specific to the location is the access to great quantity of cheap and relatively well-educated labour (Kudo, 2010). Although the garment sector shows several beneficiary circumstances for factories, these also collide with several disadvantages. For instance, a major challenge within the sector is the high employee turnover rate. Due to the relatively poor conditions within the garment industry, mainly consisting of the low wages alongside the excessive working hours. High employee turnover rate is costly, both in time and productivity, which can prevent the growth of the workforce. Retaining employees is a constant struggle in the Burmese textile factories, which hinders the creation of a great workforce, because of lack of improvements. Other concerns regarding the sector is the lack of health and safety protection (IHRB, 2013).

Regarding the political and industrial context, the infrastructure is unable to support the development and growth of a flourishing business environment. Myanmar is deficient of basic facilities and services which would help local entrepreneurs and foreign investors to create and improve undertakings (Soans & Abe, 2015). Moreover, the legal framework appears inefficient and particularly slow because of an unwieldy bureaucracy that hampers rather than unleashes entrepreneurship. In this scenario, more than ever the concept of limited statehood, as introduced by Risse (2012), appears suitable because of the government's authoritarian governance and relative isolation during the recent years. It has not been able to create an appropriate environment that encounters the rise of local entrepreneurship but also the receiving of international actors (Soans & Abe, 2015). Thus, on one hand it is appropriate to mention the 'operational gap' in terms of absence of adequate structural reforms, on the other hand there is also reason to mention the 'participatory gap' expressed by Reinicke & Deng (2000), due to the lack of intervention relative to governance issues.

In general, the garment sector in developing countries offer great opportunities for the creation of value, inclusive growth and empowerment. Nevertheless, the sector still shows major sustainability challenges that are difficult to mitigate. Although there is a growing recognition that companies also have the responsibility to address these sectoral sustainability issues, it is not feasible that they do it unaided, because these are complex issues that need to be addressed from different angles. Although many companies have CSR policies, studies have shown that the needs of the local communities have not been met adequately (Banerjee, 2017).

In response, a growing number of multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) have emerged to address these sustainability issues that exist within different sectors (Seters, 2018). Essentially, the role of multi-stakeholder initiatives is to address critical issues regarding labour and human rights and governance in any industry, which no entity seems to be able to resolve on its own. Therefore, it is a means of addressing collectively crucial issues by distinctive forms of governance, by drawing on the different stakeholders' expertise, experience as well as resources through shared goals and responsibilities (IHRB, 2013).

Recently, the Danish-funded multi-stakeholder initiative, the MYPOD project was initiated in the garment industry in Myanmar with the objective of improving the working environment, productivity and level of social dialogue. The project carried out by DIEH in collaboration with Bestseller, Aalborg University and trade union federation 3F, started its activities in 2017 in collaboration with local stakeholders, including Yangon Technical University, local trade unions and business associations. The project's duration is of 3 years with the intention of helping the Burmese garment sector resolve the sustainability issues currently present in conjunction with the development of a business case that can serve as documenting the commercial and workplace improvements (DIEH, 2017). Nevertheless, critiques of the MSIs reprehend its efficiency and legitimacy. The criticism is based on the lack of stakeholder engagement in the partnerships. MSIs are often formed by the business or interests of the stakeholders that are engaged in the MSI. However, there is a poor representation of the marginalized groups and the balance of power between stakeholders appears to be asymmetrical. Scholars argue that this asymmetry in participation also stems from the constraint of resources (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014).

1.1 Presentation of Research Question

For this reason, we propose to focus the investigation on the following Research Question:

- **How can Danish stakeholders ensure inclusiveness of local partners in the multi-stakeholder initiative 'MYPOD' in the Burmese garment sector?**

1.2 Main purpose

The thesis intends to provide an answer to the research question by adequately evaluating the MYPOD project. Consequently, it examines the multi-stakeholder initiative taking place in Myanmar by framing it in the concept of MSI and postcolonial theory. By doing so, it aims to develop an understanding of the inclusiveness of the local partners in MSIs and the related impact regarding the explicit goals.

A main characteristic of the research approach is that the multi-stakeholder initiative is explored from a postcolonial perspective. This can be perceived as unique, because the postcolonial perspective usually investigates managerial issues within an organization to identify the colonial features of the management. However, in this context it deals with a project that revolves around a whole industry, hence includes very different stakeholders that appertain to clusters. The majority of the existing literature about the MSIs portrays them as efficient in fulfilling every stakeholder's objective. Rarely, criticism is focused on MSIs. However, by joining both approaches it has provided a critical view on a MSI, particularly in the garment industry in Myanmar. This combined theory approach has contributed to the lack of criticism there is on MSIs. Thus, it contributes with new insight on this matter.

Another aspect of the MSI approach that is also reflected in the business case is the term of area of limited statehood. In the context of Myanmar, it was possible to access information about the lack of statehood, where the project has been an asset to address this lack. Simultaneously, this can enable organizations to exploit such an area of limited statehood by incorporating their own interest in the project, that initially seeks to resolve social issues. Consequently, the MSI approach has enabled to explain how the partnership began, by identifying the problem that needed to be solved. Assessing the MSI has been necessary to identify the different phases it undergoes in a peculiar context.

Regarding the postcolonial theory it has been useful by providing a critical insight on the collaboration between the partners of the MSI. By criticizing the ways of management

that takes place in modern organizations, it has enabled us to develop an understanding of the critical challenges that needs to be addressed in the MYPOD project. It has shed light on the colonial traits that are visible in such an MSI that we are investigating. One way that the postcolonial theory has been valuable in investigating the colonial traits within the MYPOD project, is to investigate the assumption about the 'others'. Accordingly, the Danish partners have clarified their position in the partnership as being the superiors in contrast to the local partners who they perceive as inferior to them. As such, it has provided findings on the 'asymmetrical understanding' which has created an imbalance of power between the stakeholders. Another aspect of the postcolonial theory that is investigated is the concept of culture. It helps create an understanding of the cultural differences that is present in the collaboration, but also how it poses a problem to the MSI. Lastly, it investigates the initiatives taken during the collaboration that can have an imperialistic impact, which has unfavourable outcomes to the project. Therefore, applying a postcolonial approach to the business case, enables to determine whether this MSI has counterproductive elements that can hinder the intended outcome.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The thesis has been structured into several sections, that consist of the following: introduction, methodology, literature review, findings, discussion, recommendations and further research. Some of the sections have been further subdivided. The introduction seeks to provide a general overview of the garment industry in Myanmar and its main characteristics. More than that, it briefly introduces the concept of MSIs as an innovative approach to tackle common issues of the sector in general, but also related to sustainability. The introduction section also presents the research question that is linked to the single case which the exploratory research revolves around. It is then followed by a methodology section that describes the methodology approach that has been applied to conduct the research. It explains the research method, research philosophy, case study approach and data collection method, which constitutes the fundamentals of the research. The literature review section refers to the theoretical framework that is given to the research. This section is subdivided into two sections since it investigates the MYPOD project from a MSI and postcolonial perspective. Firstly, the section explains the concept of MSIs in depth and the positive aspect of engaging with stakeholders along with the management of stakeholders. Subsequently, it

seeks to explain how an MSI partnership functions, while simultaneously criticizing this concept. Secondly, the literature review seeks to define the concept of postcolonial theory, initially by presenting a historical introduction. Then it clarifies the discourse of the 'others' and 'culture' which are crucial concept related to the postcolonial theory. Furthermore, the dynamics of power and control are explained, also through the concept of CSR and indirect rule. Lastly, the limitations of the postcolonial theory are presented. The section presenting the findings derives from the data collected regarding the MYPOD project. This section also consists of several subdivisions that reflect the different themes of the findings. The discussion of the thesis then assesses the different findings and set out to discuss them in relation to the theoretical framework. In this section certain views that derive from the theories are confirmed, while others are rejected. The explicit recommendations are then made based on the previous discussion. These are classified as general suggestions, but also as specific recommendations to each stakeholder type. The thesis is then concluded with suggestions for aspects of the findings that need further research.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 The Approach: Inductive vs. Deductive vs Abductive

Research is important both in business and academic context, as it provides the body of knowledge to a specific discipline. This knowledge which is perceived as unique, derives from a variety of developed subjects. Although, the definition of research appears to be complex, due to its various definitions, it is commonly acknowledged as a process of inquiry and investigation (Amaratunga et al., 2002). Critical to the outcome of the research, is the research strategy which needs to be clearly defined. Thus, a starting point for a research is the research design, which mainly consists of two different approaches. They are defined as deductive and inductive (Amaratunga et al., 2002).

The first one is based on logic while the latter approach grounds its research on empirical evidence. The deductive approach is concerned with developing hypothesis based on existing theory and then elaborating a research strategy in order to test the hypothesis in the real world (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). Therefore, the main idea underpinning a deductive design, is reasoning from a specific issue to enable generalization (Babbie, 2010). As Hackley

claims *"If a causal relationship or link seems to be implied by a theory or case example, it might be true in many cases. A deductive design might test to see if this relationship or link did obtain on more general circumstances"* (Hackley, 2003: 34). In other words, a deductive approach is appropriate to verify the validity of a theory or a specific relationship implied by another theory. With this regard, it's possible to understand if the findings support or question a theory or its assumptions (Hackley, 2003). Thus, two main advantages can be observed: the possibility to explain causal relationships between concepts and variables and possibility to generalize research conclusions to a certain extent.

However, opponents of this approach disagree with this line of thought. They argue that the generalization made from induction is based on an incomplete set of known data. To enable such a generalization the given phenomena must be observed from every situation, for the researcher to reach an accurate generalization. This is practically impossible to do (Rothchild, 2006).

Figure 1: The Inductive Approach
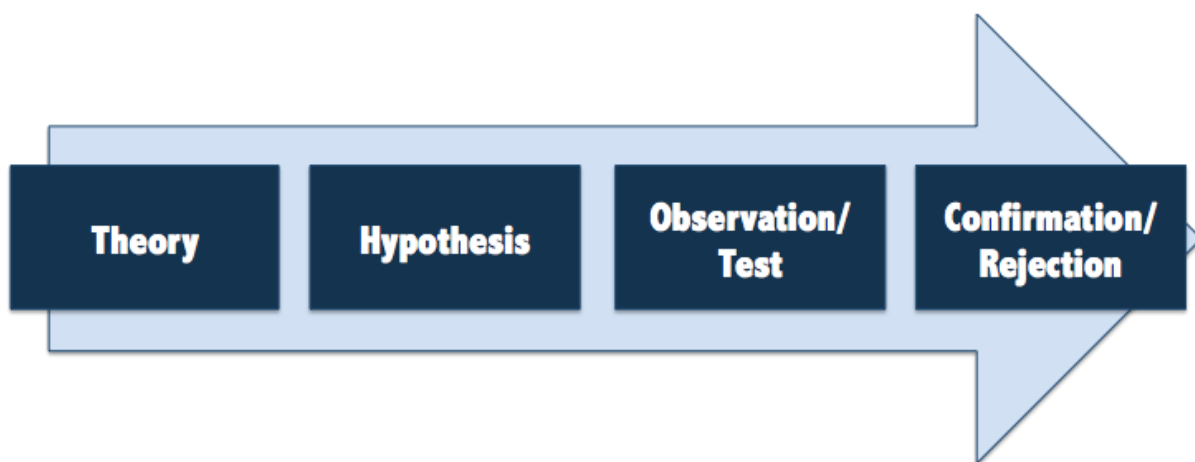
In contrast, the inductive approach begins with the observations of a case, from which new theories are developed and explained. Accordingly, the theory is constantly improved from the data collected, hence no theory or hypothesis is presented at the beginning and the specific case is thus the starting point of the research (Saunders et al., 2009). Inductive research *"involves the search for pattern from observation and the development of explanations – theories – for those patterns through series of hypotheses"* (Bernard, 2011:7). Even though the research doesn't start from a specific theory or group of these, it

does not mean that the researcher cannot formulate a particular proposal research using some already existing theories (Saunders et al., 2009). The central pillar of this approach is to gather knowledge through the experience which in turn enables the researcher to seek the right patterns to eventually create a new doctrine.

Figure 2: The Deductive Approach
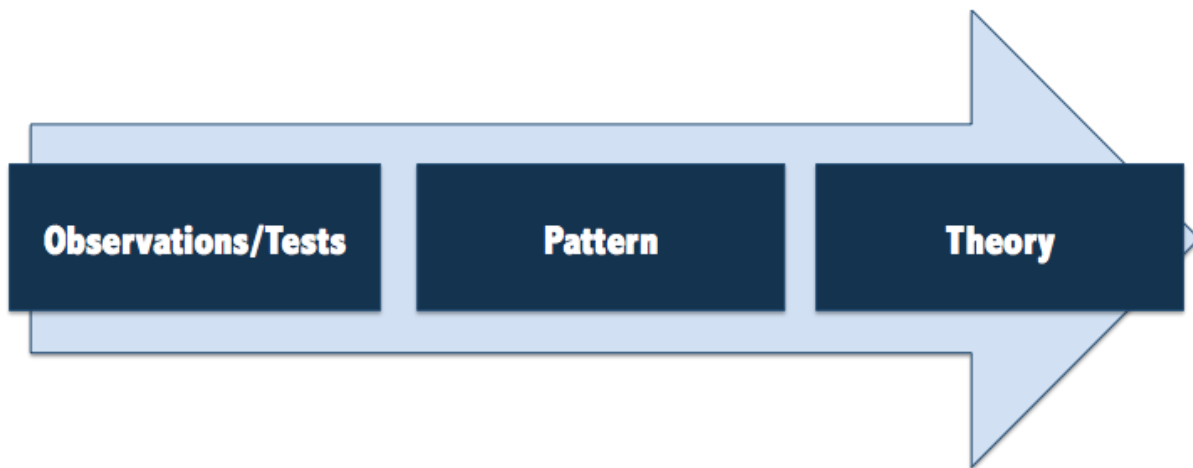
Lastly, Dubois & Gadde (2002) suggest a new approach for a business case-based research, calling it 'systematic combining', also known as the abductive approach. The main trait of this approach is the ongoing transition between a model world, namely theories, and the empirical reality. This experimental approach, as underlined by the two scholars, is particularly useful for developing new theories through a process that allows to switch from different types of research activities. This way it is possible to gain a better understanding of the correlation between what is observed empirically and what is learned from the theory (Dubois & Gadde., 2002).

Such integrated approach enables an interrelation among four areas in the research work: theoretical framework, existing literature, empirical world and the specific case analysis. In this concept the researcher is free to go back and forth through these different domains to ascertain or reject matches between the theoretical framework and the observations (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

Figure 3: The Abductive Approach
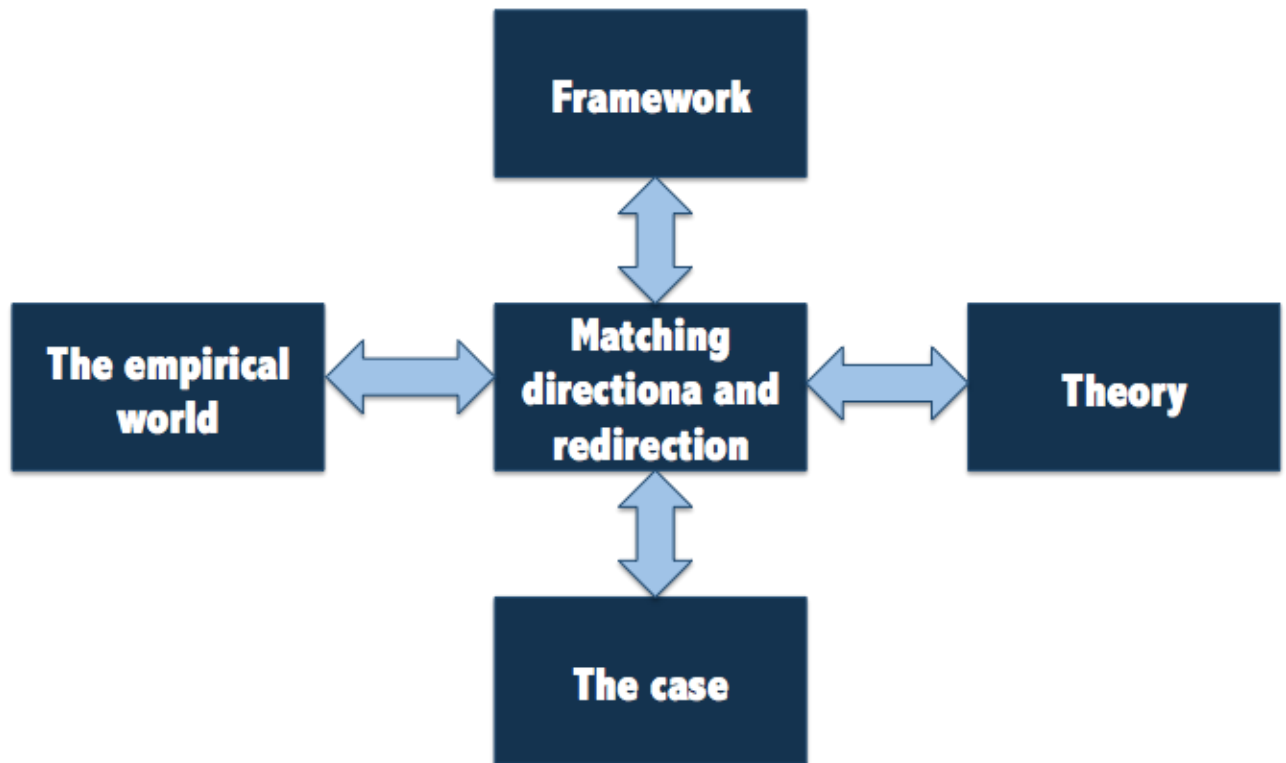
The research in this thesis was conducted by a systematic combining approach where the analysis process and theory literature review proceed along the data collection. By adopting this procedure, the research goes through a continuous evolution, changing progressively. As mentioned above, this orientation offers the chance to direct and redirect between the theoretical framework and the data analysis, constantly trying to find consistency, or eventually asymmetries, between findings and theories (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). In this way the researchers can obtain a better comprehension of the investigated situation. Moreover, Dubois & Gadde (2002) highlights that such a strategy that to 'goes back and forth', enables the researcher to come up with new theories or concepts and explains more analytically the investigated phenomenon.

   To get a clear insight on the dynamics of the collaboration in the multi-stakeholder initiative in the Burmese garment sector, the theories underpinning the research will provide a comprehension to the behaviour and strategy implemented. Therefore, the use of multi-stakeholder theory along with the postcolonial theory has been relevant. This research framework was necessary to undertake a research that enables a continuous comparison between findings and the theories. The postcolonial theory as well as the literature on multi-stakeholder initiatives served as solid pillars to support the core theories that this research

is based on. However, the goal of the current research is not to build new theories, but to identify insights regarding the investigated case.

2.2 Research Purpose/Approach: Descriptive/Exploratory

Research design can be divided into four categories: exploratory, conclusive, causal or explanatory and descriptive. An exploratory research, is a kind of investigation that, as suggested by the name itself, aims to explore the research question usually, but not necessarily, regarding a new problem. Contrary to conclusive research, the final goal of this approach is not to give one single final solution to the identified existing problem but rather a set of recommendations to relevant parties. As Robson (2002) asserts that exploratory research is useful to gain information, ask new questions and then in turn to describe phenomena from a different perspective. Therefore, it is a helpful means to not only determine the nature of the problem but also to get a deeper insight regarding a problem (Saunders et al., 2009).

In coherence with an abductive approach, through this type of research, a structured pattern has not been pursued. Essentially, in conducting the research a change of direction has been done while reviewing literature and analysing findings and data (Saunders et al., 2009). This approach allows more flexibility and freedom of movement in investigating and adopting/shaping the proposed research gradually based on findings and literature.

Even though a lot of research has been done on multi-stakeholder initiatives, few studies have been found regarding the way multi-stakeholders of a same geographic area are collaborating. The uniqueness of this research is to investigate a topic on which plenty of work has been carried out, but within a new context and a unique set of actors. Through the exploratory research model, it is the intention to *"tackle new problems on which little or no previous research has been done"* (Brown, 2006: 43). It can be argued that the recent opening-up of the Burmese market to the global market, and the establishment of the MYPOD project, makes the chosen case an interesting research topic (Saunders et al., 2009).

Along the exploratory design, it was also necessary to undertake descriptive research. Such research was useful to gain a clearer picture of the phenomenon and the context where our study is inserted in. Fox & Bayat (2007) argue that it helps at casting light on current issues or problems because the collected data provides a more complete description of the

situation. In these endeavours, semi structured interviews helped to extract information about certain characteristics and behaviours of the four main actors involved in the project.

2.3 Research Methods: Qualitative, Quantitative, Mixed

The choice about which could be the more appropriate research method to use has to be done in function of the research situation. Each research method has a certain form of collecting and analysing data, which has its advantages as well as disadvantages. Additionally, the method of research can be placed into two distinctive categories, qualitative and quantitative (Amaratunga et.al., 2002). In the following sections, the main distinctions between the different methods will be elaborated.

2.3.1 Qualitative

The first approach, considered for a long period as inaccurate compared to a quantitative research, has become prominent in social science research. The reason underpinning this scepticism is due to its nature of design being more appropriate in handling small sample size and soft data, and it being characterized by the subjectivity of the researcher.

Qualitative research has been defined as an unstructured, exploratory research methodology based on small samples that gives an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations, and provides insights of specific problem, diving deeper into it (Malhotra, 1999). This methodology fits to show the inner aspects of a human being such as emotions and feelings. In fact, *"qualitative methods are often regarded as providing rich data about real life people and situations and being more able to make sense of behaviour and to understand behaviour within its wider context"* (Vaus, D. 2002: 5). Nevertheless, this type of approach has not been exempted by critics because of its difficulty (if not impossibility) to generalize findings and its nature to be overly dependent on the personal investigator's interpretations (Vaus, D. 2002).

However, this research approach does present some limitations. Silverman (2010) and Cumming (2001) both argue, that the main risk of conducting a qualitative research is that it does not consider other aspects and issues characterizing the context. Here the focus is more about the meanings and the participants' experiences, (Rahman, 2016). Therefore,

the main problem in adopting this approach is the risk of 'leaving out contextual sensitivities' and other contextual 'imperative issues' (Rahman, 2016: 104).

A second important issue is the poor generalizability that a small sample size and the subjective nature of the research raise since findings rarely can be generalised about the whole population. Nevertheless, about this aspect some scholars coin the term 'moderatum generalization', arguing that the findings of a qualitative research *"are not attempts to produce sweeping sociological statements that hold good over long periods of time, or across ranges of cultures",* but conclusions that are open to change (Payne & Williams, 2005: 297).

Lastly, is the limitation that refers to the difficulty of analysing the collected data because the interpretation of them can be subjective. In fact, they are usually words of narratives and descriptions and then sometimes the analysis process can be difficult. The interpretation must be as objective as possible in order to be able to explain and to justify the decisions taken. Consequently, the risk of being subjected to accusations of unreliability, due to the volatility of the data, can be high. Interviewed could be influenced by different factors that can change any day now and, therefore, affecting the reliability of the interviewee themselves (Helen & Noble, 2015).

The conducted research, we mainly based on qualitative data (primary and secondary). Consequently, a complete qualitative approach has been adopted. The main goal of this investigation, in line with the proposal research, was to investigate the way different subjects collaborate with each other to achieve a common goal. We focus on the way the different stakeholders interact and collaborate. Moreover, how they include the external partners in their operations and in the project. Therefore, with respect to the inquiry there was no need to use quantitative data because it would have been inadequate in investigating relationships among different stakeholders that participate in an MSI, particularly such as the MYPOD project.

2.3.2 Quantitative

Quantitative data analysis concerns the transformation of numerical data into significant outcomes, by a process of critical and rational elaboration, which then can be converted into usable statistics. Therefore, it tends to focus on phenomena that can be easily quantified by

making use of, usually, large samples from which it is possible to generalize results. A quantitative method, descriptive in nature, is generally applied with the purpose of testing hypotheses previously formulated and to quantify a certain problem creating numerical data. The most important aspect in using this approach is the capacity to be as objective as possible in the analysis and interpretation of data findings. It is, indeed, the objectivity that is the main difference compared to the qualitative method. Consequently, conclusions are drawn from an analysis of the statistical data (Cozby, 2015). Outcomes from primary data must be continuously compared with findings of the literature review through the researcher's critical thinking. Thus, the main limit of this type of research is its impossibility to measure and recognize phenomena that are not quantifiable (Queirós, 2017)

One of the main limit of this data collection design is the risk of giving an improper representation of the target population. It is then necessary to select the correct sample of population, based on specific characteristics so both target and sample be similar. This is fundamental in the process of generalizing observations without preventing the researcher in reaching his or her objectives (Banerjee, 2010). Secondly, as mentioned previously, conducting a quantitative research requires the use of a large sample size, and this can turn into a problem because of the lack of resources. Indeed, it can be difficult to find data in particular contexts (i.e. developing countries) or about specific topics (Queirós, 2017). Another observation against the quantitative approach is the incapacity to control the environment where the interviewees are. Hence, it follows that the responses are influenced by the time in which the respondents are inserted and the conditions by which they are under (Steckler et al., 1992).

Regarding the form of collecting data, it is a standard practice to resort to a structured questionnaire. In the specific case of this thesis, this practice would not have been able to provide certain information. Nevertheless, this has been possible by adopting the question based on the interview flow. Quantitative analysis implies rigidity in collecting data and it cannot capture the emotions and feelings of the respondents. Thus, the main limit of this type of research is its insufficiency in measuring and recognizing phenomena that are not quantifiable. It can reveal on what extent some phenomenon is measured but it cannot always explore the reason or the modalities (why and how). Our investigation is mainly based on answers from interviews that provide an in-depth understanding of the topic (Queirós, 2017).

2.3.3 Mixed Method

Only recently, researchers have argued for a mixed method research approach, instead of a single approach. This methodology seeks to combine qualitative and quantitative data within a study. A comprehensive definition of the mixed methods research, is *"the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration"* (Johnson et al., 2007: 123).

There has been an ongoing debate about whether the qualitative and quantitative research methods can be mixed. This discussion stems from the different epistemological and ontological assumptions and paradigms associated with these research methods. In particular, whether the integration of these two is feasible is a prevalent discussion. However, proponents of the mixed research method perceive it as an approach that reckons the strengths and perspectives of each method (Östlund et al., 2010). In conformity with the two methods, it provides a more complete and deeper understanding of the subject of investigation (Griensven et al., 2013).

Contrary to a singular approach, by combining qualitative and quantitative findings, it creates an overall view of them. Mixed methods enable a highlight of the similarities and differences between particular aspects of a specific phenomenon. Tsahakkori & Creswell (2007) define the mixed methods research as *"research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches"* (Östlund et al., 2010: 2). Therefore, the purpose of mixing qualitative and quantitative methods has to be clear in order to determine whether or not the techniques and findings should be integrated. Thus, it is important that the qualitative and quantitative aspects are correlated and integrated (Griensven et al., 2013).

When combining different qualitative and quantitative data, it can be challenging to identify the relations between the theoretical and methodological concepts of the study. However, to facilitate the identification of the ties between the different concepts, Erzberger and Kelle (2003) propose a triangular framework as a 'methodological metaphor'. Consequently, they argue that it is helpful as it can *"describe the logical relations between the qualitative and quantitative findings and the theoretical concepts in a study; demonstrate the way in which both qualitative and quantitative data can be combined to*

facilitate an improved understanding of particular phenomena; and, can also be used to help generate new theory" (Erzberger and Kelle, 2003: 371). The tip of the triangle represents the theoretical propositions and empirical findings from qualitative and quantitative data, while the sides of the triangle enact as the logical relationships between the propositions and findings (Östlund et al., 2010)

2.4 The triangulation metaphor

In business researches it has become more common to mix methods of data collection: either within the same method (e.g. all qualitative) or combining both approaches (qualitative and quantitative) and analysis methods. It is in this regard that the 'triangulation' concept appears as *"the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon"* (Denzin, 1978: 291).

Such strategy of using different methods and analysis helps the researcher to gather more in-depth insight and understanding of the investigated scenario (Greener, 2008). The triangulation is the process of observing from different angles and perspectives (Neuman, 2013). Through this process of multiple perceptions, understandings and obtaining a better clarification of meanings turns out to be more efficient (Flick, 1992). In other words, the triangulation is a useful strategy to examine a phenomenon as it can be seen from different angles.

The deeper insight of the phenomenon arises due to the use of not only different data collection methods and analysis but also different methodologies, theoretical frameworks, disciplines etc (Chenail, 1997). In conducting research, it is fundamental to ensure the validity of the data collected, namely that they are true and certain; so the use of triangulation can be considered accurate if it brings to a common outcome and evaluation, resulting in determine validity (Olsen, 2004). Yet, the subjectivity in interpreting data is the main problem in conducting research, since it can compromise the validity of the findings. Then, in order to diminish the subjectivity and the influence of possible biases the triangulation approach has been implemented in through a data triangulation consisting of multiple interviews, which offer various responses and remarkably different images of the phenomenon investigated.

2.5 Strategy: Case study

A prevalent presumption of an in-depth case-study research is that it cannot be solely based on a single case, in order to reach to a conclusion that can be generalized. Moreover, it is argued that such an approach is too subjective and will be influenced by the researcher's own interpretations. Thus, one could question the validity of the case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The rationale for using multiple cases focuses upon the need to establish whether the findings of the first case occur in other cases and, as a consequence, the need to generalise from these findings. For this reason, Yin (2003) argues that multiple case studies may be preferable to a single case study. Indeed, to only focus on a single case, without considering other similar cases can be considered as a limit since comparisons cannot be done (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Flyvbjerg (2006) opposes this line of thought and argues that it is both appropriate and valuable to generalize from a single case. However, he acknowledges that the single case study is not the only way to do so. It depends on the chosen case that is focused on. If the case has been chosen strategically it may become a great asset to the generalizability of the case study. This does not mean that the case study is always appropriate or relevant for a research method or that the collected data are without value. The selected method should be dependent on the research and of its circumstances (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Additionally, it can be mentioned that formal generalization based on multiple case or single cases, are not the main source to reach scientific progress. Instead, it is more resourceful that the researchers carry a wide range of practical skills, one of them being 'generalization'. Formal generalization is one of multiple ways to gain and accumulate knowledge, in order to reach scientific development (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Case studies are particularly useful when exploring a topic in-depth. Rather than providing a data set for statistical purposes, the strength of case studies lies in the possibility to provide a deeper understanding behind phenomena (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Additionally, Flyvbjerg (2006) argues, as mentioned above, that it is a misunderstanding that case studies cannot be used to generalise and thus cannot be used to contribute to scientific development. Weick (1979) claims that a specific case can be particularly useful and that it can be considered as an opportunity to analyse and understand a specific situation. A proper investigation on the relation between the context and the phenomenon interacting with it, is well offered through a single case study approach (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). As mentioned,

it is important to carefully pick the cases since a careful selection process ensures the possibility to generalize from a case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Stake (1995) supports this notion by focusing on the particularisation features rather than generalisation features in case studies - thereby primarily focusing on a case study and its features and abilities and rather than its differences to other cases which is seen as a secondary feature.

As mentioned in the 'research strategy' section, the MYPOD project represents a unique case to investigate. The main goal is not to generalize, but instead, to go through a specific situation within a specific context. The particularity of the selected case is, indeed, the external environment (garment sector in Myanmar) and the cluster of Danish organizations, all different in nature, involved in the launch of the project. Thus, a deeper understanding of the way the actors interact among themselves in order to sort out a problematic issue, such as the working conditions as well as the efficiency in the textile industry, is the external environment that is under investigation. Despite the uniqueness of the case, it is arguable that similar initiatives of cooperation take place both within the same country and in other contexts. Nevertheless, this work can be used as a valuable tool of consultation for future comparable ventures

2.6 Data collection

2.6.1 Primary Data

The primary data collected for this thesis stems from the qualitative interviews conducted with representatives from the different parties involved in the MYPOD project including the trade union 3F, Aalborg University, BESTSELLER, the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative and, finally, the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business. Qualitative interviews are interviews that are directed by the interviewer and by the interviewee through their questions and answers about a specific topic (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). The goal of this type of interview is to obtain knowledge about a complicated matter. Due to the complexity of the matter, the questions, reflections and answers allow the interviewer to gather information and insight about the topic that can otherwise be difficult to explore (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

How the partners involved in the MYPOD project work together is in the case of this thesis the topic around which the qualitative interview questions revolve. It is thus an important responsibility of the interviewer to phrase questions so that these aspects of the MYPOD projects can present themselves during the interviews. In addition to creating a comfortable and natural conversation environment the questions were also non-standard, i.e. custom-fitted to each interviewee. This way, the hope is that it is easier for those aspects to become clear during the interview.

2.6.2 Interviews

A method for data collection that has been crucial for our research has been the conducting of interviews. There are different types of interviews. Some can be highly formalized while other are semi-structured. In semi-structured interviews the questions are open-ended compared to structured interviews that have a far more fixed structure. During semi-structured interviews the interviewer has the opportunity to think about and ask new questions during the interviews, thus giving the interview deeper exploratory features (Saunders et al. 2009). This type of interview is also more personal and the personal interplay between the interviewer and the interviewee, the open-ended questions and the possibility to ask follow-up questions means that the creation of new knowledge rather than reciting existing knowledge is the likely outcome (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). The interview questions were thus formulated following a common base, but they were changed during the interviews process in accordance with the answers received. A total of five interviews were conducted for the research with a duration of approx. 30 minutes to an hour each. The interviewees consisted of the Danish stakeholders of the MYPOD project. We considered them to be an asset for the data collection, as they were able to give a first-hand insight on the project. Moreover, by conducting open-questioned interviews it provided a sense of the interviewees subjectivity on the matter. Thus, it was possible to acquire detailed and unexpected information about the ongoing project in Myanmar.

2.6.3 Open-ended questionnaire

Another method of data collection that was useful for the exploratory research was the open-ended questionnaire. In the process of constructing the questionnaire, the host of questions

previously formulated for the interviews that were conducted seemed helpful in this process. Reviewing the questions and the answers provided by the interviewees made it possible to identify which data was missing from the research. This formed the base of our questions for the questionnaire. Consequently, remarkable changes were made in comparison to the ones used for the interviews (Saunders et al. 2009).

The purpose of open-ended questionnaire was to acquire insight on the responsible business activities that take place in Myanmar. Therefore, the questionnaire was predetermined for the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business, more specifically the Research and Outreach Manager Hnin M. The reasoning behind the choice of open-ended questions was that it could provide detailed answers on the subject matter. Due to lack of knowledge on the business activities in Myanmar, developing open-ended questions was a means of obtaining better insight on the matter, from an expert's perspective. Moreover, this method of data collection is viewed as necessary to acquire knowledge and deeper understanding of the business environment of the country (Saunders et al. 2009).

2.6.4 Secondary Data

Along with primary data it was decided, in order to conduct the research as accurate as possible, to make use of secondary data as well. Therefore, books and academic papers about postcolonialism and multi-stakeholder theory were the main sources consulted, within the literature review, with the purpose of obtaining a profound knowledge of the matter. In addition, quantitative data in form of statistics were gathered to get insights on the Burmese garment sector. Thus, to develop an understanding of its current state and to clarify the challenges that are present within the industry.

Table 1: The Interviewees

Name	Title	Name of Organisations
Peter Hasle	Professor	Aalborg University
Lea Bohr	Regional Coordinator, Asia	3F

Maria Kim Lassen	Social Sustainability Manager	Bestseller
Julie Bundgaard	Project Manager	Danish Ethical Trading Initiative
Hnin Wut Yee	Research and outreach manager	Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

2.6.5 Interpretation of the data

Dwyer & Buckle (2009) talk about membership roles when it comes to the qualitative researchers and pose the question whether they belong to their case population or not. Being part of the case population can affect the decisions taken by the researcher and thus compromise the ability to collect the data as it affects the ability to understand the answers given in the interview. Identifying as part of the group or not holds different possibilities and challenges. Identifying as a group comes down to not only gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race and so on but also shared experiences (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

Being an insider to a population allows the researcher to enhance the depth and width of the level of understanding of the case population and the topic. Additionally, the membership of the group gives the researcher legitimacy amongst the researched and it is thus easier to achieve acceptance more easily. This increases the chances of the researched population members being more open during the interviews which in turn enhances the depth of the research (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

On the other hand, being too similar to other persons, e.g. the researched population individuals, can make it difficult to study them. Inclusion in a population thus hinders a researcher from being able to distance herself or himself from the topic and the population sample. It limits the researcher's ability to be objective, reflect, and produce an authentic study. For instance, the researcher's similar personal experiences and views may shape the perceived answers and result in a distorted interpretation of interview answers. The researcher not being able to tell the personal experiences apart from those of the researched population individuals may have various effects. This may result in the interviews being

contaminated by the researcher's experiences being projected onto the interview results and may thus tamper with the overall research results (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

Similarly, outsiders may struggle with obtaining such connection with the researched individuals but are still prone to being influenced by the personal views gathered from interviews. There is no true neutral stance to anything. Instead, the question remains to which degree the researcher is biased (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). The self-awareness of the authors' biases in this paper is thus of major importance and in the case of this thesis, one of the researchers was employed at one of the organisations, the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative (DIEH). The author employed at that organisation thus had to interview a colleague which means that the personal relationship between them may have influenced how the answers were perceived and how the interview was conducted.

Additionally, the co-author of this thesis employed at DIEH had also met and talked with the other interviewees on several previous occasions and therefore had some degrees of personal relationships with all of these. Importantly however, this co-author has not been directly hands-on involved with the project and is therefore not a complete member of the research population. Having two other co-authors not employed at any of the organisations researched in the thesis allowed the team of researchers to provide a well-nuanced view on the topic as well as the interviews. The interpretation and coding of all interviews was therefore conducted through a reflecting discussion including all co-authors.

2.7 Intercoder Reliability

As mentioned earlier, the three authors of this thesis have interpreted and sorted the data by using codes to categorize and sort the interviews. This is useful to reach a deeper understanding of the data. When numerous persons code an interview there is an increased risk that the different coding procedures produce different results. One way to address this problem is by establishing the level of intercoder reliability. This assessment is crucial when dealing with coding undertaken by humans (Neuendorf & Kumar, 2002).

For this thesis it has naturally been a goal to validate the coding schemes and this has been done by assessing the level of reliability. Doing so requires an independent, third-party person, an outsider, to code a sample of the same interviews conducted by the authors of this thesis. Being independent in this case required that the person was unfamiliar with the data and therefore also had no bias or preconceived understanding of the data. It

was then of course necessary to explain the purpose of the individual codes. In this case, a sample of consisting of one of the interviews was subject to control coding. The independent person made use of the same data management software, Nvivo, and coded with the same codes. The aim of this process to reach a high correlation, a so-called agreement percentage, as possible to the codes conducted by the authors. This assessment of intercoder reliability resulted in an 100% agreement percentage, thus establishing a high level of reliability. Naturally, this agreement percentage is very high which may be a result of the use of very few nodes (6), a clear and thorough explanation of the nodes, and questions and answers that easily fit into each node.

2.8 Limitations

The main limitation faced in conducting this research has been the lack of financial resources that would have been useful to undertake a deeper investigation. Hence, fieldwork in Myanmar to interact directly with other subjects involved in the MYPOD projects: workers, local trade unions member and local management was not a possibility. Thus, no proper interviews with the local stakeholders are directly involved in the project were conducted. Through normal video-call from Denmark it would have been impossible to get in contact, for example, with local workers of the factories or their managers. It would have been an important contribution to the investigation, to get a local perspective, which can be considered to be a limitation to the research.

In some cases, there may be a gap between the communication of a company's CSR activities and the actual efforts (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). This means that there is an additional difficulty when interpreting the answers in the interviews. There is also a possibility that there are differences between how organisations work with sustainability and how they believe they work with sustainability. Their replies to the questions about their work progress may therefore reflect distorted views on reality.

Finally, because of the immaturity of the project, still being in the first phases, we had to treat with incomplete and/or partial data and results. There were different questions that still have to be clarified and aspects that need more insights. We are aware that our investigation relies on a specific time-frame and that what is found, along with the recommendations, is not definitive and may be subject to changes. The research has adopted an exclusively qualitative approach and does not rely on quantitative data, despite the recent

studies that suggest the use of a mixed method for a better understanding and more comprehensive view of the results.

2.9 Research philosophy

Holden & Lynch (2004: 13) pose the following question: *"if a researcher perceives ontology and epistemology to be irrelevant, then how can they ensure that their methods are really appropriate to the problem in hand?"* To ensure that the correct and appropriate methodology is adopted it is important to consider paying attention to the research philosophy including ontology and epistemology. Stating the approaches to research philosophy also communicates the stance of the research to the reader and thus leaves the reader better capable of understanding the context (Burke, 2007).

It is crucial to the research results that philosophy, methodology and the research problem match each other. Failure to match these three parameters may have a negative impact on the research's authority and the researchers' professionalism. Finally, this is only possible by adopting an intermediate, non-extreme, philosophical approach (Holden & Lynch, 2004).

2.9.1 Paradigm

This thesis is created under the influence of the critical realism paradigm. Critical social science is critical of the social topics it studies. In social science, realists seek neither a positivist, law-seeking approach nor an interpretivist rejection of realism. Instead, it combines these two approaches and takes a stance on social science that possesses both a modified naturalism and recognition of the importance of interpretive understanding of meaning. Therefore, it is fitting for case studies (Sayer, 1999).

The way things are observed does not necessarily correspond with the actual reality. Therefore, it is important to keep a critical position towards any results, even if they seem to fit into the emergence of a broader picture or system as the research process continues. The identification of the different players involved and what their relationships are with each other as well as identifying their strengths and weaknesses is central in critical realism (Sayer, 1999).

2.9.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge in the sense that it is the issue to which degree knowledge is possible to obtain (Saunders et al., 2009; Holden & Lynch, 2004). This question is essential when conducting research as an impossibility of obtaining true knowledge implies that knowledge is a social construction. Taking a stance that neither disregards the possibility to obtain true knowledge nor disregards the importance of social construction allows the researcher some room for interpretation of the answers (Holden & Lynch, 2004).

In this thesis, the research is therefore undertaken from an interpretivist approach. Such a take on the epistemology is ideal for the research as we need to understand individual roles and motives of the interviewees. For the same reason, it is a fitting approach for studying human actors rather than objects (Saunders et al., 2009). Interpretivism, a qualitative approach and phenomenological explanations all belong to the subjectivist philosophical camp (Holden & Lynch, 2004). This approach is suitable for the nature of our research as it is the aim to explore the dynamics in a multi-stakeholder initiative where understanding the individual actors' motives are of paramount importance for this purpose. Similarly, the way these actors see and understand their surroundings plays a crucial part in the interpretation of the answers given in the interviews. The opposing camp of research philosophy, the objectivist paradigm, encompasses quantitative, positivist, experimentalist etc. features (Holden & Lynch, 2004). Thereby these features are a lot more relevant to other types of research, e.g. experiments in natural science. The epistemological view on the ability to obtain knowledge naturally also determines the validity and limits of the study (Holden & Lynch, 2004)

2.9.3 Ontology

Ontology concerns the reality and whether things do in fact exist or whether they are merely perceptions and by nature then distorted and corrupted subjective interpretations. How the researchers view reality is therefore also something that influences the validity and limits of the study similar to the view on the ability to obtain knowledge. This view on the ontology is thus a 'cornerstone' in the research design (Holden & Lynch, 2004).

The ontology adopted in this thesis is thus a subjective one as the aim is to explain a phenomenon in a context. Accordingly, the meaning that individuals give to a situation is a central aspect from this point of view (Holden & Lynch, 2004). In this thesis, the individuals' perspectives will be considered in the considerations when interpreting their replies and concluding on the findings. This is also a reason for interviewing several individuals rather than just one as more interviews gather more perspectives on the same matter. Viewing the topic from more points of view thus allows us to obtain a deeper understanding of the complex matter at hand that is the dynamics amongst the participating actors in a multi-stakeholder initiative.

The ontology of critical realism is composed of distinctions between what is real, what is actual and what is empirical, a so-called structured ontology. What is real is extremely difficult to comprehend, as we differ between that reality and the actual events that such a reality creates. Using research, it is then only possible to record the empirical events (Sayer, 1999). The main limitation of critical realism as such is that any result may not be the truth. Instead it is merely the researcher's understanding and conclusions of the measured empirical events.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 Stakeholder Theory

3.1.1 What is a stakeholder?

A stakeholder is "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives" (Freeman, 1984: 25). Many other definitions of stakeholders refer to them by relating them to either an organisation, a firm, a corporation or a business as the central part (Mitchell et al., 1997). The general view on the stakeholder thus suggests that the organisation is central, but it is important to distinguish between the definition of a stakeholder and the role the different actors take. Consequently, there is no standard approach to stakeholder management (Roloff, 2007). For instance, Kuhn & Shriver (1992) oppose the notion that a company can manage its stakeholder relationship and is in a role of control. Instead, the company and its stakeholders with which it interacts engage in a voluntary network of actors (Kuhn & Shriver, 1992). The definition that places stakeholders as remote actors in a network around as the main organisation does therefore not necessarily

mean that they possess a less powerful role in a stakeholder network. A stakeholder's explanation of why they have a stake in the main organisation is what gives them legitimacy and only as long as that explanation is agreed upon by the general public (Waxenberger & Spence, 2003).

3.1.2 Multi-stakeholder management

Multi-stakeholder management gained popularity in the mid-nineties and has been used as a means to address problems relevant to different types of actors. This solution to problems affecting different actors is particularly useful when the problem in question is too complex or too resource demanding to overcome as a single actor (Roloff, 2007). A typical example of this is the clothing industry, when the Western brands first learned about abusive working conditions in the garment factories from NGOs, they engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue. This helped them map out their supply chains beyond the 1st tier suppliers to then include the often-existing 3rd and 4th tier suppliers which they previously did not have a clear overview of (Roloff, 2007).

There is no standard approach to stakeholder management. Thus, interacting with several multi stakeholder groups is only one type of stakeholder management (Roloff, 2007). Evidence support the notion that companies enjoy more trust from the public, from NGOs, and even from trade unions after engaging in multi-stakeholder dialogue. Additionally, companies experience an improvement of public image, employee satisfaction as well as a rise in local community confidence in the company (Roloff, 2007; Burchell & Cook, 2006). Other results suggest a more limited effect of multi-stakeholder dialogue as has been the case with a sample of German respondents (Roloff, 2007).

From each organisation's point of view, the other actors to which they have relations thus constitute the stakeholders. Roloff (2007) defines stakeholder management as actors with potential to harm the organisation, their claims and their level of urgency and the according response by the organisation. Similarly, Mitchell et al. (1997) sort stakeholders into different groups to find out which stakeholders that really matter. They do this by giving different attributes to the different potential stakeholders to assess the importance of engaging with them. These attributes are power, legitimacy, and urgency and the possibility to have both legitimacy and urgency to their claims as well as power enables various degrees of importance to the focal organisation. If a potential stakeholder, an entity, does neither

possess power, legitimacy, or urgency they should not be viewed by the focal organisation as a stakeholder (Mitchell et al., 1997). Although this approach does not suggest any specific types of approaches or responses to such stakeholders it does provide an ability to sort in the stakeholders and prioritise them.

Savage et al. (1991) characterise stakeholders by their ability to harm the organisation in question. These stakeholders can be sorted into different categories and those that are marginal or dependent require attention. If they are non-supportive or dangerous the focal company should adopt a strategy for self-defence. Savage et al. (1991) thus recommend that the organisation in question cooperate with influential stakeholders that are also prepared to cooperate (Savage et al., 1991). Contrary to the points made by Mitchell et al. (1997), Savage et al. (1991) do in fact explicitly suggest that the focal company engages in cooperation with the influential stakeholders. This is evident in Roloff's (2007) example of the clothing industry engaging in collaboration with influential stakeholders that were willing to cooperate. Additionally, Kuhn (2008) argues that it may not always be beneficial for the focal firm to engage in communication with all stakeholders. We therefore see a rather unclear stance on when to engage in communication with stakeholders.

This view of stakeholder management focuses on the stakeholders that can affect the main organisation. Such a view does not include strategies or recommendations for actions towards stakeholders only affected by the main organisations. This way, such an approach to stakeholder management serves only the main organisation's own well-being and cannot be used to explain stakeholder management efforts with stakeholders without influential powers over the main organisation (Roloff, 2007).

Rowley (1997) argues that stakeholder-theory is not applied systematically to analyse multi-stakeholder networks and suggests a network theory on stakeholder influence. This network surrounds the main organisation and can be knit together as to include several central organisations to reflect the nature of companies within an industry. This way, the network can include the different stakeholders that often are the same for the different companies (Roloff, 2007). The probability that an organisation will interact with its stakeholders depends on both the density, the amount of effective transactions amongst stakeholders, and the position of the main organisation in the network meaning that a more central actor in the network is able to interact with other actors in the network on its own. Consequently, this view on stakeholder-theory is focused on the main organisation and engagement with stakeholders is undertaken to protect the organisation. This view does not

include engagement with single stakeholders but rather a response to collective pressure on the organisation from the network. Nor does it suggest partnerships or cooperation with stakeholders (Roloff, 2007; Rowley, 1997). As a result, this view fails to explain the previously mentioned example from the textile industry.

Kuhn (2008) focuses on the communication aspect of interacting with external stakeholders. From a governance perspective, it is in the interest of companies to mitigate the stakeholders' influence of the company to maintain control of its self-interests. The process of mitigating the stakeholders' influence is undertaken by maintaining a level of trust between the company, the focal organisation, and the stakeholders. Trust is obtained by meeting stakeholders' demands when it comes to e.g. sustainability and responsibility. From, a governance approach perspective, this is seen as an interference with the focal organisation's interests. Therefore, the focal organisation, often the company, will seek to show a higher level of cooperation and a more desirable image to the outside world than what is actually the case in order to avoid hold-ups. The possibility of a hold-up is seen as a risk since the stakeholders have the possibility to mitigate the efficiency of the firm. Alternatively, companies avoid engaging in such risks and reduce external communication to self-promotion. Consequently, stakeholders become sceptical towards companies' actions and engagement in communications and then demand more control and regulation of said companies (Kuhn, 2008).

In sum, companies do not govern multi-stakeholder networks. Instead they only partly control the interaction on a similar level as the stakeholder with which they interact (Roloff, 2007). Roloff (2007) argues that a flat hierarchical structure in the multi-stakeholder network is a result of the actors dealing with each other and discussing the problem from their different perspectives. As argued by Savage et al. (1991), it is recommended to work together with influential stakeholders, especially those that have a potential to harm the organisation. This raises the questions of what it takes for stakeholders to initiate partnerships and how they work together.

3.1.3 Whose responsibility is it?

Business managers' first stance is often to argue that many social efforts are the responsibility of the state or that the businesses are unable to handle their stakeholders' needs when the states' responsibilities are not fulfilled (Roloff, 2007). Reinicke & Deng

(2000) introduce the terms 'operational gap' and 'participatory gap' to characterise this problem. The operational gap refers to the failure from the public sector, both national and international, to address the public-policy issues due to their complexity and the speed of which they arise and spread. The participatory gap is highly intertwined with the operational gap and refers to the lack of governance, both national and international, which leaves the increasingly internationalised private sector actors alone in this vacuum often in need of a formal governance structure (Reinicke & Deng, 2000). Meanwhile, this term shares features with e.g. the term regulatory vacuums as introduced by Scherer & Palazzo (2011). There are also strong similarities with the term presented by scholars of development studies who use the concept 'areas of limited statehood' such as Risse (2012) who defines the term as *"those parts of a country in which central authorities (governments) lack the ability to implement and enforce rules and decisions and/or in which the legitimate monopoly over the means of violence is lacking, at least temporarily"* (Risse, 2012:4). Naturally, a classification of 'area' and 'limited statehood' is necessary. 'Area' does not refer to a state that may in general be otherwise functioning but rather a geographical area or a state function. Similarly, 'limited statehood' does not necessarily refer to a failed state but means that a state is unable to enforce decisions. This may stem from e.g. a lack of resources or administrative or political capabilities. As such, this enables the usage of the term to describe a broad scope of incidents in many different parts of the world (Risse, 2012).

If such an 'organisational gap' or an 'area of limited statehood' is present in a given country, there is thus academic work supporting a collaboration between different stakeholders. Risse (2012) argues that non-state actors such as companies, NGOs and even clans and tribes step in and provide public goods or secure certain benefits such as infrastructure, public health or education when the state fails to do so (Risse, 2012). Reinicke & Deng (2000) suggest that this is the reason why the number of NGOs exploded in line with the global rise of liberalisation especially after the cold war. This is especially the case in some Sub-Saharan African countries where the number of NGOs in some cases rose 400 % within a decade (Reinicke & Deng, 2000). In short, Risse (2012) focuses on providing public goods that serve the country's people or the lack thereof due to the government's inability to do so and both Reinicke & Deng (2000) and Risse (2012) suggest that other actors including private companies, NGOs and others take responsibility of providing public goods.

Scherer & Palazzo (2011) see globalization as the reason for the increased number of these areas of limited statehoods or organisational gaps and at the same time introduce the

term 'regulatory vacuum' as well as argue that businesses assume responsibility in such cases of regulatory vacuums (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). Reinecke & Ansari (2016) argue that more research is needed on how private companies become responsible for societal problems although they also offer the explanation that private companies are affected by social pressure into accepting responsibility. Avoiding social judgement results in a strategy where a crucial part for businesses is to portray their efforts in terms of social performance. Non-disclosure of voluntary reporting standards can also result in social sanctions (Reinecke & Ansari, 2016). This is thus a way of avoiding being 'named and shamed' but also forces companies to constantly improve efforts and disclose reporting on the matter. This has resulted in businesses increasingly addressing social and environmental issues.

On the other hand, companies are also capable of exploiting these areas of limited statehood by prioritizing financial incentives and putting their own interests above the importance of the social issues (Banerjee, 2008). Sourcing of conflict diamonds and minerals sourced from the DRC serves as an example of companies exploiting regulatory voids and thus contributing to a humanitarian crisis (Reinecke & Ansari, 2016). Consequently, Reinecke & Ansari (2016) call for further research on why and how some regulatory voids end up being exploited by companies whilst others are subject to private governance.

An additional pressure for businesses to address social issues is the formalization of their responsibility *"to comply with all applicable laws and respect internationally recognized human rights, wherever they operate"* (UNGP, 2011: 25). The introduction of such international law, despite its 'soft' law nature, puts additional pressure on the private sector to address social issues and ensure high standards of human rights even in areas of limited statehood as described in earlier sections.

However, businesses are also responsible of *"seeking ways to honour the principles of internationally recognized human rights when faced with conflicting requirements"* (UNGP, 2011: 25). This is an interesting dilemma to uncover e.g. in further research as some parts of legislation in individual nations may be in direct conflict with human rights, e.g. discriminatory laws on sexual orientation. This poses a difficult situation for companies, since Scherer & Palazzo (2011) argue that companies have a part to play in and a responsibility for global governance and in social issues. At the same time a company in such a situation face the possibilities of either breaking national law or international human rights.

Companies complying with such international law and engaged in governance initiatives also participate in a political process where they set and reset the standards of global business conduct. This way the companies enter the political sphere where they can address social or environmental issues (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). Scherer & Palazzo (2011) call this type of private sector social governance 'political CSR'.

3.1.4 How does a multi-stakeholder partnership work?

To explain how a multi-stakeholder partnership is initiated, it is important to first identify the problem that needs to be solved, i.e. the organisational gap (Reinicke & Deng, 2000), the area of limited statehood (Risse, 2012) or the regulatory vacuum (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011) as presented in the previous section (these terms are used interchangeably hereinafter). In fact, governance through private sector standards is now regarded as the most common form of regulation and MSIs are more and more viewed as the most legitimate non-governmental, or private, rule-makers (Bäckstrand, 2006; Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014) as companies are not suitable to take over the role of a government (Banerjee, 2008). MSIs and their standards typically deal with a far broader range of social problems than other standards. Similarly, when it comes to standard-setting, those set by MSIs tend to be more demanding and elaborated than those set by NGOs, IGOs or business associations. They also tend to focus more on social issues than on environmental issues. Guidelines and rules set by NGOs tend to be strict, but the NGOs lack the power to enforce them. IGOs generally present standards with a broad reach that are less specific and detailed regarding monitoring and compliance. Standards set by business associations tend to derive from the lowest common denominators amongst the participating actors. Consequently, the standards set by business associations end up far more vague and general compared to those set by NGOs or IGOs. Ideally, MSIs include different types of actors and the standards agreed upon are products of democratic processes (Fransen & Kolk, 2007). Additionally, participation by government actors can strengthen the standards' credibility and authority and even result in greater compliance with the standards although government participation in MSIs not necessarily means higher standard specificity or stronger monitoring systems (Fransen & Kolk, 2007). By including both public and private actors MSIs assume a hybrid form of governance as opposed to entirely private governance that relies on voluntary standards, codes of conduct and general corporate social responsibility (Bäckstrand, 2006).

The multi-stakeholder initiative evolves first as a group made up by a limited number of relevant stakeholders. To guarantee an efficient work environment and a satisfactory degree of efficiency, the number of participants should be reduced to the minimum whilst at the same time including all relevant actors (Roloff, 2007). The inclusion of all relevant actors is of great importance since this is what gives MSIs their legitimacy (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014). This balance is essential for a good start for the partnership (Roloff, 2007). Roloff (2007) calls this the initiation phase.

The second phase, the acquaintance phase, occurs as the participants learn each other's views on the matter as well as how to work together. Having different views and understanding the peers' different views helps the participants gain a better understanding of the problem. This means that the participants need to both share common understandings and have different views on some matters for the collaboration to be fruitful. This happens as the differences in their views help the participants achieve a deeper understanding of the problem's complexity and how decisions made affect the other participants and their interests (Roloff, 2007). Essentially, the participants are building a high degree of trust and a better understanding of each other.

The third phase, the first agreement phase, is made up by the first round of discussion. After learning about the differences amongst the participants in the previous phase they are now testing each other's boundaries. This means that the different actors have to define the exact problem that they want to solve (Roloff, 2007). Defining the problem is essential to start dealing with the problem (Burchell & Cook, 2006). In turn, this will affect the way the different actors approach the problem as well as the types of actors involved (Roloff, 2007). Therefore, it is essential that the different actors are sincere and open about their end goals as not to distort the view of the common goal that the partnership is working towards. Similarly, new participants in the partnership may shift this balance or support of the definition. The participants are expected to defend their views and affect the discussion and definition in their favour. Some degree of conflict should therefore be expected and that is why a neutral actor may be useful and in this case act as a moderator. Typically, this phase results in establishing a status quo as the participants agree to disagree (Roloff, 2007). Hence the name first agreement phase.

The fourth phase, the second agreement phase, concerns the different strategies available to take the first steps of action. These possible actions are reactions or results of the definition agreed upon in the first agreement phase and they are thus largely expected

by the participants. A central question in this discussion is the roles in the next phase and the levels of work and resources that the participants will contribute with. As one may expect, this approach where resources and capabilities are essential may not be identical to the most effective solution seen from an objective point of view. However, this may be necessary to keep participants involved and may be overcome later by showing promising results (Roloff, 2007).

The next and fifth phase is the implementation phase, where the partnership transforms into an action and cooperation and the agreed strategy is implemented according to the agreed workloads. Every party must stick to their promises and carry out their part. Consequently, it is not unusual that some actors leave the partnership at this point. In this phase, the partnership is tested out and nor is it unusual that partnerships fail in this phase. Due to the difficulties often experienced in this phase, it is not a necessary criterion to solve the issue or overcome all difficulties. In this phase the primary objective is to gain some positive experience from the teamwork. Because in case of a failure to solve the given problem in the first try, a functioning teamwork is then a guarantee to the participants that the other actors are fully committed to the cause. It is then much easier to discuss and reach consensus on a new definition and move forward from there. This may however again result in a newly recomposed network if other stakeholders are necessary to the future cooperation (Roloff, 2007).

The sixth phase is the consolidation phase where the participants' high levels of mutual trust is of paramount importance. This enables the participants to formalise procedures and inspires them to become deeper invested in the partnership. Typical for this phase is the establishment of an organisation where previously informal rules are formalised. A formalisation of this type may be seen as proof of concept and thus attract new stakeholders to join the partnership. This is attractive to other actors since they may themselves skip the previous phases and save large amounts of time and resources (Roloff, 2007). This may even affect outsiders that can copy steps or take advantage of the created change in a sector (Roloff, 2007). The final phase, the institutionalisation phase or extinction phase, is based on the outcomes of the partnership depending on whether the participants may start over with the initiation phase or abandon the partnership altogether. Alternatively, its outcomes or rules may be formalised or adopted into legislation (Roloff, 2007).

3.1.5 Criticism of multi-stakeholder initiatives

In opposition to many of the arguments presented in the previous section, there is a lack of academic work to support any notion of the effects of MSIs (Fransen & Kolk, 2007). Similarly, there is little evidence to support the suggestion that MSIs are in fact inclusive (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014). This notion addresses and fits a call for an answer to the question and mapping out the power dynamics in stakeholder partnerships in the academic world (Banerjee, 2008). The argument is that the proclaimed horizontal power structures in MSIs fail to render traditional economic, political or strategic power imbalances amongst the actors obsolete (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014). This approach to power is labelled the political-economy approach and is very traditional when it comes to explaining power resources as it is often related to financial, political or knowledge resources where stronger actors with large amounts of resources at their disposal can make use of that power to influence the standard setting in favour of their own interests. However, power asymmetries can also be explained from a post-structural point of view where individuals with their capabilities and their relations to a large degree shape the decision-making processes (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014). Businesses often barely distinguish between different types of stakeholder involvement and often categorise all contact with stakeholders as stakeholder involvement including phone calls and small talk. Assuming a political-economy approach and that businesses have access to greater levels of resources, they may be able to hand pick the stakeholders with which they wish to get involved. When it comes to stakeholder gatherings, e.g. in connection to the development of rules or strategies, the pool of participants may vary greatly in the degree of which they are representative of their stakeholders (Fransen & Kolk, 2007). This relates to a large degree to the acquaintance and initiation phases presented by Roloff (2007) and shows how some actors can manipulate the results in these phases.

Similarly, Banerjee (2008) argues that the whole idea of managing stakeholders should be criticised. Managing stakeholders indicates some degree of hierarchy between the stakeholders and hints towards the existence of an ability to enforce certain views or restrictions upon the other. This is particularly the case in relation to CSR when western actors interact with local developing country stakeholders. Western companies often enforce CSR policies upon local actors that are beneficial to the Western actors and do not genuinely contribute towards sustainability (Banerjee, 2008).

The discussions and the definitions agreed upon may thus in reality reflect the balance of powers rather than the balance of interests. Similarly, different types of knowledge and modes of engagement may be prioritised above others causing the ones favoured by marginalised actors to be side-lined. Making the weaker stakeholders prone to control and manipulation puts the standard-making process at risk of not only being exclusive but also makes it difficult for the standards agreed upon to be transferred to the local environment. This is especially the case when it comes to inclusion of interests and perspectives of local stakeholders in developing countries (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014). Fransen & Kolk (2007) support this notion as they argue that actors from developed countries take up leading roles in MSIs even though they tend to only have indirect interests or less interest in the social issues at hand compared to vulnerable stakeholder groups. Fransen & Kolk (2007) therefore call for mechanisms to ensure an increasing participation from multiple stakeholders, especially those from developing countries. Additionally, MSIs and their standards interact with the local environment including its economic and political structures by which they are influenced. This may further deepen the local power inequalities (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014). These arguments challenge the inclusiveness and the chances of success that MSIs would have otherwise enjoyed in e.g. the implementation phase presented by Roloff (2007). However, there are arguments that mechanisms can be put in place to secure representation and accountability in MSIs thereby enhancing the levels of representation (Bäckstrand, 2006).

Although MSI standards are more ambitious in their rule set when it comes to progress assessments, MSIs often opt for hiring professional audit companies - the same solution preferred by business associations for their standards. A more obvious and fitting solution could be to divide the task between auditors representing the different stakeholder groups. The use of professional auditors for this purpose especially excludes developing country stakeholders (Fransen & Kolk, 2007).

Bäckstrand (2006) notes that MSIs are being welcomed by developmental professionals and institutions as a legitimate governing body. By their inclusiveness they are seen as entities that govern from a bottom-up approach contrary to traditional top-down governance. A prerequisite for this ability is of course to be representative of all stakeholders as well as possess transparency and accountability. Ideally, the MSIs should then be able to address the issue of the participatory gap by living up to these conditions (Bäckstrand, 2006).

Limitations to the multi-stakeholder initiative approach include the notion that there exists a lack of accountability in any such constructions. The result is that private and public actors with their own individual agendas and interests are now governing and setting rules for and shaping development. This constitutes a main point of criticism of MSIs since the question arises of where the responsibility lies (Bäckstrand, 2006).

Western brands capture the majority of the value created in global value chains leaving only small parts of that profit for the local developing country supplier companies and factory workers (Lund-Thomsen & Lindgreen, 2014). The Rana Plaza accident that in 2013 left more than eleven hundred workers dead underlined this exploitation of garment sector workers in developing countries. The aftermath of the accident spawned two different multi-stakeholder initiatives: The Accord for Fire and Building Safety (the Accord) and the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety (the Alliance). The two differ in a number of ways. However, these two MSIs fail to address the underlying power inequalities in the global value chains and the continuous exploitation of garment workers in developing countries (Donaghey & Reinecke, 2018).

There is a pressure from state actors in developing garment supplier countries to maintain these power imbalances with the purpose of continuing to cater to global garment value chains (Alamgir & Banerjee, 2018). It is thus evident that there are some local discrepancies between local factory worker and local NGO interest on one side and local government interests on the other side. In accordance with this notion, MSIs should then strive to prioritise local factory worker and local NGO involvement above local government involvement.

3.2 Postcolonialism

The term postcolonialism refers to a strand of studies, researches, empirical observations and analyses about the consequences and effects on all those countries conquered by western powers, including both a social and economic perspective. It refers not only to the effects on the colonized people, but also on the western people's lives (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2009). In general, the postcolonial studies are characterized by having a critical orientation towards colonialism as a historical period, and to neo-colonialism, a form of control of the former occupied countries by their former colonizers. Moreover, it tries to explain the current

problems and difficulties underpinning the societies of all those nations previously occupied (Dirlik, 2002).

The rise of this critical literature stream stems from the actual need of the people living in the former colonies to get rid of the oppressors, in terms of social and economic influence, that the western world had and continues to have on their culture and society (Ashcroft et al. 2003). It is a widespread perspective applied in different contexts that the western way of doing things, operating and thinking is better. It is recognized as being more productive and efficient. Prasad (2003) defines it as a sort of unquestioned western sovereignty affecting the politics, the culture and the economy globally (Banerjee & Prasad, 2008).

Long-term occupations had an important impact on the economies and cultures of the Asian and African colonies. While most of the South American countries obtained their independence at the beginning of the 19th century, it differed for several countries in Asia and Africa, who became independent only in the second half of the 20th century. The long period of occupation has inevitably modified and changed the society and economic system, leaving a deep mark in the citizens' lives. Although the era of colonialism is over, new configurations of it still exists, in form of economic and commercial agreements and political control. This proceeding is part of a mechanism of authority and influence on the decision-making process, both at micro and macro level, by the western countries in their former colonies. The phenomenon is known as Neo-colonialism and it occurs in different and multifaceted ways, evolving and changing on the base of the context, the territory and the time (Ashcroft et al., 2013).

The importance of postcolonialism is the awareness of this 'western sovereignty' and the Eurocentrism approach used by many scholars and researchers in their studies (Banerjee & Prasad, 2008). In this regard, Said (1978) has brought a fundamental contribute to the postcolonialism theory, pointing out the dualism of 'western and oriental' created by ages of colonialism, across a range of multiple fields and areas as governance, education and various institutional practices. Such a hierarchical binary structure about the way to see and analyse people's lives, society, history and so on is noticeable in different aspects. This differentiation grew with the evolution of our society bringing to see the world as something characterized by continuous antagonism between what comes from the west and from the rest of the world (Banerjee & Prasad, 2008).

As mentioned above, forms of neo-colonialism are seen not only within the political domain or at macroeconomic level, in terms of resources and aid flows from developed to developing countries, but also at a micro level, with respect to business and management practices inside the firms (Jack & Westwood, 2009). This concept that the western society is somehow better and that the only path to development and modernization to pursue is the one incorporating European values and principles, is also present at the business level. This gives the western firms the right to go to the emerging economies and to supervise, control, guide local markets and businesses (Banerjee & Prasad, 2008).

This superior European identity, risen over the centuries, is still pervasive within global institutions, political decisions and institutional relationships, turning into a form of western imperialism (Long & Mills, 2008). A concept became more and more rooted in the mindset of our society, reinforced by a host of economic and sociological narratives reinforcing this belief. Under these assumptions, postcolonialism offers a critique of such political hegemony and a globalization process carried on and pushed by the western world (Long & Mills, 2008).

3.2.1 Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonialism seeks to challenge the colonial ways of obtaining knowledge. On one hand it acknowledges that the realities and modes of representations similar to colonialism are still present today, although a decolonization of the world has occurred. On the other hand, it affirms the possibility and continuing necessity of change, while recognizing the achievement of certain changes (Mondal, 2014). Postcolonialism can be seen as criticism towards the mode of intellectual practice. Moreover, it refers to a transformed historical context, that involves the development of postcolonial cultures as a result of the historical and political transformations. Therefore, postcolonialism challenges the state of postcoloniality, through different modes of critique of the effects on societies and cultures (Westwood, 2006).

The definition of postcolonial theory is complex as it stems from various sources and is based on different concepts and stances. However, authors of postcolonial theory, all contribute to critique of modernist knowledge related to humanities, social science as well as management theory. As such they question the management performance, the way of resonating and working in contemporary organizations. All these factors are presumed to be

linked, hence it investigates modern western colonialism and non-western resistance to colonialism (Prasad, 2004). As such postcolonial theory, draws upon several thematic including feminism, social justices, economic, political and cultural theory. In doing so, it seeks to respond to the particular relationship between the west and non-west and its intent to change political, cultural and social structures during colonialism. It is a very complex theory, that touches upon subjectivity, consciousness and history, to understand the interdependent and transformative relations between the colonized and colonizer and a worldview that does not question the superiority of the western people over the rest of the world and its values. Instead, they're implicit and rather unquestioned (Treacher, 2005).

The main objective of the postcolonial theory is to explain how knowledge produced in and by western economies was enclosed with structures of colonial and imperial power, depending the 'other' as an object of knowledge for western powers. Colonial-based dialogue on the colonized created discourse on 'others', affecting people pertaining to the west. In other words, postcolonial theory criticizes the failures of contemporary western societies regarding delivering their promises to colonial countries. Subsequently, the different strands of literature seek to give new insight on the power, control and resistance within organizations (Prasad, 2004).

Considering that the postcolonial theory undertakes a critical analysis of the colonial and neo-colonial discourse, it influences a wide range of fields of studies, i.e. cultural studies and development studies. In this context, it is important to emphasize that the term 'discourse' refers to the creation of knowledge, underpinning social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations and their correlation, rather than writings and speeches (Prasad, 2003).

3.2.2 The discourse of the 'others'

The concept of 'otherness' is a crucial part of the postcolonial theory. The term includes both identity and differences simultaneously. It refers to the colonized subject that is the 'other', which is considered a vague term. Moreover, 'others' is a term that creates awareness of the 'self' as somehow superior and the 'other' as inferior. This is a critical point, as it is perceived to contribute to the constructions of stereotypes. In this context, we define stereotypes as a false foundation on understanding a subject. Stereotypes can be viewed as a problem arising from being incapable of grouping individuals into one space. This results in a false

representation of the reality, rejecting the group's own sense of identity. Instead an identity is created, based on the assumptions and understandings of prior knowledge, which often is false knowledge. As such, the stereotypical knowledges that are recognized by societies, can be perceived as a mechanism of control (Bhabha, 2012).

Al Kharouf and Weir (2008), illustrate this prevalent stereotypical assumption, that women in middle eastern countries are overly disadvantaged, due to their cultures. Moreover, it is a widely accepted view that investment in education and training of women are some of the major features of 'developing economies' status that aspire to achieve sustainable economic growth (Al Kharouf & Weir, 2008). However, they criticize this assumption and argue that such judgements are based on inadequate or partial evidential data. Moreover, they often incorporate wide-ranging assumptions that are not based on contemporary analysis (Al Kharouf & Weir, 2008). Al Kharouf and Weir (2008) stress the complexity of judgements about the position of women, because it does not encounter the diversity and complexity in distinctive societies, that are present in specific situations. They view this criticism useful for interpreting and evaluating the contributions of some writers from non-western societies, but also from the western world (Al Kharouf & Weir, 2008).

As argued by Said (1978), ideas, cultures and histories are not fully understood without the comprehension of their constructions. In his arguments, he questions the construction of the east, and argues that it is an unchallenged terminology, because the relationship between the occident and the orient is asymmetrical. He doesn't solely identify the orient as some 'airy European fantasy' (Edward, 1978). Instead, Said (1978) stresses that it is rather a 'system of knowledge about the orient'. Accordingly, culture is an important concept of civil society, as it is influenced by ideas, institutions, and of other persons' works. In extension, it is argued that certain cultural forms or ideas outweigh others, which is conceptualized as hegemony. Said (1978) emphasizes that the discursive construction of the oriental has a vital purpose. He argues that it intends to assert an *"idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures"* (Said, 1978: 1).

The prevailing assumption is that knowledge is non-political. Therefore, it is acknowledged that there has been an ongoing imbalance of power between Europe and non-Europeans. Thus, the relationship can only fully be understood in relations to its context. However, Said (1978) rejects the notion that imperial domination can be applied mechanically to complex elements such as cultures and ideas (Said, 1978). Thus, an

important issue that needs to be addressed is 'asymmetrical understanding'. It is a necessity that the west adjusts their 'ignorant' view on the 'others'. A change of attitude requires the effort of being open-minded to accept that the latter may not act similarly to the former and accept the existence of alternative ways, other than the ways of the West, which is familiar. Patience is also essential in adopting a different approach to understand and engage both parties in a meaningful dialogue. This enables both parties to become equal partners, thus establish a two-way communication (Cheung, 2008). Another relevant issue that needs attention is 'asymmetrical power', which is the core problem to whether the voice of the 'others' are respectively heard. The one with more power can suppress the voice of the other that has less power in the relationship (Cheung, 2008).

3.2.3 The Concept of Culture

Another important concept that is essential to postcolonial theory is 'culture'. This concept, can be determined as the capacity for a society member to undertake a position that enables them to communicate and function in accordance with the principles and constructs that are present within. Moreover, culture contributes to the distinction that can be made between the 'self' and 'identity'. The term 'self' refers to the social values acquired by an individual that enables the subject to position itself within a construct. Whereas 'identity' indicates the way an individual is classified in relation to its culture (Kumar, 2000).

It is relevant to view culture from a postcolonial perspective, as it enables the study of the relationship between the West and the 'others'. By examining such a relationship, it gives the researcher an understanding of the identified unequal terms, but also an explanation to the formation and meaning of the western cultural practices. Moreover, it clarifies the persisting condition of unequal power between the west and non-west, which is essential to take into consideration to be able to fully understand the cultural forms (Said, 1993).

In relation to Bhabha's (2012) notion of culture, the term 'mimicry' can be mentioned which stresses the state between authority and oppression. It is a form of eluding control from the colonizer, by being like them, which results in mimicry. Mimicry can be perceived as an exaggerated copying of the colonizer's language, culture, manners as well as ideas.

Thus, a sort of repetition that differs from the original form, that simultaneously undermines the claim of an ongoing colonialism and the ideologies of superiority (Bhabha, 2012).

A concept that the postcolonial theory mentions in the context of culture, is 'hybridity'. The prevalent conception of the terminology is that it *"emerged as a consequence of the colonial project through which new forms emerge from the encounter between different cultures"* (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008: 322). Hence, the bringing of different perspectives and identities that can result in the creation of hybrids, is interpreted as a meeting of equals. The concept of 'hybridity' consists of the integration of cultural signs and practices between the Western and non-western cultures. Bhabha (2012) perceives this adaptation of cultural practices not only as enriching and dynamic but also oppressive. 'Hybridity' is an important concept as it helps to falsify that cultures have unchanging features and its purity (Bhabha, 2012). Additionally, Prasad (2003) opposes this thought of line and argues that it derives from unequal power relationships in which the desire of the colonized to adopt the cultural forms and institutions of the colonizer results in the creation of new forms that mimic them (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

3.2.4 Hybridity in management

The concept of 'us' vs. 'the others' can also be applied to the organizational context, due to the cultural differences within organizations which is a critical issue that requires attention. The issue arises when western managers attempt to enforce their practices onto the 'others' (Frenkel & Shenhav, 2006). However, Frenkel and Shenhav (2006) argue that hybridity also takes place in organizations. It is perceived as the mixing of practices and methods between the westerners and non-westerners, in a way that enables them to coexist (Frenkel & Shenhav, 2006). Hybridity can be seen in different forms of management. Firstly, is the example of organizations developing innovative ways of working that are responsive to their communities. This includes models of services, management practices and methods of encouraging greater involvement and participation at all levels of the organization and in the wider community. As a result, there is great participation in the decision-making process (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008). Organizations following this form of management system enable marginalized groups, to contribute directly in the planning and delivery of their own needed services. These types of innovations can classify as hybrid forms, both in

terms of internal management and of service, or programme delivery (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

Secondly, there are the more standardized ideas of what good management consists of. In this context, the personalized management style varies depending on the manager or the task. Thus, a standardization of management processes can ensure that the service delivery is consistent at all times. Consequently, it can prevent organizational chaos from happening (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

Lastly, there is the pressure to conform, to achieve the effect of universalizing the 'good' management while simultaneously reaffirming the inherent superiority of one particular model of management. By analysing these pressures, numerous different strategies can be detected. Additionally, these are distinguished between undermining strategies and essentializing strategies (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008). The undermining strategies are present in the organization in such a way that it admires the work done, while belittling the achievements. Regarding the essentializing strategies, its foundation involves eroticising or essentialising of the 'other'. Thus, the pressure is experienced through undermining and essentializing strategies (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

However, due to managers experiencing growing pressure to conform with prevalent practices, it will probably result in the loss of their specific strengths. Most of the encountered pressures come from 'outside' the organization, i.e. commissioners and regulators, which have become an integral part of the relationships between the state contracts and the voluntary organizations for the delivery of public services. Moreover, there is a prevalent struggle between independence and control. Moreover, it supports the idea that 'good management' stems from a discourse that supports a rational and western management that is correlated to notions of superiority (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008). In addition, the allocation and regulation of funding maintains this construction. By using a postcolonial approach, it offers an understanding of this dynamic, through the colonization of the imagination. This means that the colonised internalize the image of themselves that was pre-constructed (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

The postcolonial theory enables the possibility to undertake a deeper analysis of the concept of hybridity. As such, it highlights the destructive nature of hybridity. It emphasizes that hybridization of management or service delivery simultaneously is a challenge and enables power possession to the existing services. It is suggested that the use of a

postcolonial lens offers an insightful way to understand the dynamics between voluntary organizations and their funders and regulators (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

3.2.5 Dynamics of power, control and resistance within organizations

As previously mentioned, Risse (2012) characterises states' insufficient functions or abilities to implement rules and decisions areas as 'areas of limited statehood'. As established, Scherer & Palazzo (2011) argue that business have a responsibility in such areas. Schwabenland & Tomlinson (2008) build upon this notion and argue that due to this more widespread retreat of the state in providing public services, organizations have entered contractual relationships to overtake these responsibilities on behalf of the state. Consequently, to this phenomenon, two issues seem to have arisen (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008). On one hand managers have experienced increased pressure to conform to a single notion of what management should be, which consider other models as inferior, although they have been recognized for their flexibility and creativity. On the other hand, there is an increasing fear that the independence, creativity and values of organizations are threatened by their increasing engagement as contractors to the state (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

By applying a new lens to the field of research, the postcolonial theory has enabled the analysis of organizations. Consequently, it has made it possible to generate new insights regarding the dynamics of power, control and resistance within organizations. By drawing on the postcolonial theory, it enables the exploration of present tensions and pressures experienced by managers in organizations. The tensions referred to are, on one hand, their mission benefitting the marginalized and excluded groups and on the other hand, the increased expectations that organizations act as contractors to the state and as providers of professionally managed services (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008). The increased expectations of having voluntary organizations as contracting partners stem from their expertise in working closely with the people that are perceived as the subjects of diversity. Additionally, it is also rooted in their capacity for innovation and flexibility in service delivery.

The term 'voluntary' has been a topic discussed multiple times, in which organizations at times have been at the centre of the discussion and other times excluded. However, Schwabenland and Tomlinson (2008) argue that voluntary organizations are

positioned at the core of the struggle for social justice. Therefore, their research has focused on organizations that are linked to social goods and governed by voluntary trustees and as such structurally independent and which invest their income within the organization rather than to shareholders (Schwabenland & Tomlinson, 2008).

3.2.6 CSR as Imperialism

An important concept that emerged in the 1980s was sustainable development, which sought to explore the correlation between the environment and development. Although this widespread concept is manifold in its definition, the most widely acknowledged one has proven to be that of Brundtland. Accordingly, the Brundtland Commission defines sustainable development as a *"process of change in which the exploitation of resources, direction of investments, orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs"* (Banerjee, 2003: 9). Although, sustainable development seeks to maximize the economic and environmental benefits simultaneously, viewing the term from a postcolonial lens is contradicting. This stems from the fact that sustainability and development derive from different and opposing premises. While the term 'sustain' refers to supporting or supplying, the term 'development' is viewed as an act of control, often through a programme organised and managed by nation states, international institutions or corporations where the operations are shaped by the principles of western science. This makes one question the role of CSR (Banerjee, 2003).

There has been a prevalent discourse on how CSR contribute to the alleviation of poverty and other development challenges. Business has become crucial to reach the development goals, because the field of business and development can be aligned in order to tackle the development challenges present. However, there is a need to re-evaluate the claims of CSR's contribution from a critical perspective to understand in depth how and what CSR does for the marginalized within a developing country (Blowfield & Frynas, 2005). Moreover, the majority of management and measurements methods of corporate social responsibility that are acknowledged derive from western scholars. In addition, the perspectives from suppliers from developing countries has been a neglected aspect by business scholars focusing on CSR. This aspect would shed light on whether CSR is conducted in a manner that improves the conditions of the intended recipients, whether it be economically, environmentally or socially (Khan & Lund-Thomsen, 2011).

Because the CSR concept is not homogeneous and is ambiguous in its definition, it has resulted in a broad interpretation of the term. Consequently, the concept has been adopted in many ways for different purposes. Blowfield & Frynas (2005) argue that CSR can be viewed as an umbrella term, which recognizes the following: *"that companies have a responsibility for their impact on society and the natural environment, sometimes beyond legal compliance and the liability of individuals; that companies have a responsibility for the behaviour of others with whom they do business; and that business needs to manage its relationship with wider society, whether for reasons of commercial viability or to add value to society"* (Blowfield & Frynas, 2005: 503). This lack of precise and singular definition can be perceived as critical because the business activities can have adverse effects even though the company seek to contribute to a particular improvement. Thus, there is a wide discussion about the corporations not enacting according to their articulated CSR policy, which poses a problem between the social and corporate interest (Drebes, 2016).

Another issue of the CSR concept that has raised attention is that it is a mode for business firms to dominate over the powerless by avoiding criticism and regulatory threats, by intervening proactively through CSR. Simultaneously, such interventions have proven to reinforce their existing power and influence. Because of the continuous common belief that CSR is only beneficial, it has proven to be a way to legitimize adverse business activities. For example, acquiring cheap labour to increase profit (Drebes, 2016).

Through a postcolonial perspective a missing element to the CSR discussion is 'power'. It is argued that it is rather a complex situation that is prevalent in societies, which contributes to the definition of features of society, rather than an institution, through social interaction (Drebes, 2016). Thus, there is only a presence of power through social interaction between certain groups of individuals. In a corporate context, this can be understood as firms being able to exert power over others' actions because they act in certain ways. Their actions enable them to influence the actions of others, which creates an uneven relationship. For instance, CSR measures put into action by companies (Drebes, 2016).

Accordingly, Harvey (2006) argues that there is an uneven development between the global north and south, which is mostly due to the capitalist economic system that is present. Consequently, he emphasizes that the impact of CSR is undermined by the pre-existing conditions of the current economic state. He identifies four preconditions, the principal precondition being the capturing of new spaces, which is in constant change. In return, this space is used for profit maximization due to the spatial and geographical differences. This

refers to the aspects that are linked to the specific region. In example the wage level or degree of qualified workers. Because the spaces are constantly changing, there is a tendency to search for new ideal spaces. From a corporate point of view, this would mean looking new suppliers or new markets to maximize profit (Drebes, 2016).

Secondly, is the ideology of constant growth of value, regardless of the consequences. In regard to CSR, this means that it is only applicable as long as it is useful in terms of profit maximization or does not decrease profit. Therefore, the CSR implementation of companies solely will be executed so long as the goal is visible for the consumer or public and less costly and easy to achieve. An example of an easy CSR goal would be to install fire alarms in factories, due to its simple, cost-effective and quick procedure, rather than achieving sustainable right to collective bargaining and freedom of association (Drebes, 2016).

Thirdly, is the precondition of human labour present to create value, which is a prevalent thought in many industries. To maximize profit, companies will often exploit the opportunity to find the cheapest labour. Consequently, this will end in unfair labour conditions, which will establish a need for CSR actions. Hence, the corporations themselves generate a need for CSR, by operating contradictory (Drebes, 2016).

Lastly, Harvey (2006) argues for the precondition of a differentiation of the distinctive categories of stakeholders. The differentiation of stakeholders establishes and develops various class relations and boundaries, which leads to resistance, rivalry and conflict. In regard to CSR, an issue that arises is the lack of direct action from the CSR measures, because they do not address injustice at the workplace. This stems from the fact that CSR strategies are often not build on experiences at the workplace or the needs of the marginalized stakeholders. As a response, resistance can be exerted, e.g. by the labour force taking direct action by pressuring managers or companies through unions (Drebes, 2016).

CSR is perceived as a voluntary engagement by companies to improve working conditions. However, the design and governance of CSR fails to centralize the labours in the design and implementations of the initiatives for the improvements. Instead, it aligns interests from a one-sided perspective, in order to sustain the competitive advantage of a particular stakeholder (Donaghey & Reinecke, 2018).

3.2.7 Indirect Rule

The creation and circulation of knowledge is crucial to any society in order to evolve. The production of knowledge can be associated with the process of development, which relies heavily on the process of providing new knowledge and methods. Development in itself consists of practices and strategies as a response to historical events that occurred. As a result, countries affected by these events have been dependent on development to overcome poverty (Escobar, 1989).

During the years after the post-war until the late 1970s, distinction between the truth and reality in regard to political development discourse was clear and direct. It was merely a discussion of capital, technology and education and how to successfully combine these essentials with appropriate policies and mechanisms. However, this transparency does not seem to exist anymore. Instead, it has given rise to issues of class, along with resistance and inquiry about imperialism (Escobar, 1992).

Nowadays modern organizations have taken on this role of assuring profit maximization for its stakeholders, which has been the main role of the company for a long period. Now it is more common to have social, cultural and environmental responsibilities for the societies that they are present in. The main objective of such an act is to obtain long-term sustainability (Banerjee, 2001).

However, it seems that there are similar traits of indirect ruling within the corporations which were traits of colonial rule during colonialism. A main characteristic of indirect ruling during colonialism can be described as the separation of power. In other words, the power of the chief's society was restricted. He had to render his proper services and was deprived of certain acts of control, for instance raising taxes and redistribution of land (Cooke, 2003). Indirect rule can be defined as *"the employment of the existing institutions of the country for all possible purposes to which they are adequate, their gradual moulding by means of the laws made and taxes imposed by the Central Government and of the guidance given by administrative officers, into channels of progressive change..."* (Cooke, 2003: 49-50).

Parallels can be drawn between development management and indirect rule, as the former seeks to train to build capacity, the role of education in progress and flexible labour markets. In both cases, there is a self-interest, nonetheless it would be beneficial for both parties. Although the main purpose of participatory management is to improve the effectiveness of the organization, it is argued that managerial participation in development management should go beyond that. Thus, the development management should

encompass methods of participation that seeks to intervene to enable the empowering of the relatively powerless (Cooke, 2003).

However, from a postcolonial lens participatory management is criticized for being manipulative towards the employees' values and beliefs, which can lead to 'psychological ownership'. Accordingly, it seeks to ensure a high level of commitment of the employees in the organization's work, to make certain that the organization will operate effectively (Cooke, 2003). By aligning the individuals or groups' aspiration and organizational aims, there are less favourable conditions for resistance of management control, due to the empowerment. Thus, it is a means of co-opting and controlling rather than empowering (Cooke, 2003).

3.2.8 Critique of the postcolonial theory

Postcolonialism studies, despite its nature and its contribution offered to different disciplines within the social science, is not exempt from criticism and controversy which highlight the incapacity of such cultural movement to explain and clarify some issues arose today, where globalization seems irrepressible and new forms of colonization are emerging (Yaeger et al., 2007). Indeed, colonialism manifests itself under new dynamics embedded in power and economic relationships between the so-called developed countries and their former colonies (Rao, 2000).

The critiques are various within this field of studies. Particularly, regarding its incapacity to comprehend, for instance, some current phenomena within globalization, crisis occurring in former colonies that maintain a neo-colonial structure or the disparity in different development paths. Additionally, its scarce attention to the political economy before and after the colonization of the former colonies is also a point of criticism (Geng & Qixue, 2006).

Regarding the capacity of Postcolonial theory to interpret and analyse modern forms of imperialism and colonialism, it can be argued that it is negligent in doing so. Particularly, its failure to examine the current world from a Marxist perspective is giving little clarification about the structure of capitalism and its inner mechanisms (Rao, 2000). Moreover, postcolonial theory does not investigate what 'neo-colonialism' is and how it expresses itself and develops. The same applies for 'globalization', despite the hegemony of postcolonialism in literature it fails to explain this concept (Rao, 2000).

What is missing in studies of postcolonialism, to understand some of the current conflicts and crisis, is a deep and coherent analysis of the economic system our society is embedded in capitalism. Postcolonialism scholars such as Said (1978), paid little or no attention to the development of capitalism and its structure, its mode of productions and regimes of accumulations (Lazarus, 2011). The Marxist materialist conception of history, namely the idea that social structures derive from economic structures, resulting in class struggle, is absent in postcolonialism literature. Consequently, no valid alternative theory can explain the modern global imperialism. Social disorders are also the consequences of political and economic factors characterizing a specific country and, again, postcolonialism appears to be incapable to properly examine and understand them (Geng & Qixue, 2006).

As presented by Yaeger et al. (2007), postcolonialism does not give enough "*light on the world we face*" (Yaeger et al., 2007: 636) and does *"pay insufficient attention to the fact that colonialism is part and parcel of a larger, enfolding historical dynamic, which is that of capitalism in its global trajectory"* (Lazarus, 2011:7). It fails to explain persistent forms of colonialism mostly from a cultural perspective, highlining the European hegemony, without considering the relationship to the economy and politics. Social and economic problems are turned into cultural ones, so the focus is more on the cultural aspect and how the European cultural hegemony can be reversed, for example through discourse critique (Geng & Qixue, 2006). However, societies are also built on the interaction between political and economic elements, which deeply influences culture. Therefore, the critics of culture also need to include the political and economic aspect to fully understand the interrelationship between culture, power and knowledge. Moreover, the cause of European hegemony is not clarified since the interaction of economic, technological and political factors is not analysed (Geng & Qixue, 2006).

Marx thought that what all people were striving for is related to the profit accumulation by capitalists and consequently that pursuing profits is the cause of all human activities under a capitalist system (Geng & Qixue, 2006). The problem of surplus absorption in mature capitalist systems encourages western oligopolies to search for alternative investment markets in underdeveloped countries. The result is a conflict between North and South countries which only a Marxist approach would allow to grasp. Postcolonialism seems to not really go through the structure of capitalism and how it has been changing through new forms of dependency (Luxemburg, 1913). Indeed, in contrast to neo-colonialism, it fails

to investigate economic and power relationships between nations within a western capitalist logic and analyse them through the Marxist perspective of class struggle. A phenomenon that, although happening in different forms compared to the past, is still ongoing and pervasive in our society (Rao, 2000). Postcolonial theory has failed to integrate colonialism within capitalism and its development (Lazarus, 2011).

Another aspect which postcolonialism focus on is the question of cultural hybridity and its importance to fight cultural hegemony. Bhabha's (2012) conceptualization of hybridity fails to take into consideration the imbalance of power between the cultures. As such, it neglects to contemplate which culture will be more affected by the other one in the hybridization process (Kuortti & Nyman, 2007). Therefore, the discussion revolves around the subject and object of a hybridity since it could be a strategy for western countries to implement new different forms of control and hegemony (Geng & Qixue, 2006). Consequently, the inequality between west and south cannot be eliminated through cultural hybridity. Instead, there is a risk of such inequality being more prevalent. Indeed, the hybridization process tends to hide the disparity in terms of power relationships and to ignore the difference in class structure between North and South (Geng & Qixue, 2006).

To conclude, it is relevant to report a last critique that Paulo de Madeiro moves towards the general attack on Eurocentrism (Lazarus, 2009). He underlines a common mistake underpinning this criticism, namely the tendency to refer to Europe as a whole unit without distinguishing the differences among the different countries. Europe and the west are used as synonyms when it comes to explore certain dynamics and describe social behaviour within the postcolonialism discourse (Lazarus, 2009). Instead, Europe is not a homogeneous reality, but a union composed by several countries, many of which have never been part of the imperialism process. Nor have they been controlled or colonized by other European powers (Boldrini, 2006). Then, this unification of everything is European into a single unit does not highlights differences within the Europe, reducing the Eurocentrism to dominant western economies.

Chapter 4: The Case

4.1 The Garment industry in Myanmar

4.1.1 Precedent Situation

After the military took power in Myanmar in 1988, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), previously known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), repealed the closed-door policy that had been present for 26 years. Instead, they enforced an open-door policy, which allowed private firms to engage in foreign trade. Simultaneously, the Foreign Investment Law was enacted, which allowed foreign investment in Myanmar (Kudo, 2012).

4.1.2 Garment sector

The global garment industry is considered a crucial part of world trade. Particularly regarding trade between developed and developing countries. This consists of large proportion of exports of clothing. According to BIF (2016), world exports of textiles and clothing in 2012 had a worth of 708bn dollars, where 432bn consisted of clothing alone.

In Myanmar, the garment sector is important for the country's economy. The market experienced remarkable growth during the 1990s and 2000s, which accounted for 40% of national exports before economic sanctions were implemented in the early 2000s. The economic sanctions from key importing countries included the US and Europe. This had a fundamental impact on the size and diversity of the sector, which decreased the earnings from 829m dollars in 2001 to 312.6m dollars in 2005(BIF, 2016). However, the share of exports to Korea and Japan increased. Substantially. The garment sector in Myanmar experienced a turning point in 2012, when the import ban on Burmese products were lifted, both from the US and Europe. The country thus slowly re-entered the western markets (Switchasia, 2017).

According to figures from the MGMA, there are 210 garment factories in Myanmar mainly focusing on the export market. Most factories producing in Myanmar for the export market operate under the practice of cut, make and pack production (CMP). In other words, the raw materials are imported by the customer and the designs, while the patterns and instructions are provided for the factories. The factories oversee stitching the garment before packaging and transporting the output to the buyers. This operation practice means that there is limited value added by factories on the production part of the value chains. This

means that there is lower possibility for development of wider domestic supporting services. Consequently, it lowers profit margins (BIF, 2006).

In terms of competitive advantages, Myanmar does have some advantages over other regional garment producers. These consist of low wages and a relatively well-educated labour. An actuality within the sector is that buyers are looking for alternative locations for production, due to increased wages in other countries, for instance in China where wages are rising and competition for production capacity increasing. Moreover, labour shortages and frequent labour strikes are other concerns within the industry. Myanmar also faces several constraints in terms of doing business. For instance, poor infrastructure, lack of support functions together with longer lead times, are current issues that restraint growth (BIF, 2006). Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the Burmese garment sector has great potential in contributing to the national economy, both through foreign trade and job creation. However, the industry still lacks progress, when it comes to sustainability regarding consumption and production and social responsibility (Switchasia, 2017).

4.1.3 Employment

It is widely recognized that the garment industry is a labour-intensive industry. According to Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association, it was established that approximately 300.000 workers were employed in the industry between 2000 and 2001. However, this number decreased considerably by 2005 to 120.000-130.000 workers, when the sanctions were invoked (Kudo, 2012). Currently, there is a total employment of 126.000 workers and it has been projected that there is a potential to reach a total employment of about 1.000.000 people in the long run. Particularly, the sector offers employment opportunities for women who make up for the majority of the garment workforce (BIF, 2016).

4.1.4 Garment production

As mentioned previously, the garment industry only operates by the CMP model, which is considered a basic garment production technique. This means, that the factories are only able to stick and package the finished product before to it is transported to the buyer. Therefore, the used material is imported by the customer (BIF, 2016).

An alternative model, to this common business model in Myanmar's garment sector, is the Free On Board (FOB). This model with the garment production is more common globally. It consists of factories overseeing the purchase of import of raw materials and providing other services, for instance garment design, logistics and warehousing. By taking such an approach, it is feasible to increase margins. However, few factories in Myanmar have the capability, size or access to credit to initiate such an operation (BIF, 2016).

Furthermore, several issues with production and productivity in the Burmese garment sector have been diagnosed. It is common that the garment factories in the country underperform in productivity areas. As a result, it has been established that there is a high defect rates with 20-25 % of garments requiring repair. Also, efficiency is valued as low, as it takes up to 3 times the standard time per item. Moreover, the garment factories usually face worker issues in terms of high turnover and worker absence, thereby leading to a lack of trained and skilled labour. Workers leave their jobs, mainly due to issues related to their pay and working conditions. This includes poor treatment and long working hours (BIF, 2016). Thus, all of these issues have a remarkable impact on the cost of production, and also turns Myanmar in a less attractive production location within the sector (BIF, 2016).

4.1.5 Capability

In Myanmar the garment sector faces significant constraints in regard to the development of skills and access to training. A great gap has been identified both in terms of operations, productivity, management and labour relations. Despite some factories intending to improve the worker skills by contracting expatriate managers to deal with skill development, no significant improvement have been noticed, due to the lack of understanding about what is needed and how to access new expertise (BIF, 2016). For the Burmese garment industry to be able to compete on a world market it will need to increase their competitive advantages by improving their productivity rates, production and lead-times (MGMA, 2015).

4.1.6 Labour Unions

Labour organizations in the garment sector in Myanmar are characterized by poor collective bargaining and worker representation. There is a lack of collaboration with labour unions to understand and meet the needs of all parties. It is important that factory owners and

managers engage in honest negotiations over wages and working conditions to reach a collective agreement, that realizes the workers' needs and those of the employers. Therefore, freedom of association and strengthening social dialogue across the industry are essential to improve the current conditions of the industry (MGMA, 2015).

4.2 MYPOD

The MYPOD project is a multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at strengthening productivity and improving the work environment and the social dialogue in the Burmese garment sector. Involving a broad range of different stakeholders including the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative (DIEH), the Danish Trade Federation, 3F, Aalborg University and Bestseller, a private company. Other stakeholders participating in the MSI consist of twelve garment factories, some of whom belong to Bestseller's production network. The MSI, is funded by the Danish state aid fund Danida as part of their Danida Market Development Partnerships (DMDP) fund. A peculiar feature to this construction is the nature of the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative (DIEH) as this organisation is a multi-stakeholder initiative in itself. The three other partners Aalborg University, BESTSELLER, and 3F are also members of DIEH and at the same time equal partners in the MYPOD project. As such these actors are very tightly knit together.

In some of the factories that produce for Bestseller, there is a monthly turnover of employees of up to 80 % (Bestseller, 2018). The workers have plenty of options in terms of employment, so they often choose to switch jobs regularly. This is especially the case if they feel ill-treated (Bestseller, 2018). As mentioned previously, trade unions are very underdeveloped in the country and thus there is no real tradition for workers to organise themselves.

At the 12 factories participating in the project, training of factory workers and managers is undertaken with the purpose of both improving efficiency, quality and working conditions at the factory level. A huge part of this process is to establish a tradition for social dialogue at the factory level. Social dialogue includes efforts to make both parts aware of the other's rights and wishes and therefore workers' rights to collective bargaining is a central part of this work. This is strongly connected to a strengthening of the trade unions and an introduction of these into the factories. Now, they are not present at the workplaces, instead there are coordination committees which are rather formalities than actual manager-factory

worker dialogue e.g. worker representatives are not democratically elected. The training of factory workers and managers is central to initiating this social dialogue. The overall aim of the MYPOD project is thus to spread the knowledge of human rights and labour rights as well as strengthen the social and economic development in the Burmese garment industry. The batches of twelve factories will serve as examples and be used to construct a business case which can then in turn be distributed across the Burmese garment industry so the experience from the project can be shared and help lift the social standards in the industry (Joint ETI, 2018).

Chapter 5: Findings

5.1 Environment

The result of the following findings gives some important insights about two dimensions: the status of the industrial framework of the country, with a closer look to the garment sector, and the situation about the relationships among the main actors involved in the textile business. Myanmar's world market opening-up is young and only recently the military dictatorship has begun to show improvements in its policies, in terms of democratisation of its internal processes and civil and human rights. Such dispositions allow a downsizing of the economic and commercial sanctions against the country and an increase attraction for foreigner investments, especially western actors. China, by contrast, has a long trade-related tradition with Myanmar and this is observable looking, for example, at the composition of the garment sector, mainly composed by Chinese-owned factories which play an important role also in the performance of MYPOD project.

From countryside to city: the working women.

"you learn to be industrial workers I mean a lot of these workers in the textile sector in Myanmar are young girls coming in from the countryside trying their luck in the city " - Lea Worm, 3F

Most of the workers in garment sector are young girls coming from the countryside. This indicates that they do not have any kind of experience in working in factories, handling

knitting equipment and managing relationships within the factory itself in terms of relationships both with other employees and managers. Moreover, coming from a completely different environment they are not used to living in the cities so they are alone, often without no contacts, no relationships, no knowledge of local organizations and institutions that could help them. Moving from the countryside to the city it is an important change that brings with itself many difficulties.

Lack of community spirit inside the factory: resignation. Lack of experience because of the trade's youth.

"So as long as the conditions are not good enough it's easier for them to just move instead of 'if we stay and actually have influence, so we can improve our working conditions we can improve our salaries and so on" - Lea Worm, 3F

"there's a lot of work turnover, so the factories and the workforce is very unstable. There's a lot of unrest and strikes, because it's a very new country." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"One of the biggest issues in the garment sector in Myanmar is the turnover rate. You can see in some of the factories that the turnover rates are up to 80% in just one month. That you would get almost a completely new staff within a month. This is very, very inefficient for the factories, because every month they have to teach new workers to do the same procedures. So the productivity is also low, because of the great turnover rates." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"if they don't have a good relationship with their supervisor they would just quite. So if you have a higher level of social dialogue, you are more likely to stay in the factory that you work in, because you like your boss and so on." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"when thinking of sustainability I really think that the turnover rate and the social dialogue part is very, very crucial for anything good to happen in the industry. Because if you want development to be sustained for longer time you also need employers that are motivated by their work or just have a good relationship with their supervisor and that don't quite."
- Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

The high turnover rate does not allow to create any kind of community, i.e. of worker groups within the factory. It reflects a general trend of resignation when things get bad in the factory. It means that the workers prefer actually to leave the factory instead of facing the problems and trying to solve them. This phenomenon is fairly spread in the country and has important consequences on the sustainability and the economy of the factories. Managers have to train again and again the new employees and that is a waste of time and resources. Furthermore, this situation does not allow the workers to gain the right experience and knowledge to cope with difficulties arising in the firm context and learn from them. Creating a sense of community within the factory will facilitate one important aspect of the MYPOD project, the social dialogue. Moreover, this lack of belonging can be seen as a consequence of labour unions absence or weakness.

Conflict-based resolution

"everything is more or less solved by conflict. If there is a problem you strike or you leave or you fire people so it's very conflict oriented. So for both employers' and workers' side it's a lot about getting the experience that you can actually talk about things and reach compromises and that takes a very long time to learn." - Lea Worm, 3F

"also that you have these conflict resolution systems on township basis that are still very... they still have very low capacity... they are there and they work but the representatives there, there are both employers, works, and government officials and old military staff because they always have to be there. They have so little experience in conflict resolution in labour market so I think it's more these young structures that is a challenge"- Lea Worm, 3F

What emerges is the tendency to solve every problem either through striking or leaving, thus turning to conflict-based resolutions. The continuous presence of military during confrontations between employers and employees shows an inefficient and conservative way to solve a problem, which indicates an intimidating attitude. It is in this scenario that the social dialogue component plays a fundamental role, because of its crucial function to

smooth the relationship between workers and the management or factory owners. This is the key of change and the path to pursue.

Lack of industrialization and industrial skills

"if you can come with inputs on how to structure the production differently so your employers will earn more money but you should have a part of it... I mean it's quite complex issues that we ask very young industrial workers to start with this whole.. I mean it's quite complex issues that we ask very young industrial workers to start with" - Lea Worm, 3F

"it's fairly new that international trade is even going on in Myanmar so of course there are some major changes in terms of production" - Lea Worm, 3F

Considering that Myanmar recently entered the global market, the Burmese industries can be characterized as less advanced. Especially the garment sector which is relatively new. Employers either lack practical industrial skills or do have the right machines to receive and implement new production processes. It is a great challenge to teach and try to implement new procedures. This would imply to teach both to management and workers.

Lack of unions inside the factory

"right now in all the factories that we are at the moment you don't have a trade union so you have trade union federations so national trade unions standing outside who has to get into these factories and start organising workers." - Lea Worm, 3F

Trade unions in Myanmar have started to exist and grow only recently and they are more active outside the factories. Thus, they hardly enter into the factories to involve the workers. There is the need for them to participate directly to address the workers' issues more efficiently. The lack of presence of labour unions on ground makes things more difficult in terms of building relationships between the management and workers. Furthermore, this means that workers do not have any kind of experience in collaborating with unions in order to understand the dynamics occurring within these organizations.

Coordination committees

"these workplace coordination committees which theoretically is a social dialogue forum where you have both managers and uhh... both the employers' and the workers' side represented and that's where you could raise your issues and so on but in most factories they are not functioning very well." - Lea Worm, 3F

"they are not democratically elected at least the baseline we have established it's not... in some factories the workers representatives in these coordination committees are supervisors so they are workers but they have some kind of manager responsibility." - Lea Worm, 3F

"They have this workplace coordination committee but there's no trade union and the workplace coordination committee is not democratically elected and workers don't use it. Workers... they go to the supervisor if they have a problem and ask the supervisor to go the manager. They don't have their own representative." - Lea Worm, 3F

The existence of these coordination committees that are considered to be social dialogue forums function as meeting places for the workers and their employers. Here the workers' representatives could raise and discuss any issues they wish to address. The reality is different since in many cases the workers' representatives are members of the management, so it appears that there is a conflict of interest. The workers would have difficulty being completely honest, due to fear of repercussion. Thus, the representatives within the committees is an essential issue that needs to be re-evaluated, due to the related conflict of interest.

Chinese employers

"you have all sorts of examples from these factories where you have had especially chinese employers who are used to being like to yelling and punishing and firing people and so so it's both ways that you need mutual trust I'd say." - Lea Worm, 3F

"Chinese suppliers that are the ones that are working with the factories". - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

Most of the textile factories are owned by Chinese suppliers which have a different culture and way of working compared to the Burmese. Therefore, having stronger unions active within the factories would help to harmonize the relationship between employers and employees.

Differences in CSR policies among different factories ownerships

"It depends very much on who the buyer is. I mean CSR standards is something that's coming in because you have brands that have CSR policies and therefore have some demands for their suppliers, so it's." - Lea Worm, 3F

"For the factories we are working at right now it seems that there are very big differences between uhm the locally owned factories and the chinese-owned factories on technology, on civil right and and that kind of thing" - Lea Worm, 3F

"you do have little sweatshops, you do have all that stuff as well where there is not regulation" - Lea Worm, 3F

"all businesses and companies, all big brands they uphold the UN guiding principles for business and human rights and so on. But, and they all have different codes of conducts that they give to the factories and so on" - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

In regard to the CSR policies, it depends on the specific brand and on the nationality of the ownerships. Regarding the respect for the human rights it is something related both to the culture and habits of the owners and the demands of the brands. It implies differences between for example Chinese factories and local ones. Additionally, there are many non-regulated factories that do not follow any standard if they do not work for big brands. On one hand, the general trend regarding the big brands involved, is to follow the basic international principles (ILO and UN). On the other hand, every factory has its own rules.

"it's unsustainable... that's not just Myanmar but anywhere that that factories or employers only live up to a certain standard as long as the international brands demand something of them." - Lea Worm, 3F

The compliance of specific standards only for a certain predetermined contract period would not be sustainable and not even forward-looking.

"It's also more difficult to control so there is pros and cons... I mean you have... you also have some Danish companies who have their factories outside and that might be a bit more expensive but it's easier for them to control that they live up to their standard both in terms of the quality and in terms of CSR policy" - Lea Worm, 3F

"But the whole situation of how they are working, how they are sitting, how the work station is organized and things...they are not looking into. So, we're taking you could say up, we're looking at new aspects of health and safety" - Lea Worm, 3F

A novelty within the MYPOD project regarding CSR is the new focus applied. The safety of the worker is seen from different perspectives, which the outdated policies do not.

"So, we need to make that the Chinese suppliers that we have followed into Myanmar is taking their responsibility of working with the factories." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"It should be the Chinese supplier that takes responsibility of making sure that all standards are up to a certain level in Myanmar". – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

These quotes indicate that the Chinese suppliers that source from, for example, the Burmese or Vietnamese factories, are in charge of ensuring that all the standards are complied. This implies that differences in CSR policies exist along the supply chain according to the actors involved and the degree of audit required.

"We will come out and see for ourselves sometimes, and we will support, for instance with MYPOD if you have any problems, but the tendency is that we really need to stop just auditing factories, but really look into the sustainable improvements. And how do we do

that? We do that by supporting the suppliers and changing the management shift in taking more responsibility" – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

Bestseller pointed out that this audit trend has to be stopped, or at least changed, and that the final result has to be analysed in order to understand if effective improvements have been achieved. To do that changes in the processes have to be implemented to make the suppliers more responsible and observant of the standards.

"Rules and regulations that facilitate responsible business conducts of relevant business actors. But our laws and rules are still being amended for consistency and clarity. For instance, currently ILO and others are assisting labour law reform process in Myanmar. Environmental Impact Assessment rules and procedures are still yet to be fully implemented" - Hnin, MCRB

As said by the member of the MCRB, the main problem is the lack of regulation in terms of responsible business. Weak and unclear laws are not sufficient to guarantee the pursuit of good practices and the achievement of high labour standards. In this respect main organizations as ILO are collaborating with the government in order to improve the legislative framework in the labour market.

Political environment: challenges

"So I don't think that the Rohingya crisis for instance per se will be a problem to this project" - Lea Worm, 3F

"We have had some, was worried a bit with how would he be treated in Myanmar, but so far it seems to be working and there hasn't been any real problems" - Aalborg University

"Well, well it's always when we work in these countries and you'll always have some kind of force majeure saying that if this just...you know the country just ends in war or something will happen. Of course, you cannot be there, so there's always an uncertainty in these countries." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"Because, also if you think from a business perspective, if you just take out the morally, human issues and this, then from a business perspective it doesn't make sense to keep developing a country you don't know if there's going to be trade sanctions in the country tomorrow. It makes no sense. Everyone is going to lose millions. On the other hand, we cannot sit and support something that may end up in a military regime next month, from a moral perspective, from a human perspective. So, yeah it is very difficult. " – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

The Rohingya crisis itself doesn't represent a real problem for the MYPOD project but, undoubtedly, the unstable environment in general can be seen as a threat. Any unexpected event could happen and then jeopardize the project. From a business perspective the political situation is always monitored since any possible sanction could change the dynamics within the garment sector, but also the whole economic situation of the country.

Industrial environment: challenges

"The biggest challenge in a project like this in terms of the political environment is more that it's so young, it's so inexperienced in terms of... of... an industrial or modern, or whatever you wanna call it, labour market. So there's very little understanding. Both from the government side or from the ministry of labour and from employer organisations and other partners in terms of how do we go into dialogue, how do we structure." - Lea Worm, 3F

"The labor reforms in terms of labor laws is coming in now, so MYPOD is completely separate from that. It is not on the political level, it is on factory level, yeah." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"None of the local partners aren't registered as organizations or companies in Myanmar they can't..they didn't know what to tell the Ministry of education, because they don't really know any of us. So they actually just feared to apply to be part of this project. "– Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"Immature labour market" - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"the local university had to get everything approved; every partnership or every, every project that they're involved with they had to get it approved by the ministry of education in Myanmar. The bureaucracy" – DIEH

The fact that the country lacks solid and structured foundations in terms of industrial base and labour market can represent a challenge. The labour market especially is in a low stage because of the absence of structured reforms and strong laws for the protection of workers. Other two challenges can be seen in the excess of bureaucracy in the government apparatus that discourages and slows down the implementation and launch of initiatives and programmes, and in the lack of regulation resulting into several illegal sweatshops. It is difficult to collaborate with not regulated factories since the project needs licenses and approval from the government.

"Inadequate infrastructure is also another constraint for doing businesses in a profitable manner and hence paying decent wage to workers" - Hnin, MCRB

As remarked by the manager of the MCRB, the lack of an efficient infrastructure represents an important difficulty in conducting business in adequate ways, respecting standards and laws. This indicates that a poor infrastructural system would put the entrepreneurs in a condition to not comply with some labour standards to stay in the budget, forced to incur in other costs due to inefficient facilities.

"As I explained above, we need better and clearer laws and regulations to enable responsible business conduct. We need an environment that pave the way for doing business responsibly, in general it means accountability and transparency in providing license, etc. so that it can be level playing field for all businesses" - Hnin, MCRB

"For instance, currently ILO and others are assisting labour law reform process in Myanmar. Environmental Impact Assessment rules and procedures are still yet to be fully implemented" - Hnin, MCRB

Lack of a strong and clear legislative framework regarding the labour market and business activities makes difficult the creation of a flourish and health business environment. Laws have to be strengthened in terms of transparency and assessment of responsibilities within a unambiguous legal order in line with the international standards. Subsequently is underlined the work of some international agencies in trying to improve the current legislation and take action in the regulatory system to meet international laws.

"They share their best practices to local partners. Make sure that they do not have negative impact on society and environment, but create shared value for the community where their business operate" - Hnin, MCRB

"that Burmese partners will need to comply with standards required by foreign brands. For instance, in garment sector, local businesses are complaining that they need some time to meet international best practices especially labour rights compliance including decent wage etc, since they have constraints to match all those criteria" - Hnin, MCRB

It is argued that international brands should comply with international standards and share best practices in order to push local business to adopt such practices and to improve the general business environment. To do it, foreign companies have to train and endorse local entrepreneurs involved in their value chain to respect and ensure the implementation of certain measures.

Scarce awareness about the current situation of trade unions status

"very strong need to make the employers' organisations stronger because there's only one, the trade unions are strong because there are so many. But from our perspective we would say okay, it's not a strength that there is a lot little or small organisations that don't talk to each other. It's not a strength, it's actually a weakness and you have one employers' organisation who coordinate." - Lea Worm, 3F

"We would actually say they are the strongest so there's so little understanding of how or... limited understanding at least of how these processes work. So I think it's more that that can be a challenge," - Lea Worm, 3F

The government itself is not aware about the labour unions condition. From its perspective the strength of trade unions is due to their quantity, in terms of number of unions, while from the MYPOD perspective this fragmentation is, indeed, a weakness. The employer organization is actually stronger and more powerful than unions.

"they are there and they work but the representatives there, there are both employers, works, and government officials and old military staff because they always have to be there"

It represents a conservative way to handle tense moments and reflects the situation of the country still stuck in a military dictatorship.

Equality: caste problem

"what we do, we are always in dialogue with our partners in terms of equality. In many countries it would be in terms of gender equality but in this region it is also very much about ethnicity and caste" - Lea Worm, 3F

The social dialogue is more centred to the resolution of ethnic and caste clashes that represent the main discriminations within a factory. It reflects the political environment still stuck in a military dictatorship. The presence of military obviously turns into a limit in expressing opinions.

Garment sector composition

"So the companies, the factories themselves in Myanmar, they are not, very few at least, exclusively producing for one brand. They will have several brands, they will get orders from different brands" - Lea Worm, 3F

"The factories that produces... in general in the garment industry you'll have a lot of locally owned, one way or another, that sell to different brands" - Lea Worm, 3F

"who produce to the international market are mainly owned by Chinese, Japanese and South Korean. Maybe Thai" - Lea Worm, 3F

The Burmese garment sector is fairly heterogeneous in terms of its composition. Chinese, Japanese and South Korean factories supply to the most famous brands due to their long experience in the sector in contrast with local factories. They are those that directly negotiate with brands.

"locally owned companies. So there's one of the companies in the MYPOD project that is Burmese-owned. They are often smaller, more run-down, they have less investments than the big international... and therefore obviously more difficulties in getting orders from big brand" - Lea Worm, 3F

This indicates the gap in technology and then productivity between Chinese and burmese factories. Then it becomes difficult for the local ones to get order from the big international brands

"it's large. You need to have resources in order to know what to do in these countries. I don't think any SMEs are sourcing out of Myanmar. At least, for the garment industry. The Koreans, the Japanese, and the Chinese are the biggest one there." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

The typical suppliers in this country are large Asian companies that have great resources to rely on and which can realize economies of scale and then obtain contracts with the big brands. Consequently, it enables them to explore the country, investigate and then negotiate.

Similar projects around and the donors question

"There is a project called SMART. n various matters mainly related to human resources, health and safety and to some extend also in productivity, but are limited" - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

"some ILO activities," - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

"Mainly on focus on health and safety and working conditions not so much productivity" - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

"the ILO project they have also worked with improvements of companies, less focused on productivity, but more focused on HR and health safety related issues." - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

"and everyone was saying that if the donors and brands and everyone just would focus on one type of program, because they don't have resource all of them and they can't be in five different programs in these countries" - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

MYPOD project can be considered as a unique programme because of its focus on productivity and social dialogue. Nevertheless other similar projects, promoted by important organizations as ILO or EU, more focused on health safety exist in Myanmar. In addition, several donors are present in territory, collaborating with different organizations and brands. This fragmentation of programmes and actors create confusion and, according to some, inefficiency. It is proposed to focus energies and resources only on few types of programmes in order to better channel

Social dialogue

"I think...It was a little bit different, because when it only focuses on social dialogue in Bangladesh, it is a little bit bigger. Of course, this is a lot about how to do the elections, how to choose your representatives in the factories. The challenge in Bangladesh, is that the factories are between 3000 to 15000 workers. So, even the infrastructure of setting up a proper election for a worker representatives is quite quite difficult. This is not the case of Myanmar. In that case, we needed the social dialogue to run much smoother, so you can say that the reason for joining MYPOD is the opposite" - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

Unlike Bangladesh that, because of his long tradition in garment sector, presents huge factories with thousands of workers, in Myanmar the firms are smaller and then the social

dialogue part results easier to achieve and the best solution to make things run better within the firm.

Internal factory environment

"suppliers are Chinese and the factories are Vietnamese. And often the suppliers are travelling back and forth, they are sitting in China" - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"it has been a challenge for Aalborg University to realize that whenever they need to do something, it's not only going in to the factories. It needs to be planned so much in advance, in order to get the factories onboard. The difference is that in Bangladesh the owner/supplier is actually sitting in the factory" - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"On top of that we have the Chinese suppliers, the Burmese middle management in the factories so we have a language barrier. None of them are really good at English" - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"Cultural challenges within the workers in the factories, because most of them are Chinese owned. And the Chinese and Myanmar cultures are very, very different." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

It indicates the different composition of the industrial fabric in the garment sector, showing again, the predominance of Chinese owned factories. Furthermore, it highlights the challenges underpinning this heterogeneity not only among companies but also within. In fact, Chinese suppliers, with Burmese management often source from other foreign owned companies (i.e. Vietnamese) and that obviously create communication challenges and organization problems. These language barriers and different nationality ownerships create issues also towards the MYPOD project because it hinders its members to plan and handle the relationships among the different subjects involved.

Consumer's awareness

"to be honest the consumers they're no aware. These details, they don't understand. The political consumer is a little bit a myth, to be honest. All of this is brand driven. We haven't had any questions about being in Myanmar, even with Rohingya going on. We're concerned. We're very concerned. We haven't had any questions about that from anyone. I was actually surprised. I thought that the consumer would care. I think it's very abstract for them." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

The myth of the political consumer highlights the general attitude of the average consumer not really interested in international problems. Choices made by conscious consumers are still few so they do not really affect the economic strategies taken by brands.

Cultural context and differences from Western tradition

"And we also need to know how to analyze those social contexts with the professors from the university and also the local trade unions and in the factories when we are working, to know that when he says or she says "yes" it might just be because they won't say no. So, yeah those are some of the cultural challenges that can be....yeah and also the level of projects in the garment sector looking like our project there are maybe three projects there that look a lot like ours" - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

Collaborations between the Danish cluster (3F, Bestseller, DIEH and Aalborg University) and local subjects is extremely important for the western actors in order to get insights about the Burmese culture. Especially in the working environment it is necessary to be aware about the habits and practices to better understand behaviours and actions of locals. With this regard close collaborations, in particular, with universities is something extremely useful. Here sociological researches can be conducted along with experts and professionals.

5.2 Impact

Danish Stakeholder impact

"It's difficult to say but now the logic is that you have a control or administrative function you could say in DIEH and then you have both the institution knowledge so you have the

university, you have the trade union and you have the company and of course our role would be to ensure capacity building of trade unions to ensure workers' engagement in this whole linkage between lean, occupational health and safety and social dialogue. " - Lea Worm, 3F

"So what we do is, that we train local professors from a local university, Yangon Technological University. And also we train employers from two local trade unions, in these particularly, particular methodologies that we use for this project." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that each of the Danish partners contribute to the project with a distinctive skill which intends to ensure capacity building of the local partners and the factory worker's engagement. Also, it indicates that they provide the local partners with training in certain methodologies. Because the DIEH has a control or administrative function it indicates that they have the upper hand in this project. They are perceived as a form of authority by the local partners. This can lead to believe that they have a significant impact on the outcome of the project, because they have all the knowledge and have to share it with the local partners.

"...when the training planning and material is done here in August and we start in September we will have to do some follow-up trainings or some follow-up meetings with the first batch, also after second batch is started. I think it's too optimistic that you can do these things in just a few months and then... yeah so I think we will need to do follow-up everywhere." - Lea Worm, 3F

This quote indicates that the Danish partners are determined to do an impact assessment during the project's duration to ensure that the project has the intended outcome. By doing some trainings continuously it can contribute to the capacity building, by giving the local partners more experience and knowledge. In return, the follow-up meetings can clarify whether actual improvements are made. Also, it is useful for detecting some problems along the way, to be able to address them as quick as possible.

"One thing is to get training and let's see what happens in some months or in half a year and then come back." - Lea Worm, 3F

On one hand, this quote shows that the Danish partners are committed to the project and that they want to ensure that it has the right outcome. It proves that training is a crucial part of the project, in order to enable improvement of any kind. On the other hand, it also indicates that it takes time to detect whether or not the implementations are having the right impact.

"I'm not sure what the plan is, but the plan is that they go and build their own capacity in supporting the local garment industry in productivity improvements. It's also about training...they need to educate more people in the university." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This shows that the main goal is to train them so that they can develop their own capacity to support the local garment industry in productivity improvements. The long- term plan is that the Burmese garment sector becomes self-reliant and able to tackle the issues that may occur in the industry. Therefore, Bestseller emphasizes the need to train and educate the local stakeholders.

Worker Turnover

"The selling point you can say is often turnover that if you get the workers involved there is a greater chance of them to stay longer. They have a, I think, a 25% turnover a month or something so there could also be some economic benefit." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This quote shows that there is a relatively high monthly turnover rate, because the social dialogue is poor, and the workers are not involved in the decision making. This makes them prone to quit their jobs. A solution to that issue is to improve the social dialogue within the sector. It also indicates that by taking such steps it will result in a lower turnover rate, which can be economically beneficial on a long-term basis.

"And we, that's where, that's where one of the places where the social dialogue really kicks in, because you also see that the main reason to leaving a working place is because of your relation to your supervisor or your boss." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This quote indicates that there is a hierarchy within the Burmese working space, which shows that the relation between the Boss and worker is very formal. Burmese workers might have a tense relationship to their employer and are not used to express their opinions to the boss, which is one of the main reason to the high turnover rate. By improving the social dialogue within the factories, workers are more likely to stay longer in the same workplace.

Job Opportunities

"We don't teach but you could say part of the whole development industrial development in general is that you learn to be industrial workers I mean a lot of these workers in the textile sector in Myanmar are young girls coming in from the countryside trying their luck in the city you could say... and normally you can say workers could... if they are not satisfied they quit their job and go somewhere else because there's also this opportunity at the moment, there is the opportunity to get a job somewhere else." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This statement indicates that there is an industrial development going on in Myanmar, particularly in the textile sector, which is creating jobs. Moreover, it shows that if the working conditions are bad, the workers are prone to quit their jobs and seek a job elsewhere. Moreover, it shows that the majority of the workers in the factories are inexperienced young girls from the countryside that are attempting to succeed at a life in the big city and are not dependent on the first job they get, because the favourable circumstances which are present enable them to get work somewhere else if pleased.

"The whole point I am sure is that you have educational programs to...that they can take an education as being some kind of lean expert in Yangon. That's really needed. There is going to be a lot of jobs for that if they can really train young students." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This statement indicates that there is a high demand for lean experts in Yangon, which will create a lot of job opportunities if the universities are able to train the young students as intended.

Impact Assessment

"Hopefully it will but we are also talking long-term. I don't think it will happen within the two years of this project." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This statement indicates that the implementation of solutions will have a visible impact on long-term. It also indicates that the implementations are meant to be sustainable and not a short-term solution.

"They have a little contact... and then it's been interviewing them on... uhm... basically there has been I think it's four components so there's something on social dialogue structure in general. Do they have a trade union? Do they have a workplace coordination committee? Do workers know their rights? bla bla bla bla." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This quote shows that they seek to identify the different issues that the local stakeholders are experiencing, to be able to tackle the problem, for instance the social dialogue structure within the sector. It also indicates that the factory workers do not have proper knowledge about the good working conditions that they are entitled to and that there is very little information flow, because there is a lack of contact to them.

"... make the same interviews again after the first batch to see... has anything involved.. or has there been any progress? and that could be both in terms results so you could say now they do have access to bathrooms with running water and soap which they don't at the moment so it could be very specific but it could also just be that, or hopefully - not just, but it could be that now they have actually themselves elected a workplace coordination committee and they now go to their own workers' representative when they raise issues rather than they go to their supervisor which they do right now." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This indicates that they undertake interviews with the locals before and after an implementation to evaluate whether it has had an impact on the workers and to observe if there has been any progress on the matter. Also, it shows that they seek a long-term impact.

"More than that I think it's also gonna be case stories… so look at are there any specific cases we want to highlight from the different factories." – Lea Worm, 3F.

This indicates that they intend to generate specific business cases with the cases that they identify from the different factories. This can be useful for showing improvements within specific cases, so it can be used as a selling point for implementing a solution.

"Uhmm, there is a lot of impact growth a lot of outcome of course defined in the actual project description and everything that we send in to Danida. So everything, we have targets for everything, you can find in the project description. Uhm yeah, these are very very clear defined targets." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This shows that the MYPOD project has a target-oriented approach, as it has very specific targets defined, which can be found in the description.

" So we measure the baseline conditions and then we try to introduce improvements and then we measure again, same measurements and hopefully we could show that conditions have improved." - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This quote explains the approach that Aalborg University take to measure improvements, which is done repeatedly. The measurements completed seek to ensure that the conditions are improved, and the clear defined targets of the project are met.

MYPOD Project

"None of the other partnerships working with productivity are doing that. This is very unique for us, because of the other programs are focused in developing the capacity with the local unions like 3F is. But no one is focusing on training technical staff in Yangon. Because the whole point is that if you want to have any kind of sustainable development in these countries you need to have the skilled people on the ground, you need to to work with the local people." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This explains that the MYPOD Project is a unique collaboration project, that has an innovative approach in terms of productivity, as it seeks to train the technical staff in Yangon whereas the other partnerships focus on capacity improvement through collaboration with local unions. It also indicates that there is a lack of skilled labour in these countries, which can be an obstacle to obtain sustainable development. It indicates that the MYPOD Project has a very hands-on approach by addressing the core problem within the garment industry in Myanmar.

"... it is not about just, it is not about development, it is not just about donating money. It is actually about improving, for us to even be able to produce out of Myanmar. So you can say it has a very very clear business element." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This indicates that the purpose if these interventions is also to reach visible improvement of capacity, so that companies such as Bestseller can produce. Such a statement indicates that the project is intended to be mutually beneficial to both the Burmese partners and Danish partners.

"Uhmm and the idea is that we, after we have established the baseline in all project factories and know how to do these interventions which are interventions that goes for around 5 months in total." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"So the interventions that we do, as I told you initially they're made on one production line and the point is that we can use one production line as kind of the prototype and design a business case for the factories, showing them that if you do these improvements in your whole factory, you can actually improve the productivity by "this and this" percentage wise." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

The quote indicates that there is a lack of solid facts to convince the local factories in changing their ways. The purpose of the interventions done in the production line, is to be able to use the result as a prototype to design a business case for all the factories, in order to illustrate the actual improvements and use it as an argument, in order to convince them to change their way of working.

"One of the goal is of course that hopefully the factories, the concrete factories will take these suggestions and streamline them to the whole factory, because they can see the business case in this. And another goal is that we will have some data to give us, to show us that the business case is actually there so that we can use it as a valid argument to other factories that they should look into these improvements. Because that improved work environment and social dialogue will also improve the productivity. " - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This statement shows that the goal is that the factories apply the presented suggestions to their factories. Also, that DIEH acquire data that can help to create a general business case that the factories find useful to their environment and that can help improve the work environment and social dialogue simultaneously, in order to improve the productivity. This indicates that the three elements that the project stands on complement each other.

Capacity Building

"Yeah, capacity building in the country, because that is part of the 3F framework for for their international work. As far as I am aware." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

The quote indicates that the MYPOD project not only seeks to improve the garment sector in Myanmar, but also intends to have an impact on a national level, which is to improve the capacity building within the country.

Social Conditions

"Okay, we would generally say social labor compliance standard or the environment, because there's also environment chemical standard of the factories. Uhm, we can't, I mean the MYPOD project has been running for six months." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This proves that the MYPOD project focuses more on improving the labour conditions in the factories, rather than having a positive environmental impact. So, the project's sustainability focus concerns the social conditions within the sector, rather than the environmental harm.

Productivity Improvements

"And the productivity improvements are based on the methodology of lean productivity...So professors from Aalborg university have trained local professors from Yangon Technological university and they go to the factories each week to implement these improvements, and to..which will end up being kind of suggestions for the factories, that they can choose to implement in the factories after the MYPOD project has ended. " – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This indicates that lean methodology is mainly used to improve productivity. Also it shows the direct impact that Aalborg University has and the initiatives they have taken, in order to contribute to the improvements of the local factories, by training local professors.

"for example, from a trade union point of view you could say that improved productivity could damage the workers more than, like the working conditions more than improving them." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"So improved productivity would just make them able to take in more orders. So that's a typical critique from a trade union point of view, that just to improve productivity." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that improved productivity is complex, since what is perceived as improved productivity for one can be considered as aggravating the already existing bad working conditions.

Baseline Measurements

"From the baseline, we have measured the baseline and all the factories both in productivity, working environment and also just ended baseline in social dialogue, in June...And the social dialogue baseline was measured by 3F's local employee and our local project coordinator Nunu Hlaing. And, so we can say, we can see from the productivity

baseline that it is a pretty much in line with what we were expecting." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that local partners collaborate across sectors. It also indicates that various baseline measurements are made throughout the project in all factories to ensure that the expected progresses are met to reach the designed targets of the project.

"And on the social dialogue part, yeah it is also aligning our expectations pretty much. It is difficult to measure social dialogue in a factory, because in a country like Myanmar you have a huge respect for authorities and you also..." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This statement shows that there has been made some progress in regard to the social dialogue which are in accordance with the expectations that were set, although it is difficult to measure that in a factory. It also shows that having great respect for the authorities can be an obstacle within such a project, because it can make it complicated to measure social dialogue which indicates that there is an imbalance in the relationship.

Factory Involvement

"I think the fact that we're working with the partners that are involved in MYPOD enhances the engagement from the factories of course, because we have Bestseller involved. But we do also have a local factory involved that are very interested, because I have to say that all the factories except from one that is German, owned by a German. But the other factories that we have, that we are working with from Bestseller's supply chain they are Chinese owned. Then we also have one locally owned factory in the project, so that is not supplying Bestseller. So, but their incentive to participate is actually to improve the productivity and social dialogue, which is a wish that comes from within the factory." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

As expressed by DIEH, there is a strong involvement of the partners which enhances the engagement of the factories that are concerned. In particular, Bestseller's involvement in the project also influences its supply chain, which could indicate that they are doing it out of necessity to nurture their relationship to Bestseller, rather than of goodwill. Also, it indicates

that others participants' incentives to participate is to genuinely improve productivity and the social dialogue within their own factories.

Lean Trainings

"So, and that's also improved productivity, to increase the social dialogue. One of the places where you can really see that these things complement each other. And working conditions for example, that's also as I mentioned; sitting positions, access to water. One of the working conditions we're actually looking at is how much you damage your eyes when you sit and sow. And you see sometimes that they sit with a black fabrics on a black sowing machine which is very, very difficult for the eye to tell the things apart and you get more tired and the productivity goes down." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"And also that social dialogue contributes to the productivity. So, we believe that you actually need all three elements to actually see increased productivity and that they each support each other." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"But we do believe that also work environment and social dialogue is contributing to the productivity and also making it more sustainable, cause if you just do lean improvements the factory could just do more orders and the workers would just leave the factories like we see everywhere." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that working conditions and social dialogue also contribute to improving productivity. This also indicates that all three elements need to be present, in order to achieve increased productivity. Also, it indicates that including all three elements has a sustainable impact within the sector. The improvement initiative need to have an impact on all three elements to make a sustainable difference.

Sustainable Development

"In this project we are not really working with the planet, the environmental and empty questions. So sustainability is to secure economic and social sustainability." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This indicates that sustainability in this project regards ensuring economic and social development, rather than looking at the environmental impact.

"So it's not just a question of shopping around, but actually thinking of a long term development, whereas suppliers they develop their production in order to secure quality, delivery and so forth. But also then, that buyers are then committed to use the suppliers in a longer term." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This indicates that thinking long term is crucial in improving the conditions. It also indicates that it can lead to a positive impact in regard to the relationship between buyers and suppliers, so that they are committed to their collaboration on a long-term basis and that the quality and delivery of the production is ensured.

Company Involvement

"Yeah you could say that they are of course interested in protecting their brand and they have interest in showing that they are involved in sustainability and social sustainability as well and in that respect I think it's probably good for their brand that they are involved in a project like this." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

"But I don't think that it is a risk for the project as such." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This proves that companies associated with sustainability projects like the MYPOD can have a positive impact on the company's brand. By being tied to such a project, it is a way for the brands to improve their reputation.

Steering Group Meetings

"Yeah, we are having the regular steering group meetings, where we are exchanging views. There has been some preparatory seminars. There was one monday on discussing interventions and especially 3F interventions and then we are having like the local coordinator involved in most activities going on so she's well aware about what's going on

across the different partners. So I think we have reasonable high level of exchange of information and experience." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This indicates that the purpose of the regular steering group meetings is to exchange information and experience between the stakeholders within this project. Also it shows that the local stakeholders are included in the different activities, so that they are well informed about what is happening.

Guidelines

"What we are using are, you could say, the knowledge and manuals about lean and occupational health and safety. So from the literature also using some of the ILO literature we have some indications about what's good sitting postures and for instance, how much light do you need to do sewing operations and things like that. But otherwise the vast kind of CSR guidelines is not something we use because it's not, they are not getting so, so detailed that they say anything about the sewing line." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This quote proves that the CSR guidelines that have been elaborated is not so useful for this project, because it is not specific to the garment sector. However, knowledge and manuals regarding lean and occupational health and safety is of great asset to them.

5.3 Postcolonialism

State of Social Dialogue

"So for both employers' and workers' side it's a lot about getting the experience that you can actually talk about things and reach compromises and that takes a very long time to learn. I mean we have what a 100 years history here in Denmark." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This shows that the employers and workers in the Burmese garment sector are not used to confront the issues in the workplace and reach a mutual agreement. There is a fear of conflict, which indicates that there is a low level of social dialogue in the local factories.

"also here in Denmark we have a long tradition of dialogue and we don't... I mean we disagree but we do come to a table and sit down and try to solve issues before I mean that's also the biggest strike we just had or the big conflict we just had in Denmark... I mean it's not usual we normally try to solve it peacefully... but yes as labour market matures and becomes more dialogue based it's definitely a much more peaceful working environment and people are also more interested in staying in their jobs if they have proper conditions."
- Lea Worm, 3F

"Social dialogue is the level of communication between workers and management, workers, supervisor. How you're able to communicate across levels. Whereas in Denmark we have a very, very high level of social dialogue, actually at like a friend stage with our boss. And we don't have a limit as to what we say to our boss. It is also... the level of social dialogue is also measured on the ability to complain to your boss and how often your complain is, leads to a change. So, which we have a very high level of in Denmark, but very low level in Myanmar." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that it is much more common to have an open dialogue and try to solve the issues in Denmark, even though disagreements can occur. Also, these quotes indicate that the Burmese market is quite new and that the social dialogue and working conditions are problems that needs to be addressed to enable change in the sector. The comparisons made between Denmark and Myanmar emphasizes that there is a lack of communication between workers and superiors in general in Myanmar, which is an unusual thing in Denmark.

Power Relations

"So that's one thing but the other thing is also that just the MYPOD project is as the name says a project where we would work more in partnerships so you could say there's more things in a project like this that is decided from Denmark than what we would normally work with. We would have much... the partners would be more involved in the design of the cooperation than what is the case here." - Lea Worm, 3F.

The quote indicates that the Danish partners seem to be much more involved in the decision making rather than the Burmese partners even though the decisions affect them. Therefore, it indicates that there is an unequal distribution of power in the MYPOD project between the Danish stakeholders and the Burmese stakeholders.

"To be honest I think the main challenge...but the main challenge has actually been the cooperation with Danida I think who have been a lot more hands on than for example from our, from 3F's point of view, they have basically told us who our partners should be before we even have a chance to assess whether those partners are the right partners." - Lea Worm, 3F.

"I would also, to be honest prefer not to do this through the donors, because the framework for setting up this kind of partnership is so stringent on what they want. It has to fit into a box with Danida." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"Yeah, you could say from the Danish perspective we of course have the Danida as a funding agency, as a primary stakeholder." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

These quotes show that the donor agency is very much involved in the decision-making process and have the authority in determining what is acceptable or not in relations to the project. They have the upper hand. It also seems that decisions regarding the project are sort of predetermined, because it has to fit specific criterias that derive from the funding agency.

Decision-making process

"I mean the demand should be made locally. Just as we would always think it should be workers themselves coming with their claims what do they want in salary, what do they want in terms of transport to work or whatever instead of someone from outside... might out of a good heart... but it shouldn't be international NGOs coming and telling what is a good standard. I mean we're not the ones... just as we don't want someone from United States coming here and telling us, you and me as a worker, what should we do. I mean we would like to be able to set the standards ourselves." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This indicates that the local stakeholders are not included in the decision-making process and that it's the Danish stakeholders that set the standards for them without implicating them. This quote also shows that the Danish partners apply a double standard, because they are entitled to make decisions affecting them on their own, but this seems not to be the case for the Burmese partners, which is emphasized by 3F.

Conditions

"Working with two unions in the same sector at the same time can, that's our experience from other places as well, can be challenging and we think one of them is such a weak organisation that we almost think that it is a pity for them that they are involved in such a complex project. It would have been easier for them to just have a small partnership with us where they could evolve a bit more before they started being involved in such a project."
- Lea Worm, 3F.

"They don't have the resource for that. So you could say that some of the main reason for their poor outcome is simply because we're overrunning the poor country with our…" – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller.

These quotes indicate that there is a sense of superiority towards the local organization, mainly because they question their involvement in such a project, because they lack capacity. It indicates an imperialistic way of thinking. Although the Danish partners are aware of the lack of capabilities of the Burmese partners, it seems that they are not taken into consideration, especially when it comes to productivity.

"I think the main learnings for us at the moment is both these very practical issues in terms of language barriers and… and also working with two unions in the sense that one is very… uhm… very well trained because they have been in exile and the other one is more local and therefore very weak capacity and that gives some tensions between the two unions as well. The whole 'you stayed, you didn't' kind of… uhmm and then… I mean the first step I will say is that we don't know yet is this whole how well do they… are so small organisations able to also grasp these more complex issues of productivity-based salaries and so on that

I mean we are working with unions all over the world and have been doing that for many years and this is..." - Lea Worm, 3F.

This shows that there are some practical problems within the project such as language barriers and also that all stakeholders do not have the same capacity which indicates that it can create tensions in the collaboration. Furthermore, the quote indicates that there is a skeptical view on the local stakeholders.

"But what I observe is that Burmese partners will need to comply with standards required by foreign brands. For instance, in garment sector, local businesses are complaining that they need some time to meet international best practices especially labour rights compliance including decent wage etc, since they have constraints to match all those criteria." – Hnin, MCRB.

This quote shows that the foreign stakeholders set the terms for the collaboration, which is often a constraint for the local partners, because they have difficulties meeting the criterias that are imposed on them, because of their scarce resources.

"But, they experienced, one thing was that one person who was qualified to look into productivity he left SMART and then they have some resource problems so it ended up that they couldn't join." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This indicates that there is a high risk of imprevisibility due to the lack of resources.

Bargaining Power

"So we can say to them "it seems that you struggle with productivity, it seems that you struggle with having a proper workforce and place", so we don't get any products out or we get products out with a lot of failures, so that we have claims all the time. The factory needs to go back and redo a lot of the products, and of course that's a lot of money for the factory, a lot of money for us. It doesn't, in a business relationship, of course rule number one could be that you get products out that you can buy. So, we say to the factories "unless you know how to solve this, we have this solution that may suit you and that could be to

join MYPOD". So we try to offer this as a...well it is an offer to improve their practices." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

"But when we give these orders, we expect these factories to be up to a certain standard"- Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

These quotes indicate that Bestseller has bargaining power over the factories, and that the collaboration with a company as Bestseller is an incentive for joining the MYPOD. It seems that they expect the local partners to have a certain standard even though they struggle with meeting the requirements. It appears that there is no consideration of the lack of resource of the local partners.

Exit Strategy

"I'm not sure what the plan is, but the plan is that they go and build their own capacity in supporting the local garment industry in productivity improvements. But how they're gonna do that practically I don't know. " – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This indicates that there is no predetermined "exit strategy" when the project is done. It seems that the Danish partners have not thought through how the local partners are going to continue with the productivity improvements once the project has been terminated, which could lead to a setback for the local partners.

Imperialistic mentality

"Part of the strategy is to go and really push these countries in a direction where you can say that they are... uhm how to say this, respecting you can say, respectful of human rights in the way you're supposed to be as a state. Whether or not that is actually our job to do, you can question. But, this is what industries have to do these days." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This implies that the standard is set by western countries in relation to what characterizes a "good" state. Also, it indicates that there is a tendency to impose certain things on other

countries, in places where "weak" ruling is present. It also indicates that it is common nowadays for industries to take the role of the state.

"To keep up a certain standard to make sure that the factories are trained and everything in between. So there's a lot of pressure on the supplier to take their responsibility. I think we have done too much work for the suppliers, you can say. And which we shouldn't basically. But we're there to support and what we can do is say that we reward you by giving you orders." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This shows that the local suppliers are pressured into keeping a certain standard. It appears that there is no understanding of the other partner's struggle in meeting the required standard, which indicates a lack of communication between the partners, but also a lack of knowledge sharing in the collaboration. It also indicates that Bestseller uses their orders as an incentive for the local suppliers to comply with their standard, which shows that they have bargaining power over the local factories.

"We will come out and see for ourselves sometimes, and we will support, for instance with MYPOD if you have any problems, but the tendency is that we really need to stop just auditing factories, but really look into the sustainable improvements." – Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

This shows that there is a tendency to audit the factories, rather than looking in depth into the improvements. Moreover, it indicates that there is a certain degree of distrust between the western and non-western stakeholders.

" One of the good things from a Danish point of view is that we actually stick more or less to the time plan so far. Which is not even maybe expected, but it's not even what to expect maybe that you would stick to the time schedule." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This quote indicates that the Danish stakeholders have a preconceived opinion about the local partners.

Miscommunication

"But we do think that we have a pretty clear picture from the baseline study, but there is some miscommunication in the factories between workers and management which we can identify just from seeing that they are saying different things about the same things. So in that way we can see that there is some miscommunication, and so, but of course we also know which kind of biases can be with their answers to the questions we ask them for measuring social dialogue." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This proves that there are miscommunications between the Danish stakeholders and the local workers. Between workers and management however, miscommunication is also common. Moreover, it indicates the level of social dialogue, which is great problem. But also, the tensions that there is between Danish partners and local partners because they view the Danish partners as some sort of authority, they are not prone to be completely honest with them.

"Some of them are very difficult to just reach by telephone or by email or something like that, but if Bestseller contacts them it is very easy for Bestseller, because they of course have another interest than maybe being involved with the MYPOD project. They want to be involved, because maybe Bestseller says that they should be involved as well" – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that there is a problem with the communication between the Danish stakeholders and the local factories. Moreover, it also shows that they have a different incentive for being involved in the MYPOD project.

Stakeholder Incentives

"Yeah, well it's of course challenging that we...but, there are always the different....like we represent the different incentives. But I think that all of us are very aware of each other's incentives. So we know that every time a new dilemma comes up, of course 3F thinks about the security of the workers and the unions and the WCCs and the factories etc." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This quote indicates that there is a lack of knowledge about the local stakeholders' incentives. They are more attentive to the Danish stakeholder's incentives rather than the local stakeholders' incentives. They indicate that the Danish partners' incentives also apply to the local partners, which is not necessarily the case.

Opportunistic Behaviour

"And I think that in this project, between the Danish partners, there is a great understanding of the each other's different interests. And I think that we are all trying to see how we can meet each other's interests." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that the Danish partners are more focused on meeting each other's interests and that they lack knowledge about the Burmese partners' interest. The Danish partners' needs are put first rather than the local needs, which is paradoxical when bearing in mind that the main goal of the project is to improve the productivity, working conditions and social dialogue within the garment sector in Myanmar. As such, there appears to be a conflict of interest within this project.

"If things happen in Myanmar would, either the political situation with more military rule or Rohingya situation or some kind of labour unrest it may have caused, then it raise the question for Bestseller "Will they want to continue collaboration with Myanmar?" But, that would also be the case for us if we had labour unrest in the companies we are collaborating with the management and government they are mistreating the workers, it would have also been difficult for us to continue the collaboration." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This shows that the criteria of the Danish partners are greatly prioritized. They are willing to stop the collaboration in Myanmar if there is some unrest in the country.

Cultural Barriers

"There are some, there are some very specific coordination challenges that we have spent a lot of time in the steering group talking about, so if we contact the factories and they

haven't replied within five days than Bestseller will contact them etc etc. So we have all these different systems for trying to... But it is still very difficult to... especially the coordination on ground in Myanmar is very difficult, because the communication is so different than what we're used to in Denmark. " – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"I think, because I distinguish between the Danish collaboration and also with the local partners, because I think that you can kind of see the Danish steering group as maybe one organ and then we have also the local partners that we are all really trying collaborate with. And I think that, if I should just go a step back, that one of the challenges from the partnership is mostly working with local partners because it is such a different environment and different culture. And we have some obstacles that you wouldn't see in Denmark." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"the kind of respect for authorities, it can also be a big issue for the MYPOD project, because when we go to the local university as Danish professors and Danish organizations they automatically see us as authorities or kind of ranked differently. Also, because of the custom of politeness to your guests. So that means also that sometimes when we go to the university and try to talk to them about the challenges and experiences, they say that everything is fine and that they don't experience any challenges and that they're very happy to be involved. And the minute after we leave and arrive in Denmark they would call Nunu our local coordinator and say "this and this and this is wrong" – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

These quotes show that there are some cultural barriers between the Danish and Burmese stakeholders which create obstacles. These cultural barriers affect the coordination on the ground, as well as the communication between the Danish partners and local partners. These quotes express the kinds of issues that the Danish partners are experiencing when collaborating with the local partners, which they are not used to from back home. It seems that the Danish partners have difficulties conforming to the cultural norms in Myanmar which they view as challenging for the project. There appears to be a lack of understanding on the local norms.

"Yeah I think so. As we can see that the suppliers are very "ad hoc" oriented trying to solve problems here and nu, now trying to get the next orders if we did not have a large buyer it would be more difficult to get them involved." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This shows that the Danish and local partners have different ways of getting things done, which can be a constraint for the other partner. It also indicates that they have had difficulties convincing the local factories to join the MYPOD project. Without the large buyers they would have been less likely to join.

Implementation of knowledge

" So what we do is, that we train local professors from a local university, Yangon Technological University. And also we train employers from two local trade unions, in these particularly, particular methodologies that we use for this project. Uhmm and the idea is that we, after we have established the baseline in all project factories and know how to do these interventions which are interventions that goes for around 5 months in total."
– Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"So professors from Aalborg university have trained local professors from Yangon Technological university and they go to the factories each week to implement these improvements, and to..which will end up being kind of suggestions for the factories, that they can choose to implement in the factories after the MYPOD project has ended." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

These quotes show that it is western knowledge and know-how that is being implemented in a non-western country. The local professors are trained in specific methodologies elected by the Danish partners to be presented as suggestions as possible implementations for the improvements of the local factories. This indicates that there is a top-down approach in managing and doing things.

Intrusive Behaviour

"Because that the factories are very busy, and they are very...how can you say, they can't really take much more in, so you will probably not get many factories to participate in a project like this by themselves or without anything or anyone pushing them or giving them the incentives to be involved." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

This shows that the local factories are reluctant to participate in the MYPOD project. The factories are already overburdened with tasks; however, the Danish partners do not take it into consideration and enforce the project on them. This indicates that the Danish partners have an intrusive behaviour towards the local partners. It also shows an imbalance of power, because they can allow themselves to impose such a big project on them without them participating voluntarily.

"We do that to see how much we can increase the productivity and to do the prototyping and present to the factories that this is just from one production line. But after that it is up for the factories if they actually want to keep working with the lean productivity and the work environment productivity, and the work environment improvements and the social dialogue improvements. If they want to continue that work." – Julie Bundgaard, DIEH.

This shows that the Danish partners are trying to impose a long-term solution on the factories. They propose all these solutions to them, although they were not really involved in the decision-making process in the initial phase.

Local Perspective

"This is just my perspectives and assumption. Some protectionists might be worried, but some might see this as an opportunity for partnering and transferring good practice and technology." – Hnin, MCRB.

This indicates that some Burmese business actors are sceptic about the foreign business actors' intentions in Myanmar, whereas other view it as a way of gaining more know-how and access to technology.

Void

"In doing that, we are promoting to get workers involved, but that is obviously not so, so easy and no tradition for getting workers involved, they have no experience in how to get themselves involved, how to raise voice if they are sitting in a team with managers, they normally wouldn't say anything." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This indicates that the local partners lack experience and are not used to express their opinions. It is much more common to have a formal relationship to a superior in the working space, whereas the opposite is more common in Denmark. This shows the level of respect that they have for "authority", because there is no culture of raising voice.

Preconceptions

"So especially that part is not particularly, but we have also problems that some of the companies they are lacking competence in industrial engineering. They don't know how to analyze a production line and then what to do with this analysis. They are making some very basic measurements of pieces, per hour, per day." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

"They don't have any qualified people to put into the team, and things like that." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

These quotes show that the Danish partners are sceptical about the local partners' capabilities. They do not think that they are competent enough to do a proper analysis of the production line which is required to gain useful data. Aalborg criticizes the local partners' competences, by viewing their measurements as insignificant.

"The main challenge is that it's difficult to mobilize the sufficient internal resources in the companies. They're lacking qualifications, they have a very much "ad hoc"-oriented approach which makes it difficult to make, to do planning. Some of the companies' management they have, due to this ad hoc approach, not so much committed to the process of more systematically working with improvements." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This shows that the local partners do not have sufficient resources which makes the

improvement process the more difficult. Also, it shows that the Danish partners are doubtful of the local approach when it comes to working with improvements, they do not acknowledge it as a proper way of working with improvements. It appears that the Danish partners are not flexible and willing to change their method approach, which shows that they lack adaptability.

Knowledge Sharing

"We have done some basic training of what we call "The operational teams" that is the teams going to make improvements." – Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

This indicates that there is a restriction of knowledge sharing between Danish and local partners. The fact that they are only giving basic training shows that they do not have access to all know how. This way the local partners are kind of constrained in regard to developing their capabilities.

Lack of Coordination

"But, but it can also be difficult especially planning with the companies, because we try to make plans and then some of the companies they are not ready and then we changed the plans and then it may run into..if some of the plans are changed then it may be difficult for our staff to travel at the time. Which is then fitting the company or we are collaborating with two or three or four companies and then we are missing some of the companies, because they were not really ready and then we are going to find another time to do that."
– Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

"Yeah, it's delayed so far. It's difficult to say right now..three, four months, something like that." - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

These quotes show that there is lack of coordination between the Danish and local stakeholders and that the communication between them is not optimal. There appears to be unpredictable changes on the local ground which, hinders the planning to go as expected.

5.4 Collaboration

Different roles

"Our role in this project is that we are the project managers. So, what we do, is that we coordinate all the different parts of the project, so we support all the Danish partners in coordinating. There's a lot of just administrative coordinating...just when is anyone going to the factories? Are the factories aware of that we're coming? What do the factories need to prepare? What do the local university need to prepare?" - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

As mentioned by project manager at DIEH Julie Bundgaard DIEH assumes a leading and coordinating role. As such, DIEH's role is quite different to those of 3F, Aalborg University, and Bestseller since these each have their own equivalent counterpart in the country with local trade unions, universities, and companies. Instead, apart from coordinating DIEH seems to be involved a little everywhere and have a larger degree of responsibility for the overall success of the project.

"we represent the different incentives. But I think that all of us are very aware of each other's incentives" - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"between the Danish project partners a great respect for each other's' different contribution to the project." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

"between the Danish partners, there is a great understanding of the each other's different interests. And I think that we are all trying to see how we can meet each other's interests." - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

These different quotes show the Danish partners' ability to work together and have a great sense of each other's goals, at least from DIEH's perspective. That this comes from DIEH's perspective means a lot since their coordinating role allows them to feel the effectiveness of the teamwork. If they then experience a "great respect for each other's contributions" and "a great understanding of each other's different interests", there is at least some positive dynamics of the teamwork between the Danish partners.

"You have all of these interests and skills and knowledge and experience that all in all contribute to each other", says Julie Bundgaard, DIEH about the Danish partners. This shows that at least DIEH is rather satisfied by the level of the capabilities and knowledge that the Danish partners can gather all together.

About the local partners "we know that many factory owners are probably very greedy, that's why we see all these issues with the working environment and the factories", says Julie Bundgaard from DIEH. Naturally, "issues with working environment and the factories" show that the local factories are not up to the level of what the western actor expects from a factory regarding working environment and the factories in general. That from DIEH's point of view "the factory owners are probably very greedy" also displays a level of distrust and a difference in how the factory owners engage in teamwork with the other actors in the project. DIEH's employee expresses a feeling that the Danish partners engage in the teamwork with a respect for each other and an acknowledgement of each other's goals. This quote therefore suggests that this is not the case with the local factory owners.

Danida

"there's more things in a project like this that is decided from Denmark than what we would normally work with. We would have much... the partners would be more involved in the design of the cooperation than what is the case here." - Lea Worm, 3F

"I would also, to be honest prefer not to do this through the donors, because the framework for setting up this kind of partnership is so stringent on what they want. It has to fit into a box with Danida." - Maria Kim Lassen, BESTSELLER

"it is also very limited how much we can change the project proposal as it looks like, the one that has been approved by Danida and everything" - Julie Bundgaard, DIEH

Here we see a heavy influence from outside the actual partnership previously described as only 3F, DIEH, Aalborg University and Bestseller. Danida has a large say in the way the Danish partners must act and has been very hands-on involved so far and chosen the local partners for the Danish partners. Apparently, this has come as a surprise for some of the Danish partners as they express certain degree of surprise to see themselves being forced to

live up to Danida's demands. Especially the donor role seems to be expected as incompatible with such a hands-on approach. Danida thus seems to be restricting the partnership's flexibility and hindering the possibility to make changes for the better and let the partnership evolve naturally in response to its surroundings. As a result, some interviewees suggest a wish to have engaged in the partnership without a donor like Danida and probably would not do that again.

Additionally, the fact that there is such a donor with strict demands for the partnership further interferes with the power balance amongst the partners. Although the donor in this case aims to include a weaker local partner, very likely for a good cause, it is causing division between two local actors involved in the project. To some extent, how great is another question, the interference from the donor is creating unnecessary division in the trade union movement and thus to some degree counteracts some of the efforts made by e.g. 3F to support capacity building in the Burmese trade union movement.

Danish partners and local partners

"*Working with two unions in the same sector at the same time can, that's our experience from other places as well, can be challenging and we think one of them is such a weak organisation that we almost think that it is a pity for them that they are involved in such a complex project. It would have been easier for them to just have a small partnership with us where they could evolve a bit more before they started being involved in such a project.*"
- Lea Worm, 3F

"*one [union] is very [...] very well trained because they have been in exile and the other one is more local and therefore very weak capacity and that gives some tensions between the two unions as well.*" "*The whole 'you stayed, you didn't' kind of.*" - Lea Worm, 3F

These two quotes are clear signs that there are imbalances in knowledge and capabilities and that in this case it is a Burmese partner that is very weak compared to another Burmese partner. There is also a clear division amongst the local partners and they do not seem to be working together very well. That fact that the one trade union has been abroad has

apparently strengthened them. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to determine the reasons for the division between the trade unions, but fact is that there is one.

The considerably weaker trade union can be a result of the regime's treatment of its trade unions, could be that they become stronger in the west or perhaps the reason is a mix of the two. Either way, this is an example of a developing country organisation being a lot weaker than not only its completely Western peers but also other weaker than another local organisation that had been exiled. It also suggests that there is a core of actors in the partnership that work together well, primarily the Danish ones. Outside of the core, or the group of Danish actors, there are ad-hoc relations to individual and divided local actors. It shows that there is a group of Danish partners that all know each other very well from previous collaboration and each partner has then chosen their local partner actor except for 3F. This way, the Danish partners are then in some way placed in the centre of the network each reaching out to different actors that are not interlinked.

As Lea Worm from 3F asks: "are so small organisations able to also grasp these more complex issues of productivity-based salaries and so on?" This shows very little faith in the local partners from a Danish partner's point of view. It hints that at least one of the partners takes a superior stance towards its local peers and assumes higher levels of capabilities, knowledge and power. Regardless of the level of truth to the differences in capabilities, knowledge and power there is a difference between the Western, in this case Danish, and the local developing country, in this case Burmese, organisations.

5.5 Operations

The different roles

"our role is very much to ensure that the local trade unions get involved at the factory level, so they can organise workers, they can educate workers in terms of how would they uhm both in terms of educating workers in Myanmar which is a very young industrial sector you can say on basically to be good industrial workers…" - Lea Worm, 3F

"I mean it's quite complex issues that we ask very young industrial workers to start with so… so the starting point I would also say is a challenge there." - Lea Worm, 3F

"we more or less have to start from scratch everywhere." - Lea Worm, 3F

"that we together with the trade unions will make an assessment of what kind of training should be done and then it's the trade unions who have to go and train on the work sites. So not us but the trade unions" - Lea Worm, 3F

These insights in the day-to-day operations show how 3F conduct their operations. A focus of their work seems to be capacity building in trade unions meaning that they train them in how to operate by making the local trade unions get involved. This way the local trade unions can improve their knowledge and gain important experiences. A likely outcome of this training is then stronger local trade unions. However, this seems to be an huge task, since they "more or less have to start from scratch everywhere". This also shows both that there is a lot of room for improvement and it is very likely that some will be made but it also shows that a lot of work is necessary. It thus unsure to which degree 3F can make a difference and improve the trade unions' capabilities.

"for us the reason we did this is because we had a very very practical challenge in the factories in the market that we needed to solve and we saw this as an opportunity to really address something that is very specific for us." - Maria Kim Lassen, BESTSELLER

This illustrates the problem for Bestseller that they want to solve. There have been problems with the productivity which has caused them to join the MYPOD project. The challenge has been that the production lines have been inefficient. To solve this problem the involved employees at Aalborg University state that "*we are using primarily lean methodologies. We use that to analyse and understand the production process*" (Aalborg University). The focus is thus the lean training meaning that when they enter the factories they look at the production line to find places for optimizations and improvement. Additionally, the Aalborg University representative states that "what we are using are, you could say, the knowledge and manuals about lean and occupational health and safety. So, from the literature also using some of the ILO literature we have some indications about what's good sitting postures and for instance, how much light do you need to do sewing operations and things like that" (Aalborg University). Another objective is thus also to improve the working conditions and

more specifically the sitting posture, lighting and occupational health and safety in general. Therefore, this increase in productivity is tightly linked to an improvement of working conditions in the factories. "Professors from Aalborg university have trained local professors from Yangon Technological university and they go to the factories each week to implement these improvements" (DIEH).

Similarly, the representative at DIEH states that *"we train local professors from a local university, Yangon Technological University. And also we train employers from two local trade unions, in these particularly, particular methodologies that we use for this project"* (DIEH). This means that not only the trade union 3F focuses on local capacity building in the MYPOD operations but also Aalborg University. In this case it is capacity building in the local university that is a main target.

5.6 Establishment of Partnership

Facilitating a dialogue

"So it can be the trade unions themselves that ask us for assistance in terms of contacting the brand and say 'we have heard ABC'. It can also be brands that contact us and say 'we have this factory that supply - whatever - to us and we have heard about this case, is this something you know something about?' and then it would often be to... we would not mediate, that's not our job but we would be happy to facilitate a dialogue between the supplier, the company, the trade union and also help the trade union prepare." - Lea Worm, 3F

The Danish union 3F has the main role of facilitating the dialogue among different actors involved in the textile sector. Two different contacts take place based on different purposes: local trade unions reach out to 3F in order to get advice and knowledge on how to face particular situations, and brands to help them cope with problems at the factory level. In general, it can be said that the main role of 3F is to assess and evaluate different cases from which potential partnerships can arise. The first aspect highlights the youth of local unions and their incapacity to cope with problems that might occur in the factories, in terms of working conditions.

"we would not mediate, that's not our job but we would be happy to facilitate a dialogue between the supplier, the company, the trade union and also help the trade union prepare."
- Lea Worm, 3F

This quote defines properly the role of 3F within the formation of the partnership. It underlines the function of 3F as a dialogue facilitator among the main subjects within the garment industry, namely international brands, local trade unions and local factories. In doing so, 3F engages actors to take part in the MYPOD project

Local partnerships

"we have local partners involved - or hopefully we will have local partners involved. So the social dialogue component is a big thing" - Lea Worm, 3F

This indicates the importance of having local actors directly involved in the project. In fact, this represents a key aspect in the creation and development of social dialogue. Local trade unions are those that interact with the employers and their employees, so they carry on the social dialogue within the factories. From a 3F's perspective the partnership with local unions is probably the most important point of the project, since, indeed, it is what promotes the social dialogue element.

"We are enter in into two partnerships with them there at the same time. Both the MYPOD project but also a general partnership and that can create some misunderstanding" - Lea Worm, 3F

Partnerships are not created only within and for the MYPOD project but also in general. In other words, 3F is trying to establish other partnerships with local actors beyond the borders of the MYPOD project. This aspect emphasizes the importance of promoting the value of social dialogue as much as possible through the industries.

"right now, as you probably know we have the first batch of factories and then when we have gone through the whole process with them we will start a second batch towards the

end of the year and hopefully we can show a more proper business case for the second batch so they can actually see that it also works. Right now, it's a lot about explaining and seeing as you go so getting all the local partners properly on board is one of the main challenges. And the other is that you start from a very low starting point." - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

These quotes show how partnerships with local factories are established. One of the goals of the MSI is to expand the partnership to get knowledge and experience to learn from and that can be shared.

"Yeah you can say it evolved from the network we were kind of establishing. We have been working on a Bangladesh project in the garment industry when the MYPOD project started or when the application was written for two-two half year. Uhm at... during that project we started to have contact with DIEH and one year before so we decided to be member of DIEH because we saw benefit of being part of that network" - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University

These quotes show how parts of the network within the partnerships were established during the project in Bangladesh. There are clear examples of that previous partnership still being important to their current relationships. Here the importance of networking and the consciousness of benefits and advantages to keep on collaborating with the same partners is remarked.

"but when anyone in Denmark who wants to do a program on, in Developing countries in textile they have, they ask Bestseller, because we're the only ones that really have the muscles to move anything in these countries." - Maria Kim Lassen, Bestseller

Bestseller remarks the importance to have sufficient resources and power to operate in similar contexts and so try change things. This explains the reason why it is difficult for SMEs to engage in business operations within the textile sector in Myanmar.

Chapter 6: The Discussion

6.1 Multi-stakeholder initiatives

Literature on multi-stakeholder initiatives presents a somewhat unanimous view on what a stakeholder is. However, when it comes to how stakeholders relate to one another and interact with each other there are several ways of organising such views. Some suggest an approach to stakeholders where they are defined as stakeholders by their direct relation to a focal organisation, e.g. Mitchell et al. (1997). In this view stakeholders are peripheral actors related to the central focal organisation. Other scholars suggest an approach where stakeholders are treated as a network where relationships are not centred around one single actor but rather something shared between the different types of stakeholders as well. In this view the different actors thus have stakes in each other orchestrated in a complicated tightly knit network (Kuhn & Shriver, 1992).

Similarly, the approach to interacting with stakeholders is also discussed in various publications. In these publications, the stances vary considerably with some viewing the focal organisation, in business literature often the company, as having a need to manage stakeholders and exercise control over them. This perspective thus assumes that stakeholders pose a risk to the focal organisation through their claims and therefore they should be controlled and managed. Central in this group of scholars are Donaldson & Preston (1995). Others, such as Banerjee (2008), introduce a rather critical perspective to this approach since this becomes rather problematic in a developing country setting. Western country private sector actors exercising control of local stakeholders is in this approach seen as undermining local values (Banerjee, 2008).

The findings related to the stakeholder literature in this thesis are plenty. The way the MYPOD project is organised is very different to the models subjected to research in the available literature. The MYPOD project is evidently centred around the four Danish partners backed by the Danish donor agency Danida. In that sense, the four different actors to some degree constitute the centre of the multi-stakeholder initiative.

All the interviewees indicated a high degree of trust amongst the Danish partners and declared a high level of satisfaction with the collaboration with their Danish peers. Organised by DIEH and through regular steering group meetings with the participation of all the Danish partners, the cluster of Danish participating can in a way be viewed as a single

unit in the MYPOD project. The Danish partners have also previously been in engaged in a project together and therefore know each other quite well already. Naturally, the different Danish partners are responsible for different aspects of the project, but the effective collaboration means that they can be viewed as one actor and the individual partners as merely different instruments or limbs. A lot of the decisions about the project are thus taken in Denmark

One aspect of the Danish collaboration that needs attention is the role of the donor agency Danida. Danida is dictating terms from Denmark even though it is in some of the Danish partners' interests to maintain some flexibility and reach certain decisions during the project's lifespan. This is also the case when it comes to more practical matters e.g. choosing which local trade unions to work with. Deciding these things from Denmark and not on the ground in Myanmar in collaboration with the local Burmese partners further enhances the decision power imbalances. Most of that decision power is placed in the hands of the Danish partners and Danida. From a political-economy perspective as introduced by Cheyns & Riisgaard (2014) this can be explained by the financial, political, and knowledge resources which stronger actors can make use of to exercise control over other types of actors in favour of their own interests. It is evident that the Danish partners do in fact possess such resources especially in terms of knowledge and experiences as they have already worked together on a similar project. The Danish trade union 3F is also a product of a long and strong tradition of trade movements in Denmark. Similarly, Aalborg University are regarded as experts in the lean methodology and conduct trainings of their Burmese peers and as such also as having larger capabilities in terms of knowledge than their Burmese counterparts. BESTSELLER is a buyer company and therefore also has bargaining power over the local Burmese suppliers which further shifts the power balances in the Danish partners' favour. Additionally, the Danish partners are receiving funding from Danida which is also considered financially empowering.

Accordingly, some of the local partners participating in this project are viewed as inferior to their Danish counterparts in terms of capabilities, e.g. one of the two local trade unions. This trade union is considered a lot weaker than the other since the trade union movement only recently was legalised, and they therefore have not yet built up capabilities enabling them to participate on the same level as the other trade union. The other trade union, the stronger one, has been in exile for years and has only recently returned to the country. During the time in exile, it underwent a lot of capacity training and is now a very

well-functioning trade union that is easy for 3F, the Danish trade union, to cooperate with. However, an important thing to consider is whether the time in exile means that it may not be considered entirely Burmese anymore but rather an entity influenced a lot by Western ideals. This however is beyond the scope of this project. The fact remains that this weaker trade union is only part of the MYPOD project due to Danida's demands. A more thorough analysis of the individual financial capabilities in the partnerships is also beyond the scope of this thesis. In terms of the political power the findings show that the Burmese government prioritises a strengthening of employer organisations rather than trade unions which is the opposite goal of the MYPOD project. The local trade unions are thus not politically prioritised by the local government whereas the Danish trade union 3F is a strong institution and is receiving funds from Danida, a government-run donor agency. Similarly, the local university needs approvals from ministries whenever they need to participate in such projects whereas Aalborg University is a self-governing entity. It is therefore evident that there are also certain limitations of political support to the local Burmese partners. Although an examination of political power amongst the local Burmese partners would be relevant to this topic it is beyond the scope of this thesis. In accordance with Cheyns & Riisgaard's (2014) arguments, the findings in this thesis categorise the local partners as weak on all examined types of power i.e. financial, political and experience (see figure).

Figure 4: The Different Partners in Relation to Cheyns & Riisgaard's (2014) Power Types
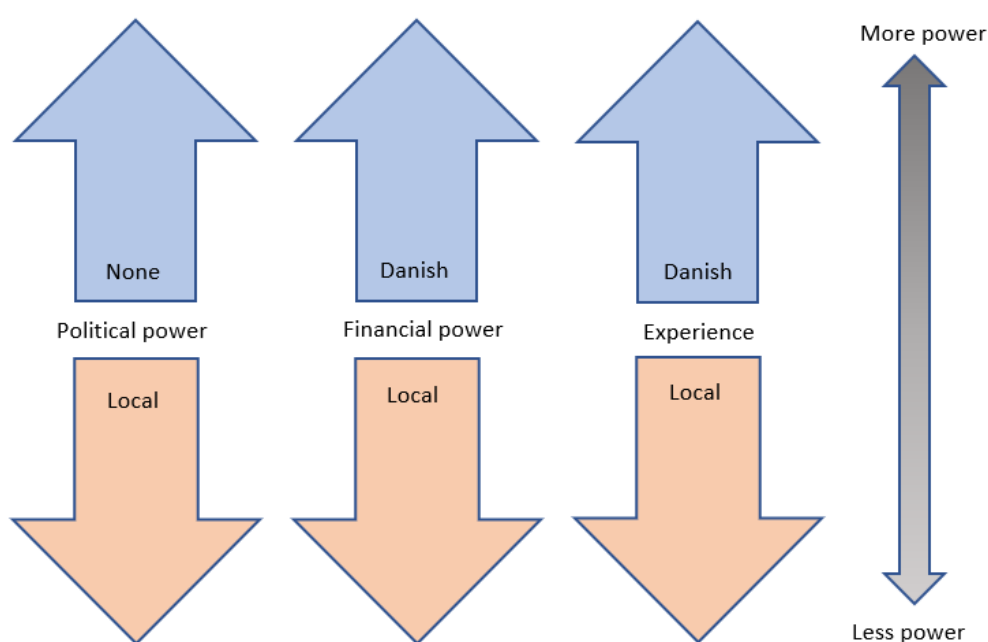
There are thus definitely imbalances in power and capabilities similar to those types put forward by Cheyns & Riisgaard (2014). All relevant findings in this thesis suggest power imbalances in favour of the Danish cluster of partners. It is therefore the case that the Danish cluster of partners, within the scope of Danida's wishes, shape the MYPOD project according to their own interests.

Although Bäckstrand (2006) notes the importance of incorporating government actors for legitimacy purposes, Alamgir & Banerjee (2018) argue that it is in developing country governments' interest to keep power imbalances in place. This is then supposed to keep the country attractive to source from in global garment value chains. In the MYPOD project however, the only government entity part of the project is the YTU conducting lean training at the factory level. Ministries and other government bodies are therefore not involved. Not involving factory workers and trying to inform them of their rights is a main point of criticism of two of the most recent and well-known MSIs: The Accord and the Alliance (Donaghey & Reinicke, 2018). By including factory level worker involvement, the MYPOD project addresses these shortcomings and presents a solution for more inclusive worker representation.

6.2 Postcolonialism

Reviewing the literature of postcolonialism has shed light on the features of colonialism being present in today's societies through distinctive subjects. An Acknowledged theorist that generally comes into sight when discussing postcolonial theory, is Said (1978) and his argument of 'orientalism' being a Western construction. Other relevant approaches on postcolonialism are taken from a cultural and managerial standpoint. In this context, scholars such as Drebes (2016) argue that managers within organizations can exert a certain power over other stakeholders, because they act in a certain way. In correlation to Corporate Social Responsibility, scholars from this literature argue that CSR strategies are merely another form of practicing control over a group of people.

The findings on postcolonialism presented in the previous sections predominantly supports the arguments of the postcolonial theory. When analysing the MYPOD project, from a postcolonial perspective, certain arguments that the theory holds are visible in such a multi-stakeholder initiative. One notion of the postcolonial theory that is essential to look

at in the business case, is that of the otherness by Bhabha (2012). He argues that misconceived presumptions about the "others" contribute to the creation of stereotypes. The findings show that there is an asymmetrical understanding of the "other" which needs to be addressed drastically. This view contributes to stereotypes and ignorance. Moreover, it creates a gap between the "self" and the "others", which generates an attitude of superiority towards the "other". Said (1978) emphasizes the prevalent imbalance of power between the Western and non-Western. This is reflected in the MYPOD project, in the sense that there is an asymmetrical power between the Danish partners and the Burmese partners. The Danish partners have shown a sense of superiority towards the local partners. Moreover, they have demonstrated ignorant and superior views, due to their preconceived opinions about the Burmese partners and lack of understanding of the others. For instance, this can be seen in the way they belittle the local organizations in the following statement, "Working with two unions in the same sector at the same time can, that's our experience from other places as well, can be challenging and we think one of them is such a weak organisation that we almost think that it is a pity for them that they are involved in such a complex project. It would have been easier for them to just have a small partnership with us where they could evolve a bit more before they started being involved in such a project." (L. Worm, August 10, 2018).

The partnership has proven to lack proper communication between the Danish and local partners. The local partners have no part in the decision-making process and the standards that they are meant to adhere have been defined by the Danish stakeholders. No local stakeholder has been consulted in the decisions made regarding the project. In that sense, it can be argued that they have constructed their own understanding of the local stakeholders, without fully understanding them. From a postcolonial view, it can be argued that the MYPOD project has features of asymmetrical power. The local stakeholders are not consulted when taking decisions. There is a void of voice regarding the Burmese partners. Thus, the findings indicate that the current state of the project in Myanmar supports the postcolonial statement that there is an imbalance of power between the West and non-West. Applying the postcolonial theory to our findings, has enabled us to create an understanding on one hand, of the relationship between the Danish and Burmese partners, and on the other hand, the interrelationship of the Danish stakeholders. Thus, it can be concluded that the MSI shows traits of asymmetrical power within the partnership, that stems from the explicit sense of superiority of the Danish partners, based on their lack of understanding of the local

partners. This derives, mainly from the poor communication between them, which resulted in the exclusion of the local stakeholders regarding the decision-making process.

In extension to the previous paragraph, it can be discussed the concept of culture in a multi-stakeholder initiative such as the MYPOD project. Bhabha (2012) argues that culture is an important concept that is crucial when investigating the relationship between Western and non-Western. In that sense it helps to differentiate the identity of oneself and that of the "other". In this context, the findings have proven to shed light on this aspect. It seems that there are some cultural barriers present in the collaboration between the Danish partners and the local partners which generates obstacles. This affects the communication among them, but also the planification on the ground. This lack of understanding of the cultural differences seems to be a great problem because it creates tensions in the collaboration, but also a sense of superiority towards the local organizations. Such scepticism toward their collaborating partners also contributes to the determination of the "self" identify and that of the others.

In relation to the concept of culture, Bhabha (2012) also mentions the term 'mimicry' as a reaction to the oppressive authority. Thus, enacting an exaggeration of the other's language, culture, ideas etc. as a form of undermining their superiority. The MYPOD project seems to oppose this line of thought, as the local partners are not opposing the western superiority which can occur through mimicry. Instead, they seem to accept this intrusive behaviour of the Danish partners, because of their respect to authority, but also because the incentives they gain from the partnership. Thus, the local partners can be considered pragmatic stakeholders.

In terms of "hybridity" of culture, this notion can be rejected because of the practical problems that have been identified, specifically due to the cultural differences. The findings indicate the comparisons made to the Danish culture as a leading example. They do not seem to acknowledge each other's differences as positive or seek to fully understand the differences. Instead, negative connotations are made to these differences. However,the MYPOD project seeks to make the local partners integrate values of their own, such as a higher level of social dialogue. Considering the project's context, one could argue that 'mimicry' is taking place if new levels of social dialogue are obtained. However, in accordance with Prasad's (2003) argument as well as the arguments found in MSI literature (Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014; Fransen & Kolk, 2007; Donaghey & Reinicke, 2018 amongst others) and the collected data, this thesis shows that this derives from unequal power

relationship present in the partnership. From the findings that indicates that unequal power seems to be prevailing in the MYPOD project between the partners, it can be argued that 'mimicry' by the local partners is currently non-existent. Thus, there is no form of resistance from the local partners towards this superior and ignorant behaviour that the Danish stakeholders are exerting in the partnership.

Another fundamental aspect of the postcolonial theory is CSR, which emphasizes the need for a re-evaluation of the concept. There are major claims that oppose the methods of measurements and management of Western CSR. In accordance with Banerjee's (2008) view, the current CSR does not extensively improve the conditions of the recipient, because insufficient resources are used to target the marginalized group. Instead, it is mostly used as a competitive strategy, whose efficiency can be debated due to its level of imitability. Moreover, Harvey (2006) argues that there are four prevailing preconditions that undermine the CSR strategies.

Although the MYPOD project is a MSI, it can be argued that it addresses issues like the ones the CSR approach intends to solve. Accordingly, the findings indicate that most of the stated preconditions by Harvey (2006) are present within the Burmese context. One major pre-existing condition that has been identified are the bad working conditions in the garment sector, which has resulted in the high turnover rate of employees that the project seeks to diminish. This indicates the lack of interest in resolving the poor conditions. Even though the MYPOD project addresses the working conditions it does not incorporate the wage level. This would mean that Myanmar would still be an ideal space profit maximization from a corporate perspective because of the relatively low wage level. This is reflected in the statement of Bestseller where it is emphasized that there is a business element involved in the project, which is to improve the conditions companies like them so that they can source from Myanmar. This suggests there is a certain degree of self-interest from one of the Danish partners because they have an interest in source from Myanmar. Thus, Harvey's (2006) precondition of capturing new spaces to maximize profit can be asserted.

This also relates to the precondition of human labour being present to create value since the companies tend to exploit the unfair labour conditions, which create a market for CSR. Thus, it can be argued that companies operate contradictory because they establish CSR strategies in response to the bad working conditions that they have created. In the Myanmar context, this statement can only be confirmed to a certain degree. This means that the poor working conditions are present in Myanmar, which can create a necessity for CSR.

However, in the MYPOD context, it cannot be concluded that a company such as Bestseller has created such conditions due to their efforts in the MSI to proactively improve the labour conditions and implement a certain standard within the supply chain.

Moreover, Harvey (2006) states that CSR is solely applicable when it is profit maximizing and less costly and visible for the public. This can only be ascertained to some degree. The main goals of this CSR project are improving productivity, working conditions and social dialogue, which can be defined as long-term goals. DIEH argues that an important element to reach such improvements is to focus on capacity building. Therefore, the project will only have a visible impact in the long run, which can be profit maximizing, for instance, because of a lower employee turnover rate. However, it does not mean that it is a less costly solution since it is time consuming and demands qualified workers.

Regarding Harvey's (2006) last mentioned precondition of the differentiation of the distinctive stakeholders, that leads to resistance or conflict, it can be claimed that they are also noticeable among the partners of the MYPOD project. However, the differentiation of the stakeholders does not seem to generate any conflict. Additionally, it is stated that, in a CSR context, an issue that arises is the lack of direct action towards the inequality at the workplace because they are not based on experiences of the marginalized stakeholders. Regarding the MYPOD project, this presumption can be rejected, because of its unique approach, that focuses on capacity improvements through collaboration with local unions. Also, during the project the different stakeholders have been interviewed, to identify the main issues. In that sense, the direct measurements are taken at the workplace. Therefore, it can be argued that the proposed initiatives are based on experiences of the marginalized stakeholders within the factories, as they were interviewed in the initial phase of the project.

It can be summed up that some of the pre-existing conditions articulated by Harvey (2006) are partially present. Accordingly, this would mean that the CSR impact would be undermined by such conditions. However, because the MYPOD project is not at its final phase it is not possible to affirm such statement. Nevertheless, it can be argued that due to the presence of some existing preconditions, it is likely that the project will not have the full intended outcome.

A prevalent discourse within the postcolonial approach is that there are features within the modern organization that are similar to those found during colonialism. This leads to a discussion about indirect rule. As Cooke (2003) puts it, it gives the "colonised"

restricted power in the sense that it is deprived of certain actions. Like the indirect ruling of colonialism, where the chief's society was restricted, due to the deprivation of certain acts of control. This is can also be seen in the collaboration between the Danish and Burmese partners. Although, the main task of the Danish stakeholders is to train the local partners to build up their capacity, there appears to be visible features of self-interest, simultaneously. The main purpose is to improve the productivity, working conditions and social dialogue within the garment sector in Myanmar. However, from the findings it indicates that there is an uneven distribution of power in the partnership. The Danish partners seem to be taking all the major decisions regarding the project, without including the local partners. They are not included in decision-making processes that affect them. Also, there seems to be a double standard that applies to the Danish partners, but also foreign companies in general doing business activities in Myanmar. They often set the terms of the collaboration and expect the local partners to adhere to them, even though it might be difficult for them. However, this does not apply the other way around.

Another way indirect ruling is being implemented is through knowledge implementation. Aalborg University oversees training of the partner university, Yangon Technical University, who then implement the acquired knowledge into the factories. So Western knowledge and know-how applied in the factories through local professors, who are trained methodologies by Western partners. In addition, the Danish partners seem to be much more concerned about their own incentives and interests, rather than the local partners' interests. This is made clear by DIEH in the following statement, "And I think that in this project, between the Danish partners, there is a great understanding of the each other's different interests. And I think that we are all trying to see how we can meet each other's interests." (J. Bundgaard, July 9, 2018). The project appears to have a mutual beneficial self-interest. Thus, it can be argued that not only is there a top-down approach to this project, but also it is a form of indirect rule, because the Danish stakeholders seek to meet their interest, through the project, which seeks to improve the garment sector in Myanmar, through three fundamentals.

6.3 Merging the concepts

Although multi-stakeholder initiatives aim to be inclusive of their members, it remains a significant challenge to maintain a well-balanced partnership in terms of power and in terms of democratic features. In this case, it is not an aspect that has derived from a particularly strong and well-resourced company forcing its will upon the other MSI participants. Instead, it has been a mix of a powerful and demanding donor agency denying flexibility to the partners in the MYPOD project. This constellation with such a donor taking on such a role is thus unsuitable for developmental efforts due to the postcolonial features undermining local cultural values. The case of MYPOD is therefore a showcase example of the donor creating the imbalances in the partnership rather than the stronger actors. Thereby, this thesis positions itself amongst other literature that criticises MSIs such as publications authored by Alamgir & Banerjee (2018); Cheyns & Riisgaard (2014); Donaghey & Reinecke (2018); and others. Of course, the Danish partners and their greater capacities in terms of political-economy power also play an important role. This thesis and its findings thus open up for an expansion of existing MSI literature by including the role of the donor agencies. Naturally this also adds to the complexity of the view on multi-stakeholder initiatives but in this case, it has proven to be an important aspect alongside power inequality framework presented by Cheyns & Riisgaard (2014).

Similarly, well-resourced actors seem to naturally take a leadership role further enhancing power imbalances giving the MYPOD project distinct postcolonialist features. These features become evident e.g. when Danish trade unions train the local ones in how to operate. Implicitly, they show that their way of conducting operations are more feasible than the local solutions. There is already some level of resistance towards foreign interference from the trade unions as one local trade union proclaims its dissatisfaction with another trade union that has been in exile and therefore is trained and experienced in a foreign setting. Why would such differences not also translate into conflict between the Danish way of managing trade union operations and the local ways of doing so? Danish university professors are also training local professors in lean methodology. Consequently, there is still a risk that local professors would have preferred to do things differently.

Although no interviews have been conducted with local factory workers, there is a possibility that there are discrepancies between local workers' wishes and the efforts that have been in focus in the MYPOD project i.e. better sitting postures. This could be the case if they are not planning on working in the garment industry for all their life and instead seek to work short term with the goal of earning as much money as possible before returning to

their homes and families as some of our data suggests is a typical feature of the Burmese garment sector. Bestseller nominating supplier factories to participate in the MYPOD project where the focus is not only on factory outcome optimization but also on working conditions may thus not be a priority to the workers.

Although these aspects of the MYPOD project may be undertaken with good intentions, this set of risks exemplifies cases where the efforts may be counterproductive. It is beyond the scope of this paper to determine whether such features are in fact counterproductive but the mere possibility that they are alongside the absence of any efforts that address such issues indicate that they have not been considered. There is thus an evident lack of inclusion of local voice in the decision-making processes. In any case, these aspects can therefore be viewed as examples of underlying assumptions that the Danish partners know better and possess higher capabilities.

As established in the theory section the ideal multi-stakeholder initiative is representative and inclusive. Only this way the multi-stakeholder initiative can contribute to governance with a bottom-up approach and address the participatory gap (Bäckstrand, 2006). The participatory gap here is characterised previously in this thesis as the inability by companies to handle their stakeholders' needs when these arise in areas of limited statehood (Reinicke & Deng, 2000). In the case of the MYPOD project however, the MSI structure has failed to be inclusive and representative of local stakeholders in the decision-making process. This also entails an inability to govern from a bottom-up approach. This inability to do so is further enhanced by the role of the donor Danida and its role as a top-down decision-maker with an ability to conduct decisive rulings.

Figure 5: The Scope of The Research. The researched Organisations constitute a horizontal axis of the relevant stakeholders whilst the research has revealed strong power mechanisms in play on the vertical axis of stakeholders.
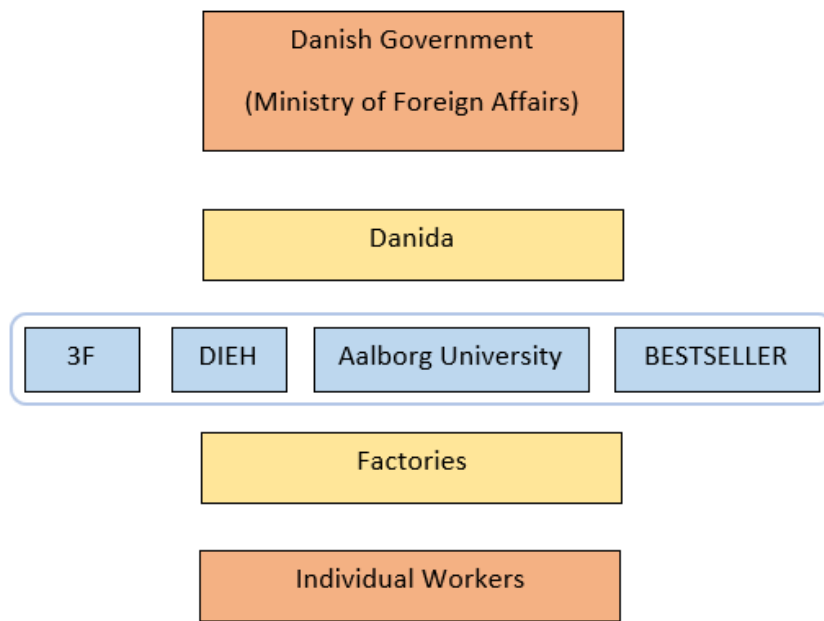
Combining the MSI and postcolonial theory to undertake an exploratory research on the MYPOD project, has been crucial to investigate the construction of the partnership and the power relation between the partners. Moreover, such a combination has been adequate to gain critical insight on such a project that seeks to generate a sustainable solution to a prevalent issue within the garment industry in Myanmar. By applying an MSI approach to our research, it has enabled us to clarify the stakeholder groups and their characteristics in terms of management of the MYPOD project. Kuhn (2006) argues that it is not beneficial to engage in communication with all stakeholders. Therefore, applying the MSI literature in our specific case has provided us with an insight on the influential and important stakeholders. It has been valuable to use the MSI approach in investigating the interaction between the local and Danish partners, to provide the reader with an understanding of their engagement. Usually, stakeholders will seek to maintain control over other stakeholders to ensure that their self-interests are met (Banerjee, 2008; Cheyns & Riisgaard, 2014).

In conclusion, this thesis has mapped out weaknesses that are prone to arise in multi-stakeholder initiatives when certain issues are not addressed. These weaknesses include exclusion of weaker, typically local, stakeholders resulting from a failure to ascertain representative features and include them in the decision-making process. Another strong weakness that has been revealed in this thesis derives from the negative implications of

having a strong and demanding donor agency on board. In this case, the donor has further weakened the inclusion of local stakeholders and thus strengthened the top-down governance approach - the very same approach that multi-stakeholder initiatives have been praised for counterbalancing. The results of these weaknesses are a continuation of the by now old-fashioned development approach with strong imperialist tendencies described here as postcolonial features undermining local values and local approaches to development using power inequalities.

Chapter 7: Recommendations

7.1 General advice for all actors

A central piece of advice for all stakeholders participating in multi-stakeholder initiatives is to avoid strict donors if possible. Naturally there may be financial benefits to cooperating with a donor and to some actors it may be a deal breaker having to cut of the donor. However, as shown, cooperating with a donor comes at a high cost in terms of flexibility and decision power for all types of participants. The rigid and strict rules and conditions set by the donor agency deny local actors a say in the decision-making process. Excluding local interests in the decision-making process is a certain way to appear to have a superior and intimidating attitude towards the local partners.

The inflexibility can hurt the actors' ability to adapt to the local environment. Even if there is no donor with strict conditions, there is still a possibility that the partners in a multi-stakeholder partnership do not reach the most ideal constellation of partners or terms initially in the partnership. Therefore, the ability to deviate from initial decision and preliminary terms and conditions is a strength to be desired for a multi-stakeholder initiative.

Avoiding strict donors thus gives an MSI flexibility and gives stakeholders the possibility to mitigate the risk of taking a postcolonial role upon themselves. However, this is only a possibility and not a guarantee. It allows the partners to include local stakeholders when shaping the multi-stakeholder initiative. The central piece of advice for the stakeholders is to include every partner in the decision-making process, especially the local partners since the decisions made will affect them. Involving the local stakeholders can contribute to the identification of the issues, but also in finding innovative ways to resolve the problems occurring. The local stakeholders can provide local knowledge to the

partnership. Since they know, what works and what does not, combining local insight with Danish partners resources can generate a better outcome of the project. Moreover, understanding the local partners' culture, can help solve this issue of 'asymmetrical understanding', which affects the relationship. Danish partners are better off viewing the cultural differences as an advantage rather than an impediment. This can lead to more engagement from the local partners and result in a more fruitful collaboration.

7.2 Trade unions

In accordance with the results of this thesis the trade-union movement is liable to division within a multi-stakeholder initiative. In the case of the MYPOD project, there has been division between the two Burmese trade unions and the Danish trade union has taken a role upon itself to train the two local unions. The recommendations for trade unions presented here are therefore directed towards Western trade unions present in developing countries.

The cooperation with the donor agency has meant that the Danish trade union in this case has been forced to work together with local trade unions possessing different capabilities. Naturally, this has limited the Danish trade union's flexibility and ability to choose local partners for itself. Additionally, working with a local trade union with very limited capabilities has proven to be a difficulty for Danish counterpart. The inexperienced local trade union has been unable to keep up with the operations defined by the Danish trade-union. The result has been a need to start with the basics in every aspect of the collaboration consequently putting an unproportionate amount of effort into lifting the local trade union's capacity to a satisfactory level.

A very evident space for improvement is thus to find local trade union partners that are at a satisfactory capacity level. Choosing only a single local partner is also a way to avoid division amongst multiple partners. This can lead to closer and more effective collaboration since the capacity building is a matter between only two parties. Including more than one partner will have the natural consequence that the operational level demands more in terms of capacity from one partner than it does from the other. Therefore, sticking to one local partner is the ideal solution.

7.3 Companies

Companies participating in multi-stakeholder initiatives should be aware of the power they possess. Especially Western companies sourcing from developing countries naturally have a huge influence on local factories from which they source. As a buyer they have an influence over local employment as well as factory owners. Being aware of such power imbalances from the beginning of a partnership allows the company to consider its role and actively make measures to be inclusive towards local stakeholders. Instead, companies should use their power to include local stakeholders and incorporate their wishes into the multi-stakeholder initiatives' agenda. By being part of the agenda and the decision-making process enables local stakeholders to shape the MSI equally in all stakeholders' favour. In such instances with powerful foreign private sector actors with plenty of resources, it may be important to establish instances to make sure that the local stakeholders' wishes are not undermined. Certain guarantees should therefore be in place to support these local actors in the decision-making processes, so the power imbalances can be evened out. A more democratic decision-making process is essential to the legitimacy of multi-stakeholder initiatives and therefore the inclusion of the all actors is essential. If any Western actor, private sector company or not, fails to be inclusive of their developing country peers then the postcolonialist features to the MSI are likely to undermine local values and enforce Western values upon the local setting.

7.4 Universities

The collaboration between Aalborg University and Yangon Technical University has been one of the things emphasized as a good example of teamwork in the MYPOD project. Training of local academic staff is something that seems to be working rather well in this setting. Professors from Aalborg University train other professors from Yangon Technical University in lean methodologies and then go to factories on a weekly basis to implement improvements. This solution seems to be working well for the academic stakeholders in the MYPOD project.

7.5 Donor agencies

Having somewhat been pointed out as only an obstacle to successful inclusion in MSIs, donor agencies do however constitute important players as they contribute with

investments. These investments of course happen in places where there is a need for them, in developing countries. To ensure that funds end up in the right places there are of course conditions that can be made to find the best projects to support. However, donor agencies should be aware that more rules and conditions are directly related to a lower level of inclusion of local stakeholders. Therefore, donor agencies face a dilemma when they set demands for multi-stakeholder initiatives. Do they want to control a lot of aspects of the MSI with an increased risk of undermining local values and thus assume postcolonial features? Or do they want to lower the risk of undermining local values and increase local participation and inclusion but at the same time leave operational management and control out of their hands? The mere fact that this dilemma exists suggest a need for change in donor agencies' policies and procedures towards measures towards stakeholders which give them more flexibility and includes more local stakeholders in the developing country setting.

Moreover, it is advisable, in order that funds and resources be used more efficiently, a major coordination between donors. This means an improvement in the way such monetary flows are channelled. What emerged from the interviews it is a concern about the broad differentiation in international projects occurring in Myanmar with respect to the garment sector. Subjects complain about such diversity claiming the need in focusing on few projects and demanding more collaboration among donors.

Chapter 8: Suggestions for Further Research

An interesting aspect for further research is to which degree it matters in terms of power imbalances who initiates the multi-stakeholder initiative. In this case it is also the same cluster of the four Danish partners that initiated the project that enjoy increased power over their local peers. Whether this is random or a consequence resulting from an increased commitment to the multi-stakeholder initiative poses an interesting question. In this thesis however, the focus is entirely on the fact that there are power imbalances and not on how these came to exist although that could be a helpful tool to discover that aspect.

Nevertheless, this shows the need for research on the role of MSI actors' backgrounds when these group together. In this case there are Danish and Burmese actors involved so why is it that only the Danish actors are working together closely and not also the Burmese actors? This inconsistency allows a dismissal of national backgrounds as the sole reason for groupings within the stakeholder population. Therefore, there is a need for further research

on this topic. One suggestion for such is the role of shared experiences and their implications on increased and tighter collaboration. This could be the case in the MYPOD project as the Danish actors have previously worked together on a similar project in Bangladesh. This however is merely a suggestion for further research. Other aspects could include a more thorough evaluation from financial or political power approaches e.g. in relation to the political-economy framework introduced by Cheyns & Riisgaard (2014).

In our attempt to provide a clear understanding of the relationship between the different partners, our research and findings have mainly been based on the Danish stakeholders' perception of the MYPOD project. Therefore, little insight has been provided from the local partner's perspective. An interesting aspect to do further research on, could be the local stakeholders' perception of the multi-stakeholder initiative, to shed more insight on the matter. Moreover, how do they view the benefits of participating in such a partnership and are the challenges perceived by them, similar to those of the Danish partners? By applying a postcolonial lens to the investigation, we have been able to identify the main challenges of the project. However, you could argue that the problem is only illustrated from one perspective. Therefore, incorporating the local partners' perspective on the MYPOD project, can provide a holistic view on the challenges of improving the productivity, working conditions and social dialogue within the Burmese garment industry. Additionally, this would give us a further insight on the main reason for the local partner accepting the intrusive behaviour of the Danish partners, that the findings have enable to demonstrate. In continuation, the research done on this partnership, has also shown the obstacles that are related to the cultural differences between the partners. Hence, another suggestion for further research, which is highly relevant is on the ways to avoid such obstacles common in a MSI. Identifying ways of diminishing such issues could contribute to better collective problem solving of distinctive challenges, which the MSI seeks to address. Consequently, this will be result in an efficient use of the experiences, expertise and the stakeholders' resources.

References

Al Kharouf, A., & Weir, D. (2008). Women and work in a Jordanian context: beyond neo-patriarchy. *Critical perspectives on international business*, *4*(2/3), 307-319.

Alamgir, F. & Banerjee, S. B. (2018). Contested compliance regimes in global production networks: Insights from the Bangladesh garment industry. *Human Relations*, 0018726718760150.

Amaratunga, D., Baldry, D., Sarshar, M. & Newton, R. (2002). Qualitative and quantitative research in the built environment: application of "mixed" research approach: a conceptual framework to measure FM performance. ResearchGate.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2003). *The empire writes back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures*. Routledge.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2013). *Post-colonial studies: The key concepts*. Routledge.

Babbie, E. R. (1998). *The practice of social research* (Vol. 112). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth publishing company.

Banerjee, A., & Chaudhury, S. (2010). Statistics without tears: Populations and samples. *Industrial psychiatry journal*, *19*(1), 60

Banerjee, S. B. (2001). Corporate Citizenship and Indigenous Stakeholders: Exploring a New Dynamic of Organisational-Stakeholder Relationships. Spring.

Banerjee, S. B. (2003). Who Sustains Whose Development? Sustainable Development and the Reinvention of Nature. Organization Studies, 24(1), 143-180.

Banerjee, S. B. (2008). Corporate social responsibility: The good, the bad and the ugly. *Critical sociology*, *34*(1), 51-79.

Banerjee, S. B. (2017). Transnational power and translocal governance: The politics of corporate responsibility. Human Relations.

Banerjee, S. B. & Prasad, A. (2008). Introduction to the special issue on "critical reflections on management and organizations: A postcolonial perspective". Critical Perspectives on International Business, 4(2/3), pp. 90-98.

Bernard, H. R. (2017). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Bhabha, H. K. (2012). The Location of Culture (online version). Retrieved from https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781136751042

Blowfield, M. & Frynas, J. G. (2005). Setting new agendas: critical perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility in the developing world. International Affairs, 81(3), 499-513.

Boldrini, L. (2006). Comparative Literature in the Twenty-first Century: A View from Europe and the UK. *Comparative Critical Studies*, *3*(1-2), 13-23

Brown, R. B. (2006). *Doing your dissertation in business and management: the reality of researching and writing*. Sage

Burchell, J., & Cook, J. (2006). Assessing the impact of stakeholder dialogue: changing relationships between NGOs and companies. *Journal of Public Affairs: An International Journal*, *6*(3-4), 210-227.

Burke, M. E. (2007). Making choices: research paradigms and information management: Practical applications of philosophy in IM research. *Library review*, *56*(6), 476-484.

Business Innovation Facility (2016). BIF Burma (Myanmar): Garments: Market Analysis and Strategy.

Bäckstrand, K. (2006). Multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development: rethinking legitimacy, accountability and effectiveness. *European Environment*, *16*(5), 290-306.

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The qualitative report*, *13*(4), 544-559.

Chenail, R. J. (1997). Keeping things plumb in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *3*(3), 1-8

Cheung, L. L. W. (2008). Let the "other" speak for itself: Understanding Chinese employees from their own perspectives. Critical perspectives on international business, 4(2/3), 277-306.

Cheyns, E., & Riisgaard, L. (2014). The exercise of power through multi-stakeholder initiatives for sustainable agriculture and its inclusion and exclusion outcomes. *Agriculture and Human Values*, *31*(3), 409-423.

Cooke, B. (2003). A new continuity with colonial administration: participation in development management. Third World Quarterly, 24(1), 47-61.

Cozby, P. C. (2012). *Methods in behavioral research* (No. 150.72 C6).

Cumming, A. (2001). ESL/EFL instructors' practices for writing assessment: specific purposes or general purposes?. *Language testing*, *18*(2), 207-224

Delmas, M. A., & Burbano, V. C. (2011). The drivers of greenwashing. California Management Review, 54(1), 64-87.

Denzin, N.K. (1978). The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods.

Dirlik A. (2002) Rethinking Colonialism Globalization Postcolonialism And The Nation

Donaghey, J., & Reinecke, J. (2018). When industrial democracy meets corporate social responsibility—A comparison of the Bangladesh Accord and Alliance as responses to the Rana Plaza Disaster. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, *56*(1), 14-42.

Drebes, M. J. (2016). Including the "Other": Power and Postcolonialism as Underrepresented Perspectives in the Discourse on Corporate Social Responsibility. Critical Sociology, 42(1), 105-121.

Donaldson, T., & Preston, L. E. (1995). The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence, and implications. *Academy of management Review*, *20*(1), 65-91.

Dubois, A., & Gadde, L.E. (2002). Systematic combining: an abductive approach to case research. Journal of Business Research, 553-560.

Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International journal of qualitative methods*, *8*(1), 54-63.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., & Jackson, P. R. (2015). Management and business research. Sage.

Erzberger, C., & Kelle, U. (2003). Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research. *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*, 457-90

Escobar, A. (1992). Imagining a Post-Development Era? Critical Thought, Development and Social Movements. Third World and Post-Colonial Issues, 31/32.

Escobar, A. (1989). THE PROFESIONALIZATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF "DEVELOPMENT" IN COLOMBIA IN THE EARLY POST-WORLD WAR II PERIOD. Int. J. Educational Development, 9(2), 139-154.

Flick, U., von Kardoff, E., & Steinke, I. (Eds.). (2004). A companion to qualitative research. Sage.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. Qualitative inquiry, 12(2), 219-245.

Fox, W., & Bayat, M. S. (2008). *A guide to managing research*. Juta and Company Ltd.

Fransen, L. W., & Kolk, A. (2007). Global rule-setting for business: A critical analysis of multi-stakeholder standards. *Organization*, *14*(5), 667-684.

Freeman, R. E. (1994). The politics of stakeholder theory: Some future directions. *Business ethics quarterly*, 409-421.

Frenkel, M. & Shenhav, Y. (2006). From Binarism Back to Hybridity: A Postcolonial Reading of Management and Organization Studies. Organization Studies, 27(6), 1-22.

Geng, Y., & Qixue, Z. (2006). The essence, characteristics and limitation of post-colonialism: from Karl Marx's point of view. *Frontiers of philosophy in China*, *1*(2), 279-294

Greener, S. (2008). Business research methods. BookBoon

Hackley, C. (2003). *Doing research projects in marketing, management and consumer research*. Routledge.

Holden, M. T., & Lynch, P. (2004). Choosing the appropriate methodology: Understanding research philosophy. *The marketing review*, *4*(4), 397-409.

Jack, G., & Westwood, R. (2009). *International and cross-cultural management studies: A postcolonial reading*. Springer.

Johnson, R. B. (2017). Dialectical pluralism: A metaparadigm whose time has come. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *11*(2), 156-173.

Joint Ethical Trade Initiatives. MYPOD. Available here: https://www.jointeti.org/projekter-p2/ (Retrieved August 15, 2018)

Khan, F. R. & Lund-Thomsen, P. (2011). CSR AS Imperialism: Towards a Phenomenological Approach to CSR In the Developing World. Journal of Change Management, 11(1), 73-90.

Kudo, T. (2012). How Has the Myanmar Garment Industry Evolved? In Takahiro Fukunishi (ed), Dynamics of the Garment Industry in Low-Income Countries: Experience of Asia and Africa (Interim Report) (1-46). Chiba: Institute of Developing Economies Japan External Trade Organization.

Kuhn, T. (2008). A communicative theory of the firm: Developing an alternative perspective on intra-organizational power and stakeholder relationships. *Organization studies*, *29*(8-9), 1227-1254.

Kumar, M. (2000). Postcolonial Theory and Cross-culturalism: Collaborative "Signposts" of Discursive Practices. Journal of Educational Enquiry, 1(2), 82-92.

Kuortti, J., & Nyman, J. (Eds.). (2007). *Reconstructing hybridity: Post-colonial studies in transition* (Vol. 51). Rodopi.

Long, B. S., & Mills, A. J. (2008). Globalization, postcolonial theory, and organizational analysis: Lessons from the Rwanda genocide. *Critical perspectives on international business*, *4*(4), 389-409.

Lund-Thomsen, P., & Lindgreen, A. (2014). Corporate social responsibility in global value chains: Where are we now and where are we going?. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *123*(1), 11-22.

Luxemburg, R. (1913). The Accumulation of Capital: A Contribution to an Economic Explanation of Imperialism.

Malhotra Naresh, K. (1999). Marketing Research an Applied Orientation, 1999. *Prestice Hall*.

Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of management review*, *22*(4), 853-886.

Mondal, A. (2014). Postcolonial Theory: Bhabha and Fanon. International Journal of Science and Research, 3(11), 2965-2968.

Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (2015). Myanmar Garment Industry: 10-year Strategy 2015-2024.

Neuendorf, K. A., & Kumar, A. (2002). Content analysis. *The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*, *1*, 221-30.

Neuman, W. L. (2013). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Pearson education

Noble, H., & Smith, J. (2015). Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, ebnurs-2015

Olsen, W. (2004). Triangulation in social research: qualitative and quantitative methods can really be mixed. *Developments in sociology*, *20*, 103-118.

Ozkazanc-Pan, B. (2009). Globalization And Identity Formation: A Postcolonial Analysis Of The International Entrepreneur.

Payne, G., & Williams, M. (2005). Generalization in qualitative research. *Sociology*, *39*(2), 295-314

Prasad, A. (2004). Postcolonial Theory and Organizational Analysis: A critical Engagement. The Academy of Management Review, 29(4), 702-704.

Prasad, A. (2003). Post-colonial Theory and Organizational Analysis: A critical engagement. Asian Business & Management, 4, 2009-212.

Queirós, A., Faria, D., & Almeida, F. (2017). Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods. *European Journal of Education Studies*.

Quinn, K. A., & Olson, J. M. (2011). Regulatory Framing and Collective Action: The Interplay of Individual Self-Regulation and Group Behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *41*(10), 2457-2478.

Rahman, M. S. (2016). The advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in language "Testing and Assessment" research: A literature review. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *6*(1), 102.

Rao, N. (2000). " Neocolonialism" or" Globalization"?: Postcolonial Theory and the Demands of Political Economy. *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, *1*(2), 165-184.

Reinecke, J., & Ansari, S. (2016). Taming wicked problems: The role of framing in the construction of corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Management Studies*, *53*(3), 299-329.

Reinicke, W. H., Deng, F., Witte, J. M., Benner, T., & Whitaker, B. (2000). *Critical choices: The United Nations, networks, and the future of global governance*. IDRC, Ottawa, ON, CA.

Risse, T. (2012). Governance in areas of limited statehood. *The Oxford handbook of governance*.

Robson, C. (2002). Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers (Vol. 2): Blackwell Oxford

Roloff, J. (2008). Learning from multi-stakeholder networks: Issue-focussed stakeholder management. *Journal of business ethics*, *82*(1), 233-250.

Rothchild, I. (2006). INDUCTION, DEDUCTION, AND THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD: AN ECLECTIC OVERVIEW OF THE PRACTICE OF SCIENCE. Society for the Study of Reproduction, Inc.

Rowley, T. J. (1997). Moving beyond dyadic ties: A network theory of stakeholder influences. *Academy of management Review*, *22*(4), 887-910.

Said, E. (1978). Orientalism: Western Representations of the Orient. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*. Pearson education.

Savage, G. T., Nix, T. W., Whitehead, C. J., & Blair, J. D. (1991). Strategies for assessing and managing organizational stakeholders. *Academy of management perspectives*, *5*(2), 61-75.

Sayer, A. (1999). *Realism and social science*. Sage.

Schwabenland, C. & Tomlinson, F. (2008). Managing diversity or diversifying management? Critical perspectives on international business, 4(2/3), 320-333.

Silverman, D. (2013). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. SAGE Publications Limited

Soans, A., & Abe, M. (2015). *Myanmar Business Survey: Data analysis and policy implications*. United Nations ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Stake, R. E. (1995). The art of case study research. Sage.

Steckler, A., McLeroy, K. R., Goodman, R. M., Bird, S. T., & McCormick, L. (1992). Toward integrating qualitative and quantitative methods: an introduction

Switchasia Network Facility (2017). Introducing sustainability to the Myanmar garment sector to increase the competitiveness of SMEs.

Tashakkori, A., & Creswell, J. W. (2007). The new era of mixed methods.

Treacher, A. (2005). On Postcolonial Subjectivity. The Group-Analytic Society, 38(1), 43-57.

United Nations Guiding Principles (2011) Guiding Principles on Human Rights - Implementing the United Nations "Prospect, Respect and Remedy" Framework. Available at https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN .pdf (Accessed August 8, 2018)

Vaus, D. D. (2002). Surveys in social research. *New South Wales: Allen & Unwin.*

Waxenberger, B., & Spence, L. J. (2003). Reinterpretation of a metaphor: from stakes to claims. *Strategic Change*, *12*(5), 239-249.

Weick, K. R. (1979). The Social Psychology of Organizing, 2nd edn McGraw-Hill. *New York*

Westwood, R. (2006). International business and management studies as an orientalist discourse: A postcolonial critique. Critical perspectives on international business, 2(2), 91-113.

Yaeger, P. (2007). Editor's Column: The End of Postcolonial Theory? A Roundtable with Sunil Agnani, Fernando Coronil, Gaurav Desai, Mamadou Diouf, Simon Gikandi, Susie Tharu, and Jennifer Wenzel. *PMLA*, *122*(3), 633-651

Yin, R. K. (2003). Case study research design and methods third edition. *Applied social research methods series*, *5*.

Östlund, U., Kidd, L., Wengström, Y., & Rowa-Dewar, N. (2010). Combining qualitative and quantitative research within mixed methods research designs: A methodological review, 48, 369-383

Appendices
Appendix 1: Interview Transcripts
Interview with Bestseller

	Timespan	Content
1	0:00,0 - 0:04,0	Maria: So we just take it one by one?
2	0:04,0 - 0:06,0	Theo: Yes let's do that. Bestseller: Okay.
3	0:06,0 - 0:20,0	Theo: So I would like to ask you how the partnership began? Was it a formalization of an existing more loose network? Did you already work together?
4	0:20,0 - 4:05,6	Maria: Because we had been members of the Danish ETI for many years and in my former job working in the Danish ETI we worked a lot with 3F and Aalborg University and Bestseller. I know that when we did the social dialogue project we got that funding from Danida, in Bangladesh. I was sitting in the Danish ETI, so I was part of getting all that funding, doing all the reporting and knew how difficult it was to actually get our different members of Danish ETI to join. We would have liked for them to join one big program on Bangladesh, because this CSR pool came up in 2013 I think, that Danida would fund programs in, for instance Bangladesh. Bangladesh had just become the new donor darling, because after Rana Plaza there was a lot of need for that. But, we tried to make a big program together with unsocial dialogue, together with 3F, together with Dansk Erhverv, to have the employer association involved too. We didn't manage to get Dansk Mode & Textil onboard. They wanted to do their own thing. We didn't manage to get like Aalborg University onboard, that was fair enough, cause they weren't a member of the Danish ETI. But they had a massive focus on the productivity, which is a really great program. But, we just really wanted to have something that have a really big impact. And we didn't really manage to have a lot of partners onboard for Bangladesh, but we did manage to get a social dialogue program in place together with the other ETIs. So then, moving to 2016, it must have been, there was a new round of this Danida fund focusing on partnerships, I know Danida keep saying it's a new thing, but it's really not, it's the exactly same thing we did for Bangladesh if you ask me. But new people come in to Danida, new case handlers and they thing it's a new thing every time. But it's basically the same as we did for Bangladesh. But this time Bestseller was not a member of the Danish ETI, we are member of the ETI in the UK, but when anyone in Denmark who wants to do a program on, in Developing countries in textile they have, the ask Bestseller, because we're the only ones that really have the muscles to move anything in these countries. So I spoke to former director Mette, Mette Bøje and shewas, she asked us if we were interested, even though we were not members of, in looking into doing a program and where would it be relevant. For us Pakistan could also have been relevant, it is very very difficult, but that was not that relevant for the Danish ETI, it was not relevant for Danida. So we started talking about Myanmar, because we do have a lot of challenges, but we made the point that if we were gonna join any kind of

		application process, we would have partners onboard that were relevant like 3F, because social dialogue is assumingly relevant for other countries, but also Aalborg University, because we didn't want to join five different little projects in Myanmar, like they're doing in Bangladesh. We want one big program that potentially can move much more. So this was kind of our pre-condition for even going in to the application process.
5	4:05,6 - 4:25,1	Theo: right, so you have mentioned Bangladesh a couple of times in your social dialogue program. And is there anything in that program, any take aways from that program that has changed the way you've shaped MYPOD?
6	4:25,1 - 5:35,6	Maria: I think…It was a little bit different, because when it only focuses on social dialogue in Bangladesh, it is a little bit bigger. Of course, this is a lot about how to do the elections, how to choose your representatives in the factories. The challenge in Bangladesh, is that the factories are between 3000 to 15000 workers. So, even the infrastructure of setting up a proper election for a worker representatives is quite quite difficult. This is not the case of Myanmar. In that case, we needed the social dialogue to run much smoother, so you can say that the reason for joining MYPOD is the opposite. We had some issues we would like to, to have uhmm to have a more active focus on, we need to solve. We knew that from Bangladesh we had different partners that could be relevant, so that's why we made the MYPOD project with the focus that it has.
7	5:35,6 - 5:39,0	Theo: yes, gathering it in one big project instead of five.
8	5:39,0 - 6:45,2	Maria: Yes! Uhmm and you can say that one of the main reason for this instability of the, of several parameters; the fact that productivity is very low, there's a lot of work turnover, so the factories and the workforce is very unstable. There's a lot of unrest and strikes, because it's a very new country. The workers are not even used to coming to work, they still have to find out that "oh we have to be there, same time every day to produce anything". So we're starting at a very very uh uh you can say very very immature labour market. Whereas, we can see from some of the other countries, like Bangladesh which has been running for many many years, it's the main industry the main income for the country. So they have a complete other setup. Myanmar is learning and that's why we struggle with some of the individual factories.
9	6:45,2 - 6:59,5	Theo: So you have mentioned instability. And that's also not just labour market wise. But politically does that have a massive influence?
10	6:59,5 - 7:36,4	Maria: yes, it has a massive influence. But in that case, MYPOD is not…it is not the driver for us. When it comes to political instability, sitting with the government, sitting with the others…we are in other partnerships, that is not a project, it is not a program. But on an institutional level, with other brands where we are lobbying for more stability in the labor market. The labor reforms in terms of labor laws is coming in now, so MYPOD is completely separate from that. It is not on the political level, it is on factory level, yeah.

11	7:36,4 - 7:48,3	Theo: Can you describe your role in the partnership?
12	7:48,3 - 7:58,3	Maria: Uhmm..well our role is mainly to help, you can say to give access to the factories to the industry.
13	7:58,3 - 8:01,8	Theo: for training sessions and?
14	8:01,8 - 9:28,8	Maria: Yes, and because we say that we are big partners with the factories and the suppliers. If we give them incentive to improve, of course with the customers. So we can say to them "it seems that you struggle with productivity, it seems that you struggle with having a proper workforce and place", so we don't get any products out or we get products out with a lot of failures, so that we have claims all the time. The factory needs to go back and redo a lot of the products, and of course that's a lot of money for the factory, a lot of money for us. It doesn't, in a business relationship, of course rule number one could be that you get products out that you can buy. So, we say to the factories "unless you know how to solve this, we have this solution that may suit you and that could be to join MYPOD". So we try to offer this as a…well it is an offer to improve their practices. So I think what is unique for our role in this is that uhmm it would be very difficult for 3F, very difficult for universities to work with factories if they don't see the business case in this. And the business case with them is definitely that we requested as a customer.
15	9:28,8 - 9:33,1	Theo: ok, so you're part is?
16	9:33,1 - 9:36,5	Maria: access to factories.
17	9:36,5 - 9:38,5	Theo: Access to factories and?
18	9:38,5 - 9:42,1	Maria: And to help drive that they do improve.
19	9:42,0 - 9:46,9	Theo: Right, so the different actors in MYPOD project complement each other?
20	9:46,9 - 9:48,3	Maria: Yes!
21	9:48,3 - 9:56,5	Theo: is this a unique of establishing a partnership? These type of partners?
22	9:56,5 - 10:06,4	Maria: Uhmm, well I think we do it in a lot of different countries with a lot of different partners. so I think for our industry it is very common. Yeah.
23	10:06,4 - 10:43,1	Theo: But, I was thinking about the types of partners; a university, a private sector, a garment company, trade unions and the Ethical Trading Initiative. Is this constellation unique? It is, does this have another purpose or another set of strengths than other types of partnerships?
24	10:43,1 - 13:35,2	Maria: Uhmm…well, to be honest I don´t think today it is that unique anymore. We have had so many partnerships around the world, that it is

a little bit the same. I would also, to be honest prefer not to do this through the donors, because the framework for setting up this kind of partnership is so stringent on what they want. It has to fit into a box with Danida. But of course we can not. The good thing about doing it this way, you could say, it is not unique, but what gives it validation is that we are not....there`s no money involved...Bestseller we don't pay 3F. 3F of course have to be completely neutral and independent union...so we don't pay them, they don't pay us. There is no money in between us. So you could say that we are independent of each other, but with the same goal. That is always really positive, cause you need to be independent. I mean, also Aalborg University may be a little bit difficult, but they are not a political institution so you could pay Aalborg University...you could say as a third party service provider for us, but with an organization like 3F. Their independence is extremely important. So you could say, there is no money involved. The funding comes from Danida, we don´t pay 3F to do anything in Myanmar. 3F chooses to work with us as a mutual partner...that you could say it's a mutual partnership, because we know each other from Bangladesh. It is managed from Danida with Danish ETI's project manager, but there is no money involved. Bestseller is not paid by the state or by anyone...our kind of contribution you could say is part of why the project is running. So in that sense it is a very of good, the governance structure of keeping different partners independent, I think it is very important. But you can also see, I mean for this kind of...we already have a program with the ILO and H&M, set up a little bit the same. We do this work with IndustriAll with the accord in Bangladesh, where it is more brand driven, but it is together with the union. So you can say it is a...the partnership per say is not unique, but I think it is for Denmark for a Danish program. I think it is. But I think it is required in these cases, where organizations need to keep their independence.

25	13:35,2 - 13:53,0	Theo: Right, and is there any other partner you would wish was involved? Are you missing any, that could be, I don't know, another private sector company another actor in this project?
26	13:53,0 - 14:32,1	Maria: No, I think indirectly they are in this, because this is also with...we are in the ETI in UK. We are a member. So other ETI UK members are already involved, because we work in the same factories. We are just the ones taking the lead on this. Newlook is already involved, IndiTex is already involved, H&M is involved so we...the role of Bestseller is to make sure that there is some kind of outreach. That we do share the experiences and we share whatever we learn from this with other brands. So we kind of represent the industry, not just Bestseller.
27	14:32,1 - 14:52,3	Theo: Okay. Okay. Do you see Bestseller as having a responsibility CSR wise, of participating in this project. Brand protection or any other?
28	14:52,3 - 15:43,9	Maria: No I actually don't, because for us the reason we did this is because we had a very very practical challenge in the factories in the market that we needed to solve and we saw this as an opportunity to really address something that is very specific for us. Or it turns out very specific for the garment industry in Myanmar. But it has nothing to do with...I mean with don't really...you can say CSR for Bestseller may be

		through our foundation where we do a lot of investments together with our partners in Africa, but for this, this is our sustainability work at Bestseller, it is basically to keep us in business.
29	15:43,9 - 15:52,1	Theo: Yeah, so you mentioned before the optimization of production.
30	15:52,1 - 16:15,0	Maria: Yes, and again for us it´s the...if we have stable workforce and workforces that are stable requires that you have a skilled and developed workforce, that they understand their rights. It is not philanthrophy, it's it's the only reason how we can work in these factories and in these countries. Uhm yeah.
31	16:15,0 - 16:45,2	Theo: Okay. And uhh how can this collaboration across sectors help solve these issues? What is the end goal? What would be better, apart from productivity increase, increased productivity? Will there be any other specific social changes, in regards to working conditions, or?
32	16:45,2 - 18:19,8	Maria: I think what I really like about it, what is actually quite specific for, what is unique for the MYPOD project is that Aalborg University is training the Yangon technical university. None of the other partnerships working with productivity are doing that. This is very unique for us, because of the other programs are focused in developing the capacity with the local unions like 3F is. But no one is focusing on training technical staff in Yangon. Because the whole point is that if you want to have any kind of sustainable development in these countries you need to have the skilled people on the ground, you need to to work with the local people. If you don't do that, the country loses out of all the opportunities. If you just bring extern skills like they...I mean because Myanmar is so new and the same goes for Bangladesh a lot of the technical staff we bring in from Sri Lanka, because they're really well trained. They have technical engineers that are really good. But if...And that is what the factories do, because they can't get that in Myanmar, they can't get that in Bangladesh. So they need to bring them from outside. But if you don't train the local, the local population they will never develop in any way to be more competitive in the business. I think it's an extremely important element of MYPOD.
33	18:19,8 - 18:32,0	Theo: So after the MYPOD ends after these three years, is it, are they supposed to take over, continuing this developing work in some way?
34	18:32,0 - 19:15,9	Maria: I'm not sure what the plane is, but the plane is that they go and build their own capacity in supporting the local garment industry in productivity improvements. But how they're gonna do that practically I don't know. It's also about training...they need to educate more people in the university. The whole point I am sure is that you have educational programs to...that they can take an education as being some kind of lean expert in Yangon. That's really needed. There is going to be a lot of jobs for that if they can really train young students.
35	19:15,9 - 19:30,6	Theo: Definitely! Have there been any challenges in this partnership? Any concrete examples that have maybe set back your work or schedule?

36	19:30,6 - 20:56,4	Maria: No, I think the challenge with these, is always to have people running in the same direction. The challenge here that we are very much aware of is that the suppliers are Chinese and the factories are Vietnamese. And often the suppliers are travelling back and forth, they are sitting in China. Of course this is our, what we are used to, this is our everyday work. But it has been a challenge for Aalborg University to realize that whenever they need to do something, it's not only going in to the factories. It needs to be planned so much in advance, in order to get the factories onboard. The difference is that in Bangladesh the owner/supplier is actually sitting in the factory. There's a very direct link, but it's completely different for Myanmar. This has been a challenge; planning, the communication, running in the same directions and making sure that we at all time are always ahead of the communication and the planning with the factories. Cause you also need the suppliers onboard and they need to travel sometimes, because there is a language barrier. On top of that we have the Chinese suppliers, the Burmese middle management in the factories so we have a language barrier. None of them are really good at English.
37	20:56,4 - 21:01,9	Theo: Right, and you have the partners from Sri Lanka and then there's the Danish partners.
38	21:01,9 - 21:19,7	Maria: Yeah, the Sri Lankan and the Danish partners, there everyone speaks English, like they do in Bangladesh. But that's just a problem here. They don't necessarily does this, neither in the Chinese supplier nor the Myanmar. So it takes a little longer, and that has come as a surprise. I think to some of the partners.
39	21:19,7 - 21:52,8	Theo: Okay. Yes, the measurement of the impacts. Are there any plans for how you are going to measure the improvements, the outcomes of this project?
40	21:52,8 - 22:16,9	Maria: Uhmm, there is a lot of impact growth a lot of outcome of course defined in the actual project description and everything that we send in to Danida. So everything, we have targets for everything, you can find in the project description. Uhm yeah, these are very very clear defined targets.
41	22:16,9 - 22:20,7	Theo: Okay, perfect! So you are going to measure that in some way?
42	22:20,7 - 22:20,9	Maria: Yes!
43	22:20,9 - 22:42,3	Theo: Has there been any previous initiatives? Maybe not exactly like the MYPOD project, but some cross sector projects or projects aimed at improving working conditions and productivity in Myanmar in the garment sector?
44	22:42,3 - 24:27,7	Maria: There is a lot! Many of them actually. There is the GIZ, which is the German Danida, has the project Tchibo. That's the German retailer. And as I mentioned the ILO has a project with H&M. so many different, bigger programs in this actually. And then now we have MYPOD. And all of us are trying to work in the same direction, because it's the same partners. And this is actually one of the biggest challenges always with

these donor programs...not only do you have Danida wanting to focus on Bangladesh in five different programs, under the Danida funding. Then you have SIDA, GIZ and everyone else coming in and doing the same. NORAD which is the Norwegian Danida. Defit which is the English version of it. And this is actually something where the local partners actually are saying...I was just in a meeting with the labor government, the unions and MGMA the employer organization, last week in Geneva, the Myanmar labor department. And everyone was saying that if the donors and brands and everyone just would focus on one type of program, because they don't have resource all of them and they can't be in five different programs in these countries. And that's a lesson learned, that we really need to consider. And also something that we need to bring back to Danida to say is that if you really spend donor money on this, would that be necessary if you already have these other programs. So I think that is something we all need to learn.

45	24:27,7 - 24:34,4	Theo: So the same way for Bangladesh you wanted to merge the five projects into one bigger?
46	24:34,4 - 24:36,8	Maria: Yes, and that was just under the Danida umbrella.
47	24:36,8 - 24:45,1	Theo: That was just for Danida, but you can see in the future some ties or collaboration in between the GIZ and the NORAD and other types of organization?
48	24:45,1 - 25:49,9	Maria: Yes, but I don't think it's ever going to happen, because we mention this every time. But it is a problem for having a proper outcome, when you unions that are so young and we need to work with them and they need to work in three different programs. They don't have the resource for that. So you could say that some of the main reason for their poor outcome is simply because we're overrunning the poor country with our...Yeah, you can definitely not quote me for this, butyou know we have to get away from this imperialistic way of thinking "now we need to fix everything because this is a poor country". On the other hand, what I like about this is that, it is not about just, it is not about development, it is not just about donating money. It is actually about improving, for us to even be able to produce out of Myanmar. So you can say it has a very very clear business element. But it is definitely a challenge for all countries.
49	25:49,9 - 26:21,1	Theo: And challenges, concrete challenges we've touched upon that already. How do you ensure that all parties actually benefit from this collaboration? What do 3F get some takeaways from this project that they can use? And do Aalborg? And I don't know, you've mentioned already that you do, but what's in it for the other partners?
50	26:21,1 - 26:54,9	Maria: Uhmm I actually uhmm You would actally have to ask them, but I'm sure, I mean they have of course also a purpose they need to fulfill. A part of 3F's purpose for being in these countries and working in these countries is of course that they have concrete results on the table for their donors. And part of that would be through MYPOD. So I think for them is to optimize their resources, to have a bigger impact and that could be, for instance through these kind of programs.

51	26:54,9 - 26:57,6	Theo: So experience and knowledge gaining?
52	26:57,6 - 27:09,2	Maria: Yeah, capacity building in the country, because that is part of the 3F framework for for their international work. As far as I am aware.
53	27:09,2 - 27:31,7	Theo: We have mentioned the sort of challenges and the uncertain environment. Has this changed anything in your strategy for Myanmar as a whole, politically?
54	27:31,6 - 28:26,9	Maria: Well, well it's always when we work in these countries and you'll always have some kind of force majeure saying that if this just...you know the country just ends in war or something will happen. Of course you cannot be there, so there's always an uncertainty in these countries. I would say we, part of MYPOD and trying to really address these issues that is part of our strategy. It has to be that we will address whatever, you can say, is the none business case for staying in these countries or else we would have to question if it would be relevant to be producing in Myanmar. If you have a country that is so stubborn about not adhering to human rights or not, you know the free voice of the workers or people in the country, of course then we need to consider if that's something we can support.
55	28:26,9 - 28:33,9	Theo: Yes, you mentioned war as a something that would uhmm..
56	28:33,9 - 29:07,1	Maria: Yes, the human rights violations that happens across these countries, Cambodia is also on their way with restrictions and freedom of speech with the new minimum wage law. These kind of things we can absolutely not work with. So part of our strategy is, and you can say, on a factory level would be then to try to work on productivity and dialogue. But, the bigger picture as I mentioned would of course be the political environment and how we lobby that, but that's a complete different forum.
57	29:07,1 - 29:14,8	Theo: Of course. Of course. So the Rohingya crisis for instance has not changed anything, in your presence?
58	29:14,7 - 30:38,0	Maria: No, it has, we have. Uhm, we have put a little hold on continuing to develop into Myanmar. We're evaluating the situation and what is gonna happen moving forward. Because, also of course if you just think from a business perspective, if you just take out the morally, human issues and this, then from a business perspective it doesn't make sense to keep developing a country you don't know if there's going to be trade sanctions in the country tomorrow. It makes no sense. Everyone is going to lose millions. On the other hand, we cannot sit and support something that may end up in a new military regime next month, from a moral perspective, from a human perspective. So, it's a yeah it is very difficult. Part of the strategy is to go and really push these countries in a direction where you can say that they are..uhm how to say this, respecting you can say, respectful of human rights in the way you're supposed to be as a state. Whether or not that is actually our job to do, you can question. But, this is what industries have to do these days.

59	30:38,0 - 30:49,1	Theo: So it has resulted in somewhat a limited commitment to further or a limitation of further commitment in Myanmar?
60	30:49,1 - 31:01,3	Maria: Uhm yeah, but not commitment you could say, cause we are of course already committed to what we already set in place. But you could say to further development of our business we are putting it a little bit on hold.
61	31:01,3 - 31:16,3	Theo: This project...oh uh is it complying with the ISO, if the IS guidelines? Not specifically where of these, but my uhh..
62	31:16,3 - 31:39,8	Maria: No, but isn't it just an auditing standard? Isn't that the social auditing standard? The human rights something? IS26000 is the new one that came out a few years back? Well in 2010 apparently. But, I mean this is just a, all the IS standards is just about maintenance that's the factory level.
63	31:39,8 - 31:48,8	Theo: Yeah, it's a question requested from some of the uhm, my thesis partners.
64	31:48,8 - 32:20,2	Maria: Oh okay, but I'm sure they are? Uhm, we don't use these guidelines. I think also the IS26000, it took many many years to get up and running. There has been so much debating on even agreeing on that guideline. I think it's because they, did they even include human rights in that? In a more due diligence process? To be honest this is not something that perpetually would do an industry.
65	32:20,2 - 32:39,4	Theo: If you were to look overall in the industry, the garment sector in Myanmar. Is it mainly large corporations, or is it smaller companies as well?
66	32:39,4 - 32:49,1	Maria: It's large. You need to have resources in order to know what to do in these countries. I don't think any SMEs are sourcing out of Myanmar. And not, for the garment industry.
67	32:49,1 - 32:50,8	Theo: So it's companies similar to yours?
68	32:50,8 - 32:53,2	Maria: Yes! But very few.
69	32:52,7 - 32:53,2	Maria: Yeah!
70	32:53,2 - 32:53,3	Theo: Very few.
71	32:54,7 - 33:22,7	Theo: Okay. Does it make it easier to do uhh, to actually change the standards in the factories? Also productivity and labour rights and so on that, like it is a few numbers of companies operating there, and not a huge mix of sizes and different nationalities and different, all sorts of different types of companies.
72	33:22,7 - 33:29,9	Maria: There are very different nationalities. The Koreans, the Japanese, and the Chinese are the biggest one there.
73	33:29,9 - 33:30,6	Theo: In Myanmar?

74	33:30,6 - 33:32,4	Maria: Yes, but it is still big!
75	33:32,4 - 33:34,2	Theo: Big companies?
76	33:34,2 - 33:56,5	Maria: Yes. But it's a…we all have, basically we all have the same standards in the factory. We all ask for the same standards, it's just about how…if we do anything, but just ask, that's the question. If you don't work with factories and improve anything and you just come and do an audit every two years, then it doesn't make any change for anything. It's just like uhh.
77	33:56,5 - 34:07,3	Theo: But being a big company, you have some sort of leverage towards the factory management and the owners?
78	34:07,3 - 37:25,1	Maria: Yes, but again it's the Chinese suppliers that are the ones that are working with the factories. So we need to make that the Chinese suppliers that we have followed into Myanmar is taking their responsibility of working with the factories. Which is what we are doing. We work a lot with this whole supplier training. We need to have much more expectations of the suppliers. It's not Bestseller. It should be the Chinese supplier that takes responsibility of making sure that all standards are up to a certain level in Myanmar. It's really not Bestseller. But we do that because we are still there, we are still present on the ground so we have to take it. But part of it, of this whole change in the industry of just doing audits, audits, audits, is that now we actually expect the supplier to be able to do the assessments of the factories themselves. To keep up a certain standard to make sure that the factories are trained and everything in between. So there's a lot of pressure on the supplier to take their responsibility. I think we have done too much work for the suppliers, you can say. And which we shouldn't basically. But we're there to support and what we can do is say that we reward you by giving you orders. But when we give these orders, we expect these factories to be up to a certain standard. We will come out and see for ourselves sometimes, and we will support, for instance with MYPOD if you have any problems, but the tendency is that we really need to stop just auditing factories, but really look into the sustainable improvements. And how do we do that? We do that by supporting the suppliers and changing the management shift in taking more responsibility. So I don't think it's easier, because we need to work in another way to really make sure that improvements stay in the factories. It's like having a test. Every time you go and defend something or you just cram like 200 books and then in six months you get tested, it doesn't say anything about what you can do that day. It just says did you not have a hangover or did you actually study, but how you structure your work lead up to that or how you structure your project leading up to the actual examination, that is where you need to excel. You need to do that really well. I honestly think that, and this is the same for the factories, they should be rewarded, they should be evaluated based on their year on out on how they work in the factories. Not just because we test them once a year. This is what we try to change. But that also requires that we have people on the ground to actually sit down and

		work very closely with the factories and the suppliers to do this work. That was a very long answer to maybe not uhm, yeah.
79	37:25,1 - 37:53,6	Theo: No, makes sense, makes sense. You sort of touched the next one already, which is about the overall status of the working conditions, and of written CSR in general. That could be a lot of things, but let's say working conditions or any other social aspects of the CSR. Have they changed?
80	37:53,6 - 37:55,7	Maria: When you say CSR, what do you mean?
81	37:55,7 - 38:09,1	Theo: It could be the social and about the human rights and working conditions in the garment sector? Do you already now see some improvements when you visit?
82	38:09,1 - 38:23,9	Maria: Ah okay, so of the garment industry? Okay, but CSR, we agree CSR is something that a company has as a policy, right? So you mean the status of the what? The Human rights standards, the?
83	38:23,9 - 38:31,1	Theo: In the factories. In the factories. For instance have there already now been some changes in the working conditions?
84	38:31,1 - 38:51,1	Maria: Okay, we would generally say social labor compliance standard or the environment, because there's also environment chemical standard of the factories. Uhm, we can't, I mean the MYPOD project has been running for six months.
85	38:51,1 - 38:51,7	Theo: It's too early, yes?
86	38:51,7 - 39:24,9	Maria: Yes, and this has nothing to do with social labor compliance of the factory, but about productivity. It does not touch upon what we normally look at in the factory. It does not touch on the worker's contract or the wage's level or if they get benefits or it...This touches upon the productivity and that there's a management and dialogue in the factory. It's actually a little bit separate to what we normally look at in the factory.
87	39:24,9 - 39:35,7	Theo: So, you don't really look at working conditions when you visit the factories?
88	39:35,7 - 40:04,4	Maria: Yes, yes, we look at the working conditions in general, but productivity looks at the specific lines in the factory. I don't think we expect that general where you can say...of course when they get more training into maybe better economics or in health and safety, but that is that is a small part of it. None of this is part of the leaning training in the lines. But, yeah it is still a little early.
89	40:04,4 - 40:12,1	Theo: It's it's...You do look at it, but not in relation to the MYPOD project?
90	40:12,1 - 41:14,6	Maria: No, MYPOD project will touch upon some of the health and safety, but it's not how can I say..there's so many elements of what we would do when we go out and evaluate a factory. This is just a small part of it. Like, MYPOD is not touching upon fire safety or building safety or

		electrical safety or trainings. But working hours it does, cause it's a part of productivity. But overall, it's too early to say cause there's no results. That's why it takes them year+ after year+ we can see if there's any result. Because one of the main focus is also that they can maintain it themselves. So we have to come back after certain time and see if they're still up to a certain standard. So that's a little too early to say yet.
91	41:14,6 - 41:21,7	Theo: Yeah and this one you've answered already so that is basically all my questions for you.
92	41:21,7 - 43:14,1	Maria: Yeah and are the brand value a major concern?well you can say, it's not really, but it's also you can..it's quite funny...Bestseller is this private owned company, but the families for instance would prefer that we didn't say anything. Because they think that this is daily business. We shouldn't go out and wave a flag or get applauded just because we do something that we were suppose to do. I know it sounds a little bit cliché, but this is actually how Bestseller is. It is quite difficult to communicate about anything. Of course in our sustainability report, but the families are also very concerned that we would get...if anyone is pointing fingers at us joining a Danida project, because the criticism would be if we are taking money from the state. So, and again if there are productivity gains, what does that mean for Bestseller? Does that mean we work with factories to get all the money for ourselves? So all of these questions that arises with this kind of partnerships is something we would rather avoid. But I of course convince them that this is the best possible way for us to also try and address some of the issues for us to stay in the Myanmar market. So, no I don't think brand value is a major concern. And as you wrote quite...and as a private company. Yeah I think there's a difference. We're not, because we're not, becuase we're not on a stock exchange. We don't have..We're not on a stock exchange. So we're not, we don't have a lot shareholders that need to see the value.
93	43:14,1 - 43:20,7	Theo: No, but you, I don't know protect salessomething? Avoiding negative media coverage?
94	43:20,7 - 43:57,5	Maria: Yeah, no but to be honest the consumers don't know. They're no aware. They can't, these details, they don't understand. The political consumer is a little bit a myth, to be honest. All of this is still brand driven. We haven't heard any, any conceit of, we haven't had any questions about being in Myanmar, even with Rohingya going on. We're concerned. We're very concerned. We haven't had any questions about that from anyone. I was actually surprised. I thought that the consumer would care. I think it's very abstract for them.
95	43:57,5 - 44:00,2	Theo: It makes sense, it makes sense!
96	44:00,2 - 44:00,9	Maria: Yeah, yeah.
97	44:00,8 - 44:03,3	Theo: Thank you.
98	44:03,3 - 44:05,0	Maria: You're welcome.

Interview with DIEH

	Timespan	Content
1	1:31,8 - 1:43,0	Christoffer: So maybe we can start off by you telling us about what, about the MYPOD Project and what your position is in the MYPOD Project? What you do?
2	1:42,7 - 2:46,4	Julie: So the MYPOD project is a strategic partnership between four Danish partners and some local stakeholders. Uhh local Myanmar stakeholders. Uhh the Danish partners are the Danish ETI, the managing partner, and Aalborg university, 3F and Bestseller. Uhh so the project stands on three legs, which are improved productivity, improved working conditions and improved social dialogue in Myanmar's garment sector. And we intent to, to do these improvements by interventions in, primary in Bestseller factories in Myanmar. Bestsellers sources from about 30 factories in Myanmar and we are going to work withapproximately 5, 10 to 12 of them for this project. So what we do is, that we train local professors from a local university, Yangon Technological University. And also we train employers from two local trade unions, in these particularly, particular methodologies that we use for this project. Uhmm and the idea is that we, after we have established the baseline in all project factories and know how to do these interventions which are interventions that goes for around 5 months in total. So uhh right we are in the process of uhh...we have just initiated the interventions in productivity and work environment which are run by Aalborg University in collaboration with Yangon Technological University. And the productivity improvements are based on the methodology of lean productivity. So after having established the baseline during the first six months of 2018, we now begun the interventions in the factories. So professors from Aalborg university have trained local professors from Yangon Technological university and they go to the factories each week to implement these improvements, and to..which will end up being kind of suggestions for the factories, that they can choose to implement in the factories after the MYPOD project has ended. So in each factory we have allocated one production line which we can work with. So we measure the baseline and give the suggestions and all the improvements for one production line in each factory.
3	4:41,5 - 4:42,1	Christoffer: Okay.
4	4:42,1 - 4:47,3	Theo: Can you already now, say anything about the results?
5	4:47,3 - 8:25,8	Julie: From the baseline, we have measured the baseline and all the factories both in productivity, working environment and also just ended baseline in social dialogue, in June. Yeah, in the beginning of June we had the last baseline measurements in social dialogue. And the social dialogue baseline was measured by 3F's local employee and our local project coordinator Nunu Hlaing. And, so we can say, we can see from the productivity baseline that it is a pretty much in line with what we were expecting. The productivity in Myarnmar's garment sector is very

low and much of it has to do with the factories, the way the factories are constructed have never really been thought out that well. There are not that many industrial engineers employed in the factories to actually see and measure the best or smartest way to actually design these production lines. So you see one piece of garment going from one worker across the factory to another worker going back to a third worker sitting in the same position where the first worker was sitting. So in that way you loose a lot of time with the garment going back and forth. And we also see from the baseline that the work environment…there are some very, there are som very easy improvements to make and some of them are more difficult. The more difficult ones are for example the heat in the factories, that's one of the, that's a big thing to change if you could say that. Whereas some of the easier things to change is to have easier access to water, better sitting positions, how the garment flow looks like, so that you don't have too many awkward sitting positions and things like that. Those improvements are easier to go in and identify and to suggest improvements on than the bigger construction wise suggestions. Which we of course are also giving, but yeah. And on the social dialogue part, yeah it is also aligning our expectations pretty much. It is difficult to measure social dialogue in a factory, because in a country like Myanmar you have a huge respect for authorities and you also…you can be kind of unsure what you can say and what you can't say. But we do think that we have a pretty clear picture from the baseline study, but there is some miscommunication in the factories between workers and management which we can identify just from seeing that they are saying different things about the same things. So in that way we can see that there is some miscommunication, and so, but of course we also know which kind of biases can be with their answers to the questions we ask them for measuring social dialogue. But the social dialogue is still being analyzed at this point.

6	8:25,8 - 8:34,1	Christoffer: Can you tell us more about the partnership between you and bestseller and Aalborg University? How it began?
7	8:34,1 - 8:36,4	Julie: Between the Danish partners?
8	8:36,4 - 8:37,6	Christoffer: Yes!
9	8:37,6 - 9:19,1	Julie: Well, it began as a …it began….it was a Danish ETI director Mette Boye who was the initiater of this project and she…uhm she kind of got the idea of this project by building on experiences from a former project in Bangladesh. Which was also between Danish ETI, 3F, Aalborg University and Bestseller. So we have a lot of experience from working together as partners and also working in the garment sector.
10	9:19,1 - 9:21,4	Christoffer: Separately or together as well?
11	9:21,4 - 10:23,9	Julie: Together as well. This is a former Danida project as well, it is just from a different fund than the DMDP fund that we are currently being funded by. So, but it is very much built from the experiences that we have from Bangladesh, but of course there are a lot of differences, just culturally, and also industrial wise there are a lot of differences between Bangladesh and Myanmar. But the kind of, the idea of having

		productivity, and work environment and social dialogue to, to supplement each other from improving the three different legs, that enhanced social dialogue can also improve productivity, and that better work environment can also improve the social dialogue and so on, that stems from the project that we had in Bangladesh.
12	10:23,9 - 10:40,1	Christoffer: Okay. Theo: So this was sort of a formalization of an existing network? or not a formalization, but a repetition maybe?
13	10:40,1 - 11:50,0	Julie: Hmm yeah…but I don't think you can ever repeat such a project because there are so many aspects that you need to rethink, because it's a new country. And even if it was still in Bangladesh…many of the interventions and how we design the project, especially for the social dialogue part is very much based on the answers given at the factories. So 3F actually have to go in and analyze the baseline to be able to design the interventions, so you can never just….but of course they have some standard, they have some different standards that they can kind of……like they have some frameworks that they can follow of course, but still everything is very specific to the situation and the country that we work in. But, but yeah, you can say that it is kind of a repetition, that the believe that you can improve work environment and productivity and social dialogue in the garment sector by including all three parts at the same time.
14	11:50,0 - 11:56,9	Theo: Right, so it showed some positive results in Bangladesh in the previous project?
15	11:56,9 - 12:52,8	Julie: I am not the right person to actually speak about the Bangladesh project, because I'm not completely sure about the final results. Also because it's actually been continued by our sister organization ETI in the UK. And so they have continued the Bangladesh project, but I'm not sure about the end results, but I know that we have had reason to continue working with these three legs based on good experiences from Bangladesh working with local universities and local trade unions on these improvements at all three factory levels which are management, supervisors and worker level. So, but you should probably ask Mikkel & Pi about the results from Bangladesh, he's more into that .
16	12:52,8 - 13:01,6	Christoffer: Can you tell us more about DIEH's role in the partnership? How does it differ from other stakeholders?
17	13:01,6 - 13:02,2	Julie: Which role?
18	13:02,2 - 13:06,1	Christoffer: DIEH's
19	13:06,1 - 15:18,6	Julie: Our role in this project is that we are the project managers. So what we do, is that we coordinate all the different parts of the project, so we support all the Danish partners in coordinating. There's a lot of just administrative coordinating…just when is anyone going to the factories? Are the factories aware of that we're coming? What do the factories need to prepare? What do the local university need to prepare? Those kinds of

		coordination. And then we have the local project coordinator Nunu Hliang, she's an employer of Danish ETI, so she reports to us and we make sure to get all relevant information from her to the partners. It is also us who facilitate our steering group meetings. And arrange the steering group meetings and make sure that we report properly to Danida every six months. I am sitting right to do the..I'm doing right now the half year report for Danida so that the project partners like; Aalborg university, 3F, especially they can focus on their interventions and their project design and their collaboration with the local partners; the university and the two trade unions. And we make sure to be a supporting role for coordinating everything and make sure that we are on time with everything. Make sure that we don't get too delayed. That we uphold all the KPIs that we have. We have very strict KPIs for every year of the project . So it is the Danish ETI's responsibility to make sure that everything goes smoothly and I was there to initiate the project from September'17 to build the relationship with the local partners and be a contact person on ground and get Nunu in to the system etc.
20	15:18,6 - 15:32,1	Christoffer: And within the collaboration between the Danish partners, has there occurred any challenges so far? Or can you identify any challenges, maybe of the collaboration?
21	15:32,1 - 18:41,9	Julie: Yeah, well it's of course challenging that we…but, there are always the different….like we represent the different incentives. But I think that all of us are very aware of each other's incentives. So we know that every time a new dilemma comes up, of course 3F thinks about the security of the workers and the unions and the WCCs and the factories etc. And of course Aalborg university they have their thoughts on the productivity improvements together with also the social dialogue improvements and also how we can strengthen the academic, the academic part of the project and the YTU (Yangon Technological University). And Bestsellers they need to….uhm they need to, like it's their suppliers so we need to also think a lot about Bestseller when we arrange with the factories and when we go there we don't inform the factories too late and they get annoyed at Bestseller etc. So we need to…I think and that's probably one of the good things from building on previous..uhh a previous project in Bangladesh, that the partners are very aware of each other's incentives and each other's main focus points and skills. So I think there is in general, between the Danish project partners a great respect for each others' different contribution to the project. Of course it can be difficult sometimes, like for example when we have to arrange with the factories that we're going there, it is very difficult for our local project coordinator to ever get a hold of the factory. Some of them are very difficult to just reach by telephone or by email or something like that, but if Bestseller contacts them it is very easy for Bestseller, because they of course have another interest than maybe being involved with the MYPOD project. They want to be involved, because maybe Bestseller says that they should be involved as well. So you can say that Bestseller can be a great asset if we can reach the factories, but also we shouldn't do that too much because that's also our responsibility. There are some, there are some very specific coordination challenges that we have spent a lot of time in the steering group talking about, so if we contact the factories and they haven't replied within five days than Bestseller will contact

		them etc etc. So we have all these different systems for trying to... But it is still very difficult to....especially the coordination on ground in Myanmar is very difficult, because the communication is so different than what we're used to in Denmark.
22	18:41,9 - 18:53,9	Christoffer: So would you say then that a part from coordination, that aligning the incentives of the different stakeholders within the project is another challenge?
23	18:53,9 - 21:30,2	Julie: I would say that it is...I would call it a general challenge from strategic partnerships, that we of course are very aware of. And I think that in this project, between the Danish partners, there is a great understanding of the each other's different interests. And I think that we are all trying to see how we can meet each other's interests. I think that also stems from the...for example from a trade union point of view you could say that improved productivity could damage the workers more than, like the working conditions more than improving them. Because improved productivities, with improved productivity at the factory floor you can take more orders in and we know that many factory owners are probably very greedy, that's why we see all of these issues with the working environment and the factories. So improved productivity would just make them able to take in more orders. So that's a typical critique from a trade union point of view, that just to improve productivity. But because 3 F, also knows from previous experience and we also have a common believe in this methodology, of combining these three legs that the project stands on. I think that, that because Aalborg University knows that you can't improve the productivity part without the social dialogue and that 3F also knows that the improved productivity and the improved working conditions are part of the improved social dialogue, we have kind of an equal respect for each other's skills and each other's interests. But that's very important I think. If you had implementations of improvements, where the partners were maybe disagreed about each other's improvements or skills are something like that or contributions to the project it would have been very difficult, because there are many times where we have to balance how much time do we spend on productivity and work environment and how much on social dialogue. And of course we align it a lot, but all the partners know that it's equally important, so I don't think that we are, that we uhh challenged in the interests of the different partners for the project. At least not so far.
24	21:30,2 - 21:45,1	Christoffer: So you have explained a bit about the challenges. Could you also give us some highlights maybe about what have been working exceptionally well within the collaboration?
25	21:45,1 - 26:17,3	Julie: Uhmm yes, I think that it's a uhmm....I think, because I distinguish between the Danish collaboration and also with the local partners, because I think that you can kind of see the Danish steering group as maybe one organ and then we have also the local partners that we are all really trying collaborate with. And I think that, if I should just go a step back, that one of the challenges from the partnership is mostly working with local partners because it is such a different environment and different culture. And we have some obstacles that you wouldn't see in Denmark. To be specific one of the challenges, especially during the

first six months of the project, was that the local university had to get everything approved; every partnership or every, every project that they're involved with they had to get it approved by the ministry of education in Myanmar. The bureaucracy in Myanmar is very different than in Denmark. So, and since none of the local partners aren't registered as organizations or companies in Myanmar they can't..they didn't know what to tell the Ministry of education, because they don't really know any of us. So they actually just feared to apply to be part of this project. So we had to involved our embassy in Myanmar to actually reach out to the ministry of education to let them know about the project and then the university could apply for this collaboration. And all this takes so long. It took me a month just to get this in place. And in the meantime the local university didn't want to get too much in to the project, which was very stagnating to the project. So these kinds of things they appear or they occur sometimes and that's that's....those are the challenges. You have to have plan b, c, d and e for everything that can happen because you dont', you never know when or if one of the partners might say that "we can't do this anymore and we have to withdraw from the project" or something like that. So there's a lot of taking good care of the partners and involving them and making sure that they understand and not forgetting to give them all the status and feedback about the project, because then they might just withdraw. But I think that some of the very good things that we have experienced so far. One of the good things from a Danish point of view is that we actually stick more or less to the time plan so far. Which is not even maybe expected, but it's not even what to expect maybe that you would stick to the time schedule. But, I think we have managed to stick to the time plan very well. I also think that we have had very few amendments to the project so far that we actually,we are quite on board with what we have promised to Danida so far. But of course there are some things that we have had to adjust. Also one of the partners that withdrew from the project and we're still trying to see how we can work with that. But, I think on the positive side, I think that all the partners have been very engaged, all the Danish partners have been very engaged and have been very positive about the collaboration with the local university. They have been really engaged and they have been very ambitious on working with the project. And they have kept all their promises to the project and one of the professors is writing his PhD about the MYPOD project. So I think all in all the partnership with the local university is one of the things I think we really did well so far.

| 26 | 26:17,3 - 26:46,9 | Christoffer: Sorry....uhmm..how does.. According to you or DIEH, how does the collaboration across sector help solve issues within the garment industry in Myanmar? |
| 27 | 26:46,9 - 29:39,7 | Julie: In Myanmar, it is especially for this project it's been really important to have Bestseller onboard. Because that the factories are very busy and they are very...how can you say, they can't really take much more in, so you will probably not get many factories to participate in a project like this by themselves or without anything or anyone pushing them or giving them the incentives to be involved. So by that, you could say that Bestseller is definitely a good incentive for the factories that we are working with. So, in that way the multi stakeholder partnership is |

very, very important. And also of course 3F's expertise in working with trade unions in developing countries all over the world. And also they have a long history working in Bangladesh and in Nepal I think also they worked a lot. But they have a big expertise in working with these trade unions. So that's a skill that Bestseller would never know...they would never know how to go in or maybe they would I can't say that they never would, but I just know that 3F has a very, very good expertize in going in to the factories and finding out how the current situation looks like. And how to do the proper improvements and how to engage all layers in the factory level, all three factory levels that we are working with. So, and of course Aalborg university are experts in lean methodology improvements and have also worked in Bangladesh and are also working in other sectors with lean productivity and OHS work environment. So they uhh..so in that way you can say that all the partners are very crucial for the project, also because we've built the project around these different skills that the partners have of course. And that is what is, what gets possible when you work across sectors like that, that you have all of these interests and skills and knowledge and experience that all in all contribute to each other.

28	29:39,7 - 29:59,1	Christoffer: So just to clarify the opportunities of a like public private partnership would be to have access to capacity, knowledge and more engagement from the factories?
29	29:59,1 - 31:56,1	Julie: In this particular project, yes! I think the fact that we're working with the partners that are involved in MYPOD enhances the engagement from the factories of course, because we have Bestseller involved. But we do also have a local factory involved that are very interested, because I have to say that all the factories except from one that is German, owned by a German. But the other factories that we have, that we are working with from Bestseller's supply chain they are Chinese owned. Then we also have one locally owned factory in the project, so that is not supplying Bestseller. So, but their incentive to participate is actually to improve the productivity and social dialogue, which is a wish that comes from within the factory. Whereas the Bestseller factory is, of course Bestseller has nominated them to be part of this project and talk to them about it and presented them the project and everyone agreed to be part of the project and also signed an MOU, all of them. But from the local side they don't have the buyer to say "I think it's a good idea that you're involved in this project". So we do also see engagement from a factory where we don't have Bestseller involved which is very positive I think. And of course they are very interested in getting into a more international market. So the local factories, there is a tendency that the local factories mostly produce for the local market. Whereas the Chinese factories which are the main part of the factories, they produce for international brands, such as the Bestseller brand, and H&M and Cheap Owen, Inditex and so on.
30	31:56,0 - 32:45,5	Theo: So you mentioned before, you know the other partners' incentives of joining and also the factories I guess they want to earn more money or produce more. So is there a goal to become more efficient in their production or is it to sort of become uhm or achieve an approval of some sort, allowing them to gain an entrance in the western market, because

		they are treating their workers better or something. Is it the productivity that is increased or is it the approval that uhh?
31	32:45,5 - 32:53,1	Julie: I am not sure I understand, because the Bestseller factories already produce for the international markets.
32	32:53,1 - 33:03,2	Theo: Yes, so what are the incentives for becoming, a part from Bestseller, to become nominated to do so. What is in it for them?
33	33:03,2 - 34:55,2	Julie: Well if they engage with the project and actually take the….so the interventions that we do, as I told you initially they're made on one production line and the point is that we can use one production line as kind of the prototype and design a business case for the factories, showing them that if you do these improvements in your whole factory, you can actually improve the productivity by "this and this" percentage wise. So what we do is a prototype of what the factories can actually expect if they do streamline this to the whole factory. Or to replicate it to the whole factory. And there is a great, great business case for the factories in, when we present to them the improvements that we believe that we can make. And show them the results actually, because we do implement these improvements, the ones that we can implement with the resources that we have. We do that to see how much we can increase the productivity and to do the prototyping and present to the factories that this is just from one production line. But after that it is up for the factories if they actually want to keep working with the lean productivity and the work environment productivity, and the work environment improvements and the social dialogue improvements. If they want to continue that work. But the incentives from the factories is mainly the business case that lies within the productivity gain.
34	34:55,2 - 35:20,7	Theo: Right, and in these trainings, the lean trainings, there are aspects that influences the workers' conditions or? And workers' conditions are part of these lean trainings? It is not simply making the production more efficient, it is also benefitting the workers?
35	35:20,7 - 35:23,1	Julie: Yeah and Yeah, exactly! because the uhh..
36	35:23,1 - 35:30,6	Theo: Is that a condition or is it just like that in most cases? Or coincidently or is it on purpose?
37	35:30,6 - 35:32,9	Julie: No, because the suggestions that we come up with are also for the occupational health and safety, which we call the work environment, the working conditions and the social dialogue. Because we do believe that all of them are, all of these three kinds of implementations are equally dependent on each other. So another gain that I forgot to say before is that one of the biggest issues in the garment sector in Myanmar is the turnover rate. You can see in some of the factories that the turnover rates are up to 80% in just one month. That you would get almost a completely new staff within a month. This is very, very inefficient for the factories, because every month they have to teach new workers to do the same procedures. So of course they are very interested in keeping the same workers so that the productivity will be increased, because if you repeat some of the work, you will get better and better and the

productivity would go up. So the productivity is also low, because of the great turnover rate. And we, that's where, that's where one of the places where the social dialogue really kicks in, because you also see that the main reason to leaving a working place is because of your relation to your supervisor or your boss. It is actually in Myanmar, you can see statistics that it is actually rated above the minimum wage or the wage that they receive. The, like the partnerships that they have with their supervisor, if they don't have a good relationship with their supervisor they would just quite. So if you have a higher level of social dialogue, you are more likely to stay in the factory that you work in, because you like your boss and so on. So, and that's also improved productivity, to increase the social dialogue. One of the places where you can really see that these things complement each other. And working conditions for example, that's also as I mentioned; sitting positions, access to water. One of the working conditions we're actually looking at is how much you damage your eyes when you sit and sow. And you see sometimes that they sit with a black fabrics on a black sowing machine which is very, very difficult for the eye to tell the things apart and you get more tired and the productivity goes down. So that's a concrete example of where productivity and working environment go hand in hand. And also that social dialogue contributes to the productivity. So, we believe that you actually need all three elements to actually see increased productivity and that they each support each other. And you can of course, you can also choose just to look at lean and say we look at the workflow and re-design it and we completely see how we can decrease all the waste time and the waste fabric etc. which lean is very much focused on, but then you wouldn't have the improved work environment and the social dialogue, which is also part of working with ethical trading and the whole project is to generate development in the sector. But we do believe that also work environment and social dialogue is contributing to the productivity and also making it more sustainable, cause if you just do lean improvements the factory could just do more orders and the workers would just leave the factories like we see everywhere. So it is important that you focus on the different levels to make sure that the workers don't just quite.

38	35:32,9 - 39:32,0	
39	39:32,0 - 39:49,2	Christoffer: When you say social dialogue, you refer to the communication with the factories? Does that also include the relation between the employees and the employer?
40	39:49,2 - 40:38,1	Julie: Exactly! Social dialogue is the level of communication between workers and management, workers, supervisor. How you're able to communicate across levels. Whereas in Denmark we have a very, very high level of social dialogue, actually at like a friend stage with our boss. And we don't have a limit as to what we say to our boss. It is also....the level of social dialogue is also measured on the ability to complain to your boss and how often your complain is, leads to a change. So, which we have a very high level of in Denmark, but very low level in Myanmar.
41	40:38,1 - 41:04,5	Theo: I just have one more thing actually, because you mentioned uhmm the difficulties with YTU that it took you months to get approval and you

		said in general that it's a difficult environment to work in. Can you give just a few more examples of the difficulties?
42	41:04,5 - 41:08,5	Julie: Yeah...with the local, working with the local partners etc?
43	41:08,5 - 41:10,9	Theo: Cultural, linguistic and things like that?
44	41:10,9 - 46:41,8	Julie: Uhmm yeah, well there are, there are many, many different challenges. Like on the factory floor, there are also cultural challenges within the workers in the factories, because most of them are Chinese owned. And the Chinese and Myanmar cultures are very, very different. There are also organizations in Myanmar working on making like guidelines to actually very, very practical guidelines for the factory floor to just hang on the wall, just to show when a Chinese man does this it means this. And when a Myanmar person does this it means this. To just try to eliminate some of the cultural difficulties, for example Chinese people have a tendency to point with their feet, which is very disrespectful in Myanmar culture. So that's some of the places where you can kind of clash. And also in Myanmar culture you have a very high respect for authorities. So you don't, you only very rarely say if you disagree with your boss or your supervisor or something like that. You don't complain that much or. So, that's on factory floor. But, the kind of respect for authorities, it can also be a big issue for the MYPOD project, because when we go to the local university as Danish professors and Danish organizations they automatically see us as authorities or kind of ranked differently. Also, because of the custom of politeness to your guests. So that means also that sometimes when we go to the university and try to talk to them about the challenges and experiences, they say that everything is fine and that they don't experience any challenges and that they're very happy to be involved. And the minute after we leave and arrive in Denmark they would call Nunu our local coordinator and say "this and this and this is wrong". And we would actually have had the opportunity to talk to them about it when we were there. But, but a lot of that is also learnings that we have to know how to cope with. Like we have to learn how to get the right information out of the professors from the university. And I have been working a lot with Nunu on this instead of....because there's a lot of challenges that happen, because you as a western person believe that the person you ask, if you ask "are you satisfied?" and you say no then it's on you, because I did ask you. But I cannot ask Nunu "are you satisfied?", because she would never say no. So I would ask her, "how are you?" Instead and she has to explain how she feels. Or I would ask her "how do you feel about this task?" or "what was your impression of this meeting?" instead of saying "did you think it went well?", because then she would say yes. And we also need to know how to analyze those social contexts with the professors from the university and also the local trade unions and in the factories when we are working, to know that when he says or she says "yes" it might just be because they won't say no. So, yeah those are some of the cultural challenges that can be....yeah and also the level of projects in the garment sector looking like our project there are maybe three projects there that look a lot like ours. Which is really, really good, and it also creates some...because then you get some completely new projects and other projects have been learning from their mistakes for years, but we

only have three years to do this project. So it is also very limited how much we can change the project proposal as it looks like, the one that has been approved by Danida and everything. So, we can learn from the other partners, but three years is a very, very short time to do this I think. And I've been very eager to learn from ILO out there, because they have, they're based there and they have been working in the garment sector for many years and they are also working with H&M. But, they have a bigger span as to how much they can prolong the projects they're working on. So they don't compromise, they don't have to compromise some things if...like if they need to get some approvals, they will wait till they get approvals and then they will continue to do it properly. And sometimes we actually have to compromise some of our and kill our darlings, because we don't have time, so we just have to move on. So I think one of the challenges is actually the time limitation, because if we, I think we could do an even better job if we had more time, yeah.

45	46:41,8 - 46:56,7	Christoffer: So you mentioned earlier like a positive aspect of the public private partnership within uhh like to solve issues within the garment industry in Myanmar in general. Could you also just mention some main challenges in general to the public private partnership?
46	46:56,7 - 46:59,4	Julie: Uhh about the strategic partnerships in Myanmar?
47	46:57,3 - 47:14,5	Christoffer: Yeah, like just public private partnerships in Myanmar, like in general? Not specifically the MYPOD, but maybe like if you also considered the other projects that are similar? Like if there are some main challenges that you all could have experienced?
48	47:14,5 - 47:22,0	Julie: uhmm...uhmmm..yeah
49	47:22,0 - 47:28,5	Christoffer: well, like challenges that are specificuhh in regards to the public private partnership.
50	47:28,5 - 49:57,3	Julie: That...because I did already mention the like the different interests and potential challenge. I think...uhm I don't know if there are any general challenges to the public private partnerships in Myanmar. And I'm not that much in to the other projects, so that I could say... of course if you see all businesses and companies, all big brands they uphold the UN guiding principles for business and human rights and so on. But, and they all have different codes of conducts that they give to the factories and so on. And I think that when talking about the different interests of partners in a public private partnership it is that the level of what is good and what is ethical and what is like, what is development and what is good work environment and what is not good work environment. And also that limit is very different, between trade union and a brand and between an NGO and a brand. So, I think sometimes leveling the expectations as to what is good enough for this project, what do we consider good working environment. But then we also , we have a lot of conventions that we use etc. But I think that that's probably one of the general and that's even if you work with coffee or with garment or vanilla..I don't know. Different sectors where you do strategic partnerships for improving ethical trading. I think that the level

		of what is what is ethical and what is good improvement and, so yeah that's probably one of the more overall challenges of strategic partnerships.
51	49:57,3 - 50:40,0	Christoffer: Uhmm..yeah so like you mentioned like that one of...how can you say it...like the main achievements was to improve the work environment, and productivity. So how would you describe like in terms of productivity? I can imagine it includes transfer of knowledge and capability within the factories. Uhm, so could you maybe explain a bit more on this process?
52	50:40,0 - 50:43,5	Julie: Could you elaborate on the question?
53	50:43,5 - 51:01,9	Christoffer: Yeah, so like basically, how are you intending to improve the working environment and productivity within the garment sector in Myanmar? Like I can imagine for example that there is a transfer of capabilities like from, maybe from Bestseller to local factories, yeah?
54	51:01,9 - 51:09,2	Julie: Uhmm..I'm not sure what you mean with the transfer process.
55	51:09,2 - 51:18,9	Christoffer: Like, how do you ensure that the local factories gain this knowledge and capabilities that they need in order to maybe improve productivity?
56	51:18,9 - 51:24,3	Julie: Uhmm so how when we...do you mean, after the interventions how we communicate it to the factories? or?
57	51:24,3 - 51:25,6	Christoffer: Yeah.
58	51:25,6 - 54:13,0	Julie: Uhmm so we do...one of the one of the...uhm one of the big KPIs from the project is to build a business case, that Bestseller will...they are the main responsibles to build this business case. That we can use to actually show to factories and that we can use within the sector to communicate about the business case and doing these improvements on productivity, work environment and social dialogue. So the point is that we can use the results, that we, so we won't use the results from the specific factory. We will gather all the results by the end of the project where we have had. Yeah, the goal is to have 12 factories through the project in total, divided on two batches. And we are doing the first one now. So after the second batch we take all the results that we have gathered so far from the interventions. Both on, both from Aalborg university and 3F and we build a business case around it. If there is one. We don't know yet. But based on our, our thesis is that there is a business case and it needs improvement. And that it is implemented simultaneously. So we do have, I can't remember how many...I think we have a KPI saying that "50 brands or something like that should be exposed to our business case or should be able to read it" and we have a KPI as to how many factories and how we should actually communicate the business case. And we will also do a final seminar in Yangon to present the business case. And we will have all the business partners to present the results from the project. So that's the idea that we can use all of the results. One of the goal is of course that hopefully the factories,

the concrete factories will take these suggestions and streamline them to the whole factory, because they can see the business case in this. And another goal is that we will have some data to give us, to show us that the business case is actually there so that we can use it as a valid argument to other factories that they should look into these improvements. Because that improved work environment and social dialogue will also improve the productivity. So in that the way we hope that the project can be more sustainable like that.

59	54:13,0 - 54:20,8	Christoffer: Yeah, so that, would that be your way of ensuring that they maintain those practices that you have proposed to them?
60	54:20,8 - 55:14,8	Julie: We can't really ensure it. But we can hope and we can highly suggest it. And hopefully they will as good business as many of these Chinese, the factory owners are. Hopefully, they can also see the business case, to a degree where they would work ambitiously with implementing these improvements to the other production lines in the factoriy and one of the suggestions is also that they hire industrial engineers in the factories and help them with these improvements. Or that they use some of the consultants that are trained to do this and there are many organizations in Myanmar including us that are training locals, also to be able to guide the factories and these improvements. So that's also, yeah that's what we hope.
61	55:14,8 - 55:44,6	Christoffer: Uhmm..I think, uhmm I just have like one last question. Like the theme of sustainability within the different sectors is very "trendy", if I may say so.
62	55:44,6 - 55:45,7	Julie: A buzz word, yeah.
63	55:45,7 - 56:18,4	Christoffer: But..and there's a lot of people that want to implement sustainable solutions, but it costs more. How do you see this within the garment industry, within the factories? Are they also keen on seeing uhmm on finding a cheaper solution, ith short term uhmm how do you say it uhmm maybe with a visible impact on short term rather than long term?
64	56:18,4 - 59:42,3	Julie: I think that within the garment sector it is very difficult to look further than short term, because of the fast fashion industry and fast fashion culture. Everyone is kind of trying to run after themselves, in the fashion industry and the garment sector. It's a..so of course it is difficult for a factory owner having clients or having customers like Bestseller or H&M etc, that have 50+ collections each year to think about long term solutions that would maybe be cheaper in the long term, but it would take more from them to implement now instead of implementing short term solutions that are efficient now and maybe more expensive in the longer run. But I don't know..I can't really speak on the behalf of them of course....I can't say, but I do believe...Sustainability as you also say is a buzz word. So it's, it's very flaky, like what does it mean. But if you look at the word in itself, is that it can sustain or that it can uphold itself for a longer time and I think in Myanmar, when thinking of sustainability I really think that the turnover rate and the social dialogue part is very, very crucial for anything good to happen in the industry. Because if you

		want development to be sustained for longer time you also need employers that are motivated by their work or just have a good relationship with their supervisor and that don't quite. And stuff like that, but sustainability in the garment industry is very dependent on which country you are looking at, because in Myanmar for example you don't have the right climate to grow cotton and they don´t produce chemical fabrics in Myanmar themselves yet. So if you look at a country like India where they have other sustainability issues, like cotton field, chemicals, chemical waste, people working with chemicals. Both, so both the environment and the people working with the chemicals that is a whole other sustainability issue that you don't have in Myanmar where you have other issues. But of course, and then in India you also have the factory issues, that's the bigger part of the supply chain there. So sustainability in the garment sector is very dependent on which country you're looking at. And in Myanmar they look very much at the work environment and the working conditions. And in Bangladesh you have the very, very tall factories like you saw it Rana Plaza that collapsed. But in Myanmar the factories are newer, so they aren't built more than two floors, most of them won't be taller than them. So it is very different what kind of issues you see in different countries, but I think what goes for all the garment sector is that everyone is running after themselves. No one is getting paid, uhh for, paid enough. The working conditions are very, very bad and it is very hot in the factories and stuff like that. There's a lot of waste.
65	59:42,3 - 59:47,7	Christoffer: I think that's it. Thank you very much for your time! Theo: Thank you so much!
66	59:47,7 - 59:52,8	Julie: You're so welcome. You're so so welcome!

Interview with 3F

	Timespan	Content
1	0:00,0 - 1:48,2	T: thank you for letting me come today. I would like to start out by asking how the partnership began but I know that you've said that you haven't been around since the beginning, is that right? L: Not been around since for the project since the beginning. I only took over the responsibility of the Asia programme by the beginning of this year. I've been working with Africa before that. So to answer very specifically I'd rather ask Jesper afterwards so I don't say anything that's wrong if that's okay but 3F has been part of DIEH - the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative - as you know since... for the last ten years... T: since the beginning. L: yeah, so and in general especially in our Asia programme seek to work on corporate social responsibility with Danish companies and so on. And in that regard you could say it links very well to our strategy in Asia as well. And we try to as much as possible and more and more to be in dialogue with Danish companies about their CSR policies when they source in developing countries. Especially in terms of facilitating dialogue with the national trade union there.
2	1:48,2 - 3:21,3	T: So how does that work? Do you seek out companies or do they come to you or? L: They come to us mainly... or it differs. Sometimes our partners... we have a few cases from Myanmar but that's also very new but else a lot from Bangladesh. Either our partners with trade unions locally will come to us and say 'in this local company where this brand - whatever brand - we can say BESTSELLER just beacuse that's the company here, where they are sourcing there has been a case of very often illegal firing of trade unionists'. So when people become members of trade unions they become activists so shop ?? for instance they get fired. So it can be the trade unions themselves that ask us for assistance in terms of contacting the brand and say 'we have heard ABC'. It can also be brands that contact us and say 'we have this factory that supply - whatever - to us and we have heard about this case, is this something you know something about?' and then it would often be to... we would not mediate, that's not our job but we would be happy to facilitate a dialogue between the supplier, the company, the trade union and also help the trade union prepare. So in that sense MYPOD is pretty much aligned to that strategy.
3		T: I've already done the interview with Maria from BESTSELLER and Peter from Aalborg University and they both mentioned the

		different experiences from Bangladesh and that was a sort of stepping stone. Do you see it the same way? L: Again I'd maybe like Jesper to answer but we... I mean you can say it's a stepping stone... our role has not been as big in that project that it is in this one, the trade union was not involved in the same sense in that project so the social dialogue component is as far I see much bigger in the MYPOD project than the Bangladesh project... but you can say it's the same linkage between lean and social dialogue. T: Is that the only way from your perspective, from your perspective, that MYPOD is different to that project? L: I don't know what the big differences are for BESTSELLER and for Aalborg University but for us it's much more that we have local partners involved - or hopefully we will have local partners involved. So the social dialogue component is a big thing but again if there's a lot of issues in terms of the beginning of the project and comparing then I'll ask Jesper about it... T: Sure, it was just to start out the interview.
4	3:21,3 - 8:47,5	T: So you've already mentioned your engagement in this project as bigger compared to the bangladesh project but how would you describe your role in this partnership? L: It's difficult to say but now the logic is that you have a control or administrative function you could say in DIEH and then you have both the institution knowledge so you have the university, you have the trade union and you have the company and of course our role would be to ensure capacity buidling of trade unions to ensure workers' engagement in this whole linkage between lean, occupational health and safety and social dialogue. MYPOD is a different project for us compared to how we normally work. Normally we have partners in developing countries who are organised in the same kind of sectors as we do in Denmark for instance in textile, in transport, in construction or whatever and then we would take a point of departure in their strategic plan, where is it they want to go and then support them in that. So it's much more a full organisational development approach where the MYPOD project is quite specific on some specific themes linked to some specific factories. So our role is very much to ensure that the local trade unions get involved at the factory level so they can organise workers, they can educate workers in terms of how would they uhm both in terms of educating workers in Myanmar which is a very young industrial sector you can say on basically to be good industrial workers... I mean to stay in the factories, to enter into dialogue with the management, to make their claims and so but also

to come for instance in relation to lean I know it is also a big part of Aalborg's approach but lean doesn't really function if you don't have the workers on board. So the workers can also come with suggestions on how this can be done more effective or in terms of occupational health and safety how can this be done more healthy or??? So yeah there can be... I mean... Obviously... For many factories and not necessarily for these specific factories but for some of them the lean component is much more easy to understand... I mean there's a cost benefit basically, where the social dialogue component is a longer stretch. The selling point you can say is often turnover that if you get the workers involved there is a greater chance of them to stay longer. They have a, I think, a 25% turnover a month or something so there could also be some economic benefit.

| 5 | | T: So this relates to the workers... you mentioned that you were aiming to teach them how to be good workers.

L: We don't teach but you could say part of the whole development industrial development in general is that you learn to be industrial workers I mean a lot of these workers in the textile sector in Myanmar are young girls coming in from the countryside trying their luck in the city you could say... and normally you can say workers could... if they are not satisfied they quit their job and go somewhere else because there's also this opportunity at the moment, there is the opportunity to get a job somewhere else. So as long as the conditions are not good enough it's easier for them to just move instead of 'if we stay and actually have influence so we can improve our working conditions we can improve our salaries and so on', but they need the experience to actually feel it on their own body 'we are able to influence our own work life'. And I don't... most of the workers I think at the moment in Myanmar in the textile sector, they haven't had that experience I mean the trade union movement is extremely young because it's been illegal under the military dictatorship so yeah. |
| 6 | | T: So this problem if you could say of keeping workers in the factories is that the main challenge in this MYPOD project? If not the main one, then one of the...

L: uhmm... I would say keeping workers in the factory is the main challenge for the factories, for the MYPOD project there is a number of things I mean everything from... for the local partners so both the trade unions, the factories and the employers organisation that we don't really have on board, but for those parties to actually see there is a business case in this whole idea between linking between linking lean, social dialogue and occupational health and safety I think that's the main challenge that will... right now as you probably know we have the first batch of factories and then when |

		we have gone through the whole process with them we will start a second batch towards the end of the year and hopefully we can show a more proper business case for the second batch so they can actually see that it also works. Right now it's a lot about explaining and seeing as you go so getting all the local partners properly on board is one of the main challenges. And the other is that you start from a very low starting point. I mean it's quite... it's quite complex issues that you... I mean... imagine you have trade unions... from a trade union perspective you have trade unions that have been in the country for maybe three years and normally in most parts of the world the first things you look into is obviously salaries, working hours and so on... and now we come with this whole... if you can come with inputs on how to structure the production differently so your employers will earn more money but you should have a part of it... I mean it's quite complex issues that we ask very young industrial workers to start with so... so the starting point I would also say is a challenge there.
7		T: And the workers need to develop as well? L: The trade unions I mean, they need to... right now in all the factories that we are at the moment you don't have a trade union so you have trade union federations so national trade unions standing outside who has to get into these factories and start organising workers. What you do have is you have in the Myanmar law you have these workplace coordination committees which theoretically is a social dialogue forum where you have both managers and uhh... both the employers' and the workers' side represented and that's where you could raise your issues and so on but in most factories they are not functioning very well... they are quite young first of all... they are new... they are not democratically elected at least the baseline we have established it's not... in some factories the workers representatives in these coordination committees are supervisors so they are workers but they have some kind of manger responsibility you could say. So I'd say I mean getting from a point right now everything is more or less solved by conflict. If there is a problem you strike or you leave or you fire people so it's very conflict oriented. So for both employers' and workers' side it's a lot about getting the experience that you can actually talk about things and reach compromises and that takes a very long time to learn. I mean we have what a 100 years [hi]story here in Denmark.
8		T: So do you think by maturing and developing these trade unions that in the long run you'll be able to prevent workers from behaving maybe opportunistic or individualist ways by just leaving? L: No! I don't think you are ever gonna do that, but I don't think we can see everywhere in the world that when workers do join forces come together, come with their proposals are able to negotiate and

the employers do the same you have a much more peaceful working environment. It's not just the workers, I want to say, it's just as much the employers. I mean you have all sorts of examples from these factories where you have had especially chinese employers who are used to being like to yelling and punishing and firing people and so so it's both ways that you need mutual trust I'd say. That you even... also here in Denmark we have a long tradition of dialogue and we don't... I mean we disagree but we do come to a table and sit down and try to solve issues before I mean that's also the biggest strike we just had or the big conflict we just had in Denmark... I mean it's not usual we normally try to solve it peacefully... but yes as labour market matures and becomes more dialogue based it's definitely a much more peaceful working environment and people are also more interested in staying in their jobs if they have proper conditions.

| 9 | | T: Yes, so hopefully it will lower the employee turnover?

L: Hopefully it will but we are also talking long-term. I don't think it will happen within the two years of this project.

T: It sets a good example hopefully. So you mentioned earlier that this project is not how you usually do business or work. Is it unique or just rather unusual?

L: In general I think it is a unique project in that you have the three Danish parties coming in and working with similar parties I mean. It's unique for us to be directly in partnership with a company. It's getting more and more in that direction. I mean one thing is that we have the MYPOD project, now we also have a strategic partnership agreement with Danida where we work together with ???? and that is unique and has some obvious advantages that you can go out and show that we are able to work employers and workers together towards a common goal but you have to be able also in that kind of partnership to do things... to show that there are differences as well... that we don't necessarily agree on everything so for instance it wouldn't help us or BESTSELLER for that matter if we always when every time BESTSELLER had meetings with the factories that we should be there or every time we have meetings with the trade unions... I mean we have to be able to both do things separately and do things together but it is... it's definitely unique that workers and employers work hand in hand in a developing project... it's going more and more in that direction I would say but it's a change in approach. So that's one thing but the other thing is also that just the MYPOD project is as the name says a project where we would work more in partnerships so you could say there's more things in a project like this that is decided from Denmark than what we would normally work with. We would have much... the partners would be |

		more involved in the design of the cooperation than what is the case here.
10		T: Yeah ok. Yes. In terms of the collaboration between the different partners in the partnership... L: Here in Denmark? In general? T: Yes. In general. If there is certain problems or challenges with the local partners that you can comment on that as well but are there any challenges or anything that is working particularly well? L: Uhm, I think it is a very positive partnership both in terms of uhm... a group of people who respect eachother and have a good working relationship. It is a very pleasant partnership in that sense and I think there is a general understanding of even though we do things very differently we can explain to eachother this is how we are going to do it, this is how we're going to do it and so on. To be honest I think the main challenge, and I hope that's not something you will write but the main challenge has actually been the cooperation with Danida I think who have been a lot more hands on than for example from our, from 3F's point of view, they have basically told us who our parterns should be before we even have a chance to assess whether those partners are the right partners. And that's that's unheard of that a donor goes in and do that. So there's some things that we, both we at 3F, but also the group in general don't necessarily agree with Danida, but I don't think you should write that as long as we are in this partnership. T: I won't. I'll leave it out.
11		L: So I think in terms of working together as Danish partners I think we have a very good relationship and open and I mean the fact that we can sit and talk directly with the employers and actually be very much on the same line... that we have employers on board on this project who say the same things as we do in terms of the importance of having trade unions involved. Then there's some challenges in terms of local partners. Mainly... the main challenge has been to get the employers' organisation on board. One thing is you have actual factories but the... in terms of sustainability you could say. One thing is that you had a project on twelve difference factories but for sustainability reasons we should have the structures on board. That's why want the trade unions on board and not just a local committee. And there we haven't... we didn't succeed... yet at least in getting the employers' organiation on board. Among other things because most suppliers for brands in Myanmar are foreign owned. They are Chinese or Japanese or

		Korean and the employers' organisation is mainly Burmese so in that sense there's a challenge. Then we have... Then we are working with this smart organisation or trying to but there are some sustainability structures in terms the work with the university which is as I understand much more positive than we had expected so... and then there is an issue for us with the trade unions. It's been a long process of getting them on board, for a number of reasons. Both because it has been difficult to explain, it is a quite complex project and it is also... Myanmar is also a country where a lot of donors are coming in at the same time so for the last four or five years a lot of international organisations have come in so there is also maybe a bit of an overload of projects in this sector I would say. Which is a challenge in some Asian countries also in Bangladesh. So yeah I think the cooperation is good but it takes longer than we had hoped to start activities locally.
12		T: You mentioned this flood of donors coming into the country. Are you seeing the garment industry moving in some direction right now? Is there actually something going in terms of sustainability and CSR standards that are being raised? L: You could say, it depends very much on who the buyer is. I mean CSR standards is something that's coming in because you have brands that have CSR policies and therefore have some demands for their suppliers, so it's... I mean the factories they are just producing something for a customer and they have to live up to certain standards and I mean for the factories we are working at right now it seems that there are very big differences between uhm the locally owned factories and the chinese-owned factories on technology, on civil right and and that kind of thing. On the social dialogue part it's all extremely limited so I mean it's fairly new that international trade is even going on in Myanmar so of course there are some major changes in terms of production but we also, even though we don't know a lot about it yet, but that's a lot of... one thing... the big suppliers, the big customers they work with the big factories and then you have all the little... I mean you do have little sweatshops, you do have all that stuff as well where there is not regulation. I think the factories they regulate in the sense that they have to live up to some standards for some buyers so if the brands don't have the standards then I don't think the factories would have them either to be honest. Unless you also start to get a dialogue going where there is a local demand for that so for instance the workers themselves starts to demand that we want to be able to bargain collectively.
13		T: And that's why you also want employer organisations and organisations in general...

L: the employers and trade unions on board to be able to... I mean...

T: so that there is still an impact from this project after the two years...

L: Yeah, hopefully. Yeah that would be the... yeah but you could say in general it's unsustainable if the only way you have a... it's unsustainable... that's not just Myanmar but anywhere that that factories or employers only live up to a certain standard as long as the international brands demand something of them. I mean the demand should be made locally. Just as we would always think it should be workers themselves coming with their claims what do they want in salary, what do they want in terms of transport to work or whatever instead of someone from outside... might out of a good heart... but it shouldn't be international NGOs coming and telling what is a good standard. I mean we're not the ones... just as we don't want someone from United States coming here and telling us, you and me as a worker, what should we do. I mean we would like to be able to set the standards ourselves.

14		T: Yes of course. To move to some more practical, hands-on, aspects of the partnership, how do the trainings work? How do you...
		L: we're not that far yet. The social dialogue component has been... it's been... you could say it's integrated somewhat in the lean part, so Aalborg University's part, because as I said they would always involve workers, they would always say that it's important to go into dialogue with workers when you talk occupational health and safety. You have to involve them in terms of coming with suggestions for different production line. We have spent, as I said, a lot of time on getting the unions on board. Which... now they have said who they want to be... like... who should be responsible, who we can train and so on. So... and there's now a baseline on social dialogue on all factories which is... we more or less have to start from scratch everywhere. They have this workplace coordination committee but there's no trade union and the workplace coordination committee is not democratically elected and workers don't use it. Workers... they go to the supervisor if they have a problem and ask the supervisor to go the manager. They don't have their own representative. So what is being done now is that we together with the trade unions will make an assessment of what kind of training should be done and then it's the trade unions who have to go and train on the work sites. So not us but the trade unions. We will probably be there the first time or something to assist but it's important that we don't do training but they locally do training and then we will coordinate it with Aalborg University so that when they go and train in lean, our training will be at the same time or just before or just after so the factories can see the linkage

		between the social dialogue and the lean component. But... and from second batch everything should be simoultaneously. But you could say where the lean part is very much uhmmm a component that was already there, developed in Bangladesh or developed in Aalborg University where it's outside experts coming in now with trainers also from the university in Yangon who have been trained. On the social dialogue component we have the challenge that we need the trade unions trained first before we can do training at factories.
15		T: and you mentioned that there were different nationalities involved, not just the Danish partners but the Chinese factory owners and the local Burmese organisations and factories. Is there any practical problems, cultural differences, communication... L: Most likely. You can say for us... You can start with just the communication between us here in Denmark and our partners in Myanmar, where you in the one organisation, there's two trade union partners, in one of them there is one and a half, I would say, who speak English so that we can communicate directly with. Then we have... we just have... we have... so one of the things we have also done is that we have hired a local staff because else we simply can't implement this project. The other trade union no one speaks English so we have to do everything with translation and a lot get lost in translation as well. So what we have done is also... we have done an intensive training course here in Denmark of our local staff uhmm so that they understand or that he understands what we mean when we say it's specific. Because there's a lot of technical terms here that can easily get misunderstood if it gets translated and we simply can't control it because I have no clue what my colleague is saying when he starts speaking Burmese. So already in the first step there's a challenge you could say. So that also means when we start developing... when we come with advisory assistants and inputs for instance for the developing of the training material there might be issues that are simply misunderstood which will be difficult to control. So that's already one thing and then of course there's the issue that we basically have different intervention logics you could call it where... as the baseline is now... where the factories are there is no social dialogue at all. It would be a lot of training of management on one side and workers on the other side and the coordination committee and then some joint trainings towards the end. And yes, if there's no managers who speaks Burmese you have a challenge, absolutely, then you need translators but you do have Burmese-speaking supervisors everywhere uhm and we have... I mean our local staff has done baseline studies at all factories also talking to management and he speaks Burmese so up till now it's not been a challenge that we can talk to... we have been able to talk to... or he has been to able to. But there's definitely a language barrier from our side.

| 16 | | T: Actually, Peter, when I interviewed him, he mentioned a lot of delays... not delayed, not certain delays yet but some, he estimated that there would be some delays because of communications problems and just differenes or capacity problems.

L: Well first of all there's always delays in development projects, that's a given. Our delays is... so our first internet... it's been getting local... so we have local staff there, been communication with the trade unions, getting them on board both because we are enterin into two partnerships with them there at the same time. Both the MYPOD project but also a general partnership and that can create som misunderstandings, also because as I said there are so many other donors so explaining what is it that MYPOD can do that A, B and C project is not doing so that has cost massive delays... or a lot of delays... or some months delays at least. And then I... my guess is that now when we have... when the training planning and material is done here in August and we start in September we will have to do some follow-up trainings or some follow-up meetings with the first batch, also after second batch is started. I think it's too optimistic that you can do these things in just a few months and then... yeah so I think we will need to do follow-up everywhere. And then it's logic. I mean it's quite practical things. One thing is to get training and let's see what happens in some months or in half a year and then come back. |
| 17 | | T: Speaking of what happens in the future. How do you plan on measuring this impact or improvement?

L: Yeah, uhm. We have a fairly extensive baseline on all factories that is based on a... well you could say it's been interviews with managers, supervisors, workers and trade unions so four different interviews. You could say the interviews with trade unions in the first batch have been fairly easily because they know very little about those factories because they are not there. They have a little contact... and then it's been interviewing them on... uhm... basically there has been I think it's four components so there's something on social dialogue structure in general. Do they have a trade union? Do they have a work place coordination committee? Do workers know their rights? bla bla bla bla. Then there is something on occupational health and safety, something on psycho-social health and safety, something on negotiation in general so there's quite a extensive template you could say and right now we're putting it into... trying... even though it's quite qualitative we're trying to make it a bit quantitative as well. You could basically say, in general you could say yes and no to the most questions and then see... make the same interviews again after the first batch to see... has anything involved.. or has there been any progress? and that could be both in terms results so you could say now they do have access to |

		bathrooms with running water and soap which they don't at the moment so it could be very specific but it could also just be that, or hopefully - not just, but it could be that now they have actually themselves elected a workplace coordination committee and they now go to their own workers' representative when they raise issues rather than they go to their supervisor which they do right now. So in that sense there is a very one-to-one comparison we can make. More than that I think it's also gonna be case stories... so look at are there any specific cases we want to highlight from the different factories. Normally that axis says more than the other things so that would be yeah...
18		T: The political environment has been unstable to say the least and you mentioned yourself that the military government only recently allowed trade unions, uhmm, but then un top of that there's been the rohingya crisis and it's still ongoing. This environment and uncertainty, has this had an influence had an influence on the project? L: The factories are in Yangon you could say. There can definitely be some underlying issues in terms of... and that's gonna be difficult for us to detect but in terms of who is gonna be elected to participate and who can be organised and so on, if there are some... One thing is the Rohingya crisis but in general there are so many ethnic groups in Myanmar and that can be a challenge but I think the biggest challenge in a project like this in terms of the political environment is more that it's so young, it's so inexperienced in terms of... of... an industrial or modern, or whatever you wanna call it, labour market. So there's very little understanding. Both from the government side or from the ministry of labour and from employer organisations and other partners in terms of how do we go into dialogue, how do we structure... for instance I had not related necessarily to the MYPOD project but I had a meeting with the ministry of labour and they said there is a very strong need to make the employers' organisations stronger because there's only one, the trade unions are strong because there are so many. But from our perspective we would say okay, it's not a strength that there is a lot little or small organisations that don't talk to each other. It's not a strength, it's actually a weakness and you have one employers' organisation who coordinate. We would actually say they are the strongest so there's so little understanding of how or... limited understanding at least of how these processes work. So I think it's more that that can be a challenge, also that you have these conflict resolution systems on township basis that are still very... they still have very low capacity... they are there and they work but the representatives there, there are both employers, works, and government officials and old military staff because they always have to be there. They have so little experience in conflict resolution in

		labour market so I think it's more these young structures that is a challenge.
19		T: You're just not on the same page? L: we're just... It's just very new to everybody this way of working so I think there are other countries where there is much... where there are conflicts... in neighbouring Bangladesh I think there are more challenges actually in terms of violence against workers and so on than there is in Myanmar but yeah. So I don't think that the Rohingya crisis for instance per se will be a problem to this project.
20		T: But you haven't reconsidered your involvement in this project? L: based on that? no. Becuase I don't think... what we do, we are always in dialogue with our partners in terms of equality. In many countries it would be in terms of gender equality but in this region it is also very much about ethnicity and caste. If you have Bangladesh and Nepal and Sri Lanka as well... that uhm you shouldn't descriminate anyone in terms of who you have as a member and who you represent. So that dialogue we'll always have. But of course there can be underlying things in terms of... at factory level, who will the shop steward, will he not represent this lady because she's muslim? We haven't heard of it or experienced it yet but I'm sure it exists.
21		T: When you look at the garment industry in Myanmar, who are the main... or what does the typical company look like? Is it a large MNC or a smaller company? L: I don't know enough about it. If it's about the garment industry that export then it's foreign employers, it's foreign owned. T: So they are similar to BESTSELLER? L: No becuase it's never... it's... BESTSELLER is just a brand that sources so they have cooperation with factories. As far as I know all BESTSELLER's suppliers in Myanmar are Chinese suppliers that they aready have in China but who has then opened a factory in Myanmar as well. So the companies, the factories themselves in Myanmar, they are not , very few at least, exclusively producing for one brand. They wil have several brands, they will get orders from different brands. We have... so... there of course... for instance you have... one of the factories in the first batch is called Bogart which is a Hong Kong-based lingerie company that then have production only to Bogart but I will say... the factories that produces... in general in the garment industry you'll have a lot of locally owned, one way or another, that sell to different brands... and you could... I mean that's also... if you... you could say it's also easier for brands if

		they don't have a production themselves, it's easier to shop around and find the cheapest or whatever. It's also more difficult to control so there is pros and cons... I mean you have... you also have some Danish companies who have their factories outside and that might be a bit more expensive but it's easier for them to control that they live up to their standard both in terms of the quality and in terms of CSR policy. So there are different approaches but in Myanmar I would say to my knowledge the ones who produce to the international market are mainly owned by Chinese, Japanese and South Korean. Maybe Thai, I don't think.
22		T: And they... those factories produce for companies that resell? L: They produce to brands so H&M or BESTSELLER or IC Company or Nike or whatever so they basically place orders so it's that kind of supply chain. Then you also have locally owned companies. So there's one of the companies in the MYPOD project that is Burmese-owned. They are often smaller, more run-down, they have less investments than the big international... and therefore obviously more difficulties in getting orders from big brands because they are not as effecient and has a lot less investment but that's fairly typical picture of that sector.
23		T: That makes sense. It's that kind of industry. My final question, because we've touched most of them, expect the last one... we talked about your ties to the... and the partnership with the local trade unions. Could you say already now that it has given you some valuable experiences or information that you can use in the future? Is there already now something... some experiences that stem from this project? L: There's definitely some valuable experience but as I said we have kind of... we have been in dialogue basically on two strings with the two unions in Myanmar. So one has been an overall assessment of them in terms of their capacity to administer Danida funds you could say and whether they have the same values as we do. We would never work with a union that is not democratic for instance. And that would be towards a more general partnership and then there's been a specific dialogue with these two unions on the MYPOD project and that obviously gives less... I think it's been challenging to have both dialogues at the same time. I also think to be honest if we haven't been pushed, also by the donor to include both, or by the embassy to include both unions or both federations, we would probably only have chosen one of them. Working with two unions in the same sector at the same time can, that's our experience from other places as well, can be challenging and we think one of them is such a weak organisation that we almost think that it is a pity for them that they are involved in such a complex project. It would have been easier for them to just have a small

		partnership with us where they could evolve a bit more before they started being involved in such a project. And then there's a... I mean... I think the main learnings for us at the moment is both these very practical issues in terms of language barriers and... and also working with two unions in the sense that one is very... uhm... very well trained because they have been in exile and the other one is more local and therefore very weak capacity and that gives some tensions between the two unions as well. The whole 'you stayed, you didn't' kind of... uhmm and then... I mean the first step I will say is that we don't know yet is this whole how well do they... are so small organisations able to also grasp these more complex issues of productivity-based salaries and so on that I mean we are working with unions all over the world and have been doing that for many years and this is... it's very... it's with very few unions that this is where we start... or never where we start. So whether we... so it's going to be intersting to see whether we are setting the barrier too high. Yeah.
24		T: That's it. L: That was it? Should I call Jesper for just 10 minutes or so and he can... if you want some of the beginning? T: No it's okay. The others have covered it. L: Okay, but else he would be happy to answer, I know. And then of course... it also depends on when... I know you are also in a process but of course... in August you probably would have more interesting information from us but then I guess it's a bit too late in terms of your writing process but let us know if there's anything we can do.

Interview with Aalborg University

	Timespan	Content
1	0:00,0 - 0:26,4	Theo: So I'd like to thank you Peter for letting me interview you today. I would like to start out by asking how the partnership began and was the formation of the partnership, a formalization of an existing network or did you already work together?
2	0:26,4 - 1:58,5	Peter: Yeah you can say it evolved from the network we were kind of establishing. We have been working on a Bangladesh project in the garment industry for for when when the MYPOD project started or when the application was written for two-two half year. Uhm at..during that project we started to have contact with DIEH and one year before so we decided to be member of DIEH because we saw benefit of being part of that network. We also in Bangladesh developed contacts with the 3f representative in Bangladesh and regular meetings, exchanging views and benefiting from lab, permanent presence in the country and their insights into some of the works issues with you could, could not get from the university and from the management we were collaborating within the companies. So it was a network which was developing...we hadn't, we haven't had done any real collaboration before that.
3	1:58,5 - 2:12,1	Theo: So what were your reasons for joining the project? Continuing from the already existing network.
4	2:12,1 - 3:29,4	Peter: Yeah, you can say that as part of the network we from now to..we we now then discuss the possibilities of making projects together. And then when we, when the partnership possibilities came up we, we saw the possibility to make a project. Maybe I should also mention that we in Bangldesh also developed a collaboration with Bestseller. So we had quite close contact with Bestseller during our project there so , so that was also part of the, we can say at that time, informal network. And then from our point of view we saw the possibility of building on the experience we had from Bangladesh in new the project using some of the same methods and approaches but also then learning from mistakes and extending our knowledge and extending our data about how to integrate productivity and health and safety in development of the garment industry.
5	3:29,4 - 3:46,4	Theo: Do you consider any of the partner organizations in the MYPOD project to be in a leadership position, taking the initiative?
6	3:46,4 - 3:51,7	Peter: In creating the project?

7	3:51,7 - 3:51,8	Theo: like continuously.
8	3:51,8 - 4:43,4	Peter: As the project is running now you can say formally DIEH is the coordinator, in that respect has a leadership role. But I think also that we have quite equal terms in deciding what to do especially 3f and Aalborg University have well established task while we have the main responsibilities and you can say with those tasks we have the leadership. So, I think it's quite equal terms and also in practice it works like that with dialogue and shared decisions rather than having someone in front to take decisions and telling the others what to do.
9	4:43,4 - 4:54,8	Theo: So it also depends on the tasks, I mean, you and 3F, Aalborg University and 3F, are doing the interventions and in that part you're sort of leading?
10	4:54,8 - 5:27,8	Peter: Yeah, then we are leading but again close collaboration because we need to have close collaboration with Bestseller about recruiting the factories, and securing commitments and we have to coordinate with DIEH...uhm who was the permanent representative in Yangon and who was involved in the interventions, so you can say that all partners are involved in that respect as well.
11	5:27,8 - 5:41,8	Theo: Okay, so this partnership, the MYPOD project is that unique in an academic context? What do you say?
12	5:41,8 - 6:36,8	Peter: Hmm, yes and no. Generally with Aalborg University we have a lot of collaborations with companies and we are continuosly working on developing collaborations with companies and in, up in Aalborg which it is still of course the major part of the university being placed there, they have a lot of regional collaborations both with companies, but also with regional organizations. But they're also I think the unique part of it, this this thing that we are collaborating so closely both with unions and with private companies it is, I think, is relatively unique.
13	6:36,8 - 6:46,0	Theo: So the scope of the partners, the number of different types of partners is the unique part?
14	6:45,9 - 6:52,4	Peter: Yeah! It has been seen before, but not so often.
15	6:52,4 - 7:02,4	Theo: Right. Okay. How would you define sustainable development in the conetxt of the garment industry?
16	7:02,4 - 7:31,7	Peter: I think that generally you can say that it is usual thing about people, planet and profit. In this project we are not really working with the planet, the environmental and empty

		questions. So sustainability is to secure economic and social sustainability. Uhmm...yeah.
17	7:31,7 - 7:32,2	Theo: In this case?
18	7:32,2 - 7:34,0	Peter: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.
19	7:34,0 - 7:43,2	Theo: And how can this collaboration across sectors help solve issues in the garment industry in Myanmar?
20	7:43,2 - 7:47,8	Peter: Yeah, when you say sectors that's across the different partners?
21	7:47,8 - 7:49,1	Theo: Yes, exactly!
22	7:49,1 - 9:27,7	Peter: So, I think that compared to our Bangladeshi project we think it's really a great possibility, but also a challenge that we have worker involvement much more higher in the agenda and we have 3F to secure that it's happening. I think it's a good possibility to secure sustainability because the involvement of workers is both important for long term economic, viability and obviously for making goods decisions for the workers. It's also important that we have the buyer involvement, Bestseller, because for obviously reasons suppliers they are looking a lot to the buyers. What are the buyers' expectations and we believe that for a long term sustainability it's also important that buyers and suppliers they develop their collaborations. So it's not just a question of shopping around, but actually thinking of a long term development, whereas suppliers they develop their production in order to secure quality, delivery and so forth. But also then, that buyers are then commited to use the suppliers in a longer term.
23	9:27,7 - 9:45,4	Theo: Okay. And you don't suspect that there could be any risk of Bestseller's involvement being mainly because of brand protection?
24	9:45,4 - 11:12,1	Peter: Hmmm. Yeah you could say that they are of course interested in protecting their brand and they have interest in showng that they are involved in sustainability and social sustainability as well and in that respect I think it's probably good for their brand that they are involved in a project like this. But I don't think that it is a risk for the project as such. If things happen in Myanmar would, either the political situation with more military rule or Rohingya situation or some kind of labour unrest it may have caused, then it raise the question for Bestseller "Will they want to continue collaboration with Myanmar?" But, that would also be the case for us if we had

		labour unrest in the companies we are collaborating with the management and government they are mistreating the workers, it would have also been difficult for us to continue the collaboration. So, I don't think that that's a particular, special risk by having Bestseller involved.
25	11:12,1 - 11:30,5	Theo: Uhm. How, how do you improve the working environment and productivity in this project? How is it happening?
26	11:30,5 - 14:38,0	Peter: It's happening in the way that we are using primarly lean methodologies. We use that to analyse and understand the production process. We use also, of course health and safety tools of measuring exposures and assessment of working postures and things like that. And this of measuring making baseline we're using them to identify where the possibilities for improvements, how can they be implemented? So we can say that that's one side of it, using lean approaches that is data driven. We need to know, understand the production, to develop the production. The other approach is aimed to work with the companies, as such getting their professionals and managers and workers involved in the improvements. Obviously, we cannot change anything, the companies have to change themselves, so we are helping them setting up teams working with improvements, assisting the teams. In doing that, we are promoting to get workers involved, but that is obviously not so, so easy and no tradition for getting workers involved, they have no experience in how to get themselves involved, how to raise voice if they are sitting in a team with managers, they normally wouldn't say anything. So especially that part is not particularly, but we have also problems that some of the companies they are lacking competence in industrial enginering. They don't know how to analyze a production line and then what to do with this analysis. They are making some very basic measurements of pieces, per hour, per day. But, normally it's a kind of...uhm very often it's more estimates than actual numbers they're using. And they are mainly doing that they're in control of production. But of course, also to measure with, "are we having this output that we need, in order to deliver to buyers".
27	14:38,0 - 14:50,9	Theo: So when you visit the factories, do you gather management and workers and train them or do you show examples from other factories? How do you..?
28	14:50,8 - 15:21,5	Peter: We have done some basic training of what we call "The operational teams" that is the teams going to make improvements. Then we have trying to do measurements together with them, as much as possible. And then results of

		measurements, we are together with the operational team presenting for management, in order to initiate improvements.
29	15:21,5 - 15:50,3	Theo: Thank you. Hmm, how do you plan to measure the impact of this involvement? I know we are not that far in the MYPOD project and it will last a lot longer. But how do you plan to make sure, that you can show and tell people that this has made difference, or?
30	15:50,3 - 16:13,5	Peter: First of all we do that by, before and after measurements. So we measure the baseline conditions and then we try to introduce improvements and then we measure again, same measurements and hopefully we could show that conditions have improved.
31	16:13,5 - 16:21,3	Theo: So that's both economic and social productivuty and working conditions?
32	16:21,3 - 16:22,7	Peter: Yeah Yeah. Yeah.
33	16:22,7 - 16:36,9	Theo: Has there been any previous initiatives in the garment sector in Myanmar?
34	16:36,9 - 17:57,7	Peter: Uhm, yeah. I would say I am not particular familiar with all the initiatives which has been taken place. There is a project called SMART which is attached to MGMA, Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association, founded by the EU where they are training companies in various matters mainly related to human resources, health and safety and to some extend also in productivity, but are limited. And then they have some ILO activities, but they have been long term planning and there has been so much implementation, but they are as I understand now working in parallel with us. Mainly on focus on health and safety and working conditions not so much productivity. Then we have some companies met all activities that have been some training activities provided by different funders, but we don't have really an overview of what has taken place.
35	17:57,7 - 18:11,2	Theo: But this EU project that has been going on with MGMA has this shown any effect so far?
36	18:11,2 - 18:28,0	Peter: I don't know so much about the project, but I think probably you can find a number of reports and evaluation reports and things on that. It's not something we really have met, out in the companies so far.
37	18:28,0 - 18:36,1	Theo: Have you encountered any challenges with the project so far? The MYPOD project.

38	18:36,1 - 19:19,6	Peter: Yes. The main challenge is that it's difficult to mobilize the sufficient internal resources in the companies. They're lacking qualifications, they have a very much "ad hoc"-oriented approach which makes it difficult to make, to do planning. Some of the companies' management they have, due to this ad hoc approach, not so much commited to the process of more sistematically working with improvements.
39	19:19,6 - 19:26,5	Theo: So ad hoc, that could be silo thinking, different areas of...?
40	19:26,5 - 19:54,4	Peter: Yeah, or simply that when we have agreed on, we are coming to do some measurements and the management is not there and the management hasn't told anyone that we are coming and they haven't formed their operational team and we are trying to do that. They don't have any qualified people to put into the team, and things like that. In variant degrees in the six companies we have been working with now.
41	19:54,4 - 20:10,1	Theo: Okay. Okay, thank you. How do you ensure that all partners in the MYPOD project actually benefit from it? Is there any certain mechanism?
42	20:10,0 - 22:18,3	Peter: Yeah, we are having the regular steering group meetings, where we are exchanging views. There has been some preparatory seminars. There was one monday on discussing interventions and especially 3F interventions and then we are having like the local coordinator involved in most activities going on so she's well aware about what's going on across the different partners. So I think we have reasonable high level of exchange of information and experience. But, but it can also be difficult especially planning with the companies, because we try to make plans and then some of the companies they are not ready and then we changed the plans and then it may run into..if some of the plans are changed then it may be difficult for our staff to travel at the time. Which is then fitting the company or we are collaborating with two or three or four companies and then we are missing some of the companies, because they were not really ready and then we are going to find another time to do that. That it's especially coordination between us, companies and Bestseller, but it has so far proven to be reasonable challenging without falling to pieces, but more changes than we expected. Or you can say, looking from inside that probably we knew that also from Bangladesh that it's difficult to plan, but you don't really realize it, before you experience it in practice.
43	22:18,3 - 22:23,4	Theo: So has this delayed the project, the timeline in any way?

44	22:23,4 - 22:36,6	Peter: Yeah, it's delayed so far. It's difficult to say right now..three, four months, something like that.
45	22:36,5 - 22:41,2	Theo: Okay, to a certain degree.
46	22:41,2 - 23:03,3	Theo: Who are the main stakeholders within the garment industry that you're not working with? Are there any others, other factors, other players that you wish that you had...or maybe not wish, but that have some influence at the garment industry?
47	23:03,3 - 23:52,5	Peter: Yeah, you could say from the Danish perspective we of course have the Danida as a funding agency, as a primary stakeholder. We in, in Myanmar we have a plan about having a very close collaboration with SMART having it involved also in our lean teams where we are now drawing on resources from the Yangon Technological University. But, they experienced, one thing was that one person who was qualified to look into productivity he left SMART and then they have some resource problems so it ended up that they couldn't join.
48	23:57,7 - 23:57,8	Theo: And SMART is the training of the EU?
49	23:57,8 - 25:01,2	Peter: SMART is this EU project doing training activities related to MGMA and the result of that is also that our relation with MGMA as a key player he's not as close as we would like to have it. We are developing a collaboration with some of the other buyers primarily H&M. H&M they are heavily involved in the ILO project and we plan to have some of their suppliers involved in our next batch of companies to make improvements. We also try to coordinate many DIEH doing that with ILO to secure that we have, we don't getting running to competition and hopefully get some kind of synergy in some of the activities.
50	25:01,4 - 25:08,2	Theo: Right, so there are other efforts by companies such as H&M?
51	25:08,2 - 25:24,6	Peter: Yeah...uh uh in the ILO project they have also worked with improvements of companies, less focused on productivity, but more focused on HR and health safety related issues.
52	25:24,6 - 25:33,4	Theo: Okay, and you plan to expand the project and include some of the other companies present in the country?
53	25:33,4 - 26:04,5	Peter: Yeah. It has been an emphasis that we shouldn't work only with Bestseller companies. So we have now, of the six companies two of them are not Bestseller's. One is a local owned and another

		one is owned by Hong Kong company not involved with Bestseller.
54	26:04,5 - 26:19,8	Theo: Is it an important factor that Besteseller has this size that it has, in terms of bargaining power?
55	26:19,8 - 26:53,9	Peter: Yeah I think so. As we can see that the suppliers are very "ad hoc" oriented trying to solve problems here and nu, now trying to get the next orders if we didn t have a large buyer it would be more difficult to get them involved.
56	26:53,9 - 27:03,0	Theo: Is Bestseller a typical company, a typical representative of a company sourcing from Myanmar?
57	27:03,0 - 28:06,9	Peter: The only other one I've been in touch with is H&M and H&M they are obviously larger than Bestseller. They also have already a permanent presence in Myanmar, which Bestseller doesn't. So you can say and they have, Bestseller have been involved in some of these also international collaboration projects like collaborating with the ILO for a longer time. So you can say that maybe H&M they are a bit more leading than Besteseller, but Bestseller is giving more priority to CSR and to supply development compared to before and that is as we understand it.
58	28:06,9 - 28:21,7	Theo: Right, so when you're looking to expand the project, as you mentioned, do you include other companies and at a later point in time, is it a prerequisite that they have the same size as Bestseller?
59	28:21,7 - 28:53,3	Peter: Yeah. it's not that we generally will expand this project than it should be more projects or new projects. We're having a second batch of six companies starting sometime in the autumn maybe later in the autumn, that's originally planned. And there will probably be one H&M company, maybe a local company and then the fourth then will be Bestseller companies.
60	28:53,3 - 28:55,3	Theo: So that is not part of the MYPOD project?
61	28:55,3 - 28:56,2	Peter: That's MYPOD project.
62	28:56,2 - 28:56,4	Theo: Okay.
63	28:56,4 - 29:07,0	Peter: Yeah. Yeah. And we're not so far planning to expand beyond that. Unless of course a new project opportunity pops up.
64	29:07,0 - 29:35,5	Theo: Right. What would you..How would you describe the status of the CSR commitment level in Myanmar at this time or

		before the launch of the project? How thoroughly did companies work with CSR?
65	29:35,5 - 31:13,0	Peter: I don't think I'm the, in the best position to judge that. I know that Bestseller and also H&M they have their CSR compliance audits. So some of them I think basic conditions they are properly in place, but I also as I undestand it there is a difference from what they learned during the audits and what's the practice if we think of freedom to organizing unions for instance. But it's not really our field, so that's something 3F would know more about that. We are looking into tangible conditions at the sewing lines and that's not really something which is, as far as I know, part of the complaince audits. They are looking for some right basic things about fire safety, fire fighting equipment, is it there and things like that. But the whole situation of how they are working, how they are sitting, how the work station is organized and things...they are not looking into. So we're taking you could say up, we're looking at new aspects of health and safety.
66	31:13,0 - 31:27,8	Theo: Thank you. You mentioned before, the Rohingya crisis and other political instability, has it been any example of these factors influencing the project?
67	31:27,8 - 32:44,6	Peter: It hasn't directly influenced so far. We have had some talks with DIEH, 3F and Bestseller about reactions to Rohingya situation and we have from our side been leaning on them saying that we followed them, because we're not really experienced in judging political situations like that. So we will properly follow the decisions they take and have done so far. We have had, we are using a consultant from Bangladesh who is an expert in garment. We have had some, was worried a bit with how would he be treated in Myanmar, but so far it seems to be working and there hasn't been any real problems. The only problem has been that it has taking him some time to get his visa each time he's travelling, but in Myanmar it had, it has worked quite alright.
68	32:44,6 - 33:12,5	Theo: Okay. Uhmm as a final question, I would like to ask if there are any guidelines that you're working with; ISO and FDIS guiding principles, anything that you are basing some of your work on?
69	33:12,5 - 34:08,3	Peter: We are not. What we are using are, you could say, the knowledge and manuals about lean and occupational health and safety. So from the literature also using some of the ILO literature we have some indications about what's good sitting postures and for instance, how much light do you need to do sewing operations and things like that. But otherwise the vast

		kind of CSR guidelines is not something we use because it's not, they are not getting so, so detailed that they say anything about the sewing line.
70	34:08,3 - 34:17,0	Theo: Okay, alright. That makes sense. Alright, I think that was all the questions I had for you. I would like to say thank you.
71	34:17,0 - 34:18,9	Peter: Okay. You're welcome!

Interview with Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

– Can you explain how the partnership between IHRB and DIHR began?

Ans: Can you please ask this questions to IHRB's relevant personnel, John Morrison, john.morrison@ihrb.org . They are in better position to answer this. To my knowledge, IHRB might have taken an initiative. I was first appointed by IHRB as a program coordinator since 2012 one year before MCRB was established. I was responsible for helping to establish MCRB and also held a big workshop introducing the concept of business and human rights in Myanmar back in 2012.

– How does MCRB encourage responsible business activities throughout Myanmar?

Ans. Our work is based on three pillars: knowledge, capacity building and dialogue. We work with all stakeholders including government, businesses, civil society. We did sector wide impact assessment, SWIA on mining, oil and gas, tourism, ICT and we hold multi-stakeholder workshops facilitating discussing on various issues related to responsible business conduct of businesses. On capacity building, we held workshops for businesses on human rights policy, grievance mechanisms, anti-corruption,etc. We also provide input to laws related to responsible business issues. For instance, our input is substantially taken into consideration by the government when they draft and enact 2016 Myanmar investment law. You can check more on our website http://www.myanmar-responsiblebusiness.org/index.php, and if you have any particular and specific questions, please do let me know.

– Can you describe the most common problems for foreign actors in Myanmar?

Ans: I think you meant business actors? In general, they need laws, rules and regulations that facilitate responsible business conducts of relevant business actors. But our laws and rules are still being amended for consistency and clarity. For instance, currently ILO and others are assisting labour law reform process in Myanmar. Environmental Impact Assessment rules and procedures are still yet to be fully implemented. If you delve into our website including news and events, you might have more idea on that. For instance see the link: http://www.myanmar-responsiblebusiness.org/news/consultants-biggest-challenge.html. Corruption and red tape are also common problems like in other developing countries.

– How do Burmese actors view western actors?

Ans. You meant Business actors, I think? This is just my perspectives and assumption. Some protectionists might be worried, but some might see this as an opportunity for partnering and transferring good practice and technology.

– What are the common challenges that Burmese stakeholders experience when entering a business partnership with western stakeholders?

Ans. It's not really relevant for us. But what I observe is that Burmese partners will need to comply with standards required by foreign brands. For instance, in garment sector, local businesses are complaining that they need some time to meet international best practices especially labour rights compliance including decent wage etc, since they have constraints to match all those criteria. But this is just what I heard from them. You should contact organizations such as Myanmar Garment Manufacturing association, MGMA for more knowledge on that. They also have website.

– What are the main challenges for ensuring responsible business activities in Myanmar?

Ans. As I explained above, we need better and clearer laws and regulations to enable responsible business conduct. We need an environment that pave the way for doing business responsibly, in general it means accountability and transparency in providing license, etc. so that it can be level playing field for all businesses. Inadequate infrastructure is also another constraint for doing businesses in a profitable manner and hence paying decent wage to workers etc. Weak regulations and implementation of existing safeguards is also a big challenge. Also refer to EIA explanation above.

– What are your suggestions to the western actors conducting business in Myanmar?

Ans: They should adhere to Myanmar laws and also international standards. They share their best practices to local partners. Make sure that they do not have negative impact on society and environment, but create shared value for the community where their business operate.

Minutes from a Dialogue Meeting with Bestseller and DIEH

Dialogue meeting: Strategic Partnerships for Sustainable Developement
– the case of Myanmar's garment sector

At Bestseller, 31 May from 13.00-16.00

Danida presentation

The agenda 2030: Tine works as much with trade partners as with development partners. The private sector plays an important role in the 2030 strategy. Economic growth must be run by the private sector. The organisational sector can not do this by themselves. We need to get all the Danish capacities engaged.

The SDGs are also market opportunities. We should not be naive. If a Danish private company invest somewhere in the world to contribute to the SDGs, they still need to make money. We should not neglect this condition.

Doing business differently
CSR is important, but it's on th side. We need to look into the core of the company's and see where CSR can be integrated as an integrated part of the core business strategies.

If you look at MYPOD, then Bestseller has intens dialogue with workers as to how they can do it better etc. But not necessarily how we can improve on sector level. Here Bestseller need other actors to help. Especially important in fragile economies. Danida puts their knowledge from the Ministry of foreign affairs and their work around the world. Danida DONT fund companies or give money to the private sector. Not allowed by the EU aid laws.

The strategic partnerships are beneficial to private partners, for example in Nigeria with Arla/GAIN project, arla would not typically go to the cattle farmers and talk to them themselves, but Gain can help here. Combined business and development.

Combining business and development

10 years ago we would have been afraid to combine business and development, but that has changed now - e.g. due to the SDG's, especially SDG 17.

Working with partnerships is a strong option, but it takes time, it is very difficult and complex to combine business and development. Both parts have very important gains to obtain.

Bestseller presentation

Why they have engaged with this project.
1. Have very good experiences with working together on a similar project in Bangladesh.

Numbers
- 3000 employees in DK, and app. 15.000 worldwide.
- 450 suppliers around the globe, 800 factories (30 in Myanmar) - Mainly China, Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, Myanmar

Myanmar update:

- Great potentials for growth
- Prospect: 1,5 million jobs in the textile industry by 2024 (double from now)
- MGMA (employer association) see good potential - wants to move from CMP (cut, make, pack) to FOB (entire proces)
- Need skilled workforce
- EU ambassador speech at the Buyers Forum in May: "We are positive about trade, but it is not unconditional - the condition is that Myanmar follow a democratic process, that Myanmar respect human rights and EU standards" - Myanmar are hopefull about this push from EU

Myanmar challenges:

- Low productivity
- Quality is not that good
- Up to 85% annual employee turnover (China and Cambodia it is between 7-10%)
- Worker and skill training
- Language barrier to proper worker-management dialogue
- Cultural obstacles (Chinese management and Myanmar workers)

Business opportunities for Bestseller from MYPOD:
- Absenteeism, turnover and productivity are direct KPI's or MYPOD, which all contribute to better business for bestseller
- Expected outcome for Bestseller is that MYPOD can show a clear business case that working with LEAN improvements and social dialogue will increase productivity, create a more stability workforce, more skilled workers (improved quality, less waste), less strikes and worker unrest (Due to improved social dialogue)
- We join forces with similar programs (H&M and ILO) (GIZ and Chipo)

Advantages from sourcing from Myanmar:
- The products Bestseller get from Myanmar they cannot produce in Bangladesh
- More detailed garment is not possible in Bangladesh or India - more basic garment
- Due to the Chinese management they can produce detailed garments (like in China), but it is cheaper

DIEH (NuNu)
- YTU have good skills theoretically, but through MYPOD they get good opportunities to see the work in reality and practice "on ground" in the factories..

Panel discussion

Introduction, AAU & 3F
- Peter, materials and production - department (section) for sustainable production

- Jesper, industrial development can leave poor workers behind, while development takes off. Development means that people of the country should have benefits. The first goal is the gel employer and employee to work together, and next step is to get worker associations on board in tripart negotiations. In MMR the industry is taking off, app. 800.000 workers in garment. Through trade union federations we see that 1.500 are organised in unions. Unions were legalised in 2011/12 - the confederation (CTUM) was recognised in 2015. Unions need to learn about lean, productivity, OHS as well as social dialogue. To know the mechanisms in the factories. 3F support this training and development —> to learn the link between lean, OHS and SD.

Open panel discussion, Q&A
- It is important to support MGMA - but there are many donors (luckily but challenging) who want to engage with MGMA, which makes it really difficult to engage them into MYPOD
- NuNu: MYPOD also connect to other networks. MGMA is very important, a key player by setting up the minimum wages. One MYPOD factory is an MGMA member. Important in the future to show our results to create incentive both to MGMA and factories.
- 3F: working with local partners. Slow startup. Always difficult to be international partners telling local partners how to do things right. Very problematic that TU's become firefighters only going to the factories when there're strikes going on. Gives the TU a reputation in the factories that they only advocate strikes and disputes
- Working with YTU has been a good surprise - they have been very engaged and taken the training very serious. Maybe an easier partnership than we had expected, whereas the management in the factories have been more reluctant than expected
- 1.Is there a conflict of interest of Danida being part of the project as well as the donor? 2.And is the project becoming an extension of the Danish policy for Myanmar?
    - 1. Business for development is a new strategy. The partners define the projects themselves when we work with DMDP. Danida is not involved with the development of the concept note. When Danida believe they are in line with the criteria of the program and the right balance between business and development, they are selected. Danida is more involved with the development

of the full project proposal, where they chose if the project gets funded or not. What are issues and demands. ToR and results framework.

- ○ 2. Important to Danida that all funded projects can contribute to sustainable development with a focus on SDG 8. Also a demand that a business case is developed, and that the business case has the opportunity for scale-up. MYPOD is interesting due to the involvement of the local partners in the market. Danida sees it as a contribution that they have a presence in MMR through the embassy, where we have a labour market advisor

- Work with WCCs: 3F has just looked through the answers from the baseline study from 5 factories. But experiences tell 3F that a WCC consisting of 2 management and 2 worker representatives in a factory with 2-5000 employees are completely insufficient. At this moment we do not have sufficient social dialogue instruments. We also experience that in many WCCs in Myanmar, the worker representatives are supervisors. From BESTSELLER's perspective the partnership with 3F and local trade unions is crucial, as they cannot explain themselves to factories why it is important to implement social dialogue.

- DIEH: social dialogue and trade unions are completely new systems to Myanmar. They need different stakeholders like the government,. Also, 99% of workers come from rural, poor areas. They do not think what the law is, but more about their survival.

- Buyers influence, Bestseller's relationship and influence: it is a difficult country to be an employer in. It requires that BS takes a bit more responsibility than what is expected from them. It requires a lot of involvement.

- Suppliers: There are missing links in the project design. E.g. between the Chinese and local factories - MGMA primary support and represent the local factories (none of BS suppliers are locally owned).

- In MMR they have just opened up the dialogue about bargaining. But you can never have collective bargaining if you do not have a proper worker representative organisation, where they can have democratic votes etc...

- Danida recommend especially the non-commercial partners to be present in the country. Otherwise, working in such different cultures it will be too difficult