

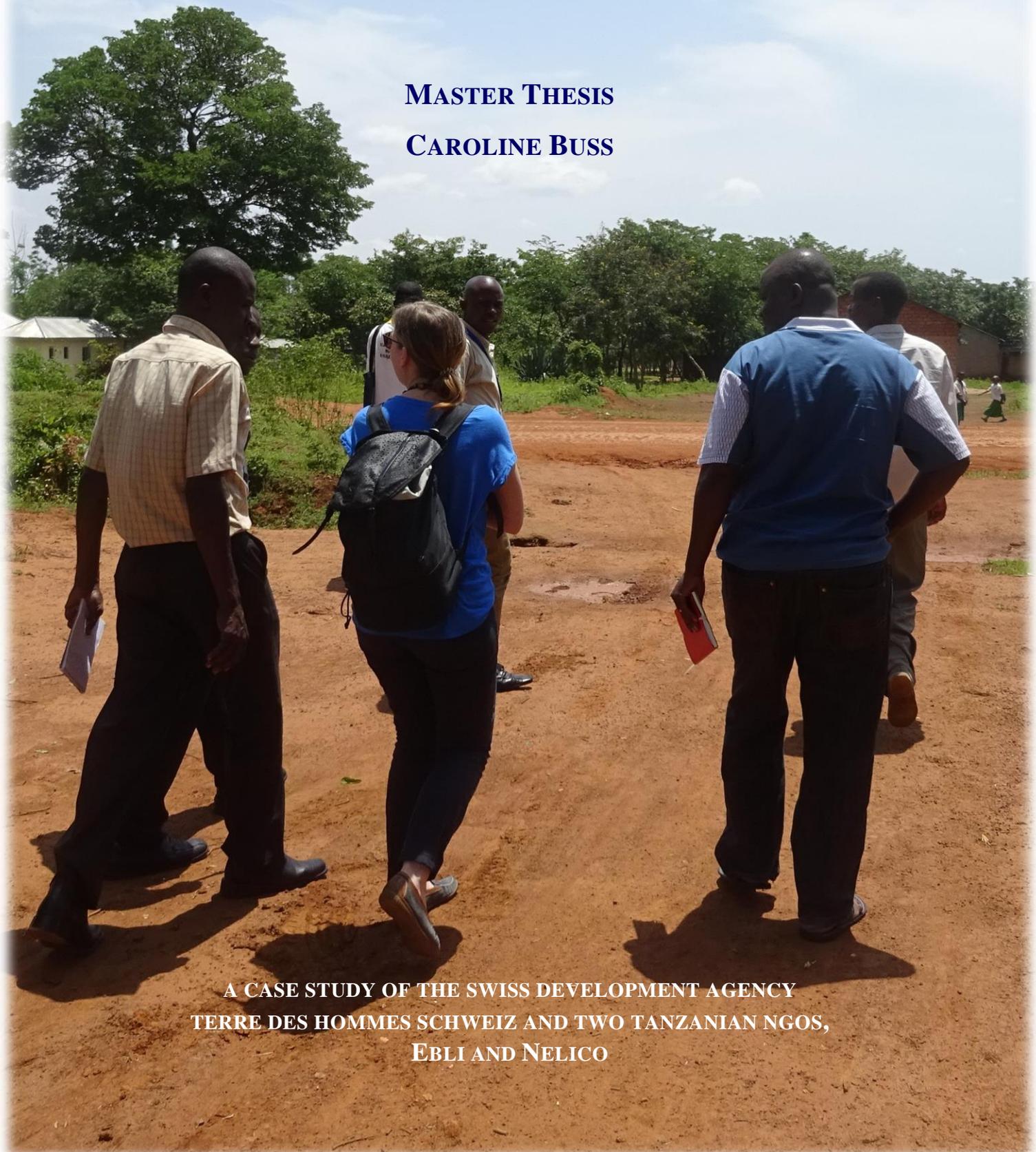
PARTNERSHIP IN NORTH-SOUTH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

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AN ALTERNATIVE TO DEVELOPMENT?

MASTER THESIS

CAROLINE BUSS



**A CASE STUDY OF THE SWISS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
TERRE DES HOMMES SCHWEIZ AND TWO TANZANIAN NGOS,
EBLI AND NELICO**



**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

Department of Geography

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COOPERATION**

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A CASE STUDY OF THE SWISS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
TERRE DES HOMMES SCHWEIZ AND TWO TANZANIAN NGOS, EBLI AND NELICO

GEO 511 - Master Thesis

Author:

CAROLINE ELISABETH BUSS

carolineelisabeth.buss@uzh.ch / gari.b@hotmail.com

Student Number: 10-723-146

Supervised by:

DR. MIRIAM WENNER

Faculty Representative:

PROF. DR. ULRIKE MÜLLER-BÖKER

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Department of Geography
University of Zurich

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This thesis addresses concrete practices in the working collaboration between the NGOs *terre des hommes schweiz* (tdhs), *Education for Better Living Organization* (Ebli), and *New Light Children Center Organisation* (Nelico). I want to give inputs and new insights into their collaboration, and therefore make a small contribution in advancing the principle of partnership in the current North-South development cooperation (NSDC). It is my conviction that due to the globalized world we live in, it has to be possible for the North and the South to work together as equal partners in order to learn from each other and to solve the problems we identify.

Firstly, I wish to thank all those who were part of my research. I thank the director of tdhs, Franziska Lauper, who gave me the possibility to research their organization and their collaboration. I thank the program coordinator of tdhs, Catherine Hollinger, who took a lot of time to introduce me to her work and the processes inside of tdhs. She further let me accompany her on her visit to Tanzania and opened many doors for me. Also, I want to thank the National Coordinator of tdhs, Costantine Nyambajo, not only for sharing his knowledge but also for supporting me during my stay in Tanzania. Additionally, I want to thank the director of Ebli, Bernard Makachia, as well as the director of Nelico, Paulina Alex, for granting me access to their organisations. I would also like to thank my interview partners from tdhs, Ebli and Nelico, without whom my research would not have been possible.

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Finally, I want to thank my family and friends who accompanied me during this process and who supported me whenever I needed it.

SUMMARY

In today's North-South development cooperation (NSDC), the principle of partnership, and hence a collaboration at surface level, is one of the key approaches that most organisations and NGOs claim to practice. Simultaneously, there is a lack of a clear definition on what 'partnership' actually includes and hence many organisations use this term to sugar-coat their collaboration (Fowler 1998: 155). The principle of partnership emerged in the 1980s and is part of the 'alternative development' or 'human-centred approach' (Mason 2011: 445). This new line of development interventions was a reaction to the unsatisfying development practices in the first two decades of the development industry (Esteva 1992: 15).

Another reaction to the little successes of these early decades was the post-development debate (PDD). Contrary to the human-centred approach, the PDD demands an alternative *to* western-dominated development. The PDD rejects the entire field of western-dominated development and claims that the notion is based on wrong assumptions, namely that the Northern example is supposed to be the favourable one (Matthews 2004: 379). Additionally, because the NSDC ought to be solely based on a western value system, the PDD argues that it leads to a westernization and homogenisation of the world (Sachs 1992: 4). Hence, the PDD emphasizes the capacities of the Southern communities and wants to focus on the so-called 'grassroots-movements' that come from within the Southern communities (Escobar 1995: 215).

In current literature, both approaches are often debated but rarely combined. In the course of this thesis, I discuss both the principle of partnership and the PDD and explain their main criticisms, claims and arguments. I do this in order to answer the main theoretical research question of this thesis: Can the principle of partnership be considered an answer to the main claim of the PDD for an alternative to western-dominated development? To have theories on paper is only one contribution to the field of the current NSDC: It is another thing to implement these theories into practices of the NSDC.

In order to apply the theories of this thesis in practice, I conducted my own qualitative research on the collaboration between the development organisation *terre des hommes schweiz* (tdhs) and two Tanzanian NGOs, *Education for Better Living Organization* (Ebli), and *New Light Children Center Organisation* (Nelico). The main applied research question for my thesis is to analyse whether the collaboration between these three NGOs can be considered a partnership or not. In relation to this question, I further ask if it is even possible to work in a partnership in the current NSDC. In order to answer this research question, I used my own definition of a partnership. Based on several case studies and scientific literature, I define partnership as a type of collaboration between two NGOs that has to consider the Southern NGO as the expert of their context and further involves the following seven indicators: mutual trust, transparency and active communication, cultural awareness and mutual respect, shared principles and mutual targets, mutual influence, shared responsibility and accountability,

and sustainability and mutual evaluation. I define each of these indicators in the theoretical framework of this thesis.

During my qualitative research, I conducted eleven semi-guided interviews (Reuber/Pfaffenbach 2005: 132f.) with employees from all three NGOs. In order to interview the Tanzanian employees, I travelled to Mwanza and Geita, Tanzania. During this field work, where I also accompanied three employees of tdhs, I was further able to conduct participatory observations (Rosenthal 2005) of the meetings and field visits the employees of tdhs attended. I completed my research with the analysis of important documents of the collaboration such as proposal guidelines or contracts. During this research, I adopted an ethnographic approach and I am therefore also interested in finding out how the employees of tdhs, Nelico and Ebli experience the collaboration themselves.

To answer the question of whether the collaboration between tdhs and Ebli or Nelico can be considered a partnership depends on the definition one uses. The main findings of my research show that the collaboration does not fulfil my definition of a partnership. Due to the fact that I use a very strict and detailed definition, several indicators, such as mutual accountability or mutual evaluation, are not achieved by the collaboration. However, the definition my interview partners have of a partnership is less detailed and hence the collaboration does fulfil their definition. Most of my interview partners also do consider the collaboration to be a partnership given their definitions.

Moreover, one aim of this thesis is to propose new inputs and ideas on how to improve the collaboration. Through the course of my analysis, I propose several ideas in order to improve the collaboration and consequently achieve those indicators of my definition that are not yet fulfilled. Additionally, I also argue that if my propositions were to be implemented in the collaboration, my interview partners would still consider the collaboration to be a partnership. This is because my propositions do not contradict with their definitions but reinforces certain aspects.

Even though I do not consider the collaboration to be a partnership, based on my propositions to improve the collaboration, I argue that it is still possible to have an authentic partnership in the current NSDC between two NGOs. In addition, I also argue that if the principle of partnership is applied correctly it can be considered an answer to the claim of the PDD for an alternative to western-dominated development. The most important argument for this conclusion is the fact that the principle of partnership demands for the Southern NGO to be respected as the expert of their context. Consequently, the projects are not based solely on western values and norms but primarily on the local circumstances.

Finally, this thesis addresses the collaboration between three rather small NGOs that work within the Swiss and Tanzanian context. The findings of my research are therefore only relevant in this specific context and I do not claim for a universal validity of my results.

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ABBREVIATION

Ebli = Education for Better Living Organization

NC = National Coordinator of *terre des hommes schweiz*

Nelico = New Light Children Center Organization

NGO = Non-governmental organisation

NSDC = North-South Development Cooperation

PC = Program Coordinator of *terre des hommes schweiz*

PDD = Post-Development Debate

SFA = Solution-Focused Approach

tdhs = *terre des hommes schweiz*

INTRODUCTION

For the last nine years, I have been working for a youth project in Switzerland that is part of an international network involving youth groups in Kenya, South Africa and Colombia. The project *imagine* originated in Switzerland and was initiated by the development organisation *terre des hommes schweiz* (tdhs). The youth groups of Kenya, South Africa and Colombia joined the project later on. During my work for this project, I experienced an inconsistency in how the collaboration worked. On the one hand, our team in Switzerland felt the strong need to consider every youth group as equal with mutual authority to decide together on important issues. On the other hand, there were many situations where a hierarchy occurred due to the fact that we from Switzerland were the most experienced project group and the ones with the financial means. It was exactly this discrepancy in my everyday work that determined my interest for this thesis.

In today's development industry, the principle of partnership is one of the most often-used terms to describe collaborations, and it can therefore be considered as one of the most important paradigms in the current development practices. As partners, both sides are supposed to be equal and on the same level. Furthermore, a partnership is supposed to ensure the effectiveness of the development project because the implemented projects are based on local needs and circumstances (Lister 2000: 228). Nowadays, it seems as if it is almost necessary to declare the collaboration a partnership in order to distance oneself from the previous system of 'donorship' (Bontenbal 2009). However, many scholars criticise the extensive use of the term partnership and argue that it is mostly needed to sugar-coat the collaboration (Fowler 1998). Similarly, Eriksson Baaz (2005: 7) argues that the term partnership is merely used as a masquerade to justify the involvement in the Southern world by pretending to work as partners. Consequently, many scholars have researched several case studies in order to analyse how partnership is actually practiced and most results were unsatisfying. Hoksbergen (2005) for example criticised the aspect of capacity building within a partnership as just another way of imposing western approaches on the South. Harrison (2002) described the issue of accountability as a "one-way street" where the South must account for their expenses towards the North but not the other way around. Other examples can be found when considering Fowler (1998) – who criticised the uneven transparency between two NGOs – and Mawdsley et al. (2005) – who advocates for more personal relations in order to improve partnerships. Furthermore, the extensive use of the term partnership results in uncountable definitions of what a partnership is supposed to look like and hence there is no unifying definition of a partnership.

Even though the principle of partnership is often misused in the current practices of the international development industry, it emerged from good intentions. After the second world war and with the independence of many former colonized regions, the concept of international development aid gained attention (Rist 2014, Esteva 1992). Looking at this period in retrospect, many scholars now argue that the Northern world had primarily their own interest in mind when working in the development industry

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(Rist 2014). It is therefore not surprising that many scholars seem to think that “where colonialism left off, development took over” (Kothari 1988, cited in Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 178). It was in this period of unsatisfying development work in the 1980s that two very different approaches arose. One of those new approaches is the so-called ‘human-centred approach’ that is part of ‘alternative development’. The proponents of alternative development emphasize on the individuals and want to put their personal needs at the centre of attention. The development interventions should no longer focus on the progress of systems or institutions, but on the people on the ground who are directly affected by poverty (Mason 2011). It was within this approach that the principle of partnership emerged.

The second reaction to the unsatisfying situation of the development industry goes in an opposed direction. The post-development debate (PDD) demands an alternative *to* development as opposed to the principle of partnership that advocates an alternative development. The scholars of the PDD claim that international development cooperation must be rejected entirely because it is based on wrong assumptions. For example, the development industry is based on a western value system, but “a project premised upon a set of values cannot succeed in the absence of those values” (Matthews 2004: 380). The PDD further criticises the homogenisation of the world through the development programs and hence wants to focus on local ideas and initiatives, the so-called grassroots movements (Escobar 1995: 215) in order to maintain diversity.

These claims already show that even though the principle of partnership and the PDD argue for different approaches, some of their arguments and claims seem to overlap. In current literature, there are many case studies on how partnership is practiced (e.g., Lister 2000, Harris 2008, Harrison 2002, Lewis 1998) and many scholars discuss the claims and critics of the PDD (e.g., Matthews 2004, Nederveen Pieterse 2000, Ziai 2012). But even though many of the arguments overlap, there is a lack of current research that combines the PDD with the principle of partnership. It is therefore one purpose of this thesis to close this gap and discuss both the PDD and the principle of partnership in order to carve out their main claims and criticisms. Based on this theoretical framework, I combine these two approaches and analyse whether the principle of partnership can be considered an answer to the main claim of the PDD. The main theoretical research question for this thesis therefore is:

Can the principle of partnership be considered an answer to that claim made by the PDD for an alternative to western-dominated development?

The supporting questions of my thesis are:

What are the criteria of a partnership in the international development cooperation identified by different scholars and institutions?

What are the main claims made by the scholars of the PDD and how do they understand alternatives to development?

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Apart from the theoretical interest in this subject, I am further interested in applying these questions to practice. Therefore, I conducted a qualitative research on the collaboration between three non-governmental organisations (NGO¹), the Swiss NGO *terre des hommes schweiz* (tdhs) and two Tanzanian NGOs *Education for Better Living Organization* (Ebli) and *New Light Children Center Organisation* (Nelico). To apply the theoretical questions into practice, I ask the following research questions:

Which indicators of a partnership, as I identify them, are successfully applied within the working collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico?

How do the employees of tdhs, Ebli and Nelico characterize their collaboration and how do they understand partnership?

Based on the research of my case study, is the principle of partnership implementable in the current North-South development cooperation (NSDC)²?

One of the main questions of this thesis is to analyse whether the principle of partnership answers the claim of the PDD. It is therefore one aim of this thesis to show that if the principle of partnership is applied correctly in practice, it can be considered an answer to the main claim of the PDD for an alternative to western-dominated development.

The second main question of this thesis is to analyse whether the collaboration between tdhs Ebli, and Nelico can be considered a partnership. Therefore, the second aim of this thesis is to give the employees of the three NGOs new inputs and insights into their working practices in order to improve their collaboration.

Consequently, this thesis focuses on the collaboration between NGOs. Other branches within the development industry, such as collaborations between states or institutions are beyond the scope of this paper. Additionally, the results I gathered are only significant for the specific case study and also only for the Swiss and Tanzanian context. I do not claim that my results are universal or that my propositions can be applied in other contexts. Further, I am not interested in the effect a partnership has on the success of the implemented projects in the South. My interest lies within the internal processes and structures that influence and form the collaboration itself.

In order to answer my research questions, the term ‘development’ is especially important, and it is one of the key concepts of this thesis. The meanings and associations of this term are extremely diverse and

¹ An NGO is a “non-profit organization that operates independently of any government, typically one whose purpose is to address a social or political issue” (Oxford Dictionaries 2016).

² In certain chapters, I will use the word West as opposed to South. In other chapters I will use the word North as opposed to South. This is adapted to the word that is used in the indicated literature. However, in my analysis chapter, I will only use the word North because most scholars speak of North-South Development Cooperation and not West-South Development Cooperation. In this thesis, the words West and North are used interchangeably based on the terminology in the used literature.

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often discussed in current literature³. It has been used since the 1950s to describe the practices and efforts of the development industry due to the different situations certain countries were in (Matthews 2004: 375). Likewise, many use this term in order to describe certain countries or people as *underdeveloped* in order to show that they still ‘need to catch up’, to become like the Northern states (Esteva 1992). For the scholars of the PDD (as well as for many others) the term development always includes the specific assessment of the more favourable situation of the North over the South. Putting all those connotations aside, development can be simply understood as “a process involving the unfolding of changes in the direction of reaching a higher or more mature state of being” (Matthews 2004: 376). Consequently, it is a transformation or improvement of the situation into a more desirable state. In this thesis, I use the term ‘development practices’ or the term NSDC⁴ in order to describe the development industry since the 1950s.

The research for this thesis was conducted in February and March 2016 in Mwanza and Geita, Tanzania as well as in Basel, Switzerland. I carried out eleven qualitative, semi-guided interviews (Reuber/Pfaffenbach 2005: 132f.) with employees from all three NGOs. Additionally, I conducted participatory observations (Rosenthal 2005) of meetings and field visits that were held during the project visit of three employees of tdhs in Tanzania. In order to obtain more background information, I analysed several working documents and guidelines that are used within the collaboration. During my research, I adapted an ethnographic approach that enabled me to research how the collaboration is shaped, practiced, and experienced.

In order to analyse whether the collaboration can be considered a partnership, I identified seven indicators that I use to define a partnership. Those indicators are based on scientific literature (such as Lister 2000, Ashman 2001, Mason 2011, Bontenbal 2009) and are: mutual trust, transparency and active communication, cultural awareness and mutual respect, shared principles and mutual targets, mutual influence, shared responsibility and accountability, and sustainability and mutual evaluation. Additionally, Ebli and Nelico have to be respected as the expert of their contexts.

This thesis is organized in five main parts. The first part outlines the context of my research by giving a short overview on the history of the NSDC as well as the Tanzanian context. Additionally, I provide a short description of the three involved NGOs as well as the technicalities of their collaboration. The second part describes the theoretical framework. Chapter 2.1 outlines the PDD, chapter 2.2 focuses on the principle of partnership, and chapter 2.3. gives a short input into the geographies of the north-south development cooperation. In chapter 2.4, I explain my understanding of a partnership by defining the indicators I used for my research. The third part provides an input into the ethnographic approach and introduces the methodologies I applied in conducting my research. In chapter 3.5, I shortly discuss the limitations I experienced during my research. Part four discusses the analysis of my research and

³ See for instance Bebbington et al. 2008; Mitlin et al. 2007; Esteva 1992.

⁴ This term is especially used to describe the collaboration between NGOs, situated in the North and the South, such as it is the case within my case study.

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therefore contains my case studies as well as my research findings. In chapter 4.1. I analyse each of my seven indicators individually and expound whether the collaboration fulfils this specific indicator or not. In chapter 4.3, I discuss how my interview partners define partnership and if they consider the collaboration to be one. Finally, in chapter 4.4, I answer my research question about whether I consider the collaboration between tdhs and Ebli or Nelico to be a partnership. The last part, chapter 5, discusses if partnership can be considered an alternative to western-dominated development. I close this thesis by combining the two theoretical approaches I used.

1. THE CONTEXT OF MY RESEARCH

In this chapter, I establish the frame of my research. First, I give a short overview on the history of the North-South development cooperation (NSDC). This is important in order to better understand both the post-development debate (PDD) and the principle of partnership. In the second part, I give a short description of the Tanzanian context and their history with the NSDC in order to better understand the context of the current NSDC in Tanzania. In the last part, I present the three NGOs tdhs, Nelico, and Ebli that are involved in the collaboration I analyse, and give a very short insight into the technicalities of their collaboration.

1.1. The History of the North-South Development Cooperation

After the second world war, Europe and the United States were in a difficult social, economic and political situation. Occupied with issues the West had, the situations and changes within their colonies in Africa (as well as other parts of the world, e.g., India) such as decolonization and building of new states, shifted to the background of Western attention. It was in that period that “the concept of development” was “invented” (Rist 2014: 69f.). How development was “invented” will be elaborated in the following chapter.

THE BEGINNING: 1949

In January 1949, in his Inaugural Speech, US President Truman defined four points that should describe the main focus of the US within the current worldwide challenges. Whereas the first three were to be expected, point four, as Rist (2014: 71) calls it, “inaugurated the development age”. Rist (2014) argues that it was in this speech that the word ‘underdeveloped’ was used for the first time to describe the situation of a nation. Truman said:

“Fourth, we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnate. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of these people. [...] In cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investments in areas needing development.” (US-President Truman, cited in Rist 2014: 71)

Here, Truman used for the first time the term ‘underdevelopment’ in such a specific context and with such a political reach. Even more so, he also defined development as something that not just happens⁵

⁵ In comparison to other work (such as Lenin or the UN General Assembly) who used the word development in a socioeconomic context (Rist 2014: 73).

THE CONTEXT OF MY RESEARCH

but something that can be actively achieved and supported (Rist 2014: 73). Consequently, he changed the existing meaning of 'development' permanently, because "underdevelopment began, then, on January 20, 1949. On that day, two billion people became underdeveloped" (Esteva 1992: 7).

Truman not only used the term underdevelopment in this specific context, he further characterized more than half of the world's populations as victims. Therefore, they are passive and in need of help from others such as the West. Hence, as Rist (2014 74) argues, with this new order of the developed and underdeveloped, the West and the South were suddenly put into relation to each other based on their 'state of development'. Moreover, the West seems to have the aspired condition whereas the South is in need of 'catching up'. Additionally, in order to need help, as described by Esteva (1992: 7), the people living in the 'underdeveloped' countries now also had to refer to themselves as underdeveloped: "For those who make up two-thirds of the world's population today, to think of development - of any kind of development - requires first the perception of themselves as underdeveloped, with the whole burden of connotations that this carries." The perception "the underdeveloped" had about themselves therefore drastically changed and some of them also used this 'need of help' to their 'advantage': "This new 'definition' was accepted by those who headed the independent states, because it was a way of asserting their claim to benefit from the 'aid' that was supposed to lead to 'development'" (Rist 2014: 79). However, this aid, as Rist (2014: 79) further argues, only led to the fact that the now independent states had to take the 'development path' and were again under the influence of the West. Hence, many scholars argue that where colonialism ended, development took over (Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 178)

THE 1950s AND 1960s

In his speech, Truman limited development to technical assistance and economic growth (Rist 2014: 78), which can be measured with the income of a person (Esteva 1992: 12). Such thinking characterizes the main paradigm of this period rather well since development was primarily seen as the "increase in the per capita production of material goods" (Esteva 1992: 12). Even though 'social development' was named for instance in the reports of the United Nations, it was widely overshadowed by the predominant paradigm of 'economic development' (ibid: 12f).

Further, it was this period that led to the so-called Modernization Theory. Based on the assumption that economic growth will lead to development, modernization was seen simply as "the process of transformation from traditional to modern principles of social organisation" (Leys 1996, cited in: Andrews/Bawa 2014: 924). Moreover, the main paradigm of this time assumed that the 'primitive' or 'indigenous' knowledge of the South was inferior to that from the North. Hence, there was a dichotomy between the scientific knowledge of the North and the traditional knowledge of the South (Andrews/Bawa 2014: 924). The Modernization Theory therefore assumes that 'underdevelopment' has endogenous reason and that 'underdeveloped' countries are on a lower level than 'developed' states.

At the End of 1960, the importance of 'social development' changed when the 'Proposal for Action' of the UN stated that "the problem of the underdeveloped countries is not just growth, but development..."

THE CONTEXT OF MY RESEARCH

development is growth plus change. Change, in turn, is social and cultural as well as economic, and qualitative as well as quantitative” (Esteva 1992: 13). But although the social aspect was more integrated into the NSDC, it was still seen in relation to economic growth and it was considered more of a condition for economic change rather than an important change itself (ibid).

THE 1970s

In the late 1960s, critiques emerged on the Modernization Theory because it assumed homogeneity of Southern as well as Northern cultures and knowledge. Even more, the single focus on economic growth led to many inequalities. This was the period when the Dependency Theory emerged, rooted mostly in Latin America. This theory states that Southern societies and states depend too much on Northern states. The Southern states are solely used for the needs of the Northern states and are therefore constrained in their development. (Andrews/Bawa 2014: 925). Contrary to the Modernization Theory, the Dependency Theory therefore assumes that the reasons for ‘underdevelopment’ are exogenous and not endogenous.

Additionally, based on the experiences of the first development decade, the focus of the NSDC in the 1970s tried to integrate different aspects of ‘development’ into one paradigm. Early in the 1970s, the UN passed a Resolution that established an integrated approach to development that “would fully integrate the economic and social components in the formulation of policies and programs” (Esteva 1992: 14). But even though this decade started with the claim for a unified approach, the opposite was the case. Due to the diversity of ‘problems’ such as environmental issues, hunger and unemployment, each of them was dealt with separately. The only commonality between these different approaches was the idea to develop people instead of systems or things. This focus on people initiated the ‘human-centred development’ (Esteva 1992: 15).

With human-centred development, the people should have more influence in the development process and it should include all aspects of their lives, and therefore be *integrated* development. Additionally, development was considered to directly deal with the basic needs of people instead of hoping that the satisfaction of those needs will come as a result of the successes of development (Esteva 1992: 15). Nederveen Pieterse (1998: 346) calls this approach ‘alternative development’, meaning that it is “development from below” and refers to local communities or NGOs (e.g., Mitlin et al. 2007: 1705).

It was in this period that many Northern organisations shifted from operational to funding activities and therefore enabled Southern NGOs to grow and diversify (Mitlin et al. 2007: 1705). Hence, most of the Northern NGOs no longer implemented their own programs or projects (Lewis 1998: 503).

THE 1980s

With this diverse field of theories and approaches, it is not surprising that the 1980s are often called the “lost decade of development” (Esteva 1992: 16). Many NGOs and other organisations had to redefine their own structure or purpose and were therefore preoccupied with themselves.

Conversely, others call this period the “NGO decade” (Bebbington et al. 2008: 9). It is characterized by many changes and adjustments within the NGO sector of the North, but moreover also by many newly

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formed NGOs in the South (Mawdsley et al. 2005: 78). This mushrooming of Southern NGOs was reinforced by the shift of the Northern NGOs from an implementing role to a funding one (Bebbington et al. 2008: 12).

In conclusion, it was a decade where many changes happened. These changes opened the path for the current situation in the NSDC that started in the 1990s.

THE 1990s

The 1990s was a decade of many new development ideas. ‘Sustainable development’ was one of the main paradigms of this period: “Development that meets the needs of today without necessarily compromising those of future generations” (Daly 1996, cited in Andrews/Bawa 2014: 926). Additionally, in 1990, the United Nations (UN) published the first Human Development Report where each country was evaluated and qualified by indicators such as life expectancy, adult literacy and child mortality. With this, each country became comparable with 129 other countries in the world and the UN was able to put a number on the status of development of each country (Esteva 1992: 17). Theories such as the ‘capability approach’ or the ‘sustainable-livelihood approach’ further emerged in this period and diversified the field of the NSDC (Andrews/Bawa 2014: 926).

CURRENT SITUATION

The current situation of the NSDC is extremely heterogeneous and diversified. Many Northern NGOs actively raise funds for projects and organisations in the South. This fundraising further reinforces the very present ‘global Salvationism⁶’ (Andrews/Bawa 2014: 927). For example, many NGOs raise funds by using the poverty of the South with, for instance, images of vulnerable or ‘starving’ children.

Besides the moral obligation, there are also other arguments for why the NSDC is valuable. However, they are rather ‘selfish’ arguments, such as: to limit migration from Southern countries to Northern, to eradicate diseases that could spread from the South to the North, to limit population growth that is a threat to ecological sustainability, and to open trade and new markets in the South for Northern products (Fowler 1998: 138, see also Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1998: 222).

Currently, with the Millennium Development Goals that ended in 2015 and the newly accepted Sustainable Development Goals that continue until 2030, an important period is ahead. With the “17 goals to transform our world” (SDG 2016a), the areas of action are broader than ever, and the field of NSDC is extremely diversified.

In this chapter, I outlined the history of the NSDC and introduced the most important paradigms that were hegemonic over the last six decades. Further, I introduced the idea of the ‘invention of development’ with Truman’s Point Four. With the idea of development, many states in Africa were put into the box of ‘underdevelopment’. Tanzania is one of the countries that is considered poor or

⁶ Global Salvationism is the idea that people from the North have of saving people from the South.

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The political capital of Tanzania is Dodoma, located at the centre of the country, and the economic or commercial capital is Dar es Salaam, in the Indian Ocean. Tanzania is divided into 27⁷ regions such as Kigoma, Kilimanjaro and Mwanza. The United Republic of Tanzania was established in 1964 when the ‘Union of Tanganyika’ and ‘Zanzibar’ united under their first president Julius Kambarage Nyerere. Kiswahili and English are the official languages spoken in Tanzania. Additionally, there are numerous local languages. The religious belief of the population consists of traditional beliefs (30%), Islamic (35%) and Christian (35%) (Tanzania Consul 2016).

In the mid-1980s, Tanzania’s government began to be widely supported by international funders, which continued into the early 1990s. The peak of support was in 1992, when Tanzania received more than US\$ 1.3 billion from the Official Development Assistance⁸. Due to several international political decisions, the funds decreased severely from 1992 until 1995. With the election of a new government in 1995, Tanzania gained approval from international development funders, which led to a three-year Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility-Program through the International Monetary Fund. This helped Tanzania join the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative in 2000. In order to get international funds, the Tanzanian government had to agree to many conditions such as implementing a poverty reduction strategy. These conditions, introduced from outside, led to a lack of ownership on the part of the Tanzanian people and state and therefore led to little effectiveness of the support. (Cramer et al. 2006: 424f.)

Consequently, the history of the NSDC in Tanzania is multi-layered and influenced by ideas and opinions from the North. This also results in a very distinct image that Tanzanians have of people from the North. Hence, for many Tanzanians, ‘white people’ are still related to the colonial times. As Eriksson Baaz (2005: 67) points out: “the meaning attached to ‘whiteness’ and the West very much depends on context and experience.” Shortly after the independence of Tanzania, the image of the Europeans was primarily one of an enemy and imperialist and Tanzanian people mistrusted the ‘white people’. Additionally, white people were often considered to be rich and influential. Nevertheless, the picture of a *mzungu*⁹ seems to have changed, since Eriksson Baaz (2005: 69) quotes a Tanzanian development worker as having said: “I think it’s the background, the colonial background, that made people think that the *mzungu* is superior, that the *mzungu* is able to do everything, is trustworthy and they feel that if a *mzungu* is here... everything will be solved.” The word *mzungu* itself illustrates this image because it originally stands for wealth and material prosperity (Eriksson Baaz 2005: 68). Nevertheless, this image

⁷ To that date, on the website of the Tanzanian Consul, Geita is not yet indicated as an own region. However, during my stay, people told me that Geita was registered recently as an own region and is no longer part of the Mwanza Region.

⁸ The official development assistance is defined by the OECD as: “those flows to countries and territories and to multilateral institutions which are provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies.” (for a more detailed definition see OECD 2016)

⁹ Kiswahili word for a white person (Eriksson Baaz 2005).

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is mostly present with older people: Younger Tanzanians seem to challenge this picture and do not consider white people as “superior” anymore (Eriksson Baaz 2005: 70).

Keeping the history of the NSDC as well as the Tanzanian context in mind, I now turn to the description of the three NGOs that are involved in the collaboration I do my research on. All three parts of this chapter therefore build together the context and frame my research is based on.

1.3. The Three NGOs Involved

In the next chapter, I give a short overview on the three NGOs that are part of the collaboration I research. The first NGO I describe is the Swiss development agency *terre des hommes schweiz*, followed by the two Tanzanian NGOs *New Light Children Center Organisation* and *Education for Better Living Organization*.

The information presented here can be found within different sources. Firstly, I gathered much information during my interviews when I asked about the organisations. Secondly, most of the information can be found on the website of tdhs or on documents that can be downloaded there. Frequently, I also consulted internal documents such as proposals or reports that are not publicly available. A list with the internal documents I used can be found in chapter 3.3.3.

1.3.1. terre des hommes schweiz

terre des hommes schweiz (tdhs) is a Swiss development agency situated in Basel, Switzerland. A very coherent definition of tdhs is written in their annual report from 2015:

“tdhs is a non-political and non-denominational association that has been committed to a just world for more than 50 years. Working together on projects with local organisations, we campaign for better living conditions for young people across ten countries in Africa and Latin America. In Switzerland, we strive to increase awareness of global interconnections and run information campaign to promote fairer north-south relations.”
(terre des hommes schweiz 2016e)

The organisation *Terre des Hommes* was founded in 1960 by Edmund Kaiser in order to help refugees of the Algerian war. Besides the organization in Switzerland, other *Terre des Hommes* movements were established in France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Luxemburg, and in 1966, they joined the international federation of *Terre des Hommes*. Six years later, in 1972, the Swiss *Terre des Hommes* split into two separate organisations: *Terre des Hommes* based in Lausanne and Zurich, a child aid organisation, and *terre des hommes schweiz/Suisse* based in Basel and Geneva (terre des hommes schweiz 2016f).



Picture 1, tdhs logo (tdhs 2016a)

The current tdhs in Basel has a Board of Management, consisting of eight people: One Executive Director followed by one Head of Program and one Head of Communication.

In total, tdhs has 23 employees in the office at Basel. Out of those 23 employees, there are five Program Coordinators (PCs) who are responsible for coordinating the projects tdhs supports in the different countries. Additionally, they have eight local National Coordinators (NCs) situated in the Southern countries who coordinate the supported project on the ground. Currently, tdhs employs one NC in each Brazil, El Salvador, Colombia, Nicaragua, Peru, Mozambique, and Tanzania, along with one NC for both Zimbabwe and South Africa. Further, tdhs supports a refugee camp in the Western Sahara (terre des hommes schweiz 2016b).

tdhs has different sources of funds. They receive 51.8% of their capital from private supporters, and 18.2% from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. They receive additional funds from inheritances, churches, Swiss cantons, and through own activities. They spend more than 55% of the funds on their program in the Southern countries, 16% within Swiss projects and information campaigns, 16% for fundraising and 10% for administrative costs. tdhs further possesses the ZEW certificate¹⁰ (terre des hommes schweiz 2016d).

In regard to their thematic work, tdhs defines three specific field of actions for every four years. For the period of 2017 to 2020, the fields of action are gender-based violence, sexual reproductive health and rights, and economic empowerment. These fields of action can change slightly after the four years, but their three main areas, called key project areas, remain the same. These can be considered as the approach, method or practice of *how* they work within their fields of action. These are: psychosocial support (PSS)¹¹, violence prevention and conflict resolution, and youth participation¹². For each of those fields of action, tdhs has an employee who is an expert – for instance the desk for youth participation – who is responsible for the implementation of those fields. Furthermore, tdhs works with the Solution Focused Approach (SFA). This approach is a way of looking at problems and dealing with challenges in a solution-focused manner rather than in a problem-focused perspective, emphasizing on the resources and strengths each individual has (terre des hommes schweiz 2016d).

In every country where tdhs is active, they work with several local NGOs, and for each country, there exists a specific country program that defines the specific aims and objectives for the involved NGOs.

¹⁰ For more information about the ZEW certificate go to www.zewo.ch (Zewo 2016).

¹¹ PSS is an approach that focuses on the psychological effects of stress or trauma and helps the affected youth “to work through these situations and gain control of their lives again” (terre des hommes schweiz 2016g).

¹² Youth Participation aims to involve young people directly in the processes of change in order to take their concerns seriously and not merely keep them at the receiving end of orders (terre des hommes schweiz 2016h).

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This country program can be considered as a summary of the aims and activities the local NGOs are currently working on. Each country program further focusses on two of the three fields of action. For Tanzania, those are gender-based violence and reproductive health and rights. Within Tanzania, tdhs currently works together with five organisations such as: *Kividea*, based in Kigoma, near the border of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo; *Humuliza*, in the Nshamba Region, in the Northern Part of Tanzania; *Nelico*, situated in Geita, and *Ebli* and *Wadada*, situated in Mwanza near Lake Victoria (terre des hommes schweiz 2016c).

1.3.2. New Light Children Center Organisation

New Light Children Center Organisation (Nelico) is an NGO situated in Geita, Tanzania, and was established in 2004 (Nelico 2: 1f). It is a child rights-based organization and their main focus lies within the support of most vulnerable children and orphans, and the empowerment of youth to be able to cope with stressful situations (Nelico 1: 1). On their website, they formulate their main vision as:

“To bring a positive change in the lives of the children and youth with a particular focus on orphans and most vulnerable children, through promotion of their well-being and creation of an enabling environment where communities promote, respect and protect child rights, and recognize the needs and rights of those already affected” (Nelico 2016).



Picture 2, Nelico office building (own picture)

The context of Geita is highly influenced by the local formal and informal gold mines. Due to those mines, many young people migrate to the area in hopes of employment and often either find none or leave Geita again after a period of time due to disappointments. Quite often, those migrants leave their children in Geita, which results in a high number of children and youth living on the streets (Nelico 1: 1).

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Nelico uses different approaches such as PSS to counsel and support affected youth. They offer legal aid programs as well as youth voice programs in order to include the local youth in their programs, but also to involve them in the public discourse and to inform them about the current situation. Furthermore, Nelico carries out a Book Project where they support students in writing and reading and help them to cope with their circumstances by writing down their stories. Some of those books are to be published (Proposal Nelico 2016-2018: 30).

In their proposal for tdhs, Nelico defined four main areas of action for the tdhs-supported projects such as child domestic violence, human rights, sexual reproductive health, and education (Proposal Nelico 2016-2018: 4). As formulated in their proposal, Nelico wants to “enhance sexual reproductive health and rights knowledge among young people and gender rights among children with a focus on eradicating sexual and gender based violence in Geita” (Proposal Nelico 2016-2018: 21). Their concrete work in the field includes workshops with teachers and students about the mentioned topics, community awareness campaigns, provision of legal aid to the community and local children, and revolving funds for local youth to establish an entrepreneurial business (Proposal Nelico 2016-2018: 18).

The organisational structure of Nelico includes a Member’s Council that is at the top of the structure, followed by the Board of Directors, followed by the Executive Director. Nelico has different departments such as legal aid department, albino department, youth department, PSS department, as well as human resource and financial department (Nelico 1: 2). Nelico has approximately twenty-five employees (Nelico 2016).

tdhs supports Nelico with an amount of USD 100,000 per year and their collaboration started in 2006 (Nelico 2: 1). It is therefore one of the longest collaborations both tdhs and Nelico have (Nelico 1: 2, tdhs 2: 2). Nelico gains additional funds from NGOs such as the Swiss NGO *Pestalozzi Children Foundation* (Nelico 2016).

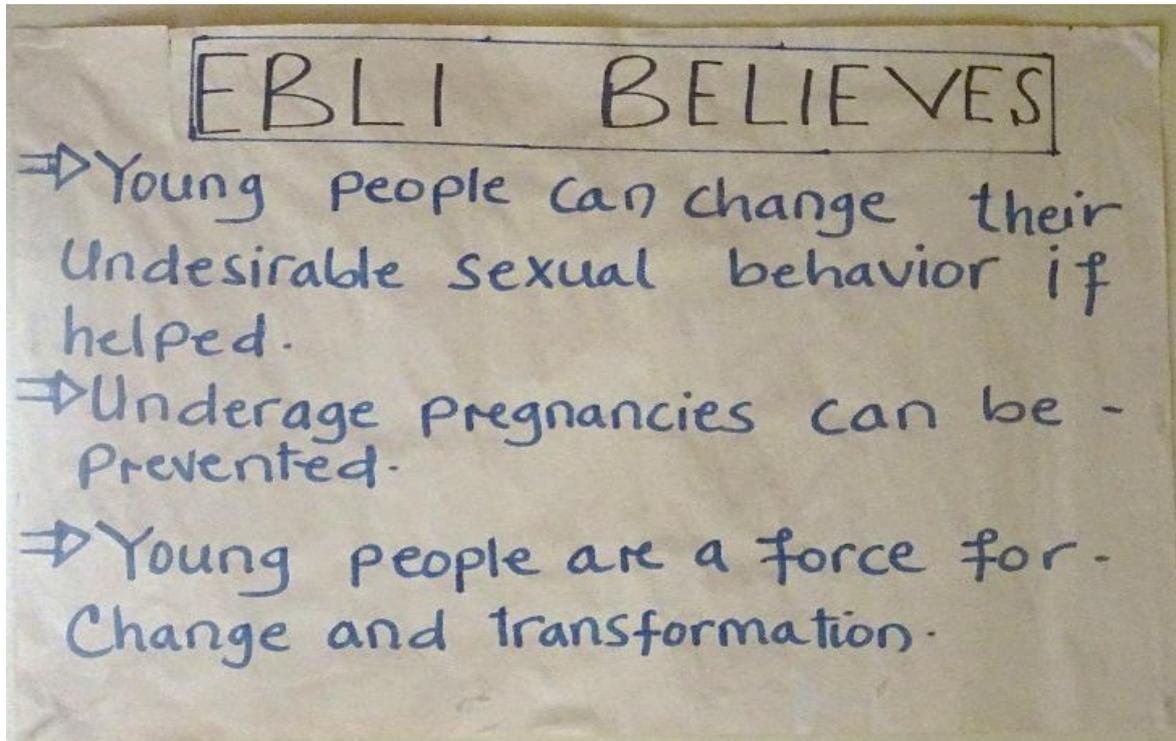
1.3.3. Education for Better Living Organization

Education for Better Living Organization (Ebli) is an NGO situated in Mwanza, Tanzania, and was established in 2009 (Ebli 1: 1). Their main focus lies with young mothers, who have had to drop out of school due to pregnancy. Their mission, as described on their website, is as follows:

“Ebli is an NGO working with young people in Mwanza, Tanzania, to reduce the rate of school dropout using behaviour change process and to economically empower those who do dropout of school for increased capacity for employment or self-employment.” (Ebli 2016)

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The approach they use, the behaviour change process (BCP), is aimed at motivating youth to change their 'risky sexual behaviour patterns' (Proposal Ebli 2014-2016: 2).



Picture 3, Poster from the Ebli office (own picture)

Young women who get pregnant as teenagers are more likely to drop out of school. Consequently, they most likely remain badly educated for the rest of their lives, which often results in poverty (Proposal Ebli 2014-2016: 5). Therefore, Ebli tries to decrease the number of young women getting pregnant and hence dropping out of school. They do so by educating them about the legal situation and rights they have, by informing them through workshops about sexual reproductive health and prevention mechanisms, by conducting workshops in order to raise awareness, and by conducting BCP workshops 'that enables [the students'] choosing of a healthy lifestyle' (Proposal Ebli 2014-2016: 23).

In addition to the programs Ebli conducts in school to prevent teenage pregnancies, they further offer programs to young women who already have a baby and had to drop out of school. Ebli offers a computer program where young mothers can learn basic computer skills as well as general entrepreneurship skills in order to help them find employment or start a self-employed business. Additionally, they offer school education to young mothers where they can finish secondary school in order to receive the official government diploma (Ebli 1: 1).

The organisational structure of Ebli includes the founding members, followed by five board members, followed by the Executive Director. Within the organisation, in addition to the director, there are four local employees: An accountant, a social worker and two project managers. Furthermore, Ebli has three

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international employees that work at Ebli but partly get their salary from international NGOs¹³ (Ebli 1: 1).

Tdhs supports Ebli with USD 49,500 per year and their collaboration started in 2012 (Ebli 1: 1). Other support Ebli receives consists mostly of workforce, such as described above. Hence, most of the capital Ebli holds comes from tdhs, apart from smaller income-generating activities Ebli does themselves (Ebli 1: 2).

1.3.4. Technicalities of the Collaboration

With the system of the National Coordinator (NC) and the Program Coordinator (PC), tdhs has a specific communication system. The employees of the NGOs in the South communicate primarily with the NC in their country. The NC-office of Tanzania is situated in Dar es Salaam and there is one National Coordinator who is primarily responsible and the main contact person for the Tanzanian NGOs. He is supported by an accountant who is in charge of all the financial activities and support (tdhs 2: 4).

The NC visits each project approximately three to four times a year and the PC once a year. Additionally, there are two to three partner platforms in a year, where all the Tanzanian organisations meet. Mostly, only the NC is present at those partner platforms, occasionally also the PC. Depending on the theme and focus of the platform, there are additional staff members from tdhs present. If for instance the focus is on youth participation, the youth participation desk of tdhs travels to Tanzania as well (tdhs 1: 3).

The collaboration is structured such that at the beginning there is a one-year pilot phase. After a successful pilot phase, the two NGOs sign a three-year contract that can be renewed several times. For this three-year contract, the Tanzanian NGOs has to write a proposal of approximately thirty pages including a budget. After discussing and approving this proposal internally within tdhs, the contract is signed. Within this three-year period, the Tanzanian NGOs have to write several reports based on the activities stipulated in the proposal, such as a quarterly report, a half-year report, a second quarterly report and, at the end of the year, an annual report. Each of those reports involve a written report of the activities as well as a financial report (tdhs 2: 3). The PC, as well as the NC, gives detailed feedback for each of those reports based on the content and the aims defined in the proposal. Additionally, each year, there is an external audit report (tdhs 1: 5).

This chapter outlined the context of my research. I described the history of the NSDC as well as the Tanzanian context, and in the last chapter I described the three NGOs that are analysed in my research. This chapter is therefore aimed at better contextualizing my research and hence the results. The next

¹³ Such as one employee from the US from the Maryknoll Lay Missioners, one Korean employee from the Korean International Cooperation Agency and one employee from the Swiss NGO, Interteam.

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chapter gives additional background for my thesis by establishing the theoretical framework of the PDD and the principle of partnership.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I now introduce the theoretical framework that this thesis relies on. This framework is inspired by debates evolving from a critique of the ‘Grand Theories’ of development, the Modernization Theory and the Dependency Theory. Together with the practices of the North-South development cooperation (NSDC), these two theories entailed different debates as well as critiques within and on the NSDC. Such critiques gave rise to the post-development debate (PDD) on the one hand, and the human-centred approach on the other. While the PDD rejects the field of NSDC entirely, the human-centred approach advocated the focus on the person and its basic needs instead of focusing on structural changes. Part of this approach is the principle of partnership that calls for a consideration of the South as an equal partner to the North. In the following, I first focus on the PDD and explain its main claims and critiques (chapter 2.1). In chapter 2.2, I elaborate on the principle of partnership with its main characteristics and I give an insight into the current partnership practices. In the following chapter (chapter 2.3), I briefly introduce the main aspects of the ‘geographies of NSDC’. Based on this theoretical framework, I conclude this chapter by discussing the indicators I use in my research to define partnership (chapter 2.4).

2.1. The Post-Development Debate

The field of the NSDC is diverse and contains many different opinions and claims. The PDD, however, stands out. This is because it does not claim a special approach within the development practices (such as human-centred approach for example) but rejects the field of development¹⁴ entirely.

In the following chapters, I first offer a short overview on the origins of the PDD and its most important scholars. In chapter 2.1.2, I discuss the main critiques the PDD raises on the development practices as well as their main claim for an alternative *to* western-dominated development. Since this debate not only raises many criticisms but is also often criticised, I discuss the most common critiques on the PDD in chapter 2.1.3. This last chapter also includes a short insight into the closely related post-colonial studies.

2.1.1. Origins of the Debate

The growing critique on development practices until the 1980s led to several new debates and theories, one of which is the PDD. Well-known and often-discussed contributions are the work by Arturo Escobar – *Encountering Development* – that was published in 1995, the *Development Dictionary* by Wolfgang Sachs in 1992, the *History of Development* by Gilbert Rist, and the *Post-Development Reader* from Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree, both published in 1997. Other important scholars of the PDD are Gustavo Esteva (1992), Morgan Brigg (2002), Serge Latouche (1992), and James Ferguson (1994).

The main claim made by the PDD is not an ‘alternative development’ but – in contrast to this – an alternative *to* development. This claim is grounded on the assumption that “the concept of development

¹⁴ As described in the introduction, the PDD uses the term development to describe the NSDC and not to describe the simple meaning of some sort of transformation or improvement.

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is obsolete or bankrupt and that the practice of development has done more harm than good” (Matthews 2004: 373). Hence, the PDD also rejects the approach of an alternative development because it is still based within the same field of development and “most of the efforts are also produced in the same worldview” (Nandy 1989, cited in Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 181). Alternative development in the opinion of the PDD therefore only looks for another approach but with the same goals as conventional development practices (Ziai 2006: 196). The PDD however bases its claim for an alternative to western-dominated development on the fact that within the field of development, the hegemonic norms and values as well as the goal of development are of western origin and therefore cannot work in the South. Escobar (1995: 13) writes in the introduction of his book: “development has relied exclusively on one knowledge system, namely, the modern Western one. The dominance of this knowledge system has dictated the marginalization and disqualification of non-Western knowledge systems.” Accordingly, the scholars of the PDD claim that the field of development, and with this the NSDC, should be rejected entirely.

The scholars of the PDD reject development on three levels: one as a political project, secondly as a theoretical construct and third, as a term itself. The first two critiques refer to the invention of development by Truman in 1949¹⁵. Apart from the assumption made by Truman that the western, industrial capitalism is the favourable system, the PDD further maintains that the invention of development was aimed at continuing to control the former colonized regions, and hence to make sure that the West (or more specifically the US (Sachs 1992: 2)) stays on top of the system. The critique on the term itself refers to the ambiguous use and definition of the term, which results in no clear or universal use or understanding of the word (Ziai 2006: 195f.)¹⁶.

Important to note, the PDD does not reject the idea of some sort of social transformation or changes within a state or society but it rejects the idea that ‘underdeveloped’ states need to catch up to the ‘developed’ states and become ‘like them’ (Matthews 2004: 376).

The following section elaborates on the PDD’s most important critiques and claims.

2.1.2. Critiques from the Post-Development Debate

The PDD raises several important claims and critiques on the theories and practices of the NSDC. Primarily, the PDD considers ‘development’ as well as ‘underdevelopment’ as a historic construct that is linked to specific interests of the western world (Ziai 2012: 134). This is appositely described by Rajni Kothari as: “where colonialism left off, development took over” (Kothari 1988, cited in Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 178). Those specific interests of the Western world can further be considered the reason for one of the most important criticisms of the PDD: the NSDC cannot work, because it is based on Western value systems and not on the Southern local values and norms. Therefore, many projects or

¹⁵ See chapter 1.1.

¹⁶ See also the introduction.

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programs are misconceived from the beginning. They were based on the assumption, as Matthews (2004: 379) expresses it, of the “universalisation of Western experiences”. One example of those different value systems is described by Shaffer (2012) and refers to the understanding of poverty¹⁷. The Western assumption about poverty and its meanings does not comprehend what poverty means to every society in the world. Hence, poor does not necessarily have to be the opposite of rich but it can also mean to be excluded of the community or to lose one’s status (Shaffer 2012: 1769). Citing Rahnema, Shaffer (2012: 1770) explains that, “modern programs of poverty alleviation have ‘little, or often nothing to do, with what different categories of poor perceived as their needs’”. Shaffer (2012: 1772) continues that “the ‘modern’ conception of poverty has limited relevance in large parts of the global South in that they denigrate simplicity and frugality, eulogise wealth and riches, and do not correspond to the needs of local communities.”

This example of different perception on poverty exemplifies the claim of the PDD that development is a construct also in another aspect. Ziai (2012: 134) explains that the PDD advocates development a construct, because it is based on the western assumption that the well-being or ‘stage of development’ can be measured with economic indicators. This economic thinking assumes that the human being has endless growing needs and has therefore the need for a growing economy. Other, non-economic activities, as described in the example on poverty, are thereby devalued. Consequently, the PDD argues that the NSDC wrongly assumes that “the world ought to be playing the same game” (Douglas Lummis 1992: 45) and additionally does not take into consideration the diversity and heterogeneity of the culture of those it should assist (Matthews 2004: 379). It is hence not surprising that the PDD calls these misconceptions to account for the few results that were achieved with the NSDC.

These few results and the current socioeconomic situation of many states and societies is another reason for the PDD to reject the NSDC. Matthews (2004: 377) for instance notes that although many African states went through many development interventions, they remain impoverished and the gap between Africa and the North is still very wide. Even though there were many successful interventions and many countries had been able to improve their situation, the promises that had been made were not kept:

“When dealing with issues as urgent and desperate as poverty, inequality and deprivation, limited success must be recognised ultimately as failure. To promise to deliver a starving man a meal and then only to deliver a few crumbs is to fail to keep a promise.” (Matthews 2004: 378)

However, Matthews (2004: 381) further proposes that some projects might have been unsuccessful because the communities actively chose to take a different way that was more suitable for their needs and aspirations. In the same vein, Matthews (2008) further discusses the role ‘the privileged’ should play when collaborating with the ‘underdeveloped’. In this context, she quotes James Ferguson (1990)

¹⁷ For another discussion on poverty and the PDD, see Matthews 2008.

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who discusses the possibility that the activities of the Northern actors might be irrelevant in the Southern context. Said differently, “it is possible too, that different kinds of knowledge and skills will be required, that the nature of our intellectual activity itself will have to be transformed in order to participate in this way” (Ferguson 1990, cited in Matthews 2008: 1038).

Some scholars (e.g., Daniel Etounga-Manguelle (2000), cited in Matthews 2004: 279) represent the assumption that the NSDC fails not because of misconceived projects but because of the “African culture” and their “wrong value systems”. In contrast, the PDD argues that the NSDC cannot succeed because the NSDC *itself* is based on the wrong value system: “a project premised upon a set of values cannot succeed in the absence of those values” (Matthews 2004: 380). The PDD would therefore argue that it is not ‘the Africans’ who need to change their value system, but that “perhaps the values ought to remain and the development projects should go” (Matthews 2004: 380).

To claim that the values and norms of the African cultures should remain entails another argument. Sachs (1992: 4) argues that because many development projects were based on western ideas “the result had been tremendous loss of diversity.” He relates this loss to architecture, clothing, language, customs, and gestures, which can all be considered as part of one’s culture. Sachs (1992: 4) even goes one step further in stating that the NSDC has not only led to a loss of diversity but it has also “considerably impoverished the potential for cultural evolution.” Similarly, Matthews (2004: 377) acknowledges that it does not matter how development projects are conceptualized, “it always results in cultural homogenisation.”

Another reason for the PDD scholars to reject the NSDC is related to ecological motivation. They argue that “attaining a middle-class lifestyle for the majority of the world population is impossible” (Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 175). The Western system is characterized by industrialisation and the use of fossil energy. Since this system is highly unsustainable it should not be the aim to transform other societies to this system. Consequently, as Sachs (1992: 2) argues, if all states followed the Western, industrial examples, the world’s population would need five planets to “serve as mines and waste dumps”. It is therefore obvious, Sachs (1992: 2) continues, that the system of the Western countries should not be used as an model one wants to achieve.

A combination of all these criticisms explains why the PDD rejects the NSDC entirely. Their claim for an alternative to Western-dominated development therefore demands completely different approaches and projects. Hence, the scholars of the PDD see much potential in local cultures and knowledge and argue that projects need to evolve from the roots of the society, or the grassroots movement (Escobar 1995: 215). This would mean that one has “to move away from conventional Western modes of knowing in general” (Escobar 1995: 216) in order to make room for new ideas and approaches. Hence, the grassroots approach, as postulated by the PDD, contradicts the conventional ways of some development strategies that “apply development expertise *to* local communities” (Sylvester 1999: 710). Matthews (2004: 380) agrees and emphasizes the fact that each part of the world, such as Asia or Africa can be a

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valuable source in order to find alternatives to development. For example, in the case of poverty, the PDD would not negate the existence of people in distress or living a life of deprivation but they would strongly argue that there is a need to reconceptualise word poverty. Hence, the definition of poverty should not be reduced to economic deprivation but include other factors that are based on the experiences and opinions of ‘the poor’ (Matthews 2008: 1042).

After discussing the critiques the PDD raised on the NSDC, I now turn to the critiques that were raised towards the PDD itself.

2.1.3. Critiques on the Post-Development Debate

A debate that is as fundamental as the PDD has many opponents. One of them, for example, is Jan Nederveen Pieterse. This chapter shortly explains the main critiques that are raised against the PDD¹⁸.

Criticizing the PDD’s favouring of local cultures and cultural diversity, opponents see a tendency of romanticizing local cultures and their traditions. The critics claim that the PDD has an uncritical view of the local communities and draws an idealized image of pre-modern cultures and communities. By idealizing Southern cultures, the PDD therefore rejects the Northern or Western cultures altogether and with this also their scientific successes (Ziai 2006: 202). Another critique, Ziai (2006: 202) continues, refers to exactly this rejection and argues that the PDD ignores or denies the advantages of those scientific achievements such as the modern medicine and hence for instance the low rate of child mortality. By rejecting such achievements, the PDD deprives the South of the technologies of the North.

Whereas the PDD criticised the homogenization of the world, many critics accuse the PDD of the exact same thing. Many critics argue that the PDD itself unitized the whole NSDC and does not recognize the NSDC itself has diversified its practices extremely. Approaches such as human-centred development or alternative development see the people from the South as active subjects of their development and therefore many projects are based on local Southern needs. By rejecting also those forms of the NSDC, the PDD does not only deny the agency of the involved people but also falls into the same trap that it accuses the NSDC of (Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 178).

Furthermore, because of their narrow view on the NSDC, the PDD is accused of ignoring the successes of some development projects (Rist 2014: 274)¹⁹. Additionally, critiques detect a regional bias in the PDD’s writings as the focus of their critique is usually on African or South American states, while the transformations in East Asian states were often neglected (Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 183).

¹⁸ Each of those critiques raised has counterarguments from within the PDD that refutes those critiques. Due to limitations of this thesis, this chapter will not evaluate those counterarguments. They can be found in e.g. Ziai 2006 or Rist 2014.

¹⁹ See chapter 2.1.2 on the PDDs view of this critique.

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The PDD further claims that people from the North have no right to prescribe to people from the South how to develop. However, Nederveen Pieterse (2000: 182) argues:

“This kind of thinking implies a compartmentalised world, presumably split up along the lines of the Westphalian state system. This is deeply conventional, ignores transnational collective actions, the relationship between social movements and international relations, the trend of post-nationalism and the ramifications of globalisation. [...] Under the heading of ‘post’ thinking, this is actually profoundly conservative.”

Finally, the PDD is criticized often for not proposing any solution to their claims. They argue for alternatives to development but rarely give examples of how this alternative would look like or what would work in their opinion (Ziai 2006: 203). As Nederveen Pieterse (1998: 366) writes: “there is critique but no construction.” Nederveen Pieterse (2000: 184) goes one step further and argues that by not giving any solutions, the PDD endorses the current situation and therefore enables more of the same.

To summarize the main critique on the PDD, Nederveen Pieterse (2000: 188) writes:

“Post-Development is misconceived because it attributes to ‘development’ a single and narrow meaning, a consistency that does not match either theory or policy, and thus replicates the rhetoric of developmentalism, rather than penetrating and exposing its polysemic realities.”

Another well-known critic of the PDD is David Mosse (2004, Lewis/Mosse 2006). In his paper on the difference between theory and practice in the NSDC, he discusses the fact that there is a striking gap between the policy of development and its implementation²⁰. He criticises the PDD scholars by saying there is “little wonder that critics such as Ferguson²¹ apparently spend so little of their time talking to development workers” (Mosse 2004: 644). Mosse therefore proposes that it is not primarily important to criticise the system of the NSDC, as the PDD does, but it is more important to analyse the concrete practices of the development industry. He therefore proposes an ethnographic approach to researching the project directly in the field in order to do justice to the diverse field of development. This ethnographic approach is interested in the opinion of the people on the ground and hence can be considered an emic approach²².

²⁰ In the paper Mosse wrote together with Lewis (2006) they conclude that “the disjuncture arising from the autonomy of practice from rationalizing policy is not an unfortunate “gap to be bridged” between intention and action, but is instead necessary and must therefore be actively maintained and reproduced” (Lewis/Mosse 2006: 5). The whole discussion on this issue is however beyond the scope of this paper.

²¹ In his book ‘The Anti-Politics Machine’, Ferguson (1994) “introduces the concept of the development apparatus, a complex of institutions that generates its own form of discourse and constantly reproduces itself through its very own failure, thereby manufacturing specific forms of governance that depoliticize everything they touch. Development becomes an unquestionable meta-narrative: the anti-politics machine” (Rest 2012: 110).

²² I discuss the ethnographic approach in more detail in chapter 3.1. as part of my own research methodology.

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Although such critiques should be taken seriously, one should not forget that the PDD itself is very heterogenic and should be considered a *debate* more than a *theory* (Nederveen Pieterse 1998: 361). Therefore, some of the described critiques apply only to certain scholars (Ziai 2012: 135) of the PDD, but all of them have been adopted into the discourse and debate of the post-development thinking and have been commented on by various scholars of the PDD.

Another important debate that emerged simultaneously with the PDD is of post-colonial studies. Even though those two debates have different topics or approaches, they are often compared or even combined in current literature. Nonetheless, post-colonial studies also criticise certain aspects of the PDD. Therefore, I want to give a brief insight into post-colonial studies in order to give a more comprehensive picture on the PDD and the critiques raised against it.

Even though both post colonialism and the PDD emerged in the 1980s, their approaches are rather different. Whereas the PDD can be considered an ideological criticism, post colonialism was strongly influenced by literary studies (Ziai 2012: 135f). One of the key contributions of post-colonial studies, which is to “recognise blurred lines between indigenous and foreign knowledge in post-colonial history” (Sylvester 1999: 710), contradicts the PDD to a certain extent. By focusing on literature, post-colonial studies have primarily analysed literature written by people from the former colonized regions (Sylvester 1999: 713). Therefore, post-colonial studies also focus primarily on the representation, experiences and cultural identity of people living in former colonized countries (Ziai 2010: 407). Furthermore, as described by Ziai (2010: 402), post-colonial studies focus on the process of colonialism, de-colonialism and re-colonialism as well as the consequences and after-effects of colonialism, whereas the PDD primarily focuses on the development industry after colonization.

Additionally, post-colonial studies emphasize that through colonialism and globalisation, local, Southern communities also might want to have the same improvements and technological instruments as the North (Sylvester 1999: 710f). The PDD, Sylvester (1999: 171) argues, has neglected the fact that “knowledge has ‘worlded’ by the forces of globalisation such that local ideas become hybrid.”

In the same vein, de Vries (2007: 26) criticizes the PDD by saying:

“Some have chosen the path of ‘alternatives for development’. Although I sympathise with these positions, I argue that we should relate to Third World people’s dreams and desires and not withdraw from the promise of development. In other words, people’s desires for development must be taken seriously and development’s promises should not be abandoned.”

De Vries (2007) argues that in today’s globalized world, there is no alternative to development because Southern people have a desire for development due to this interconnectedness and information flow. Consequently, de Vries argues that it is this desire, the “virtual dimension” (de Vries 2007: 29), that is the engine of development. Hence, it is impossible to be against development as well as unequal to

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deny development to those who “desire” it. Whereas de Vries (2007) focuses his claim primarily on Southern people, Rest (2012) forwards the argument by de Vries and states that it is not only the Southern people who have a desire for development, but also people living in the Northern states (Rest 2012: 115). Additionally, Rest (2012) emphasizes on the fact that this desire for development cannot be examined independently but must always be put into a wider context. Rest (2012: 114) concludes that “the desire for development is deeply entangled with complex techniques of power spanning from the local to the transnational.”

Notably, post-colonial studies too have changed over the years. For example, current work includes the book ‘the paternalism of partnership’ by Eriksson Baaz (2005). In this research, she analysed how identity is produced within the discourse of development workers in Tanzania. With her results, Eriksson Baaz shows that post-colonial work is still relevant in today’s development practices, and hence, the constructed assumptions on the ‘developed North’ and the ‘underdeveloped South’ is still very much vivid (Ziai 2010: 409). Eriksson Baaz (2005: 35) herself writes: “colonial history thus continues to shape contemporary identities, not only in the sense that past ideas and images remain embedded in the contemporary discourse and identities, but inasmuch as the colonial constitutes one of the histories in relation to which people are positioned and position themselves.”

This chapter discussed the most important aspects of the PDD. Based on the practices of the NSDC in the early decades and the hegemonic theories such as Modernization Theories, many scholars were discontent with the situation of the development industry. One reaction to this discontent was the PDD that rejects the entire NSDC and considers the Southern context as the root for the alternatives to development. However, this debate has many critics and I therefore discussed the most important concerns many scholars raise against the PDD including the ethnographic approach by Mosse (2004) and post-colonial studies.

Nevertheless, it is my opinion that this debate addresses several important issues and hence initiated many important discussions around the flaws of the NSDC. However, their claim for an alternative to Western-dominated development was first raised over 30 years ago. Within this period of time, many things changed within the NSDC and new approaches were implemented. The principle of partnership is one of those new approaches that arose due to the unsatisfying situation in the early decades of the NSDC. It is therefore another reaction to the same grievance the PDD arose from. Situated in the human-centred approach as part of the alternative development, the principle of partnership claims for a development cooperation that considers the South as an equal partner to the North. This principle has found wide recognition in today’s NSDC and many NGOs claim to work in a partnership. It is the main interest of this thesis to analyse whether the claim for an alternative to Western-dominated development by the PDD has been achieved in the current NSDC by applying the principle of partnership. This further results in the question of whether the critiques of the PDD are still relevant today. The discussed critiques

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of the PDD are therefore important to know in order to compare them later with the characteristics of a partnership. The principle of partnership is discussed and explained in the following chapter.

2.2. The Principle of Partnership in NSDC

As described in the introduction, this thesis focuses on the collaboration between NGOs, and how the principle of partnership figures here. Nevertheless, the principle of partnership can be applied not only in the collaboration between NGOs but also between states or other institutions. I now discuss how the principle of partnership became such an important approach and outline what it includes as well as its main challenges. Chapter 2.2.2 shows how the principle of partnership is applied in practice by focusing on different case studies from current literature. In chapter 2.3, I shortly introduce the main aspects of the ‘geographies of NSDC’. Based in these different theoretical backgrounds, I discuss in chapter 2.4. the indicators I use in my research to characterize a partnership.

2.2.1. Origin and Main Claims of the Principle of Partnership

In chapter 1.1., I described how in the 1980s the NSDC came into crisis and how the claim for new approaches was raised. One of those new approaches is the human-centred approach and within this a new paradigm, the principle of partnership emerged (Mason 2011: 445, see also Lister 2000: 229). The idea of partnership is however older than the 1980s. In 1969, the Pearson Commission on Aid and Development called for “a new partnership based on an informal understanding expressing the reciprocal rights of donors and recipients” (Pearson 1969, cited in Harrison 2002: 589). Even though there were many calls for such partnerships over the years, only in the 1980s and 1990s did it grow to the importance it has now.

Shortly summarized by Hoksbergen (2005: 17) the principle of partnership emerged based on the history of the NSDC:

“In the early years, Northern development organisations journeyed South and did the work themselves (stage one). There followed a stage of indigenisation when NNGOs [Northern NGO] hired nationals to do the work (stage two). NNGOs then moved towards forming and training national development organisations (stage three). NNGOs now advocate partnering with these new SNGOs (stage four).“

The reason behind the rise of this new principle was to base the projects of the NSDC more on local needs and to involve the Southern NGOs as equal partners. This was possible, as described in chapter 1.1, because many Northern NGOs shifted from implementing activities to funding activities (Lewis 1998: 504). The involvement of Southern NGOs is further supposed to ensure that the Southern NGO has the primary ownership of the implemented projects (Bontenbal 2009: 101, see also Ashman 2001: 76, Abugre 1999: 2). Consequently, the participation among the beneficiaries increases and those projects are more sustainable (Lister 2000: 228). Eriksson Baaz (2005: 7) agrees with Lister (2000) and

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emphasizes on the relation between the focus on ownership and responsibility and the “perceived need to enhance sustainability”. Therefore, the key element of a partnership is to have the Southern partners in the lead in order to make the NSDC more effective and hence more successful (Harrison 2002: 590). Importantly, along with this shift in approach, the Northern NGOs (as well as other stakeholders) moved away from the image of the poor, inactive African²³ in need of help, towards an image of an active and capable individual that one can do business with (Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1998: 222).

Nowadays, many NGOs as well as other institutions very often use the term partnership to describe different collaborations. Consequently, this term has been “used and abused as a blanket” (Fowler 1998: 140), in order to describe many different types of relationships among many different types of agencies. Hence, there are different, sometimes imprecise, definitions that are used to describe what a partnership means and what elements it includes. A very common definition, provided by Lister (2000:228), is that partnership is “a working relationship that is characterized by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and the willingness to negotiate.” Ashman (2001: 75) defines a partnership “to mean a relationship based on the principles of equity and mutual benefit”, and Robert Picciotto defines partnership as “a collaborative relationship towards mutually agreed objectives involving shared responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations” (Picciotto, cited in Abugre 1999: 7). Abugre (1999: 8) continues and states that without symmetry, reciprocity, equity, and fairness, there is no partnership, but only a collaboration.

For this thesis, I combined different definitions of partnership in order to establish my own definition that is best suited for my specific case study. Consequently, I understand partnership as a specific type of collaboration between a Northern NGO and a Southern NGO that includes the following aspects:

- mutual trust
- transparency and active communication
- shared principles and mutual targets
- cultural awareness and mutual respect
- mutual influence
- shared responsibility and accountability
- sustainability and mutual evaluation²⁴

Furthermore, the implemented projects have to be based on the needs and knowledge of the Southern NGO and hence there needs to be respect for the expertise in the South. Since this definition involves many different aspects, it is stricter than most of the definitions I found in literature. However, many scholars criticize (see e.g., Fowler 1998) the existing, unclear definition of partnership. Hence, in order to prevent this criticism, I use a rather strict definition.

²³ In comparison to Truman’s speech in 1949, when he described ‘the poor’ as passive and victims. See also chapter 1.1.

²⁴ Those indicators are further discussed in chapter 2.4.

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As described above, many scholars criticise the lack of a universal and distinct definition of what partnership includes. Consequently, one of the most common critiques of the principle of partnership is the fact that many institutions or NGOs just use the term to describe their collaboration without really applying the underlying criteria. The most common term to describe this issue is to call it “a case of old wine in re-labelled bottles” (Fowler 1998: 155). This argument is supported also by Lister (2000: 229), whose critique is of a more fundamental nature: partnership ought to be a “Northern-imposed idea” in order to “establish legitimacy for operations in the South”, and therefore to show that Northern NGOs are still needed and add value within the NSDC²⁵ (see also Eriksson Baaz 2005: 7). In his case study, Fowler (1998) uses the term ‘authentic partnership’ to describe those collaborations that really execute a partnership and not just use the term to sugar-coat their collaboration.

Another reason why many scholars argue that a true or authentic partnership is not possible is due to the distribution of financial resources between the partners. The fact that one of the partners most often is the ‘donor’ and the other one is the ‘recipient’ of financial resources results in the issue of an “asymmetry of power” that cannot be eradicated with any “well-intentioned dialogue” (Elliot 1987, cited in Lister 2000: 229, see also Mason 2011: 453). Kajese (1987: 80) expresses it rather pessimistically, writing: “The Southern NGOs are quite aware that money and know-how spell *power* in the hands of Northern NGOs. This is a fact, not an accusation.” With the flow of financial resources, there comes the issue of financial accountability. Even though some Northern NGOs do not want to execute their ‘power’ when it comes to money, most of them still do (Hoksbergen 2005: 20). Closely related to the issue of unequal distribution of money is the issue of structural inequalities. Hence, the North often holds technological and institutional advantages (Bontenbal 2009: 101). These technical advantages further reinforce the asymmetry of power.

Although there are many issues with the principle of partnership, many scholars still consider it a valuable approach for the NSDC. Fowler (1998: 144) underlies this opinion with two arguments. First, good relations between Southern and Northern NGOs contribute to Southern social capital²⁶ and therefore enable a civil society to better control markets. Secondly, relationships that are based on trust are more economically efficient. Moreover, Mason (2011: 448) argues that if the NSDC is executed as a partnership, the Southern opinions and arguments should be taken seriously. Consequently, the issue of imposing Northern policies or ideas on the South without adapting them to the local context can be prevented²⁷. Hence, to have a partnership and therefore to have the Southern NGOs be involved, ensures that the projects are based on local needs and value systems (Bontenbal 2009: 105). Thus, in order to

²⁵ This criticism also reminds strongly of the PDD, see chapter 2.1.2.

²⁶ The term ‘social capital’ is used primarily within the livelihood approach, see chapter 1.1. Fowler (1998: 144) defines it in his text as “the sum of trusted, reciprocal relationships between citizens and their association at all levels of politics and economy.”

²⁷ This aspect also reminds strongly of the PDD. See chapter 2.1.2.

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create real change and sustainable results, Bontenbal (2009) continues, it is crucial to build a project on existing knowledge, capacity and practices. Ahmad (2006: 637) summarizes this aptly:

“Organisational and management theories suggest that NGOs which lack the capacity to learn and iterate, or are dependent for their survival on donors who demand short-term measurable results, are unlikely to be effective in supporting the longer term social and institutional changes sustainable development demands.”

Another aspect that is related to partnership is capacity building²⁸. To work in a partnership often enables employees of Southern NGOs to build their capacities since it is they who are implementing the projects and not the Northern NGOs. Bontenbal (2009: 101) considers capacity building as the means “to create conditions” in order to find “sustainable development strategies” that are based on local needs. Consequently, capacity building is often considered an important aspect of a partnership. Lewis (1998: 505), for example, argues that the hierarchy within a collaboration flattens if both partners are capable and have similar skills. It further builds autonomy and self-reliance (Lewis 1998: 505), which relates back to the above-described shift in mind to recognize the Southern employees as active individuals and no longer as ‘passive Africans’ in need of help.

Finally, many scholars consider partnership to be opposed to the earlier common practice of donorship where the hierarchy within the collaboration was very distinct (Bontenbal 2009: 101) and the Northern NGO was transferring not just financial resources but also other resources to the South (Ashman 2001: 75). Furthermore, partnership should prevent “inappropriate donor behaviour” that demanded ineffective conditions and control mechanisms (Abugre 1999: 2). To apply the principle of partnership is therefore to shift away from the “hierarchical donor-recipient” relationship towards an equal and horizontal collaboration (Ashman 2001: 76).

In this chapter, I introduced the most important claims and characteristics of the principle of partnership. However, even though the principle of partnership seems to be well accepted on paper, I argue that it is more important to see how it is executed and applied in the field. Therefore, the next chapter gives an overview on certain case studies that researched how partnership is put into practice within the current NSDC.

²⁸ Capacity building is: “the process by which individuals, organisations, institutions and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives” (UNDP 1997, cited in Bontenbal 2009: 101). For a more detailed case study on capacity building, see Zeelen/van der Linden 2009.

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2.2.2. Partnership put into Practice

As positive as the principle of partnership might appear in theory, the important question is how it is put into practice. This chapter gives an overview on different case studies that researched how the principle of partnership is applied into practice²⁹.

In general, establishing a partnership in NSDC is challenging, as described by Mason (2011: 452), since it requires the involved NGOs to mutually define important concepts such as development or partnership even before the collaboration starts. Lewis (1998: 504) further emphasizes this issue and claims that this is in fact the key issue within partnerships. The Southern NGOs, especially, have been questioning the nature of the partnerships that they were in, and they had a different understanding from their Northern partners: “While NNGOs talk about partnership, it is not unusual for the SNGO ‘partner’ to view the relationship purely in terms of transfer of resources” (Lewis 1998: 504, see also Ahmad 2006: 630).

Going into more detail, there are several challenges when applying partnership in practice. Hoksbergen (2005: 18) describes the fact that many Northern NGOs not only support the Southern NGOs financially but also with different trainings, capacity building, and networking. This diverse support however increases the risk of the Northern NGO dominating the partnership, which would be counterproductive (Hoksbergen 2005: 19). Additionally, Hoksbergen maintains that (2005: 20) accountability and control over the use of funds, especially, are major aspects where the two NGOs are not equal. Harrison (2002: 591) agrees, writing “accountability is seen as a one-way street”. Even more importantly, Southern NGOs spend a considerable part of their time attempting to meet the “accountability requirements” of the different Northern NGOs (Harrison 2002: 591). In practice, this ‘accountability requirement’ is often due to the risk of corruption in some Southern countries, and hence, the Northern NGOs see themselves as forced to closely monitor and audit the expenses of the Southern NGOs (Hoksbergen 2005: 20). However, disregarding the issue of corruption, the fact that the Northern NGOs need proof as to how the money is used in the South contradicts the basic idea of a partnership between two equal NGOs. This is especially so as there seems to be no equivalent reporting from the North to the South.

Another aspect of a partnership, as described above, is to build the capacity of the Southern employees. Applied in practice, these capacity building efforts can lead to several complications. For once, by building the capacity of the South, the North automatically becomes the teacher and the South the student. Hence, it leads to an inequality and a hierarchy that contradicts the aspect of equality within a partnership (Hoksbergen 2005: 21, see also Lewis 1998: 505). Moreover, it becomes problematic when the programs of the capacity building try to implement organisational structures and mechanisms that originate in the North and therefore are not adapted to the Southern context. Fowler (1998: 142) adds another aspect to this issue and claims that many Northern NGOs have a low learning capacity whereas some Southern NGOs are already advanced in “terms of effective development practice.” Additionally,

²⁹ In this chapter, I mention certain aspects of a partnership, such as mutual trust and cultural awareness. Those terms are defined in detail in chapter 2.4.

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by building capacity, many Northern NGOs tend to move on and end the collaboration as soon as the Southern NGOs seem capable. Hoksbergen (2005: 21) quotes Liz Goold, a former Oxfam GB employee, who said: “There is a paradox that true partnership is achieved at the moment of mutual independence and equality, yet this is generally the moment the partnership ends.” Therefore, the practice of capacity building raises two challenges within a partnership: the question of what kind of capacity should be built and with whose knowledge and norms, and the fact that capacity building can lead to an ending of the collaboration before partnership is truly possible.

To have a partnership also means to work together over a longer period of time and to stick together through complicated times. Unfortunately, many Northern NGOs tend to leave when problems start to arise. Harris (2008: 707) exemplifies this issue in her case study on Cambodian NGO workers by describing the concerns of Southern NGO employees: “When their [Northern NGO] funds run out, they just leave” and they “disappear when the ‘fun’ is over”. These statements show that there is a suspicion among the Southern development workers about the Northern NGOs that they will not take any responsibility for any negative outcomes or results. This issue of ‘just leaving’ clearly contradicts the aspect of a sustainable and long-term partnership.

The understanding of different cultures is another aspect that is viable for an authentic partnership. In practice, as described by Harris (2008: 704), there is often a lack of such understanding. She describes a case where two Filipinos simply laughed at the question whether the funders value local culture because they assumed the question was rhetorical. The Southern development workers on the other hand, Harris (2008: 704) continues, are very aware of the differences of culture, even within one country. One illustration of such different cultural norms is the understanding and importance of time. For example, Northern NGOs have their own, specific timeframe and they are not aware of the amount of time it takes to build trust or relationships among the community in order to implement the projects: “Linda³⁰ felt that funders have quite narrow interests, and as long as the budget is spent on schedule they ‘don’t care’ what else happens” (Harris 2008: 705). Besides not having enough time to do their work, the development workers further experienced a double standard in the understanding of time. They described an example where the Southern development workers were only given a short time to prepare a report but then waited over a year for the approval (Harris 2008: 705). These situations, described by Harris (2008), not only show that many Northern NGOs are not culturally aware of their ‘partners’, but also point to the lack of mutual responsibilities and accountability. Many Northern NGOs appear not to feel like they need to stick to deadlines or to account for what they are doing.

This issue of unequal cultural awareness is strongly related to another aspect of partnership. In particular, it raises the question of the possibility of mutual trust. Mutual trust is not easy to achieve in practice, as concluded by Harris (2008: 709), based on the results of her case study. Her results indicate a lack of interest in personal relations from the Northern side. These personal relations are however important for

³⁰ A development worker from and within Cambodia.

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mutual trust to be built. Hence, the Northern NGO stands in the way of an authentic partnership as “the local counterparts are disengaging from the relationship, feeling that they are not bound to comply with a contract when they believe that the funder is not behaving appropriately” (Harris 2008: 709). This inappropriate behaviour results from, amongst others, the lack of cultural knowledge on the part of the Northern employees. Consequently, this underlies not only the importance of cultural awareness in a partnership but also the importance of mutual trust and respect. Therefore, these aspects are crucial for establishing an authentic partnership, but in practice, some collaborations seem to lack in these areas.

More importantly, mutual trust ought to be present between several individuals and hence, personal relations are another important aspect of a partnership. Lister (2000: 236) suggests having personal relationships between several employees in order to make the collaboration more resilient towards personal change. If the whole partnership is, for example, based on only two people, this makes it very vulnerable, since people can leave an organisation due to various reasons.

Mawdsley et al. (2005) focus their paper primarily on the importance of personal relations in order to improve partnership. They argue that written documentation such as reports can be reduced through field visits by the Northern NGO. Hence, strong personal relations that are built over a longer period of time and through many visits can reduce the administrative effort. Consequently, such long-running and personal relations (and therefore a long-running partnership), as argued by Mawdsley et al. (2005: 79), can not only reduce the time needed to write and read the tremendous amount of reports, but also improve the job satisfaction for both the North and the South. Additionally, personal relationships improve the sensitization of the Northern NGOs for the local context in the South, and they create more opportunities for the Southern NGO to learn about their Northern partners and give them feedback. Lastly, personal relationships improve the knowledge the Northern employees have of the project. This further improves the monitoring and evaluation of the project and partnership (Mawdsley et al. 2005: 80). These advantages refer to several aspects of a partnership. The reduction of report writing is linked to accountability as described above, and the sensitization for the local context clearly contributes to cultural awareness.

In addition, transparency is another important aspect of a partnership that can be improved through personal relationships. In practice, mutual transparency is however rarely implemented, as Fowler (1998: 143) writes: “simply put, the North is organizationally less transparent than the South, which disempowers the latter.” Based on the fact that most Northern NGOs do not need to account for their work or write reports to the South, personal relations can improve transparency in a way that Southern NGOs improve their knowledge on the Northern NGOs. This further contributes to making both NGOs equal.

As with most literature, Mawdsley et al. (2005: 80) identify certain challenges with such intense personal relations: Firstly, frequent visits demand a rather large time effort as well as high financial costs. Secondly, there is often a language barrier between the employees, and thirdly, the Southern NGOs can ‘manipulate’ the visits by only showing the success stories and hiding failure. Fourthly, close personal

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relationships can also lead to the loss of objectivity, especially if two employees do not like each other on a personal level. Therefore, Mawdsley et al. (2005: 81) suggest that both “over-reliance on documentation” as well as a “devaluation of professional working practices” are harmful for a partnership.

Generally, existing studies often claim that it is the Northern NGOs who need to adapt their perceptions about partnership or to improve their own capacities in order to be able to work in an authentic partnership (Fowler 1998: 149). Reasons for this lie within the Northern NGOs. Ashman (2001) describes several issues that the Northern NGOs have, such as not sticking to the agreements or not being transparent enough about their work (Fowler 1998: 143). Other areas of improvement could be of a structural nature: The NGO needs to be organized in a manner that makes, for example, personal relationships possible or that allow employees of the Northern NGOs to also visit the beneficiaries of the projects (Fowler 1998: 149). Therefore, the reasons can lie with the institutional context. Against this backdrop, Harris (2008: 703) importantly argues that the “failure to achieve authentic partnership does not necessarily reflect a lack of willpower among Northern organisations, since the complex environment of development practice makes equality hard to realise in practice” (see also Hoksbergen 2005).

Others argue that the problem often lies within the mind-set of the Northern NGOs, or what Fowler (1998: 142) calls “paternalistic behaviour”. In the same vein, Ashman (2001: 87) finds that many Northern NGOs still assume that they could decide and set conditions because they are the ones contributing the money. Therefore, Harrison (2002: 590) argues, the Northern NGOs neglect the fact that non-financial contributions such as knowledge, labour force, or the actual implementation of the projects are just as viable and necessary for a project to be successful. Therefore, non-financial contributions should be valued just as much as financial contributions.

Nevertheless, also the Southern NGOs could improve in some ways, as argued by Fowler (1998: 143): Some Southern NGOs are sensitive to the fact that their weaknesses are pointed out by Northern NGOs and they are not active enough in looking for other financial sources especially ones that are rooted in their own community.

Since there are many challenges in applying authentic partnership, there are also many suggestions on how the implementation could be improved.

Hoksbergen (2005: 22) suggests several strategies, such as to partner with “locally rooted organisations” because they come from a position of strength due to their own identity and mission as well as the support they get from local communities. Additionally, Hoksbergen (2005: 22) suggests making covenants and not contracts in order to improve trust towards each other. He continues with six more recommendations, namely: “really work together, channel each other’s voices, match funds, phase out, evaluate the partnership, and choose the right evaluation model” (Hoksbergen 2005: 24-26). I shortly explain these six recommendations.

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In order to ‘really work together’, Hoksbergen (2005) suggests having only a few people in the Northern NGO working in the partnership so that there can be a personal relationship and maybe even friendships. Further, these employees need to see the work on the ground and interact with the beneficiaries of the projects in order to really understand what the local contexts are and hence to ‘channel each other’s voices’ (Hoksbergen 2005: 24f.). In the same vein, Harris (2008: 708) quotes development workers of her case study who claim that the Northern NGOs should visit their projects more often and during those visits also listen to the beneficiaries directly. This is further necessary, Hoksbergen (2005: 25) argues, to really be able to represent the projects in the Northern home countries. To match funds means that the Southern NGOs should have local incomes that match the funds they get from the North. Additionally, Hoksbergen (2005: 25) suggests that there should not be the need to phase out, if something is working. Lastly, Hoksbergen (2005: 25) argues that it is equally important to evaluate the collaboration and not merely the implemented projects as is mostly practiced at present. Hence, to evaluate the collaboration itself would further improve the partnership. Lastly, there is not necessarily the need for a partnership. Hoksbergen (2005: 26) argues that it is better to find the right model that both parties agree on instead of trying to transform something into a partnership. If, however, partnership is desired, there should be a clear understanding on the part of both partners what this entails and how it is implemented in practice (Lister 2000: 237).

Apart from the suggestions by Hoksbergen (2005), Harris (2008: 708) proposes additional improvements. She suggests having an open dialogue between partners, to improve upward and downward accountability, and to make monitoring and accountability more meaningful in order to improve a partnership (Harris 2008: 708). This view is supported by Mason (2011: 451) who emphasizes the importance of an open dialogue. Mason relates this to defining each partner’s role and quotes the former president of Senegal, Abdou Diouf, who said: “The first step lies in redefining the status and roles of those involved in a way that truly recognizes and accepts the equal dignity and responsibility of both partners [...]” (Diouf 1997, cited in Mason 2011: 451).

Even though the principle of partnership has wide recognition among the current NSDC, there are several challenges in applying it in practice, as I showed during the course of this chapter. Additionally, there are many different definitions found in literature. Before discussing my definition of a partnership, I provide a brief introduction into the geographies of the NSDC. The spatial distribution of NGOs strongly influences not only the organisations but also the collaboration itself and these influences are discussed in the following chapter.

2.3. Geographies of North-South Development Cooperation

NSDC is strongly related to the spatial location of the involved NGOs. First, most of the NGOs that work together are situated in two very different countries with a rather large spatial distance between them. Secondly, the perception and assumption a person has about the other country, NGO, or person is very much influenced by the location of each NGO. It is therefore important to consider how the different locations influence the NSDC³¹. Further, the geographies of NSDC also beg the question: “Why did nongovernmental resources flow here and not there?” (Bebbington 2004: 732). This short chapter, based on the article by Bebbington (2004), provides an input and thoughts about the geographies of the NSDC.

There are several aspects where NSDC interacts with the production or reproduction of space. Generally said:

“Analytically, the work shows that the presence of NGOs, and the financial, knowledge and other flows that this presence implies, is part of the production and reproduction of place. [...] Furthermore, the effects of this presence will vary according to ongoing processes of immanent³² development which also vary across the locations in which NGOs work. Put differently, these place and landscape changing effects vary across space and contribute to unevenness in patterns of local development” (p. 727).

Thus, these uneven patterns of development result from an uneven presence of NGOs. A common critique on the NSDC is based on the fact that some areas have a high density of NGO interventions whereas other regions or countries barely have any³³. Therefore, NGOs are criticised by different scholars to choose the regions based on personal needs (e.g., a big city with airport close by) and not where their work is most needed. This influences people living in areas with many NGOs as well as the ones living in areas with none. Hence the “development hotspots” benefit from much attention on the international stage, whereas others are forgotten (p. 728). Consequently, the spatial distribution of development interventions does not match the spatial distribution of poverty (p. 740).

Additionally, to call an NGO either Southern or Northern limits them to a certain spatial area. However, many NGOs work not only in the North but also the South and should therefore be considered as international NGOs³⁴, especially because they work and act within an international context. This context influences the NGO while allowing the NGOs to shape the international context and relations: “These

³¹ See also chapter 1.2 on the context of Tanzania.

³² Bebbington (2004: 726) defines immanent as “structural, political economic change, such as the expansion of capitalism”. It is opposite to intentional development, which is the NSDC.

³³ Tanzania is considered a country with high density of intervention, also due to its rather stable political situation (DEZA 2016).

³⁴ tdhs is a good example for such an NGO, since a large portion of their employees is made of NCs who are from and live in the Southern countries. See chapter 1.3.1.

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international networks in which NGOs are embedded, and which sustain NGOs, make it difficult to talk glibly of Northern and Southern NGOs as discrete entities” (p. 729).

For any research on NSDC and hence for my thesis, this geography of NSDC is important to keep in mind, not just because the local context and production of space influences how people act, but also because each region has its own (development-) history. This influences how Southern people perceive Northern people and vice versa, but also how they work together and how the collaboration is structured.

I discussed two major approaches within the NSDC in the chapter on the theoretical framework of my thesis. Firstly, I described the main claims of the PDD and discussed how its scholars demand an alternative to western-dominated development. Simultaneously, I discussed several criticisms raised against the PDD such as their lack of recognition of the diverse field and practices of the NSDC. In order to do these diverse practices justice, many scholars such as Mosse (2004) propose an ethnographic approach in order to research the NSDC. Secondly, I elaborated the principle of partnership that emerged as an answer to the few results the NSDC had in its first decades. The principle of partnership does not reject the idea of NSDC but demands a system where the Northern and Southern NGOs can operate on the same level. Finally, I briefly introduced the importance of the spatial distribution of the involved NGOs. Based on this theoretical framework and the described case studies, I identified several indicators that I consider most important to define a partnership between two NGOs. These indicators, and with this my definition of a partnership, are described in the following chapter.

2.4. My definition of Partnership

In current literature, there are many different indicators and criteria identified to characterise a partnership in the NSDC. Different criteria are further used to characterize different types of partnerships such as between states or for research purposes (see e.g., KFPE 2014). Additionally, because many different NGOs or institutions often use the term partnership to describe different types of collaborations, there is a lack of a universal definition or criteria (Lister 2000: 228). Based on the above-described theoretical framework as well as different scientific research papers and guidelines from development organisations, I have identified seven indicators for this thesis that relate best to my case studies and are therefore most useful in characterizing this specific type of partnership. In addition to those seven indicators, there is one aspect that is often described in literature as one of the key factors of a successful NSDC: The NGO in the South should have the lead in identifying the area of activity because they are the experts of their context (see Paris Declaration. OECD: 2005).

I now discuss and define each indicator individually.

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MUTUAL TRUST

Most of the literature I consulted named mutual trust as a key element of a partnership. Ashman (2001: 77) defines mutual trust between two partners as one of the first factors of a partnership. Building trust further relies on personal relationships that have to be built over time and that get stronger the longer the partnership lasts (Ashman 2001: 85). Lister (2000: 228) also names mutual trust as the first element of a “successful partnership” and further notes that “the dominant mechanism for linkage and collaboration in both organizational relationships is individual relationships between key actors” (Lister 2000: 232). Additionally, Mason (2011: 449) cites in his paper the first edition of the 11 principles of the KFPE³⁵ Guidelines from 1998. This first edition defines ‘build up mutual trust’ as their second principle³⁶. In the same vein, Wannan et al. (2010: 36) define the ten principles for a partnership of the African Union, and mutual trust is named as one of the key elements of a partnership.

Mutual trust itself is defined by Mayer et al. (1995: 712) as: “The willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party.”

I argue that the level of mutual trust can be improved with a close personal relationship because it enhances the ‘willingness to be vulnerable’. Trust is further related to the level of control and the amount of freedom someone has within the collaboration. I therefore argue that the better two people know each other, the higher the level of trust can be and the higher the mutual trust, the more freedom someone has within the collaboration, leading to a lowered need for control.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACTIVE COMMUNICATION

Another indicator for partnership used in this case study is the amount of transparency and, with this, active and open communication. The KFPE (2014) names two indicators that apply to the concept of transparency. One is to ‘share data and network’ (principle 7) and principle 2 states “we have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak”. Also in the first edition, quoted by Mason (2011: 449), the KFPE names two principles that refer to transparency and active communication; namely (5) create transparency as well as (3) share information. Lister (2000: 228) also states transparency and ‘the two-way exchange of information’ as one of her elements for a successful partnership and she further characterized, as mentioned above, that a partnership needs to have the willingness to negotiate. Further, Ashman (2001: 77) names active communication as one of the critical factors for a partnership. Lastly, the Paris Declaration (although they call it “Harmonisation”) states that transparency is one of the key elements for a partnership (OECD 2005). Transparency itself can be defined, as Mitchell (1998: 109) argues in his paper, as “the acquisition, analysis, and dissemination of regular, prompt and accurate [regime-relevant] information”. Vishwanath and Kaufmann (1999, cited

³⁵ Short for: Kommission für Forschungspartnerschaften mit Entwicklungsländern. In English: Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries.

³⁶ In the 2nd edition of 2014, the principle of mutual trust is no longer named as one of the 11 principles.

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in Hollyer, et al. 2011: 1194) define transparency as the “increased flow of timely and reliable [economic, social and political] information, which is accessible to all relevant stakeholders.”

I argue that due to the great distance³⁷ between the people involved in NSDC, it is especially important to have transparent collaboration and active and open communication, where the different activities, changes, and also problems are communicated openly and both partners are aware of the current activities of the other. This is especially important when people with different cultural backgrounds are involved (see also Wannan et al. 2010).

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND MUTUAL RESPECT

Within the NSDC, mutual respect as well as the aspect of cultural awareness are especially important concerning the different cultural backgrounds of the involved individuals. Cultural awareness is often defined as “the understanding of differences between themselves and people from other countries or other backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values” (Collins dictionary 2016). In the literature on partnership, Lister (2000: 228) defines mutual respect as one of the core indicators for partnership. Bontenbal (2009: 104) strongly argues that the partnership needs to build on existing capacities and structures and she also links this to respect towards cultural awareness. She raises this issue in the context that “working in partnership with ample attention to local culture and knowledge and where differences in values and work ethics are respected” (Bontenbal 2009: 101) is one of the issues that is often raised in the discussion of partnership that has truly altered the NSDC.

To respect someone, as described by Antoniazzi (2011: 748), means “to consider another worthy of esteem, to refrain from obtruding or interfering, to be concerned, and to show deference.” Additionally, what it exactly means to, for example, consider someone worthy of esteem differs depending on the cultural background.

Therefore, although the cultural aspect is often only linked to the Southern NGO being in the lead, I argue that cultural awareness and respect for the different cultures involved is especially important within a partnership in the NSDC. To understand and to respect different work ethics, different approaches, different values systems and the cultural background of the people involved in the partnership can prevent misunderstandings and is therefore, in my opinion, crucial to a successful partnership (see also Wannan et al. 2010: 38).

SHARED PRINCIPLES AND MUTUAL TARGETS

One of the most often cited and most detailed indicators is that both partners should share the same principles. Hence, there needs to be a mutual understanding of the targets and the purpose of the projects and intended change. Further related is the aspect of joint learning. The first edition of the KFPE has as its first guideline, ‘decide on objectives together’ (Mason 2011: 449) and also in the second edition the first point is called ‘set the agenda together’. Point 5 is called ‘promote mutual learning’ (KFPE 2014) which, as I define it for this thesis, falls into the same category. Mason (2011: 443) further characterizes

³⁷ For more information on the geography of NSDC, see chapter 2.3.

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partnership with the aspects of shared development objectives and shared decisions on where the aid is directed to and shared implementation strategies. Lister (2000: 228) writes in her paper that a successful partnership should include joint decision making and is further characterized by a shared sense of purpose.

Ashman (2001: 92) has a slightly different view on this and writes:

“The partnership literature has emphasized the importance of shared development visions in effective partnerships because they foster the development of shared goals and criteria for success. This study suggests that shared vision is important, but not sufficient. PVO³⁸ - NGO partnerships work more effectively when the partners perform complementary, rather than competing, roles in joint projects.”

Contrary to Ashman (2001), I understand shared principles in a way that it does not mean the two NGOs must compete over the same roles in the projects. I understand it in a way that the fundamental principles of the work and projects as well as the main targets and vision for a project have to match. Hence, there needs to be mutual understanding on what kind of social transformation is intended. This does not mean that both NGOs need to perform the same role. Even more, I argue that in a NSDC, the two NGOs have different roles and tasks. These shared principles and the mutual targets are, I argue, essential to a partnership, because if the objectives are not the same, it becomes very difficult to work together.

MUTUAL INFLUENCE

Apart from sharing the same targets, a partnership should allow both NGOs to maintain the same amount of influence and control within the partnership and, hence, over the other NGOs. For Ashman (2001: 77), mutual influence is also a critical factor of a partnership and he further states (p. 80) that mutual influence is directly related to the amount of “managerial autonomy” an NGO has. Mason (2011) does not elaborate much on this indicator, but he also names ‘shared ownership’³⁹ as one of the important factors of a partnership. I understand his argument to that effect that mutual influence does lead to a mutual ownership of a project.

Even though this indicator is not described very well in the indicated literature, I identified it as important for my case study. In contrast to shared responsibility (see below), mutual influence refers to the influence the NGOs have within the partnering organisation. Therefore, it does not relate to the control over the implemented projects but to decisions or processes within the other NGOs. Different scholars (e.g. Ashman 2001) argue that the autonomy and independence of both NGOs within the partnership is important. I agree with this statement. But I further argue that no matter how big (or small) the influence of one NGO over the other is, it’s important that it is mutual and reciprocal. Therefore, I

³⁸ Short for: private voluntary organizations.

³⁹ The debate about the term and concept of ownership is beyond the scope of this paper. For more information, see EUROADAD 2001 or Cramer et al. 2006.

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am not interested in analysing how big the influences over the other NGO is, but I am primarily interested in analysing whether the influences over the other NGO are mutual or not.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Whereas mutual influence is seen in relation to the two NGOs, the indicator of shared responsibility and accountability relates more to the implemented projects. Mason (2011: 443), the Paris Declaration (OECD 2005: 8) as well as Ashman (2001: 87) identify shared responsibility and accountability as key elements. In the same vein, the KFPE defines shared responsibility in both their version. Whereas in 1998 (Mason 2011: 449) it is called ‘share responsibility’, KPFE changed it to ‘P3: clarify responsibilities’ in the second edition (KFPE 2014).

For this thesis, I analyse accountability in the context of the implemented project. Hence, both NGOs have to be accountable to the other partner about the kind of work they do for this project and how they do it. With shared responsibility over the project I understand that the risk of failure and the success of a project is shared between the two NGOs. Additionally, to share responsibility does not mean that every step needs to be taken together, but that each partner should have its own responsibilities and that those should be clearly defined: “any partnership ultimately depends on each partner contributing what they are particularly skilled in doing” (KFPE 2014, see also Wannan et al. 2010: 40). I agree with this and want to emphasize that the area of responsibility can be different but the amount of responsibilities has to be equal for it to be truly shared.

SUSTAINABILITY AND MUTUAL EVALUATION

While the other indicators mostly focus on the present, the last one relates more to future outcomes of the partnership. Interestingly, this aspect is lacking in most of the cited literature. Bontenbal (2009) stresses the importance of a sustainable project but ties this to the above-mentioned fact that projects should be based on local capacities. Wannan et al. (2010) are the only scholars from the literature surveyed that consider this aspect closely. In their guide, the authors even distinguish sustainability and evaluation so as to separate indicators and describe both as very important for a partnership. The KFPE is the only other source mentioning this aspect. In the first edition (Mason 2011: 449), it is described with point 6: to ‘monitor and evaluate the collaboration’. But in the second edition they changed the focus of P6 to ‘enhance capacities,’ which can be understood as pointing at a sustainable way of transferring know-how.

The most common definition on sustainability that is also used by the UN is to “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (SDG 2016b). While I feel that this aspect is neglected in the presented literature, I find it rather important and understand that the partnership, along with the collaboration (and not just the implemented project), should be evaluated together with both partners. This evaluation helps to further make a partnership more sustainable and can support my understanding of sustainability: That the partnership should be shaped in a way that both NGOs will be able to exist and continue with their work even after the partnership ends.

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During the course of this chapter, I defined all seven indicators that contribute to my definition of a partnership. The following table presents the most important aspects of each indicator and therefore gives an overview about the seven indicators I described in this chapter.

Table 1, Summary of the indicators used in this thesis

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION
Mutual Trust	Good personal relationship Low level of control High amount of freedom
Transparency and active communication	Share knowledge and information (two-way exchange) Communicate success and problems, challenges Awareness on current activities of the other NGO
Cultural awareness and mutual respect	Knowledge on different values and norms Understanding and respecting different work ethics
Shared principles and mutual targets	Share the same vision of change Shared development objectives Joint learning Decide on targets together
Mutual influence	Influence over and within the other NGO is mutual and reciprocal
Shared responsibility and accountability	Referring to the direct work for the implemented projects Risk of failure and success is mutually shared Each NGO has its specific responsibilities and accounts for them towards the other NGO
Sustainability and mutual evaluation	Mutual evaluation of the collaboration Possible continuation of the individual work of both NGOs after ending the collaboration

Even though I distinguish these seven indicators, I am aware of the links between them. If, for instance, a partnership is highly transparent, this can increase the trust the partners have towards each other and decrease the amount of control. Another link can be that with a longer and more sustainable partnership, there are stronger personal relations that enhance the mutual trust. Lastly, cultural awareness supports the understanding that the Southern NGO is the expert of their context. This last aspect is explained now.

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EXPERTISE IN THE SOUTH⁴⁰

Within the principle of partnership, many scholars argue that the Southern NGO has to be in the lead to decide which projects are most needed, and where the field of action has to be. The Paris Declaration establishes this as the first point in their declaration: “Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions” (OECD 2005: 3). In the same vein, Bontenbal (2008:105) emphasizes the fact that the projects and objectives of a partnership are most successful if based on local needs and capacities, and when they are demand-driven. I agree with this claim and argue that a project that is implemented within a partnership is most successful if the Southern NGO is in the lead in identifying the important fields of action. Hence, it is crucial for a partnership that the Northern NGO respects the Southern NGO as the expert of their context.

The indicators described in this chapter define how I understand a partnership. For the research of this thesis, I analyse if the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico can be considered a partnership based on these indicators. However, I also recognize that it is not just relevant if I consider the collaboration to be a partnership but also if the involved employees consider it to be one. Hence, as described in the critique on the PDD, I argue in the vein of the ethnographic approach and consider the emic understanding of partnership as very important for my research. The way my interviewees define partnership and if they consider the collaboration to be one allows me to also critically question my definition of a partnership. Therefore, I not only analyse if my indicators are fulfilled by the collaboration, but also if my interview partner considers the collaboration to be one. This analysis is part of chapter 4.

In order to do my research, I conducted several interviews as well as observations in the field. The following chapter gives an overview on the methodologies I used during my research.

⁴⁰ This aspect of partnership has many parallels to the main claims of the PDD. Therefore, many arguments overlap with claims I elaborated in chapter 2.1.2. This part will therefore be very short in order to prevent repetition.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I first give a brief introduction to the ethnographic approach in the North-South development cooperation (NSDC) and how it gained importance in this field of research. Then, I shortly describe the qualitative research in general as well as the methods I used during my research. In chapter 3.5, I conclude with the limitations and challenges I experienced during my research.

3.1. Ethnographic Approach

In chapter 2.1, I described how the post-development debate (PDD) seems to homogenise the field of the NSDC and that its scholars do not appear to recognize the heterogeneity and diversity of the development practices. Additionally, the PDD is sometimes criticized as a somewhat theoretical debate without sufficient appreciation of the practices and reality of the NSDC (Matthews 2008: 1039). At the same time, the principle of partnership postulates a very individual and particular collaboration and hence development practice. In order to do justice to these diverse and heterogenic practices of NSDC and to recognise the importance of the emic view, the research on NSDC adapted an ethnographic approach (Lewis/Mosse 2006: 10).

This approach strongly focuses on the practices of the NSDC and asks rather *how* it is done as opposed to *what* is being done (Korf 2004: 209). Korf (2004: 212) characterizes the ethnographic approach as follows: “The approach of an ethnography of development practice tries to overcome the unsatisfactory confrontation between the post-development critics and the development policy and practice⁴¹.” The ethnographic approach therefore examines the practices of the NSDC and how it is organized and socially reproduced (Korf 2004: 212). Policy papers or concepts of stakeholders such as NGOs are attempts to organize the diverse fields of NSDC and are not necessarily applied accordingly in practice. They are interpreted in order to match reality and therefore what is written on paper often does not match what is practiced in the field. Hence, the question that an ethnographic approach asks is not *if* the NSDC is working but rather *how* it is actually working (Korf 2004: 213). Therefore, the ethnographic approach does not lead to overall theories or guidelines on how the NSDC should be practiced but it can give various inputs at the micro level for development workers or experts on the ground (Korf 2004: 221). The methods this approach uses are consequently based on local and individual experiences. Consequently, most important for this approach are participating observations where the researcher gets involved into the practices of the NSDC, combined with qualitative methods such as interviews or group discussions. This demands a high amount of self-reflection on the part of the researcher since he is often part of the practices. Hence, the strict border between researcher and researched gets abrogated (Korf

⁴¹ The original quote is in German: “Diese unbefriedigende Konfrontationsstellung zwischen poststrukturalistischer Entwicklungskritik und Entwicklungspolitik und -praxis versucht der Ansatz einer Ethnographie der Entwicklungspraxis zu überwinden.“

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2004: 213). Additionally, ethnographers are always “co-practitioners” because they also “perform the reality they describe” (Mosse 2004: 666).

Mosse (2004) wrote his paper on the relation between the policy of the NSDC and the implementation in practice and therefore also focusses on *how* the NSDC works and not *if* it works. Mosse (2004: 647, see also Lewis/Mosse 2006: 4) refers to Bruno Latour and defines ethnography as follows:

“The ethnographic task is also to show how, despite such fragmentation and dissent, actors in development are constantly engaged in creating order and unity through political acts of composition. It involves examining the way in which heterogeneous entities — people, ideas, interests, events and objects [...] are tied together by translation of one kind or another into the material and conceptual order of a successful project.”

For this thesis, I too adopted an ethnographic approach in order to analyse how the collaboration between tdhs, Nelico, and Ebli is characterized. I am not interested if the collaboration is successful or if the implemented projects are successful but rather how the employees experience the collaboration and how it is practiced. Therefore, I have – apart from a deductive interest where I analyse the collaboration by using the above described indicators – also an inductive and hence emic interest in the opinion of my interview partners. In the next chapter, I explain the methods I used for my research.

3.2. Qualitative Research Methods

The research conducted for this thesis lies within the field of qualitative methods. The findings of this research are therefore not meant to be universally applicable but rather show the opinions and impressions of the people who have been interviewed for this case study. As described by Reuber/Pfaffenbach (2005: 35), the qualitative methods are not standardized and are therefore subjective and represent individual and single examples. Since the qualitative research relies on the opinions and experiences of the research subject, it is further important to note that “there can never be an empirical world, therefore, only a myriad of worlds of meanings: there can be no universal truths” (Johnson 1997 cited in Reuber/Pfaffenbach 2005: 31).

The qualitative methods and research practices are further characterised by a diverse range of methods (such as interview, participatory observation or data analysis), orientation on the everyday experiences with the perspective of the persons involved, as well as the principle of openness (Reuber/Pfaffenbach 2005: 119). The qualitative methods are based on a “logic of discovering⁴²” and the possibility of changing hypotheses or plans during the research (Rosenthal 2005: 13). This not only results in the willingness to renegotiate the research questions but also in the ability to be open to changing strategies within an interview or an observation. The interview questions therefore should be formulated openly and the researcher has to be able to adapt spontaneously to the given answer (Rosenthal 2005: 53). The

⁴² In German: Logik des Entdeckens.

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amount of data and therefore the size of the sampling for the research with qualitative methods cannot be defined in advance but becomes clear during the process of the research (Rosenthal 2005: 88).

3.3. Field work

First, I wish to briefly outline how I decided to research this specific case study.

Due to my work for *imagine*, a project of tdhs, it was clear to me from the beginning that I wanted to research the work of tdhs. The next step was to choose the Southern NGO that tdhs works with in order to research the collaboration. The reasons why I chose Ebli and Nelico, situated in Tanzania, are diverse. For one, I chose Tanzania because of my language skills. Due to my limited abilities to speak Spanish and my inability to speak Portuguese, the Latin American countries, as well as Mozambique, were out of the question. This left me with the options of Zimbabwe, South Africa or Tanzania⁴³. Currently, the political situation in Zimbabwe is rather difficult, which was a reason for me not to travel to this country at the moment. Consequently, the choice remained between Tanzania and South Africa. I chose Tanzania mainly because the Program Coordinator of tdhs planned to go on a project visit in February 2016, which gave me the unique opportunity to include this visit in my research. I then chose Nelico and Ebli due to their geographical closeness (Mwanza and Geita are only a two-hour drive apart) as well as their different stages within the collaboration of tdhs⁴⁴.

In order to conduct the qualitative research for this thesis, I travelled to Tanzania for three weeks. In those three weeks, I accompanied the Program Coordinator (PC), the National Coordinator (NC), and the Director of tdhs on their project visits to the two Tanzanian NGOs: Ebli, situated in Mwanza, and Nelico, situated in Geita. During their visit, I conducted observations of the meetings and field visits the employees of tdhs had scheduled. Additionally, I interviewed the NC of tdhs. After the first week, I remained in Tanzania alone to conduct interviews with the employees of Ebli and Nelico. After returning to Switzerland, I conducted three more interviews within tdhs and analysed the working documents of their collaboration. The process of data collection lasted from February until May, 2016.

3.3.1. Observations

The first part of my research was characterized by participatory observations. Reuber/Pfaffenbach (2005:124) distinguish in their book several levels of participation within the observation. The “observer as participant⁴⁵” approach is characterized with minor integration into the activities and with the predominance of the observation. This reflects my role in the field, since I interacted very little and mainly remained in the background to observe the situation from the outside.

The observed activities were primarily the meetings and the field visits⁴⁶ that the PC and the NC of tdhs had during their project visits. During the observations, I had the following leading questions in mind:

⁴³ See chapter 1.3.1 for a list of all the countries tdhs works in.

⁴⁴ See also chapter 1.3 for more information on their collaborations.

⁴⁵ In German: Beobachter als Teilnehmer

⁴⁶ One meeting and one field visit each with Ebli and Nelico.

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Who talks how much? Who speaks the most? What kind of terms such as *donor* or *partner* are used? What kind of questions are asked?⁴⁷ To record my findings, I took handwritten notes simultaneously during the observations. As Rosenthal (2005: 115) recommends, I further wrote down important basic data such as where the meeting was held, how long it took, and who was present. At the end of the day, I transcribed my notes, compiled them into a document, and complemented my findings with additional impressions I gathered throughout the day.

I gathered those impressions in between meetings, such as during car rides or in the evening during informal talks. With this, my research can be further characterized as “shadowing” (Müller et.al 2011: 337), where I, as the researcher, followed the PC like a shadow during her work. Hence, I was able to observe all interactions the PC as well as the NC had with the employees of Ebli and Nelico. Since we stayed in the same hotel and spent most of the time together, I was better placed to get a good impression of how the PC and NC act and behave during their project visits.

3.3.2. Semi-Guided Interviews

As the second component of my research, I conducted semi-guided interviews (Reuber/Pfaffenbach 2005: 132f.). Therefore, I prepared an interview guideline where I wrote down several questions formulated as open questions. The guideline was divided into open starting questions, questions that aimed at the seven indicators of a partnership used in this thesis, and final questions to sum up the interview⁴⁸. The questions helped me ensure I asked about the important aspects of the research. Further, I asked ad hoc questions where I felt it was necessary or added questions depending on the answers I got from my interview partner. In total, I conducted 11 semi-guided interviews: four within tdhs, four within Nelico, and three within Ebli. All interviews were between 40 minutes and 2 hours.

The interview partners were selected due to their role and position within the three organisations. With tdhs, I chose the interview partners myself, since I know the organisation well enough to determine who has important information for my research. With Ebli and Nelico, I chose the interview partners together with the employees. For all three organisations, I conducted an interview with the director. With Ebli and Nelico, I further interviewed the finance administrators and long-term employees who were already involved in capacity building or report writing for tdhs. It was important for my research that my interview partners already had experience in working with tdhs. Within tdhs, I further interviewed the NC and the PC, since they are most involved in the collaboration with Ebli and Nelico. Additionally, I interviewed the person holding the PSS-position since she is a long-term employee of tdhs and further conducts SFA workshops with the employees of Ebli and Nelico.

During the interviews, I tried not to use either the word ‘donor’ or ‘partner’ before the interview partner did so. This way, I attempted to ensure not influencing the given answers. The questions I asked were somewhat adapted to the person I was interviewing, which means that I asked the director questions that

⁴⁷ See the appendix for the full questionnaire.

⁴⁸ See the appendix for one example of the full interview guideline.

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were slightly different from what I asked the finance administrator. Furthermore, for the employees of tdhs, I had interview guidelines that were slightly different when compared with Ebli or Nelico. Further, I asked most of my interview partners to write down the names of the people who are most important for their work in order to see how closely tdhs, Nelico, and Ebli work in their everyday transactions. In addition, I asked some of them to draw a diagram of the working collaboration. This way, I had another type of information and another impression on how they see and experience the working collaboration (see also Kumar (2002: 234): Venn Diagram).

3.3.3. Documents

As an additional source for my thesis, I analysed specific documents that are part of the collaboration between tdhs, Nelico, and Ebli. All the analysed documents were already in existence as part of the collaboration (see Flick 2007: 323), such as guidelines for proposal, and are used as a means of communication and exchange of knowledge within the collaboration (see Flick 2007: 331). Most of these documents were internal working instruments and not publicly accessible. They were established both by employees of tdhs as well as Nelico and Ebli (see Flick 2007: 324). The specific documents I analysed are as follows:

- The three-year proposal including a budget written by Nelico for the years 2016-2018.
- One annual report written by Nelico for the year 2015.
- One three-year contract between tdhs and Nelico for the years 2016-2018.
- The three-year proposal including a budget written by Ebli for the years 2014-2016.
- One annual report written by Ebli for the year 2015.
- One three-year contract between tdhs and Ebli for the years 2014-2016.
- The country program of Tanzania written by tdhs for the years 2013-2016.
- An annual report on the country program of Tanzania written by tdhs for the year 2015.
- The document “Project Guidelines of terre des hommes schweiz” on how to write a proposal, a budget and a report, written by tdhs.
- Criteria on how to identify new ‘partner NGOs’ written by tdhs.
- The concept (german: Leitbild) of tdhs, written by tdhs.

As Flick (2007: 327) writes in his book, I am aware that these documents are written for a specific purpose and by employees of these three NGOs and are therefore a “specific version of reality, constructed for a specific purpose⁴⁹”. With this understanding, I used these documents as a contextualisation of my results from the conducted interviews, as well as an informative supplement.

⁴⁹ The original quote is in German: “Sie stellen eine spezifische Version von Realitäten dar, die für bestimmte Zwecke konstruiert wurde.”

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3.4. Data Analysis

In order to analyse research data, Reuber/Pfaffenbach (2005: 162) distinguish several types of coding such as for example ‘open coding’ or ‘thematic coding’. For this thesis, I used ‘thematic coding’ which is stronger limited in establishing the categories for the coding than the open coding. Therefore, it is better suitable for research with semi-guided interviews (Reuber/Pfaffenbach 2005: 162). As written above, I identified seven indicators for a partnership that I use in this thesis. Therefore, the categories I used to code my research material are based on these seven indicators: 1) mutual trust, 2) shared principles and targets are decided together, 3) shared responsibility and accountability, 4) transparency and active communication, 5) mutual influence, 6) sustainability and evaluation, 7) cultural awareness and respect. Additionally, I used the aspect that the Southern employees are the expert of their context as another category.

To code my interview transcripts as well as my observation transcripts and the documents, I first marked and identified the important answers and passages that relate to these seven indicators with the specific number. With this, I can compare and analyse the different results from the different sources for each specific indicator.

While coding the material, I identified more categories due to the answers I was given. Three aspects of the collaboration were frequently mentioned by different interview partners and hence I identified three more categories for the coding: *) the importance of money, *) the specific way tdhs works⁵⁰, and *) different and other ‘donors’ involved in the work of the three NGOs. Hence, I expanded my coding categories based on the results found during my research. This an important aspect of the qualitative research method and it is often demanded by different scholars, such as Krakauer (see Rosenthal 2005: 204).

Krakauer (Rosenthal 2005: 204) further claims that in qualitative research it is also important to consider individual cases, latent content, or things that remain unsaid, and to contextualise the information within the whole text and not review them in isolation. For this research, I consider these three aspects as extremely important because many of my indicators rely on personal opinions, such as the indicator of mutual trust. Therefore, I consider individual opinions as important for the results found in this research.

Within qualitative research, each method can have its weaknesses and limitations. As described by Flick (2007: 12) the use of different perspectives, different methods, and finally the triangulation of those findings, leads to a broader and wider understanding of the research area. Even if different methods can lead to contradictive results, it further contributes to deeper and broader analysis and understanding of the research field (Flick 2007: 19).

⁵⁰ I often heard the sentence ‘tdhs is different’.

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3.5. My Position and Limitations During my Research

Qualitative research always implies the subjectivity of the researcher. Furthermore, each researcher has his or her own position in relation to the research participants (dissertation scholar 2016). In my case, this is especially important.

For the last nine years, I have been working for the youth project *imagine*, supported by tdhs. *imagine* is situated in Basel and after working as a volunteer, I have been employed by tdhs for the last five years. Even though my work for *imagine* has no direct links to the collaboration tdhs has with Nelico and Ebli, this employment affects my research concerning the following:

Firstly, due to this employment, I already know the employees of tdhs and hence, gaining access to the research field was very easy. Consequently, I was able to talk to the director beforehand and ask her if they would agree to let me conduct my research. The fact that they have known me for several years could also be the reason that they agreed. Additionally, the fact that I already personally know the different employees of tdhs makes communication with them very simple. In order to ask for an interview, I could just go to the specific person in the office and ask them, or I could easily call or write emails to the different employees whenever I had a question.

Secondly, the fact that my interview partners from tdhs already knew me has possibly influenced the answers I got from them. I can imagine that they were more open and transparent in their answers because I am somewhat close to a 'co-worker' and not just any external researcher that they do not know.

Thirdly, due to my employment, I already had some knowledge about how tdhs works. With this knowledge, it was easier for me to decide which NGOs I wanted to conduct my research on. Additionally, it helped me to understand all the internal procedures and decision-making processes since I already knew how tdhs is organised and structured.

In addition to these positive effects, my employment may also have had negative outcomes.

Firstly, my involvement with tdhs can, to a certain extent, cloud my own judgment and my interpretation of the research material.

Secondly, this employment could have also influenced the answers I got during my interviews. While in the field, I introduced myself as a researcher from the university and did not mention my employment. But, if asked how I knew tdhs, I did not keep this information to myself. This could have led to my interview partners not being completely honest with me, an employee of their 'donor'. Thirdly, the fact that I was introduced to Nelico and Ebli through tdhs influenced the way they saw me. I was accompanying the PC of tdhs, which made it very easy for me to get appointments for my interviews. Hence, this introduction by tdhs helped me to gain access to the people in Tanzania, but at the same time it might have changed the answers I received from them.

In addition to the effects my employment with tdhs had, there were some other limitations to my research. Primarily, I realized during my interviews that there was a language barrier. Although all

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interview partners were able to speak English very well, I realized it was difficult for some of my interview partners to express themselves the way they wanted. For both them and me, English is a second language and it is always more difficult to truly express what someone wants to say in a foreign language.

Lastly, and independently from my employment with tdhs, the questions I asked were about their collaboration. I asked them to be open and honest in their answers, but I am not sure whether the employees of Nelico and Ebli would really say something that could jeopardize their working collaboration and consequently, the support and funds they receive from tdhs.

All these positive as well as negative effects of my specific position in the field are important for me to bear in mind while analysing the research data. The next chapter therefore concerns the analysis of my case study.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN TDHS, EBLI, AND NELICO

As described in chapter 2, the principle of partnership is part of the human-centred approach and, therefore, of alternative development. Partnership postulates a collaboration where the North and the South are equal partners without one NGO dominating the collaboration. One interest of this thesis is whether the principle of partnership answers the claim of the post-development debate (PDD) for an alternative to western-dominated development, as described in chapter 2.1. The second interest concerns the practical application of partnership in today's North-South development cooperation (NSDC). Therefore, I conducted my research to find out whether the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico can be considered a partnership or not. In order to do that, I identified several indicators that characterize a partnership. The analysis of my research is the subject of this chapter.

In chapter 4.1, I first analyse if the seven indicators I identified for a partnership are matched within the collaboration of tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. Also, I analyse if the Tanzanian NGOs are considered the experts of their context. In chapter 4.2, I describe the three additional aspects I identified during my analysis: Namely, the aspects of other donors involved, the importance of money, and the specific way tdhs works. Based on my interviews, I further derive some insights on what partnership means and involves for the employees I interviewed and how they see and characterize the collaboration. I elaborate these inputs in chapter 4.3. Based on these inputs and the results from chapter 4.1, I conclude in chapter 4.4 whether this collaboration can be considered a partnership or not.

4.1. Does the Collaboration Fulfil the Indicators?⁵¹

In this chapter, I analyse if the collaboration fulfils the criteria of the indicators that define a partnership⁵². I discuss each indicator individually based on my interviews and observations as well as the data analysis.

4.1.1. Mutual Trust

As described in chapter 2.4, mutual trust is based on personal relations. The better two people know each other and the longer they have worked together, the better trust can develop. The assumption is that the more trust there is, the less control they execute and the more freedom someone has within their work. Hence, many scholars (such as Harris 2008, Lister 2000, and Mawdsley et al. 2005) argue that personal relations are crucial for a partnership. Lister (2000) proposes to have personal relations between

⁵¹ For each quotation of my interview partners I indicated the appropriate page number of the interview transcript. Those transcripts are however not part of this document. The transcripts can be obtained by contacting the author, Caroline Buss.

⁵² When I write about the collaboration between the NGOs, I always mean between tdhs and Nelico or tdhs and Ebli. If I refer to the relation between Ebli and Nelico (or other tdhs supported Tanzanian NGOs) I will clearly indicate it.

several employees in order to enhance mutual trust. Similarly, Fowler (1998: 149) argues for a structure that allows employees of the Northern NGOs to be able to visit the Southern NGOs on a regular basis in order to build such personal relations and enhance mutual trust. In her case study, Harris (2008) criticized the lack of interest for personal relations from the Northern NGOs and therefore emphasized on the importance of personal relations.

Turning now to the results of my research, I show that within the collaboration of tdhs with Ebli and Nelico such personal relations do exist. As described in chapter 1.3.4 on the technicalities of the collaboration, there are several visits per year by tdhs employees to each NGO. This close exchange is possible because of the local National Coordinator (NC) who visits each NGO approximately three times a year. Additionally, the accountant of the NC office, as well as the Program Coordinator (PC), visits each NGO once a year. Furthermore, other tdhs employees, such as the desk for PSS,⁵³ get to know the employees of Ebli and Nelico by attending, for example, a partner platform. These frequent visits, especially from the NC, ensure a close personal relationship and therefore provide for trust to be built. Consequently, there are also personal relations between many different employees, as demanded by Lister (2000). I now substantiate these results with the answers I gathered during my interviews and show that my interview partners are extremely interested in getting to know the persons they work with.

In order to obtain information about the level of trust within their collaboration, I started by asking them to describe the relationship with the employees of the other NGO and if they consider it a personal relationship or professional. Most of the interviewees agree that there is some type of personal relationship between the employees of the NGOs. Whereas the Tanzanian interview partners experience the professional aspect of the relationship during meetings (e.g. Nelico 2: 8, Nelico 4: 2), all of them also referred to it as somehow personal, as it is described in the following statement: “[XY]⁵⁴ was here, we looked at her as our sister, our friend, and also our donor. So, we feel the professional aspect without neglecting the fact that, over and above that, we are friends” (Ebli 1: 6).

It is not only the employees of Ebli and Nelico who experience this personal aspect of their relation, the tdhs employees too recognized that there is more to the relationship than mere professionalism. One employee of tdhs (tdhs 4: 7) for example states that she has very personal conversations with the employees of Ebli and Nelico during her visits, which leads to a basic friendship and trust between them “and when you see each other again, you can reconnect⁵⁵” (tdhs 4: 7).

For the interviewees of Ebli and Nelico, this combination of professional and personal relations does not seem to be contradictive, as we see in the statement from Ebli 1 above. From the perspective of tdhs however, there seems to be the need for some sort of boundary. tdhs 2 (p. 10) also experiences this

⁵³ See also chapter 1.3.1.

⁵⁴ In order to guarantee anonymity, I replace the name of a person mentioned with [XY]. Nevertheless, because of the context, some hints as to who this person is cannot be prevented.

⁵⁵ In German: Dann habe ich sehr persönliche Gespräche eigentlich, mit ihnen die einfach dort sind. [...] Aber für mich ist so diese Grundfreundschaft oder Vertrauen ist da. Und wenn man sich wiedersieht, kann man wieder anknüpfen.

personal aspect of their relationship and considers the employees of Ebli and Nelico as “incredibly interesting persons” who interest her on a personal level too. Nevertheless, she feels the need for clear boundaries, “to keep a professional distance because you always have to make decisions that are not just good or that can disadvantage someone.” This is why she feels that “if you are too involved on a personal basis, it is difficult⁵⁶” (tdhs 2: 10).

The different views of tdhs 4 and tdhs 2 can be explained by their position within tdhs, which is also mentioned during the interview of tdhs 4. She differentiates between her position (the desk for psychosocial support) and the position as a PC of tdhs. Since tdhs 4 is not the one who decides how much funds Ebli or Nelico get, she does not feel this pressure and therefore does not feel this need for a boundary. Her position allows tdhs 4 to have a more open and personal relation with Ebli and Nelico (tdhs 4: 7).

Based on those personal relations, all of my interview partners said very clearly that they feel that they can trust the employee of the other NGO and that they have the impression that they are trusted by the other NGO. Additionally, most of my interview partners named mutual trust as a condition for their collaboration, which is exemplified by the following statement from Nelico 4: “I think they trust me, otherwise we could not have a project” (Nelico 4: 5, see also Ebli 1: 7, tdhs 1: 13, tdhs 2: 7).

This chapter so far showed that there are personal relations within the collaboration and mutual trust between the employees. It is now also important to see the amount of freedom someone has within their work. As described at the beginning of this chapter, mutual trust enables someone to act freely and to not be controlled by the other NGO. The results of my interviews show that this interplay between trust and freedom is a constant issue for the employees of tdhs: “It is like an area of tension. How open are you, how far do you trust them and how far do you control? This is always a challenge⁵⁷” (tdhs 3: 5). The employees of Nelico and Ebli, on the other hand, do not appear to experience this tension. For them, there are certain guidelines as regulated in the contract, but none of them felt controlled or observed by tdhs (e.g. Ebli 1: 7). The one exception to their freedom is the financial boundaries, as elaborated by Nelico 1:

“So, we have that room, we have that freedom to do something else as long as it makes our intended purpose better than it was. So, we feel that freedom. [...] [But] You don’t expect too much freedom. Because [XY] was stressing yesterday that there is no way we can use the gain [financial surplus based on several activities] without their agreement. That is none negotiable. There are always non-negotiables in any kind of relationship.” (Nelico 1: 11)

⁵⁶ In German: Doch, es ist sicher mehr als ein professioneller Austausch. [...] Das sind ja auch unglaublich spannende Personen, die sich engagieren in den Projekten. Und ehm, die interessieren mich auch persönlich sehr. [...] Und gleichzeitig muss man eine professionelle Distanz gewähren, weil man muss auch immer Entscheide treffen, die nicht nur toll sind, oder die auch jemanden benachteiligen. [...] Wenn man da zu stark persönlich involviert ist, ist es schwierig.

⁵⁷ In German: Es ist ein Spannungsfeld. Wie weit bist du offen, wie weit vertraust du einfach und wie weit kontrollierst du, Das ist immer so ein Abwägen.

While there is this tension between professionalism and friendship on the side of tdhs and there is a feeling of being controlled in the use of funds on the side of Nelico and Ebli, all of my interview partners agree that there is mutual trust within the collaboration and that their relationship goes beyond a solely professional level. These impressions are also supported by the observations I gathered in Tanzania. After or during the field visits, the NC and PC of tdhs would eat lunch together with the employees of Ebli or Nelico. During the car rides they talked about football and which team is better. During the meetings, there is room for friendly chatting, and some of them make jokes. There is an interest in spending some time together apart from work to catch up and to have a nice time together. On our first day in Mwanza after the meeting, all of us together with the whole staff of Ebli went to have a big lunch where we all sat at one table and the conversation was not about work but about normal matters. These moments made me realize that the employees from both NGOs are interested in personal relations and that the better you know each other the better you can work together, because you can build trust.

Therefore, I argue that there is mutual trust within the collaboration of tdhs with Ebli and tdhs with Nelico.

Nevertheless, it seemed that the level of trust slightly differs between Ebli and Nelico. I gathered this impression based on several observations during my research and it was further confirmed by a statement from tdhs 2: “I trust Ebli... I trust Nelico... too... [but] not to the end entirely⁵⁸” (tdhs 2: 9). This difference in trust is based on the higher level of transparency Ebli seems to have towards tdhs. Therefore, I now turn to the analysis of the indicator of transparency and active communication.

4.1.2. Transparency and Active Communication

Transparency and active communication is extremely related to mutual trust. As described in chapter 2.4, transparency means to have open and honest communication and to share changes, successes or problems with the other NGO in order to keep them up to date. In current literature, many scholars such as Lister (2000), Ashman (2001) or Fowler (1998) claim the importance of transparency and active communication. Although this aspect seems to be very important, Fowler (1998: 143) criticizes the Northern NGO and claims that they are “organizationally less transparent than the South” which leads to an imbalance in power.

Moving on now to the results of my case study, I show that Ebli and Nelico do have active and open communication with tdhs as demanded by Ashman (2001) and Lister (2000). However, the critique raised by Fowler (1998) also seems to be applicable in my case study. Even though there are personal relations between the employees as described in the last chapter, this does not seem to enhance the knowledge Ebli and Nelico have on tdhs. I now substantiate these conclusions with the statements from my interviews.

⁵⁸ In German: Ich vertraue Ebli... ich vertraue Nelico... auch... nicht bis ans ganze Ende.

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In order to learn if their collaboration is transparent, I started by asking how exactly their communication is structured. As described in chapter 1.3.4, tdhs has an NC situated in Dar es Salaam who is primarily responsible for the NGOs they work with in Tanzania. All of my interview partners agreed and explained that Ebli and Nelico primarily communicate with the NC and he then forwards the information to the PC in Switzerland (tdhs 1: 5). Similarly, the PC solely communicates with the NC in Dar es Salaam who then forwards the inputs from Switzerland to the NGOs in Tanzania. The means of communication are a bit different depending which communication is looked at. Whereas the employees of Ebli and Nelico primarily use email and spontaneous phone calls to communicate with the NC (Nelico 3: 3), the PC uses weekly Skype Meetings in order to discuss urgent matters. Additionally, they also communicate via email (tdhs 2: 4).

Besides the means and frequency of communication, it is also important to determine who is directly involved in the communication. As mentioned above, within tdhs, communication happens solely through the NC and the PC. Other staff members of tdhs are not directly involved in communication with the Southern NGOs (tdhs 3: 2). Similarly, only a few employees of Ebli and Nelico are directly involved in the communication with tdhs, as exemplified by the following statement from Nelico 3: “According to the policy of the organization, [the] finance manager is not directly in contact with [the] national coordination office. We have to channel through director in case there is any information we want to report” (Nelico 3: 2). Whereas at tdhs, the director is not involved in the communication, the directors of Ebli and Nelico are the primary contact points for the NC. However, there seems to be a divergence between theory and practice. Other staff members besides the director also seem to have access to direct communication with the NC office. Nelico 3 (p. 4) quotes the NC who told him to “feel free to ask, in case of anything, we are here to help you.” This seems to be highly appreciated by the employees of Nelico and Ebli, and he continues: “I can call anytime, even at night. When I feel like there is something that I don’t understand when I am writing a report, or when something is confusing me, I can call” (Nelico 3: 4). Consequently, it seems like even though there are official communication channels through the director, certain staff members (who are mostly heads of departments) have the ability to communicate directly in case of important issues. This should be seen as a positive aspect since it supports active and open communication and it allows for more people to be involved in direct communication. The NC from tdhs agrees and says:

“Yes, we are in Dar es Salaam but they feel that we are not in Dar es Salaam. We are together because we communicate regularly, we send emails, and for me, I am free anytime. They are free to call me anytime. Even sometimes when I am at home, if they ask me something, I respond.” (tdhs 1: 5)

This statement further substantiates that the communication between the NC office and Ebli or Nelico is very active and open, and employees of Ebli and Nelico feel like they can ask for help and support

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whenever they need it. More importantly, Ebli 1 (p. 4) also claims that whenever they needed support, they immediately received it.

Nevertheless, I cannot say that the work is transparent in every aspect. The answers I showed here always refer to questions or problems Ebli and Nelico have within their own work in implementing the projects. Yet, asked about tdhs and their work, the answers I received were different. Ebli 3 (p. 3) for example, did not have the impression that she knows much about tdhs or if their work is transparent as the following statement shows: “Our side is transparent. But their side, I don’t know anything.” Furthermore, when I asked Ebli or Nelico whether they ask questions about tdhs or whether they get reports or budgets about the activities from tdhs, I got the following answers:

“Personally, I would not be so much interested [in anything] other than the general idea that they go there [...] Them... as donors, I think in... general... that [ask questions about tdhs] would be eh... overstepping really.” (Ebli 1: 4)

“I have never done that [ask questions about tdhs] ... I have no experience with that.” (Nelico 1: 6)

Therefore, it seems like the employees of Nelico and Ebli are not really interested in knowing more about the work inside tdhs or about other country projects of tdhs. Nevertheless, when I asked if they felt confident to ask such questions and to obtain answers, everyone affirmed (e.g. Ebli 2: 4, Nelico 4: 3). Consequently, it seems like Nelico and Ebli are confident about asking questions and consider tdhs as open and honest, but at the same time they do not seem to make use of that freedom or confidence.

Apart from asking concrete questions about the other NGO, reports and proposals from Ebli or Nelico are another important aspect in transparency and active communication. Taking these written documents into consideration, the imbalance of information becomes even bigger. Due to the accountability Nelico and Ebli have towards tdhs because of the funds they receive, tdhs is much better informed on what is going on inside of Ebli or Nelico than they are of tdhs. As Ebli 1 (p. 3) states, all important updates are “contained in the reports that we send every three months.” Those reports, written on a quarterly basis, are very detailed and contain information such as the number of staff working on the projects and an overview of other supporters and projects Ebli or Nelico have. Hence, it is made sure through this system of report writing that tdhs is always updated by Ebli and Nelico. Looking at accountability from tdhs, the reports that Ebli and Nelico receive from tdhs about the organization or work are incomparable, less detailed, less informative, and less frequent⁵⁹ (tdhs 3: 3). Additionally, it is not guaranteed that both Ebli or Nelico receive such reports from tdhs, since the director of Ebli stated to have never gotten any reports from tdhs where as the director of Nelico affirmed to have received them (Nelico 2: 4, Ebli 1: 4).

⁵⁹ The report Ebli and Nelico receive is the one that is also available on the website of tdhs. See terre des hommes schweiz 2016e.

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There is however, one instrument through which tdhs informs the NGOs in Tanzania about changes and transformations within tdhs; the partner platforms. They are hosted each year and are perceived as the main instruments for tdhs to inform the Tanzania NGOs. Tdhs 2 (p. 5) states that by informing the Tanzanian NGOs through these partner platforms, tdhs wants to cover questions before they arise and to prevent uncertainties. They attempt to communicate proactively and inform about structural changes. Therefore, their communication “is always very transparent and very honest⁶⁰” (tdhs 2: 5). Nelico 1 confirms this practice by saying that “if there is anything new within tdhs we get it through the platform; that is after we have received emails, so they give further clarification there” (Nelico 1: 6).

To sum up how the communication works and if their collaboration is transparent, it can be stated that the communication itself seems to be very active. The statement from the NC that he is available also after office hours and is open for communication was confirmed during the other interviews. Employees from both Ebli and Nelico emphasized that they can email or call the NC office whenever they feel the need. Especially this system with the NC and PC seems to enable this active and intense communication and all three NGOs seem to respect and appreciate it.

I also received the impression that tdhs genuinely attempts to inform Ebli and Nelico about important changes within tdhs and is quite proactive in their communication. One example that was mentioned both by tdhs 2 and Ebli 1 was a situation some years back, when tdhs had fewer financial means they could give to the Southern NGOs: “For instance, when there was the economic depression, they informed us and they would update us and tell us that this is what is happening” (Ebli 1: 3). Consequently, it seems like tdhs is very much open and honest about their internal work and situation, which was confirmed during the interviews with the employees of tdhs. Nevertheless, compared to the reports and the information tdhs gets from Ebli or Nelico, their information-sharing is significantly lower. The reports Nelico and Ebli receive have only very basic information and are in no way as detailed as the reports tdhs receives.

Contrarily, in my opinion, the employees of Ebli and Nelico too have the possibility of being more active in asking questions about tdhs. Since all of them feel free to do so, why do they not do it? During my observations of the meetings and field visits, it was obvious that every topic and every question raised was about the work of Ebli and Nelico. None of the employees of Nelico or Ebli asked questions about the work of tdhs while the NC and the PC asked many questions about the work of Ebli and Nelico. These questions were not just about the projects funded by tdhs, but also about the organisation in general, what changes they go through or what plans they have for the future. How is it that such questions were not asked by employees of Ebli and Nelico? Is their level of trust higher and do they not

⁶⁰ In German: Da wir regelmässig Plattformen in den Ländern machen, an denen wir informieren, sehr offen informieren, darüber was in Basel läuft, versuchen wir zu decken bevor Gesprächsstoff entsteht bei den Partnern, weil Unsicherheiten entstehen. Vielleicht würden dann vor allem so Fragen kommen, wenn etwas nicht klar ist, oder nicht gut kommuniziert. Ehm... da versuchen wir sehr offensiv zu kommunizieren, von Basel aus. Also auch strukturelle Änderungen und so weiter, ist immer sehr transparent, immer sehr ehrlich.

feel the need to ask? Are they in some way still inhibited to ask direct questions? Or, more simply asked, are they just not interested in knowing more about tdhs?

Although I cannot conclusively answer these questions, I suggest another reason why there are so few questions raised. Combining the results from the previous indicator about mutual trust and the personal relations it can be suggested that they are the reason why Ebli and Nelico do not feel the need to ask questions or to have more detailed reports and hence more transparency. It can be argued that Ebli and Nelico, based on the trust they have in tdhs, feel that tdhs would inform them of important issues or changes. Consequently, combining these two indicators, trust can enhance but also lower transparency.

To conclude, I argue that the collaboration is transparent since all three NGOs are open for questions and communicate changes. Nevertheless, given the written reports from Ebli and Nelico, tdhs knows more about them than vice versa. Hence, in order to make the transparency even more mutual, I argue that there needs to be a better, structurally embedded system as to how Ebli and Nelico receive reports from tdhs and that those reports should be more detailed.

4.1.3. Cultural Awareness and Mutual Respect

Cultural awareness and mutual respect is another important aspect of a partnership. When working together with people from different cultural backgrounds, it is very important to have a certain awareness of these differences and to respect the different work ethics and the people involved in the partnership.

In current literature, many scholars (e.g. Bontenbal 2009) argue for the importance of cultural awareness whereas at the same time, several case studies claim that there is a lack of cultural awareness, mostly with the Northern NGOs. For example, Harris (2008: 704) describes in her article that her interview partner laughed at the idea of cultural awareness from the Northern NGO. In order to improve this cultural awareness,⁶¹ both Harris (2008: 708) and Hoksbergen (2005: 24) claim that Northern NGOs should visit the Southern projects and NGOs on the ground more often. During those visits, the Northern NGOs can see for themselves the context the projects are implemented in and can further talk to beneficiaries. Additionally, the employees of the Southern NGOs can learn more about the Northern culture during the visit and hence also improve their own cultural awareness.

Turning now to my case study, I show that my results differ from the case study of Harris (2008). Whereas her interview partners laughed at the idea of cultural awareness from the Northern NGOs, my interview partners agreed that tdhs has this awareness and is very much interested in local cultures. The employees of Ebli and Nelico too appear to have this cultural awareness. All of my interview partners further stated that this intercultural exchange enriches their work and gives them new inputs. Additionally, the claim for frequent visits by the Northern NGO is met within my case study since

⁶¹ As well as mutual trust and personal relations, see chapter 4.1.1.

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several employees of tdhs visit the projects of Ebli and Nelico at least once a year. I now support these findings with the answers gathered during my interviews.

In order to obtain information on the cultural awareness of my interview partners, I asked different questions, such as if they feel like they can learn something from the employees from Switzerland or from Tanzania, if they experience this inter-cultural work rather as enriching or as challenging, or if they even consider cultural awareness as important or not. In the following section, I first analyse the view from my Tanzanian interview partners. After that, I turn to the answers from the Swiss interviews.

In the same vein as Bontenbal (2009), Nelico 1 (p. 17) emphasized the importance of cultural awareness and stated that it “reduces unnecessary friction” when people from different cultures work together. Contrarily, Ebli 1 (p. 11) does not consider cultural awareness as important because to him, all people are humans and therefore the same:

“With the current arrangement that we have, I don’t see so much how culture can be an issue. [...] Yes, we share the same humanity. Maybe they will be a little concerned about eating a sugar cane, that’s ok. [...] But the basic thing is that we share the same humanity. For me, it doesn’t [matter]...” (Ebli 1: 11)

Nevertheless, when I asked about the structure with the NC, he acknowledged that it is an advantage to work with someone who is from Tanzania, because “it makes it a little bit easier” (Ebli 1: 12). The most obvious advantage, he further notes, are the language skills: “But the only advantage that comes in probably is the fact that the Tanzanian knows the language a little bit more and can have those nuances of communicating with the local people” (Ebli 1: 12). This statement shows that even though for Ebli 1, it is not important where a person comes from, it is still important if you share certain cultural aspects such as language skills.

This issue with the language barrier was mentioned throughout most of my interviews. Nelico 3 also mentioned this issue because he found it challenging at the beginning to work with Swiss people. For both him and for the Swiss employees, English is not their first language. This makes it difficult to communicate clearly, as the following statement shows:

“Yes, at the beginning it was difficult for me. At the beginning, because especially when it comes to cultural aspects and the language aspect. Because we don’t speak too much English, we speak Swahili [...]. So, you cannot say each and everything in English, because it’s not your mother tongue. [...] So, slowly we come to know each other like Swiss people do their work and what’s their dislike, what they like. So, every time when you need maybe to have a communication now [...] we have to put something here between so that we can understand each other. Yes... it’s like to understand the way Swiss people behave and Swiss people sometimes they have to understand how Tanzanian people behave. For example,

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especially in time management, something that is really a challenge I can say.“ (Nelico 3: 12)

In this statement, Nelico 3 addresses another issue and talks about the fact that both NGOs have to get to know how the other people do their work or what their dislikes are. This knowledge is exactly the kind of interest that is important for cultural awareness and as shown here, Nelico 3 does have this interest. Similarly, Nelico 4 emphasized during her interview that it is important for her to be open to learn from the Swiss employees. She therefore said that “I believe everything I do depends on where I come from. So, I have the obligation to be open and if I want to learn something I have to be open to receive new things” (Nelico 4: 6).

Going one step further, I asked my Tanzanian interview partners whether they have the impression that the employees of tdhs are also open to learning from them or learning about the Tanzanian way. All of them affirmed (e.g. Ebli 2: 9). Nelico 1 further tied this cultural awareness to their collaboration and said that because tdhs has this knowledge, “that’s why we have this collaboration” (Nelico 1: 18, see also Nelico 4: 6). Nelico 3 further emphasized that this cultural awareness also needs time to build and said: “So if she [the PC] will have a long time with Tanzanian then she is good in those collaborations” (Nelico 3: 13).

Combining the above results, my Tanzanian interview partner said that not only do they themselves have this cultural awareness, but also the employees of tdhs seem to be interested in and aware of the cultural differences. Even more so, many of my Tanzanian interview partners, such as Nelico 1, consider this cultural awareness as a condition for their collaboration. Consequently, it seems likely that they saw it as an advantage to work together with people from different cultural backgrounds. This intercultural collaboration enables them to learn new things and is therefore helpful and enriching for their own work (Ebli 3: 8, Nelico 2: 13). Nelico 1 also emphasizes on the opportunity to learn from each other because “then we have different perspectives” and through “how they interact with us, there are a lot of things they learn from us” (Nelico 1: 17).

Within the aspect of cultural awareness, the role of the NC is very essential. He frequently mentioned his role as a translator not just for linguistic but also for cultural aspects and he is therefore an intermediary for cultural differences. He stated throughout his interview that it is important to have someone in the country who understands the customs and culture and therefore understands the employees of the Tanzanian NGOs. At the same time, he knows about the importance of the visits from the Swiss employees because this allows them to learn and to have a cultural exchange with the Tanzanian employees, as exemplified in the following statement:

“That’s why if you remember, they are very happy to have someone from Switzerland. Because for me, I am still a Tanzanian. [...] If you have someone direct from there, you can have this cultural differences and reflect on them. So, people appreciate when they have

someone from outside. And of course, from our culture, when someone comes to visit you, this someone is valuing you. So, they like this one. So, this also is very important.” (tdhs 1: 20)



Picture 4, Field visit Ebli: The NC translates statements from the beneficiaries of Ebli to the PC. (own picture)

After having displayed the Tanzanian view, I turn in the upcoming section to the answers I received from my Swiss interview partners. Their answers are very similar to the ones from the Tanzanian interview partners. Primarily, all of them evenly emphasized on the importance of the NC as an intermediary who has to culturally translate for both sides. tdhs 4 for example stated during her interview that the feedback from the PC to Ebli or Nelico are important, but that, at the same time, “the role of the NC is essential. Because they are like translators of the whole thing⁶²” (tdhs 4: 13).

Similar to the Tanzanian employees, the Swiss interview partners too emphasized the importance and advantages of this intercultural work and hence the importance of respecting other cultures. However, for them too, it can be very challenging. The following two statements from tdhs 2 and tdhs 3 exemplify this quite well.

“Of course, it is both. It is extremely enriched and really fascinating and I think you really have to get into it and have a lot of tolerance because otherwise it won’t work. [...] It needs a lot of flexibility from our side and apart from being very fascinating, it is sometimes also

⁶² In German: Also es ist ein Input, wo sicher gut ist, aber da denke ich auch, die Rolle von den NKs ist sehr zentral. Weil sie sind dann auch so wie Übersetzer oder von dem Ganzen.

tedious and sometimes I wish that it would just go the way I like it. [...] You often get to that point, when you think it would be so much easier to just say 'that's the way, period.' But I realized quite quickly that this would not lead to anything and it would just be wrong and lazy⁶³." (tdhs 2: 24)

"So, it is of course positive. Well, I think otherwise I should not be working here (laughs). [...] Yes, I always find it very fascinating, and I enjoy seeing how it can be different, and also discussing it with them⁶⁴." (tdhs 3: 10)

tdhs 3 (p. 12) continues that to have both an NC and a PC who work with Ebli and Nelico enables them to receive feedback from someone who is close to the projects and also from someone who is farther away. This matches the statements from my Tanzanian interview partners who appreciate the inputs from the Swiss perspective and at the same time appreciate the NC who is someone from their own culture.

As I showed, all of my interview partners consider it an advantage to work with people from another culture. One example from the Swiss perspective, as stated by tdhs 2 (p. 24), is that this intercultural cooperation combines the structural thinking from the Swiss side with the local knowledge and customs of the Tanzanian side. The combination of those two approaches and knowledge systems helps to make the projects successful.

Lastly, the way I experienced it, as well as the impressions I received through the interviews, lets me conclude that all of the involved employee see the advantages of such intercultural collaborations. With the system of the NC, I received the impression that much friction that could occur due to cultural differences can be prevented. The results displayed here let me conclude that all of my interview partners seem to agree with me and they seem to value the position of the NC very much. Additionally, I can say that through these annual visits of the PC and the frequent visits of other tdhs employees, both the PC and the Tanzanian employees enter into direct contact with the other culture and therefore come to know more about it. This further helps to improve their cultural awareness.

⁶³ In German: Es ist natürlich beides. Ehm, es ist natürlich extrem bereichernd und wahnsinnig spannend und ich glaube ehm... man muss sich total auf das einlassen und eine grosse Toleranz an den Tag legen, weil sonst funktioniert es nicht.[...] Aber ehm, es braucht... auch sehr viel Flexibilität von unserer Seite aus. Ehm... nebst dem, dass es das spannendste ist, ist es ab und zu auch, auch einfach mühsam und ab und zu wünscht man sich... ja, dass es einfach so würde laufen, wie man das gerne hat. [...] Man kommt immer wieder an so Punkte, an denen man denkt, es wäre so viel einfach, einfach zu sagen 'so läuft es und fertig'. Aber, ich glaube man besinnt sich immer recht schnell und merkt, aber das würde so zu nichts führen in dieser Arbeit und es wäre einfach ehm, falsch und es wäre einfach bequem.

⁶⁴ In German: Also es ist auf jeden Fall mehr positiv. Also, ehm ich glaube sonst dürfte ich nicht hier arbeiten (lacht) Ehm... Ja, es ist ehm, ich finde es immer spannend, es macht mir Spass zu sehen, wie das anders ist, oder mit ihnen das auch zu diskutieren, anzusprechen.

Nevertheless, to be culturally aware and to respect the other culture is always very personal and can be different for each person, as stated by tdhs 1:

“Yes, there are things that tdhs can learn, but it depends with the individual. [...] So, it depends on who is visiting, what they want to learn and if they take it home.” (tdhs 1: 21)

To conclude, I argue that both the Swiss and the Tanzanian employees have a certain amount of cultural awareness and mutual respect, and all my interview partners are interested in learning from the other employees. This helps them not only to improve the collaboration but also the implemented projects. Hence, I agree with the PC’s statement that there is “a very respectful acquaintance with each other and it is a very positive collaboration⁶⁵” (tdhs 2: 29).

4.1.4. Shared Principles and Mutual Targets

Shared principles and mutual targets are important for a partnership because unless both NGOs have the same targets and working principles, it is very difficult to work together and to achieve the intended change. Therefore, as described in chapter 2.4, both NGOs need to have the same understanding of what change or transformation is needed and how this change can be achieved in order to work together in a partnership.

In current literature, Lister (2000) as well as Ashman (2001) emphasizes the importance of joint decision making. However, Ashman (2001: 87) also criticizes that many Northern NGOs seem to have the opinion that they can decide what is implemented because they are the ‘donors’. Fowler (1998: 142) describes this issue in his case study and calls it “paternalistic behaviour”.

In my case study of the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico, there are several levels of decision making or targets, such as the concrete project targets on the ground or the overall targets of the country program⁶⁶. Based on my research, I can say that on some levels, there is joint decision making but on others each decides on their own what the targets ought to be. However, the criticism by Ashman (2001) and Fowler (1998) on the paternalistic behaviour is not evident in this case study because tdhs does not impose anything on Ebli and Nelico. I now underline these findings with the results from my research.

tdhs has, as described in chapter 1.3.1, certain key project areas and approaches they want every Southern NGO to use. In order to see if Ebli and Nelico share those approaches, I first asked my interview partners to define what PSS, youth participation and the SFA means to them⁶⁷. The answers I gathered show that most of my interview partners share the same understanding of these three approaches. For some of them, who attended a partner platform such as Nelico 1 (p. 8), the understanding is deeper than for others because during those partner platforms these approaches are often the focus.

⁶⁵ In German: Ich finde wir haben sehr einen respektvollen Umgang gegenseitig miteinander und es ist sehr eine positive Zusammenarbeit.

⁶⁶ For more information on the country program see chapter 1.3.1.

⁶⁷ A definition of those approaches can be found in chapter 1.3.1.

For Ebli 1 (p. 5) these approaches also blur together because they require each other: “There is no way you can do a workshop in an SF manner. Then it lacks participation. [...] Because you engage young people’s minds and you engage them in the issue that you are looking at, you are addressing their social needs”. tdhs 3 (p. 5f) agrees in her interview with Ebli 1 and refers in her statement also to the SF approach, which can complement both PSS and youth participation: “SFA is a method that can contribute to that. [...] It is a method that conditions participation. SFA is not something hierarchical, it is a method that you can use for PSS and for youth participation. And youth participation is like the purpose of tdhs⁶⁸.”

As described at the beginning of this chapter, it is not just important to share the same principles but also to know who introduced them in order to avoid the “paternalistic behaviour” (Fowler 1998). Therefore, I asked my interview partners who introduced those approaches or if they were already working with them. All of my interview partners agreed and said that PSS as well as youth participation was already practiced by Nelico and Ebli whereas SFA is a method that was introduced by tdhs (Nelico 2: 6). However, even though tdhs introduced this approach to Nelico and Ebli, they do not impose it on them. It is merely an offer, as stated by tdhs 2:

“So, I think, SFA really came from us. Actually, it was tdhs who first applied SFA in the African context. It hasn’t been done before. [...] We train them and we would recommend it, but in the end, if someone does not work with SFA it is not a reason to say we leave this partner. [...] But generally, that someone said they don’t want to try it [to work with SFA], we’ve never had that⁶⁹.” (tdhs 2: 14)

The fact that both Ebli and Nelico were already working in a participatory way with young people is no coincidence. tdhs only works with local organisations that already fit into their activities and principles. Southern NGOs who have different areas of expertise or different focuses do not receive any support from tdhs. tdhs 2 (p. 14) substantiates this choice by saying that they only work with similar NGOs because they do not want a situation where “the partner has to go into a direction they don’t want. Therefore, it makes sense to have partners that already fit in to a certain extent⁷⁰.”

⁶⁸ In German: SFA ist eine Methode, wo dazu beitragen kann. [...] Ist eine Methode und gleichzeitig ist es eine Methode für mich, die diese Partizipation bedingt. Man kann nicht, SFA ist nicht etwas Hierarchisches, es ist eine Methode, die du für PSS nutzen kannst aber auch für Jugendpartizipation. Und Jugendpartizipation ist für mich eigentlich der Zweck von tdhs.

⁶⁹ In German: Also ich denke, ehm SFA ist wirklich von uns ausgekommen. Also das ist sowieso überhaupt erst tdhs, wo SFA im afrikanischen Kontext braucht, das gab es vorher gar nicht. Und wir bilden sie weiter aus in dem und wir würden das empfehlen, aber am Schluss, wenn jemand nicht mit SFA arbeitet, ist das nicht ein Grund zu sagen, man steigt bei diesem Partner aus. Aber Grundsätzlich das jemand gesagt hat, sie wollen nicht, versuchen, das hatten wir noch nie.

⁷⁰ In German: Wir suchen natürlich Partner, schon aus nachdem sie ins Programm passen. Weil wir wollen nicht Partnerschaften eingehen, wo sich dann eben Partner müssen irgendwie in eine Richtung bewegen, die sie nicht wollen. Darum macht es Sinn, von Anfang an solche Partner zu nehmen, die ein Stück weit schon hineinpassen.

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Apart from the principles (or approaches) that Nelico, Ebli and tdhs share, there is also a need for mutual targets. tdhs establishes the specific country programs with two fields of actions for each of the countries they work in. For Tanzania, tdhs wrote a new country program for the period from 2017 to 2020 with the fields of action of gender based violence and reproductive health and rights. In order to write this country program, the NC and PC of Tanzania held workshops during the partner platform in February 2016 to let the Tanzanian NGOs participate in defining the important points and steps of this program. Nelico 1 (p. 13), who attended this partner platform, experienced it as very participatory and very open. Also, the two fields of action that were chosen match perfectly with the work of Nelico who already focus on gender based violence and reproductive health and rights: “That was precisely what was already written in our proposal” (Nelico 1: 13). Ebli 1, who also attended the platform, appreciated the way the country program was discussed, because “this we do together, it’s not like they are imposing the idea on us” (Ebli 1: 3).

However, even though they discussed it during the platform, the identification of the two fields of action was done in Switzerland before the partner platform and without the direct involvement of the Southern NGOs. But, as described by the PC, those were based on the areas and fields the Southern NGOs were already working in:

“So, the first initiative came from Basel but together with the NCs. [...] We tried to analyse what were the very important issues. [...] And from there, we identified three fields of action that we are going to work with in future, so they came from us together with the NC. Out of those three fields of action, we had to choose two. And this we also did here without involving the partners. But we chose them based on what the partners already work on⁷¹.”
(tdhs 2: 7, see also tdhs 4: 12)

The fields of action and the country program are on the highest level of decision making because they not only concern Nelico and Ebli, but all NGOs that work with tdhs in Tanzania. At the lowest level, these are the targets for the concrete projects that are implemented by Ebli and Nelico. In each three-year proposal that Ebli and Nelico have to write, they have to identify those project targets. Ebli and Nelico decide on those targets by themselves, without consulting tdhs. However, the project targets have to be in line with the targets that are defined in the country program. Consequently, the country program defines the frame, and within this frame, Ebli and Nelico define their targets autonomously (Ebli 1: 6, tdhs 2: 15).

⁷¹ In German: Der erste Schritt ist gemacht worden in Basel aber mit den NKs zusammen. [...] und hat versucht herauszuarbeiten was sind jetzt eigentlich so die besonderen brennenden Punkte gewesen. Aus dem heraus haben sich dann drei Schwerpunkte ergeben, mit denen wir jetzt in Zukunft arbeiten werden, die sind... also von uns aber eben zusammen mit den NKs erarbeitet worden. Aus diesen drei Schwerpunkte musste man zwei wählen. Und das haben wir jetzt gemacht, von hier, da haben wir die Partner nicht involviert, haben das aber natürlich auf Grund von dem gemacht, was die Partner bereits arbeiten.

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Apart from sharing the same approaches and having mutual targets, it is also important to share the same overall vision. All of my interview partners agreed that the main vision of Ebli and Nelico match the vision of tdhs (e.g. Ebli 1: 8). Ebli 2 (p. 2) said in her interview: “We are going to achieve the same goals. [...] To make a better life for the youth.”

As described here, targets and principles can be defined on several levels. The overall vision, as described last, is definitely shared by Ebli, Nelico and tdhs. All of them focus on young people and want to enable them to have better living conditions by involving them directly and by giving them psychosocial support. This is not a coincidence since all three NGOs actively chose to only work with someone who matches this vision. This might also be one of the reasons why tdhs does not show this “paternalistic behaviour” as criticised by Fowler (1998) or Ashman (2001). Therefore, I find it rather reasonable to make this selection in order to find a NGO that shares your principles to begin with. One level further down, looking at the country program, there is a slight difference. Even though the thematic areas match the activities of Ebli and Nelico, the process of how those areas are identified is not completely mutual. The first step, and therefore the most important one, is done without directly involving the Southern NGOs. On the other hand, the NC and the PC are well aware of what Ebli and Nelico are working on and where they are active because they know those organisations by working with them over several years. Since the thematic areas are set out very broadly, I argue that both the NC and the PC are capable of identifying them without directly including Ebli or Nelico. Therefore, they are still mutual, even though they are not decided together.

The targets within the proposals of Ebli and Nelico however have almost no involvement from tdhs. Nelico and Ebli decide on the targets independently and the only influence tdhs has is by giving them feedback. This feedback mostly concerns technical issues such as if the chosen indicators are appropriate, but never questions the target itself (tdhs 2: 15). It is further argued by tdhs as well as Ebli and Nelico that those targets are based on the needs of the beneficiaries and that Ebli and Nelico are autonomous NGOs and therefore should decide on their targets alone.

Apart from the mutual targets, tdhs, Ebli and Nelico also share the same principle such as PSS or youth participation. The reason for this common ground also lies with the choice of tdhs to only work together with NGOs who have already applied these approaches before the collaboration. Here again, as I argued before, I consider this a good choice because it helps to prevent any imposing of unwanted aspects on Nelico or Ebli.

To conclude, I argue that the vision and principles are shared by all three involved NGOs and that all NGOs share the same targets. The collaboration therefore fulfils this indicator. The impression I received during my interviews lets me conclude that the way tdhs defines targets such as the country program is much more participatory and involving than as practiced by many other Northern NGOs. Additionally, many of my Tanzanian interview partners emphasized that tdhs never imposes anything on them but respects them as autonomous NGOs.

This autonomy of the NGOs is directly linked to the mutual influence within a partnership. Therefore, I analyse this indicator next.

4.1.5. Mutual Influence

As described in chapter 2.4, mutual influence is another indicator I identified for a partnership, and it analyses the organizational influence one NGO has over the other. As argued by many scholars (e.g. Ashman 2001, Mason 2011⁷²), each NGO should be able to maintain its independence as an autonomous organisation also within a partnership. Without wanting to disagree, I argue that it is more important to see whether the influence over the other NGO is mutual or not. Therefore, I am not primarily analysing how big the influence is but rather if one NGO has more influence over the other.

Based on my results, I have to conclude that the influence within the collaboration between tdhs and Nelico and Ebli is not completely mutual. Whereas all of my interview partners agree with Ashman (2001) and Mason (2011) that it is important for Ebli and Nelico, as well as for tdhs, to be an autonomous organisation, tdhs has more influence on Ebli and Nelico than the other way around. Due to their funding role, tdhs is involved in certain decision-making processes and therefore has a certain organizational influence on Ebli and Nelico, and this influence does not exist the other way around. I now support this result with the answers from my interviews and the impressions I gathered during my research.

One of the most important aspects of mutual control in a partnership is the written documents and plans that accompany the collaboration⁷³. For this case study, there are several different documents that influence the collaboration such as guidelines for the proposal and report-writing, the proposal and reports, the contracts, and the annual plans for visits and deadlines. These guidelines, also called “Log-Frame” (tdhs 2: 25), and the contracts are established and written by tdhs⁷⁴ without consulting the Southern NGOs, and they are similar for every Southern NGO in each country tdhs works with (tdhs 2: 3). The Log-Frames define how the reports and proposals need to look like, what exactly they need to contain and also when they need to be sent to tdhs. The contracts, as described by tdhs 2 (p. 3), are not only written by tdhs but they are also written “more from our perspective.” Since the contracts are mutually important for both NGOs, I argue that the Southern NGO should be able to participate in establishing this contract. In the same vein, the Southern NGOs should be involved when defining the Log-Frame since they are the ones who then have to write the reports and hence apply the Log-Frames.

Additionally, the annual plans as to when the PC and the NC will visit the NGOs are also defined by tdhs alone. tdhs presents the annual plan during the partner platform and gives reasons for the visit dates with the fact that they “prefer to visit after the first quarter report” (tdhs 1: 7). Hence, tdhs 1 (p. 7)

⁷² Unfortunately, there was no consideration of this indicator in the case studies I described in chapter 2.2.2. Therefore, I won't be able to compare my results with other practical research.

⁷³ See also chapter 1.3.4 on the technicalities of the collaboration.

⁷⁴ The Log-Frames are oriented on international standards. tdhs establishes them in a way that tdhs themselves have all the important information for their own donors, such as the Swiss government. See also chapter 4.2.1.

continues that the Southern NGOs “know (that in) this period the NC will visit us.” Moreover, not only the visits but also the dates for the partner platform are defined by tdhs alone, as described by Nelico 2 (p. 9): “There is no discussion that maybe asking how many days do you want for us to have a platform. I think it is a plan from their office.” Consequently, tdhs fixes all of the important dates and timetables. For the project visit, I argue that the Southern NGO should be more involved in choosing the exact time to travel. The visit by the PC of tdhs is a significant time for the Southern NGO and I argue that they should be equally involved in choosing the exact dates. However, for the partner platform, the situation is a bit different. Here, I argue it makes more sense for one NGO to fix the dates alone since during the partner platform, all five Tanzanian NGOs as well as tdhs need to attend. Therefore, it would be difficult to find a date by discussing it with everyone. But, in my opinion it would be just as possible for a Tanzanian NGO to fix the dates. Hence, there could possibly be a rotation system in place where each NGO can fix the dates for one partner platform.

Apart from the documents and annual plans that shape the collaboration, the three NGOs can also have an influence over the other NGO’s internal activities. For Ebli and Nelico, their influence within tdhs depends on the area. Thematically, Ebli and Nelico have a large say in “what is happening with us and they are very present in our media⁷⁵” (tdhs 2: 21). However, this is not a direct or active influence and Nelico and Ebli have no control over it. They do not control where or how tdhs uses the media or how they are represented. They merely provide the content or deliver success stories.

Similarly, Ebli and Nelico do not have any influence on a structural or organisational level (tdhs 2: 21). The most important tdhs employee for Ebli and Nelico is the NC. But even when tdhs hired a new NC, the Tanzanian NGOs were not involved in the process (tdhs 2: 20). However, this does not seem to bother the Tanzanian employees, as Nelico 2 (p. 12) states: “So, for me I think they have the right to recruit staff members, even without informing us.” Combining the answers from all of my interviews, there is a clear and mutual understanding that Nelico and Ebli do not have an organizational influence within tdhs, and all of my interview partners seem to respect the organisational autonomy of tdhs.

Turning now to the influence that tdhs has within Ebli and Nelico, the situation looks different and not as clear. Many Tanzanian interview partners said that tdhs has no influence within their internal decisions such as who to hire or where to rent an office space (Nelico 2: 5, 10). Ebli 1 (p. 9) said: “Oh, definitely no. That’s internal. [...] Who you hire when you hire them, is none of their business. That’s more internal business.” The way both Ebli 1 and Nelico 2 formulated their answers, it appears that they are more protective of their internal decision making. In a way, it seemed as if they wanted to show that they are independent and they needed to emphasize on their autonomy.

However, one Tanzanian interview partner drew a slightly different picture. Nelico 1 (p. 14) estimates that tdhs has a certain influence on an organizational level because they give the funds that are used to

⁷⁵ In German: Inhaltlich prägen sie natürlich enorm was hier bei uns innen läuft und natürlich sind sie sehr präsent in unseren Medien.

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employ new staff: “the NC normally tells us that we give you the funds, now it is up to you to decide whether you employ one person or you employ ten people.” However, tdhs “contributes to the office rent” (Nelico 1: 14) and therefore has an influence on what kind of office is affordable for Nelico.

The answers from the tdhs employees coincide with the answer from Nelico 1, since they also argue that due to the funds, they have a certain influence. However, this influence is simultaneously also the reason for an area of tension, as tdhs 2 (p. 12) describes:

“Well this is basically always the case, if you pay for something, fund it, you always have some sort of say in it. And at the same time, you try not to do that. So ehm, who they hire, we don’t have an influence on that. But we demand a bit of a gender balance in the organisation. So, we have an indirect influence on who they hire. And ehm... on the office and so on, sometimes there is funding and so on and then we surely have an influence. So, we surely have more influence on them on a structural and organisational level than they have on us⁷⁶.”

tdhs 4 (p. 12) goes one step further and argues that even though tdhs has this influence and “can say the labor costs are too high” for example, Nelico and Ebli still have the possibility to say no. She further says that there is always a negotiation around certain issues, but at the same time admits “that we are on the stronger side.”

Even though, tdhs has this influence on Ebli and Nelico, they are aware of this area of tension and they still respect Ebli and Nelico as autonomous organisations who decide on their internal activities (tdhs 4: 5). During his interview, the NC addresses this area of tension and at the same time acknowledged them as autonomous organisations by saying: “These organisations are independent. [...] So, in employing staff, they decide. [...] But this person has to be in the budget, because you cannot employ someone who is not in the budget.” (tdhs 1: 18)

In summary, I can say that the employees of Nelico and Ebli have no influence at all on an organization level within tdhs. tdhs, on the other hand, does have an influence within Ebli and Nelico due to their funding role. Consequently, I argue that the influence is not completely mutual and this indicator is therefore not fulfilled within this collaboration.

Whereas I support the claim for an autonomous organization (see e.g. Ashman 2001), I also argue that in some areas more involvement of the Tanzanian NGOs would be appropriate. For example, in choosing the new NC, tdhs could have consulted the Tanzanian NGOs as to what qualities or qualifications would be helpful for them or even give each Tanzanian NGO one vote as to which of the

⁷⁶ In German: Also das ist natürlich grundsätzlich immer so, wenn man etwas zahlt, finanziert, hat man irgendwo auch immer ein Mitspracherecht. Und gleichzeitig versucht man das natürlich nicht zu machen. Also wer sie anstellen und so weiter da haben wir keinen Einfluss darauf. Ehm was wir aber z.B. verlangen ist ein bisschen Gender Balance in den Organisationen. Also haben wir indirekt schon einen Einfluss, wenn sie anstellen. Und auf das Büro und so weiter, zum Teil gibt es halt Finanzierungen und so weiter und dann hat man da sicher Einfluss. Also wir haben sicher auf sie viel mehr Einfluss strukturell und organisatorisch als sie auf uns.

applicants they would like to work with. This way, tdhs could have balanced out the higher influence they have on Ebli and Nelico to a certain extent.

Other improvements I suggest concern the documents and the annual plan. As described above, the documents (such as proposal guidelines or contracts) as well as the annual plan are fixed by tdhs. On the one hand, I proposed a rotation system for fixing the dates of the partner platform. On the other hand, I argue that it should be possible to involve Ebli and Nelico into fixing the dates for the project visits. Concerning the Log-Frames, I argue that in a true partnership, it should be possible to receive input from Ebli and Nelico (or other Southern NGOs) as to how a proposal should look like. Even more so, since Ebli and Nelico are the ones who have to work with those guidelines and write the proposals, they should be able to co-decide the Log-Frame. I am aware that this would complicate the administrative work of tdhs. However, Nelico and Ebli also have to adapt to the different requirements from the different 'donors' (Nelico 3: 2⁷⁷) since every 'donor' has their own guidelines. Given Nelico and Ebli are capable of adapting to different requirements tdhs too should be able to cope with the different requirements from their Southern partners.

Finally, apart from the uneven influence, there is also a difference in the opinion on the influence. All of my interview partners agreed that Ebli and Nelico have no influence within tdhs. However, whereas all tdhs interview partners said that they have a certain influence on Ebli and Nelico due to their funding, only one of the interview partners from Ebli and Nelico agreed to this. The others stated that tdhs has no influence in their internal decisions. It seems therefore that this indicator is one of the most challenging and there seems to be a need for further clarification between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. At the same time, this indicator has much potential for improvement, as I described here.

4.1.6. Shared Responsibility and Accountability

The indicator of shared responsibility and accountability is probably one of the most important ones in a partnership. As described in chapter 2.4, in order for a collaboration to be a partnership, it is important that both NGOs have their own responsibilities, according to their capacities and resources, and that those responsibilities are mutual and respected by the other NGOs. Therefore, both NGOs also need to account for their responsibilities towards the other NGO.

In current literature, this indicator is broadly discussed and analysed in different case studies. Hoksbergen (2005) and Harrison (2002), for example, claim that it is often a one-way street when it comes to accountability. This means that only the Southern NGO has to account for their action, and not the Northern. Additionally, in the paper by Ashman (2001) and in the case study by Harris (2008), the Southern employees complain about the lack of timely responses from the Northern NGO, and the issue that they had to wait for over a year for the approval of a project. Mawdsley et al. (2005) propose in

⁷⁷ See also chapter 4.2.1. on other donors involved with Ebli and Nelico as well as with tdhs.

their paper the approach that personal relations could reduce the effort and time for reports because through personal contacts and exchange the written reports could become obsolete.

Based on my research, I show that within the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico, there is an uneven accountability. Even though the situations described by Ashman (2001) or Harris (2008) are worse than in my case study, tdhs does not have to account for any deadlines, activities, or, more importantly, for the origin of their funds. Ebli and Nelico on the other hand have to account for every activity they implement and every change they have within the projects.

However, I show that the responsibilities are mutual and clearly allotted within the collaboration. I now support these findings with the results from my research.

In order to see what kind of responsibilities tdhs, Nelico, and Ebli have, I asked my interview partner to primarily describe the responsibilities they have within the collaboration. Many of my Tanzanian interview partners referred to the contracts and said that they have the responsibility to fulfil what is written there (Ebli 1: 10). Similarly, they have to stick to their proposals (Nelico 2: 11) and “have to implement as planned” (Nelico 1: 15). Even more, they have to make sure that the planned activities “are going well” (Ebli 2: 7) and they therefore have the responsibility to do their best.

Apart from implementing what they agreed on, Nelico and Ebli further have the responsibility to update tdhs on important changes and hence “we have to always give them timely reports [and] information about the progress of the project that tdhs is funding.” (Nelico 1: 15).

Consequently, those responsibilities are rather clear and all of my Tanzanian interview partners gave me similar answers and hence agree on their responsibilities. Also, the employees of tdhs agree with these statements when I asked them what responsibilities Ebli and Nelico have. tdhs 4 (p. 10) referred to their contracts and proposals as the frame for the responsibilities of Ebli and Nelico. The statement from tdhs 2 (p. 18) summarizes the view from tdhs pretty well:

“They get a contract based on a project they submit. And I think they have the responsibility to try to implement this. I don’t say that it always has to be successful. But I would say that they are responsible to give their best in order to implement on what we agreed on. And if it does not work, they are responsible for communicating that⁷⁸.”

On the other hand, tdhs also has certain responsibilities towards Ebli and Nelico. From the perspective of the employees of tdhs, the areas of responsibility are quite diverse.

tdhs 4 (p. 8) emphasizes that tdhs does not only “give money” but that “we go together on a path, [...] and apart from the negotiations about the contract, I also see that we learn together. [...] and I think, we also share knowledge and that is sometimes more valuable than money. [...] There can be setbacks; you

⁷⁸ In German: Sie bekommen einen Vertrag auf Grund von einem Projekt, das sie einreichen. Und ich denke, sie haben schon die Verantwortung das probieren umzusetzen. Ich sage nicht, dass es in ihrer Verantwortung liegt, dass das immer klappt. Aber ich würde sagen, sie sind dafür verantwortlich, dass sie ihr Bestmöglichstes tun, um das so umzusetzen wie wir das abgemacht haben. Und wenn es halt eben nicht funktioniert, wären sie für mich ganz klar in der Verantwortung das ehm mitzuteilen.

have to have a mutual process, that is important I think⁷⁹.” In the same vein, tdhs 2 (p. 18) does not primarily define the funds as their first responsibility but:

“We are responsible for enabling a sustainable development. This means to openly communicate about the finances, tell them what they can expect and what not. [...] With sustainable development I also mean that they can do their work in the best possible way. That does not only cover financial responsibility but also, that you take them seriously in their work and really try to support them as much as possible and in the way they need⁸⁰.”

These two statements show that tdhs does consider their funding role as one responsibility, but that they consider other areas and other support as just as important. This point of view is supported by the answers I got from my Tanzanian interview partners. For example, Nelico 2 (p. 11) refers to the feedback on the reports they receive from tdhs and considers this as very important in order to help Nelico improve their work. In the same way, Nelico 1 (p. 12) appreciates this support and this feedback on the proposal or reports and said “that is always good, to invest time in planning and to have an efficient implementation rather than little time for planning because then we have a lot of problems in implementing.” Similarly, Ebli 1 (p. 10) said that tdhs “mentors us in different ways, for example, through capacity building and opportunities that they give us. That would mean that they care, they want us to progress. [...] So, I would not imagine it’s just the funds... That would be really sad.” This statement refers to the above written statement from tdhs 4 where she describes the mutual path and the mutual learning experience that goes beyond just a funding role of tdhs. Consequently, tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico seem to agree on that subject.

To summarize, it seems as the responsibilities are clearly distributed and mutual and that they are in line with the capacities and resources of each NGO. All three NGOs also agree on the responsibilities the other has and also seem to be satisfied with these roles. Interestingly, all of my interview partners agree that tdhs does have the responsibility to give Nelico and Ebli funds, but other areas of support are just as important and just as appreciated.

There are some inequalities in mutual accountability. Most evident is the inequality in report writing and the annual deadline plan. In several previous chapters, I already elaborated on the reports that Ebli

⁷⁹ In German: Das finde ich eben das spannende an tdhs. Also wir sagen nicht nur, wir geben euch Geld. [...] Und eigentlich tdhs verstehe ich so: Man macht zusammen ein Weg [...] und ausser diesen Vertragsverhandlungen, sehe ich auch, dass man zusammen etwas lernt. Also wir sind so wie eine Lerngemeinschaft und [...], ich denke, wir geben ihnen auch Wissen und das ist manchmal mehr wert als Geld. [...] Und das ist immer ein gemeinsamer Weg, das ist kein Päckchen, dass wir ihnen geben können. Es kann auch Rückschläge geben, man muss wie zusammen einen Prozess machen, das ist wichtig, denke ich.

⁸⁰ In German: Wir sind dafür verantwortlich, dass wir ihnen eine nachhaltige Entwicklung ermöglichen. Das heisst, offen und klar kommunizieren, was die Finanzen angeht, was können sie von uns erwarten und was nicht. [...] Aber wir haben da eine grosse Verantwortung als tdhs. [...] Ich meine, mit so nachhaltiger Entwicklung meine ich auch, dass sie wirklich ihre Arbeit im besten möglichen Sinn umsetzen können. Und ich finde, da gehört nicht nur finanzielle Verantwortung dazu. Auch, dass man einfach sie ernst nimmt in ihrer Arbeit und einfach wirklich versucht, sie bestmöglich zu unterstützen, wie sie es brauchen.

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and Nelico have to write for tdhs. Whereas Ebli and Nelico have to account for every activity they implement, tdhs does not have any such obligations. Additionally, for each activity Nelico and Ebli implement, they also have to document their expenses. Furthermore, general changes in the budget are bound to rather strict guidelines, as Nelico 3 (p. 8) explains: “For example, if the deviation is under 10%, we are allowed to make those changes in the budget. But over 10%, we have to communicate the plan. So, there is no discussion. So, in case I want to use more than 10% budget on the activities, I have to have prior communication. That’s their way, I cannot change it.”

Focusing again on the reports and proposals, Ebli and Nelico seem to appreciate the effort that tdhs puts into their feedback on the reports and proposals, because it improves their capacities. They further seem to consider those documents as positive and as a learning process even though they are time consuming (Nelico 1: 12). However, even though the documents itself are appreciated by all NGOs, the timeframe and the deadlines they are based on are not mutual. Just like the annual plan for the visits and the partner platform as described in the previous chapter, the deadlines for the reports too are solely fixed by tdhs. Contrarily, tdhs does not have any deadlines or timeframes for their feedback, for any of their inputs or even for the transfer of funds (tdhs 2: 11). Even if tdhs is late at some point, Ebli and Nelico do not seem to intervene, they just “wait until we get it” (Ebli 1: 7). tdhs, on the other hand, always sends reminders and asks frequently for reports, even if the deadline has not yet passed (Nelico 3: 7). This clearly shows that there is a lack of mutual accountability because tdhs does not have any binding deadlines or timeframes they have to obey.

Lastly, another important instrument for accountability and responsibility is the contract. As described in the previous chapter, these contracts are written from the tdhs perspective and are “not prepared in a very participatory way⁸¹” (tdhs 2: 3). Forming part of the contract are several aspects that Ebli and Nelico have to fulfil such as the above mentioned 10% deviation limit, the deadlines for all the reports, and to give the NC access to original documents and accounts. It further states that tdhs commits to the transfer of funds after receiving the reports on time. However, there is no deadline as to when tdhs has to transfer the funds, and it is the only responsibility of tdhs that is written in the contract. All the other points are addressed to Ebli or Nelico and describe their areas of accountability.

To conclude, I argue that accountability within this collaboration is not mutual. Even though my Tanzanian interview partners said that tdhs never keeps them waiting, tdhs still does not have an objective timeframe they need to keep to when they have to send feedback or approve a project. Therefore, one significant improvement for their collaboration would be to set binding deadlines for tdhs too. Since Ebli and Nelico have clear deadlines for reports, I argue that tdhs too should have clear deadlines for their feedback. This way Ebli and Nelico know when to expect the feedback and, more

⁸¹ In German: Nicht sehr partizipativ erarbeiten.

importantly, they can remind tdhs on the deadline and do not have 'to wait until they get it'. This system would make accountability more mutual and therefore enhance the level of partnership.

The responsibility within the collaboration of tdhs with Ebli or Nelico however is mutual. Both NGOs have their responsibilities that they are aware of and that the other NGOs agree on. Whereas Ebli and Nelico have the responsibility to implement the activities they agreed on and communicate changes and developments, tdhs has the responsibility to fund those activities and to support Ebli and Nelico with technical advice and other skills such as report writing or project planning. More importantly, all NGOs also seem to be satisfied with the way the other NGO executes their responsibilities.

Reconsidering the idea of Mawdsley et al. (2005) that personal relations could reduce the written reports seems very interesting and suitable in this case study. With the system of NC and PC, tdhs has the precondition to consider this approach. It is even more interesting when it is linked back to the aspect of mutual trust. Since all my interview partners stated that they trust each other, I would argue that a discussion on reducing the amounts of reports that have to be written could be valuable for all NGOs involved⁸².

Lastly, what I find questionable is the fact that tdhs does not have to account for the funding they receive, towards Ebli and Nelico. Even though Ebli, Nelico and tdhs are aware of the financial responsibility that tdhs has, there is no mechanism or instrument that makes tdhs account for their income or sources of funds. Why do they not have to account for their sources and therefore show Nelico and Ebli that they have secured funding for the next three years? I argue that if Ebli and Nelico have to account for what they use the funds for, tdhs should also have to account for the security and sources of those funds.

4.1.7. Sustainability and Mutual Evaluation

Sustainability and mutual evaluation are important for a partnership because at some point, every collaboration will end. Therefore, I argue that it is important to not just evaluate the implemented projects, but the collaboration itself. By evaluating the collaboration, both NGOs can address issues within the collaboration and therefore strengthen the partnership. This further enables both NGOs to be organized and positioned in a sustainable way. Consequently, I argue that the partnership should be shaped in a way that both NGOs can keep on operating even after the collaboration ends, and, for example during an evaluation of the collaboration, this issue should be discussed.

In current literature, the issue of sustainability is very present and often discussed. On the one hand, Fowler (1998) raises the concern that many Southern NGOs do not put enough effort into finding other sources of income. On the other hand, Hoksbergen (2005) and Lewis (1998) argue that through capacity building, which is often used as an instrument for sustainability, the North automatically becomes the teacher and hence a hierarchy occurs. This contradicts the principle of partnership. Lastly, Harris (2008)

⁸² See also chapter 4.2.1. on a further discussion on this issue.

claims that many Northern NGOs leave the collaboration as soon as problems arise and therefore make it impossible for a sustainable collaboration to be built. Based on the results from my research, I now show that the concerns raised by Fowler (1998) are not warranted within this case study. Additionally, even though tdhs also uses the instrument of capacity building, by applying the SF Approach they prevent the issue of becoming the teacher. And lastly, tdhs represents the point of view that the Northern NGO must uphold the collaboration as long as the Southern NGO can profit from it and hence tdhs does not leave as soon as problems arise. I now support these conclusions with the results from my research.

First, I wanted to find out whether there is an evaluation of the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. Based on the answers I received, there is none. There are several evaluations, internal and external, but they are more concerned about the projects and not the collaboration (tdhs 2: 27). A structural evaluation about the different roles of each NGO or about the communication is not practiced, as tdhs 4 (p. 13) confirms. Therefore, it is easy to conclude that this aspect of the indicator is not fulfilled within this collaboration.

The aspect of sustainability is more complex. Contrary to the not existing evaluation, there are discussions going on about the probability of an end to the collaboration. Ebli 3 (p. 9) stated in her interview that tdhs always advises and supports Ebli in finding other supporters. Concretely, as part of their proposal, both Ebli and Nelico have to display what other donors they have and, more importantly, what kind of ‘phase – out’ strategy they propose in case the collaboration ends (tdhs 1: 21). Nelico 1 (p. 19) quotes the NC and said that his is especially important, because “as much as we support you, you never know what tomorrow holds”. Hence, tdhs encourages Nelico and Ebli to find solutions that “will keep Nelico moving with or without tdhs” (Nelico 1: 19).

However, tdhs goes one step further and declares as their main aim to support grass-root organisations and to help them to become independent and autonomous NGOs. Unfortunately, reality often looks different. tdhs 2 (p. 27) described this claim as following:

“Well this is actually our main goal, to support small organisations, help them grow until they are able to function on their own. [...] But ehm, in reality it is not that easy to say we support you until you are independent. That is the goal, but it’s not reality. [...] Ehm, we also support activities they have in order to gain own income, this is surely a part of the projects we fund. [...] The NC is also always looking out for other donors for our projects. That’s what we do. Reality is just different. Reality is simply that it is not so easy and sometimes or most of the times just simply luck⁸³.”

⁸³ In German: Eigentlich ist ja genau das unser Ziel. Kleine Organisationen unterstützen, helfen sie aufzubauen, dass sie über langfristig alleine funktionieren. [...] Nur in, also ganz in Realität ist es einfach nicht so leicht wie man das jetzt auch, eben, dass man einfach sagt, wir unterstützen euch jetzt, dass ihr selbstständiger werdet. Das wäre das Ziel. Realität ist das aber nicht. [...] Ehm man tut ihre eigenen Aktivitäten, wenn sie haben, um Einkommen machen, sicher auch mit unterstützen, das ist sicher auch ein Teil vom Projekt, den wir finanzieren. [...] Der NK ist stetig auf der Suche nach weiteren Donors für unsere Projekte, also das wird immer gemacht.

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Through the answers I received from my Tanzanian interview partners, tdhs 2 seems to be right in claiming that in reality it is not that easy. Nelico 1 (p. 19) stated that “we’ll be in deep trouble, if they stopped [supporting us] at the moment.” Ebli 1 (p. 13) is not as pessimistic as Nelico 1, but he also claims that at the moment, they are not financially independent and they would need to find another donor in order to deliver their services to the beneficiaries. Interestingly, Ebli 1 does not seem to be aware of the fact that tdhs also financially supports income gaining activities, because he continued: “We do not get money for investments, we get money to deliver a service” (Ebli 1: 13). It seems like there is a need for clarification or better communication between tdhs and Ebli in order to improve the sustainability of Ebli and also Nelico.

In addition to the evaluation and the phase out strategies, there were some other aspects addressed by my interview partners that affect the aspect of sustainability. One of them is the fact that through working with tdhs, both Nelico and Ebli get to know other, similar Tanzanian NGOs, and can therefore build networks and relationships. With these networks, they can share knowledge and discuss best practices or receive advice and support from similar NGOs. Even though this network exists in all countries tdhs works in, the Tanzanian example is special. The Tanzanian NGO institutionalized this network by establishing the Hamasa Network. Nelico 1 (p. 10) further explains how this Network originated: “We have decided as tdhs partners to form a network that brings together all tdhs-funded organisations to do specific work that is advocacy in human rights. And we just initiated this.”



Picture 5, Poster for the first Meeting of the Hamasa Network (own picture)

Realität ist einfach anders, Realität ist einfach, dass das nicht so leicht ist und dass das wirklich ehm ab und zu oder meistens einfach recht Glück ist.

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Even though it was established by the Tanzanian NGOs, tdhs both supports the idea of the Hamasa Network and has financed the first meeting:

“That came from their side and is 100% based on their initiative. We supported it at the beginning so that they could have a meeting. It was a small financial contribution, so that they could bring this to life. But again, apart from that, it is all them⁸⁴” (tdhs 2: 26).

Apart from this network, capacity building is present in other aspects of the collaboration too. One important area where capacity building is practiced is in the financial management⁸⁵ of an NGO. As already described, the other person working in the NC office is an accountant. He is the primary contact person for the financial staff of Ebli and Nelico. Both the NC and the accountant of the NC office are Tanzanian. With this system and the fact that tdhs uses the SF Approach, they attempt to prevent the issue of them imposing ideas or capacities on the South. tdhs 4, who is the expert of the SF Approach within tdhs, explains how they came to work with this approach:

“Well, I knew, we could not just take a Western therapy-model and just apply it there. And that’s why SFA was appropriate, because it always assumes that the person who has, let’s say, a problem, has the solution. And it is logical that this solution lies within their own culture⁸⁶.” (tdhs 3: 6)

Another example for local support and capacity building is the collaboration between Ebli and *Wadada*⁸⁷. *Wadada* is a very young and rather small NGO that works together with tdhs. Additionally, Ebli helps to build the capacity of *Wadada* in the aspect of financial administration. In order to do that, the accountant of Ebli regularly meets up with the accountant of *Wadada* to advice and support *Wadada* (Ebli 3: 9). tdhs supports this direct exchange by paying Ebli a small additional amount that covers the extra salary expenses of Ebli.

The last aspect that concerns this indicator is the period of time the collaboration lasts. Hence, a long collaboration is essential in building a partnership. Through the answers I received during my interviews, I can say that tdhs as well as Ebli and Nelico are interested in a long-term collaboration (tdhs 3: 4). In fact, the collaboration between tdhs and Nelico has been going on for ten years (Nelico 2: 2). Additionally, tdhs does not consider making mistakes as failure but as part of a process. Therefore, Ebli

⁸⁴ In German: Genau, das ist völlig von hinein aus gekommen also das ist komplett und 100% nur von ihnen aus gekommen. Eben unterstützt haben wir am Anfang, dass sie mal ein Treffen machen konnten, eine kleine finanzielle Unterstützung, dass sie das konnten ins Leben rufen. Aber eben sonst, ehm ist das ganz von ihnen.

⁸⁵ Other areas of capacity building are often practiced during the partner meetings such as capacity building in youth participation or in the SF Approach. See also chapter 1.3. or 4.1.4.

⁸⁶ In German: Also mir war so klar, kannst nicht irgendwie ein westliches Therapiemodell dort einfach darüberstülpen und das SFA hat sich einfach angeboten, weil es einfach immer davon ausgeht, die Person, die eben, ich sag jetzt mal, das Problem hat, sucht die Lösungen. Und es ist ja irgendwie logisch, dass sie Lösungen sucht, die der eigenen Kultur entsprechen.

⁸⁷ *Wadada Center for SFA*, situated in Mwanza, Tanzania.

and Nelico do not carry the risk all by themselves. If something goes wrong, tdhs does not leave but helps Ebli and Nelico to learn from the mistakes. Ebli 1 describes this as following:

“But they say [XY], we are willing to risk with you. [...] Failure is not viewed as failure, it’s just a stepping stone towards success. [...] So, when a goal was not met, there possibly are reasons as to why it is not met. And whatever the reason, there are lessons learnt, and by the fact that there are lessons learnt, the activity was worthwhile.” (Ebli 1: 10)

To conclude, I argue that the collaboration does not fulfil the aspect of mutual evaluation because there is no structured and established evaluation of the collaboration itself. Even though, as described in chapter 4.1.2, there is open communication and all NGOs are open for suggestions, I argue that it would still be important to have an official and structured evaluation of the collaboration itself. This way the collaboration can be improved and steps towards a more mutual partnership could be taken. In practice, this evaluation could be easily implemented, if for example they schedule this evaluation during one partner platform. Alternately, the NC and PC could add this evaluation to one of their project visits.

Apart from the missing evaluation, other aspects of a sustainable partnership are fulfilled. I argue that the type of capacity building that is practiced in this collaboration ensures that the Southern employees build their capacities in a way that really benefits them and is based on the context and circumstances of their daily work. Especially through the support of tdhs, both Ebli and Nelico can build a network of local NGOs where they can find support and exchange knowledge.

Furthermore, all three NGOs address the matter of financial stability after the collaboration. By supporting Nelico and Ebli in finding other supporters or gaining income on their own, tdhs is very aware of the risk financial dependency holds. Ebli and Nelico also engage with this topic by describing in each proposal what phase-out strategies they have. These strategies are important to make Ebli and Nelico financially more independent and help them to become a long-term and hence sustainable organisation.

Finally, the issue described by Harris (2008) that many Northern NGOs leave as soon as problems arise is not evident in this case study. tdhs advocates the importance of learning from one’s mistakes and supports both Ebli and Nelico throughout this process. Additionally, all three NGOs are interested in a long-term collaboration.

4.1.8. Expertise in the South

The claim that the Southern NGOs has to be in the lead to determine the projects or fields of action is not only one of the main claims of the principle of partnership but also one of the main claims of the PDD. Both claim that projects of the NSDC can only be successful if they are based on local needs and are based on the local context and circumstances. It is therefore essential that the Northern NGO respects the Southern NGO as the expert of their own context and lets them decide what kind of projects or areas of action are most needed and most appropriate.

Within the work of tdhs, this aspect of a partnership seems to have special importance. As described above, tdhs works with the SFA. This approach itself assumes that each person is the expert of their own life, problems and therefore also the solutions to those problems. tdhs not only encourages the Southern NGOs to work with this approach but also wants to incorporate it into their own work practices. Therefore, tdhs 3 (p. 6) stated in her interview that it would not make sense for tdhs to ask the Southern NGOs to use SFA and then not apply it themselves. Hence, tdhs themselves also works in a SF way and therefore recognizes the Southern NGOs as the experts of their context (see also tdhs 2: 9).

By working with the local NC, tdhs further incorporates the respect for the Southern NGO as the expert. tdhs 4 explains how they came to work with this system in the following statement:

“First of all, one consideration was, you cannot, with this big distance from Switzerland to those ten countries, you are not close enough to really accompany the partners. [...] So we need someone, who is closer [...] Then we also said, that was clear, we want someone from the countries. We want to be present in the countries as an organisation, but also through people from that country. We said, people from that country, they know their context better and that is an advantage to hire people from that context⁸⁸.” (tdhs 4: 4)

This statement further shows that the respect for the Southern NGO as the expert of their context was one important reason to implement the NC system. Behind this point of view lies also the opinion that positive change can only be achieved by working together with local people, as also argued by tdhs 4 (p. 12): “So I think this idea that we go there and change the whole world is very strange. The only thing you can do is to support local people that they can realize their own things⁸⁹.”

In practice, to respect the Southern NGO as the expert means that the aims and areas of action within their projects are determined by Ebli and Nelico themselves⁹⁰. tdhs 2 (p. 15) confirms in her interview that “this lies within their hands”. Hence, “their proposals, their aims of the program, of the project, these are their aims and we don’t have anything to do with that⁹¹.” My interview partners from Ebli and Nelico agree and support this statement. They are the people “on the ground” (Ebli 1: 8) and therefore “know and work with the beneficiaries” (Nelico 1: 9). And through this close interaction with the beneficiaries, Nelico 1 continued, they also know the beneficiaries’ needs and therefore can decide what projects are important to implement. tdhs only gives them the fields of action, such as violence

⁸⁸ In German: Zuerst Mal, also mal eine Überlegung war, du kannst nicht auf so grosse Distanz, von der Schweiz aus zu diesen 10 Ländern, bist du zu wenig nahe dran und du kannst diese Partner nicht wirklich begleiten. [...] Also wir brauchen wie jemand, der näher dran ist, [...] Dann haben wir auch gesagt, das war klar, wir wollen auch Leute aus den Ländern. Wir wollen eigentlich in den Ländern präsent und vertreten sein als Organisation, aber auch durch Leute von diesen Ländern. Wir haben gesagt Leute aus den Ländern, die kennen die Kontexte besser als wir und das bringt etwas, wenn man Leute aus dem Kontext anstellt.

⁸⁹ In German: Also ich meine die Idee, wir kommen dahin und ändern die ganze Welt, ist etwas schräg. Das Einzige, was man machen kann ist lokale Leute unterstützen, dass sie irgendwie ihre Dinge realisieren können.

⁹⁰ See also chapter 4.1.4 on shared principles and mutual targets.

⁹¹ In German: Also das liegt ganz in ihrer Hand. [...] Das heisst, ihre Anträge, ihre Ziele vom Programm, vom Projekt, das sind ihre Ziele und da haben wir nichts dabei.

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prevention⁹², as a frame or an overall topic, but the concrete projects lie within the expertise of Nelico and Ebli (Ebli 1: 6). This respect of the expertise can be taken one step further, as the following statement from Nelico 2 (p. 13) shows: “But on the spot, I told them that this cannot work in Tanzania. Because of our traditions, our norms and things like that. And they respected it.” Hence, Ebli and Nelico not only decide the projects on their own, but tdhs also accepts if an idea from them is not applicable in the Tanzanian context.

With those results, I argue that within the collaboration of Ebli, Nelico and tdhs, the South is respected as the expert of their context and can decide for themselves what projects should be implemented. Even so, both Ebli and Nelico base their proposal not only on their own knowledge but include the beneficiaries by asking them what their needs are:

“The first step when we want to develop a proposal we depend on our beneficiaries, what our beneficiaries want. So, first of all we normally receive inputs and comments from youths, from children, from parents and other community members.” (Nelico 2: 7)

To conclude, I argue that within this collaboration the implemented projects are based on the local needs and the local context. Additionally, the fact that tdhs works with the SF Approach and has an NC office in Tanzania with staff from Tanzania shows that tdhs understands very well that local people are best suited to accompany local organisations and projects and that the Southern NGO needs to be in the lead and needs to be respected as the expert of their own context.

Additionally, as described in chapter 4.1.2, the NC has one more important role within this collaboration. He can serve as a translator to help the Swiss staff of tdhs to better understand the context and local circumstances of Tanzania. This role is especially important during the visits of the Swiss employees to Tanzania where they can not only talk to beneficiaries but also learn more about the local context and the circumstances the projects are situated in. Those visits are very important because “you see those people again, and really how it smells, how it is. You remember that. Otherwise it’s all so theoretical on the papers⁹³.” (tdhs 4: 7)

⁹² See also chapter 1.3.1 on terre des hommes schweiz

⁹³ In German: Dass du wieder Leute siehst und also wirklich, wie es riecht, wie es ist, dass man wieder so weiss. Sonst ist das alles so theoretisch und in dem Paper Zeug.



Picture 6, Field visit Ebli: The NC and the PC of tdhs speak to the beneficiaries of Ebli (own picture)

During the course of this chapter, I analysed if the seven indicators I defined at the beginning of my thesis are fulfilled within the collaboration between tdhs and Ebli, Nelico. Additionally, I analysed if Nelico and Ebli are respected as the expert of their context. However, during my interviews I received answers that let me define three additional important aspects of the collaboration such as the importance of money within the collaboration, other donors that are involved within tdhs, Ebli or Nelico and the specific ways of tdhs. I analyse those three additional aspects in the following chapter.

4.2. The Three Additional Aspects

Based on several similar answers I received during my interviews, I identified three additional important aspects that influence the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. This chapter analyses those three additional aspects. First, I describe how other donors or NGOs involved with tdhs, Nelico or Ebli influence the collaboration. Secondly, I analyse the role of the funds and therefore show how the fact that tdhs financially supports Ebli and Nelico influences the collaboration. Lastly, due to the often-heard sentence “tdhs is different” I elaborate how and in what areas my interview partners consider tdhs to be different from other donors they have experiences with.

4.2.1. Other Donors Involved

All three NGOs, tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico have other donors or organisations that they work with or that they receive funds from. On the one hand, Ebli and Nelico get funds from other international NGOs and also have projects within their organisation that are not part of the collaboration with tdhs. tdhs, on the other hand, also receives funds from other institutions and hence have donors themselves. Those other projects and donors influence the collaboration between tdhs, Nelico, and Ebli to a certain extent.

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As a Southern NGO, it can be an advantage to work with more than one Northern NGO. Nelico, for example, also addresses people with Albinism as part of their outreach. This is however not part of the interests of tdhs. Therefore, as Nelico 2 (p. 7) said, “we have another donor who is supporting the issue of Albino killings. So, we put that to the other donors.” Consequently, Nelico can diversify their fields of action without risking the collaboration with tdhs.

Nevertheless, having different donors can also complicate things for the Southern NGO. For once, every donor has other standards and guidelines, such as financial reporting, which can make the work of the Southern NGO more complicated (Nelico 3: 2). Additionally, financial reporting can become more difficult with several donors involved. For example, if one staff is on a tdhs salary, his or her work should be on tdhs projects. In practice, as I noticed during my observations, it can happen that this employee shortly works for projects of other donors for example as a replacement for a co-worker. What makes sense in practice, does not lie within the guidelines of tdhs and can therefore leads to issues in monitoring for tdhs. From the perspective of tdhs, it makes sense to emphasize that the employees paid by tdhs also work for the projects supported by tdhs. For Nelico and Ebli, it makes sense to be able to use their staff in a flexible manner and where needed, even if this can be for another project. These different positions can lead to issues and conflicts within the collaboration.

But it is not only Nelico and Ebli that have different donors involved. The funds that tdhs gives to Nelico and Ebli come from other sources in Switzerland, as described in chapter 1.3.1. Therefore, tdhs also has to account for their expenses to their own donors. tdhs 2 describes this issue as follows:

“Well, it is really also a big part of our work to report to other donors. And I think we are a bit in the same dilemma as our partner organisations [POs]. So, on the one hand you want to sell the specificity of our projects and on the other hand you have to fit the strategy of the donors you get funds from. So, I think, we are exactly in the same position and that’s why I can understand in what kind of discrepancy they [Ebli and Nelico] are in⁹⁴.” (tdhs 2: 20)

This reporting to their own donors has a big influence on the collaboration with Ebli and Nelico because it is one of the reasons why tdhs needs all the reports from Ebli and Nelico in the first place. They need those documents in order to show their own donors that the funds are put to good use and “that they effectuate something⁹⁵.” (tdhs 2: 25)

With this ladder of accountability, tdhs has no choice but to insist on certain proposals and reports. Because they themselves have to show – for example to the Swiss government – that the money was put

⁹⁴ In German: Also es ist auch wirklich ein grosser Teil von unserer Arbeit an andere Donors zu reporten. Und ich glaube da sind wir so ein bisschen im selben Dilemma wie unsere PO. Das man einerseits die Spezifität von unseren Projekten will verkaufen und andererseits müssen sie in die Strategie hineinpassen von den Donors, von denen man das Geld will. Also ich glaube da sind wir eigentlich genau in derselben Position und darum kann ich als auch verstehen, in welchen Zwiespälten sie stecken.

⁹⁵ In German: dass diese Projekte auch etwas bewirken.

to good use. So even if they want to have a completely different method of reporting or monitoring, they would not be able to implement it. In her paper, Lister (2000) elaborates on this issue and calls it a 'double dependence' (Lister 2000: 232) on the part of the Northern NGOs. Lister (2000: 236) further argues: "It is not sufficient just to consider asymmetries of power between agencies as constraints to partnership, but the wider framework within which those agencies operate, and the mechanisms for establishing those frameworks including the use of discourse, must also be taken into consideration⁹⁶." This view is supported by Harris (2008: 703), as described in chapter 2.2.2, who writes in her paper that the reason for a collaboration not to be a partnership does not have to lie with the Northern NGO. The reason often lies in the bigger context and hence with the complex system of the NSDC.

Taking this context into consideration, I want to emphasize on the argument I brought forward in chapter 4.1.6 on shared accountability. Hence, I argued that it is not essential to see how extensive the accountability is, but it is more important that it is mutual. If it is therefore not possible to lessen the accountability of Ebli and Nelico, tdhs should have to raise their level of accountability by, for example, having to adhere to deadlines themselves or systematically account for their sources of funds towards Ebli and Nelico. Therefore, even within this ladder of accountability, the level of partnership could be improved.

This issue of other donors involved is also strongly linked to the importance of funds within this collaboration. I therefore analyse this aspect in the following chapter.

4.2.2. The Importance of Money

"The west seems to be endorsed with the resources necessary to help us bridge some of the gaps that we identify in this so-called third world countries." (Ebli 1: 11)

This statement from one of my interview partners shows his view on the importance of money in the NSDC and described that due to the global financial distribution of money, it is the Northern NGOs who mostly financially support the Southern NGOs and not the other way around. This flow of money is the reason for the aspect of accountability described in chapter 4.1.6, and it is very important for the financial sustainability of the Southern NGO.

During my interviews, the role of money was often mentioned. The employees of tdhs frequently described the role of money as an issue. More precisely, in the opinion of my tdhs interview partners, many situations were defined by the importance of money even though they wished the situation to be different. tdhs 2 (p. 21) explains the issue that "when you pay for something, somehow you always have a say in it", but at the same time, she tries not to exploit this power. In the same vein, tdhs 3 (p. 4) experiences an imbalance in power due to the fact that tdhs is the donor and the other NGOs are the

⁹⁶ I agree with this statement. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this paper to further analyse this 'ladder of accountability'.

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receivers. Moreover, in her opinion, this will not change any time soon. Whereas tdhs 2 and tdhs 3 speak of an area of tension within their ‘partnership’⁹⁷, tdhs 4 goes one step further by saying:

“So, with all the sweet-talking of partnership, we give them the money. That’s like the foundation. And that is not within partnership. Because we have the money and they don’t⁹⁸.” (tdhs 4:10)

This issue of the importance of money further contradicts with other principles of tdhs such as to respect the South as the expert of their context. More precisely, on the one hand tdhs tries to maintain the autonomy of the Southern NGOs and hence give them freedom to implement to project as needed. On the other hand, there are conditions tied to funds and certain things need to happen a certain way due to the need for accountability of the use of funds (tdhs 2: 12). Consequently, Ebli and Nelico are limited in their freedom. Even though there are many efforts made by tdhs to lower the influence they have as donor, for tdhs 2 (p. 23) it seems almost impossible for them to get rid of the restrains they feel it involves.

Combining these statements from my tdhs interview partners, I conclude that in the view of tdhs the funds play an immense role within the collaboration. The funds influence many other aspects of the collaboration and the role as donor involves many challenges and also predicaments for tdhs. Therefore, being the donor also appears to be some kind of burden to them. At the same time, they value the fact that they are the donors are very important. Going one step further, I argue that by considering the funds and money in general as so important, tdhs themselves reproduce this imbalance over and over again. They always put themselves back into the role of a donor.

Contrarily, my Tanzanian interview partners consider funds differently. For them, the funds are essential in order to implement their projects, but the way they talked about it was different. They never talked of an area of tension or considered the flow of money to be contradictive to a partnership. Nelico 3 (p. 7) for example talked about the transfer of funds in a very practical manner. For him, writing the financial report is merely the process in order to obtain the funds that he needs to pay the salaries of the other employees with. Hence, for him it is just a technicality. For Ebli 1, money does not seem to have that much of an importance. For him, it is merely a means to change his community and he does not attach too much importance to the funds. Reporting on the money is only part of the deal:

“When someone gives you money to implement something they need a report. And it’s almost like it’s their right to have a report, to know that their money has been put to good use.” (Ebli 1: 6)

Additionally, none of my Tanzanian interview partners expressed the wish to change this system as my tdhs interview partners implied it. For the employees of Ebli and Nelico, there does not appear to be an

⁹⁷ The employees of tdhs mostly name their collaboration a partnership.

⁹⁸ In German: Also, wir also bei allem Schönreden von Partnerschaft, wir geben ihnen Geld, das ist mal die Basis. Und das ist nicht partnerschaftlich, oder. Weil wir haben das Geld und sie haben das Geld nicht.

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area of tension with the flow of funds but it is only one part of the whole collaboration. As expressed in the introduction quote from Ebli 1, the North has the financial means, but the South has the local knowledge.

Nevertheless, during my observations, I had the impression that whenever the discussion was about the use of funds and money, the language and atmosphere somehow changed. When talking about funds during the meetings, the NC and PC of tdhs became more like donors, their voices were more distinct and the language was clear, no jokes were made. Contrarily, when talking about thematic or technical issues they were friendlier, the atmosphere was more relaxed and they appeared more like partners.

Taken together, these statements suggest that funds are an important factor for all the interview partners. For Nelico and Ebli, the funds are one aspect of a partnership and do not include contradictions. For them, it is important because it is their salary and the means to implement their projects. It is crucial for their work and for improving the conditions of their beneficiaries. If they would get more funds, for example, they could do more for their communities.

“My wish would be to get more funds, really. Now that I see how we do so much with so little, imagine what could happen if they had funding. How many lives we would be able to touch for ever.” (Ebli 1: 15)

However, for tdhs the role of funds is different. For them, it is highly contradictory because they always find themselves in the predicament of monitoring the use of funds while respecting Nelico and Ebli as partners and experts and giving them freedom. However, with this predicament, tdhs reproduces this imbalance themselves, as I argued above.

Other authors, as described in chapter 2.2, also discuss the issue of money within the NSDC. Elliot (1987, cited in Lister 2000: 229) as I previously cited, argues that the asymmetry of power is inevitable and cannot be removed, no matter how open the dialogue is. Based on the statements I gathered during my interviews, it seems like the employees of tdhs would agree to that statement because they experience exactly this discrepancy in their everyday work. My Tanzanian interview partners, on the other hand, would probably disagree. Even though they are the ones obliged to account for the funds, they do not seem to consider this as a negative. For them, the funds are only one piece that contributes to the implementation of their project, i.e., labor force. Consequently, the statement by Kajese (1978: 80) who argues that ‘money equals power in the hands of the Northern NGO⁹⁹’ is rebutted by the answers I gathered from my Tanzanian interview partners. This raises three questions. Do Ebli and Nelico not have this issue with funds because tdhs is able to exclude this discrepancy from their direct interaction? Did tdhs find a way to overcome this asymmetry of power without realizing it? Or, is this issue something that the North still has to deal with whereas the South has already overcome it¹⁰⁰? Whichever

⁹⁹ See also the statement by tdhs 2: 24, in chapter 4.1.3.

¹⁰⁰ For a more detailed discussion on these questions, see chapter 4.3.

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may be the answer, the role of money seems to be very contradictory, but only for tdhs. It appears that tdhs could learn from Ebli and Nelico as to how to work with money differently.

As described in the previous chapter, there will probably be this ladder of accountability for many years to come and the North will, at least for the next decade, be the one providing funds to the South. But, in my opinion, the funds are not everything to the NSDC and especially not everything to the implemented projects. I argue that in order to have a successful collaboration (or partnership) one also needs labor force, information or know-how. Hence, the funds are only one wheel in the whole machine. Consequently, the issue is not the money itself, but the importance that tdhs ascribes to it. A project could not be implemented without funds, but neither could it be implemented without the know-how of the local employees or their social contacts within their communities. Harrison (2002: 590) agrees and quotes a study from Muchunguzi and Milne (1995) by writing: “A focus on financial contributions undermines the importance of those who contribute knowledge, labor and other goods.” Nelico 3 agrees and stated in his interview: “For example, Nelico is implementing, but tdhs is financing. So, we give us a different task but with the same objective. So, we get financial support but we put manpower to support the intended objective. So, that’s a partnership, you see?” (Nelico 3: 15)

So why is the concept of funds considered as essential if they are just one part of the work? I argue that to give money such importance compared to other contributions stands in the way of establishing an authentic partnership and therefore, I argue, the perception about the importance of money inside tdhs has to change.

Fortunately, there are already some ideas and awareness on this topic inside tdhs, as one statement shows: “In order to balance a little bit this imbalance of power, you could say that we support them with money and on the other hand we depend on their information. In a way, they sell us information and we give them money¹⁰¹” (tdhs 4: 10). This shows that some employees of tdhs are aware that money is not the only component that is needed for this collaboration or the implemented projects. Nevertheless, the answers I received during my interviews also let me conclude that the importance of money is still too high in the minds of many employees of tdhs.

Finally, this statement also raises another aspect that I wish to discuss. On the one hand, as described earlier, the employees of Ebli and Nelico depend on the funds since they base their salaries on the funds. Those salaries are the foundation of their livelihoods. On the other hand, without the work of Ebli and Nelico (or Southern NGOs in general) the employees of tdhs would also lose their jobs¹⁰². tdhs exists because there are organisations such as Nelico and Ebli who work in the Southern countries and who

¹⁰¹ In German: Um dieses Machtgefälle wie ein bisschen ausgleichen, kann man sagen, wir unterstützen sie mit Geld und auf der anderen Seite sind wir angewiesen auf ihre Informationen. Also sie verkaufen uns Informationen und wir geben Geld.

¹⁰² The loss of employment is not as immediate as with Ebli and Nelico but realistic in a wider context.

want to work together with NGOs from the North. The whole industry of the NSDC could not exist without the Southern NGOs. Therefore, I wonder, whose job depends on whom¹⁰³?

4.2.3. The Specific Way of tdhs

As a last aspect of the collaboration, this chapter analyses the fact that all of my Tanzanian interview partners said at some point that tdhs is different than other donors. I now show in what areas tdhs seems to work differently and how the employees of tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico value this.

The most significant aspect of the collaboration for Ebli, Nelico and tdhs is the fact that there is an NC-office in Dar es Salaam. All of my interview partners seemed to appreciate this system of having a contact person or co-worker from Tanzania within Tanzania. Based on my findings, I can say that there are two reasons why this system seems to be very appreciated by Ebli and Nelico. Primarily, since the NC office is situated in Dar es Salaam, it is possible for the NC to visit the projects several times a year, which is different to other donors (Nelico 4: 2). Nelico 2 explains this in greater detail:

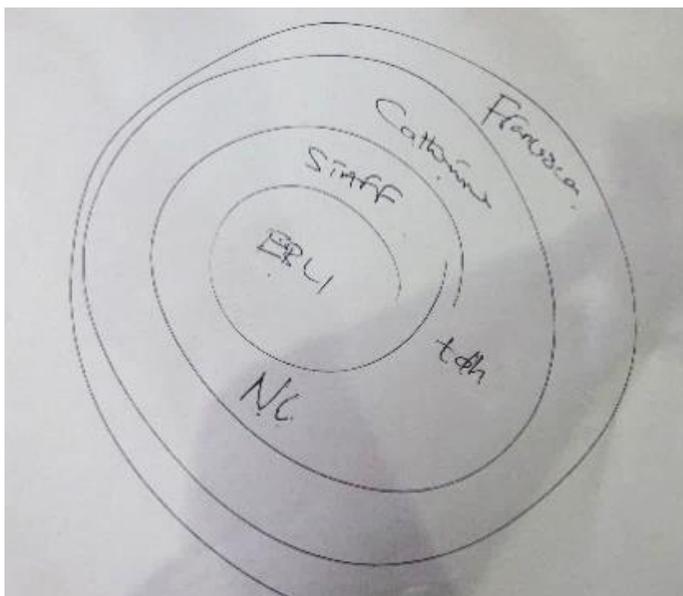
“But the difference from tdhs and other donors is: Other donors normally visit for example our projects to see how we are doing our work, sometimes once a year. Maybe sometimes when we sign the contract it is the only time we meet with those donors, but after signing the contract the business ends up. But for tdhs it is very unique that sometimes we get the opportunity to meet with [XY] [the NC] here at Geita, meet with him at the platform. [...] I can say it is a very unique collaboration really.” (Nelico 2: 8)

Secondly, because the NC is a Tanzanian and hence speaks the national languages, the employees of Ebli and Nelico can talk more easily to the NC. He is not only geographically close to Nelico and Ebli but also practices direct communication (Nelico 3: 5). Additionally, the NC “understands the environment” and he knows “the challenges we face” as described by Ebli 3 (p. 8).

¹⁰³ See also Mosse 2004 or Ferguson 1994 in chapter 2.1.3.

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During my interviews, I asked each interview partner to write down those persons who are most important for his or her everyday work, when thinking of the collaboration with tdhs, Ebli, or Nelico. These answers further illustrate how important the NC is within the collaboration. For my interview partners from Ebli and Nelico their own staff or the beneficiaries are more important than tdhs. But within the tdhs staff, the NC (or the accountant of the NC office) are always most important for them. The illustration on the right shows this quite well.



Picture 7, Illustration from Ebli 1 about who is most important for his work with tdhs. (own picture)

Similarly, my interview partners from Switzerland appreciate the system with the NC. For them, it is an advantage to have a co-worker within the country who is close to Ebli and Nelico and who knows and understands the culture and norms¹⁰⁴. tdhs 2 (p. 9) has a lot of trust in this system because she is convinced “that this works very well, local people in a local context¹⁰⁵”.

Apart from the NC system there is another aspect where tdhs is considered special. Each PC visits every Southern NGO at least once a year. The NC visits approximately two to three times a year. Additionally, other tdhs employees, such as the desk for PSS, often accompanies the PC on her visits. These visits do not only help to better understand each other but also enable a face-to-face discussion about proposals, ongoing changes or challenges. During these meetings tdhs “doesn’t care who is there. [...] Like maybe other donors will be only interested to show the Executive Director. So, for them that is different” (Ebli 2: 4). This interest in the whole organisation, the openness to talk to different employees and not just the director and the fact that “we normally sit [together]” (Nelico 4: 2) is much appreciated by Ebli and Nelico.

Additionally, as described in chapter 4.1.3, visits also include trips to the beneficiaries of the projects, as the following picture illustrates.

¹⁰⁴ See also chapter 4.1.3 on cultural awareness.

¹⁰⁵ In German: Dass das gut funktioniert, mit lokalen Leute im lokalen Kontext.



Picture 8, Nelico Field visit: The PC, the NC and employees of Nelico are in a classroom with students who benefit from a Nelico project. (own picture)

Those visits to the beneficiaries and to the NGOs themselves are also considered unique for my Swiss interview partners. To visit the Southern NGOs and to see the projects for themselves is not just an obligation but a pleasure and an important part of their work: “And now as a Director, for me it [the visits] is really fascinating¹⁰⁶” (tdhs 4: 8). During these visits, Ebli and Nelico often express this appreciation towards tdhs:

“And then they told me there ‘You know, with other organisations, the director, if they even come, then they come for half an hour and do like one speech and then they leave again.’ So, you know, this is special with tdhs. And this is not just sugar coating, I can imagine that is really like that¹⁰⁷.” (tdhs 4: 8)

Another aspect of the collaboration where tdhs is considered unique is the way they give feedback to Nelico and Ebli. tdhs is highly engaged in follow up activities and giving Ebli and Nelico feedback on their reports or proposals and giving technical inputs or suggestions in order to improve their work. My interview partners appreciate this engagement and hence consider tdhs special (Nelico 4: 7). Nelico 1 further explained:

“I was telling [XY] [the PC] the other day, we have so many donors but tdhs is unique because they are always following up, giving us feedback, and suggesting areas to improve and this is what has made Nelico stronger and more popular in Geita.” (Nelico 1: 6)

¹⁰⁶ In German: Und eben jetzt als Direktor, ich finde eben, für mich ist es eigentlich spannend.

¹⁰⁷ In German: Und dort fanden sie dann so 'Ja eben, bei anderen Organisationen würden die Direktor, wenn sie überhaupt kommen zu ihnen, dann kommen sie eine halbe Stunde und machen so eine Rede und dann sind sie wieder weg.' Also weisst du, das ist schon bei tdhs speziell. Und das ist nicht nur Schmeichelei, ich kann mir vorstellen, dass es wirklich so ist. [...] Also wir nehmen uns noch Zeit und sind in einem interessierten Austausch mit unseren Partnern.



Picture 9, Ebli office work with feedback sessions. Present are: The NC, the accountant of the NC office, the PC, the Director of tdhs and the Director of Ebli. (own picture)

One of my tdhs interview partners, who has contacts to all Southern NGOs that tdhs supports, further corroborates this view in one statement:

“I hear, so not just for Africa but also for Central America or South America, I often hear that there are few or no donor organisations that invest so much effort into this dialog and also in what I do, with SFA, so there is no other that invests so much effort to do this capacity building¹⁰⁸.” (tdhs 3: 4)

In the same vein, the NC who has experience with other Northern NGOs sees a special way in how tdhs works. He observes the way other organizations works and concludes that tdhs really has “its own unique way.” (tdhs 1: 4)

In several chapters above, I described the issue of proposal writing as well as capacity building and elaborated how these can lead to the issue of the Northern NGO imposing their ways on the Southern NGO. However, these statements suggest that such capacity building and feedbacks can also be positive and actually help the employees of the Southern NGO to improve their skills and to improve their work.

Finally, for both Ebli and Nelico, tdhs seems to have a special role or a special status among the other donors. Nelico 1 (p. 10) for example is “very, very happy and proud to have such a donor” and he further calls tdhs a “mother donor [...] because we have been with them for a long time compared to other

¹⁰⁸ In German: Ich höre, also nicht nur in Afrika, sondern auch in Zentralamerika und Südamerika, höre ich immer wieder es gibt selten bis keine Donor-Organisation, die sich so viel Mühe gibt für diesen Dialog auch und in dem was ich mache, mit SFA, also es gibt keine anderen, die sich so Mühe geben, diese capacity building zu machen.

donors and if you look at the face of Nelico, it's basically what tdhs is supporting" (Nelico 1: 2). Ebli 1 would probably agree with this statement from Nelico 1, because he values tdhs in a very special way, as the following statement shows:

"I see a lot of openness with tdhs, a lot of partnership. Friendship that goes beyond just funding. We are more than a number to them, we are more than just a statistic, we are people." (Ebli 1: 4)

I am aware of the possibility that my Tanzanian interview partners whitewashed their answers to a certain extent in order to make tdhs look good and not to upset them. Nevertheless, all of my interview partners individually said at some point that tdhs is special, more engaged, more interested or more reliable than other donors they work with. Therefore, based on these findings, I argue that tdhs really seems to have a special way in working together with Ebli and Nelico. This is not just because the collaborations last for several years, but also because tdhs is engaged and honestly interested in the progress and well-being of Nelico and Ebli. I cannot argue that there are no other Northern NGOs who have similar ways of working with Southern NGOs, but based on the answers I received and the impressions I gathered, at least among the donors that support Nelico and Ebli, tdhs seems to do it differently, and with the impressions I got, it works better.

In chapter 4.1, I analysed if the indicators I identified for a partnership are fulfilled within this collaboration. In this chapter, I discussed three more aspects that are important to the collaboration and influence it in very distinct ways. Before I conclusively answer the question whether I consider the collaboration to be a partnership, I first want to elaborate in the next chapter how my interview partners define partnership and if they themselves consider the collaboration to be a partnership. Their opinion further allows me to critically question also my indicators and hence my definition of a partnership. The following chapter therefore focuses on the emic understanding my interview partners have about partnership and the collaboration.

4.3. How the Interviewees Define Partnership and the Collaboration

In each interview, I asked my interview partner what a collaboration has to be shaped like in order to be a partnership. Closely related to this question, I then asked if they consider the collaboration with Ebli, Nelico or tdhs to be a partnership. The answers I got for those questions will be part of the following chapter. First, I want to show how the interview partners from Ebli and Nelico define partnership.

Most of my interview partners named one or two things that are important for a collaboration to be a partnership. Very important for Nelico 2 (p. 15) is the fact that there is "no one who is up while the other one is down. We are in the same level." Additionally, transparency and open communication and hence "the door (being) open to share" seems to be important to Nelico 2 (p. 15). Nelico 3 (p. 15) linked

partnership to common objectives or “to having the same goal to achieve”. In order to do that, the partnership needs to have “guidelines and principles which can put us on the same track.” Those guidelines define the different tasks that each NGO has within the partnership. Nelico 3 (p. 15) continues: “For example, Nelico is implementing, you see. But tdhs is financing. So, we give us a different task but with the same objective. So, that’s a partnership, you see?” For Nelico 1 (p. 19), partnership mostly refers to transparency and open communication where both partners can speak freely on their wishes and needs. For Ebli 1 (p. 14) a partnership is that two people “are walking hand in hand. [...] It’s a partnership, because you are looking forward, together. If there is a problem, we are looking at it together.” Even more importantly, during the interview, Ebli 1 often referred of his own accord to the fact that the collaboration is a partnership. For instance, he affirmed that the collaboration is transparent because it is a partnership. Based on these statements, for Ebli 1 a partnership has to be transparent, the partners have to respect one another and as described in the quotation, have to share the same goals and it has to be a long-term partnership (see also Ebli 2: 3 and Ebli 3: 10).

To summarize, the criteria they used to define partnership coincide with most of the indicators I use in this thesis: to share the same objective and to achieve a common goal (hence shared principles and mutual targets), to work together over a longer time (hence sustainability), to have open communication and to be able to speak freely (hence transparency and active communication) and to respect one another (hence cultural awareness and mutual respect). Generally speaking, partnership for them means to be on the same level, to be equal.

After asking them to define a partnership, I asked my Tanzanian interview partners to describe the collaboration they have with tdhs in one word. The answers I got were diverse, but at the same time meant similar things. Nelico 2 (p. 16) called it a “twin-collaboration” because twins are people who are the same. Nelico 1 (p. 20) called it “a positive collaboration” and Ebli 2 (p. 10) described it as “very cooperative and participatory.” Ebli 1 (p. 14) answered this question by saying: “And that is why we always call it a partnership. Yes, that’s the term I would give to it” (see also Nelico 3: 15, Nelico 4: 7). Consequently, every Tanzanian interview partner used a positive term to describe the collaboration.

In addition to my Tanzanian interview partners, I also asked the employees of tdhs how they define partnership. For tdhs 1 (p. 22) partnership means that both NGOs are depending on each other, and tdhs 3 (p. 13) emphasizes on the fact that both partners should be “determined to accomplish something together¹⁰⁹”. tdhs 3 continues that both NGOs should have a profit from it and the responsibilities should be clearly divided and agreed on. tdhs 2 (p. 28) defines partnership as when “you try to act on the same level.” This also means that you respect and trust the expertise of the other and try to learn from it, “and, like we said, a lot of tolerance, respect and transparency¹¹⁰” (tdhs 2: 28).

These statements show that their definition of partnership coincides with my indicators and more

¹⁰⁹ In German: Wenn beide entschlossen sind zusammen etwas zu erreichen.

¹¹⁰ In German: Versucht man auf gleicher Ebene zu agieren. [...] Und ehm, das was wir schon gesagt haben, viel Toleranz, Respekt und Transparenz. Ich glaube, wenn man das, das wäre für mich eigentlich eine Partnerschaft.

importantly, also coincides with the answers from my Tanzanian interview partners. I can therefore say that all three NGOs have, at least to a certain extent, a common understanding of what a partnership should be and what it should include.

Before I conclusively answer the question whether all of my interview partners consider the collaboration to be a partnership, I want to address one last issue. At the beginning of this thesis, I clearly distinguished the terms donor (and hence donorship) and partner (partnership). During my interviews though, I realized that for my Tanzanian interview partners, those terms do not seem to be so important to distinguish. They sometimes refer to tdhs as donor, other times as partner. I got the impression that when talking normally or talking about the funds, they use the term donor out of a habit. But when asked directly and when they were more aware in choosing their words, they referred to tdhs as partners. When referring to Ebli and Nelico all of my interview partners mostly use the term partner (or partner organisation) to describe the Tanzanian NGOs. It seems that within the partnership, tdhs has the role of the donor who is giving the funds, and Nelico and Ebli have the role of the partner who has the manpower and who is implementing the project. So even within a partnership, there can be a donor (see also Nelico 2: 11/15, Nelico 1: 9, tdhs 1: 22).

This double role of tdhs as partner on the one hand and as donor on the other relates back to the issues I described in chapter 4.2.2 on the importance of money. The following statement from tdhs 2 nicely exemplifies how this contradiction influences and also concerns her and her work:

“There comes the critical point. I think, in all of that we are really in a partnership, I really think that. Because I know how it feels for me in my work, and I really know that there is a mutual exchange. But, as long as we give the money, we will always be in different position, always. And I really don’t know how we could change that¹¹¹.” (tdhs 2: 28)

One solution to this issue with the ‘donor-term’ is proposed by tdhs 4. She also considers tdhs as partner and donor at the same time. However, “that we are donors, you can also see that as a compliment, as a sign of trust” (tdhs 4: 13). For instance, tdhs trusts in the capacities of Ebli and Nelico and therefore gives their money to them and Ebli and Nelico trust that tdhs is able to deliver the funds. tdhs 4 is of the opinion that the term “donor” should be reconceptualised because many misused this term as a pressure point. “But I don’t avoid this term ‘donorship’, since for me it is more a ‘we believe in you’.” For her, to be a donor is something good and hence “both terms are important¹¹²”(tdhs 4: 13).

Turning back to the question of how my interview partners define partnership, I can conclude that the answers from my interview partners were very similar. To share the same vision and to have mutual

¹¹¹ In German: Und da kommt der kritische Punkt. Ich finde, in dem allen sind wir wirklich Partnerschaftlich, ich finde das wirklich. Weil ich einfach weiss, wie es sich für mich anfühlt, diese Arbeit und ich wirklich weiss, dass es ein gegenseitiger Austausch ist. Nur, solange wir das Geld geben, sind wir immer in einer anderen Stellung wie sie. Immer. Und ich weiss wirklich nicht, wie man das ändern kann.

¹¹² In German: Dass wir Donors sind, das kannst du auch als eh nicht Kompliment, als Vertrauensbeweis anschauen. [...] Aber ich scheue mich nicht vor dem Begriff Donorship. Aber will es so verstanden wissen als ‘Wir glauben an sie’. [...] Von dem her finde ich beide Begriffe wichtig.

goals or purpose seems to be the most important aspect in a partnership for them. Additionally, it is important that both partners respect one another and can communicate openly and talk freely. Therefore, I can say that the understanding of a partnership is mutual for all three NGOs.

Finally, when I asked them to name the collaboration some already called it a partnership. With those who used a different term, I asked if they would also consider to call it a partnership, based on the definition they gave immediately before. All of my interview partners, except for one¹¹³, agreed that the collaboration can be considered a partnership because it fulfils the criteria they just used to define a partnership (see e.g. Nelico 4: 7, Nelico 1: 20, Ebli 2: 10). Therefore, my interview partners consider the collaboration to be a partnership and their definition of a partnership is fulfilled by the collaboration.

In the following chapter I want to discuss if I agree with this opinion and if I also consider their collaboration to be a partnership.

4.4. Can the Collaboration be Considered a Partnership?

In chapter 4.1 and 4.2, I showed which indicators are fulfilled within the collaboration of tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. In the previous chapter, I analysed how the interviewee themselves define partnership and if they consider the collaboration to be a partnership. In this chapter, I first summarize the results from chapter 4.1 in order to answer my research question whether I consider the collaboration to be a partnership. Then I compare my results with the opinions from my interview partners and discuss whether my definition of a partnership is adequate or not.

In chapter 4.1., I argued that several of the indicators are fulfilled within the collaboration between tdhs and Ebli or Nelico. I argue that due to the close personal relations the NC and the PC have with the employees of Nelico and Ebli, and due to the frequent project visits, there is mutual trust within the collaboration and hence the collaboration fulfils this indicator. Those frequent visits as well as the interest my interview partners show towards the other culture and for the other persons, I argue the indicator of mutual respect and cultural awareness is also fulfilled within the collaboration. Furthermore, within the collaboration there are several levels of targets defined, such as the country program or the concrete project aims. Even though there is no direct involvement at all level for both sides, all targets are defined in a way that the other NGOs are taken into consideration or can later confirm that they agree to these aims. Additionally, Ebli, Nelico and tdhs all share the same principles and have the same understanding as to what kind of change they want and how they want to achieve it. Therefore, I argue that within the collaboration there are shared principles and mutual targets. Additionally, Nelico and Ebli are considered as the expert of their context and are therefore supported in a way that truly benefits them. tdhs does not try to implement or impose things on Ebli and Nelico that they themselves do not consider as useful. Furthermore, there are clear and mutual responsibilities within the collaboration that

¹¹³ Ebli 3 said that for her, it is a donorship. Nevertheless, during the interview she defined a partnership and this also coincides with how she described the collaboration itself. But, since tdhs is giving Ebli funds, she considers the collaboration a donorship.

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both NGOs agree on and are satisfied with. Likewise, I argue that the collaboration is shaped in a sustainable way and can last for a longer period, which helps to build a partnership. Communication within the collaboration is very open and active and all interview partners feel free to ask questions whenever needed and can talk openly on issues they have. Additionally, it appears that all three NGOs are very transparent about their work and are willing to answer questions if they were raised. Therefore, this indicator too is fulfilled within the collaboration.

There are however also indicators that are not fulfilled within the collaboration. The most decisive difference lies within mutual accountability; even though the responsibilities are mutual, accountability is not. As described in chapter 4.1.6, tdhs has no deadlines for their feedback or for the approval of the proposals. Neither do they have to account for their sources of funds have to send reports to Ebli or Nelico. Consequently, there is an immense difference in the level of accountability since Ebli and Nelico have to write detailed activity reports on quarterly basis with fixed deadlines. Even more so, these deadlines are defined solely by tdhs with no consultation from Ebli and Nelico. This further shows that there is no mutual influence within the other organisation. Ebli and Nelico are not consulted when it comes to choosing a new NC for Tanzania, neither can they influence the guidelines for the reports or the timetable for the year, such as when a partner platform is hosted or when the PC should visit. On the other side, tdhs has a certain influence within Ebli and Nelico such as demanding a gender balance in staff or ability to refuse to pay a high salary for the director. In addition, even though the communication itself is active and transparent, the knowledge tdhs has on Ebli and Nelico is incomparably higher in relation to the knowledge Ebli and Nelico have on tdhs. There is no instrument that informs Ebli and Nelico about tdhs at the same level that tdhs is informed about the Tanzanian NGOs. Although the employees of Ebli and Nelico feel confident to ask questions about tdhs, they do not make use of that freedom. There seems to be no interest in knowing more about tdhs or in asking for better reporting on tdhs. Therefore, Ebli and Nelico could be more active in asking questions or getting more information about tdhs as an organisation. On the other hand, tdhs could find a better, more structured or more frequent system as to truly inform Ebli and Nelico. Finally, since there is no mutual evaluation on the collaboration but only on the implemented project, this indicator is clearly not fulfilled.

Based on these results I argue that the collaboration does not fulfil all aspects of a partnership and I therefore do not consider the collaboration to be a partnership. Especially the uneven accountability and control over the other organisation contradicts with the claim of the principle of partnership that both NGOs should be on the same level.

Continuing the line of argument that I do not consider the collaboration to be a partnership, there are two aspects I wish to discuss further. First, I find it rather surprising that many of my interview partners from Ebli and Nelico do not feel the need to know more about tdhs as an organisation. If it was a true partnership, would they not feel this need to know tdhs completely? Or, on the other hand, is it perhaps a sign of trust and respect that they do not consider they have to know everything about the other partner,

because they trust that the NGO is doing its best? I am not in the position to answer those questions. But, based on the idea of mutuality of the partners, I argue that Nelico and Ebli have to know more about tdhs in order to get in line with the high amount of knowledge tdhs has about Nelico and Ebli. Even more so, knowing more about your partner, I argue, can only help to improve the level of trust or even the cultural awareness and hence improve a partnership.

Secondly, in the course of this thesis, it was clear that the funds have a special position within the collaboration. More precisely, the perception about the importance of money has a special position within the collaboration. I argue that as long as some of the involved employees consider the fact that tdhs is the donor as important, it will always be an issue. But, if the perception about the term *donor* would change, as suggested by tdhs 4 or as considered by many of my Tanzanian interview partners, there would be no contradiction any more. I do not argue that the funds are not essential for the project and hence for the collaboration. But, I do argue that other aspects such as the know-how of the Tanzanian employees, their field work with the beneficiaries, and the technical support from tdhs are just as important as the funds.

Consequently, the way the collaboration works now, I do not consider it a true partnership. But, based on the impressions I got during my interviews and especially considering the aspects I described about tdhs being different compared to other donors, I argue that the collaboration has a very good foundation and is very close to being a partnership. Additionally, there are certain measures that could be taken in order to improve the collaboration and to make it more of a partnership, as I described in chapter 4.1 and 4.2. Based on the impression I gathered during my research, I argue that many of those measures, such as the mutual evaluation or the implementation of a timetable for tdhs, can be easily implemented. Nelico and Ebli as well as tdhs appear open for suggestions and for new things and therefore I am positive that there is a very good foundation within this collaboration to improve it even more and to make Nelico and Ebli mutual partners, as the following picture illustrates.



Picture 10, Group picture during project visit at Ebli with the NC, the accountant of the NC office, the PC, the director of both tdhs and Ebli, four staff members of Ebli and the daughter of one of the beneficiaries of Ebli. (own picture)

The question now remains, does the collaboration have to fulfil all of my indicators? Most of my interview partners stated that they consider the collaboration to be a partnership. I argue it is not (yet) a partnership. Now, whose opinion is more relevant?

Compared to other case studies I described in chapter 2.2.2, I argue that the collaboration is already very close and hence closer than many other case studies to be a partnership. Additionally, as I described in chapter 2.2, there are several different definitions on what a partnership is. Lister (2000: 228), for example, defines partnership as “a working relationship that is characterized by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and the willingness to negotiate.” I argue that the collaboration between tdhs and Nelico and Ebli fulfils this definition of a partnership and hence Lister would probably consider this a good example of a partnership. My definition of a partnership though is much more detailed and distinct than many definitions I found in literature. Therefore, I can imagine that it is very difficult for a collaboration to fulfil all of my indicators to my satisfaction. For example, I argue that because Ebli and Nelico know less about tdhs and have for instance no influence in choosing the NC there is no mutual influence and there is an imbalance of know-how and information sharing. Other scholars would argue

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that the fact that tdhs regularly informs the Southern NGOs about the most important changes during the partner platforms is already enough and therefore the collaboration fulfils this indicator.

Additionally, my interview partners also defined what a partnership is for them. Considering these definitions, as described in the previous chapter, I argue that the collaboration fulfils most of their aspects they used to describe a partnership. Since they are the ones experiencing and working within this collaboration, I argue that their opinion is more important than mine. This means, if the involved employees consider the collaboration to be a partnership, this is more important than if I consider it a partnership. Nevertheless, I do not think that the employees of tdhs, Ebli and Nelico would consider it a step back if the improvements I suggest would be implemented. Hence, even if they already consider the collaboration to be a partnership, I argue they would not consider it to be less of one if my suggestions were to be implemented. Consequently, if the collaboration could fulfil my definition of a partnership, I argue it would also still fulfil their definition. This further lets me conclude that it is possible to achieve a true partnership in the current NSDC, but it is a great challenge.

Based on the results I described in this chapter, I will analyse in the following chapter if partnership can be considered an answer to the claim made by the PDD for an alternative to Western-dominated development.

5. PARTNERSHIP AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO DEVELOPMENT

One of my research questions for this thesis is to analyse whether the principle of partnership can be considered an answer to the claim made by the post-development debate (PDD) for an alternative to Western-dominated development. This chapter therefore combines the critiques from the PDD with the different aspects of a partnership. Where it is suitable, I substantiate my arguments with examples from my case study. At the end of this chapter I conclude with a short discussion whether the PDD is still relevant in today's North-South development cooperation (NSDC).

As described in chapter 2.1, there are several claims made by the PDD to criticize the practices of the NSDC. The most common critique of the PDD is the issue that many projects of the NSDC are based on Western value systems and therefore will not work in Southern societies because "a project premised upon a set of values cannot succeed in the absence of those values" (Matthews 2004: 380). One example, as discussed earlier, is the existence of different understandings of 'poor' and therefore different strategies to reduce poverty. Shaffer (2012) argues that ideas and aims of projects and programs to reduce poverty in the South differ from the local realities and hence are misconceived by the North. Even though this is one of the most important arguments from the PDD it is also the one that is addressed best by the principle of partnership. Hence, the principle of partnership emphasizes the fact that there need to be shared principles and mutual targets if two NGOs want to work in a partnership. Even more, as described in chapter 2.4, the involved NGOs have to discuss and define together what their principles, targets and visions are for the projects. Additionally, the principle of partnership is based on the core assumption that the Southern NGOs need to be in the lead by determining the concrete areas of the implemented projects. With these two aspects, the principle of partnership directly addresses the critique from the PDD and tries to prevent the projects from being based on wrong assumptions.

In my case study, I described how Ebli and Nelico decide on the activities and concrete targets for the projects on their own. Based on knowledge they have from the beneficiaries and because they come from, live and work in this context, the employees of Ebli and Nelico know what is needed and what kind of projects are suitable for their specific context. Additionally, I showed several instruments of how tdhs ensures and secures the Southern NGO as the expert, such as the National Coordinator (NC) office or the use of the SFA. Hence, the argument from the PDD that ideas and projects need to come from the roots of the society is also matched within my case study. The aspect of a partnership to have the Southern NGO in the lead (as also practiced by tdhs) directly refers to the 'grassroots-movements' that are essential for the PDD.

To conclude, I argue that this claim of the PDD is answered by the principle of partnership since projects of the NSDC can be rooted in the Southern society and can be based on local value systems and norms.

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The PDD further claims that due to the NSDC there is a loss of cultural diversity and a homogenisation of the world's cultures. The PDD claims that this homogenisation is due to the fact that many projects are based on the Western value system and suppress local ideas and local culture. Sachs (1992: 4) even argues that the development practices have "considerably impoverished the potential for cultural evolution". As described above, this issue is not the case when the collaboration is structured as a partnership. Even more so, as described in chapter 4.1.3, cultural awareness is one important aspect of a partnership. Being culturally aware demands for a person to be open and interested in the culture of another person and to recognize and respect it with the intention of maintaining the different cultures. Therefore, a partnership does not have the intention of homogenising the world, but contrarily sees the employees of the Southern NGOs as active individuals with their own culture and as capable stakeholders¹¹⁴.

As I showed with my case study, it is possible to work together with people from different cultural backgrounds and overcome certain challenges due to cultural differences. Even more so, many of my interview partners consider it an advantage to work together with people from a different cultural background because it gives them new and different inputs for their work. Additionally, working together with people with a different background does not necessarily lead to a homogenisation of the world's cultures because one can maintain his or her own even when working with others. Additionally, I argue that working together with people from another culture can even strengthen one's own. Based on several statements from my interview partners, I argue that being exposed to another culture makes someone more aware of his own, and being more aware on their own culture can lead to living it more consciously and hence maintaining it¹¹⁵.

To conclude, I argue based on the aspect of cultural awareness that there is no risk of cultural homogenisation due to the NSDC if it is practiced as a partnership.

A third argument from the PDD is the issue "that attaining a middle-class lifestyle for the majority of the world population is impossible" (Nederveen Pieterse 2000: 175). The scholars of the PDD argue that the Western system that is based on fossil energy and it is therefore no model for the Southern world. Whereas I agree with the PDD that the energy use of the North is currently unsustainable, I do not agree that this should result in an ending of the NSDC. As described in chapter 2.1.3, many scholars argue that the claims of the PDD would result into a withholding of certain scientific achievements from the South (Ziai 2006: 202). I argue that these scientific achievements (such as sustainable energy production or medical progress) are one of the reasons why there should be an NSDC. The aspect of transparency and active communication of a partnership enables NGOs to share experiences, and to discuss best practices or lessons learnt. This can prevent the South from making the same mistakes as the North by possibly investing in sustainable energy sources from the start. Therefore, I argue that this concern of

¹¹⁴ See also chapter 2.2.1, Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1998: 222.

¹¹⁵ Aside from this argument, I also want to raise the idea that if the NSDC would lead to a homogenisation of the world's culture, why would it lead to a loss of the Southern norms? If there was such a homogenisation, why could it not be a 'Southernisation' of the world's culture?

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the PDD is addressed by the principle of partnership by enabling the different NGOs to learn from the mistakes the other made.

Within this line of argumentation lies another claim of the PDD, described by Matthews (2008: 1038), that there is no assurance the Western knowledge and skills are relevant in the Southern context. The principle of partnership addresses this issue with the aspect of shared responsibility. As described in chapter 2.4, “any partnership ultimately depends on each partner contributing what they are particularly skilled in doing” (KFPE 2014, see also Wannan et al. 2010: 40). If this aspect is ensured, the criticism of the PDD is disproved. Both NGOs have to decide together what roles they have and what responsibilities they have to meet. Therefore, it is ensured that the contribution the North makes is necessary and adequate. As I showed with my case study, it is an important aspect of a partnership to share the responsibilities and it is also doable in practice since Ebli, Nelico and tdhs can contribute their strengths to the collaboration.

Concludingly, I argue that if NSDC is practiced as a partnership it answers the main claim of the PDD for an alternative to Western-dominated development. In this chapter, I combined four important critiques from the PDD with the principle of partnership and showed that each of those critiques is disproved or resolved with the principle of partnership.

However, the PDD arose over 30 years ago and since then several improvements, such as the internet and the increasing globalisation have changed the world and the practices of the NSDC (see e.g., Sylvester 1999). In the same vein, de Vries (2007) raised the fact that the South has a right to develop because they have a “desire for development” also due to the globalized world we live in (de Vries 2007: 27, see also Nederveen Pieterse 1998: 366). Matthews (2008: 1040) goes one step further and argues that through this “interconnectedness” of the world, the ‘privileged’ have “some sort of obligation to respond to the plight of those who occupy a disadvantaged position on the complex webs of relations in which we are more favourably positioned“.

Based on my research and the consulted literature, I conclude that the PDD raised many important critiques and started a very important discussion. At the same time, many critics raised by the PDD lost their eligibility in the current NSDC. Therefore, I agree with Matthews (2008: 1040) that the North should not “leave the poor alone” as is sometimes claimed by the PDD, but that in today’s world it is inevitable that people from the North will work together with people from the South. The principle of partnership in today’s NSDC further opens up the possibility that people from the South might have the solutions to the problems we face here in the North.

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CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed at showing that the principle of partnership can be considered an answer to the main claim of the post-development cooperation (PDD) for an alternative to Western-dominated development. In order to adopt this research question in the current practices of the North-South development cooperation (NSDC), I conducted a qualitative research on the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. I analysed whether their collaboration can be considered a partnership and hence, if partnership is even possible in the current NSDC. This practical research addresses the second aim of this thesis: to give practical inputs and ideas for the collaboration between tdhs, Nelico, and Ebli that can be applied to their everyday work.

Based on my findings, I conclude that the principle of partnership is an answer to the claim of the PDD and hence can be considered an alternative to Western-dominated development if it is applied correctly. One of the main criticisms of the PDD states that the NSDC leads to a Westernization of the world because it is based only on the Western value system. As I have shown, if a collaboration is shaped as a partnership, the projects are based on the values and norms of the local, Southern context. This is because one of the main claims of a partnership is to consider the South as the expert of their context and to maintain shared values and mutual principles. Consequently, the main critiques from the PDD is refuted. Furthermore, the shared values and principles as well as the claim for mutual respect and cultural awareness of both NGOs address the issue of homogenization of the world's cultures as criticised by the PDD. Another criticism from the PDD addresses the unsustainable energy use of the Western world. Whereas the PDD propagates this as a reason for abandoning the NSDC, I argue that it is precisely one more reason why the North should work together with the South. By working together and sharing experiences of success and failure, the South can learn from the mistakes of the North and hence prevent certain mistakes from happening again. A partnership further requires for both NGOs to take over those responsibilities that they are especially skilled in executing and that benefit the other NGO. This shared responsibility ensures that the knowledge both NGOs bring to the table is relevant for the collaboration as well as for the implemented project. Hence, the concern raised by the PDD that there is no guarantee the knowledge of the Northern NGO is even relevant can be rebutted. Consequently, the main critiques raised by the PDD are addressed and achieved by the principle of partnership if it is applied correctly in the practices of the NSDC.

Thus, it is one achievement of this thesis to close the gap I identified in current literature to combine the claims of the PDD with the principle of partnership that were so far mostly researched and discussed separately.

The application in practice of a partnership concerns the second part of this thesis. Answering the claims of the PDD on paper is one thing, being applicable in practice however is another. I therefore applied my research question in practice and conducted research on the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and

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Nelico. Based on my findings, I conclude that the collaboration does not fulfil my definition of a partnership. However, there are several aspects that are achieved within the collaboration: There is mutual trust and active communication; all of my interview partners respect the counterpart and show an awareness for their culture; the principles are shared and the targets are mutually decided on; there is a shared responsibility that both NGOs are aware of and agree on; the collaboration is shaped sustainably and Nelico and Ebli are respected as the experts of their context. The other indicators though, are not fulfilled. Most striking is the unequal accountability since Ebli and Nelico's accountability towards tdhs is unevenly larger. The same issue exists concerning mutual influence. Whereas tdhs has influence over salaries or gender regulations for the staff, Ebli and Nelico have no influence on structural decisions inside tdhs. These two aspects further result in the issue that tdhs is more aware of what is going on inside Ebli and Nelico than the other way around. Consequently, tdhs has a much more profound knowledge on Ebli and Nelico. Finally, there is no evaluation on the collaboration itself. However, the employees I interviewed for my research all stated that in their opinion the collaboration is a partnership. Simultaneously, the current collaboration does fulfil their own definition of a partnership. The reason why they consider it a partnership and I do not, lies within the different definitions. All of the criteria my interview partners used to describe a partnership can also be found in my definition. However, my definition goes further and is much stricter than theirs. Therefore, I agree that when using their definition, the collaboration can be considered a partnership.

Nonetheless, I argue that the measures I presented to improve the collaboration are still important and relevant. For one, there could be an implementation of an evaluation of the collaboration. Secondly, tdhs could introduce deadlines for their responsibilities in order to match the deadlines Ebli and Nelico have. On the other hand, Nelico and Ebli could be more active in raising questions and holding tdhs accountable for their responsibilities or for the sources of their funds. Fundamental for the partnership is therefore also the perception on the importance of money. As I showed, it is important not to overvalue the importance of the funds but to see them as just one piece that is needed to solve the puzzle, and hence as important as labor force or local knowledge. With those propositions, and the additional ones I raised in chapter 4, I conclude that it is possible to collaborate as even partners within the current NSDC.

Thus, the second achievement of this thesis is to propose concrete ideas in order to improve the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. During the course of this thesis, I proposed several ideas that could be implemented within the collaboration. It is however beyond my influence to actually implement my suggestions. This task falls to the employees of tdhs, Ebli and Nelico.

Even though I argue that it is possible to have an authentic partnership between two NGOs, I am aware of the challenge it involves. One challenge is the ladder of accountability I described in chapter 4.2.1. tdhs themselves have donors that they have to account towards and hence, they are part of a wider context and cannot decide everything freely. Nelico and Ebli have also other organisations or donors they work with and that have an influence and demands towards them. These other organisations

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therefore influence also the collaboration between tdhs, Ebli, and Nelico. For further research, it would be very interesting to widen the focus and to include more organisations, or more rungs of the ladder.

Additionally, I limited my focus to the collaboration between two NGOs. However, the field of NSDC involves collaborations between other stakeholders such as states or international institutions. I propose that it would be not only interesting to widen the focus when researching NGOs such as tdhs, Ebli and Nelico but to also widen the focus to other types of collaboration such as between two international organisations or between two states. I would consider all three NGOs I researched as rather small organisations, since tdhs has approximately thirty employees and is the biggest within my three researched NGOs. I would assume that with organisations that small, it is easier to work as partners because aspects such as personal relations, mutual trust or mutual influence become more complicated and more challenging when working in organisations with, for example, more than hundred employees. Therefore, it would be very interesting to analyse whether my assumptions are true or if also bigger, international organisations or governmental stakeholders could work together as partners.

Another aspect that would be interesting to research is the effect a partnership has on the implemented projects. As I outlined in the introduction, I am not researching the projects but the collaboration. However, I find it an interesting question to see if a partnership really does have a positive outcome for the projects and if the implemented projects really are more successful if the collaboration is a partnership. Because ultimately, the aim of the NSDC is to achieve a positive change in the life of people living in the South.

Finally, I kept asking myself the same questions when writing this thesis: Are my thoughts and my ideas even realistic? Or am I a scientific researcher that has no idea of the actual work that is done every day? Is it, for example, even possible to change the perception about the importance of money? Can tdhs even account for their sources of funds towards Ebli and Nelico? And are the employees of Nelico and Ebli even interested in having an influence within tdhs? Or would this just increase their work load and be therefore counterproductive?

Ultimately, is it even necessary to work in a partnership? Or is it enough if everyone involved in the collaboration is satisfied with the way it works? I am not capable of answering all those questions, and I am not even sure if all of them can be answered. It is however my opinion that a partnership is a collaboration that should be favored over others. Taking the history of the NSDC into consideration, I argue that it is very important to try to overcome the colonial pattern of thinking. The history of the colonial times, the perception that the North must help the South and with this the victimisation and hence the objectification of the Southern people is still very present today. Hence, I argue that it is very important to use strategies and approaches that counter these views and emphasize the capability and subjectivity of each person living in the South in order to finally see them for what they are: As capable as people living in the North.

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APPENDIX

1. Overview on my interview partners

Table 2, Overview on the interview partners

ABBREVIATON	ORGANISATION	POSITION
tdhs 1	terre des hommes schweiz	National Coordinator Tanzania
tdhs 2	terre des hommes schweiz	Program Coordinator Tanzania
tdhs 3	terre des hommes schweiz	Executive Director
tdhs 4	terre des hommes schweiz	Desk for Psychosocial Support and Coordinator Regional Programme / Youth2Youth
Ebli 1	Education for Better Living Organization	Executive Director
Ebli 2	Education for Better Living Organization	Program Manager
Ebli 3	Education for Better Living Organization	Accountant
Nelico 1	New Light Children Center Organisation	Youth Coordinator / Head of Youth Department
Nelico 2	New Light Children Center Organisation	Executive Director
Nelico 3	New Light Children Center Organisation	Finance Manager
Nelico 4	New Light Children Center Organisation	Youth Worker / Child Labor Officer

APPENDIX

2. Example of my Interview Guideline¹¹⁶

INTRODUCTION

1. Tell me something about yourself. Where are you from?
2. Tell me a bit about Nelico | Ebli | tdhs. What is it that you do, what is your main goal?
 - a. On what kind of norms and values is the NGO based?
 - b. What do you think about them?
3. How do you work at Nelico | Ebli | tdhs. What is your structure?
 - a. How many employees do you have?
 - b. What is it that you do, what are your tasks? How does a normal day look like?
4. Explain shortly the corner posts of your collaboration.
 - a. When and how did the collaboration with tdhs start?
 - b. How long is a contract?
 - c. What are the guidelines?
 - d. When and how are the funds transferred?
 - e. What other collaboration do you have besides the one with tdhs?

MAIN QUESTIONS

TRANSPARENCY, ACTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. Tell me how you communicate with tdhs. How does the communication work? What channels of communication do you have? How often do you communicate?
2. Is the communication structured or can you have spontaneous, individual communication?
3. Who normally asks for a skype or email interaction?
4. Do you ask questions about the work inside tdhs?
 - a. Do you get reports about tdhs?
 - b. Do you feel informed about the processes, changes within tdhs?
5. What does transparency mean to you?

¹¹⁶ This is one example of my guiding interview questions. I adapted the questions slightly for each interview partner, depending on the organisation and the position of my partner. Additionally, I often adapted or changed the questions spontaneously during the interview.

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- a. Do you feel like your collaboration with tdhs is transparent?
- b. Do you have an example where you felt like the collaboration was transparent?
- c. What are advantages and disadvantages of transparent work in your opinion?

SHARED PRINCIPLES, TARGETS ARE DECIDED TOGETHER

1. What does SFA, youth participation, ..., mean to you?
2. Who defined those principles?
 - a. Did you know them before the collaboration with tdhs?
3. How do you decide on your main goals? Can you give an example?
4. Do you feel like you share the same principles as tdhs?

MUTUAL TRUST

1. How would you describe the relationship between you and the employees of tdhs? Is there a personal relationship or is it just professional?
2. Do they stick to your agreements?
 - a. What happens if you don't? Do you have an example?
 - b. What happens if tdhs misses a deadline or does not stick to the agreement?
3. Do you feel like you can trust them?
4. How much space to improvise/act freely do you have in your work? Is everything structured or do you have freedom e.g. of activities?
5. Do you feel controlled? Observed?
6. Were there any situations where you felt disappointed by tdhs?
 - a. Do you know of any where they were disappointed in you?

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY

- If you think of your everyday work with tdhs | Ebli | Nelico, can you write down the persons who are most important for you to do your work?
 - Think of Ebli and Nelico and identify the important stakeholders. Draw circles and place them on the paper. The bigger, the more important. The closer the better accessible. You can think of it as an Organigram.
1. Tell me about how your program came into life? With an example.

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- a. Who had the idea? Who decided to realize it?
2. In what aspects is tdhs deciding? Staff? Program? Methods?
3. What kind of responsibilities do you have towards tdhs?
 - a. Do you have influence within their Organization?
4. And what kind of responsibilities do they have towards you?
 - a. Do you get reports, budgets from them? Do you give them Feedback?
5. What happens if a project is not successful? Who carries the risk?

MUTUAL INFLUENCE

1. Do you have any power within the organization of tdhs?
 - a. How did e.g. the NC get chosen? Explain in brief.
2. Who decides to renew a contract?
3. How much influence does tdhs have with your NGO? In %?
 - a. And how much do you have within tdhs?
4. What do you have that you can offer tdhs?
 - a. Where can you teach them something?
 - b. Where are you stronger than tdhs?
5. Where does the influence of tdhs end? Within your community work?

MUTUAL RESPECT, CULTURAL AWARENESS

1. How would you describe the strengths of a Tanzanian NGO?
2. And the ones of a Swiss NGO?
3. Can you give an example where those differences were an advantage?
4. What does cultural awareness mean to you?
 - a. Can you give an example?
5. What are the challenges in a North-South collaboration? What are the advantages?
6. Can you give an example where you felt like tdhs learnt something from you?

EVALUATION, SUSTAINABILITY

1. How do you evaluate your collaboration and your projects?

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2. Do you discuss the possibility of a period after tdhs within Ebli, Nelico?
 - a. Do you discuss this also with tdhs?
 - b. What would happen if tdhs stops supporting you?

FINAL QUESTIONS

1. What is an ideal partnership for you? What would you need for an ideal partnership? Can you give an example?
2. Who owns Nelico, Ebli?
3. Draw a metaphor for your working collaboration.
4. How would you 'name' your collaboration? With one word.
5. Why do you work with tdhs?

APPENDIX

3. Overview on my Observation Questions

BASIC DATA

- Where, When, Time, Context, Timetable
- Who is present?
- Description of activities
- Descriptions of two detailed situations with reference to the whole day
 - ➔ Interpretation is not the same as observation, interpretation should be based on observation.
 - ➔ My feelings are also part of the observation

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

- Who talks how much?
- Who talks to whom?
- Where are people seated?
- What words are used?
 - Partner? Donor?
- Who decides?
- Who has what rights?
- Are all questions answered from both sides? Or are there 'secrets'?

TANZANIAN PERSPECTIVE

- How does the Tanzanian staff refer to tdhs in front of others?
 - Is it respectful or subservient or equitable?
- Are there questions about tdhs? And how are they answered?
 - ➔ What is part of the culture and what is because they are from tdhs?

TDHS PERSPECTIVE

- How do they talk?
 - Do they want to teach?
 - Do they want to control?
 - Do they want to observe and learn?
- Is the Tanzanian staff respected as the expert?
 - Where are they the experts and where not?
- Is it a visit to control or to learn from each other, to share experience?
- How do they handle the cultural context?
 - Customs?
- ➔ Are they guests or are they the boss?

PERSONAL DECLARATION

PERSONAL DECLARATION

“I hereby declare that the submitted thesis is the result of my own, independent work. All external sources are explicitly acknowledged in the thesis.”

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Buss', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Caroline Buss

27th January 2017