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**AUGUST, 2016**

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# THE INTERNATIONALITY OF LOCAL PEACE

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International NGOs in local peacebuilding in South Sudan

Cover image: PAX Peacebuilding in South Sudan by Grant  
(2009)

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## SUMMARY

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In recent decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become an increasingly important phenomenon in all sorts of societal fields. NGOs emerged as grass-roots movements serving mostly local goals and interests, but now are an increasingly important group of actors within the international community (INGOs). This is also the case for the area of conflict management and peacebuilding. In South Sudan, a new country that has been full of violent conflict, there is an important role for the international community as a whole and especially for INGOs, who are highly involved in local peacebuilding projects. INGOs therefore have a high impact on a local societal scale, but are not naturally rooted into local society. There is growing criticism of the involvement of international actors into local complex contexts and there is a need for analysing INGOs behaviour in relation to its context. This research focusses on the influence of INGOs both local and international ties to the behaviour of the INGO in local peacebuilding projects.

Based on this the research aim was formulated: *Contributing to the knowledge on the relation between the behaviour and role of NGOs and the international and local context they work in, in order to get a more sound scientifically grounded image of INGOs in local peacebuilding activities and help INGOs with this insight to improve their tactics to be more effective in building peace.*

In this research the leading question is: *How do international ties and local ties influence the behaviour and role of international NGOs in local peacebuilding activities in the post-conflict setting of South Sudan?*

The first three sub-questions aim at mapping the different local and international ties an INGO can have working on peacebuilding and their purposes. The other sub-questions focus on the different aspects of INGO behaviour in a local context.

To set a theoretical framework for this thesis, two main theories will be explained. The glocalization theory, focussing on the importance of the local in a globalizing world, is used to make a framework for an analysis of the different local and international ties. The stakeholder-agency theory, that is based on Giddens' structuration concept, is used to construct an analysis framework for the behaviour of INGOs in projects, defining four main aspects: mandate, legitimacy, power and urgency.

In order to research the interaction between local and international ties and the behaviour of INGOs, different research strategies were used. A desk research was conducted to map the ties INGOs can have in general. A case study was conducted to apply those ties to a certain case and analyse the influence on the INGOs' behaviour. The case consists of the post-conflict peacebuilding in South Sudan, in which many INGOs are active.

The research contained two main data collection methods. The first was the collection of existing literature that mapped the different ties. The second method was the conducting of semi-structured interviews with employees of Dutch INGOs who were involved in local peacebuilding projects in South Sudan. The aspects based on the stakeholder-agency theory were used as a framework for the analysis of the interviews. Additionally some documents and website statements were collected to complement the results out of the interviews. The INGOs that were involved in this research were ICCO, PAX and Dorcas.

The situation of conflict in South Sudan is immensely complex and consists of a multiplicity of conflicts on different scales and around different topics. Important is that the INGOs are actors that come from outside that context to work and emerge themselves into that complexity. However the influence of the overarching national scale on the activities of those INGOs might be rather small. This might affect which sort of local ties are important and have a large influence on INGOs.

International ties can be divided into financial, non-financial, constituency and law/policy ties. Financial ties make INGOs dependent on international actors (mostly institutional donors) that are themselves not directly involved in the context that they work in. Non-financial ties mostly consist of connections with other INGOs on different scales and levels of formality. They exchange information and give access to networks. INGOs often are also tied to their domestic constituency which consist of members of affiliated organizations, volunteers, etcetera. INGOs are also tied to policies of international governments, who set the possibilities and international context in which INGOs can work.

Local ties are divided in participation, embeddedness, associativeness and national and local laws. Participation is the involvement of individuals from local communities into the structure of the INGO. Embeddedness is the cooperation with local organizations in the civic field. Associativeness is having ties with a diverse range of institutions outside the civic field such as government and businesses. National and local laws also have the ability to constrain the freedom of INGOs.

After the ties were mapped, the influences of all these ties to the different aspects of the behaviour of INGOs was analysed. Out of this analysis, 4 general conclusions could be made:

- 1) Because of their international ties and background, INGOs have to work according to a multiplicity of mandates. These mandates originate both from the local involvement and their ties to the international community and their own constituency. This can lead to conflicting/different goals and difficulties and lead to the commitment to be legitimate and accountable both to local and international constituencies.
- 2) A high amount of participation, embeddedness and associativeness, influences the behaviour of an INGO in a positive way. The mandate will be better focussed on the needs of the local communities and it results in a higher local legitimacy, better power position and a better chance of creating urgency. However some problems occur when creating local ties: It is difficult to get a fair representation of the local population, risking only serving some elite or specific groups. Second, the capacity of local organizations and individuals is very low, risking to spend money inefficiently. And third, it is for local individuals and organizations difficult to hold the INGOs accountable, undermining their mandate and legitimacy.
- 3) Institutional donors are the most influential tie. Their influence is mostly in generic terms, such as time-frame, specialization and implementation. However this can have a major impact on the execution of local projects. The INGOs have a tendency to adjust to the wishes of the international donor, however it is dependent on the financial strength of the INGO and the individual relationship to which extent this influence is strong and conflicting with local needs.
- 4) Ties with other INGOs serve to get access to networks, exchange vital information and complement each other, improving all aspects of INGO behaviour in local peacebuilding. However some cooperation is only taking place for the purpose of being eligible for funds, costing a lot of time in cooperation that doesn't work out in local projects.

These conclusions leave several challenges to the INGOs. Most importantly INGOs always have the risk of neglecting local needs because of what international ties demand of them. However, as INGOs also fulfil a vital role as middle-men between the international community and the actors in local conflict, their important role in local peacebuilding projects is justified, if they are aware of the effect of their internationality.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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CBO	community based organizations
CICAM	Centre for Conflict – Analyses and Management
CSO	civil society organization
EU	European Union
FBO	faith based organization
ICCO	Interkerkelijke Coördinatie Commissie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking
IDP	internally displaced person
NGO	non-governmental organization
INGO	international non-governmental organization
PKN	Protestantse Kerk in Nederland
SPLA	South Sudan People’s Liberation Army
SPLM	South Sudan People’s Liberation Movement
UN	United Nations
UNMISS	United Nations mission in South Sudan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

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In recent decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become an increasingly important phenomenon. NGOs play an important role in all sorts of fields on the local, national and international stage. During the early development of NGOs, they focussed foremost on protest against policies and politics. They were a link between grass-roots society, businesses, interest groups and governments and were mostly activist and topic-specific organizations (Pearce, 2000). However, more recently they have become more and more an institutionalised part of decision-making, policy-making and policy implementation itself (Pearce, 2000; Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009).

NGOs emerged as grass-roots movements serving mostly local goals and interests. When western governments started with large-scale international development programs in third world countries and there became increasing concern about problems in the Global South, Western NGOs appeared that would work on a global scale, bringing in money from the west and implementing it in development schemes in the third world (Tvedt, 2006). They became a major actor in third world countries and became known as International NGOs (INGOs). They formed alliances with comparable organizations in other countries to form international alliances and became an increasingly important group of actors within the international community on all sorts of issues (Pearce, 2002).

This is also the case for the area of conflict management and peacebuilding. INGO's on all scales and areas of expertise are involved, and have an influential role in building peace in conflict and post-conflict settings (Mahoney, 2007). INGO's are involved in peace negotiations, as representatives of one party, or as mediator. They are involved in putting pressing problems on the international agenda and the local implementation of solutions.

In South Sudan, a new country that has been full of violent conflict over the past 60 years, there is an important role for the international community as a whole and especially for INGOs (Kaler & Parkins, 2015, p.400). In a diverse range of areas of development, also in peacebuilding and state-building, INGOs spend an enormous amount of money into the South Sudanese society. With a failing government system, INGOs take up the role of mediator, reconciler and supplier of amenities in local communities (idem). As is the case in other countries, INGOs thus have a large effect on local situations, although they are an outside, unrooted actor in the local context.

The focus of this research is on the involvement of INGO's in local processes of peacebuilding, applied the case of South Sudan. This will be further specified in the upcoming chapters.

## 1.2 RELEVANCE

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This growing role of NGOs is strongly acknowledged in scientific literature, as is the fact that NGO (and INGO) is a very broad concept in which there is much differentiation and heterogeneity (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009). NGOs vary from large international holistic organizations to small local operating grassroots-movements. Across these different scales, these NGOs are often closely connected. The rise of NGOs in all areas of expertise has been researched in the last 25 years. For a long time, this research has had a very positive perspective (De la Cruz, 2013). Besides, much of the research had focused on the NGOs as new entity itself. First as a middleman between government,

society and business on a local level, later as INGOs in other fields such as humanitarian development (Lewis & Opokuh-Mensah, 2006). However in recent years, the theoretical positive effects of (I)NGOs, especially in international humanitarian aid and peacebuilding, have not always worked out in reality. Proven by recent studies, it turns out that there is a tension and discrepancy between the goals and solutions decided upon on an international level and the demands and effects on a local level (Mac Ginty, 2008).

This means that there is a need for more context in the research to INGOs (Lewis & Opokuh-Mensah, 2006). The INGOs cannot longer be researched as an isolated entity and its theoretical effects, but research has to focus on the context which is dependent for the effectiveness and role of INGOs. This research will try to do this by focussing on the relationship between NGOs working in peacebuilding situations and the context of international and local pressures they have to deal with.

By getting more information on the relationship between the role of a NGO and its context, this research will not only contribute to more scientific knowledge on NGOs and peacebuilding processes. It can also give insights to the NGOs themselves on how they are positioned in a certain context and which factors are important for them. This insight can lead to a change in behaviour and tactics of this NGOs and in this way contribute to the effectiveness and sustainability of the contribution of NGOs to peace in developing post-conflict areas.

### **1.3 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTION**

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The research goal is formulated as:

*Contributing to the knowledge on the relation between the behaviour and role of NGOs and the international and local context they work in, in order to get a more sound scientifically grounded image of INGOs in local peacebuilding activities and help INGOs with this insight to improve their tactics to be more effective in building peace.*

This research goal is twofold: (1) The scientific goal of getting a more realistic image of the work of NGOs by placing it in a certain context, and (2) the societal goal of giving the NGOs more insights by which they can work more effectively in peacebuilding projects.

Following the research goal as formulated above, the leading research question for the bachelor thesis is: *How do international ties and local ties influence the behaviour and role of international NGOs in local peacebuilding activities in the post-conflict setting of South Sudan?*

In order to answer this leading research question, this research will be conducted on the basis of the following sub-questions:

- *Which types of international ties for international INGOs in local peacebuilding efforts can be distinguished?*
- *Which types of local ties for international INGOs in local peacebuilding efforts can be distinguished?*
- *For what purposes do international INGOs use and create these ties?*
- *How do these international and local ties influence the mandate (agency) of these international INGOs in South Sudan?*
- *How do these international and local ties influence the legitimacy these INGOs have in South Sudan?*

- *How do these international and local ties form the means of INGOs to influence other stakeholders in building peace in South Sudan?*
- *How do these international and local ties influence the presentation of pressing agendas by these INGOs?*

The first three questions shape the context which is researched, because it is necessary to get a clear image of the factors that constrain and put pressure on INGOs in their work of peacebuilding. When these factors are clear, it is possible to research how these have an influence on the role and behaviour of the INGOs itself, in their local projects. These influence is spread out over the last 4 sub-questions. Each of these questions represent one operationalised variable of the conceptual model, as will be discussed in chapter 2.

## **1.4 RESEARCH FOCUS**

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This leading research question contains a few elements which have to be further specified. First, there is the research object. These are the international NGOs. The INGOs in this research have the following characteristics: They have to 1) be internationally active and involved with/financially dependent on international actors, charities and funding, 2) cooperate with local civil society organizations, 3) be active in local peacebuilding activities. The second element of the question is the outside influence on these INGOs. These are the local and international ties which have to be further investigated. The last element of the question is the context or setting in which this takes place. This is formulated as a post-conflict setting, namely South Sudan. Post-conflict means that the local situation is in a phase where there has been a violent, armed conflict between two or more groups, but where there are now possibilities to build sustainable peace. Of course, post-conflict setting does not mean that there is no violent conflict whatsoever. In South Sudan there are numerous violent conflicts and risks of conflicts. If these would not be there, there would be no need for further peacebuilding. When this research was started, South-Sudan on a national level still had peace, although unstable, and thus there was a post-conflict situation on a national scale. The recent events in South Sudan might have changed this situation, but that could not be taken into account in this research. The exact definition of an INGO and the demarcation of ‘peacebuilding’ for this research will be explained in chapter 2. For a more elaborate explanation for South Sudan as a case, the relevant aspects of the South Sudanese context for this research and the recent violent outburst, see chapter 4.

## **1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

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The rest of this thesis will be structured as follows: chapter 2 will be an elaboration and definition of the most important concepts of this research. It will discuss relevant theories that construct the basis of the analyses of both the INGO as an entity and the context in which it operates. This will result in the conceptual model and its operationalization. Chapter 3 will explain the different methodological approaches used in this thesis, defend the choice for the case that is used and elaborate on the respondents that contributed to the data collection. Chapter 4 will elaborate on the case that is chosen of South Sudan, its recent history of conflict and a short assessment on the different layers of conflict and the role of INGOs and civil society in South Sudan. Chapter 5 will map, based on the literature, the different types of foreign ties that INGOs can have and analyse the purpose of those ties and its application to the South Sudan case. Chapter 6 will do the same for the local ties an INGO

can have. Chapter 7 is the analysis chapter in which all mapped ties of the previous chapters will be analysed regarding its influence on the behaviour and role of INGOs, based on the operationalization in chapter 2. In chapter 8 the general conclusions, policy recommendation towards INGOs, recommendations for further research and an extensive reflection on the process and content of this thesis will be given.

## 2. THEORY

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

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For this research, it is necessary to theoretically conceptualise both the working and role of an INGO as an entity and the context in which this takes place. First a clear definition of (I)NGOs as such will be given. Then, a definition of the process of peacebuilding will be given and explained which stages it contains and what demarcation of the concept is used for this thesis. For this thesis a structurationist perspective will be explained, which results in the use of two concrete theories. First an explanation of the broader structuration theory of Giddens will be given and applied to this research. Then use of a stakeholder-agency perspective for analysing the INGOs as an entity and the effect they have on building sustainable peace will be explained. Then the theory of glocalization will be elaborated, which makes it possible to investigate the impact of the context of both international and local factors to the effectiveness of NGO's in peacebuilding. Finally, these two theoretical perspectives will be linked with each other and used into one conceptual model.

### 2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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#### 2.2.1 NGO AND PEACEBUILDING DEFINITIONS

It is difficult to give a clear definition of a NGO, because they are very diverse in 'philosophies, ways, methodologies and agenda's' (De la Cruz, 2013, p.313). This means they can be active on all sorts of problems, they have no common organizational structure and their funding, working habits and origin is extremely differentiated. According to Atkinson & Scurrah (2009, p.xii) NGOs are a sub-set of the broad concept of civil society organizations (CSO). A CSO is any organization 'in which ordinary citizens come together to advance an interest or concern that they have in common (...) and want to take collective action (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009, p.xii). NGOs are a more concretely organized, and formally constituted form of CSOs, which are mostly self-governing, private and non-profit (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009). Often NGOs have some kind of social justice agenda, however this is not inherent to the definition.

An important factor of differentiation between NGOs is the scale (geographical and size) on which they are active. The most famous NGOs like Oxfam, Greenpeace, etcetera, are operating all around the globe, and are more specifically called INGOs. They have different departments divided along topical or geographical criteria and have a vast network of sub-organizations. These sub-organizations are mostly local small-scale grass-roots movements, which are often more topic-specific and only operate within a certain community or nation. Traditionally there is a standard and strong relationship between the large global NGOs and the local grass-roots NGOs in the way that the INGOs often provide the means so that local NGOs can do the development work in their community (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009, p.6). Practices can vary from lobbying in Western politics to build wells in Sub-Saharan Africa. INGOs have been more and more involved in practices of peacebuilding and conflict settlement, not only as an advocacy party for a specific topic or group, but also as a mediator between parties and as initiators for a broad peacebuilding approach (De la Cruz, 2013). In this research, the focus is on INGOs that are involved in peacebuilding activities in post-conflict settings. These are NGOs that have an international structure, but are working in local communities and working with local grass-roots organizations.

Another concept that is to be defined is the peacebuilding that is central to this research. Peacebuilding can be defined as 'all the efforts required on the way to the creation of a sustainable peace zone' with the aim to 'transform conflicts constructively' (Reychler & Pfaffenholz, 2001, p.12). It is therefore a broad concept involving a lot of actors, means and methods. It is not simply about resolving a conflict, but aims at a structural change in societal dynamics. Reychler & Pfaffenholz (2001, p.17-18) exhibit a wide range of tools which are used in peacebuilding which they categorize in: Official diplomacy, Nonofficial Conflict Management (track II), Military measures, economic and social measures, government (political) measures, legal measures and communication/education measures.

Sustainable peace is not build from one day to another. It contains different stages and demands a lot of different processes. However, it is difficult to indicate concrete stages in peacebuilding because processes have to run alongside other processes. Jeong (2005) distinguishes peacebuilding between short-term and long-term processes. Short-term measures are aimed at quickly ending violent conflict and limit the societal damage. This involves initiating negotiations, creating cease-fires, direct humanitarian aid, military intervention, etcetera (Jeong, 2005). Long-term peacebuilding aims at structural addressing the underlying problems of existing tensions and erase the grounds for possible conflict. This is less about diplomacy and military power and more about societal, grass-roots change by economic, societal, governmental measures etcetera. When a conflict is violent, the short-term measures are most important. Only when a conflict de-escalates or is formerly resolved, long-term peacebuilding can start (idem).

### **2.2.2 STRUCTURATION**

The theory that was used to analyse the behaviour and role of INGOs in peacebuilding, that will be discussed in the next paragraph, is based upon the social theoretical work of Anthony Giddens and his concept of structuration. Central in the structuration theory is the concept of 'duality of structure'. With this concept is expressed that there is a dynamic and mutually influential relationship between standards, values, habits and institutions (structures) on the one hand and possibilities and actions of human actors (agency) on the other (Giddens, 1984). 'Structure is both the medium by and through which practices (of agents) happen (...) and they are the outcome of practices that have previously happened' (Giddens, 1979, p.5). Structures are the result of past actions and determine partly human behaviour and possibilities. Agency is formed by the ongoing practices of agents (Inglis & Thorpe, 2012, p.226), and is thus not an event, but a constant flow of actions through time and space (Giddens, 1984, p.25). If these actions ignore, replace or in a different way reproduce the existing structures, this agency then has the ability to change structures (Inglis & Thorpe, 2012). This agency can be conducted by agents on several layers of consciousness. In current society, according to Giddens, the knowledgeability of agents, in the form of self-examination, and intended purposive action is becoming more important (Inglis & Thorpe, 2012, p.228). Giddens calls this 'reflexivity'.

This theory can be applied to the topic of this research: The INGOs are the agents that are limited in their behaviour by existing structures they are integrated in, in this case the ties with both international and local society. However the INGOs themselves also have the power to change certain structures – both the structures they are tied to and the structures they work on that lead to the endurance of conflict – through a continuous flow of actions. This theory gives therefore a solid framework for researching the interaction between international and local context (the structures)

and the behaviour and role of INGOs (the agency). In order to be able to analyse this interaction, the concepts that form both the existing structures and the agency of INGOs has to be further concretised. This can be done based on the stakeholder-agency theory and the glocalization theory.

### **2.2.3 STAKEHOLDER-AGENCY THEORY**

The stakeholder-agency theory enables to build a concrete theoretical framework for analysis. The theory is a combination of both stakeholder and agency theories, originating in managerial literature. From a business perspective, the agency theory is about the relation between a principal and its agent, or representative (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.59). Its key idea is that this relationship should 'reflect efficient organization of information and risk-bearing costs' (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.59). It states that there is a contract between the agent and the group or person he represents (the principal), but that there is a divergence between the interests of the principal and the acting of the agent (Hill & Jones, 1992, p.132). This divergence can be limited by 'establishing appropriate incentives for the agent and incurring monitoring costs designed to limit the opportunistic action by the agent (Hill & Jones, 1992, p.132). Thus it is about the question if the agency the agent produces is representative for the goals of the principal. In the case of peacebuilding, INGOs are the agents who always act in name of a certain group or issue. It is about how effective they represent the interests of these groups through their agency.

Stakeholder theory has also a managerial background and states that 'stakeholders are those interests groups and actors who affect, or in turn are effected, by a certain problem (in this case a conflict) (Freeman, 1984). The theory tries to address which stakeholders should get or deserve (managerial) attention because stakeholders affect the abilities to solve a problem in a certain context. Stakeholders should be identified by 3 aspects: legitimacy, power and urgency (Doh & Teegen, 2002). The role of INGOs as a stakeholder is therefore determined by the ability to obtain these three aspects.

Both theories are often combined into the stakeholder-agency theory (see: Hill & Jones, 1992). The stakeholder-agency theory states that when the divergence between the interests of agents and the principals it represents becomes smaller, the agency of the agent becomes stronger. This gives the agent particularly more legitimacy (but also more urgency and power), giving the agent a larger stakeholder status, enlarging the salience and effectiveness of this agent (Hill & Jones, 1992; Doh & Teegen, 2002). According to Doh & Teegen (2002) this theory is very applicable to NGOs, because they have a position between government and commercial organizations, always represent a certain group or issue (thus are an agent) and have to obtain a status of stakeholder (which they do not naturally have because they are not directly affected themselves) in order to have influence. Although this is based on the position of NGOs in the West between companies and governments, it is also applicable to INGOs in peacebuilding situations. The essence is that when NGO's fully and accurately represent the interests of the part of civil society they purport to represent (representativeness/agency), the more likely they are to attain attributes of a stakeholder, namely legitimacy (most important), power and urgency, and the greater their material impact/effectiveness is on the long term viability and sustainability of their peacebuilding (salience) (Doh & Teegen, 2002).

## 2.2.4 GLOCALIZATION THEORY

Besides having a theory that makes it possible to analyse the NGOs as an entity, another theory is needed that enables the analysis of the context in which this entity operates and how this context penetrates the entity. The glocalization theory also has its roots in management and business. It originated as a theory on commercial processes becoming more and more global but at the same time can be adapted in details, creating heterogenic mass-production (Robertsen, 1995). However, this theory has become wider in scope, explaining global societal trends, becoming a social theory within the globalization discourse. It's essence is that globalization is not a process which overrides locality. Globalization is in this theory defined as the simultaneity and interpenetration of the global and the local, the universal and the particular (Robertson, 1995). In other words, local issues become global in scope and global issues have a very local particular impact and these two processes are both influencing the actors within these issues.

In peacebuilding, this is a highly relevant theory. Atkinson and Scurrah (2009) state that INGOs become more important in peacebuilding because they are able to bring the societal change in a globalizing conflict which for example national governments cannot. In literature around peacebuilding, the interface between local and international factors is understood as very important. MacGinty (2015) states that the 'local' through activity, networks and relationships highly influences the effectiveness of international peacebuilding. Lee (2015) researched the motivations behind local resistance to externally led post-conflict peacebuilding programmes.

A concept which fits in this glocalization theory in relation to peacebuilding is 'hybrid peace', which is the result of interaction and conflict between local actors or agents and their ability to resist and give alternatives to liberal peace and international and national actors/agents and their ability to enforce acceptance of and give incentives for local engagement with liberal peace (MacGinty, 2008). This hybrid peace is thus a result of both international and local pressures or constraints and their interaction.

NGOs in peacebuilding also fit within this glocalization framework. They are operating more and more on a global level, they depend on operating on an international scale, but on the other hand can only have any effect if they cooperate with local partners, represent local interests and are seen as a legitimate actor by the local communities (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009; Doh & Teegen, 2003). NGOs are therefore a part of this interaction between the 'global' and the 'local'. Thus the glocalization theory is a useful way of conceptualizing the relation between NGOs and the 'global' and 'local'.



## 2.3 CONCEPTUAL MODEL

This theoretical underpinning leads to the following conceptual model central to this research:

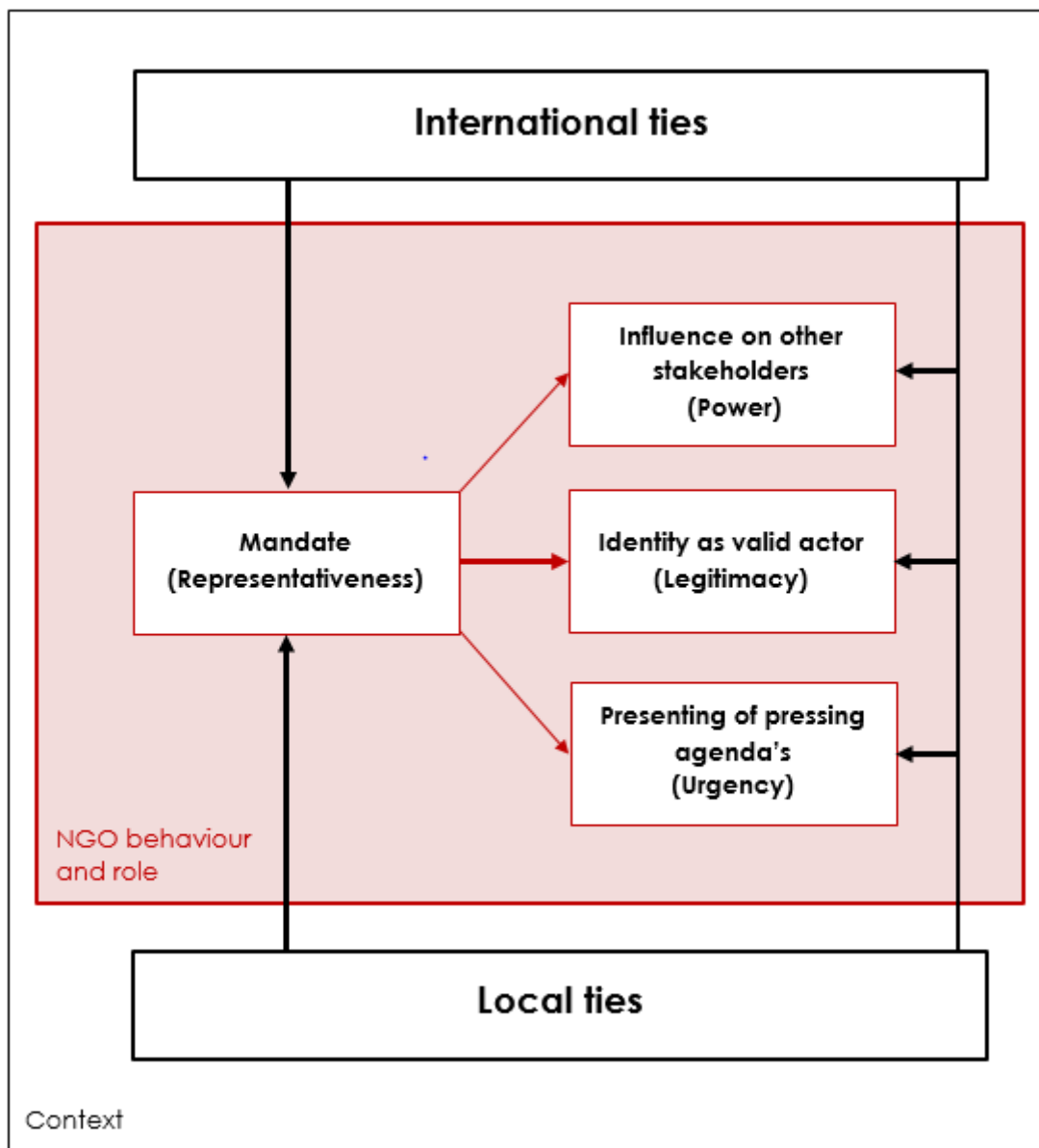


Figure 1. Conceptual model

The model coming from the stakeholder-agency theory is used to conceptualise the behaviour and role of the INGO. In other words, this part of the model conceptualises the INGO as an entity. The globalization theory is central to setting the context. This is conceptualised through the local and international constraints and pressures. They both influence all the 4 aspects of the behaviour and role (it's agency, power, legitimacy and urgency; the arrows on the right leaving from local and international constraints are meant as influencing on all three stakeholder aspects).

The representativeness or agency aspect of an INGO also influences the stakeholder aspects, with the strongest influence on the INGO's legitimacy. It is needed to take in these relations in the conceptual model. However this relation can be assumed based on the literature, as proven in the text above, and therefore will not be the focus of this research. Thus, the focus of this research will

be on the relation between local and international constraints and pressures and the four aspects which construct the entity of the INGO.

What can be concluded from the literature is that the three stakeholder aspects have a direct influence on the saliency (and therefore effectiveness) of INGOs in peacebuilding processes. So it can be assumed that the higher the power, legitimacy and urgency of NGOs is, the higher their effectiveness (Doh & Teegen, 2002, p.671). However for this research it is not possible to measure the effectiveness of INGOs. What is possible is the 'measurement' of the agency-stakeholder aspects as operationalised below.

The identification of local and international ties is an integral part of this research, as can be seen in the first two sub-questions. It will be assessed based on existing literature and the interviews (see chapter 3). What is meant by these variables however is the connection other actors on the local and international scale which influence (constrain or enable) the moves and behaviour of a NGO as an entity.

The aspects of the NGO as an entity according to the stakeholder-agency theory are still abstract. In order to make these aspects 'measurable' or ascertainable, translated these abstract aspects are translated into more concrete variables. The first aspect is agency, which Doh & Teegen (2002, p.672) also translate as 'representativeness'. This means that INGOs depend for their agency on the right to represent a group, perspective, voice, etcetera. Without a representative role, an INGO would have no meaning in a peacebuilding process. This 'representativeness' can be measured, or ascertained by the mandate they get. The mandate can be defined as commission to do something, carry out a policy, be involved in a certain issue, on behalf of a group that enables someone to do so (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016). So only with a concrete mandate, an INGO can obtain a certain agency in a peacebuilding process.

Legitimacy is operationalized as the identity an INGO has in a certain context as the valid actor to execute the activities they do. An INGO can only operate if it is seen as a legit actor or stakeholder in a certain process. This aspect is about perception, the perception that the position and actions of INGOs is desirable and acceptable for other parties involved (Mitchell et al, 1997, p.865). Therefore it is a question of identity. For this research it was impossible to get information on if other local stakeholders see the INGO as a legitimate actor. However it was possible to get information s on how INGOs try to establish and strengthen their identity as a legitimate actor.

The power of an INGO can be operationalized as the means that they have in order to influence and put pressure on other stakeholders involved (Doh & Teegen, 2002, p.673). This aspect of INGO's behaviour and role can be measured in the amount of access they have to 'coercive, utilitarian and normative means' to impose its will on other stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997, p.865).

The last aspect of the behaviour and role of INGOs, the urgency, can be measured in the extent to which they present particular pressing agenda's to other stakeholders and the outside world (Doh & Teegen, 2002, p.673). In other words, to which extent they can make sure that the issues and problems they think are important are also perceived by others as important. How the data for all these variables are collected will be explained in chapter 3.

## **3 METHODS**

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

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This chapter will elaborate on the methodological background of this thesis. First, the different methodological approaches used in this thesis will be presented and the choice for a qualitative research focus will be explained. Second, the different data collection methods will be explained and elaborated on how these data will be analysed and used for this research. Third, the choice for a case study and the elements that make South Sudan a valid case for this research will be clarified. Fourth, the INGOs that cooperated with this research and the respondents will be introduced.

### **3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY**

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For this research different methodological approaches have been used. This research has a qualitative focus, meaning that it uses in-depth data collected through literature study and extensive interviews. Qualitative research is meant to go in-depth into underlying relations, specific contexts, motivations, reasons and behaviour (Verschuren en Doorewaard, 2007). It has mostly an explorative character because it does not aim at giving numeric evidence, but giving deeper insight in a particular problem in a specific context (Verschuren en Doorewaard, 2007). In this research the underlying relationship between the context on different scales and the behaviour of the research object is central, making qualitative research a logical choice. It has an in-depth focus on the problem and explores how the behaviour and role of INGOs is influenced without making a quantifiable hypothesis. The variables of the conceptual model have been operationalized in a unquantifiable way like for example identity, reputation or mandate. Uncovering the true meaning of these variables is only possible through in-depth research methods. Quantitative data therefore do not give the needed information for making statements about underlying relations and behaviour. Besides, there are some practical reasons for conducting qualitative research. Because there are only a few NGOs which match the criteria, only a few NGOs could be researched. In other words, the sample size is small. Quantitative data will therefore have little meaning or relevance.

Partly, this thesis was a desk research. A desk research is characterised by the use of and reflexion on existing material such as literature and secondary data (Verschuren en Doorewaard, 2007, p.201). This means that in using this strategy there is no direct contact with the research object to gather information. This strategy was mostly used in order to answer the first three sub-questions on indicating what international and local ties there are for the work of INGOs. This sets the general context (international and local) which later on was related to the INGOs themselves. Another characteristic of desk research which applies here is that it uses existing information, but approaches it from a different perspective (Verschuren en Doorewaard, 2007, p.201). This will be done by combining international and local approaches and perspectives to the work of INGOs in peacebuilding. The desk research led to a clear image of the ties of NGOs in general, which then could be used to research the behaviour and role of NGOs to a deeper extent.

However, only desk research was not enough. Because in order to answer the research question as a whole it was also necessary to dive deeper into the INGOs themselves, their behaviour and their underlying motivations and struggles. This information could not be found through indirect sources as in desk research, but had to be researched by direct contact with the research objects. This was

done by a case study in which multiple INGOs will served as a source of qualitative data. The most important aspect of a case study is that it tries to get deep and integral insights in specific context-dependent situations (Verschuren en Doorewaard, 2007, p.184). In this research the international and local context is an essential part, namely the influencing variable. It is therefore inevitable to place this research in a context which is delimited in time and space. Thus, only looking at a specific case gives the deeper insights on the specific behaviour of NGOs in that context.

This research focuses on one case only, because that enabled to research the specific context in-depth. With more cases, this would have been undoable. Besides, it was difficult find multiple cases which are comparable because the background, course and resolution of each conflict is always more or less different. When cases are not comparable, researching multiple cases would only undermine the internal validity of this thesis. There is one negative effect of this choice. Researching only one case delimits the generalizability (or external validity) of the research. Because the context is essential in this research, it was inevitable to focus on just one context. However, this research is still able to provide insights to the general influence of contextual, international and local factors, because these factors will also be present in other contexts. Important with a single case study research is that there are different methods of data collection used, or triangulation (Verschuren en Doorewaard, 2007, p.191). The different methods will be explained beneath.

### **3.3 RESEARCH MATERIAL**

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The following data collection methods are a logical result of the research strategy explained above:

First, a literature research was done. On the one hand literature research was used to define and reflect upon a total of international and local ties of NGOs in peacebuilding operations. This date gave an overview and combine multiple findings in multiple contexts. This made it possible to make a logical categorization of possible international and local ties. On the other hand literature research was done on the specific case. Through this method more insight was obtained on the conflict and current situation and which factors and actors are involved in current peacebuilding.

Second, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in order to collect the qualitative data to find the underlying relations between the international and local contexts and the aspects of the working of NGOs as described in the conceptual model. This information was only attainable through contact with people who are directly involved in the process of peacebuilding on behalf of INGOs. Through this interviews the different forms of local and international ties could be concretised into practical relationships. Besides, the influence of these relationships could also be researched through these interviews.

The interviews were analysed by using specific labels that statements about either the sort of tie (for example 'donor' or 'partner') or the sort of influence (for example 'mandate', 'legitimacy', etc.). Besides, they were labelled on the scale the tie or influence occurred ('local' 'national' or 'international'). All the different ties that came out of the interviews were then categorized according to corresponding ties from other respondents and the literature. The influence that were labelled were then classified by aspect of the INGO's behaviour and role where possible.

The interviews were semi-structured because the information that was needed was about identity, power, underlying motivations, etcetera. Interviews were taken with people working within the INGOs on peacebuilding projects in South Sudan. That could be either at a distance (in the

Netherlands) as a coordinator or on site in South Sudan or both. Because of practical reasons, the interviews were conducted with Dutch employees of international active NGOs with an office in the Netherlands. For a more extensive explanation on the respondents and why they were chosen, see the paragraph '3.5'. For the interview guides and questionnaires, [see appendix x](#).

As an addition to these two main data collections methods, some documents were collected that were used to complement the results of the interviews. These data consist of official statements on the websites, policy documents and year reports of the INGOs. As the interviews are the main data collection, these documents were used to compare the statements in the interviews with the official statements. The interviewees sometimes left some blank spaces or they referred to certain documents. Besides, some UN documents were collected in order to get an insight of UN involvement in South Sudan. The data from policy documents thus serves as controlling and complementing data.

### **3.4 CASE STUDY**

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The case of South Sudan was selected for several reasons: (1) It had to be a case in which a violent conflict has occurred, but there has been some kind agreement or cease-fire which has stopped the immediate conflict. This is because only in such cases, there will be possibilities for long-term peacebuilding operations. In 2015 a peace agreement was signed in South Sudan, ending the official civil war. This however does not mean that there is no more violence. (2) There had to be some kind of involvement of the international community. (3) In the region of the case there have to be internationally operating NGOs working on local peacebuilding projects, because those are the research objects in this thesis. In chapter 4, the case of South Sudan will be further explained. In this chapter attention will be paid to recent conflict and why South Sudan still is a valid case for this research.

### **3.5 RESPONDENTS**

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For this thesis, three INGOs originating from the Netherlands were researched who are somehow involved in peacebuilding in South Sudan: PAX (formally IKV Pax Christi), ICCO (Interkerkelijk Coördinatie Commissie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking) and Dorcas. All three INGOs have an office in the Netherlands and have office(s) in South Sudan and work on local projects. From this INGOs, 4 respondents in total (2 from PAX and one from ICCO and Dorcas each) were interviewed during an in-depth semi-structured interview. The operations and origin of the INGOs researched and the role of the respondents within these INGOs will be shortly explained below. Besides, one expert-interview was conducted with Lotje de Vries, who will also be introduced.

PAX is a traditional but small peacebuilding organization based in Utrecht (Netherlands). PAX has projects in Ukraine, Africa (DRC and South-Sudan), Colombia, the Middle East and the Caucasus (PAX – regio's, n.d.). They work on civilian peace programs with the main themes of 1) natural resources, 2) protection of civilians, 3) disarmament, 4) gender and 5) community building (PAX – thema's, n.d.). PAX works on both local peacebuilding implementation projects and on lobbying and policy advocacies in the conflict countries, at international institutions and in the Netherlands. In South-Sudan, PAX's projects are focussed on the themes; protection of civilians, disarmament and community building. Their concrete activities in South Sudan are: 1) vocalizing the local population in conflicts, 2) doing research in order to increase the claim-making capacity of the local population, 3)

lobbying for attention to local peace issues at international and national level, 4) mediation and creating dialogue in local communities and on a national level, and 5) military training (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016; K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). These activities on local, national and international level make clear that they PAX is mostly a political peace organization and not a humanitarian organization. This means that they have a higher involvement in local and national politics and activism than INGOs that are involved in humanitarian development. Based on its Christian background, PAX works from a philosophy of seeing their relation with the local communities in which they work as a social contract (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016).

The first respondent from PAX was Hans Rouw. He has been working with PAX for seven years, starting as a researcher on security both in Africa and South America. He currently works as a program leader on the theme of 'protection of civilians'. In this role, he is setting up a new team working on a diverse range of projects that mainly focus on South Sudan (idem). The second PAX respondent was Kathelijne Schenkel. She's the program leader for PAX program and projects in South Sudan. She supervises the three employees of the PAX office in South Sudan and is responsible for the country strategy of PAX and its implementation (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Both work from the headquarters in Utrecht but regularly travel to South Sudan.

ICCO is one of the traditional 'big 4' international development NGOs from the Netherlands (together with Novib, Cordaid and HIVOS), has a Protestant background and is still linked to the Protestant Church Netherlands (PKN). ICCO has always been a very broad development cooperation organization with activities ranging from advocacy to economic development to peace and community building (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). In recent years on a global scale ICCO shifted more towards a specific scope, focussing on economic development, food supply and relief (ICCO - projecten, n.d.) with a specialization in agribusiness (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). However in South Sudan ICCO is still strongly involved in conflict, post-conflict and emergency relief (ICCO – Zuid-Soedan, n.d.). They have concrete projects in South Sudan in combatting gender based violence in conflict settings, local peacebuilding dialogues and community empowerment and individual livelihood initiatives (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). So although globally they have become mainly a humanitarian development organization, ICCO is still partly a political peace organization in South Sudan.

The respondent from ICCO was Gonda de Haan. Formally she is not employed by ICCO but by 'Kerk in Actie' (in English: Church in action), which is the diaconal agency of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (idem). Where ICCO mostly is funded by institutional funds, Kerk in Actie is funded by private funds from collections in churches in the Netherlands (idem). Kerk in Actie has no projects in South Sudan themselves, but collaborate with ICCO on a number of local ICCO projects in South Sudan. So although they are officially two different structures, Kerk in Actie uses its funds in ICCO organized projects (idem). The role of Gonda de Haan is to integrate the private funding from Kerk in Actie into specific ICCO-projects in South Sudan. Therefore she herself is also an integral part of the ICCO structure and has a lot of knowledge of both ICCO's projects in South Sudan and the international ties of the INGO.

The third INGO is Dorcas, a Christian-based development organization based in Andijk, the Netherlands. Based on its Christian values, Dorcas wants to care for the poor and the repressed, focussing on sustainable development, social care and disaster management (Dorcas – over Dorcas,

n.d.). Dorcas conducts 168 projects in 18 countries. In South Sudan Dorcas is highly active in a broad range of projects including reconstruction, family and youth development, agriculture and healthcare (Dorcas – Zuid-Soedan, n.d.). Although these are no actual peacebuilding projects, they work in conflict and post-conflict settings where they alleviate issues certain situations that tackle root causes of some local conflicts. What makes Dorcas different from the other two INGOs is that is a humanitarian development organization and has no political peace aspects, which both PAX and ICCO have. This makes it difficult to compare the INGOs. Because Dorcas is not clearly involved in peacebuilding, findings from this INGO have to be analysed with care and cannot be included in conclusions about the behaviour of INGOs in peacebuilding projects. However, Dorcas still gave some valuable information on general issues about the context of South Sudan and it used to see if there are ... The respondent from Dorcas was Joost Vermeulen. He is the project coordinator for all relief projects in South Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenia.

The last respondent for this thesis was Lotje de Vries. She was interviewed as an expert on the conflict in South Sudan, in order to get a better understanding of the local context. Lotje de Vries is assistant professor at the Centre for International Conflict – Analysis and Management (CICAM) of the Radboud University and a postdoc research fellow at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg. She has focused on security, borders and state-building. She has done a lot of research on state-building in South Sudan and co-edited a book on the borderlands of South Sudan.

## 4 CASE BACKGROUND: SOUTH SUDAN

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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In this chapter, a short introduction to the case of South Sudan will be given, in order to get an idea of the local context of conflict. First a very brief history of the conflicts of South Sudan since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century will be described. Then, there will be a reference to the development in current events in South Sudan. Third, the role of the international community following those conflicts will be elaborated. Fourth, the role of the civil society and civil society organizations in South Sudan and its link to the international community will be explained. Finally, a short conclusion on what aspects of this case are important for this research will be presented.

### 4.2 SHORT HISTORY OF CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN

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#### **Decolonization**

Since the 1890 Sudan – both current Sudan and South Sudan – were under shared British/Egyptian rule that had its colonial capital in Khartoum (Collins, 2008, p.33). During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the influence of Egypt in the region became much smaller (idem). Until 1946, South and North Sudan were effectively governed as two separate regions, because of their cultural, religious and ethnic differences (LeRichie et al., 2013). However in 1946, the British colonial rulers in Khartoum decided to merge the North and the South of Sudan abruptly into one administrative region. Already since the 1930, nationalist and anticolonial movements were emerging across Sudan (idem). After intense struggle against the British and heavy internal fights, the British empire granted Sudan independence in 1956, but as a single unified nation, despite the large divide between north and south (Collins, 2008).

#### **Civil war and an independent South Sudan**

In 1955, anticipating independence from the British, South Sudanese insurgents started to organize themselves, most importantly in the Anyana army group (LeRichie et al., 2013, p.16). The development of these groups led to the first civil war between the Sudanese government in Khartoum and the South Sudanese rebels in Juba, that lasted until 1972. In that year the Abbis Abeba peace agreement was signed, creating more autonomy and benefit out of national resources for South Sudan (idem, p.24).

By the end of the 1970s, large oil fields were found in South Sudan, that could bring in enormous amounts of money for the Sudanese government. Since 1980 the national government in Khartoum therefore started to violate the peace agreement by diverting the border in order to get a larger share of the resources. This is one of the main reasons that in 1983 a second civil war started (idem, p.57). By now, the most important South Sudanese battle movement is the South Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) led by John Garang. However the SPLA was faced with large inner violent struggle between generals and factions (idem, p.58). The war leads to an enormous amount of refugees (to for example Chad and Ethiopia), internally displaced persons (IDPs) and a severe famine (idem). In 2003, beside the civil war in South Sudan, the extremely violent Darfur conflict emerged, just north of South Sudan.

In 2005, after difficult mediation efforts of the UN, a new peace agreement is signed between the Khartoum government and the rebels. An autonomous status for South Sudan is established and a



referendum for independence is agreed (idem, p.115). John Garang becomes vice-president of Sudan, but dies after a few weeks in office. In 2011 the referendum is held and the South Sudanese people decide for independence and South Sudan becomes an internationally acknowledged independent nation (idem, p.16).

### **The civil war of 2013**

In 2005, Salva Kiir, leader of the SPLM – the political branch of the SPLA – became president of the autonomous region of South Sudan. In 2011 he was elected as the president of the new nation (De Waal, 2014). However there was no stable national peace. In December 2013, Kiir accused his vice-president Riek Machar of attempting a coup. Kiir dismissed several important generals and his whole cabinet. Machar fled the country and it led to an internal war between loyalists of Kiir and opposition forces supporting Machar (idem). At the initiative of (North) Sudan peace talks were quickly started in 2014, but fighting continued and the UN sent in peacekeepers (Burke, 12 July 2016).

### **Peace agreement**

Under threat of UN sanctions that would severely hit the inflow of money into South Sudan – as it is for a large part dependent on foreign aid – a peace agreement was signed in August 2015 between Kiir and Machar. Machar came re-installed as vice-president and in April 2016 a new government of unity was established. However, civil unrest and volatility in the country remained high (idem).

## **4.3 RECENT EVENTS**

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In the beginning of last July a new conflict arose between Kiir and Machar after a bombing near a meeting of the two South Sudanese leader. Machar has fled the country again and armed forces that back the opposition clashed violently with loyal forces, resulting in about 300 deaths (idem). According to the UN more than 16.000 people fled to Uganda due to the new eruption of fighting and there are currently around 1.6 million IDPs in the country (UN, 4 August 2016). Besides, recent hyper-inflation leaves millions of people in hunger and essential infrastructure for relief is not existent. Although on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July a ceasefire was signed, fighting and humanitarian suffering continues until now (idem).

The interviews and all other data were collected prior to the new outburst of violence and thus while a peace agreement was still in place. This means that new situation and volatile context and its influence on the work of the INGOs in South Sudan is unclear. The new events might mean that the influences of local ties specific for the South Sudanese case might have changed. Given that the respondents were all directly responsible for projects and employees on the ground in South Sudan, talking to a bachelor student now is not their first priority. It was therefore impossible to obtain new data on this short notice. Conclusions on local influences therefore have to be cautiously interpreted, but – as the following paragraph makes clear – a lot of INGO activities and aspects of the local context continue regardless of the national political issues of violence.

## **4.4 MULTIPLICITY OF CONFLICTS**

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Up until here, the more general conflict development on a national scale has been discussed, which focussed on the most concrete demonstrable conflict that has arisen. However, as the INGOs mostly work on a local community and regional level – even working on issues that exist across borders – it is also important to discuss the South Sudanese conflict situation on a local level. Looking at this local

level to the structural causes and effects of violent conflict in general, it becomes clear that there cannot be spoken of one conflict. A lot of other factors arise beside the most obvious conflict between the president and vice-president and their armed forces. Several points of attention are important when looking at the violent situation in South Sudan on different scales.

The first point is that the clear opposing groups in the national conflict are not one unified force and they suffer large internal struggles and violence between generals (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). These internal violence has always taken place, as the SPLA that fought for independence has never been a unified army (LeRichie et al., 2013). A second point is that on a local level, most conflicts between and within communities do not arise out of the national conflict, but are a result of all kinds of negotiations and tensions over local livelihood (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). A third point of attention is that these local level tensions and root causes for violent conflict are more or less consistently existent and endure over a longer time than the political struggles at a national level (idem).

A diverse range of factors that lead to local conflicts could be mentioned, because there are so much needs and shortages. De Vries (idem) mentions two major factors that currently lead – and in the past have led – to local violent conflict:

1) There always has been a livelihood conflict that exists between kettle herders and farmers and among kettle herders themselves. The general problem is that cows are for a large part the property of influential generals. These generals provide the herders with arms in order to raid farms and other kettles (idem). This leads to local land conflicts but the actors behind it are of national and regional importance. Also because these kettle herders are nomads that travel regardless of where the borders are, it is a cross-border issue (Kircher, 2013, p.18).

2) The second issue is mostly a local political dimension. In South Sudan there is always a battle for local government positions (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). A recent example is the national decision that was made to enlarge the number of states (South Sudan is a federal state) from 10 to 28 (Independent online, 12 July 2016). This leads to all sorts of local tensions regarding new border lines, the distribution of natural resources and the political influence by communities (for example, which village becomes the state capital) (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). This new policy creates specific problems, but local conflict about political influence is always present.

All these causes of local, regional and national conflicts one way or another are related with each other through interests, actors, etcetera. This means that ‘the conflict’ is not existent, but that there is a multiplicity of conflicts across a range of actors and scales (idem).

The issues with failing to create stable peace and a working state apparatus can therefore not be pinned down to the general current conflict, but is a long-term and deeply rooted problem. That is also important regarding the work of INGOs in South Sudan. ‘Whether or not it’s conflict, INGOs always have a lot of work to do at every level’, because there is a shortage of simply everything (idem). The INGOs, also those which are active in peace, stabilization and state-building, have enough work over a long-term irrespectively of the general concrete conflict. ‘I’m not even sure to what extent the local conflicts and the nation-wide picture really affect the work of these INGOs. (...) What really affects INGOs is the mandate by the UN’ (idem).

## **4.5 INVOLVEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND INGOs**

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Since the independency, but particularly since the second civil war and the Darfur conflict, the international community has played a large role in (South) Sudan. The UN has conducted since 2011 an official peacekeeping mission in South Sudan as there was and still is a continued threat to the international peace in the region (UN resolution 1996, 2011). The UN is also highly involved in state-building, as it accepted South Sudan as its 193d member in 2011. Also other international and national governments (EU, USAID, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs) play a large role through mediation, state-building and especially the provision of enormous amounts of money for humanitarian and peacebuilding purposes (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). These funds are not only spent by the government itself, but are for a large part transmitted to INGOs to implement it in local and national projects.

INGOs therefore have since long played a large role in South Sudanese society, because they brought in large amounts of money to be spend into local communities, which makes the South Sudanese highly dependent on INGOs (Kaler & Parkins, 2015, p.400). Because of the weakness of the government, these INGOs provide a lot of the basic needs that normally the government should provide (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). Therefore there is a diverse INGO community is present in the capital Juba, which plays an important role in civic and institutional life in South Sudan. Some INGOs are active on the national level, trying to influence the national authorities, strengthen the national state and control the government. Others are working in local communities on a wide range of topics and issues in relief, short- and long-term development, including peacebuilding initiatives. There is also a difference between INGOs in the distance to the projects – on the ground – through sub-contracting, having local partners or self-implementation. It is thus a diverse community (idem).

## **4.6 ROLE FOR THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN CURRENT PEACEBUILDING**

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South Sudanese civil society on different levels is an important liaison for INGOs and the international community as a whole (idem). CSOs play an important role both on the national level controlling the government and on the local level as partners of INGOs. However, the ‘space for CSOs to do something meaningful has greatly decreased over the past year and it becomes increasingly dangerous to be critical’, due to restrictive policies of the government (idem).

On the very local level, churches, school teachers and small councils play an important part in civil society. According to De Vries (idem), there is always a certain local elite – that is educated, speaks English and/or has worked in the capital) that takes up a leadership role in civil society of the communities. When INGOs enter a certain context and community, these are the people they come to speak with in first instance. These elites are an important liaison, but INGOs are very dependent on them. Therefore the risk exists that through those local elites, INGOs only will serve the needs of a limited group of people (idem).

## 4.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

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There are several relevant aspects of the conflict situation case in South Sudan that are important to take into account in this thesis. The situation of conflict in South Sudan is immensely complex and consists of a multiplicity of conflicts on different scales and around different topics. Important is that the INGOs are actors that come from outside that context to work and emerge themselves into that complexity. However the influence of the overarching national scale on the activities of those INGOs might be rather small, because the services that they provide and the goals they set, tackle issues that are more local and long-term. This might affect which sort of local ties are important and have a large influence for INGOs.

According to De Vries (personal communication, date), the role of the international community is also substantial on the activities of INGOs in the South Sudanese case. When the UN mission changes, as happened in 2014 when the mission focused on a narrower understanding of protection of civilians (UN resolution 2155, 2014), the INGOs' room to operate also changes. This case therefore enables to look at a broad scale of influences on both international and local conflict dynamics. In this research this will be further investigated by looking at individual ties and their influences on the behaviour of INGOs at the local project level.

## 5 INTERNATIONAL TIES OF INGOS

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### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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In recent decades, despite the fact that the world has become more and more connected and intertwined across borders, there has been a tendency that internal – that means within countries and within communities – conflicts have increased in importance (Hegre et al., 2003). On the other hand external conflicts, between countries, communities, ethnicities, religions etcetera, have declined. In line with the glocalization theory, the locality is of growing importance, also in human conflicts (MacGinty, 2015). However, this does not mean that international actors and connectedness with the international community do not play a role. Because of growing globalization, thus growing interconnectedness across borders through economic ties, supranational governmental/financial/aid bodies and institutions, and growing importance of (social) media, no societal conflict is fully internal (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009). In this multi-scalar area of conflict and peacebuilding, international NGOs originating mostly from Western Europe and North America, play an important role. From existing literature can be concluded that these INGOs often are highly intertwined with the international community in the form of relations with other INGOs, supra-national governmental institutions, different national governments, lobby groups, financial institutions, etcetera (For Example; MacGinty, 2008; Nowrot, 1999). This connectedness influences the behaviour of these INGOs. Because of their close involvement in highly internal conflicts, this also influences the conflicts itself (MacGinty, 2007). The literature gives a large range of different types of ties or relationships that INGOs can have on the international scale with the above mentioned international actors. Not only with whom a relationship exists, but also on what basis this relationship exists differs. This research tries to map and categorize the ties these INGOs have through literature study. What this ties mean in concrete relationships with international actors becomes clear from the interviews. This will be the focus of this chapter.

At the base of these ties there is always a certain exchange of resources and goods – in the form of money, knowledge, personnel, ideas, materials, etcetera. If there is no exchange of resources, there would be no purpose for a relationship. This means if a tie exists or not determines the access these INGOs have to certain resources, thus the possibilities these INGOs have. In this way, the existence of ties creates an adjustment of behaviour. The result of ties of INGOs with other international actors is therefore always a certain dependency (Brown & Moore, 2001). This dependency on those ties, and thus the threat of losing certain resources when the link is broken, creates a situation in which other international actors have an influence on the INGOs and their work (Jalali, 2013). Based on the kind of influence an international actor has, there can be made a fundamental distinction between ties based on financial and non-financial resources. This is because financial resource ties create a funder-receiver relation that has other consequences than when there is no financial dependency. When there is no funding involved in a relationship between an INGO and another international actor, there is often a more mutual exchange of resources that are not monetary.

### 5.2 FINANCIAL RESOURCE TIES

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When a relationship between an INGO and another actor is based on financial funding, we speak of a donor-receiver tie. Most INGOs, such as the INGOs interviewed for this research, are for a large part dependent on the influx of money from international actors such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

(or another governmental body from foreign states), supra-national institutions like the EU and the UN and international private funds. When funding comes from governmental or private institutions of the country of origin of the INGOs, these are still international financial resources. This is because from the viewpoint of where the money is spent, in the local projects in South-Sudan, this also counts as international funding.

Donor-receiver ties are characterised by the fact that there is only a unilateral dependency. This means that there is always a power imbalance between the funder and the INGO. There is always a fear of loss of funds at the side of the international NGO, which might make them less willing to 'engaging in political activity not welcomed by their funders' (Jalali, 2013, p.60). These funders are not directly involved with and have knowledge about the local context and the local projects where the money is spent (*idem*). Nevertheless do these donors shape the conditions on where the money goes.. It is of course dependent on the individual ties and level of engagement between NGO and donor and the level to which the donors sets conditions, but an INGO will always be to some extent directly limited because of its tie to an international funder. In this way the international community and institutions have a fairly direct influence on the way NGOs operate and therefore their effect on the local projects.

From academics, there is a lot of critique on the growing involvement of international actors (mostly INGOs) who are not rooted in local society working in local contexts and having a large impact on those local situations (see: Jalali, 2013; Robinson & Friedman, 2007). A major part of these critiques focuses on the donor-receiver structures that tie INGOs to international institutional donors and the competition between INGOs for the acquiring of funds that is the result of this dependency. The most important problem with this competition of resources that academics mention is that it creates on the one hand fragmentation of the INGO landscape and on the other hand overlap in projects (Jalali, 2013, p.61). It creates fragmentation because donors search for the most appropriate implementer for their funding programs. The more specialized an INGO is towards the specific topics that institutional donors focus on in their funding calls, the more likely they are to get funding, creating a fragmentation of INGOs into all sorts of specializations (*idem*). On the other hand, some problems and some conflict-countries and regions are higher on the international agenda than others. When some conflicts and problems get more attention, this means that international institutions and governments create more funds for those conflicts. As a result, INGOs will be competing with each other on those projects and countries that are high on the international agenda, neglecting issues and areas that get less attention. It creates overlap in INGOs working on the same issues and in the same areas, while other regions and issues, regardless of their local importance, become neglected (Barr & Fafchamps, 2006). In the analysis more attention will be given to these principles and the effects on INGO behaviour and role.

Besides institutional funds, the INGOs are also dependent on private funds, coming from different sources. These private funds have a smaller impact on the INGOs and the most important difference with the institutional funds is that there are much less conditions connected to the funding (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). This is mostly because private funding is often more diverse and cannot be designated to certain actors. However these INGOs often have a domestic constituency (such as members of the church organization the INGO is affiliated to) where in the form of individual donations a large part of the private funds come from. The principles of the

institutional and private funds have different influences on the INGOs and will be discussed in chapter 7.

Looking at the INGOs assessed in this research, all three are for the largest part funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A minor, but substantial part of ICCO's funds, originate from private donations coming from church collections and small individual donors and gets some donations from businesses they cooperate with (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). Dorcas has a broad base of support – unlike ICCO not directly members of one church organization – who contribute with private donations, but this is still a small part of the total funding (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). PAX has less small private funds, although there are some, and is beside funding from the Ministry mostly dependent on other institutional donors such as the EU and the UN and affiliated organizations (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). Although this gives a general picture, the INGOs did not release detailed financial information that would enable to research which funds go to which specific projects.

### **5.3 NON-FINANCIAL RESOURCE TIES**

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Not all resource connections of INGOs to the international community are on a financial basis. Of course INGOs working on peacebuilding also have connections where there is no funding involved, creating a more equal relationship. In these ties, there is an exchange of other resources such as information, personnel, knowledge, etcetera (Jalali, 2013). Most connections without financial ties consists of relationships with other INGOs who work in the same area, in this case South Sudan, work on the same topics in peacebuilding or both. Of course when working on peacebuilding, INGOs encounter other INGOs and other international organizations that have the same goals or work on issues that are complementary to the work of these INGOs in the same community, region or nation. This means that there are always contacts between these organizations. However only when there is some real form of cooperation, there can be spoken of a tie, because there is some kind of dependency (Brown & Moore, 2001). This is because of the assumption that if INGOs will only cooperate with other INGOs or other international organization if they provide a resource that the INGOs themselves cannot deliver, or only in a less efficient or effective manner.

These ties influence the possibilities of INGOs, what they can and cannot do or accomplish, in local projects greatly. Based on literature and the interviews with different INGOs, a few distinctions can be made between different non-financial relationships with INGOs and other international actors. The first distinction is on level of formality of the ties. The level of cooperation can range from a one-time cooperation or simple exchange of information to project-based long-term cooperation based on a mutual funding program (Moore et al., 2003, p.305).

Another distinction can be made on the basis of the geographical scale on which these non-financial ties with international organizations exist. The interviews with the INGOs gave three distinctive geographical levels where INGOs (and other international organizations such as churches and church councils, UN sub-organizations and businesses) can cooperate. As anyone would expect, international ties exist on the broad international level, where they collaborate in international partnerships and represent themselves together towards international governmental institutions (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). The second important scale is that of the domestic/national level in the country of origin of the INGO. INGOs often work together with other INGOs or internationally active organizations that come from the same country, because there exist

personal connections, they have a common history or background or they have to account to the same domestic constituency (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). Although the internationalised, globalised character of many INGOs, this factors makes INGOs from the same country more closely connected than with INGOs from other countries. The third scale on which there is a resource tie between international organizations in peacebuilding is the local scale of the projects. Although INGOs may not have a connection with international organizations on an international scale, they can work together on the local scale in which they do their projects (idem). Many INGOs are specialized in certain issues and approaches, but in a local context this is often not sufficient and therefore other INGOs have to be brought in to complement their practices (Jalali, 2013, p.61). Also in a national context of a post-conflict country, there is often a broad international NGO community where there is a lot of exchange between INGOs without being partners in specific projects. This leads to the situation where INGOs have international ties with international organizations, but only in the local context and not on a broader international scale. International ties do therefore not have to have an international necessity, but the local context can demand for it.

INGOs international connections to other INGOs, on different levels of formality and geographical scale have a wide range of purposes that are useful for INGOs in working more effectively and efficiently on all scales. Based on the analysis of the interviews, non-financial cooperation between INGOs have three main purposes:

- 1) The first important aspect of connection between INGOs is the exchange of information and know-how. INGOs all have their own focus, expertise and knowledge on a certain conflict context. This information is vital in order to build projects that have a substantial influence in the conflict situation. For INGOs it is therefore important to have as much information on the context (on local, national and international scale) as possible (for ex. H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). It is in the best interest of the INGOs to share their information with each other.
- 2) Another important purpose is that ties with other INGOs can give those organizations access to other people, stakeholders in local conflicts, government officials, international lobbying networks, etcetera (idem). As each INGO has its own local, national and international network, and almost always serves as a middle man between all these scales and stakeholders, having strong ties with other INGOs gives access to many more people and networks than INGOs could build for themselves.
- 3) The most local and concrete purpose of ties with other INGOs is complementation. As all INGOs have their own focus and expertise, they cannot do all the work needed on their own (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). Conflicts are dynamic and complex, which often creates new needs and new situations that were not planned when a specific project started. However it might be more effective in certain context if these new or additional needs were filled by other INGOs who have their expertise in that area. Having ties with other INGOs makes it easier to include them within a short time and therefore makes INGOs more flexible on a local scale (idem). For this purpose INGOs specialized in peacebuilding do not only have ties with INGOs with the same focus, but also with INGOs who are more focussed on relief and humanitarian development, as needs in post-conflict and conflict settings often include emergency relief and humanitarian development besides peacebuilding practices.

However, partnerships between INGOs are not always solely for the purpose of exchanging information, creating networks or complementation. They can also have a financial purpose. The interviews made clear that there exist a lot of partnerships between INGOs that are created to apply for funding together at international or domestic institutions. In a lot of cases where there is funding



available for peacebuilding work in South Sudan, donors seek for a multiplicity of INGOs in which each INGO plays its own role in the implementation of these programmes (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). Although this financial need for cooperation can overlap with the purpose of complementation – as the international donors imply – this is often not the case in practice. This means that INGOs sometimes cooperate on the basis of “who looks good together rather than what works in practice” (idem). This takes a large offer in time of these INGOs while it has no purpose in the local implementation, limiting the possibilities of the INGOs on the local level.

## **5.4 TIES TO DOMESTIC CONSTITUENCY**

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Besides all the international organizations the INGOs have a tie with, they also have to take into account their own background. INGOs can be affiliated to and/or created out of another organization, for example religious groups, western medical agencies or western humanitarian initiatives. If this is the case, these INGOs always are tied to the group of people that belongs to this background organization, their constituency (Brown & Moore, 2001). This constituency in the country or countries of origin shares the same values, interests and beliefs. These values and beliefs influence the INGOs in the way they work, what sort of projects they do and what perspectives they use. These influences are of course relatively stable compared to other ties and often is completely engrained in the organization (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016).

All three INGOs in this research have a Christian background and Christian values are strongly incorporated in their work. The extent to which they are directly connected towards specific religious organization with a specific constituency differs, but all three have to take into account the values and beliefs that come from their Christian background. ICCO is directly affiliated to (and funded by) ‘Kerk in Actie’, which is the diaconal agency of the PKN, thus creating a tie to a protestant constituency (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). Dorcas has strong ties with Christian organizations, but not directly to a church organization with membership, so the constituency is more vague (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). PAX has a Christian background, but it is less tied to Christian organizations in the Netherlands (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016).

This tie to their constituency is both financial and non-financial. In the case of ICCO and Dorcas, they are financially partly dependent on private individual donations from members of the church organization they are connected to, although only for a small part. Therefore they have to adjust or present their projects in such ways that these members are willing to donate money (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016; J. Vermeulen personal communication, date). However, even if this financial dependency would not exist, they still would be influenced by the values and beliefs of this constituency as they are always in some way involved in the organization.

## **5.5 INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS**

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Even if there is no direct individual financial relationship between international governmental institutions and peacebuilding INGOs as explained in paragraph 5.2, in which INGOs have to adapt to their direct funding conditions, INGOs are still to a certain extent tied to international policies and institutions in a more general way. This influence of laws and policies is a consequence of the INGOs internationality and natural connection to the international community, because these connections are based upon the policies of these institutions (Jalali, 2013). On the other hand, through its

connection to international governmental institutions, INGOs are also partly responsible for the establishment or adjustments of those policies and laws.

International laws can be limiting on the level of the type of projects an INGO does or the methods it uses, the relations that an INGO can commit to on a national and local level (for example cooperation with local groups who are internationally not accepted as valid actors), and on the mandate that an INGO can have (Brown & Moore, 2001). However the respondents mentioned that a real international legal framework is missing. It is mostly a Dutch legal framework that tie the INGO to the extent that they have to comply to ethic and procedural rules (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). This means that the country of origin can be an important influence on the INGO. According to the INGOs, there is no need for a global or European framework other than human rights declarations, because they think it is the responsibility of the country of origin (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016).

On the other hand, mandates, resolutions and missions that are formally constructed by supra-national governments such as the EU and the UN do have an influence. These are important in the possibilities an INGO has to act, regardless of the existence of a financial dependency of these institutions. On the level of supra-national governments, INGOs are therefore more dependent on policies than on law. An illustration of this influence is the UN change of policy regarding their mission in South Sudan towards a narrower approach to protection of civilians. As explained in chapter 4, this led to a shift in activities of INGOs away from peace- and state-building towards relief and adapted partly to that narrow approach of protection (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016).

## 6 LOCAL TIES OF INGOS

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### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

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The growing importance and involvement of INGOs in peacebuilding processes is a result of diverse globalization processes as explained in the general introduction. Although the background of the growing role of INGOs can be found in the international aspects of conflict and development, their effects are very local. The INGOs, as result of their internationality have gradually developed their international ties that were discussed in the previous chapter, but they are not naturally connected to the local situation in which they want to work prior to the start of their project (Stark et al., 2006, p.324). This means that when starting a project in a new local context or a new country, they have to build local connections from the ground up with actors that play a role in the local context on top of the international ties they already have.

This is especially important for INGOs involved in peacebuilding, because an important characteristic of peacebuilding work is that voluntary cooperation of the local population is essential in having any successful effect. When INGOs in humanitarian aid bring goods that have material value, people will easier accept your presence without local connections (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). When working on peace issues, the only way that any result can be achieved is through dialogue with and between local stakeholders, local ties are essential for INGOs to be able to deliver a contribution to peace, because (idem).

In the past years, there has been growing interest – not only in the international involvement in local conflict and post-conflict contexts – but also in the importance of local involvement of international organizations, especially INGOs. The INGO community in peacebuilding and other civic action projects have been strongly criticised by academics for their lack of local involvement and the resulting limited notion of local contexts (see: Jalali, 2013; MacGinty, 2015; De la Cruz, 2013). Because these organizations financially and politically are backed by foreign actors, they do not have the urgency to increase local involvement and therefore can just come in and do it their own way, without consulting local actors. This is also increasingly the case for local home-grown NGOs who are backed by international funds (Jalali, 2013, p.56). These critics such as Jalali think that more international ties thus lead to decreased local integration, creating a lack of understanding of the situation and recognition of important actors. Only international and no local involvement thus leads to all sorts of inefficiencies and counter-effectivities. Therefore there is a large call from the academic world for more local involvement for INGOs and a certain engagement with local people, grass-roots movements and politics.

This chapter's goal is to map the different forms of ties that INGOs can have – and according to many are obliged to have – to the local context. This will give an answer to the second sub-question of this thesis (*Which types of local ties for international INGOs in local peacebuilding efforts can be distinguished?*). The mapping of ties will be based on the publication of Stark et al. (2006), who differentiate three forms of local rootedness: participation, embeddedness and associativeness. As this division was written for local NGOs that were foreign funded and this thesis focusses on INGOs it cannot be copied one on one. It is therefore adjusted to fit INGOs and some missing things were added, based on literature and the interviews. Each paragraph will explain one of the aspects of local ties and then will be applied to the case of South Sudan. The influence of these local ties, or lack of

local ties, on the behaviour of INGOs will be discussed in chapter 7.

## 6.2 PARTICIPATION

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The first type of local ties that is defined is participation. Participation is in the core about an NGOs ties with local individuals that are not organized in CSOs or other civil organizations, but are directly involved with the NGO (Stark et al., p.328). On the one hand these individuals consist of the local people who are integrated into the structure of an NGO itself, thus the members, volunteers and staff. On the other hand participation can come from the local constituents of the NGOs, so the target groups who NGOs try to represent, give a voice to or give humanitarian aid (idem). As this research focusses on International NGOs in peacebuilding, in most cases there will be no local members of these INGOs. This means participation can be defined as the extent to which volunteers and staff from local origin and constituents (i.e. local individuals from target groups) are engaged and integrated into the organization.

According to Stark et al. (2006, p.328) just the involvement of local individuals in the minimum sense of the word 'involvement' is not enough to create a participatory tie. The criterion is that there has to be a 'relation of accountability'. This means that the staff members, volunteers and constituents have to have some form of engagement in which they are enabled to be critical towards and give feedback on the actions of the INGO (idem). Only if this is the case, there is a participatory tie between local individuals and the INGO. Among NGO and development research, there is a consensus that a high participation leads to a stronger rootedness to local interests and therefore enables INGOs to better represent those interests (see: Barr & Fafchamps, 2005; Robinson & Ridell, 1995). INGOs being accountable to local individuals has as a result that these people are more likely to express their values, opinions and insights, which strengthens their voice (Barr & Fafchamps, p.28-29). It therefore enables more local mobilization in collective action (Stark et al., 2006, p.328), which in this research means action towards peace initiatives.

In the case of South Sudan, the respondents agree upon the importance of having participatory ties. The staff in local projects and offices of all three INGOs in this research exists for a large part of locals. Beside the staff, PAX tries to involve local individuals from the communities in which they want to create peacebuilding projects through dialogues on the programs, although the project design is already finished beforehand. (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). However the most engagement with local people is through the local partner organizations, so most individuals do not have a direct relationship with PAX itself (idem). Dorcas has a high direct involvement with local individuals. This INGO does not work with local partner organizations and therefore does all the implementation themselves. Except for 2 expats, all Dorcas staff in South Sudan is local. (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016) However as Dorcas is more focussed on relief and humanitarian development and less on peacebuilding they may not be representable to draw conclusions on this point. ICCO also has some local staff, but has decided to leave most of the contact with and integration of local people to the local partners (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). "First and foremost it's the [responsibility] of the local NGOs that has executed the program" (idem). The direct accountability is therefore not towards ICCO. This means that their own participation is relatively low.

Although the involvement of local people into the organization of all three respondents is to some extent the case, being accountable is often a challenge and a struggle. Similar to findings in other literature regarding other contexts (see: Agyemang et al., 2009, p.28), the local people have few possibilities to be critical towards the INGOs in South Sudan (H. Rouw, personal communication, 19 May 2016; G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). The situation in the country is so distressing and people have so little, that they find themselves at the receiver end of the relationship with (I)NGOs. "South Sudanese do not have the possibility to hand in formal complaints (...) or be critical" (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). There are no natural systems of communal accountability if an INGO appears and intervenes in the local context (Agyemang et al., 2009). INGOs have therefore the possibility to building and continuing projects without any local participatory tie. It is thus the responsibility of the INGO to create ways for people to be involved and critical. Both PAX and ICCO try with different methods and at multiple points in the process to enable people from their target groups to give feedback and come up with new ideas. However, "it is more an attitude, providing moments for input, than it is a system." (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). The extent to which people are actually able to be critical and can hold the INGO accountable is impossible to research from a distance and goes beyond the focus of this thesis. However it is important to acknowledge when looking at the influence of participatory ties that creating accountability is difficult in the context of South Sudan.

### **6.3 EMBEDDEDNESS**

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The second element of local ties is embeddedness. Where participation was about ties to individuals (members, staff, volunteers and constituents), embeddedness is defined as 'ties to other organizations in the civic sector' (Stark et al., 2006, p.328). In regard to this research that looks at INGOs and their ties, embeddedness can thus be described as the connections that INGOs have with local organizations in the civic sector – also called CSOs. The most important and most obvious CSOs to collaborate with INGOs are local NGOs who are able to help with the achievement of (a part) of the INGO's goals. Some organizations who do not have the capacity to be registered as an official NGO, and are called CBOs (community based organizations) (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016), still can be valuable to INGOs to work together with.

As with participation, INGOs can only be embedded if the relationship with local CSOs includes the aspect of accountability. Participation is downward accountability (towards the receiver) (Agyemang et al., 2009, p.28) and embeddedness as horizontal accountability (towards others in the same field) (Stark et al., 2006). They hypothesise that cooperation with and between local NGOs increases opportunities to form and evaluate projects and programs on the basis of other values and perspectives, defining them in a more encompassing way (Stark et al., 2006, p.328). Besides, other literature suggests that collaboration provides a channel for exchange of information, for example on the local context, increasing effectiveness of the programs (Bach & Stark, 2004)

Regarding the South Sudanese case, both PAX and ICCO have a multitude of close ties with local civil society organizations with whom they cooperate. This cooperation ranges from regular talks to a relation in which the local partner is the implementer of the programs and projects and the INGO is their support and international link (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). As ICCO has a policy of not implementing themselves, they only work with local NGOs and CBOs who do the actual on the ground peacebuilding work within the local communities (G. de Haan, personal

communication, 29 June 2016). PAX is more involved in the execution of the actual programs than ICCO, but still has ties with a lot of CSOs on national, regional and communal level. They have 5 official local partners with whom they have the closest relation (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Both provide opportunities for those local civic organizations to regularly give feedback, evaluate, bring in new perspectives and initiatives and shape the current programs. This means that both INGOs can be considered highly embedded in the South Sudanese context. Dorcas on the other hand “has worked with a local grass-roots NGO, but that failed after one year” (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). This was “due to local capacity”, which was too low to be able to efficiently implement their programs and therefore they only do self-implementation (idem). This means that they cannot be regarded as embedded. Again, it is difficult to draw any conclusions from this choice because only a small part of Dorcas activities include peacebuilding aspects. However, it makes clear that the lack of capacity of local NGOs limits the cooperation and strength of possible ties with INGOs which may create difficulties.

In general, on basis of these respondents, the hypotheses mentioned above seems to apply to South Sudan. There were three main purposes for creating ties with local NGOs and other CSOs that were presented by the respondents: 1) The first purpose is getting access to the right people. Because local CSOs are grass-rooted, they have a natural connection in the local connection. Therefore they know who to talk to within communities, who are the people that are most in need and they speak the local languages (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). Cooperation with these organizations makes it easier to reach the people the INGOs need or want to help and thus are seen as “gatekeepers” (idem) 2) A second purpose is that being backed up by local CSOs who are rooted in society gives INGOs more credibility on what they want to achieve, both to international donors and locals. (idem). 3) And last, it gives not only access to people, but also to information on the local context that help shaping projects towards better serving the target groups. “They are well rooted (...) and know better who are the ones in need” (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). This information would not be available if INGOs would implement without being embedded, because the rootedness of local NGOs gives them specific insight.

## **6.4 ASSOCIATIVENESS**

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Where the first two local categories were focussed on density of ties – both with target groups and local partners in the same ‘field’ – this category is focussed on the diversity of ties, thus the broadness of ties outside of the same working field of the INGO. Associative ties are defined as the INGOs ‘collaborative relations with actors outside the civic domain’ (Stark et al., 2006, p.329). They define an (I)NGO as associative if it has ties to a minimum of two organizations belonging to different sectors (idem). When an INGO starts working in a post-conflict situation – or any other civic domain – there is a wide range of actors and stakeholders beside their constituents and partners that are important (see: Bruszt & Vedres, 2006). Associative ties are therefore meant as all the connections with local organized groups that come from diverse institutional fields beside the field of civil action. Stark et al. (2006) name government, business, science/education and mass media institutions as the most important examples of possible associative ties.

In peacebuilding efforts this associative local aspect is particularly important, because peace processes always involve a large amount of stakeholders from a range of sectors with their own perspectives and interests. To be able to work on an inclusive, sustainable and hybrid peace, it is

important to include as much of these stakeholders as possible, because if stakeholders are neglected, they may become spoilers to the peace processes (MacGinty, 2008). In this way, INGOs are always, one way or another, tied to a diverse range of organizations and institutions outside the civic field. In the literature it is argued that the main purposes for NGOs to be associative are to 'make more encompassing representations' (Stark et al., 2006, p.329), get a wider range of perspectives and provoke more positive publicity and credibility associated with diversity.

If the criterion of Stark et al. (2006, p.329) of having at least two connections to organizations outside the civic field are applied to the South Sudan case, all three INGOs in this research can be called associative. However the extent to which they have associative ties differs. There are no exact numbers on the amount of organizations that the INGOs collaborate with. What can be said is that Dorcas has the lowest amount of ties with organizations outside the civic field. Both PAX and ICCO have an extensive network of collaborative ties with all sort of organizations. One reason for this is that they have a much lower self-implementation rate. The other is that PAX and ICCO are both involved in broad peacebuilding programs that operate at national, regional and local levels (PAX, 2014), while Dorcas' peacebuilding efforts are just on a local scale (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). Being active on all scales of peacebuilding naturally demands including many more stakeholders than only working on a community level. Dorcas is therefore not completely representable, but it gives an insight in working on a multiplicity of scales increases the amount of ties that have to be taken into account.

As general purposes of associative ties, the respondents indeed elaborate on the principle that it gives them a "fair representation of perspectives and ideas". Besides it ensures a certain "sustainability of their projects and programs". It does not mean that every possible voice has to be heard: "We need to include all their perspectives to the extent that they are meaningful for this particular project and not deceive yourself that every South Sudanese has an equal amount to say" (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). This confirms the general hypotheses of why associative ties are important. Looking at individual sectors of associative ties, there is a lot of diversity in the extent to which INGOs cooperate with them and for what reasons. Businesses are involved mostly by ICCO, but in the projects that are about creating a better livelihood through agribusiness initiatives (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). As livelihood development projects are more and more based on market principals, the involvement of businesses are very helpful. However in real peacebuilding projects, businesses are less important and sometimes work, in the case of PAX, even as a spoiler (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). PAX and ICCO also have ties with media institutions, both for the purpose of giving a voice to people, spreading a mission and for being an integrated part of some programs (idem). Relations with knowledge and educational institutions also exist, for example to be able to get good local staff, work together on research projects, etcetera. However both PAX and ICCO admit that cooperation could be stronger (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016).

All four respondents from the three INGOs working in South Sudan admit that there is a growing recognition that collaborative ties with local authorities are also important in both peacebuilding and humanitarian development. Although local and national governments in conflict ridden and corruptive systems were mostly seen as opposing forces to the work INGOs do, in recent years the INGOs in South Sudan have acknowledged more and more that a good relationship with government is necessary and helpful (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). Especially in

peacebuilding, the local authorities are needed to be involved into the dialogue to prevent them from becoming spoilers (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Besides they can be very helpful in increasing capacity and facilitate dialogues and meetings. Also in emergency situations, which occur often in South Sudan, a government who is willing to help because of the good relationship an INGO has built with them, can be vital (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). This collaborative attitude is particularly feasible towards very local governments, because they are the most directly accountable towards the local population and therefore have a need and willingness to serve the needs of the local population (idem)

## **6.5 LOCAL AND NATIONAL LAWS AND POLICIES**

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But not all ties to local and national government are cooperative. As government authorities are able to impose rules and regulations, INGOs are always bound to laws and policies of the specific country they are working in. Domestic laws and policies can be imposed for good reasons: to regulate and register the proliferation of NGOs and other CSOs in order to prevent that there are an enormous amount of NGOs working without any control or accountability (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). However, around the world there are many cases in which governments impose legislation that limits NGOs in their freedom, forbids or limits foreign funding, imposes enormous taxes or make it possible to destroy NGOs completely if the government does not like them (Jalali, 2013, p.63-64). INGOs are always tied to these regulations and can be severely limited by them.

For the case of South Sudan, it is difficult to estimate how limiting domestic South Sudanese laws and policies are for INGOs in peacebuilding. PAX indicates that there is an NGO bill that can impose high taxes and other constraining measures on NGOs, when they do something against the will of the government. “You always have to be careful how you bring your message” (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). The other INGOs do not have bad experiences with laws in South Sudan, but admit that governmental policies can sometimes be a bit constraining (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). This constraining tie to laws is nearly always imposed by national governments, because local authorities – for reasons mentioned above – are more willing to help the INGOs in serving their same constituency (idem).

The collaborative ties with authorities mentioned in the previous paragraph can help in alleviate the constraints imposed by laws. When there is a long-term relationship, governments will be less eager to impose their limiting laws to the INGO, because they then will see the value – also for the government officials themselves – of the presence of these INGOs (idem).

## **6.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

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In this chapter the different forms of local ties of INGOs were discussed. What can be concluded is that all INGOs working in peacebuilding in South Sudan have a multiplicity of local ties that on the one hand enables them to achieve their goals and on the other hand may constrain their actions. Because the focus not only was on what sort of local ties there are, but also on why these ties exist, this chapter mainly elaborated on the positive influences. However it can also be concluded that there are many difficulties and sometimes even limiting principles that can have a negative consequence on the behaviour of the INGO. What concrete consequences these ties have on the mandate, legitimacy, power and urgency of the INGOs will be the focus of the next chapter.



A nuance on the result presented above is the notion that it is not necessary for INGOs to have all sorts of local ties mentioned above and that having one sort of ties may have an influence on the extent to which there exist other ties. For example: The INGOs that are highly embedded – have a lot of partnering local NGOs and CSOs – often themselves have a role on the background in the concrete implementation. The participation of local individuals is therefore often conducted by these local partners and the INGO might have less participatory ties. One must be careful to value low participation as bad, because when embeddedness is high, participation might be not directly visible.

## 7 INFLUENCE OF TIES ON INGO PROJECTS

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### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

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Now that all the international and local ties that an INGO can have are mapped and categorized, it is possible to analyse the influence of these ties on the behaviour and role of the INGO in the local context. In the last two chapters the question was what sort of ties there are, but there was also a short emphasis on why these ties exist or what reasons INGOs have to create those ties. In this chapter it will be further elaborated what the concrete influences are of the existence (or non-existence) of those ties upon the INGO itself. With this analysis the last four sub-questions will be answered (see paragraph 1.3), with each sub-question focussing on one of the aspects of the behaviour and role of an INGO.

Based on the conceptual model that stemmed from the theoretical framework, this chapter will discuss each aspect – the mandate, legitimacy, power and urgency – that together form the behaviour of an INGO in a project. All the influences from international and local ties on this aspect will be analysed and elaborated. However some influences could not be pinned down to one specific aspect, because it influences the organization on a more general level and not at project-level. These influences will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

### 7.2 THE MANDATE

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The first aspect of the behaviour and role of an INGO in a local project is the mandate. In the operationalization, this aspect was defined as the commission to act on behalf of and in favour of someone else (a group or an individual) (Doh & Teegen, 2002). INGOs themselves do not have any stake in the local projects they work in. They always have a representative function, giving a voice or capacity to groups who do have a stake in the issue. If an INGO does not have a mandate to work in a certain context, than there is no sense in working in that context. The stronger and clearer the mandate of an INGO is, the better it is able to do valuable work. As was explained in the theoretical framework, a strong mandate has a positive influence on the other aspects – the power, urgency and most importantly the legitimacy – of the INGO (idem, p.672). Thus when assessing the influence of both local and international ties on the mandate, it is important to analyse where the mandate comes from, so on behalf of whom the INGO operates: who gave this commission to act in that local context and which ties are responsible for this.

However in peacebuilding processes in South Sudan, an outsider INGO cannot chose sides and chose to represent only a specific group. Because the conflict is so complex along different scales and groups (see chapter 4), it is only possible to achieve something if people and groups are brought together (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). The INGOs in this research working in South Sudan are therefore always functioning as an intermediary with a position that is as neutral as possible. They do not support specific groups, ethnicities or religion. The INGOs all say that they try to represent the local population in general (PAX/ICCO) or the people who are “poor and oppressed” (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). As this is still vague, it is important to look at which local contacts contribute to a strong local mandate, thus as an INGO being able to act on behalf of (a specific) part of the local population.

The analysis of the interviews suggests that having a high participation has a positive influence on the strength of the mandate. Having ties with local individuals who are involved directly into the structure of the INGO – staff, volunteers, but also delegations from local communities who can give input – enables the INGO to better understand the local situation. Being in direct contact with the people the INGO is trying to help, enables it to better represent them (for ex.: K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Besides, by involving local individuals in the INGOs also gives the local population directly a voice in the peace process, contributing to the mandate (H. Rouw, personal communication).

Being embedded into the local civil context – having ties with local NGOs – strengthens the mandate too. The main reason is that local grass-roots civil organizations have “natural ties with the local population” the INGO tries to represent and can overcome “communication difficulties” that an INGO would encounter (idem). This gives the INGO – through the link with local CSOs – access to people who can help shaping the projects based on vital information on the target groups and the local context (idem; G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). This – like participatory ties – enables the INGO to represent the target groups better in peace dialogues and other peace initiatives. Besides, local civic organizations themselves possess important knowledge on local context, values and needs (idem). Obtaining that information and use it in cooperation with those local organizations in the projects helps to strengthen the mandate.

However as an international organization with international ties the commission to act is not only shaped by the local population, but also by the international aspect of the INGO. When working in a local project, although for the purpose of local people, the INGO always represents some kind of internationality (Brown & Moore, p.570). This means that an INGO always has some international mandate, because if the international community would not support the INGO working somewhere than it would not have the possibility to work (idem). The international mandate is shaped by the international ties of an INGO and the stronger and more numerous its ties – so the level of support from the international community – the stronger its international mandate. Below the influence of the different categories of international ties will be assessed, based on the experiences of the respondents.

Financial ties are an important influence on the mandate, because the finances are the primary condition for the possibility to act in a project. These finances nearly always bring with them some kind of conditions on where the money should be spend. Finances therefore are an important part of the commission to act (idem). The concrete influence donors have on the mandate depends on the strictness and concreteness at project level of the demands of the donor.

In practice in the South Sudan case, the institutional donors have a large influence on the mandate, because most funds originate from them. These institutional donors, as explained in chapter 5, set frames and conditions for their funding where INGOs have to adjust to in order to be eligible for funds. Although these conditions are often only generic and do not relate to individual, but more likely to a range of projects or the organization as a whole (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016; G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016), they indirectly have an influence on the mandate at project level in South Sudan. The institutional funds have formulated a mandate for their own organization in which they determine their focus, target groups, goals, perspectives, approaches, etcetera. In practice, when an institutional donor gives out a funding call and INGOs apply for that funding, this institutions mandate is transmitted to the INGO, because the INGO has to

adjust its target groups, focus and ways of operating in order to be eligible for that funding. This adjusting has to take place, disregarding the local ties.

This is however not a one-on-one transmission whereby INGOs fully discard the mandate from the local population. The INGOs are always trying to find a balance between the needs and possibilities from the local context and the conditions set by the institutional donors: “We mostly see them as brackets in between which you can work” (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). The level of adjustment of the mandate to the institutional donor’s mandate is dependent on the freedom and trust the institutional donor gives to the INGO.

According to the respondents, the influence of private funds is much smaller. In most instances, the relation between private funds and the INGO is more open. The INGOs present a proposal for certain projects and based on this proposal – without any conditions beforehand from the private donor side – the donor decides to fund or not (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Institutional funders already set a framework for funding proposals beforehand which then shapes the mandate an INGO has to develop. With private funders this is not the case.

Beside the fact that international (governmental) institutions have a large influence on the mandate of projects that belong to specific funding programs, they also have a more abstract influence through international laws and policies, even if there is no financial link. International governments (especially the UN and the EU are important in this case) and national governments (in this case the Dutch) create certain foreign policies on how they approach conflicts and tensions abroad. In their policy papers, resolutions and statements, they define the problems in certain conflicts and what in general terms should be done to solve this. An example is that the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs applies for their development department an approach that is based on the ‘theory of change’. All development projects have to be approached according to this framework (Rijksoverheid, 2015). This approach also finds its way into the projects that the three INGOs in this interview conduct. These policies give a mandate to the INGOs to act in order to tackle these problems. When their activities are backed up by for example UN and EU resolutions and policies, they have stronger mandate through a larger international support. Therefore INGOs to some extent will adjust their activities to changing policies in order to keep a valid mandate. An example of this is a recent change in UN resolution on South Sudan (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016; see paragraph 4.7).

Another important international influence on the mandate might come from the domestic constituency of the INGO. As was explained in chapter 5, INGOs can have a strong domestic constituency in the country or countries where it originates from. In practice, this constituency can consist of members and volunteers in the Netherlands and/or members of an affiliated organization, such as a church. ICCO is itself - and through its collaboration with Kerk in Actie – strongly affiliated to the PKN (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). Dorcas and PAX both have a strong Christian base too, but are not as directly affiliated to a Christian denomination with members. The constituency of an INGO has certain norms, values and focus of importance. Because INGOs cannot neglect their background and this constituency, regardless of if there is some financial dependency. So to some extent INGOs have to adjust to the wishes and values of the constituency, or at least do not have the freedom to suddenly deviate from this values (idem). In a way INGOs also represent this constituency by their approaches and values, even at a local project level. Therefore the domestic constituency also gives the INGO a certain mandate.

The previous makes clear that there are a lot both international and local influences on the mandate. It does not mean that some influences are always positive and some negative, because it is difficult to assess in which cases and with which ties the mandate is stronger or weaker. What can be concluded is that because INGOs are on the one hand locally active, on behalf of a local population, and on the other hand are tied to international actors, INGOs are always given a multiplicity of mandates from different levels. In the best case these different mandates fit perfectly to each other, with the values and interests locked in the international mandates suit exactly to the needs from the local population. However values, approaches, interests and conditions transmitted through the international mandates can also diverge from what the locally constructed mandate might dictate. If the proper balance is not found, this might lead to activities and projects not fully in the interest of the local population, creating problems with the INGO's legitimacy, power and urgency.

### **7.3 LEGITIMACY**

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Legitimacy was defined in chapter 2 as the extent to which an INGO is seen as an authorized and valid actor in peacebuilding processes and initiatives in a certain context by the target group and other stakeholders involved (Doh & Teegen, 2002, p.672). Legitimacy is thus about identity, but what kind of identity the INGOs have in the local South Sudanese context is difficult, if not impossible, to assess. It was out of the reach of this research to get information on if other local stakeholders see the INGO as a legitimate actor. Therefore one has to be cautious in drawing rigorous conclusions out of this analysis regarding the INGOs position.

However it was possible to get information from the interviews on how INGOs try to establish and strengthen their identity as a legitimate actor. Based on this, it was possible to analyse which international ties are needed in these attempts to strengthen the legitimacy. In this way it was possible to assess which ties contribute to the legitimacy and which ties (or absence of ties) might undermine or impose difficulties on the legitimacy.

For a part this question is already answered in the last paragraph. As was explained in the theoretical framework there is a strong relation between mandate and legitimacy (see chapter 2). Based on the theory it is assumed that a stronger mandate leads to a higher legitimacy. This means that indirectly the ties that strengthen the mandate (such as high participation and embeddedness) also lead to a higher legitimacy via the same principles and contradictory mandates can undermine the legitimacy. Beside this indirect effect, the analysis brought forward some direct influences on the legitimacy by the different ties as mapped in chapter 5 and 6. Those direct influences will be discussed below.

Strong participatory ties with local individuals strengthen the legitimacy on different scales and towards a range of stakeholders. The first influence is that if local individuals from communities are involved in the INGO itself, they are enabled to bring in their ideas, visions and feedback. These local communities will see the INGO as a more valid actor if some of them are directly integrated in the organization. This is especially important in peacebuilding projects, because INGOs do not offer any goods that have a materialistic value. Thus, local communities and actors always have the possibility to not cooperate if the INGOs are not seen as valid (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). Peacebuilding efforts have no effect without voluntary engagement. If locals voluntarily cooperate with the INGOs in setting up projects and creating dialogues, this is a proof for the legitimacy towards the local communities (idem).

High participatory involvement also increases the legitimacy of the INGOs towards local and national South-Sudanese authorities. These authorities always have the possibility to create legal battles against the INGOs, exclude them from organizational rights, imposing taxes on them and making them judicially illegitimate (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Being strongly integrated within the local communities protects INGOs from these governmental whims, as governments risk losing support from the local population if they limit the work of INGOs that are strongly backed by the local population (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, 15 June 2016). This makes participatory ties “politically needed” in order to remain legitimate towards the South-Sudanese government (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016).

Embeddedness – ties with local CSOs – contributes to the identity of a valid actor through the strengthening of the mandate. This is because the purposes that embeddedness has of access to people and get information on the local context that shape the local mandate. As local NGOs better understand the local context and are naturally more rooted into society (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016), they are better trusted by local people. Working together with local NGOs and other civil organizations gives INGOs therefore a more legitimate position towards other local actors and the target groups.

Besides, working together with local civil society partners also can increase the legitimacy towards the international institutional level. According to the respondents, ties with local partners are used to bring those local partners to the international level to tell their story and how the partnership with the INGO looks like (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). Giving those local organizations a voice towards international institutions leads to a higher credibility of the INGO and the notion that they are best fit to be involved in that local context.

A high diversity in the local ties across a range of institutional fields – associativeness – increases legitimacy too. Particularly in peacebuilding, getting a wider range of perspectives and creating an overview of interests across societal groups and institutions will lead to a more inclusive peace process (Stark et al., p.329). On the side of those different stakeholders, this will lead to a higher acceptance of the INGO as a stakeholder. Involving as many actors as possible who have an interest in the issues addressed in the INGO’s projects therefore will limit the amount of spoilers that emerge during the implementation. Especially a strong cooperative tie with the authorities on both national and local level can increase legitimacy (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). As explained in paragraph 7.2, authorities can impose laws and policies that make an INGO illegitimate. In recent years it has been acknowledged by the INGOs that cooperation with government will ensure that on the long run, governments will not spoil, increasing the legitimacy.

Although more local ties in general will lead to a higher legitimacy some difficulties regarding local ties can undermine the legitimacy if the INGO is not cautious about this effects. It is very difficult for INGOs, because they are not naturally rooted into the local context to get a good representation of actors and perspectives, as they always are dependent on others (i.e. local partners, contacts or employees) to get access to other stakeholders. “NGOs have a tendency to talking to the elites of a country rather than the absolute grassroots” (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016) If INGOs do not have a good picture of all the stakeholders and only listen to or give a voice to the limited representation of society that is presented to them, this may lead to choosing sides and neglecting others (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). This creates the risk of having an opposing group that will not accept the INGO as a valid actor with the right authority. This

opposing group will become a spoiler, decreasing the INGO's legitimacy. The difficulties regarding lack of accountability may cause problems too. If there is little possibility to give feedback and criticism for local individuals, CSOs or other organizations to the approaches of the INGO, it can act outside the interests of the target groups, which decreases legitimacy (Brown & Moore, 2001, p.582).

International ties can cause difficulties with local legitimacy because they cause the multiplicity of mandate. With a mandate that is also inevitably directed towards international actors and constituencies, an INGO may be forced to shift away the focus of its projects from local needs and context. This leads to a decrease in suitability of the INGO as the legitimate actor playing a role in that local context. However this does not mean that international dependency – both financial and non-financial – automatically leads to a decrease in legitimacy. The goals and approaches of the international actors that transmit the mandate to the INGO might perfectly fit to the local needs. INGOs have to take into account that the international influence is inevitable and have to ensure it does not endanger the fulfilment of local needs.

Finally, international ties with other INGOs, through contacts on international, national and local scale, have an influence on the legitimacy. As explained in chapter 5, relations with other INGOs generally have three main purposes and consequences: 1) the exchange of information, know-how and context on all levels, 2) getting access to existing networks and 3) specialization and complementation. All these purposes can ensure that the INGO is seen as a valid actor, thus increase the legitimacy on the level of both the local context and the international community.

The mutual exchange of information and know-how increases the knowledge of INGOs. It therefore makes them more suitable to tackle the problems they encounter when setting up and designing projects and during the implementation (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). Getting access to international networks also creates entrances into local society that were otherwise not possible and thus increase the legitimacy. ICCO, through its contacts with other INGOs is affiliated to a global church aid network, called ACT. Being in this network gives them access to local church organizations who are highly trusted by and integrated in the local society (*idem*). Ties with other INGOs may also lead to specialization and complementation. This means that the INGO becomes better in a certain area, increasing the ability to fit on the local context, increasing the legitimacy of both the INGO self and other INGOs (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). A problem of this principle may be that INGOs become less broad in scope and thus less flexible if local events demand for another approach or other initiatives.

In conclusion different international and local ties have a direct influence on the legitimacy of INGOs and imposes a challenge on the organizations to on the one hand be the most suited organization to do the work they do at a local level – and be seen as such by the local communities – and on the other hand given the trust by the international community that the INGO indeed does useful work according to the principles the international community fixes.

## **7.4 POWER**

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The third element of the behaviour of INGOs – power – is defined as the means an INGO has to influence and put pressure on other stakeholders involved (Doh & Teegen, 2002). Other than the first two elements that were about why these INGOs themselves were the right actors to be in the position they are, this is about the extent to which they can influence others. Of course, there can

only be an influence on other stakeholders when there is a connection to those stakeholders. So having local ties – because this research is about the role of INGOs in local projects – is a prerequisite of having any power. This would suggest that more local ties would therefore lead to more local power. However, this may be too simplistic because not every relationship leads to a situation in which an INGO can influence the actor it has a relationship with. Therefore this research will look at what principles lie behind the influence of ties on power and on how the number and extensiveness of ties strengthens or weakens the INGO's power.

One of the main purposes of having ties with local NGOs and other CSOs, is creating access to people within local communities that otherwise would not be found by the INGO itself. In a context like that of South Sudan, it is difficult as a foreigner and a foreign organization to be able to talk to the people on a community level who can contribute to the peace and development processes (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Local NGOs and CSOs who have grass-roots in those local communities have the necessary knowledge about who the important actors on a local level are. These leaders in local communities (for example chairs of committees, teachers, church leaders, etcetera) themselves have an influence on other stakeholders and the community itself (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). If INGOs can cooperate with these leaders, they obtain a stronger power position within the community.

Having participatory ties with local individuals within the structure of the INGO also increases power, mostly to one specific stakeholder: the government (both local and national authorities). The same principles that were explained by legitimacy, apply to power dynamics: Because South Sudanese government on all levels is corrupt and unpredictable, it is important to have strong participation, as those authorities will less easily try to frustrate the INGO's initiatives if these are backed by local people (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). It makes the INGO's position to get things done towards the government stronger. This is especially important for INGOs who are involved in civil and political activism, such as PAX, because these activities might undermine the position of government officials. Governments feel less threatened by INGOs who do mostly developmental work and peacebuilding efforts as a smaller local part and does not really involve political activism (J. Vermeulen, personal communication, date).

The same principle applies to associativeness: ties across a diverse range of local and national institutions outside the civic field. Especially ties to governmental institutions themselves prove to be important for obtaining a power position. It is important for INGOs to have direct lines with governmental officials (in parliament and ministries) to put pressure on the government (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Ties with other institutions can also give access to the government system in order to have an influence there.

Laws and government policies within South Sudan can undermine the power of an INGO, for example by imposing taxes on foreign money and strict rules on local staff, freedom of speech, etcetera. If other stakeholders who function as spoilers for the INGO's initiatives have close ties with government, they can use this corruptive system to undermine the INGO's power. This can be combatted by strong ties with government itself or institutions that are closely connected to the authorities.

The influence of international ties on the power position of INGOs, especially in very local contexts, was more difficult to assess. The interviews gave no clear picture of this influence. What could be



hypothesized is that its international financial ties, leads to a dependency relation in which the INGO has a strong power position over other stakeholders, because they bring in all of the money that is available. The INGO in this case is the only actor having the position to spend that money. However in the interviews these kind of influences were not discussed, thus this should be further investigated in order to be able to draw conclusions.

In conclusion, stronger local ties in South Sudan, either through participation, embeddedness or associativeness can increase the power of an INGO. This means being more integrated into local society through the different types of ties increases the possibilities an INGO has to influence and put pressure on other stakeholders involved in the process. However as INGOs are not naturally integrated into the local society, the same difficulties with local ties that were discussed regarding legitimacy and mandate, can undermine the power position of INGOs.

## **7.5 URGENCY**

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The urgency was defined in chapter 2 as: the extent to which they present particular pressing agenda's to other stakeholders and the outside world (Doh & Teegen, 2002). This aspect of the behaviour and role of an INGO is thus about creating attention and a sense of importance for the issues the INGO is working on in the local projects. It is difficult to assess to what extent they concretely succeed in creating this urgency and such an analysis goes beyond the reach of this research. However the relation between ties and urgency is assessed by looking at which channels and relations are used to bring issues to the national and international agenda and which ties can be used to strengthen the voice of the INGO and the impact of this voice.

Having ties with local NGOs and other CSOs contributes to the creation of urgency on an international level. This is because the international community – such as the UN and the EU – are more willing to listen and the message has more impact if INGOs bring in local people and experts to lobby activities (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). The local people who have the expertise to contribute to the message are mostly involved in local NGOs. Being embedded and having those local contacts therefore invigorates the message on an international level. This relation also works vice versa: whereas the local NGOs in South Sudan often do not have the capacity or the freedom to spread attention for certain issues around conflict to the international communities. INGOs both have that capacity and the freedom, so they also can contribute to the urgency of local NGOs on an international level and in that way help increase the impact of those local organizations (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). This same principle also applies to ties with local individuals. Participation increases the urgency at an international level. The general impression is that it has more impact when the local people who are used to transmit a message are formally organized – thus in NGOs or other CSOs – than when local individuals who come directly from a community voice the concerns. However this might depend on the issue that is addressed.

Having ties with a diverse range of national and local institutions outside the civic action field, helps in the creation of urgency both at a local and a national level. Especially institutions that are closely connected to the government (or the government itself) and institutions that have a high esteem within local society such as churches are important in this respect. At a national South Sudanese level, given the violent struggles and weak government, local issues are often neglected. As the INGOs are often active within that very local scale, it is important for them to create urgency on the national level (L. de Vries, personal communication, 28 June 2016). If an INGO that has no

connections to different institutions, then there is no exchange of information across different sectors and less entrances to government officials, thus it is more difficult to create urgency.

Looking at international ties, the access to different networks of INGOs and other international civil organizations proves to be helpful in the advocacy for agenda setting both on the international and the local level in the country of the project. When INGOs work together, they have an enormous amount of total knowledge and can together create a large constituency that backs their initiatives, because these INGOs all have their own background and constituencies. These factors lead when working together to a higher level of attention of the international community to the issues the INGOs address (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). Besides, on a national level INGO partnerships can put pressure on the government to create attention for an issue far better than when INGOs all work alone. Not only networks between INGOs but also ties to international church organizations, such as the world council of churches, increases the impact of and the constituency behind the message (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016).

In the case of South Sudan, the international institutions that are funding the programs of the INGOs are also the institutions who are themselves involved directly in South Sudan and can have an impact on the situation there, such as the UN and the EU. This means that these are also the institutions where urgency has to be created. Having ties with those institutional donors therefore increases the international urgency of the INGOs, because the INGOs can bring up and create attention for issues in their regular accounting towards the institutions which is part of their financial relationship. However one could argue that the existence of an institutional donor tie not only could be a means to create urgency, but also is a proof of the successful creation of urgency that already has taken place. Because if there was no urgency for the issues of the INGO already, there would be no funds.

## **7.6 GENERAL INFLUENCES**

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Up until here, the influences of international and local ties were analysed on the four aspects of the behaviour of INGOs in local projects. Out of the analyses of the interviews also came some influences that could not be categorized according to those four aspects of the conceptual model. The main reason for this is that those influences mostly had an impact on the meso-level – the organizational level in total – or on the INGO community as a whole, while the model is aimed at the local project level. So although these influences fall outside the preliminary framework of this research it is still important to mention them and they will be discussed below.

The influence of institutional donors on the behaviour of the INGO (mainly in forming the mandate and its legitimacy) at a project level was already explained in the previous paragraphs. However a result of the interview analysis was that the influence of institutional funders on INGOs mostly takes place in very generic terms and on the level of the organization as a whole. These influences can be summarized into three main aspects of influence:

1) *The level of self-implementation.* Institutional donors demand extensive and elaborate accounting for the projects both regarding finances and activities – more than any other kind of international tie. It is fair to expect from the INGOs to have the capacity to deliver those accounts. However when working with local partners, this might impose difficulties. All INGOs acknowledge that the capacity in regard to accounting of local NGOs and CBOs is very low. INGOs would like to transfer the implementation of the project to local NGOs, because they are better rooted and thus better suited.

However, this might be made impossible by institutional donors, because the accounting standards are too high to meet for the local NGO (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). As most institutional donors do not donate on single project level, this is an influence that is at the more general level than at specific projects. The general level of self-implementation that an INGO prefers might therefore be partly determined by the conditions the donors sets and not only by the local context and needs (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). Although it is a general influence, it has a very concrete effect on local projects and the amount of embedded local ties. If institutional donors demand more self-implementation, this decreases the embeddedness (relations with local civic organizations), which impacts the mandate, legitimacy, power and urgency for the reasons explained in the other paragraphs.

2) *Level of specialization*. Another influence is on the level of specialization in the overall activities of INGOs. In their calls for proposals for funding, the international donors can prefer INGOs that have a specific focus on certain topics or approaches over more general, broad INGOs or vice versa (*idem*). In order to be eligible for funds, INGOs adjust their focus and specialization to the preferences of the donors. According to the respondents, the development towards more specialization and fragmentation in the INGO community is therefore generated by the donor community. The level of specialization has also an influence on the level of flexibility of an INGO. If an INGO has a broad approach and covers a lot of issues and approaches, it can easier adapt to changing circumstances. More specialization would therefore mean a loss in flexibility. This can be countered by stronger ties with other INGOs, which leads to complementarity and thus increases flexibility. However on the base of only three INGOs in a specific South Sudanese context cannot be concluded that there is a general, overall tendency towards more specialization triggered by institutional donors. This should be further researched involving more INGOs across many different contexts.

3) *Time-frame*. A third limiting influence that arose was the time-frame of funding cycles. At the institutional donor level, funding cycles for specific programs last no longer than 5 years (K. Schenkel, personal communication, 14 June 2016). Besides, there is a strict divide in time-frame between different forms of peacebuilding programs. The shortest cycles are for emergency relief projects (maximum 1,5 years) and the longest are for long-term development and state-building programs. However in practice, the divide between different kinds of peacebuilding is much more fluid, as emergency relief might eventually become longer-term development and vice versa (G. de Haan, personal communication, 29 June 2016). Therefore the funding cycles of institutional donors limit the flexibility that is often needed in local projects because the local context changes. Besides, INGOs often strive for a much longer-term engagement (10 years or longer), because then they are really able to become rooted into the local context which leads to a higher effectiveness (K. Schenkel, personal communication, date). Because of the funding time-frame, planning for real long-term development is often made impossible.

The influence of institutional donors on the concrete behaviour of INGOs is now extensively discussed. However it depends on the financial position of the INGO how large this influence is. When INGOs operate with much finances already from a diverse range of sources, they are in the position of choosing which funding calls to apply for (H. Rouw, personal communication, 9 May 2016). If the financial position is bad, they will quicker adjust their plans and behaviour to get funding.

A final general remark regarding the influence of ties is that the type of INGO matters in the importance of local ties. Peacebuilding can only be achieved when locals voluntarily cooperate. Without voluntary cooperation, there will be no way to peace possible (idem). With humanitarian aid, delivering goods that have a concrete value, such as food, training, etcetera, local ties are less needed to have an impact because there will always be someone to accept what you offer. Still the results of this research show that being better integrated in local society will make the INGO more able to assess where the goods are needed the most, increasing its legitimacy and influence.

## 8 CONCLUSION

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### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

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A lot has been discussed up to this point. First, the different types of international ties an NGO can have were mapped. Also the way in which these ties emerge and the purposes they have were assessed, giving an answer to sub-questions 1 and (partly) 3. Second, the same was done for local ties, looking at how an INGO as an outside actor can be rooted in and dependent on local societal and contextual structures. This gave an answer to sub-questions 2 and 3. Then as a third part, all the influences of the different types of ties were systematically analysed. The four aspects of the behaviour and role of an INGO in a local project context were one by one analysed, giving an answer on the sub-questions 4 (regarding the mandate), 5 (regarding legitimacy), 6 (regarding power) and 7 (regarding urgency). However some influences, especially that came from ties regarding international financial resources, could only be analysed on a broader level, across the organization of the INGOs. These could therefore not be pinned-down on one aspect, but were still taken into account in this research.

In this final chapter, all these above mentioned results answering the sub-questions, will be bundled into the general conclusions that give an answer to the leading question. First the international and local ties that were mapped in chapter 5 and 6 will be connected to the theoretical framework of glocalization. Second, the influences of these ties will be presented into some general conclusions. Third, some policy recommendations for INGOs and institutional donors and recommendations for further research will be discussed. Finally, there will be a personal reflection both on the content of this thesis and the process that led to this final document.

### 8.2 INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL TIES

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The mapping of the different forms of international and local ties was used to analyse the international and South Sudanese context in which the INGO operates and how this context penetrates the entity of the INGO. Returning to the theory and conceptual model that were discussed in chapter 2, this assessment of ties was done in the framework of the glocalization theory. This theory hypothesises that globalization is not a process which overrides locality, but is defined as the simultaneity and interpenetration of the global and the local, the universal and the particular (Robertsen, 1995). INGOs are actors that are a result of globalization, are the actors embodying global processes. In South Sudan and elsewhere they operate in and for a local situation in which they do not have natural roots but nevertheless can have a high impact, in this case in regard to a situation of conflict. According to the theory global social processes would lead on the one hand to a high impact of the international aspects of the INGO on its local operation and on the other hand local processes and actors would have a high impact on the INGO despite its internationality.

This research assessing the different types of ties of INGOs and the purposes of these ties, confirm this perspective. The INGOs involved in peacebuilding in South Sudan all have an extensive international network that reaches across the globe. The INGOs are highly dependent on these global networks, which matches with the general discourse of globalization. The most obvious and influential international dependency is based on the financial resources INGOs get from a wide range

of mostly institutional actors. Besides, they are highly dependent on world-wide networks of INGOs and other organizations for their knowledge, power and capacity.

However not all these ties are globalized and thus regardless of geographical origin, because the international ties that an INGO is most dependent on, are the ties that reach back to the country of origin of the INGO (although these ties would not seem international, they are from the perspective of the local project level in which the INGO concretely operates). In the case of the Dutch INGOs working in South Sudan, most funds originate from the ministry of foreign affairs. The INGOs and other internationally active organizations that an INGO cooperates with on both the international and the local project level are more likely (but not exclusively) to come from the Netherlands than from other countries. A third element that binds INGOs to their country of origin is their background constituency. So although INGOs are a textbook example of organizations which growing importance is a result of globalization, its geographical origins still matter.

The importance of 'the local' that is an essential part of the glocalization theory seems to be confirmed regarding peacebuilding in this research. INGOs create ties with local actors and become integrated into local society for several purposes that were explained earlier. Especially in a weak state context such as South Sudan, where communities cannot count on a strong national government, local ties are vital. The INGOs in this case are working on a local level and thus have a direct on-the-ground impact (instead of only at a national, state-structure level). There is thus a large dependency on 'the local', existing of local contacts and ties.

### **8.3 INFLUENCE ON INGO BEHAVIOUR IN SOUTH SUDAN**

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The conclusions above only demonstrate that there is a contextual influence on the INGOs and that both the internationality and locality of the INGO matter. However, stating that there is an influence is not enough and the stakeholder-agency theory was used to assess how these ties concretely affect the INGOs' behaviour and role in practice in their projects in South Sudan. In chapter 7 the individual influences on the individual aspects were presented. Now these results will be brought together in four general conclusions regarding the influence of local and international ties on the behaviour and role of INGOs in peacebuilding projects in South Sudan and the possible difficulties and problems they create. This will answer the leading research question: *How do international ties and local ties influence the behaviour and role of international NGOs in local peacebuilding activities in the post-conflict setting of South Sudan?*

#### **8.3.1 MULTIPLICITY OF MANDATES**

Because of their international ties and origin, INGOs have to work according to a multiplicity of mandates. The first mandate that should always be present is the mandate based on the creation of local ties. Because INGOs always operate in order to address a certain local issue and thus improve the local situation, serving the local needs, INGOs always act on behalf of (a part of) the local population. It is possible that INGOs represent specific groups in the local situation, but in peacebuilding efforts INGOs are mostly involved in involving as many actors and perspectives as possible. A strong rootedness into the local society through local ties strengthens that local mandate.

However due to their internationality and their dependency on international actors, INGOs also get international mandates that they have to take into account and influence the behaviour of the INGO on a local level. One international mandate that the INGOs have is transmitted to them by the

institutional donors via funding. These institutional donors have formulated their own mandate through their policies where the funding is based on. The execution of this mandate is not done by the institutional donors themselves. Instead they give funding to an INGO provided that the INGO spends the money in line with that mandate. The INGOs in this research also had strong ties to a domestic private constituency that consisted of members of for example an affiliated church. As these ties with the constituency transmits values, interests and perspectives, the INGO thus partly acts on behalf of this group.

By its nature an INGO thus has to deal with a multiplicity of mandates from both the local and international level. These mandates all affect – consciously or not - the local projects that INGOs design. Although the mandates may be in harmony, there is always a risk that the multiple mandates create a discrepancy in goals, values and interests, resulting in conflicts and dilemmas. A multiplicity of mandates leads to a commitment to be legitimate and accountable to all the groups that an INGO gets its mandate from (see chapter 2, conceptual model). This can bring the INGO in a difficult position and lead to choices that are not in the best interest of the local population.

### **8.3.2 ROOTEDNESS IN LOCAL SOCIETY**

A high amount of local ties, so a strong connection to the local context, either with individuals, civil grass-roots organizations (NGOs/CBOs) and a diverse range of other organizations and institutions, has a positive influence to the behaviour of an INGO. The mandate will be better focussed on the needs of the local communities. Besides it leads in general to a higher local legitimacy, a better power position towards other stakeholders and a better chance of creating urgency for certain issues on an international, national and local scale, as was explained in chapter 7.

In the South Sudanese context INGOs that are more rooted in local society are better able to serve the needs of the local population and its efforts therefore are more likely to be effective. Logically this would also apply in other contexts, but this thesis is not able to draw conclusions in that respect. However when creating and continuing local ties in local projects in South Sudan some difficulties emerge that undermine this positive influence:

- 1) It is a challenge that sometimes proves to be impossible to get a good representation, instead of only connecting to the elites or specific groups that are presented by local NGOs or other local ties. The dependency on local ties for access to people creates the risk of not being able to serve the interests of the people who are worst off, but only a specific groups or the elites.
- 2) The capacity of local NGOs and CBOs is very low. This leads to the risk of spending money inefficient. INGOs then need much time in building that capacity. Besides, these local partners often cannot deliver the level of capacity that INGOs needs to account to international institutional donors in order to get funding.
- 3) When ties with local individuals and organizations are created, there is a lack of accountability of the INGO. This is because these locals generally do not have the capacity to be critical towards the ideas and work of the INGOs. It is dependent on the effort of the INGO itself to enable people to be critical. Is this not the case, then INGOs are able to do a lot of work without getting any feedback, undermining their mandate and legitimacy.

These difficulties might undermine the positive effects of rootedness in local society. However, when INGOs handle it well, it is still important to work on and create ties to local society. Important is that

INGOs are aware of these principles and take measures to minimize its effect. In the recommendations paragraph some suggestions will be presented.

### **8.3.3 INFLUENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL DONORS**

In this research, institutional donors – both domestic governments and supra-national governments – proved to be the most influential international tie. These institutions influence the INGOs in generic terms regarding for example time-frame, focus of programs and countries in which it is possible to work, but their direct influence on the actual on-the-ground projects is usually very low. However they have a strong influence on certain aspects of the INGOs that can have a major impact on the execution of local projects and thus the role and behaviour of INGOs in a local context. These influences take place at the level of the individual relation between donor and INGO or at the level of the general INGO community. Out of this research, three major influences can be concluded:

- 1) The level of self-implementation. Instead of letting local civil organization implement the project, INGOs might be forced to self-implement, because of the eligibility of funds. This is thus regardless of what would be best in the local context.
- 2) The level of specialization. Institutional donor might prefer funding generic broad INGOs or INGOs that are highly specialized in a certain topics. INGOs adapt to the general preferences of donors in order to be more eligible, by focussing on a specific issue or broadening their activities. This has consequences for the flexibility and behaviour of an INGO at the local level.
- 3) The time-frame of programs and involvement. As institutional donors provide funding programs that last for a maximum of 5 years and use a rigid divide in time-frame between relief and development, INGOs cannot plan more than 5 years ahead and lack the flexibility to be longer involved in a local context than the funding cycle lasts if the local situation demands it.

These influences mostly affect the mandate – as explained above – and the legitimacy, thus the interpretation of the INGO being the appropriate actor to operation in that local situation.

### **8.3.4 INGO NETWORKS**

Ties to networks of INGOs that work on the level of the international community and on the national and local level, are vital for the behaviour of INGOs in their local projects. Non-financial ties with other INGOs have as a purpose to: 1) get access to networks, 2) exchange vital information and 3) complement each other in local activities. These mechanisms improve all aspects of INGO behaviour and role in local peacebuilding, as was explained in chapter 7. However, some cooperation is only taking place for the purpose of being eligible for funds, costing a lot of time in a cooperation that does not work effectively in local projects. INGO networks that are enforced by institutional donors therefore sometimes decrease efficiency and the time INGOs can spend on the local projects.



## 8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 8.4.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Towards INGOs**

Because the respondents were employees of the INGOs that were analysed in this research, it is difficult to make objective conclusions on what goes well and what they could do better. Besides, as all INGOs who are active in South Sudan work in different contexts, geographical areas and a diverse range of topics, also within peacebuilding, every situation demands a different approach with different actors and sets of knowledge, tools and resources. The INGO itself still has the most knowledge and expertise to make the best consideration. However out of the analysis emerged some challenges that all INGOs had to cope with. Based on the results on the influences of certain ties, some broad recommendation can be made towards INGOs that they should concretise according to their own insights and knowledge.

Following the results on the positive influence of local rootedness, INGOs should invest extensively in the creation of broad and deepened local ties prior to and during a project. An INGO should not only connect to the 'usual suspects' – local NGOs that have the same goals or the first people they get to talk with in local communities – but should also aim for a broad range of actors and individuals across different sectors and interests in order to get a fair representation.

An important problem with this local rootedness is that local partners have a low capacity. It is recommended to invest in the capacity building of those local partners although this costs a lot of time and effort, because the purposes and benefits of having local ties and cooperation with them is very high. However, specific situations – such as immediate relief in emergency situations – could demand for another approach.

Another major problem is the accountability. This aspect of the individual relation is the responsibility of the INGO, as they are the one the local partners are dependent on. This means that when INGOs create ties with local actors, they should invest a large amount of time and effort in enabling the partners to regularly give feedback and challenge and involve them to think critically when projects are designed, evaluated and adjusted.

#### **Towards institutional donors**

INGOs working in South Sudan are for their resources mostly dependent on institutional donors. These donors, most importantly the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EU should be aware of the responsibility that comes with this dependency. They should also be aware that the INGOs are more than themselves rooted in local situations, have the most knowledge of what fits best to the context. Therefore it is important to have a relationship with INGOs they give funding to that involves individual feedback. This also gives the possibility to INGOs to spend the money on their own insight, with mutual dialogue. Based on the problems that arose in this research regarding dependency on institutional donors, some concrete recommendations can be done towards those funders.

The first recommendation concerns the accounting and other demands the institutional donors set. These prerequisites can be such a demanding task that INGOs choose to implement projects themselves and be less involved with local partners as these do not have the capacity to comply to those demands. Although it is good that there is a strict control mechanism, these demands may be at the expense of local interests.

The second recommendation concerns INGO networks. It is important that INGOs work together, but which partnerships have to be made, should be up to the INGOs as they can assess what practically works on a local level. Currently it is sometimes the case that INGOs apply for funding together because for donors it appears to be very useful if they cooperate, while it does not work in practice.

The third recommendation is that INGOs prefer a relationship in which evaluation and accounting towards institutional donors is based upon processes and local qualitative results. Evaluating based on approaches focussing on quantifiable outcomes are not desirable, because this does not represent the effects an INGO at a local level has.

The last recommendation is that institutional donors should be much more flexible in the time-frame for their funding programs. In practice there is much fluidity between relief, reconstruction and longer-term development such as state building. A rigid distinction in the time-frame on the side of the donor therefore decreases flexibility and long-term involvement of INGOs.

#### **8.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the results of this research, there can be some suggestions made for further research. As this was an explorative and broad research, looking at ties on all levels and influences on all aspects of INGOs' behaviour. This research therefore could not go into detail on all individual relations of INGOs and on each aspect of the INGO. It is therefore recommended that research is conducted that focuses on the influence of specific ties or on specific aspects. There are some logical suggestions based on this research for a further specification. Two examples are given in the following.

First the interaction between international institutional donors and INGOs was a major issue of concern for the INGOs. A research on the specific relation between these actors in which the institutional donor side is assessed too, is recommended. Second there were some problems found with local ties, especially local NGOs serving as partners, regarding capacity and accountability. This research however does not give results on how capacity and accountability could be improved in practice. Therefore an in-depth analysis of local partners is needed which was not a part of this research.

In order to see similarities in importance of certain aspects of locality, this research should be multiplied in different contexts. As the local situation is different, this might influence the importance of local ties. Not only at the local level, also at the international level this research should be multiplied. This research only contained INGOs that originated from the Netherlands and since this research proved that country of origin of the INGO is still an important factor, INGOs from other countries should also be researched.

This research focussed on the individual aspects of mandate, legitimacy, power and urgency of an INGO. In further research, the influence of these individual aspects – given the insights of this research – on the concrete effectiveness in local projects should be assessed. Such a research would require fieldwork, because data from effects on local communities should be collected. Besides, this research found some influences of international actors on aspects such as time-frame, specialization and self-implementation that fell outside the conceptual framework of this research. Therefore further research on this specific influences is recommended with the use of a different framework.

## **8.5 REFLECTION**

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### **8.5.1 REFLECTION ON CONTENT**

This thesis was always meant to have a broad and explorative character. In hindsight the research maybe should have been narrowed down a little further. The broad approach, focussing on all aspects of the behaviour of INGOs in local projects and on all possible international and local ties, it was impossible to give a lot of attention to individual aspects or individual relations between ties and certain aspects. On the other hand, this research gives by its broad character a clear overview of the interplay between being tied to international actors on the one hand and implementing in a very local context. If I focussed only on one specific tie or specific aspect, I would not have been able to properly map that tension between the international and the local.

Another problem was that it proved to be difficult to obtain data from local partners and other actors involved in South Sudan. Skype interviews were not possible and INGOs were understandably not very willing to ensure that local partners filled in questionnaires. Therefore the partners' side of the relation could not be taken into account in this research. That decreases the value of results, most importantly regarding the aspects that are partly formed by the interpretation and insights of those local actors, such as legitimacy. Involving other perspectives than only the INGOs would have contributed to more solid results, however this proved to be impossible in this time-frame and on such a volatile case of South-Sudan.

As the geographical and contextual focus of this research was only on South Sudan the generalizability of this research is very low. This thesis partly focussed on researching the context and its importance and it is based on the assumption that every context is different. Getting a high generalizability was therefore never possible. However this doesn't mean that results found in this research do not apply to other contexts and situations. This research can serve as a guideline for further research on the same topic in other contexts. Some suggestions were made in the previous paragraph.

### **8.5.2 REFLECTION ON PROCESS**

Although eventually I am satisfied with the result, some problems were encountered along the process. First and foremost these problems occurred through bad time-management and resulted in not making the first deadline. There were three main problems that I encountered that caused delays in the process.

The first problem was that the general theme that was given beforehand (local conflict in a globalizing world) was very broad. It took me a long time to concretise it into a specific research topic and question that was narrowed down enough to transform it into a doable research. Because of much doubt and extensive considerations, I wasn't able to finish a complete and solid design before the end of march, leaving too little time to do the actual research.

A second problem that impeded rapid progress consisted of the extra-curricular activities I did during the second semester of this college year. Especially the honours programme and the board of a student association (at the Nijmeegse Studenten Honoursvereniging) were time-consuming. I strongly underestimated the possibility of combining those activities with full-time work on the

thesis. Eventually, after I reprioritized activities and after the honours programme was finished in May, more time became available and the process of writing made more progress.

A third problem that I encountered was that it proved to be difficult to find appropriate and available respondents. This was because the group of possible respondents was small – people from INGOs in the Netherlands that worked on behalf of that INGO on peacebuilding projects in South Sudan – and the respondents all had full travel schedules. It took a long time before I had my first contacts. However, through this first contact there was a snowballing effect by which other respondents were found. Eventually the actual contact with the respondents went smooth. Because the last interview was planned days before the first deadline, I needed more time to analyse this data and write the results chapters and conclusion.

The process of writing itself was not always easy as well. The largest difficulty I had was that the ideas that I had all remained in my head. Instead of writing my first ideas right away in a rough version, I was too perfectionist and wanted to write it perfectly in first instance. After the interviews were done, I did not have oversight over what I actually had found and therefore I paralysed in the writing process. Eventually I resolved this by drafting a rough conclusion with some basic points based on the first generic analysis of the interviews. After doing more extensive analysis, I was able to structure the other chapters so that they would logically lead to the conclusion. Eventually I am quite satisfied with the result, both regarding the quality of the actual research and how it was written, although it took a lot of effort and stress.

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# APPENDIX: INTERVIEW GUIDES

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## Interview guide 1: INGOs

Introduction

Start recording (+ change language to English)

Introduction questions (work and projects of THE INGO, work of himself + position within THE INGO + THE INGO in South Sudan)

1. Can you give a short introduction about yourself and your work within THE INGO in general?  
Follow up:
  - How long have you been working with THE INGO
  - What kind of work do you do within THE INGO?
  - What kind of projects do you do within THE INGO?
  - Do you have other working experiences within the field of peacebuilding?
  
2. Can you give a short introduction about THE INGO and its projects?  
Follow up:
  - What kind of peacebuilding projects is THE INGO working on?
  - Are the projects only local or is THE INGO also involved in nation-wide or transnational projects?
  - What is the background of THE INGO as an organisation? Does this background influence the kind of projects THE INGO conducts? Does it influence the way in which THE INGO tries to build peace?
  
3. The South-Sudan case: What are the projects THE INGO is working on in South-Sudan and what is the goal of these projects?  
Follow up:
  - What is the background of these projects? When were they started and why?
  - With whom does THE INGO collaborate during this projects or does it conduct these projects on its own?
  - What is your own role in these projects?
  - Are there any other international NGOs involved in the same region and on the same sort of projects?

The position and behaviour of THE INGO in South Sudan

4. Who do you as THE INGO try to represent (marginalized groups, local community people, etc.) in these projects in South Sudan?  
Follow up:
  - To which people do you give a voice in these projects?
  - How do you decide this?
  - What is your mandate in these projects?
  
5. How do you identify yourself as THE INGO towards local communities/local media/local governments? (How do you want to be seen?/What reputation do you build for yourself?)  
Follow up:
  - Is there any difference in way of framing yourself towards different groups?



- Do you always succeed in getting the reputation you want?
6. How do you legitimize your presence in the area towards local people and groups?
  7. How do you influence other stakeholders in the projects to get things done?  
Follow up:
    - how can you improve your position within these projects so that you are respected by other actors (and influential)?
    - What does it take to get a position in which you can get things done?
  8. How do you place the problems you want to tackle with your projects on the local and international (political) agenda?  
Follow up:
    - What means do you need to get attention for certain problems?
    - What outside factors determine the attention the problem you want to tackle gets?

#### Local ties and constraints

9. Participation: To what extent do you involve local people (from groups you represent) in the projects you do in South Sudan?  
Follow up:
  - To what extent can they hold THE INGO accountable for its deeds? (What if anything goes wrong?)
  - How do you get to know what these local people want?
  - To what extent and in what instances do you evaluate your projects with local people?
  - What benefits does it have to involve local people within the organization of THE INGO?
  - And what constraints?
  - How does the involvement of local people influence the general behaviour of you as THE INGO?
10. Embeddedness: To what extent do you cooperate with local grass-roots non-governmental organizations with the same goals as you?  
Follow up:
  - For which purposes?
  - What kind of organizations are these?
  - What benefits does it have to cooperate with other locally originating organizations?
  - And what constraints?
  - How does this partnership with other grassroots organizations influence the decisions THE INGO makes in these projects in South Sudan?
11. Associativeness: To what extent do you cooperate with a diverse range of local and national organizations/institutions (such as: government local/national, businesses, media, scientific organizations, etc.)?  
Follow up:
  - For which purposes?
  - Elaboration on different kinds of organizations.
  - What benefits does it create?
  - What constraints?

- How do these partnerships influence the decisions THE INGO makes?

12. Legal constraints: Are there any laws in South Sudan that make it difficult for you as THE INGO to operate?

Follow up:

- How do you handle these laws?

- Do you try to surpass these laws?

- In what way are they constraining? (i.e. To what extent do you not do some things that without these laws you would do?)

#### International ties and constraints

13. Financial resource ties: Where are the funds for the projects (of THE INGO in general and for the projects in South Sudan) coming from and does it involve international actors?

Follow up (if it involves international actors – especially institutional):

- On what basis do these actors give the funding to you?

- Do they have any other involvement in your organizations besides financial funding?

- What is the story you tell to get funding of international actors?

14. Do these actors place demands on the projects (which projects, which focus, which target group etc.) in return for their funding and if yes, what do you do with those demands?

Follow up:

- Are their sometimes conflicting ideas about what a funder wants and what local groups want or need?

- What are the benefits of international funding and what are its constraints?

- Do investors want to see short-time results? Does this conflict with the needs in the long-term project?

15. Non-financial resource ties: Do you cooperate with other international organizations or institutions within these projects in South Sudan and if yes, what is their role in those projects? (for example other NGOs, the UN, the EU, International Monetary Fund, etc.)

Follow up:

- Do you interchange ideas, information and know-how with these international partners and if yes, in what way does this influence the projects you do?

- What are the benefits of having an international network for these projects? Are there any constraints? (i.e. In what way are you dependent of these networks?)

16. Do you take foreign actors into account when making decisions regarding the projects?

Follow up:

- Do you (have to) report to any international organization or institution?

- What is the effect on the projects itself?

17. International law dependency: Which international laws have to be taken into account when starting and developing projects like those in South Sudan and how do they affect your decisions?

Follow up:

- Who makes these laws?

- Are these laws constraining or do they give a legitimization to your work?

### Concluding remarks and questions

18. Can you think of any other factor, international or local, that has to be taken into account when working on peacebuilding projects which have not yet come up during our conversation?
  
19. Further contacts: Are there any other people who would be interesting for my research to speak with? Can you get me in contact with local people working on the projects in South Sudan?

Wrap-up

## **Interviewguide 2: Lotje de Vries**

### Introduction

1. Can you shortly introduce yourself and the professional relation you have with South Sudan?  
(For what purposes in South Sudan? Which aspects of the conflict have you studied?)
2. What is the background of the civil conflict that has been going on in South Sudan since 2013? In what context did the conflict emerge?

### Multi-scalar conflict

3. Which root-causes on the local societal level can you name for the emergence and continuance of the conflict?  
(How would you describe the essence of the conflict on a local scale? What are local factors that contribute to the conflict?)
4. What role does the local society play in peacebuilding initiatives in South Sudan?  
(Which local actors are important when building on peace and why?)
5. In what way is the conflict a nation-wide conflict? (In what way does the conflict take place on a national level?)
6. What is the role of national government and opposition groups in the conflict?
7. In what way are international actors involved in the conflict and what is their role?  
(What are external international influences in the conflict? What role does the UN play? Is the conflict in any way transnational, involving neighbouring countries?)

### Position of local communities and international NGOs

8. What influence do local communities have in the settlement of this conflict?  
(What changes should they make, what power do they have?)
9. What role do local grass-root Civil Society Organizations and local NGOs play in the conflict and efforts towards peacebuilding?  
(What position do they have? What efforts do they make to find a common solution? In what way are they involved by local and national governments?) – evt. Vervolgvrage on local governments.
10. As far as you can tell, what role do international NGOs working on peacebuilding in South Sudan in the conflict?  
(Is this a positive role, do they have any effect? Do NGOs oversee the complexity of the conflict on different scales?)
11. What conditions should international NGOs meet to be able to have a positive effect on the peacebuilding?  
(What should they do? With whom should they work with? Etc.)