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In pursuit of lasting impact in international development aid projects

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Preface

The thesis concludes my Master of Science in Project Management at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). The thesis was completed during the spring of 2022.

The subject was selected based on my enthusiasm of creating a positive change in lesser developed communities around the world. The purpose of this master's thesis is to enhance the knowledge of choosing the best-suited solutions and ensuring the longevity of the impact of international development aid projects.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Elise Skattum and Katrine Osgjerd Garnæs at Engineers Without Borders, as well as, Hilde Huus-Hansen at Niafrangs Venner for the opportunity to get first-hand experience of an international development project. Furthermore, I would like to thank my supervisor, Tim Kristian Andreas Torvatn, for his much-needed guidance on the project. I am thankful for the informants in Senegal, in addition, to the aid practitioners who provided crucial insights to the thesis. Finally, I would like to extend my appreciation to my parents who have been of great support. It has been a pleasure to work with the aforementioned persons on this fulfilling project.

Over and out,

Amin Jahangir

Abstract

The growth in the number and diversity of development aid projects is a notable element that is changing the development aid context. International development aid encompass initiatives with the aim to facilitate sustainable social and economic development of a country or target beneficiaries.

The problem statement addressed in this thesis is as following:

How can we ensure relevance and sustainability in international development aid projects?

By sustainability in projects I refer to a project's continuing and lasting positive impact after the donor organization has withdrawn from the project. Furthermore, relevance addresses if there is a true need for the project and its intended outcomes. With development aid projects as the focal point, this study intends to supplement, strengthen and support the overarching body of project management knowledge. In addition to a literature review, a cross-sectional study encompassing empirical data from development aid practitioners and field data from the Clean Beach - Clean Village project, a comprehensive and overarching understanding of the area of development aid is gained.

The literature review and empirical data accentuate that local ownership is identified as inadequate, in addition to, being a critical driver. An exploration is conducted into the common pitfalls and success factors are in the attainment of strong local ownership in such projects. The findings from the investigation highlight a multitude of key drivers to facilitate strong local ownership in such projects. A model illustrated in Figure 5 Local Ownership is proposed. Frameworks to achieve this is, practically, non-existent in published literature. Hence, an important motivation for this study is that, among others, key stakeholders, donors and project managers are empowered to benefit from the information obtained from this study in planning and execution of current and future projects.

Keywords: Local Ownership, Master's Thesis, NTNU, Relevance, Sustainability, Developmental Aid, Foreign Aid, Project Management

Sammendrag

Utviklingen i antall og type bistandsprosjekter er et bemerkelsesverdig element som endrer bistandskonteksten. Internasjonal utviklingsbistand omfatter initiativer med mål om å oppnå bærekraftig sosial og økonomisk utvikling av et land eller målmottakere.

Problemstillingen som tas opp i denne oppgaven er som følger:

Hvordan kan vi sikre relevans og bærekraft i internasjonale bistandsprosjekter?

Med bærekraft i prosjekter refererer jeg til et prosjekts vedvarende og varige positive virkning etter at giverorganisasjonen har trukket seg fra prosjektet. Videre tar relevans for seg om det er et reelt behov for prosjektet og dets tiltenkte utfall. Med bistandsprosjekter som fokus, har denne studien til hensikt å supplere, styrke og støtte den overordnede kunnskapen om prosjektledelse. I tillegg til en grundig litteraturgjennomgang, en tverrsnittsstudie som omfatter empiriske data fra bistandsutøvere og feltdata fra Clean Beach - Clean Village-prosjektet, oppnås en helhetlig og overordnet forståelse av fagfeltet, internasjonal bistandsutvikling.

Litteraturundersøkelsen, i tillegg til, empiriske data understreker at lokalt eierskap er som regel utilstrekkelig i gjennomførte bistandsprosjekter. Lokal forankring og eierskap er dermed beregnet til å være en kritisk driver til suksess i slike prosjekter. Det foretas en utforskning av de typiske fallgruvene og suksessfaktorene i å oppnå et sterkt lokalt eierskap i slike prosjekter. Funnene fra undersøkelsen fremhever flere nøkkeldrivere for å oppnå en lokalt eierskap i slike prosjekter. En modell som vist i Figure 5 Local Ownership er presentert. Rammeverk for å oppnå dette er ikke-eksisterende i publisert litteratur. Som følge av dette, er en viktig motivasjon for denne studien at sentrale aktører, som donorer og prosjektledere, kan dra nytte av denne undersøkelsen og bruke dette i planlegging og gjennomføring av nåværende og fremtidige prosjekter.

Nøkkelord: Lokal Forankring, Eierskap, Masteroppgave, NTNU, Relevans, Bærekraftig, Bistand, Internasjonal Bistandsprosjekter, Prosjektledelse

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1   Introduction

Year by year, considerable amounts of funding is granted to international development aid projects. To exemplify, across a total of 1640 projects, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) granted a total of NOK 40,1 billion in development aid in 2021 (NORAD, 2022). Given such considerable sums, it stresses the importance of through international development aid investments.

In broader terms, international development aid are initiatives with the aim to facilitate sustainable social and economic development of a country or target beneficiaries (Ba & Kyne, 2008). Development aid is widely recognized to be of high complexity, where fragmentation, transparency and imperfect information are represent a some key issues. Typical endeavors vary from the construction of schools to improve access to drinking water. There is extensive research conducted on success factors for commercial or profit-oriented projects (Ba & Kyne, 2008; Pinto, 1987). In contrast, the area of ID remains an under-explored topic. Generally, a project should be initiated if; (a) there is a need for it and (b) the outcomes are maintained after project termination (Samset, 2010). This is also supported by OECD (2011)'s evaluation criteria, where relevance and sustainability are two of the six criteria. Following Samset (2010)'s logic of why a project should be initiated, both (a) and (b) have a direct relation to relevance and sustainability. By sustainability in projects I refer to a project's continuing and lasting positive impact after the donor organization has withdrawn from the project. Furthermore, relevance addresses if there is a need for the project and its intended outcomes.

1.1   Problem Statement

While immediate results of development aid projects typically indicate some basic level of project success, they fail to address the outcome level - whether the project invokes a positive impact to the target beneficiaries over time. Institutional and sustainability issues such as insufficiency in implementation capacities, in addition to, the misplacement of donor's and political actors' focus on 'quick fix' results are prominent issues (Ika et al., 2009; Ika & Hodgson, 2014). In a study of project failure in Africa, Ika (2012) accentuates that poor project performance, as well as, dissatisfaction among stakeholder and beneficiaries is the norm. As a result, efforts to improve the impact of development aid is of imminent concern. This leads to the presentation of this master thesis' following problem statement:

Problem Statement:

How can we ensure relevance and sustainability in international development aid projects?

My goal is to investigate how we can ensure relevance and sustainability in development aid pro-

jects. The literature review illuminates project management in development aid projects as under-exposed (Ika, 2012). Moreover, there is a lack of published literature on what constitutes project success in development aid. This prompted an inductive research approach. With development aid projects as the focal point, this study intends to supplement, strengthen and support the overarching body of project management knowledge. In addition to existing literature, a cross-sectional study encompassing empirical data from development aid practitioners and field data from the Clean Beach - Clean Village project, a comprehensive and overarching understanding of the area of development aid is gained.

As a consequence of time constraints, the scope for this master project will encompass the critical driver; local ownership. The empirical insights accentuate that 'people drive development'. In the pursuit of ensuring relevance and sustainability in international development aid projects, the literature review highlights that local ownership is identified as inadequate, in addition to, being a critical driver. I also have a strong personal interested in exploring local ownership. To guide the investigation of local ownership, I claim that is reasonable to explore the associated pitfalls and drivers of that either inhibit or facilitate local ownership. With this in mind, sub-questions of the problem statement are as following:

Sub-questions:

SQ1: What are common pitfalls that inhibit the attainment of strong local ownership?

SQ2: What are the key drivers to ensure strong local ownership?

If not specified otherwise, the terms "international development (ID) projects" and "development aid projects" are be used interchangeably. In addition, the terms "recipients" and "target beneficiaries are used interchangeably.

The thesis follows a scientific journal structure, organized in six sections, with the following remaining sections; Theoretical Background, Methodology, Empirical Data, Discussion and Conclusion.

Section 2 *Theoretical Background* presents a literature review of relevant topics. Section 3 *Methodology* encompasses a detailed outline of the research process, in addition to, ethical considerations and personal reflections. Section 4 *Empirical Data* presents the key findings from the investigation. Section 5 *Discussion* explores the problem statement in regards to the theoretical background and empirical data. Section 6 *Conclusion* presents concluding remarks, practical implications of the research, as well as, prospective further research.

1.2   Clean Beach - Clean Village project

The objective of the field trip is to collect data through ethnographic interviews and observation. This data will be part of the empirical data of this master thesis - and will be crucial in consulting

NV on how to ensure sustainability in the project.

Senegal is poor and lacks systems for waste disposal, handling and recycling. The main goal of the Clean Beach – Clean Village project, initiated by Niafrangs Venner (NV), is to establish such systems together with the community and local institutions. Apart from Proplast in Dakar, there are no other known such initiatives in the country. The project also includes designing and building a production facility producing useful products for the local community using the collected garbage. The whole process from collecting plastic on the beaches, via sorting, melting and molding new products shall not compromise the environment or the workers' health.

Niafrangs Venner's ultimate goal is that when the project is completed that it can be run sustainably by the local partner organization; Bolong. My role is, through a study of literature and experiences of professionals within the international aid industry, to identify the measures that can be taken to increase the likelihood of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project to be maintained in the long run. An important motivation for this study is that, among other key stakeholders, donors and project managers are empowered to benefit from the information obtained from this study in conducting future development aid projects.

2   Theoretical Background

The following chapter encompasses a review of the theoretical background of the selected area of study. Accordingly, for coherence purposes, I begin by investigating the topic of projects, followed by, an investigation into international development aid projects. Next, a review of existing literature on local ownership is conducted, and a preliminary model on success factors of local ownership is presented. Finally, background on the Clean Beach - Clean Village project is presented. An important remark is that there is the topic of international development projects, especially the niche topic of local ownership in such projects, is an underexposed topic in existing literature.

2.1   Projects

Projects have not always been the way of doing things. Nowadays, the word project is thrown around left and right, from the engineering industries to policy implementation (Schoper & Ingason, 2019). Ultimately, it seems to have become the status quo of how to do things. Authors such as Maylor et al. (2006) and Schoper and Ingason (2019) emphasize the trend in the projectification of society. Schoper and Ingason (2019) and Sjoholm and Godenhjelm (2009) accentuate that the project form is a symbol of flexibility and is regarded to be a preferable manner of adapting to unexpected situations.

The aid industry is no different. Freeman and Schuller (2019) and Lawson and Morgenstern (2019) accentuates that, from 1997 to 2007, the number of aid in the project form increased by 328.34%. Prior to the project form, the norm of aid institutions was to provide donor funds to governments that were in need of aid (Freeman & Schuller, 2019). The prominent critique of this method included the use of these donor means by fraudulent administrations, as well as, social implications (Freeman & Schuller, 2019). By conceptualizing a link between input and output, project-based techniques were able to allocate aid funding (Martens et al., 2002). Although project-based aid is regarded as best practise, arguments against project-based aid reflects a donor's interest to control & manage aid-funding (Freeman & Schuller, 2019). Authors such as Ouattara and Strobl (2008) emphasize that projects overcome key social issues of aid with statistically-rooted improvements in economic growth as opposed to recipient government funding.

2.1.1   What is a project?

Organizational endeavors typically entail either projects or ongoing operations. Alternatively, a combination of the two (Samset, 2010). Authors, including Samset (2010), generally agree on operations being characterized as ongoing and repetitive in nature. It is imperative to have a coherent, clear and accurate definition of a project. While a consistent definition of the term is, arguably, non-existent (Weaver, 2010), there are key distinguishable elements of the term. (PMI,

2008) synthesizes these elements in the widely regarded definition:

> "A project is **temporary** endeavor undertaken to create a **unique** product, service, or result"

(PMI, 2008)

As discussed by ISO (2012), the two critical elements are, firstly, the time-specific nature of a project, and secondly, the non-routine and specificity of the deliverable. There is a consensus in project management to distinguish between output and outcome of a project. While the output is the tangible and intangible deliverables as a result of conducting the project, the outcomes are the intended benefits a project is set out to deliver (Parsons et al., 2013). While construction projects have a tangible deliverable (eg. a train station), International development (ID) projects result in deliverables that are challenging to quantify. This represents the focus on 'soft' deliverables of ID projects. The typical stages of a project follow the following sequence; identification, initiation, planning, execution, monitoring & control and closure. Having a concise definition of the term, let us examine the concept of **sustainability** in projects.

2.1.2 Sustainability

As observed in the literature, within the subject of projects, the notion of sustainability appears to have many meanings (Ruggerio, 2021). An important remark is that the term sustainability and sustainable development are used interchangeably. Published in 1987, numerous authors recognize the World Commission on Environment and Development's definition of sustainable development as *"development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* (WCED, 1987).

Although the definition has been criticized to in a few studies Ruggerio (2021), it remains the general benchmark definition of sustainable development. This study has a larger interest in the definition of sustainability of to what extent the project's positive impact will be sustained once the project is completed (Samset, 2010). To study sustainability in the context of development aid, a more concise definition is needed. OECD (2011) defines sustainability as:

> "Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn."

(OECD, 2011)

In critique of the ambiguity of WCED (1987)'s definition of sustainability, Elkington (1998) introduced the term; The Triple Bottom Line (TBL). TBL is, today, a widely used framework in the evaluation of performance across *economic, social, and environmental* lines (Elkington, 1998). For

an endeavor to be sustainable, there needs to be a balanced emphasis on all three components. Let us examine these key components in the context of initiatives of an organization.

Economical An organizational endeavor cannot be sustainable if it numbers don't add up. To be able to support future generations, creation of economic value is imperative (Elkington, 1998). The economic line should emphasize the prosperity of the surrounding system and enhance the organization's capacity to support subsequent generations (Alhaddi, 2015).

Environmental The environmental aspect is, traditionally, what comes into mind when one thinks about sustainability. Essentially, it emphasizes that the initiatives of an organization do not compromise future generations' access to natural resources (Alhaddi, 2015).

Social The social aspect, an aspect that is often overlooked, encompasses conducting business endeavors in a way that is fair to the employees and the wider community (Elkington, 1998). Essentially, these initiatives should provide value to the society (Alhaddi, 2015).

Researchers, such as Alhaddi (2015) and Elkington (1998), argue that the absence of a clear framework for sustainability provided a particular issue in the literature. Moreover, the term sustainability appeared to be used inconsistently. While the TBL framework is a widely recognized framework that takes into account the importance of social considerations, studies presented by (Jackson et al., 2011; Rogers & Ryan, 2001) argue that the social weighting is often unbalanced. The literature review reveals a deficiency in the literature of the social aspect of sustainability, specifically in development aid projects.

Subsequently, a literature review of relevance in ID projects is presented.

2.1.3 Relevance

There is limited utility in doing a project well without it being the 'right' project. This underlines the importance of relevance. Samset (2010) distinguishes relevance as a success factor in *"whether the objectives are aligned with needs and priorities of users and the society"* (Samset, 2010)[p.14].

Beck (2003) presents a widely recognized definition of relevance in aid projects as:

> *"Relevance is concerned with assessing whether the project is in line with local needs and priorities (as well as donor policy)."*

(Beck, 2003)

There is a direct correlation between sustainability and relevance. Notably, that for a project to be sustainable (the intended effects outlast the project end-date), intended outcomes need to be relevant. In the case that these outcomes are irrelevant to the recipient, there is limited utility for recipients to sustain the project. We can establish that relevance is a requirement for

sustainability and, accordingly, must be attained first (Klakegg, 2009). It will be reasonable to enhance the probability of long-term consequences after improving the basis for relevance.

In order to assess the sustainability and relevance of a project, we need to introduce a criteria to measure project success.

2.1.4 Project Evaluation & Success

Recognized as the iron triangle, the traditional method to evaluate project success is by the success criteria; cost, time and quality (Stojcetovic, 2013). However, this perspective of project success has been critiqued to be restricted and premature (Samset, 2010). This has prompted important actors, among others, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations to establish a better method to evaluate project success.

With the purpose to have a concise and consistent method to evaluate the success, significance or value of an initiative (project, policy, program or other), OECD (2019) developed a widely acknowledged framework. The evaluation criteria is supported by, among others, Klakegg (2009) and Samset (2010). Table 1 outlines the scope of each criterion the context of development evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria	Describing Question	Explanation
Relevance	Is the initiative the right one?	The degree to which the intended objectives and nature of the initiative respond to the global and local recipient's needs and policies.
Coherence	How fitting is the initiative?	The degree of compatibility of an initiative in a context of multiple other initiatives in a region, industry or organization.
Effectiveness	Will the initiative achieve its objectives?	The measure of how well the initiative met, or is likely to meet, its objectives and results.
Efficiency	How well are the resources managed?	The initiative's implementation of inputs into outputs in a timely and cost-effective manner.
Impact	What change does the initiative make?	The initiative's generation of positive or negative, anticipated or unanticipated, holistic effects.
Sustainability	Will the initiative produce lasting benefits?	The prospect of lasting net benefits of the initiative.

Table 1: OECD's Criteria for development evaluation (OECD, 2019)

A project should be initiated if; (a) there is a need for it and (b) there is a sustained outcome after project termination. If this foundation is not there, what is the purpose of initiating the

project? Nonetheless, there is a potential for project failure as a consequence of non-fulfilment of the other four criteria; impact, efficiency, coherence and effectiveness. Following this argument, the emphasis of this study is on the criterion: relevance and sustainability. This option does not indicate that the four other criteria are irrelevant, as they might also lead to failure.

Accordingly, success is defined as executing a relevant project with long-term impact. Having established what a successful project is, unsuccessful projects are regarded as those inconsistent with the needs of the recipient and its society, as well as, discontinued effect. Nonetheless, whether one can classify a project as a success is a complex, and multifaceted notion that its definition and assessment are constrained by a particular context (Ika et al., 2009; Ika & Hodgson, 2014). Furthermore, at various instances, project success implies differing notions to various stakeholders. Long-term evaluation of consequences and uncertain causation between causes and effects is a key attribute of complexity in the measurement of projects success (Klakegg, 2009).

Having presented a review of projects and evaluation while, simultaneously, setting the scope of this study, it is imperative to get a thorough understanding of development aid projects. Accordingly, the following section will present the nature and performance of development aid projects.

2.2   International Development Projects

International developmental projects are key initiatives with the goal to facilitate sustainable social and economic development (Ba & Kyne, 2008). Ba and Kyne (2008) accentuates that typical aims of ID projects vary from poverty reduction to capacity building to the construction of social and physical infrastructures, verified by (Ika et al., 2009; Ika & Donnelly, 2016).

In the development of a new conceptual model for ID projects, Ba and Kyne (2008) characteristically define ID projects to be:

> "... projects that provide socioeconomic assistance to the developing countries, or to some specially designated group of target beneficiaries."

(Ba & Kyne, 2008)[p.74].

The Official Development Assistance (ODA) is a benchmark measure of aid provided to developing countries (OECD, 2022). Accordingly, ODA provided a total funding of 169.24 USD billions to recipient countries, institutions and projects (OECD, 2022). Implementing successful DA projects underline the importance of effectively managing donor funds. Furthermore, getting an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of DA projects is imperative. Subsequently, this enables us to identify the critical success factors that impact project performance.

2.2.1 Project Performance

In a study of project failure in Africa, Ika (2012) accentuates that poor performance in ID projects is pervasive. Accordingly, poor project performance is frequent, and stakeholders' and beneficiaries' dissatisfaction appears to be the norm (Ika, 2012). Ika (2012) supports these claims by referring to various surveys on the performance of ID projects. So, what are the characteristics of such projects?

All too frequently, initiatives flourish in one region and then fail, partially or fully, in another, highlighting the importance of context in ID project success (Ika & Donnelly, 2016). First and foremost, acknowledging that ID projects extend to a wide range of projects settings, they, similarly, face a series of 'technical' challenges. Explicitly, mismanagement issues such as poor project initiation, cost overruns and project delays, insufficient risk analysis and insufficient basis of evaluation (Ika, 2012; Ika & Donnelly, 2016; Ika & Hodgson, 2014).

Ba and Kyne (2008) argues that ID projects are characteristically distinguished by their social and non-profit natures, the multifaceted interactions among the stakeholders, as well as, the intangibility of the developmental deliverables. Ika and Hodgson (2014) accentuates this while highlighting the contextual aspect of the sociopolitical situation. With an understanding of these characteristics, let us take a deeper dive in what challenges such projects face.

As introduced, the majority of ID projects involve an intricate network of stakeholders (Ba & Kyne, 2008). A construction project, typically, has the two main stakeholders of the client, which is the financing party and benefits from the associated deliverables, and the contractor, the responsible party for the management of the project (Ba & Kyne, 2008). In contrast, the main stakeholders in an ID project are threefold; the donor who funds the project but does not directly utilize the project deliverables, the implementation party, and, finally, the recipients who directly benefit from the project deliverables (Ba & Kyne, 2008). The implications range of key stakeholder roles range from financial accountability of the implementation party, potentially in light of unforeseeable funding and/or corruption, to the lack of developmental, cultural and competence consensus. Consequently, it results in the incompatibility of the true needs capacity and the financing party's development policies (Ba & Kyne, 2008).

Ika et al. (2011) and Ika and Hodgson (2014) elaborate on the institutional and sustainability issues such as inadequate political support, insufficiency in the capacity to implement, in addition to, the misplacement of donor's and political actors' focus on 'quick fix' results (Ika et al., 2009; Ika & Hodgson, 2014). Also, an imbalance in the power dynamics between project planners, implementer and recipients represent a key challenge (Ika & Hodgson, 2014). Diallo and Thuillier (2005), Ika (2012) and Youker (1999) elaborate on managerial and organizational challenges such as lack of consensus on objectives, an insufficient needs assessment and inadequate stakeholder management, evaluation failure and challenges involving local recipients rooted in communication and distance

problems.

2.2.2 Success Criteria

There is extensive research conducted on success factors for commercial or profit-oriented projects (Ba & Kyne, 2008; Pinto, 1987). In contrast, the area of ID is an under-explored topic. By conducting a field study from selected Asian countries, Ba and Kyne (2008) presents a model for ID projects, linking success criteria and factors with project life-cycle phases. Furthermore, Ba and Kyne (2008) accentuate the importance of ensuring strong local ownership; aligning policy priorities; effective stakeholder management; competency in project management; meeting the true needs of the recipients; and sufficient local capacity and resources (Ba & Kyne, 2008). In a study encompassing aid effectiveness of Brazil's health cooperation projects, Russo et al. (2013) present a model that illustrate shared principles, complementary actions and differential commitments. Key success criteria for these ID projects include ownership, transparency, inclusive partnerships and accountability (Russo et al., 2013). Moreover, through a review of ID projects, McKee et al. (2019) highlight the success factors establishing learning systems; predictability in future donor funding; mutual accountability; and institutional corporation (McKee et al., 2019).

While the presented research papers and frameworks shed light on crucial success factors of ID projects, a 'benchmark' model that incorporates the success criteria & drivers of the social, contextual and technical aspects is, arguably, non-existent. In an effort to incorporate the success criteria identified from the literature review into an all-encompassing framework, this paper presents Figure 1 Local Ownership. As a consequence of time and resource limitations, the scope of the thesis will be the critical success factor; local ownership. Accordingly, let us explore the concept of local ownership.

2.2.3 Local Ownership

We have now established that local ownership in ID projects is a prerequisite, among authors and practitioners, for success (Ba & Kyne, 2008; Ika, 2012; McKee et al., 2019; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). In fact, I would argue that this is the most important success factor to ensure relevance and sustainability in such projects. While there are numerous studies that use the concept of local ownership as a method of evaluation, it remains a vague concept that is challenging to define, implement and assess (Ballantyne, 2003; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). By reviewing literature on local ownership, there are two widely accepted definitions of the term. Local ownership is defined as:

> "... processes where local stakeholders take control and responsibility for the design, implementation, and monitoring of an activity" (Ballantyne, 2003)[p.3].

"[...] the acceptance of responsibility through a process of stakeholder participation, empowerment and consensus". (Singh, 2002)[p.47]

There is a somewhat consensus, among researchers, that the 'local' refers to refers to organizations and communities in developing countries. Thus, ownership is by and for the local stakeholders (Ballantyne, 2003). Simply put, if there are no local 'owners' who assume control of the undertaking after the donor and implementing party withdraw from the locality of the recipients (Ballantyne, 2003), how can we ensure the projects long-term impact? Ballantyne (2003) and Stefan (2000) echoes this by arguing that a prerequisite for development itself is to be long-lasting, local stakeholders need to accept responsibility for the initiative and its outcomes - in other words, assume ownership and control. Having concisely defined the term, it remains imperative to study the crucial characteristics of the term. Through a literature review, researchers such as Ballantyne (2003), Pierce et al. (2003), Rey-Moreno et al. (2014), Singh (2002) and Stefan (2000) emphasize the importance of localization, capacity-building, addressing true needs, power & control, commitment accountability, as well as, contextual determinants. It is evident that from this literature review that there is a multitude of key drivers to ensure relevance and sustainability in development aid projects. A model, as shown in Figure 1, has been developed to highlight these drivers.
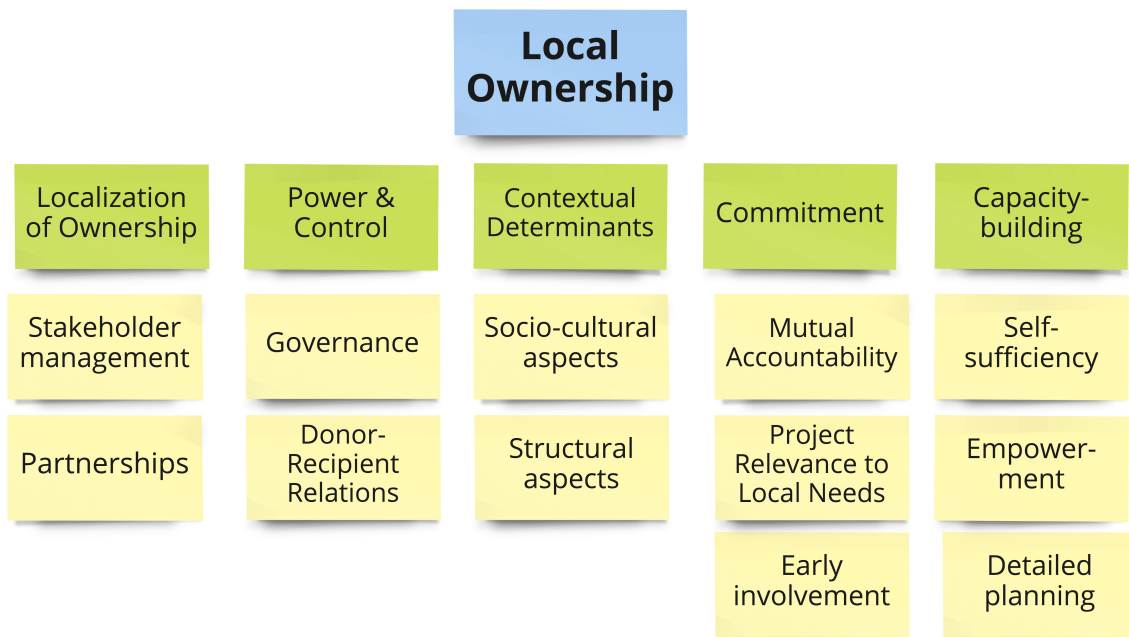
Figure 1: Local Ownership V1.0

The success criteria, represented in green, are followed by respective drivers, represented in yellow. The model does not assume that any success factor or criteria to be of different levels of importance. Finally, it is noteworthy that that the presented model is solely based on a literature review, and hence, may be subjected to alterations based on empirical data. An updated model will be presented in Section 5 Discussion.

Localization of Ownership & Partnerships

Any ID project will involve a wide variety of stakeholders. As a consequence, it is crucial to address who the owners are. Facilitating broad inclusion of local stakeholders through involvement and engagement is a prerequisite for strong local ownership (Ballantyne, 2003; Weeks et al., 2002). Weeks et al. (2002) emphasizes that the ideal approach is to facilitate stakeholder engagement and management in all phases of a project. There is a consensus among researchers that if there is low or non-existent degree of ownership in the early stages of a project, it becomes progressively difficult to develop in the design and implementation stages (Ballantyne, 2003; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014; Weeks et al., 2002). This presents a space or mechanism to discuss and concur on the best way forward in terms of activities or strategies. Moreover, such mechanisms can facilitate reviews of roles and responsibilities. Effective stakeholder management is an important mechanism to ensure that the stakeholders is enabled to take suitable levels of ownership (Ballantyne, 2003). Nevertheless, Weeks et al. (2002) highlights that such an approach is highly difficult to put into practise. Ballantyne (2003) accentuates that partnerships vary in nature and quality. In some cultures, relationships are valued to be cultivated over longer time-horizons. As important is the potential implications of prospective stakeholders' unwillingness to participate as a consequence of an activity being perceived to belong to a specific interest group (Ballantyne, 2003).

Power & Control

Initiatives performed by an external party generally results in the formation of a dependency-relationship between the donor(s) and the recipients. Many such initiatives fail to be long-lasting, sustainable, and community-controlled (Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). Ballantyne (2003) accentuates that there is a confusion among practitioners on addressing donor-recipient relations. While some demand a larger degree of ownership to the recipients, others call for a unified definition and clarity in the roles of the partnerships (Ballantyne, 2003). Furthermore, Ballantyne (2003) highlights that the project implementation party typically place stronger emphasis on accountability to the donor than to the recipients. As a consequence of financial and reporting responsibilities, donors may assert too much control and ownership, adversely effecting the sustainability of the initiative. Moreover, this compromises the activity's long-term viability by interfering or encouraging over-dependence on the donor. However, this over-dependence may be countered through partnerships; by forming trusting relations with local stakeholders (Ballantyne, 2003).

Commitment & Accountability

In efforts to develop strong local ownership, it necessitates the prerequisite of the recipient's commitment to the project (Ballantyne, 2003; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). Responsibility relates to an individual's sense of duty to the network, as well as, for the outcomes produced by the individual's contribution (Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). Commitment encompasses the degree of attachment to the endeavor, in addition to, the reasoning for remaining involved (Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). Bal-

lantyne (2003) highlights that ownership is not a linear sequence where stakeholders automatically transition from participation to ownership. Rather, it is cultivated over time through a process where capabilities, understanding and commitment of the stakeholders are strengthened. Owners in the early stages of a project may not be owners at the close-out stage, and new owners may join at all stages (Ballantyne, 2003). In efforts to develop a framework to assess aid quality, McKee et al. (2019) highlight that mutual accountability of development cooperation must have the crucial prerequisite of transparency. Inadequate transparency in project plans and goals delimit recipient involvement and, hence, ownership of the project (McKee et al., 2019).

Contextual Determinants

Contextual determinants are significant for a variety of reasons, including understanding existing cross-cultural differences. Work has a distinct meaning in various cultures with a varying degree of significance (Pierce et al., 2003; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). The amount of time it takes for psychological ownership to emerge is also influenced by culture. Pierce et al. (2003) accentuates this by proposing that a longer-term perspective will result in the individual's stronger connection to objectives over which he or she felt ownership.

Pierce et al. (2003) argue that the impact of contextual factors play a key role in the development of ownership. These can mainly be grouped as either structural or socio-cultural characteristics. Structural characteristics, such as laws, regulations and hierarchy structures, can either foster or inhibit individuals from acquiring sentiments of ownership (Pierce et al., 2003). Other structural barriers include participatory barriers due to distance, as well as, minimal degree of formalization of property rights (Pierce et al., 2003; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). For example, mechanistic organizational structures with a strong top-down hierarchy may limit the likeliness of psychological ownership to be formed. Cultural characteristics, on the other hand, encompass values and beliefs, ways of socialization and traditions (Pierce et al., 2003). Moreover, the more a person's self-concept is linked to collectivism (such as in Japan), the more ownership is characterized as a common, shared experience. Individualistic cultures (such as Australia) on the other hand, tend to perceive ownership at the individual level. However, Pierce et al. (2003) accentuates that there is limited scientific data that supports such claims. These characteristics are vital to consider in the understanding of local decision-making processes and, more importantly, socially created forms of collective ownership.

Capacity-building

To become independent and self-sufficient recipients and recipient communities, Ballantyne (2003) underlines the importance of recipient communities to engage in capacity building activities. Now, these activities may vary depending on the given project and context, yet, common soft skills in areas such as finance, management and communication are universal (Ballantyne, 2003). Ballantyne (2003) argues that to reduce or avoid issues that may arise in transferring ownership from

one party to another, the formulation process of a project must be driven by the local stakeholders. This approach favors an approach to empower local stakeholders prior to project initiation, or alternatively, during execution stages (Ballantyne, 2003).

Needs-Driven

To ensure relevance and sustainability in ID projects, a project must be aligned with recipients' true needs, priorities and situations (Ballantyne, 2003; McKee et al., 2019). The needs in the given contexts differ, which necessitates a thorough needs-assessment during the front-end phase of a project (Watkins et al., 2012). Watkins et al. (2012) highlights needs assessments as the methods, approaches, and guidelines that a project should implement to gather critical information, improve decision-making, and produce relevant and long-term outcomes. Moreover, while needs assessments are typically done in the front-end phases of a project, it should be conducted as part of a continuous monitoring process (Watkins et al., 2012). Ownership is something that is taken, in contrast, to being given. This necessitates the early involvement of prospective owners of the project. This involvement is critical. Trying to plan activities for someone else to run, especially without their input, is unlikely to provide long-term benefits (Ballantyne, 2003).

2.3 Clean Beach - Clean Village

2.3.1 Project Description

Senegal is poor and lacks systems for waste disposal, handling and recycling. The main goal of the project, Clean Beach – Clean Village, initiated by Niafrangs Venner, is to establish such systems together with the community and local institutions. Apart from Proplast in Dakar, there are no other known such initiatives in the country. The project also includes designing and building a production facility producing useful products for the local community using the collected plastic litter. The whole process from collecting plastic on the beaches, via sorting, melting and molding new products shall not compromise the environment or the workers' health. The output of the project are tiles made of recycled plastic, while the outcome is to improve the surrounding environment, which generate employments and development of the region by supporting local industries such as fishing, tourism and agriculture. All in all, the outcomes are better living conditions for the recipients.

Project Activities

The project activities encompass plastic collection, transport to the production facility, as well as, the production of tiles. While NV and Bolong have an governing role of overseeing sufficient plastic collection, the collection is aimed to be a community initiative. In addition, local organizations and village leaders play an instrumental role in encouragement and facilitation of plastic collection. The transport system is currently done by Bolong, where the association either account for the

plastic transport itself or pay a local transport company for the services. Finally, the production of tiles is run by Bolong, with engaged employees to run the facility.

Project Management

Niafrangs Venner was started in 2009 by Hilde Huus-Hansen when she opened TinTing guesthouse in the small coastal village of Niafrang in southern Senegal, as shown on Figure 2. NV started as a voluntary organization to generate work and help poor families pay for school and higher education. They have made substantial contributions to the community over the past years, e.g. built a community house. They also have regular dialogue with the local authorities (Huus-Hansen, 2022).

Figure 2: Project location (GoogleMaps, 2022)

The Problem

Senegal has a long coastline towards the Atlantic Ocean and plastic and other garbage keeps covering the beaches. This has implications for people and animals:

• Livestock, chickens and pigs eat plastic from rubbish heaps and become ill.

• Turtles and birds get caught in plastic when swimming and diving in the sea - potential drowning hazard.

- Birds, wildlife and welcoming villages are important for tourism.

- Drains are blocked.

- There is nowhere to send collected garbage for proper handling.

- Rubbish heaps are set on fire, producing poisonous smoke, which is damaging to the environment.

- Waste is buried, and when decomposed, might get into the ground water.

Tourists raised concerns regarding the litter. And gradually, the rest of the community became aware of the issue. They recognize that there is more to it than just making the area appear nice. The community demands a safe environment for both humans and animals.

<u>Collection events:</u> NV has organized regular garbage collection events with voluntary help from the local community. Usually around 30 people contribute in each event. The youth organizations in the area have also taken responsibility and initiated some events themselves.

3 Methodology

The following chapter follows the processes of a research design; research strategy, research method, data collection and data analysis method. This is represented in Section 3.2. In addition to this, an evaluation of the quality of the research with identified limitations is presented. Finally, personal reflections are presented, folloId by ethical considerations in the research. To a significant extent, the approach used is based on framework provided by Clark et al. (2021). Essentially, the empirical data is sourced from two research methodologies; a cross-sectional study that facilitates an analysis of interviews and the Clean Beach - Clean Village project. Empirical data from both sources will be used in presenting the results and associated analysis in the discussion section of this thesis.
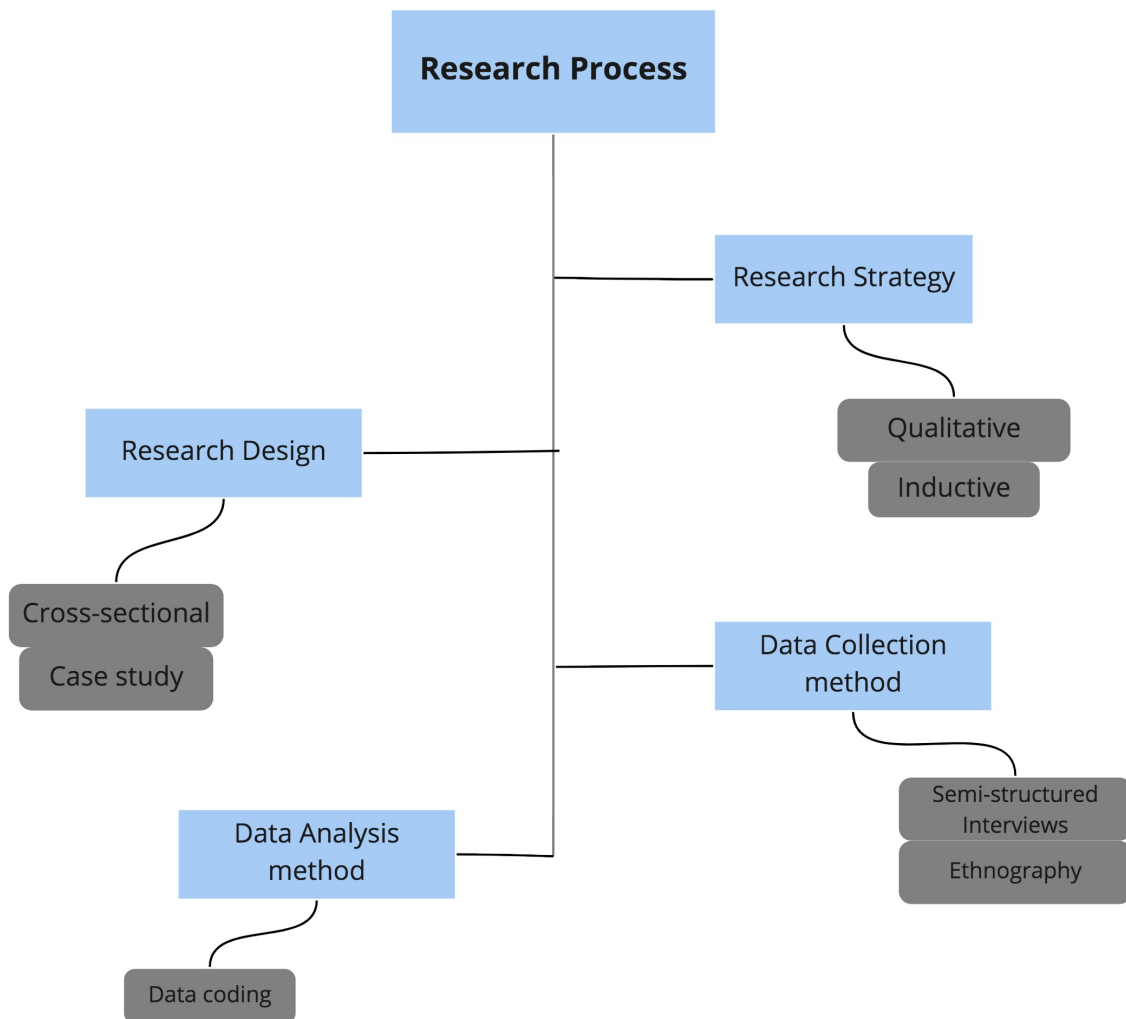

Figure 3: Outline of the Research Design

3.1 Research Strategy

Most researchers, including Clark et al. (2021), distinguishes betIen qualitative and quantitative research strategies. Furthermore, Clark et al. (2021) defines a research strategy as *"a general*

orientation to the conduct of social research" (Clark et al., 2021)[p.35]. Quantitative research may be defined as a research approach that stresses quantification in data collection and analysis, as Ill as a logical approach to the link betIen theory and study, with an emphasis on theory testing. The strategy encapsulates a perspective on social reality as an external unbiased reality (Clark et al., 2021).

On the other hand, qualitative research may be defined as a research approach that takes precedence on words rather than numbers in data collection and analysis, and that primarily stresses an inductive approach to the link betIen theory and study, with an emphasis on theory generation. The strategy emphasizes how people understand their social surroundings and incorporates a concept of social reality as a continually dynamic emergent aspect of a persons construction (**Ieks**).

Whereas the conventional approach is to select one of the presented research strategies, Clark et al. (2021) presents a third alternative; mixed methods research. It is noteworthy that some academics challenge the idea of mixed methods research. Employing a such research strategy approach would, ideally, facilitate a synergy on the individual methods' strengths while simultaneously mitigate on the individual methods' shortcomings. Despite this, Clark et al. (2021) presents strong arguments against this approach. In addition to adding complexity to the research strategy, which in turn is time-consuming, resolving discrepancies in the interpretation of the data may also be difficult (Clark et al., 2021).

Considering the limitations in published theory on sustainability in development aid projects, I realised that I had to conduct an exploratory study. As exploratory studies favors an investigation of large nuances where context is of upmost importance, a qualitative research strategy is imperative to follow. Furthermore, qualitative research strategy favors an inductive approach of the link betIen theory and research, in which the former emerges from the latter (Clark et al., 2021). While a qualitative research strategy has some benefits such as openness and relevance, variation and complexity and flexibility. HoIver, some potential drawbacks include as external validity, transparency in the data collection process and questions regarding replication of the study (Jacobsen, 2018). The benefit of flexibility following a qualitative research strategy was crucial - it enabled me to gain a detailed understanding of the circumstances of international aid projects.

As the starting point of my investigation was a broad problem statement with vaguely formulated research questions, I concluded that there was limited emphasis that could be placed on quantitative data. As a result, I rejected the quantitative research strategy. Driven by a passion to leverage my expertise in project management to playing my part in obtaining lasting impact through aid projects, I took upon myself the challenge of conducting research in a field that is underexposed in the current project management literature.

3.2   Research Design

Next in our research process, I had to decide on a framework that directs the execution of a research method and the subsequent data analysis.Clark et al. (2021) defines this as a research design. Typical research designs presented by Clark et al. (2021) include the designs: experimental, cross-sectional, longitudinal, case study and comparative.

In the selection of research design, it was evident that I needed to collect in-depth data from a multitude of sources. This is followed by analyse the data collected by designing a framework of the drivers of success in development aid projects. This framework was then going to be applied and tested to the "Clean Beach - Clean Village" project planned and implemented by NV. This means that, essentially, the methodology of the thesis is in two parts.

An experimental design involves testing a hypothesis by specifying a set of controlled, dependent and independent variables, often used in social settings (Clark et al., 2021). In my case, this strategy would have required me to formulate a hypothesis to be tested. HoIver, testing the hypothesis with real-time experiments in international development aid projects would be challenging. Given the time restrictions of the thesis, a longitudinal research design, which requires data sampling over an extended period, would be inapplicable. While considering a

Clark et al. (2021) remarks that comparative design implies applying identical methodologies to two different cases with the aim to get a better knowledge of social phenomena through comparison. When used as part of qualitative research, a comparison study takes the form of numerous case studies. In short, the primary distinction between a case study and a comparative design is the number of instances analyzed (Clark et al., 2021).

An important dimension for me was to design a framework that would be applicable to all development aid projects. This would require me to collect information from a multitude of projects. As presented in the introduction, aid projects are to a large extent context-specific. Therefore, a single case study of a project would provide insufficient insights to detect patterns that may be extrapolated to other cases. As a result, implementing a cross-sectional research design was optimal.

Cross-sectional research design focuses on "interpretive descriptive accounts of a population under observation" (Allen, 2017)[p.13]. Clark et al. (2021) classifies cross-sectional research design including three key aspects; multiple cases, at a single instant, quantifiable data and patterns of association. Multiple cases are necessary to ensure variation in data. The data from the multiple cases are collected concurrently. To measure the variation between the cases, a systematic and consistent procedure is required. Finally, a cross-sectional design enables one to exclusively study the correlation between variables (Clark et al., 2021). It remains important to be aware of the potential weaknesses of this research design. For instance, Clark et al. (2021) refers to weak internal

validity; the acquired data makes determining causal direction challenging.

3.3   Research Method

Clark et al. (2021) refers to the approach used to acquire empirical data as the research method. Possible research methods that can be implemented include observation, focus groups and interviews. Given that this research project is two-part; an interview-based study followed by a field research study, I decided to use different research methods for the respective parts. The research methodologies for the respective parts are presented below.

3.3.1   Research Method for the Off-site Research

Following a thorough examination of the various methods, I concluded that conducting semi-structured interviews is the most advantageous option. This is due to the method's relatively unstructured character as Ill as its capacity to offer insights into the respondents' perspectives (Clark et al., 2021). In these types of interviews, an interview guide is produced in advance, common for all the interviews. Using an interview guide ensured that I addressed mostly the same topics throughout the interviews. Otherwise, a risk would be to follow entirely different directions in each interview (Clark et al., 2021).

Digital interviews with video Ire held with discussions related to the interview guide. Although digital, benefits of face-to-face interviews range from establishing trust and openness with the respondents and that the interviewer is able to observe and, as a result, have a larger degree of control over the interview situation (Jacobsen, 2018). The responses from the informants Ire noted and used as part of the results and discussion of this report.

Jacobsen (2018) argues that the semi-structured individual interview can be time-consuming with large amounts of data gathered from a few respondents. This opens up the floor to individualism - individual attitudes and perceptions without regard for the social situation (Jacobsen, 2018). The benefits of conducting interviews with more than one informant concurrently includes varied perspectives, in addition to, the informants being able to build or disagree on each others responses. Some potential drawbacks encompass situations where the response is polarized by one informants opinions or perspectives and, as a consequence, limits the willingness for a respondent to share their views (Jacobsen, 2018). Aware of this information, I chose to to conduct single-person interviews.

The pros and cons of using other research methods such as self-completion questionnaires was up for discussion. While there are clear advantages such as being more efficient to administer and more standardized data, the outweighing disadvantage of being unable to prompt and probe respondents regarding certain topics tipped the scale for me (Clark et al., 2021). As I Ire attempting to investigate a field with limited documentation, a document analysis was considered inapplicable.Focus

groups are distinguished by their unstructured nature, with an emphasis on encouraging interactions among the informants (Clark et al., 2021). In a focus group, there is a prominent risk that respondents would not express their honest opinions, in fear of it being different than the majority of informants. Given this, coupled with the shear logistical issues of scheduling such a focus group when there is a restricted pool of possible respondents, the method was deemed unsuitable.

3.3.2 Research Method for the On-Site Research

Ethnography was selected as a research methodology for the Clean Beach - Clean Village project. Ethnography is often interchangeably referred to as participant observation, but Clark et al. (2021) argues that the term includes an emphasis on the culture of the people with whom the ethnographer is engaging (Clark et al., 2021). Essentially, the researcher or ethnographer is "immersed in a social setting for an extended period of time; makes regular observations of members of that setting; listens to and engages in conversations..." (Clark et al., 2021)[p. 432]. The degree of involvement of the ethnographer in the social setting to be studied needs to be established. Using a guideline presented by Clark et al. (2021), I will adopt a "partially participating" observing role. Although the ethnographer takes part in the major activities, observation is not always the primary data source. The more important data sources are interviews and documentation (Clark et al., 2021). In this study, the primary data source was interviews with key stakeholders.

3.3.3 Literature Review

A literature review is essential for numerous reasons. Most importantly, it is an approach to explore the existing theory on the selected research area, as Ill as, to identify possible gaps(Clark et al., 2021). The selected research area is relatively unexplored. As a consequence, there is limited published literature on the topic. Considering this, I decided to focalize the thesis on empirical data as key sources.

Nonetheless, Oria and Google Scholar Ire instrumental databases to provide access to essential scientific journals, providing sufficient results. The review process, in-line with the process emphasized by Clark et al. (2021), followed the sequencing of, firstly, collecting a plethora of relevant research articles through searching for relevant keywords. Keywords encapsulated "development aid projects", "sustainability in projects" and "relevance in development projects". Thereafter, the review is filtered to only include the articles relevant to the research question. Finally, these articles are analysed and synthesized with their key findings in the form of summary tables.

A preliminary framework for key success factors to ensure local ownership in international development aid projects as part of the Section 2. However, considering the limited literature published on this research area with an identified gap in an effective framework published, the preliminary model was considered to be inadequate. As a result, through analysis of empirical data, the aim

was to evaluate the applicability of the model - which key factors are included and which ones should be added.

3.4 Data Collection Method

Having selected a research strategy, research design as Ill as a research method, it was imminent to begin the interview process and prepare for the field study. The following sections will encompass the sampling strategy, present the sample and detail the empirical data collection process.

3.4.1 Sampling Strategy for the Off-Site Research

As I implemented a cross-sectional design for our study, as specified in Section 3.2, with the goal of collecting nuances between research subjects with extensive knowledge and expertise. This is reasoned by that our chosen topic that being underexposed in the existing literature. In addition, bearing in mind that these aid projects are context-dependent, it was important to diversify our respondent pool. This leads to the conclusion that the sampling strategy is influenced by the selected research design.

(Clark et al., 2021) distinguishes various sampling strategies such as purposive, theoretical and convenience sampling. Reasoned by the specialized competence and experience required by potential respondents, I chose purposive sampling. The aim of purposive sampling is to strategically sample respondents to ensure relevance according to the established research questions (Clark et al., 2021). Within purposive sampling, criterion and snowball sampling has been chosen. Essentially, sampling those who match a set criterion, in addition to, capitalizing on current research participants assisting in the recruitment of prospective individuals (Clark et al., 2021).

I began the sampling process by getting in touch with relevant informants already in our network. Next, posting on relevant forums on Facebook. Also, I used media, Facebook forums, and relevant Ibsites to contact potential informants. Throughout the sampling process, I used snowball sampling to expand mine and Elie's informants base.

Sample of Informants

The information regarding the details of informants is compiled in Table 2. Instead of names, interview object numeration is used, in addition to some generalization of their previous and present professional roles. This is done for reasons directly related to confidentiality.

Interview Object	Current and former roles	Experience (years)	Interview length
1	Program manager of international development projects and initiatives	10-16	41 min
2	International program director of aid projects, Director of education	25	1 h
3	Project and program leader of aid projects	7	34 min
4	Project leader of development aid projects	6	39 min
5	Project leader of humanitarian and development-political projects	13	1 h
6	Program advisor of humanitarian aid projects, Team leader of institutional partnerships	16	41 min

Table 2: Sample of Informants

Table 2 demonstrates the relevant qualifications of the respondents in this investigation. To ensure variety and informants from various levels of engagement in such projects, the informants range from consultants and advisors to program leaders and directors in the field of international aid. Another important criteria for me in the selecting the sample of informants was for these to be in a broad range of years of experience in the relevant field. As a result, the informants ranged from seven years to 25 years of experience.

The Interview Process

The empirical data from the interviews with development aid professionals was collected in partnership with Elie Mutula Nzigo. The interview guide used for the interviews can be found in Appendix B and **??**. An essential point to note is that when asking questions, I did not strictly adhere to the interview outline, rather I encouraged variation and follow-up questions in reaction to the informants' responses, as Ill as to encourage deeper reflection.

The interview length ranged from 34 minutes to 1 hour, where the longer interviews generally had deeper reflections. By audio recording the interviews, with permission from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, it presented me the opportunity to easily focus on the dialogue, take a deeper dive on intriguing aspects and prompt follow-up questions. Heritage (1984) emphasises benefits of recording and transcribing interviews as it facilitates for repeated examinations of interviewee responses. A disadvantage of transcription is that the method is time-consuming (Clark et al., 2021), where heaps of text needs to be analyzed.

3.4.2 Sampling Strategy for the On-Site Research

Similarly to the sampling strategy, purposive sampling strategy was implemented. This is due to the aim to sample informants who are and have the capacity to influence the project. For the field research conducted on-site in the Casamance region of Senegal, the stakeholders Ire identified and mapped, as illustrated on Figure 4.

Sample of Informants Having anchored the research methodology, in addition to having identified the stakeholders, the following step was to select which stakeholders to sample (Clark et al., 2021). Naturally, due to time limitations, access and the scope of this study, only the integral stakeholders Ire sampled. Namely, village leaders of the regions; Niafrang, Kafountine, Diannah and Kabadio, the Women's Association of Diannah, the project developers in Bolong, the local youth organization and the project leaders.

Data collection The data collected in the field research was in the form of field notes. The ethnographic approach features unstructured interviews with the identified informants (Clark et al., 2021).

3.5 Data Analysis Method

To analyse the qualitative data collected from the interviews and the on-site field interviews, I chose to implement aspects of the grounded theory framework. Clark et al. (2021) outlines the coding process where, first and foremost, one examines the transcripts and field notes and categorize the data based on the proposed model from the Section 2. Using NViVo, codes Ire generated based on labels within the identified categories. These codes Ire applied to the interviews and field notes. Finally, the codes Ire cross-analyzed to identify themes and their occurrences. With a basis from Section 2, five themes Ire identified where each success criteria has its associated success factors. The empirical data revealed the identification of a sixth success criteria and additional success factors. Accordingly, a total of 6 themes Ire produced based on a total number of 300 codes from the off-site interviews of industry professionals. The results from the coding process are presented in Section 4 Empirical Data.

3.6 Evaluation and Personal Reflections

3.6.1 Inspiration of Project Choice

Although I struggled to recall where or when I became aware of Engineers Without Borders' (EWB) Meaningful Master's, I am grateful to have had the opportunity of collaboration. Meaningful Master's provides master's students the opportunity to apply theory from their respective engineering studies into practise. As a project management student, it was an opportunity to explore social,

economic, and environmental challenges in international development aid projects. A field trip to the respective project-site is an integral part of the Meaningful Master's, which in this case was the Casamance region of Senegal. An introductory meeting with a collaboration partner of EWB, namely Niafrangs Venner, highlighted a competence gap in the area of project management. The Clean Beach - Clean Village project was presented and a contract was signed to begin the project. Prior to conducting this project, I had limited knowledge and competence in the area of international development aid projects. Nevertheless, I was thrilled to start exploring the subject and contribute to make a difference in developing countries.

3.6.2 Quality of the Research

Through the perspective of scientific quality, it is imperative to evaluate the quality of the research methodology. As outlined by Clark et al. (2021), the dimensions of reliability, replication and validity will be examined. Reliability encompasses the degree to which the results of the study are repeatable (Clark et al., 2021). As this study reviews projects and experiences of informants from various developing countries, the data is strongly context-dependent. Replicating the results of such a qualitative and context-dependent study has its limitations. However, strong emphasis has been placed on detailing the methodology. Regardless, the aim of this study was conceptual generalization - rather than placing emphasis on individual cases, it is placed on gaining insights into the overarching subject of ID projects.

The criterion of validity relates to the "...integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research" (Clark et al., 2021)[p.47]. Examining the internal validity, which is a question of causality, Clark et al. (2021) suggests various guidelines in his book. One of which are principles to improve the validity of a study. I made it a priority to conduct the study in accordance with these. This is exemplified by choosing not to ignore contradictory statements brought about by informants.

3.6.3 Ethical Considerations

Any social research study necessitates rigorous ethical considerations to ensure the preservation of informants' rights. Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata (NSD) have evaluated and accepted the research proposal prior to commencing the data collection. I have taken careful measures to get informed consents of informants, which was a document sent to the informants prior to the interview. The consent form can be found in Appendix A. Verbal agreement of the informants to partake in the research was a part of the data collection process. Also, the consents needed in respect to the field study Ire ensured with relevant contracts in place. The confidentiality of the informants from the interviews and field study Ire protected through anonymity in this thesis.

3.6.4 Limitations

The interview questions Ire not directed towards precisely identifying critical success criteria, local ownership with its associated factors and pitfalls. Instead, the interview guide comprised of multi-faceted questions regarding human aspects, technical aspects, as Ill as, social and contextual aspects of international development aid projects. The scope of the thesis was set based on what I consider to be the crucial success criteria, local ownership, with a basis in literature review and empirical data. This presents a limitation on the quality of the results in accordance with the stated research questions; and hence the scope of this study. In this investigation, a total of six informants Ire interviewed. To improve the reliability of the study, more respondents could have been sampled, in addition to, a stronger literature review. Time restrictions is a prominent issue, which also inhibits the narrowed scope of the thesis in relation to answering the problem statement.

This study was further constrained by the current literature's inadequacy of published theory, as Ill as, inadequacy in a common method of DA evaluations, which compromised the quality of the research's theoretical underpinnings. Another identified limitation is the questionable objectivity of local informants as they potentially perceived me as an 'outsider with money'. As a consequence, the informants may have provided information to encourage further funding, or alternatively, paint a more positive picture of the situation. This directly impacts the bias of the empirical data from the field study.

The proposed framework for Local Ownership Figure 5 is subjected to various limitations. Addressing generalization, which is the extent to which the model can adapt to a different project and context, the model uses a literature review and empirical data from development aid practitioners. However, generalization can be improved by testing the model on multiple development aid projects to make adjustments accordingly. This goes hand in hand with external validity (Clark et al., 2021). Moreover, the field study and follow-up of the project was restricted to four months. In contrast to follow-up from project formulation to project close-out. This presents a limitation on emerging perspectives of local stakeholders. Instantaneous data does not give any indication of initial perceptions or perspectives at the close-out phase, directly influencing the validity of data collected.

4 Empirical Data

The following section presents the key findings from my investigation, which encompasses the on-site field study, as well as, the qualitative interviews conducted of development aid practitioners. In addition, initial analysis of field data is presented. The aim of the following chapter is to provide empirical data in relation to the problem statement. Direct citations from the interview objects (IO)s are included.

First and foremost, each and every informant emphasized local ownership as a critical success factor in the pursuit of relevance and sustainability in international development aid projects. In fact, keywords such as 'ownership', 'locally rooted' and 'involvement' were mentioned on a total of 57 occasions. Moreover, informants emphasized that without adequate ownership by the intended recipients, there is a high likelihood that the project outcomes and benefits will be lost in the long run. IO 1 comments that:

> "A consequence of not having local ownership is delimited impact, typically a time-limited effect. One may be able to achieve a small outcome. If you don't have ownership you will most likely have a poor plan because you do not know the needs well enough. It also strongly delimits the long-term impact."

In a quest for relevance and sustainability of a project, the recipients must be self-sufficient after the donor and the project implementation party have withdrawn from the project. To be self-sufficient, it necessitates that the recipients have strong ownership of the project. IO 5 accentuates a best-case scenario of an international development project:

> "In the best-case scenario, if a project is to work as intended - the project needs to be strongly rooted in the community. Also, the project must fulfill a need that can continue when the project is completed."

Detailed planning is widely recognized to be a critical success factor of project success. Moreover, which local stakeholders will have a governing role, when the the ownership will be transferred, as well as, how the transfer will take place are central dimensions to account for. IO 4 emphasizes this in the following statement:

> "Detailed planning is crucial, as well as, who will assume ownership of the project, when and how."

In addition to adequate planning, some informants emphasize the importance of having sufficient resources, which is a critical success factor of both local ownership and sustainability. With none or a limitation in required resources, intended outcomes of a project will subside. With this in

mind, continuity in the access to required resources need to be accounted for when initiating an ID project. Correspondingly, IO 1 asks the following question:

"Do the local stakeholders possess the necessary resources to ensure its continuity?"

In pursuance of which stakeholders ownership encompasses, the following section will examine the informants' responses to localization of ownership.

4.1 Localization of Ownership & Partnerships

The majority of informants stressed that broad inclusion of local stakeholders promotes collective ownership. While personal ownership of specific project areas and tasks encourages responsibility and commitment, collective ownership encourages the sustainability of project outcomes. Nonetheless, collective ownership is resource-demanding. IO 5 expresses accordingly:

"Facilitating inclusion of a wide array of stakeholders is important. Also, being responsive to what the need is locally and being able to think quite broadly about what involvement is, and, not just thinking of distinct leaders such as government officials, but others may not be as apparent. These may be women's organizations, as well as, youth groups. Many people work a little under the radar. While it is resource-consuming, broad inclusion is essential to ensure ownership."

Furthermore, IO 4 exemplifies her point by shedding light to an initiative conducted in Palestine:

"In Palestine, our starting point was to do a scan of various issues in that context. We had offices in Gaza who identified who had locally anchored organizations within the village. How did we do this? We examined aspects such as the leadership in the organization and the diversity of the members. We developed proxy indicators to ensure legitimacy. Based on that, we selected partners who had legitimacy in their communities and, then, formed the initiatives with them."

Selecting partnering organizations based on 'proxy indicators' may be an effective way to assess potential partners within the community. As exemplified by IO 4, examples of such proxy indicators are legitimacy in their respective communities and diversity among the members. While such local organizations may not always exist from beforehand, the donor and/or the project implementer can support and facilitating the establishment of these. IO 5 underlines that although facilitating broad inclusion of the project, which strengthens ownership, it is resource-demanding, typically in terms of cost and time. Ownership must happen at all levels, from children to authorities, referred to as collective ownership. Yet, ensuring collective ownership is typically a complex process. IO 1 accentuates the importance of ownership at multiple levels with the following comment:

>*"Ownership needs to be present at several levels. One of these levels must be the local community, in addition to, local or national authorities. Strong emphasis should be placed on close partnerships with authorities. This is what gives an initiative structural and long-lasting impact."*

Data gathered from the field study indicate that the project legitimacy of the Clean Beach - Clean Village is established by close collaboration with local youth and women's organizations, in addition to, partnerships with schools and religious organizations. Moreover, partnerships with local authorities including village leaders, the municipality as an institution, as well as, governors is established. The village leaders possess authority in their respective villages and are appointed by their community. These partnerships are crucial to ascertain broad involvement within the local community. Engineers Without Borders' involvement in the project contribute to project legitimacy. However, reaping the benefits of these partnerships necessitates mechanisms and spaces to negotiate ownership. Such spaces and mechanisms are practically non-existent in the project. Furthermore, clear roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder remain unclear.

Stakeholder Management

Effective stakeholder management of, among others, local organizations, authorities and partners, whereby transparency and accountability are emphasized, is expressed by informants as key success factor to sustain project outcomes. Accordingly, Figure 4 presents the stakeholders of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project. The population size of the community is approximately 19,000.
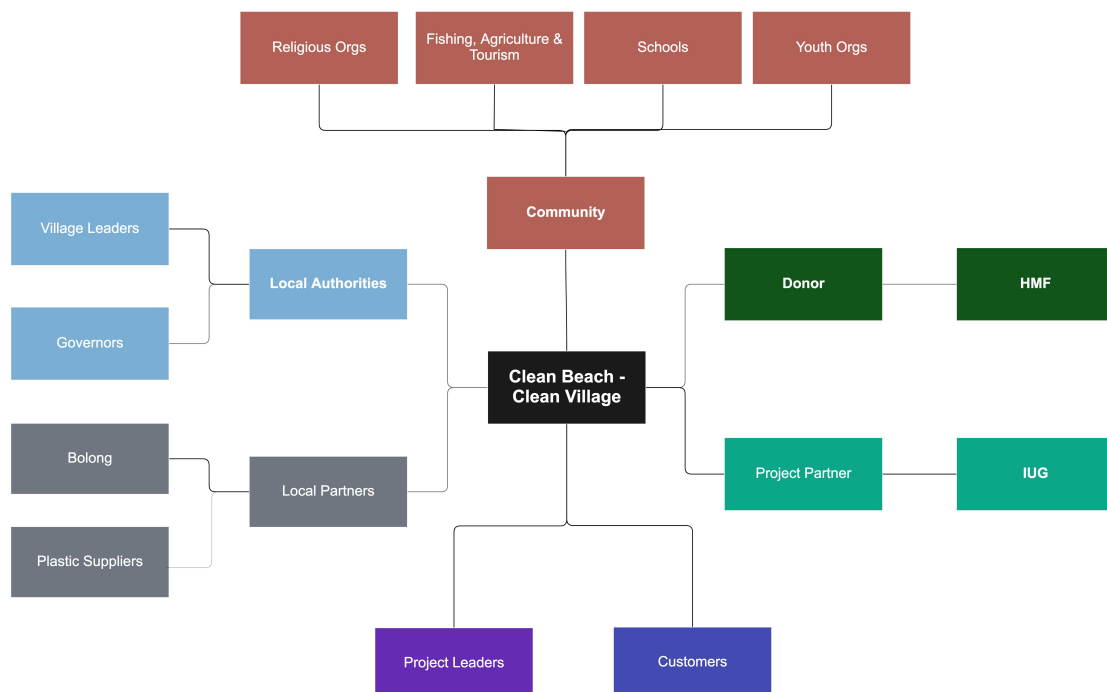

Figure 4: Stakeholder Map

NV can use the stakeholder map to clarify roles and form close collaborative partnerships. Close partnerships with key stakeholders requires sufficient commitment to the project. Subsequently, the aspect of commitment is examined in the following section.

4.2   Commitment

IO 2, IO 3 and IO 5 emphasize the importance of early recipient involvement in the project. Early involvement necessitates awareness from early stages of a project. Only with awareness, can support and commitment be developed. At the foundational level, ownership is a two-way street; the donor together with the project implementer and the recipients. Both parties need to be engaged and committed to the project. The likelihood of enduring effects in the absence of both sides' involvement is minimal. The stronger the commitment is to the project and its outcomes, the stronger the local ownership is. IO 6 underlines this by commenting:

> *[In addition to being needs-driven], as important is the requirement that you have secured the necessary buy-in and sufficient commitment from partners you depend on (e.g. institutions, authorities, local organizations). A cooperative partnership must be established early and be maintained. We depend on others to play their part to get results."*

The local stakeholders of the Casamance community were in agreement that there was a lack of awareness of the project in its early stages. The Bolong association continuously campaign to educate the community regarding plastic pollution. Initially, the majority of local stakeholders did not have faith in the project. However, when the community learnt that the project team had acquired land and initiated plastic collection events, the perception of the project changed for the better. At the time of the field trip, the data collected strongly indicate that the community is pleased with the project. Moreover, an understanding of the benefits of the project and the importance of environmental preservation is continuously nurtured. Nonetheless, there was a consensus that responsibility and commitment to the project is deficient. Some village leaders stated that the community should be awarded for plastic collection initiatives. In contrast, other authoritative figures (some village leaders, religious organization leaders) express that merely establishing recycling places and providing bins would be sufficient.

A local youth organization emphasize that awareness regarding the issue of plastic pollution is raised by hosting annual festivals for environment and health. By hosting these events, the local youth organization comments that take active measures to integrate awareness into culture. In addition to awareness, the organization facilitate community participation in plastic collection events to ensure continuity in its handling and recycling. An emerging theme of local stakeholders is the 'what's in it for me' perspective - a few informants hold the perception that the project's

goal is to make a profit that will not positively impact the community. Regardless of this, local ownership in terms of commitment, responsibility and accountability is regarded as deficient.

4.3   Needs-Driven

A key factor identified among the informants that DA projects must be needs-driven. In addition, to ensure continuity, the recipients need to be aware of the initiative and what the intended outcomes are. Awareness of a project roots from the recipients having, initially, recognized a need in their community. This directly links to relevance in that the objectives of the project are aligned with needs and priorities of the recipients and community. While this may not always be the case, awareness of the local need can be raised in the early stages of a prospective initiative. Recipients may find it challenging to think of new ways to encourage development, to change the status-quo. Ideally, the recipients 'drive the project', while the donor and project implementation party support them. IO 4 emphasizes this accordingly:

> "The concept was that people themselves know what is most important to them. As a donor, we would support them in organizing themselves, but they find the solutions themselves."

Informants of the field study are in consensus of that the project solves a local need. For example, local fishermen of Niafrang comment that plastic is the reason why the quantity of fish is decreasing. As the fishing industry is a crucial source of livelihood of the community, the Clean Beach - Clean Village addresses true local needs. The benefits of the project are also recognized to apply to other sources of livelihood in the community; local tourism and agriculture. Nevertheless, the degree to which local stakeholders were engaged in formulating and 'driving' the project is further discussed in Section 5.1.3.

Conducting projects rooted in foreign or personal initiatives inhibits relevance and sustainability. IO 2 highlights the trap of 'falling in love with the solution':

> "It is imperative that those for whom the initiative is intended for must themselves have ownership of the problem. Also, the recipients must be actively involved in defining the problem. There is a tendency to 'fall in love with the solution', rather than the problem to be solved."

While ensuring that the intended project is rooted in true local needs, ideally formulated by the local stakeholders, they may not have the capacity to execute such a project, nor sustain the project outcomes when the donor withdraws from the project.

4.4 Capacity-building

When conducting ID projects with the aim to facilitate lasting impact in a community, awareness of that the intended outcome does not happen overnight is crucial. More importantly, recipients can only sustain the project outcomes if it is in their capacity. IO 1 accentuates this by asking the following rhetorical questions:

> *Is the local community mobilized and capable of facilitating the continuity in the intended outcomes? Is there adequate awareness surrounding the initiative and its intended outcomes?"*

Moreover, IO 4 and IO 6 highlighted that capacity-building of the recipients and the sharing of know-how related to what the project needs builds local ownership. Conversely, the more sense of ownership the recipients have, the more inclined they are to enhance their knowledge and competence. IO 5 comments that ID projects that supports local inhabitants' capacity to earn income from is an interesting dimension. However, such projects will, typically, face the challenge of inclusion of vulnerable groups (elderly, disabled, children) within the community. As employment within such commercial projects is, intuitively, based on utility and value-generation, it raises questions as to what degree local ownership is ensured. In addition, the informant highlights the potential inhibitor of that such projects require professional training to run. IO 5 exemplifies such an initiative as developing a local fishing industry with the goal that, within five years, the project will generate adequate revenue to be self-sufficient. Is the ownership limited to, as in the example of the development of the fishing industry, the fishermen and their families?

According to the insights gained of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project, with a plan that local stakeholders will sustain the project outcomes, capacity-building is a core processes. Bolong has been involved since the formulation of the project and NV remain avid to continue the transfer of Bolong has experience within finance, communication and management from earlier endeavors. However, the organization lacks the technical competence needed in the production of these tiles. Employees of the factory are capacitated to operate the recycling and production facility .Another important insight is that the NV and Bolong intend to train factory employees in equipment maintenance and repair.

4.5 Context

While all the informants elaborated on their perspectives of context and its implications on project execution, IO 2 attempts to quantify the importance of context. Accordingly, the informant argues that context accounts for 60-70 % of project success in ensuring sustainability and relevance in DA projects. Having worked with a plethora of development aid projects, IO 1 supports IO 2s claim on the importance of context by commenting:

> *"I believe that it is absolutely essential to know the local language and context. You get closer to people. If you observe a community from the outside, yet, speak a common language, you manage to conceptualize things that you, yourself, were not aware of."*

Drawing from personal experiences, IO 2 reflects on a near-identical project conducted in two vastly different locations and contexts; Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Work customs and norms are fundamentally dependent on local culture. Culture and communication were key determinants of project performance, as explained by IO 2:

> *"I was a project manager for projects that we were conducting in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as, Latin America, regardless of it being exactly the same project. It turned out to be highly successful in the African countries, yet, a disaster in Latin America. I think my success in managing the project in Africa was due to the fact that I was born and raised there... I know the African way of doing things and I speak the language both literally and figuratively. I struggled in Latin America, I did not understand how they did things and I struggled with the communication. I believe the project failed because I failed to understand the local culture and adapt the project to it. In contrast, in Africa I knew exactly how to design the projects and had an idea of what action to take if it did not go as I planned."*

Implementing a project based on foreign customs and ways of working inhibit the project ownership of the recipients. Moreover, such socio-cultural aspects influence the local reception of the project. As such, formulating the project based on local socio-cultural dimensions is a crucial success factor to ensure commitment and accountability of the recipients. Finally, the majority of the informants comment that corruption is a prominent structural barrier in a multitude of countries. As a result, establishing strong anti-corruption practises and policies is imminent.

The project leaders of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project have numerous years of experience in conducting projects in the local community, with its respective contextual determinants. While the project leaders are acquainted with the local language and culture, changing habits of the recipients remains a challenge. Explicitly, the habitual change whereby instead of polluting the local environment with plastic litter, it is collected in each household and recycling stations. Another habitual challenge is the establishment of regular clean-up activities within the community. By local stakeholders being aware, accountable and committed to undergoing these habitual changes results in ownership. Nevertheless, it is evident that the project leaders have made strong efforts to adapt socio-cultural and structural factors from project formulation. Considering the structural characteristics, it is evident that the community lacks systems and infrastructure for plastic recycling - which the Clean Beach - Clean Village attempts to solve.

4.6   Power & Control

The majority of informants were in consensus that strict and bureaucratic processes and demands placed on the project implementation party, by the donor is an inhibitor to local ownership, as well as, sustainability in DA projects. In the effort to aid recipients in development initiatives, IO 5 emphasizes the following:

"One of the major shifts in development aid is that we are talking about local partner-ships - cooperation. The intention is great - both sides can exercise influence. At the same time, we have not done much with the decision-making power. It is clearly with the person who holds the money - whether it is a smaller or larger actor."

IO 5 reflects on a project where the after withdrawal, the target beneficiaries were left with a strong dependence on continued external funding. The project compromised the construction of a preschool on the poor areas of the Gaza Strip. As a consequence, IO 5 distinguishes between sustainability as a concept and sustainability in operation in the following comment:

"I have worked on a project which encompassed support roles on the Gaza Strip where local ownership was evident. The initiative was theirs. However, they were left with a strong dependence on Norwegian funding to maintain operations because it is difficult for locals to mobilize funds. A dilemma was that the target beneficiaries had a strong ownership - it was sustainable as a concept but it was not sustainable in operation."

Development projects are complex endeavors where situations, local contexts and/or priorities of the recipients frequently differ from what had been initially anticipated. Both IO 1 and IO 3 highlight the need for flexibility in project implementation from the donor. Moreover, greater flexibility can facilitate the discovery of better suited solutions adapted to the given context. Accordingly, IO 2 states the following:

"Strict demands set by the donor is a showstopper for sustainability - very much so. [...] When we inform NORAD [the donor] that we want a larger degree of flexibility to solve major development issues, NORAD say that they need to report hard facts and figures to the Norwegian Parliament. How can we work towards local ownership when such bureaucracy inhibits it? We need more flexibility so we can give flexibility to our recipients. Then, they can also have a greater freedom to find solutions."

To summarize the dimension of power control, the informants are in consensus that a larger degree of flexibility from the donor enables the project implementer to facilitate stronger local ownership. The project manager in NV expressed that the donor placed strict reporting demands. Further-more, on account of the donors efforts to minimize the risks associated with initial investments in

infrastructure, such as investing in solar power, placed some further constraints on environmental sustainability. As a consequence, flexibility in pro Examining the governance of the project during and after project implementation, Bolong is a trusted local partner by the community.

4.7 Other Remarks

Continuous Assessments

Multiple informants highlight that continuous learning and assessments throughout the duration of a project is important. In the assessments of a project's relevance and sustainability, a part of this should be evaluations of degrees of ownership and explorations of opportunities to facilitate a stronger sense of ownership at various stages of the project. Not only during initiation or termination phase of a project. IO 3 comments the following:

> "Success in a project is that the intended results and outcomes. It can have unintended effects and then you have to adjust your project. One discovers that it does not go to plan. In that case, which methods do we use? Are we using the wrong people? Then you have to find out the reasons for this and adjust accordingly. Continuous development and learning is key."

Dimensions of continuous assessments will be further explored in Section 5.2.

5 Discussion

Having established the theoretical background, in addition to, presented and reviewed the empirical data, the following chapter explores the problem statement: *How can we ensure relevance and sustainability in international development aid projects?*. Moreover, the two sub-questions play a central role in the exploration of the presented research question. The structure takes a basis in the sixth identified themes from the theoretical background and empirical data, as illustrated by the proposed framework; Figure 5 Local Ownership V2.

While the literature review points to that a failure to ascertain local ownership is an inhibitor to relevance and sustainability, IO 5 explicitly emphasizes that a direct consequence of inadequate local ownership being a delimited impact of a project, typically in the form of a time-limited impact. Furthermore, the informant accentuates that inadequate ownership in the early phases of a project will generally lead to a poor plan because the needs of the target beneficiaries are not well understood - delimiting the relevance of the project.

5.1 Local Ownership: identified themes

5.1.1 Localization of Ownership & Partnerships

The literature review highlighted the importance of involvement and engagement of a wide variety of stakeholders in all phases of a project (Ballantyne, 2003; Weeks et al., 2002). Effective stakeholder management where the needs, priorities and demands of partners/local stakeholders are heard and taken into account is supported by both theory and empirical insights. The empirical data confirms that broad inclusion of local stakeholders promotes collective ownership. Moreover, while personal ownership of specific project areas and tasks encourages responsibility and commitment, collective ownership encourages the sustainability of project outcomes. Nonetheless, an important finding was that facilitating collective ownership is resource-demanding - in terms of time and cost. Partnerships is recognized, among authors, to be an enabler for localization of ownership (Ballantyne, 2003). Furthermore, informants addressed that an effective way to assess potential partner organizations is by the use of proxy indicators. Examples of such indicators include legitimacy in their respective communities and diversity among the members. While the subject area of partnerships is an elaborated in literature, there is an evident gap in the literature on partnerships in international development aid. Furthermore, empirical findings reveals that ownership needs to be present at multiple levels, from children in the community to local authorities. IO 5 accentuates that strong emphasis should be placed on close partnerships with authorities, which is what gives a development aid project structural and long-lasting impact.

Moreover, the theoretical background also stressed that effective stakeholder management is facilitated through mechanisms and spaces where ownership can be negotiated (Ballantyne, 2003).

With inadequate literature on such mechanisms to negotiate ownership, the empirical data also failed to elaborate on this topic. I suggest that such spaces can take the form of regular and collective meetings with key stakeholders present. While the field study indicate the involvement of a range of stakeholders, from women's organizations to the local governor, there was no indication of collective spaces where multiple key stakeholders were capacitated to develop and negotiate ownership and partnerships. This represents an improvement potential for the project. In addition, the project should put in place a partnership system with the municipality to initiate and run a recycling system. This will be crucial to ensure the longevity of the project outcomes.

5.1.2 Commitment

The literature review points to commitment and accountability as pillars to ensure ownership, where the two drivers go hand-in-hand. Assigning responsibility to local stakeholders fosters commitment, as well as, accountability (Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). McKee et al. (2019) highlight that mutual accountability of development cooperation must have the crucial prerequisite of transparency in project plans and goals. The informants emphasize that early recipient involvement necessitates awareness of the project from the beginning. IO 1 stresses that securing the necessary 'buy-in' from partners one is dependent on (e.g. institutions, authorities, local organizations). The theory highlight that ownership is not a linear sequence where stakeholders automatically transition from participation to ownership. Rather, it is cultivated over time through a process where capabilities, understanding and commitment of the stakeholders are strengthened (Ballantyne, 2003). With basis in trust, mutual accountability can be fostered (McKee et al., 2019). The empirical data support and builds on theory, and vice versa, which sheds light on the drivers of commitment; awareness & perception and mutual accountability.

The analysis of the ethnographic study of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project, as presented in Section 4.2, indicate gradual improvements in both the awareness and perception of the project within the community. Bolong take active measures in educating the community of the numerous benefits of the project for the community. Regardless, I would argue that stakeholders' commitment to the project and the outcomes remain deficient. To improve this, assigning responsibilities to key stakeholders using spaces (e.g. collective meetings) can foster commitment to the project.

5.1.3 Needs-driven

To ensure relevance and sustainability in development aid projects, the literature review emphasizes that a project must be aligned with recipients' needs, priorities and situations (Ballantyne, 2003; McKee et al., 2019). These factors are situation-specific. Ballantyne (2003) accentuates that ownership is something that is taken, in contrast, to being given. Typically, the donor or implementing party take charge of the formulation stages of a project. Theory and empirical data

support that they should restrict their direct roles and responsibilities and, to the extent practicable, invite local stakeholders to engage and lead. Recipient involvement in the formulation phases of a project offer unique perspectives on a matter, which are formed by local needs.

The informants stress that conducting projects rooted in foreign or personal initiatives inhibits relevance and sustainability. Although the literature emphasizes the importance of solving local needs, as well as, experienced informants being aware of this, it remains difficult to implement in practise. Moreover, multiple informant bring to light the pitfall of 'falling in love with the solution' - rather than the problem to be solved. The perceived needs of the recipients does not equate to the real needs. A possible inhibitor to this issue may be due to restrictions in relation to time and flexibility provided by the donor. This will be further explored in Section 5.1.6.

Examining the degree to which the local recipients of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project drive and formulated the project presents the Bolong organization as a key player. The field study indicated that basic needs of the community are already met. Infrastructure is, in contrast, an area of development potential. Based on the ethnographic data, my arguments are that establishing plastic cleaning and recycling systems are in line with community priorities. The community are aware of the environmental consequences of the plastic-problem that negatively impact the local industries; agriculture, tourism and fishing. Regardless, the need for such plastic handling systems is not regarded as a direct priority for a few groups in the community. Bolong takes active measures to raise awareness of the need, project and its intended outcomes to ensure alignment of intended outcomes.

5.1.4 Context

Both literature review and empirical data support the claim that 'a project is never isolated from its surroundings, namely its context'. Both structural (forms of organization, laws and legislative infrastructure) and socio-cultural (values, norms and ways of socialization) aspects play a crucial role in aligning a project with its context (Pierce et al., 2003). I claim that it is near impossible to copy-and-paste a project conducted in one context to another. Among others, contextual factors strongly impact local decision-making processes and, more importantly, socially created forms of collective ownership. Structures and processes to facilitate multi-way communication encourages transparency in decision-making processes, trust in the project, in addition to, strengthened commitment of the stakeholders to the project.

The amount of time it takes for psychological ownership to emerge is also influenced by culture (Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). Reflecting on projects conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, IO 2 accentuates the critical role of culture and communication. Implementing a project based on foreign customs and ways of working inhibit ownership of the recipients.

The field data from the community of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project strongly reflect

a collectivist culture. Accordingly, ownership should, theoretically, be a common and shared experience (Pierce et al., 2003). I claim that such collective ownership is a stronger sense of ownership, yet however, is more complex to achieve. Habits and norms are a part of socio-cultural characteristics and challenging to alter (Pierce et al., 2003). Thus, habitual changes associated with plastic recycling within the community require commitment to undergo. Stricter regulations on plastic by the municipality may be present an opportunity to discourage the unreasonable disposal of plastic. Also, data collected suggest that local ownership is further strengthened by the efforts towards environmental sustainability in their community.

5.1.5 Capacity-building

The findings from my investigation support the literature review on the crucial role of capacity-building to develop local ownership. Empirical data emphasize that conducting ID projects with the aim to facilitate lasting impact in a community, recipients can only sustain the project outcomes if it is in their capacity. Furthermore, IO 1 comments that the target beneficiaries possess detailed knowledge of what the pressing issues are in the current situations. A donor and/or project implementer should, ideally, support them in organizing themselves and supplement in required capacities with theoretical knowledge and project management competence. While IO 1 claims that the recipients should find the solutions to local needs themselves Section 4.3, I would argue that this can be difficult in practise. Target beneficiaries possess extensive local expertise regarding the situation, yet, may not be aware of prospective solutions. As such, the solutions should, instead, be formed together with the donor and project implementer in a balanced manner. Moreover, the target beneficiaries should be capacitated to take ownership and 'drive' the project. Ballantyne (2003) supports this by stating that to reduce or avoid issues that may arise in transferring ownership from one party to another, target beneficiaries should be empowered in their capacities in the early phases of a project.

An interesting concept accentuated by multiple informants is supporting local communities in their own capacity by the use of a business model. In doing so, this may naturally ease the challenges of fostering ownership. Moreover, an incentive is established for the target beneficiaries where the donor and project implementer assist recipients in a way to help themselves. The recipients take control of the project and become accountable for the success of the business part. The Clean Beach - Clean Village project follows such a model where produced tiles will be sold to customers, which is becomes a source of income for the community. Nonetheless, IO 5 comments that such projects will, typically, face the challenge of inclusion of vulnerable groups (elderly, disabled, children) within the community. As employment within such commercial projects is, intuitively, based on utility and value-generation, it raises questions as to what degree local ownership is ensured to the collective community. I claim that such a development aid project with a business model can be an effective way to facilitate long-term local ownership.

5.1.6 Power & Control

The literature review highlighted that initiatives performed by an external party generally results in the formation of a dependency relationship between the donor and the recipients. IO 5 reflects on a project where the after withdrawal, the target beneficiaries were left with an over-dependence on continued external funding Section 4.6. Although the project had a business model where parents would finance the school through tuition, the parents could not afford to continually finance their children's intuition. I argue that the reason for this may be poor contextual and capacity assessments. As a result, many such initiatives fail to be long-lasting, sustainable, and community-controlled (Ballantyne, 2003; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). Also, it remains imperative to acknowledge that although I argue that local ownership is a crucial driver for sustainability and relevance, it does not neglect other key drivers such as economical sustainability.

Ballantyne (2003) highlights that the project implementation party typically place stronger emphasis on accountability to the donor than to the recipients. As a consequence of financial and reporting responsibilities, donors may assert too much control and ownership, adversely effecting the sustainability of the initiative. Insights from development aid practitioners confirm this. Moreover, there is a need for greater flexibility for the project implementer so the project implementer can provide a larger degree of flexibility to the recipients. I clam that an institutional change is required for this power dynamics problem. This is easier said than done. However, awareness is present of the issue and being communicated by foreign aid practitioners to donors. Ballantyne (2003) argues that this over-dependence may be countered through partnerships; by forming trusting relations with local stakeholders. However, I argue that it is difficult for a donor to place trust in local stakeholders, as opposed to, the project implementer. To some degree this is also evident in the Clean Beach - Clean Village project where demands on reporting, as well as, initial investments on solar power infrastructure is evident.

While some demand a larger degree of ownership to the recipients, others call for a unified definition and clarity in the roles of the partnerships (Ballantyne, 2003; Rey-Moreno et al., 2014). While the informants do not touch upon this point, I agree on the call for a unified partnership framework in development aid projects. This point is outside the scope of this study, but presents an opportunity of further investigation.

When the project implementer and donor transfer ownership of the project to the recipients, this cannot happen abruptly. Securing a seat at the governing function of a project, enables monitoring and a degree of control to maintain the intended outcomes. I would argue that by the project implementer securing a seat at the governing function of a project for a few years after withdrawal enables monitoring and a degree of control to maintain the intended outcomes. This is a recommendation for Niafrangs Venner, specifically for the Clean Beach - Clean Village project.

5.2 Other Remarks

Projectfication of Development Aid

The literature review pointed out early that the aid sector is project-driven. As a consequence, project manager typically use methodologies from traditional projects in typical sectors, such as the change of design in the production of toothpaste. In light of the empirical findings, I now doubt that projectification of the aid sector is a problem in and of itself. It is evident through interviews with informants that they often worked at a program level, which is compromised of multiple projects, rather than a single projects. IO 4 emphasizes the importance of 'community mobilization programs' as a more efficient initiative to obtain lasting impact. A recommendation to the project managers of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project is to split the endeavor into an collective program with three projects; (a) plastic collection, b) transport and handling, and, (c) production of recycled tiles. Among others, benefits of doing so are improving the management of projects inter-dependencies, better visibility in risk management and improved resource management. Clarity of roles and accountability are overarching benefits of this (PMI, n.d.).

Continuous Assessments

Empirical insights revealed that continuous learning and assessments of current degrees of ownership, in addition to, explorations of opportunities to facilitate a stronger sense of ownership is needed. Such assessments should not only take place in the initiation or termination phases of a project. Other evaluations include the use of methods and the people involved. This provides a basis to make adjustments accordingly. Again, flexibility is an important driver to perform the necessary adjustments. While adequate up-front planning mitigates many potential challenges that may arise during project execution, the context-specific unpredictability of development aid projects is an uncertainty that can only be mitigated through flexibility. This is an added driver to Figure 5, placed under the success criteria, needs-assessment. Continuous assessment were not observed in the field study, potentially due to the time-limited period of my field study.

5.3 Proposing a framework: Local Ownership

Having presented a preliminary framework for local ownership Figure 1, the empirical data calls for alterations to the model. The alterations to the initial model are; (a) needs-assessment as an added success criteria with the associated drivers of detailed planning and early involvement, (b) the inclusion of authority involvement as a driver of localization of ownership, (c) inclusion of flexibility as a driver of power & control, (d) transparency & communication as driver of context and, finally, (e) addition of continuous assessment as a driver. While the literature review is somewhat sufficient in identifying some success criteria and driver to facilitate local ownership, the analysis of the empirical data identified a literature gap of other success criteria with its associated

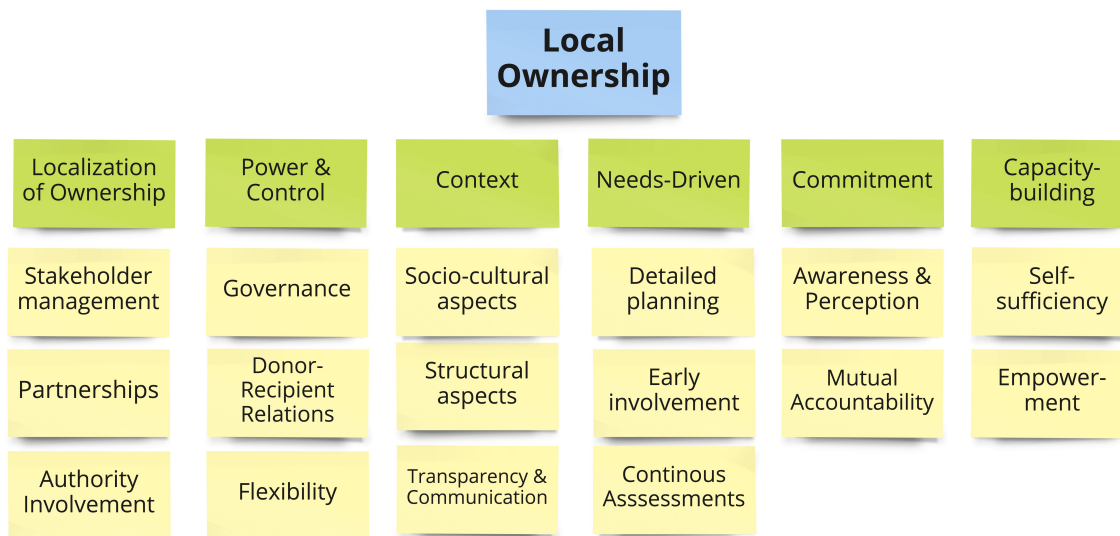drivers. The finalized model Figure 5 is presented accordingly:

Figure 5: Local Ownership V2.0

It is important to be aware of that several drivers are not limited to a specific success criteria. Moreover, synergies between success criteria and drivers occur naturally. As an example, by empowerment of local stakeholders for capacity-building purposes may naturally result in increased commitment and mutual accountability. Furthermore, empowerment of local stakeholder may not impact detailed planning, which makes it an independent factor in this example. More importantly, certain drivers may inhibit the successful attainment of other drivers or success criteria. To exemplify, I claim that it is challenging to involve all stakeholders in a community. As a consequence, the empowerment of selected stakeholders in the community may discourage other stakeholders' commitment to the project. Such issues will be context-dependant. I claim that Figure 5 can be an effective framework to ensure local ownership in the pursuit of relevance and sustainability in development aid projects.

6 Conclusion

Project management in development aid is underexposed in literature. Furthermore, relevant frameworks to ensure and evaluate the relevance and sustainability of such projects is insufficient. In this pursuit, this thesis identifies the pitfalls and key drivers to ensure strong local ownership. For clarification purposes, local ownership is *"the acceptance of responsibility through a process of stakeholder participation, empowerment and consensus"* (Singh, 2002)[p.47].

In adherence to the structure of a scientific investigation, the thesis is concluded in the following chapter. Firstly, a summary of my answers to the problem statement and its sub-questions is presented. Subsequently, practical implications of the investigation is discussed, which also includes recommendations for the Clean Beach - Clean Village project. The final section highlights interesting topics for further research identified in this thesis.

6.1 Answering the Problem Statement

The problem statement for this thesis is formulated as following:

> *How can we ensure relevance and sustainability in international development aid projects?*

To guide and scope the investigation of the problem statement, two sub-questions were introduced. Firstly, I aim to answer the problem statement in relation to SQ1, which is as follows:

> *SQ1: What are common pitfalls that inhibit the attainment of strong local ownership?*

SQ1 guides an investigation to identify the common mistakes that can prevent the attainment of local ownership. The attainment of local ownership has both a 'technical' aspect (detailed planning) as well as a 'soft' aspect (empowerment of recipients). The literature review is successful in highlighting various pitfalls, including failure to identify the true needs of the recipients, as well as, their capacities to sustain the project outcomes. Misplacement of donor's and political actors' focus on 'quick fix' results inhibits the often resource-demanding process of ensuring strong local ownership. The findings accentuate the pitfall of an inadequate understanding of the true needs, priorities and situations of the recipients. Moreover, while needs assessments are typically done in the front-end phases of a project, it should be conducted as part of a continuous monitoring process. Informants pointed to failure to adapt the project to local context, especially culture and communication. Development aid projects are complex endeavors where situations, local contexts and/or priorities of the recipients frequently differ from what had been initially anticipated. Failure to adapt to changing context represents another pitfall of local ownership. Strict bureaucratic

demands with limited flexibility by the donor inhibits efforts towards ownership. Another pitfall is to neglect the recipients in the formulation phases of a project, which may result in issues of transferring ownership at a a later stage in the project. The findings bring to light the pitfall of 'falling in love with the solution' - rather than the problem to be solved.

Having identified common pitfalls in ensuring strong local ownership, the second sub-question is as follows:

SQ2: What are the key drivers to ensure strong local ownership?

The key success criteria and their associated drivers are illustrated on Figure 5. Project managers of development aid projects should place a primary emphasis on the "outcome" as opposed to the "output," as well as, on the beneficiaries as opposed to the donors.

The findings stress the importance of involvement and engagement of a wide variety of stakeholders in all phases of a project. Effective stakeholder management where the needs, priorities and demands of partners/local stakeholders are heard and taken into account is supported by both theory and empirical insights. To ensure relevance and sustainability in development aid projects, the findings emphasize that a project must be aligned with recipients' needs, priorities and situations. A project is never isolated from its surroundings, namely its context'. Formulating a development aid project project based on local socio-cultural and structural dimensions is a crucial success factor to ensure commitment and accountability of the recipients. Conducting development aid projects with the aim to facilitate lasting impact in a community, recipients can only sustain the project outcomes if it is in their capacity. As such, the target beneficiaries should be capacitated to take ownership and 'drive' the project. Moreover, there is a need for greater flexibility from the donor to the project implementer so the project implementer can provide a larger degree of flexibility to the recipients. Together, they can implement the best suitable methods and solutions. Finally, there is a need for continuous learning and assessments of current degrees of ownership, in addition to, explorations of opportunities to facilitate a stronger sense of ownership.

The short and concise answer to the problem statement is that a crucial criterion that international development aid projects can focus on to ensure relevance and sustainability is to facilitate strong local ownership. This should not, however, neglect the importance of other criteria.

6.2 Practical Implications

The growth in the number and diversity of development aid projects is a notable element that is changing the development aid environment (Ingram, 2022). This investigation intends to present a new framework for local ownership in international development aid projects based on existing literature, in addition, to empirical findings. The basis of this is through identifying pitfalls and, more importantly, success criteria and drivers that facilitate strong local ownership. Practical implication for the donor, as well as, the project implementer is elaborated on in the following two sections:

6.2.1 The Donor

Typically, the donor places an emphasis on rigorous reporting and evaluating 'good intentions' and outputs. In addition, there are evident restrictions on the degree of flexibility placed on the project implementer and the recipients. Instead, the findings highlight and propose that the donor should focus on the output and impact of the project. Success in impact of the project necessitates that relevance and sustainability is a the core of the project. To achieve this, strong local ownership is a crucial driver for this. Greater flexibility provided to the project implementer and donor enables the local stakeholders to identify the true needs and find the best suited solutions to achieve these.

The donor is an important actor to gather data from a large quantity of development aid projects, and leverage this data through technology to share the project implementer with best-practises and frameworks to be used (Ingram, 2022). Moreover, through continuous feedback from the reports of the project implementer, the donor should facilitate necessary adaptations to ensure project success.

6.2.2 The Project Implementer

An implications for the project implementer is to test and use the proposed framework for local ownership Figure 5. Localization of ownership should be shifted to the target beneficiaries with broad involvement. Partnerships and collaboration with local stakeholders should be leveraged to encourage accountability and, hence, ownership of the project. Also, I propose that the project implementer performs continuous assessments of the degree of relevance and sustainability of the project to make adjustments accordingly. Moreover, I propose that the project implementer should provide spaces and mechanisms where ownership can be developed and negotiated for the local stakeholders. Establishing structures and processes to facilitate multi-way communication remains imperative.

Another practical implications for the project implementer is to restrict their direct roles and responsibilities and, to the extent practicable, invite local stakeholders to engage and lead. Prox-

imity to the project and its context is imperative for project adaptation to ensure relevance and sustainability. Finally, feedback to the donor regarding the challenges and success of project implementation so that frameworks can be established is imperative.

6.2.3   Clean Beach - Clean Village

The thesis suggests recommendations for the project managers of the Clean Beach - Clean Village project. These are discussed in the appropriate sections of Discussion Section 5, as well as, listed following:

- Establishing collective spaces where multiple key stakeholders were capacitated to develop and negotiate ownership and partnerships.

- Assigning responsibilities to key stakeholders using spaces to foster commitment to the project

- Stricter regulations on plastic through partnerships with the municipality to discourage the unreasonable disposal of plastic.

- Continue to raise awareness within the community of the need, project and its intended outcomes to ensure alignment of intended outcomes.

- Secure a seat at the governing function of a project after the donor and project implementer withdraws from the project, which enables monitoring and a degree of control to maintain the intended outcomes.

- Split the initiative into a collective program with three projects; (a) plastic collection, (b) transport and handling, and, (c) production of recycled tiles.

- Perform continuous assessments of current degrees of ownership, in addition to, explorations of opportunities to facilitate a stronger sense of ownership.

6.3　Further Research

The investigation into international development aid projects, specifically, how to facilitate strong local ownership for relevance and sustainability purposes highlighted various aspects of further work. Firstly, the findings of this study pointed out early that the aid sector is project-driven. As a consequence, project managers typically use methodologies from traditional projects, which may be an issue in and of itself. The extent to which an isolated project can result in a relevant and long-term impact is questioned. An investigation into if the aid sector should be project-driven, as opposed to, program or policy driven presents an area of further research. Regardless, the development aid sector is under explored in project management literature. Therefore, I propose that in order to advance the discipline, researchers should develop the discipline.

Frameworks such as OECD (2019) present methods of evaluations for aid projects, which may differ from typical project management methodologies. This investigation, in addition to, the developed model for local ownership aims to supplement this. It remains imperative to test the proposed framework on multiple aid project with the aim to be more adaptable.

With a prominent constraint of resources of this thesis, the investigation could be expanded to get insights from the donor-perspective. This would balance and result in a higher level understanding with the identification of new success factors and pitfalls in the pursuit of local ownership. Furthermore, the field study and follow-up of the project was restricted to four months, in contrast to, follow-up from project formulation to project close-out. By performing the investigation of local ownership throughout the project phases, a better understanding of the development of local ownership could be achieved.

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A Consent Form

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet:

Masteroppgave med problemstilling:

In pursuit of lasting impact in International Development Aid Projects.

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i en studie om langsiktigheten i hjelpe- og bistandsprosjekter i utviklingsland. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for studien og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Studien er en masteroppgave innen prosjektledelse som utføres våren 2020. Det gjennomføres mange prosjekter i utviklingsland, men hva skjer etter at giverorganisasjonen har trukket seg ut? Formålet med denne oppgaven er se på hvordan øke sannsynligheten for at prosjektene har en langvarig positiv effekt og påvirkning på samfunnet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

I empiriinnsamlingen legger vi vekt på å ha et utvalg med ulike perspektiver og innfallsvinkler. Du blir bedt om å delta i denne studien fordi vi ønsker høre dine perspektiver og erfaringer. Ved å dele vår motivasjon og studiens formål med personer i vårt nettverk har vi blitt tipset om flere aktuelle intervjuobjekt. Vi har også kontaktet relevante bedrifter og organisasjoner, samt personer vi har funnet gjennom relevante avisartikler eller lignende.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

● Hvis du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det i utgangspunktet ett personlig intervju. Det vil ta ca. 60 minutter. Intervjuet vil inneholde spørsmål om dine erfaringer med hjelpe- og bistandsprosjekter, samt tanker rundt hvordan prosjekter kan bidra til varig positiv endring i samfunnet. Det vil bli tatt lydopptak av intervjuet, som deretter transkriberes og anonymiseres. Alt dette vil bli slettet innen masteroppgavens innleveringsfrist i juni 2020.

● Dersom det er aktuelt å gjennomføre et oppfølgingsintervju vil vi kontakte deg. Her står du fritt til å velge å delta.

● Utover intervjuet/intervjuene vil vi kun benytte offentlig tilgjengelige kilder for å samle inn data.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i studien. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykke tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil kun bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

● Dine svar vil kun behandles av oss, Elie Nzigo og Amin Jahangir, og eventuelt vår veileder Tim Kristian Andreas Torvatn.

● Det vil kun bli lagret én lydfil av intervjuet som oppbevares sikkert. Ved transkripsjon vil navn og eventuelle kontaktopplysninger bli erstattet med pseudonym.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter studien?

Studien skal etter planen avsluttes i juni 2020. Alle personopplysninger og opptak vil bli slettet innen dette.

Dine rettigheter

Du har rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger

Hvem er ansvarlig for studien?

Studien gjennomføres av to masterstudenter. NTNU er ansvarlig for studien.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra NTNU har NSD (Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS) vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i denne studien er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- NTNU ved
    - Elie Nzigo, på e-post eliemn@stud.ntnu.no (masterstudent)
    - Amin Jahangir, på e-post aminj@stud.ntnu.no (masterstudent)
    - Tim Torvatn, på e-post Tim.torvatn@ntnu.no (veileder)

Samtykkeerklæring

 Du vil på starten av intervjuet bli bedt om å:

- Samtykke til å delta i intervjuet.
- Bekrefte at du har mottatt og forstått dette informasjonsskrivet og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål.
- Samtykke til at dine opplysninger behandles frem til studien er avsluttet, i juni 2020.

B Interview Guide English

Interview Guide

We first want to understand a little more about your background.

1. What is your current workplace?
    a. What tasks do you have?
2. How many years have you worked with Aid / international development?
3. What type of project have you been involved in?
    a. Competence enhancement?
    b. Development of infrastructure
    c. Health promotion assistance
    d. Political assistance (creating democracy, holding elections, fighting corruption, education, gender equality, etc.
    e. Creation of jobs, etc.

4. What was your role in the project?
5. What do you think is needed for development aid projects / development aid projects in developing countries to bring about a lasting positive change in society?
6. What do you think about the way today's aid and assistance projects are carried out today?
    a. What is done correctly?
    b. What is being done wrong?

7. What happens to the local communities when the project ends and the funds and resources are no longer provided?
8. What would you generally do differently on the projects you have worked on?
9. More generally, how would you describe a successful project?
    a. How to achieve this?
    b. Which trap should one avoid?
10. There are many different ways to help. What type of projects do you think are most effective?
    a. For example, there is emergency aid, skills development, infrastructure development, health-promoting aid, political aid (creating democracy, holding elections, fighting corruption, prosecution, gender equality, etc.), creating jobs, etc.

Social aspects of the project

11. Do you think that enough consideration is given to the needs and wishes of local residents when the projects were planned?
12. How did you work to ensure that the local population took ownership of the project? Local anchoring
13. In what way was the local population represented in project management?
14. Do you think that the local population got better after the project ended and the funds and resources were no longer provided?

15. Do you think that the projects you worked on had a positive impact on the lives of the locals?

Context, culture and society

16. As we look at projects in developing countries, are we curious about how much contact you have had with people from developing countries, in their hometown?
17. How much knowledge did you have about local culture and history before you started working on the project?
18. Did you feel that the locals understood what you were trying to achieve with the project?
19. Did you ever feel that culture was an obstacle to the project being carried out in a good way?

20. What would you generally do differently on the projects you have worked on?
21. What happens to the local communities when the project ends and the funds and resources are no longer provided?

(We have already talked a bit about how relief projects are planned and implemented.) We now want to go a little further into that.

Planning and implementation of projects

22. Did you have clearly defined goals with the project?
23. Did you feel that a long-term perspective was taken when the project is planned?
24. Did you use professional project management tools for planning and carrying out the project?
25. When starting an aid project: To what extent do you think one should have a concrete plan VS to take things as they come?
    a. In that case, how should one plan?
    b. In that case, what should one plan?

26. What do you think affects the long-term effect after the donor organization has withdrawn?
    a. What can be done to ensure that the long-term effect is positive?
    b. How have you done this in the projects you work on?
27. There are many different ways to help. What type of projects do you think are most effective?
    a. For example, there is emergency aid, skills development, infrastructure development, health-promoting aid, political aid (creating democracy, holding elections, fighting corruption, prosecution, gender equality, etc.), creating jobs, etc.

C Interview Guide Norwegian

Intervjuguide

Vi ønsker først å forstå litt mer om **bakgrunnen** din.

1. **Hva er ditt nåværende arbeidssted?**
   a. Hvilke arbeidsoppgaver har du?
2. **Hvor mange år har du jobbet med Bistand/internasjonalt utvikling?**
3. **Hva slags type prosjekt har du vært med i?**
   a. Kompetanseheving?
   b. Utvikling av infrastruktur
   c. Helsefremmende hjelp
   d. Politisk hjelp (opprette demokrati, avholde valg, bekjempe korrupsjon, utdanning, likestilling, osv
   e. Opprettelse av arbeidsplasser, osv
4. **Hva var din rolle i prosjektet?**
5. **Hva tenker du skal til for at bistandsprosjekter/utviklingshjelpsprosjekter i utviklingsland gir en varig positiv endring i samfunnet?**
6. **Hva tenker du om måten dagens hjelpe- og bistandsprosjekter blir utført i dag?**
   a. Hva gjøres riktig?
   b. Hva blir gjort feil?

7. Hva skjer med de lokale samfunnene når prosjektet avsluttes og midlene og ressursene ikke lenger blir gitt?
8. Hva ville du generelt gjort annerledes på de prosjektene du har jobbet med?
9. Mer generelt, hvordan vil du beskrive et vellykket prosjekt?
   a. Hvordan oppnår man dette?
   b. Hvilket feller burde man unngå?
10. Det finnes mange ulike måter å hjelpe på. Hvilken type prosjekter mener du er mest effektive?
    a. Eksempelvis har man nødhjelp, kompetanseheving, utvikling av infrastruktur, helsefremmende hjelp, politisk hjelp (opprette demokrati, avholde valg, bekjempe korrupsjon, rettsforfølgelse, likestilling, osv.), opprettelse av arbeidsplasser, osv

Menneskelig aspekter ved prosjekt

11. **Mener du at det blir tatt nok hensyn til lokale innbyggeres behov og ønske når prosjektene ble planlagt?**
12. **Hvordan jobbet dere for å sikre at den lokale befolkningen tok eierskap til prosjektet?**
13. **På hvilken måte ble den lokal befolkning representert i prosjektledelse?**
14. **Mener du at den lokale befolkningen fikk det bedre etter at prosjektet ble avsluttet og midlene og ressursene ikke lenger ble gitt?**
15. **Mener du at prosjektene du jobbet hadde en positiv innvirkning på de lokaleinnbyggere sine liv?**

Kontekst, kultur og samfunn

16. **Ettersom vi ser på prosjekter i utviklingsland, er vi nysgjerrige på hvor mye kontakt du har hatt med mennesker fra utviklingsland, på deres hjemsted?**
17. **Hvor mye kunnskap hadde du om lokal kultur og historie før du begynte å jobbe på prosjektet?**
18. **Følte du at de lokale forsto hva dere prøvde å oppnå med prosjektet?**

19. **Følte du noen gang at kultur ble en hindre for at prosjektet ble gjennomført på en god måte?**
20. **Hva ville du generelt gjort annerledes på de prosjektene du har jobbet med?**
21. **Hva skjer med de lokale samfunnene når prosjektet avsluttes og midlene og ressursene ikke lenger blir gitt?**

<u>(Vi har allerede snakket litt om hvordan hjelpeprosjekter planlegges og gjennomføres.) Vi ønsker nå å gå litt videre innpå det.</u>

Planlegging og gjennomføring av prosjekter

22. Hadde dere klare definerte mål med prosjektet?
23. Følte du at det ble tatt en langsiktig perspektiv når prosjektet blir planlagt?
24. Brukte dere profesjonelle prosjektledelse verktøy for planlegging og gjennomføring av prosjektet?

25. **Når man setter i gang med et hjelpeprosjekt: I hvor stor grad tenker du at man burde ha en konkret plan VS å ta ting som de kommer?**
   a. Hvordan burde man i tilfelle planlegge?
   b. Hva burde man i tilfelle planlegge?

26. **Hva tenker du at påvirker den langvarige effekten etter at giverorganisasjonen har trukket seg ut?**
   a. Hva kan gjøres for å sikre at den langvarige effekten er positiv?
   b. Hvordan har dere gjort dette i de prosjektene du jobber i?
27. Det finnes mange ulike måter å hjelpe på. Hvilken type prosjekter mener du er mest effektive?
   a.   Eksempelvis har man nødhjelp, kompetanseheving, utvikling av infrastruktur, helsefremmende hjelp, politisk hjelp (opprette demokrati, avholde valg, bekjempe korrupsjon, rettsforfølgelse, likestilling, osv.), opprettelse av arbeidsplasser, osv

Human aspekt
1. I hvilken stor grad hadde de lokale eierskap til prosjektet?
2. Mener du at det blir tatt nok hensyn til lokale innbyggere når prosjektene ble planlagt?
3. Hvem initierte prosjektet?
4. Ble den lokale befolkningen konsultert før prosjektet ble i igangsatt?
5. På hvilken måte ble den lokal befolkning representert i prosjektplanlegging?
6. Hvordan jobbet dere for å sikre at den lokale befolkningen tok eierskap til prosjektet?
7. Hadde den lokale befolkningen kompetansen til å opprettholde prosjektet fordeler?