NTNU
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ECONOMICS AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

MASTER THESIS IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT WITH SPECIALIZATION IN INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING

A paradim shift in the management of international development projects

A strategy for obtaining sustainable positive impact from aid projects

Authors:

Elie Mutula Nzigo

Supervisor:

Tim Andreas Torvatn

10th june, 2022

Preface

This thesis concludes my Master of Science in Project Management, with specialization in industrial engineering, at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

The topic of this study stems from my passion and interest in using my education to contribute to the development of the African continent. I'm grateful to my supervisor Tim Torvatn to have given my the freedom to define the scope of this thesis and to his patient supervision and guidance. The preliminary work of this thesis was conducted during the fall of 2021, which is presented in the specialization project, this thesis is based on the specialization project.

Glossaries

ID International Development

PM Project manager

Funder Organisations from the industrial countries who fund ID projects

Beneficiary Local communities in developing countries, who recieve developement aid

Summary

This thesis discusses International development project and what can be done to achieve positive sustainable impact. Projects have become the preferred way to deliver international aid, but there is a contradiction between the practice of conventional project management and the nature of international development. This study tries to bridge the gap between project management literature and practice and International development. It calls for ID projects to be done differently due to it complexity and nature.

The study is based on semi-structured interviews with informants who have or are currently working within the development aid sector. The interview reveal a frustration with the bureaucratic nature of the aid projects and a call for flexibility and agility in international development projects.

We suggest that in order to achieve sustainable positive impact there are three key drivers that have to be in place. First, the project teams should have a deep contextual understanding of where the project will be conducted,this understanding will help him/her navigate the emergent complexities in the project and will also help in forming risk strategies in the project planning phase. Secondly the project teams should work to ensure local ownership of the project, by having ownership of the project the local population will work to sustain it long after the funding have stopped and the project founder have left the country. Lastly the project teams should be given flexibility and freedom to act, ID projects are complex with a high degree of

uncertainty, to achieve success project managers need to be flexible to act upon the emerging situation that may jeopardise the project.

1   Sammendrag

Denne oppgaven diskuterer internasjonale utviklingsprosjekter og hva som kan gjøres for å oppnå positiv bærekraftig effekt. Prosjekter har blitt den foretrukne måten å levere internasjonal bistand på, men det er en motsetning mellom praksisen med konvensjonell prosjektledelse og karakteren av internasjonal utvikling. Denne studien prøver å bygge bro mellom prosjektledelseslitteratur og praksis og internasjonal utvikling. Det krever at ID-prosjekter gjøres annerledes på grunn av sin kompleksitet og natur.

Studien er basert på semistrukturerte intervjuer med informanter som har jobbet eller jobber innenfor bistandssektoren. Intervjuet avslører en frustrasjon over bistandsprosjektenes byråkratiske natur og en oppfordring til fleksibilitet og smidighet i internasjonale utviklingsprosjekter. Vi foreslår tre nøkkeldrivere som må være på plass for å oppnå varig positiv effekt. For det første så mener vi at prosjektteamene bør ha en dyp kontekstuell forståelse av hvor prosjektet skal gjennomføres, denne forståelsen vil hjelpe ham/henne med å navigere i de nye kompleksitetene i prosjektet og vil også hjelpe til med å danne risikostrategier i prosjektplanleggingsfasen. For det andre bør prosjektgruppene jobbe for å sikre lokalt eierskap til prosjektet, ved å ha eierskap til prosjektet vil lokalbefolkningen jobbe for å opprettholde og vedlikeholde det lenge etter at finansieringen har stoppet og prosjektgründeren har forlatt landet. Til slutt bør prosjektteamene gis fleksibilitet og handlingsfrihet, ID-prosjekter er komplekse med høy grad av usikkerhet, for å oppnå suksess må prosjektledere være fleks-

ible for å handle på den nye situasjonen som kan sette prosjektet i fare.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

2 Introduction

Most international assistance provided by governments and NGOs to developing countries is provided via projects (Diallo & Thuillier, 2005). In contrast to humanitarian aid projects, International Development projects do not have the objective to provide immediate assistance to populations affected by wars or natural disasters, and they usually take place in more stable contexts with the aim of improving living conditions in terms of economy, education, or health in the long term (Golini et al., 2003).

There has been a growing trend of money and human capital employed in ID projects (Diallo & Thuillier, 2005). As a consequence, a number of global players in the aid industry have worked for decades to establish solid project management (PM) practice. The World Bank, US AID, the OECD's development Assistance Committee, and the Canadian International Development Agency have developed their own PM standards , and supported related training and education in developing countries directly or through training organizations (Landoni, 2011).

Despite all the effort and resources invested in International Development projects, there seem to be little success rate. A McKinsey-Devex survey suggests that 64% of donor-funded projects fail (Hekala, 2012). U.S.Meltzer Commission (2000) found that more than 50% of the World Bank's various projects fail. The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), in an independent rating, claimed that in 2010, 39% of World Bank projects were unsuccessful (Chauvet et al., 2010). While

the World Bank has invested more than US\$5 billion in more than 700 projects in Africa over the past 20 years, its project failure rate is over 50% in Africa (Dugger, 2007). Many other agencies and donor countries have not performed with much more success (The Associated Press, 2007).

(J. K. Pinto & Mantel, 1990) argues that project failure is much related to our ability to identify external determinants up front to ensure a realistic approach, and project success is very much related to our ability to adapt to external conditions. (Ika et al., 2009) noted that project success remains an ambiguous, inclusive, and multidimensional concept and its definition and measurement are bound to a specific context . In traditional projects, success is usually measured by the triangle of cost, time and quality, (Ika et al., 2011), however projects have often been delivered within time, cost and quality standard only to be considered failures sometime later. Also, some projects that exceeded time or cost constraints have been considered successful. This paradox leads Samset (2010) to distinguish between success criteria for strategic performance of a project and tactical performance(see Section 3.3.1).

In addition to conceptual ambiguity, project success is a matter of perception and divergence perspectives. The way we evaluate projects changes over time, a project may be perceived successful at its launch and turns into a catastrophe sometime after.

Sustainability in the project profession is an approach to business that balances the environmental, social, economic aspects of project-based

work to meet the current needs of stakeholders without compromising or overburdening future generations (of Project Management, 2020).

But why are ID projects prone to failure and what can be done to ensure sustainable success of ID projects?This question lays the foundation for our research question, we wanted to understand the reason for ID project failure, especially those that are "seen" as a success initially. Due to my acquires knowledge in project management, I adopted a project management perspective on ID projects. I wanted to understand where the sources of failure was and investigate if ID projects can be done in a different way. The concept of sustainability have gained increased of attention lately, and I wanted to see how one can ensure that the projects are sustainable. Sustainability is concerned about the longer term conditions and results of a project (Samset, 2010).

2.1 Definition of International Development

For the purpose of this thesis, we will use the term "International development" as defined by (Ika et al., 2020b)

The term "international development" mean the process and the conscious promotion of the goals of the sustainable and equitable reduction of poverty and the improvement of living standards in low- and middle-income countries

International development projects are thus those projects that seek to contribute, directly or indirectly, to achieving sustainable and equitable poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards in the

global south(Ika et al., 2020b).

2.2   Research question

Numerous organisation and academics have pondered the question of why so many international development projects are failing, (Ika, 2012) argues that the unique environments in which ID projects take place make them prone to failure. ID projects are characterized by high complexity, strong front-end activity, relative intangible objective of poverty reduction, a large array of heterogeneous stakeholders, divergent perspective among these stakeholders, the need for compromise, project appeal in the eye of politicians, the profound cultural and geographical gap between project designers and their beneficiaries, the asymmetrical distribution of power between the world's richest countries, institutions and people and its poorest and the prevalence of rather bureaucratic rules and procedure (Ika, 2012). (Ika, 2012) suggest that the failure of international development projects is due to three main problems,structural contextual problems, institutional sustainability problems and management problems.

(Muriithi & Crawford, 2001) argues that International development projects are failing because of the lack of relevant project management approach suited for the local context.They argue that standard project management tools and techniques are based primarily on experiences of practitioners in developed Western economies and relies extensively on assumptions of economic rationality. They suggest modification or extension to existing project management standard and guides in order

increase their relevance and applicability for projects in Africa. We want to investigate what can be done to achieve sustainable project success, with regard to this, the thesis was based on the following Research question:

Research question:

How can International development projects be planned to ensure sustainable positive impact?

This study aims to contribute to the body of project management knowledge, by focusing on what we believe drives sustainable project success. There is a divide among project management scholars on whether or not standard project management theory is universal and can be applied to all types of projects or not. Project management institute implies that their procedure are universal, while (Ika, 2012; Khang & Moe, 2008; Muriithi & Crawford, 2001) argues that ID projects needs a different approach. We will consider ID project from the project managers point of view, we will start by looking at the theory on project management in ID projects and then we will interview ID projects practitioner to see if there is a correlation between theory and practise and identify areas that needs more attention. Our focus in this thesis is on projects implemented in the global south but are funded in the global north, we ignore homegrown projects that are implemented and funded by locals in developing countries.

3 Theoretical Background

We will first start our discussion by reviewing the theoretical background of the relevant topics.We will start by investigating why development projects are failing and what can be done about it, we will then look at project planing and its importance and investigate the complexity of ID projects. We will then look at what constitutes project success and there after we will present the project success drivers, enablers and variables model to guide the selection and implementation of aid projects. The model presented in Section 3.5, were developed after a literature study in the specialization project in the fall of 2021, and can be found at, (Nzigo, 2021).

3.1 What is a Project

It is not clearly defined what the word "project" means, many authors and practitioners have applied various definitions to the word project, a generally accepted definition of the term does not exist however one of the most quoted definition of a project is given by the (Project Management Institute, 2000):

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

Work performed by organisations usually involve either operations or projects,operation and projects differ primarily in that operations are ongoing and repetitive daily activities while projects has a definite beginning and a definite end. The uniqueness on projects means that

products and services differs in some distinguishing way from all similar products or services (Samset, 2010). While the literature on project management indicate that projects has clear goals for what it has to achieve, in what time frame, and with what resources, the case revealed that this was seldom the reality (Maylor et al., 2006).

3.1.1 Project planning

A project is divided into three main phases, the front-end, the implementation phase and the operation and evaluation phase (Samset, 2010). The front-end phase is what (Samset, 2010) calls the entry phase or the planning phase of a project, the front-end phase is defined from the point of view of the project donor and not necessarily the project manager or the beneficiaries of the project. The focus of the front-end phase is on the purpose of the project and how the output of the project can help achieved this purpose (Samset, 2010).

The planing phase is characterised by high uncertainty and little information, as a project progress with time, the uncertainty decreases but so does the flexibility of the project (Samset, 2010), Figure 1 shows the relationship between uncertainty, time and information.
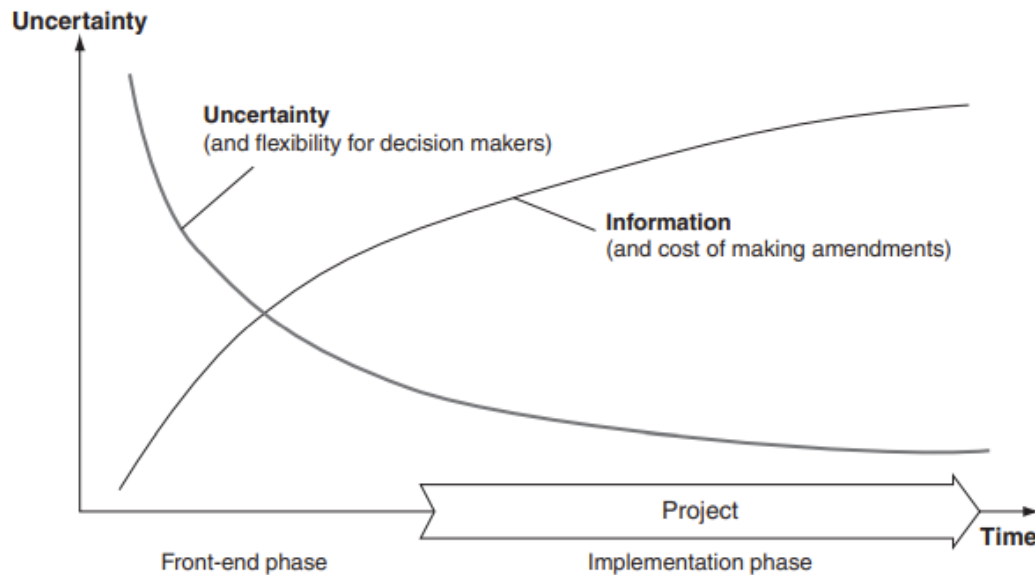
Figure 1: Project planning is done under high uncertainty(Samset, 2010)

When NGOs apply for funding from bilateral development agencies, like Norad and USAID, a very detailed and specific application form must be filled (Norad, 2020; USAID, 2021). Projects can apply for funding for a durration ranging from one to five years for Norad and USAID does not fund projects for more than 26month at a time (Norad, 2020; USAID, 2021). All project applicant are required to present an overarching plan, a total budget and financial plan and a specific measures to achieve impact and cost-effectiveness (USAID, 2022).

(Ika et al., 2009) remarked that "failing to plan is planing to fail", this sentiment is shared by other project management scholars such as (Dvir et al., 2003; J. Pinto & Slevin, 1987; Samset, 2010). The emphasis on planing is also strongly advocated by the Project Management Institutes guidebook (Project Management Institute, 2021a). Despite the consensus on the importance of planing and planing pro-

cess, scholars are also keenly aware of the shortcomings of planing and the importance of having flexible plans. (Dvir & Lechler, 2003) coined the term "plans are nothing, changing of plans is everything", (Dvir & Lechler, 2003) urges project managers to constantly reorient the project based on evaluations, rather than following a rigid plan. (J. Pinto, 2013) argues that the seeds of project failure are often sown from the outset through flawed project planning. He argues that optimism bias, end date-driven schedules and poor change control are some of the deadly sins of project management Table 1 presents three of the deadly sins of planing described by (J. Pinto, 2013).

Deadly sins of planing	
Optimism bias	Planners often commonly underestimate how long activities on a project are likely to take, using rosy assumptions to set a project schedule. Peoples' attributions diminish the relevance of past experiences, they are quick to dismiss poor past project track records as being the product of external or unstable causes. Somehow, it is assumed that the past does not factor into current estimates because previous problems were caused by other and therefore cannot be seriously considered for current assignments.
End date-driven schedules	A common error made by many organizations entails imposing 'Be done by. . .' directives on their project teams. That is, rather than create a viable time-frame moving forward, managers actually start scheduling by working back from some future date considered to be a non-negotiable deadline. This negates the value of comprehensive planning, risk assessment, scope development, and other critical elements that are necessary in putting together viable project plans.
Poor change control	Change control is the careful management of necessary changes made to the project as it is being implemented. Plan-changes are typically induced by the project environment and prevent us from following the original project plan, this changes can be a result of shortage in resources, delays, strikes, weather conditions, etc (Dvir & Lechler, 2003).

Table 1: The deadly sins of project planing , from (J. Pinto, 2013)

3.1.2 "Soft" and "Hard" projects

There are two types of projects, soft and hard projects. The term soft project is used to describe any project which aims to achieve an intangible result such as poverty reduction, capacity building, etc, while hard projects are those projects in which the final result is a relatively unique tangible product such as a bridge, a building, production plant etc (L. Crawford & Pollack, 2004). One can argue that in ID, even hard project have a soft element in them, and the communities where ID projects are done are more interested in how a new building can better their lives than the building itself.

In a road construction project, the donor and implementer is partly concerned with the technical quality of the road but the recipient is concerned with whether the road makes it easier and faster to travel from A to B. For a school construction project, the locals' interests go beyond the suitability of the school building and are more concerned with the learning and teaching that take place inside the building (Samset, 2010). The local populations are more concerned with how the project affect their daily lives than the project itself, it is easier to see this in hard projects, while the benefits of soft projects are more subtle.

It is relatively "easy" to achieve success on the "hard" component of a development project, since they have well defined deliverable. The most successful World Bank projects in Africa have been in infrastructure as well as in the oil, gas and mining industries (Dugger, 2007). This is not surprising since most of these projects are done with a fin-

ancial motives and have been implemented by experts from the donor country. (Ika, 2012) warns about the focus on accountability in ID projects, arguing that development is intangible and that focus on delivering on the tangible part will result in projects that have zero impact and not sustainable.

3.2 The nature of international Development Projects

Contrary to conventional projects, that have the motive of profit maximisation for shareholders, international development projects objectives is to deliver goods and services that are intended for public use in the developing world, with the sole intention of bettering the lives and bring about economic development of the citizen in the country of operation (Diallo & Thuillier, 2005). ID projects are conducted in almost every sector of activities including: infrastructure, agricultural, transportation, water, electricity, energy, sewage, health,education,environment, social development, reform and governance, etc. ID projects shares some characteristics with conventional projects in that they deliver goods and services, are limited, temporary, unique, multidisciplinary, they develop through a life cycle, they face time, cost and quality constrains and require some specific tools and techniques for their implementation (Ika, 2012). What distinguish ID projects the most is the absence of profit motivation, and the fact that the beneficiaries of the project are not the ones who pays for it.

3.2.1 The Complexity of International Development

The nature of ID projects make them rather complex, (Ladyman et al., 2013) describe complexity as: "a complex system is one whose evolution is very sensitive to initial conditions or to small perturbations, one in which the number of independent interacting components is large, or one in which there are multiple pathways by which the system can evolve."(Ladyman et al., 2013). By this definition, the fact that ID project have independent funder, implementers and beneficiaries contribute to the increase of complexity.

(Youker, 2003) argues that the nature and dynamics of ID projects contribute to the increase of complexity, he identified several aspects that contribute to this complexity such as: the difficulty to involve local beneficiary stakeholders in the project planning and decision making processes due to distance, communication problems and cultural differences, corruption is often an endemic problem and require monitoring system to insure transparency, the asymmetry of power between the project founder, implementer and beneficiaries. (Youker, 2003) noted that the financing agency often leads the project identification in line with it own objectives, leading to problems and poor stakeholder participation later in the project. Figure 5 shows how complexity increases with intangibility of objectives, and how different types of projects are related to this graph.

There are some characteristics that makes ID projects challenging to manage. ID projects are typically public sector projects and have often intangible and often conflicting objective, they have many layers of

stakeholders with conflicting expectation, over-optimism and political interference (Ika & Hodgson, 2014). (Groves & Hinton, 2004) argues that the way forward for aid is to adopt a complex systems approach to understand the aid system, and its outcomes. This requires stepping back from the intricacies of individual project and program and gaining an understanding that links and motivate the various actors.
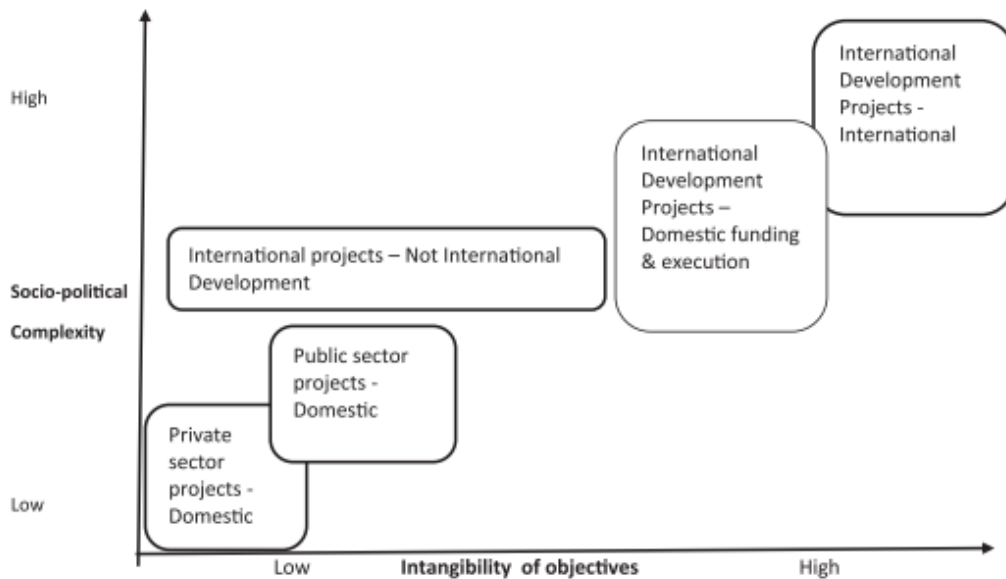
Figure 2: ID projects show high socio-political complexity and intangibility of objectives

(Groves & Hinton, 2004) suggest that adopting a complex system approach to ID projects involve two element. On the one hand project planner should understand the choice being made by individual actors and their position and power within the system. On the other hand, it is equally important to understand the wider context, the relationships and networks between actors in the system as a whole, recognizing that the system has it own internal logic (Groves & Hinton, 2004). Key actors in ID projects include non-governmental organizations (NGOs),bilateral donors, international finance institutions, na-

tional government, regional and local government and 'poor people' who are the target beneficiary, all these actor may have different objectives with the project and the project manager must balance these different need and demands in order for the project to be successful.
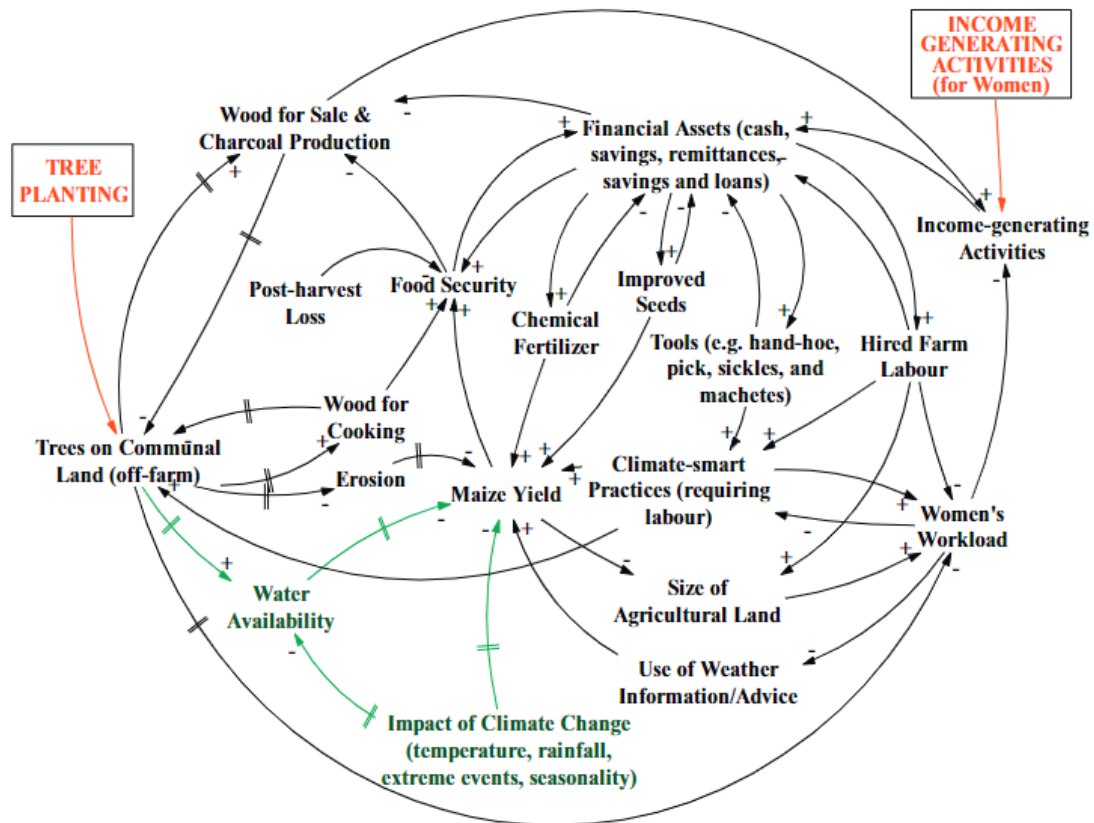
Figure 3: ID projects can be viewed as complex adaptive systems((Jagustović et al., 2019))

Figure 3 shows the complexity of an ID project, it is impossible to take a linear approach to these projects, because of the emerging problems and the facts that one action causes an unpredictable reaction. The emerging complexity of ID projects makes it even more important that the project teams managing these projects understand the local context, and can anticipate these emergence in the project planing. This complexity asks for the project manager to take a holistic view, and understand that "no project is an island" and is totally dependent

on it environment (Engwall, 2003).

3.3   What is Project Success?

According to (Cooke-Davis, 2002; Samset, 2010) there are two distinct ways of measuring the success of a project, these two alternatives are "project success" and "project management success". Project success measures the overall objective of the project while project management success are concerned with the traditional measures of project performance against cost, time and quality. (Atkinson, 1999) argues that the focusing on whether the project was done right and not on doing the right project may lead to the strategic failure of the project, stating that; "Doing something right may result in a project which was implemented on time, within cost and to some quality parameters requested, but which is not used by the customers, not liked by the sponsors and does not seem to provide either improved effectiveness or efficiency for the organization".(Samset, 2010) bolster this, stating that cost overrun and timeliness of delivering the outputs are restricted, premature measures of a project's success. In a broader perspective, a successful project is one that significantly contributes to the fulfillment of its agreed objectives.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) declared that the objectives of it projects should be consistent with needs and priorities in the societies it operates in, and it should be viable in the sense that the intended long-term benefits are realized (Samset, 2010). This statement was endorsed by the United Nations

(UN), the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and finally the European Commission (EC). This led to the creative of five success criteria which future development projects will be measured against:

Project success factors	
Efficiency	The degree to which project outputs have been delivered as planned and in accordance with budget. Whether it could have been done cheaper, more quickly and with better quality.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the objective has been achieved, that is the first order effect of the project for the users, in the market, in terms of production, etc.
Impact	All other positive and negative changes and effects of the project, both in the short and the long term.
Relevance	Whether the objectives are aligned with needs and priorities of users and the society.
Sustainability	Whether the positive effects of the project will be sustained after the project has been concluded.

Table 2: success factors, from (Samset, 2010)

3.3.1 Project success vs project management success

According to (Samset, 2010), project success is concerned with the strategic performance of the project and should be distinguished from project management success. Strategic performance of a project is concerned with the broader and long-term consequences of the project, it considers whether the project would have a sustainable impact and remain relevant and effective over time (Samset, 2010). Project management success is concerned with the tactical performance of the project, tactical performance is a question of delivering the output on time,quality and budget. Project success is concerned with how

the project is going to affect the environment it operates in, while project management is concerned with the meeting the contractual obligations.
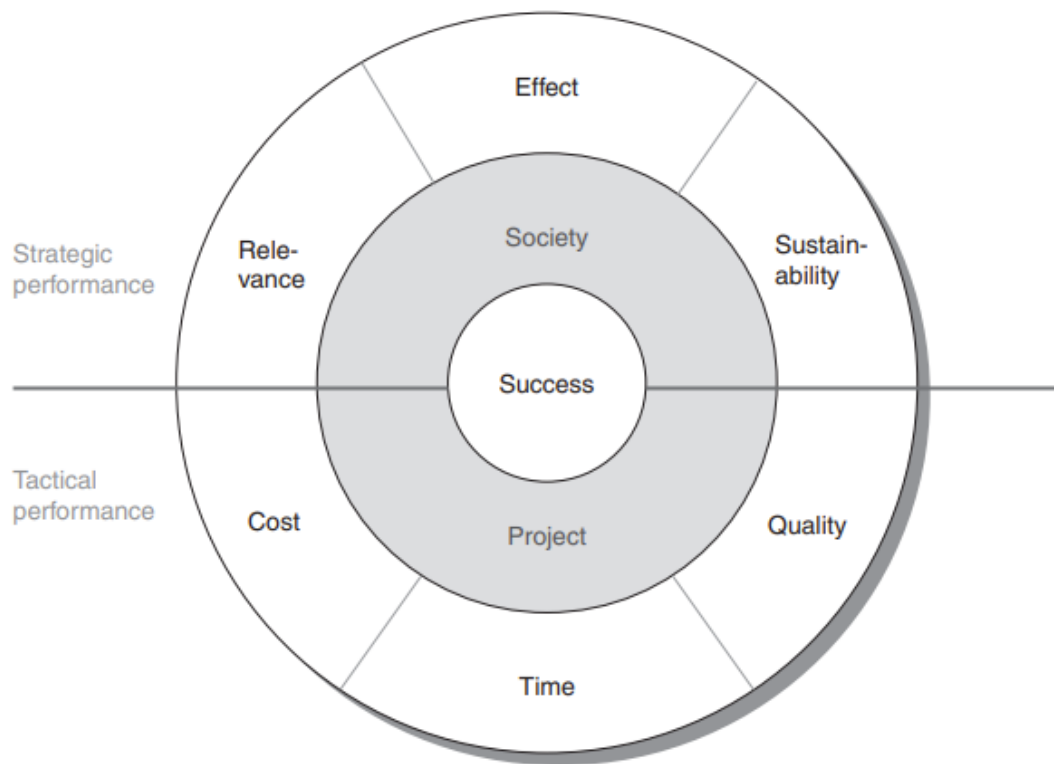
Figure 4: Strategic vs Tactical performance from (Samset, 2010)

3.4 Sustainable Development

The United Nations defines sustainable development as follows:

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

By this definition, sustainability is all about the future,and sustaining the positive impact of the project for future generations. Project planners and strategist need to have an acute awareness about the fu-

ture in order to ensure sustainability. The United Nations developed a sustainability framework, composed of three pillars, these pillars are: *economical*, *environmental* and *social* sustainability (United Nations, 2021). This is often called the three dimensions of sustainable development. It is the connection between these three dimensions that determines whether something is sustainable. We are going to look only at economical and social sustainability since an environmental sustainability is beyond the scope of this this thesis. Being sustainable according to this definition is finding a way to optimize economic benefit and social impact of the project, in the context on development it means ensuring sustainable economic development in a way that benefits the whole of society.
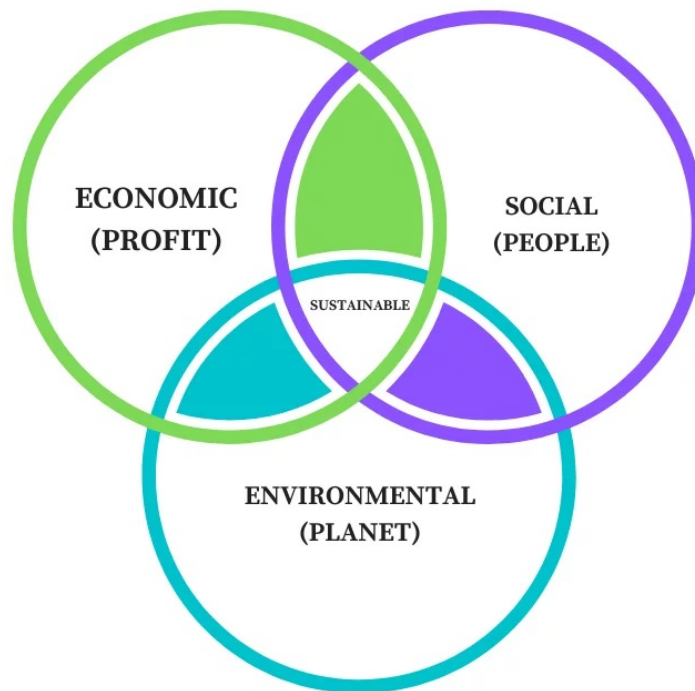
Figure 5: The tripple bottomline of sustainability

3.4.1 Economic Sustainability

The economic dimension of sustainable development is about ensuring financial security for people and society. Poverty and inequality are a source of unrest and division in the population, and can provide a breeding ground for conflict and political uprising(United Nations, 2021). Economic growth can be important for development, especially for poor countries. It can create new jobs and tax revenues to pay for welfare services such as schools and hospitals.

3.4.2 Social Sustainability

The social part of sustainable development is about ensuring that all people have a good and fair basis for a decent life.

According to (Martens & Carvalho, 2017) education, decent work, gender equality, cultural diversity and good health services are just some of the areas affected by social sustainability. Social conditions thus say something about how people feel in a society, whether they get their rights fulfilled, and whether they have the opportunity to influence their own lives and the society in which they live. A project needs to have an impact on the live of the people in order to be sustainable, if a project benefits the live of the local populations in a positive way they will sustain it, if not it will be discarded.

3.5 Key drivers for success ID project-model

Based on the theory on why International Development projects fails and what can be done to design and implement sustainable projects in developing countries, we developed the key drivers for success model(KDS-model) presented in Figure 6.The model was developed in the specialization project done in the fall of 2021 (Nzigo, 2021), the model consist of the five success factors described by (Samset, 2010), key drivers for attaining these success factors, success enablers and key variables. We will discuss and present the literature on the tree drivers for success in section Section 3.5.1, Section 3.5.2 and Section 3.5.3, we will then explain the model and how the drivers and enablers for success are all connected and how they contribute to the attainment of project success.
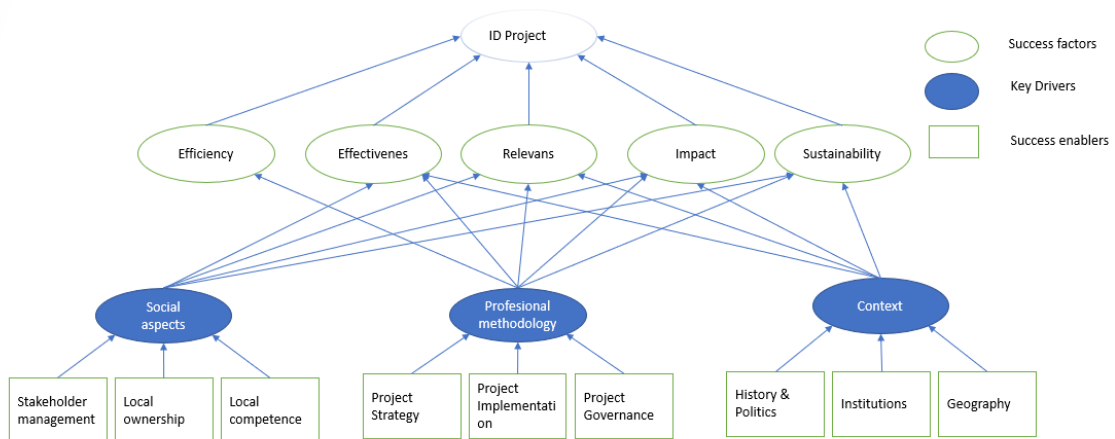
Figure 6: Key sucess drivers and enablers

3.5.1 Social Aspect of International Development Project

For an ID project to succeed, one need to have the support and engagement of the population that will be affected by the project. In ID

projects, the emphasis is mostly on the point of view of donors, and little attention is given to the local communities (Ika et al., 2009).(Diallo & Thuillier, 2005) noted that ID projects goals and objectives, by their very nature, are delicate since most of them deal with human development, social transformation, and poverty reduction. By dealing with social transformation and human development, the local communities needs should be at the forefront of project planning and strategy. (Nanthagopan & Thompson, 2018) emphasizes the importance of building resilient local communities that can be self-sufficient long after the project is done. One way of managing and addressing the human aspects of projects is through stakeholder management.(Khang & Moe, 2008) noted that ID projects require at least three separate key stakeholders: the founding agencies, who pay for but do not receive project deliverable, the implementing units, who are involved in the execution and the target beneficiaries who expect some benefits from the projects. (Ika, 2012; Samset, 2010) bolster this by arguing that, one of the reason projects fails to meet the overall needs and expectation of the target beneficiaries is because an imbalance on priorities by the donors, noting that they tend to focus on the implementing units and ignore the target beneficiaries. According to (Youker, 2003),many of the challenges faces by ID projects is because of the lack of cultural understanding and consideration by the project sponsors. He argues that local citizens may have a different concept of time and different value structure and cultures, this often create a divergent perception and objective of the project. A review of World Bank project concluded that one of the reasons for projects failures, were the lack of

shared perception and agreement on the objectives of the projects by between the founding agencies, the implementing units and the target beneficiaries(Bank, 1986).

(Ika & Donnelly, 2016; Khang & Moe, 2008; Youker, 2003) all emphasize the important of strong local ownership of the project to ensure impact and sustainability. As noted by (Youker, 2003), "rule number one is to ensure full participation of locals in the entire process of the project life cycle and to endeavour to develop complete local ownership of the project by both the various levels of government involved as well as all stakeholders. It should be their project, not the donors project".

3.5.2 Project Management Methodology in Development Projects

(Project Management Institute, 2021b) defines project management as the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. This definition implies that in order to have project success one has to use specific tools and techniques to plan, organize, monitor and control the project. According to (Samset, 2010), one of the primary goals of project management is to attain structured and effective continuous management and to conduce decision makers at various levels to pull in the same direction by providing a common long-term goal to keep in mind while making decisions.

Over the last 50 years, project management, as a formal management discipline has transcended its origins in engineering, aerospace and

defense and is now used in most sectors including the aid and humanitarian sector (Morris, 1994; Pellegrinelli, 2009). In recent years, there has been a growing trend of money and human capital employed in international development projects,Consequently, a number of global organisations in the development and humanitarian industry have worked to establish solid project management practices, designed to meet the need of ID projects (Diallo & Thuillier, 2005; Landoni, 2011). One would except better results as a consequence of the investments, but this haven't been the case (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006; Ika, 2012; Muriithi & Crawford, 2001; Pellegrinelli, 2009). (Muriithi & Crawford, 2001) argues that many of the concepts, tools and techniques of project management are based on economic rationality, analysis of means-end logic and an ideology of control based on western culture. When these techniques are used in cultures whose values are not based on economic rationality such as those in many African countries, the techniques maybe inappropriate and result in project failure (Muriithi & Crawford, 2001). (Ika, 2012) bolster this my arguing that development projects fails because the methodology used is not designed to account for all the complexity that is encounter in a development context.

(P. Crawford & Bryce, 2003; Hermano et al., 2012) argues that ID project are distinct from traditional projects and must be handled differently because; firstly, project goals are complex and intangible since they are concerned with poverty alleviation or social transformation, therefore the usual profit motive is missing. Secondly, ID projects have a social and political nature which attracts a complex web

of stakeholders. Thirdly, the operating environment is unique since it is surrounded by sociopolitical instability, geographic and cultural separation among actors.

3.5.3 Contextual Aspect of International Development

Project context is the circumstances in which the project is going to be undertaken in, it is the description of the internal and external environment where the project is going to be undertaken, since ID projects are international in nature and part of a broader context, the chance of failure increases (Ika, 2012; Youker, 2003). According to (Engwall, 2003) project success is less related to the technical content of the project, but rather with how different stakeholders interpret a project in relation to the procedures and traditions of its surrounding context. He argues that in order to identify the contingency factors of a project, the project need to be conceptualized as interconnected with the history and future of the country of implementation, as well as embedded in their surrounding environment context. Since ID projects are part of a broader international context, they face serious problems that may be political (contradictions between the political agenda and the development agenda of both donors and recipients) and economic (resource constraints). Other contextual problems such as endemic corruption, capacity building setbacks, lack of political support and incompatibility between donor and recipient countries management system contribute to the failure of ID project. (Ika & Hodgson, 2014) noted that, Context is especially important in ID projects because of the nature of these projects. They are funded by ID agencies and

donors from the west and implemented in the south. They utilize resources from or in more than one country, this exposes them to high levels of risk and socio-political complexity and, in particular, cultural complexity in terms of local ways of life, institutions, politics, language, time zones, processes, contracts, conflicts and resources (Ika & Hodgson, 2014).

3.5.4 Key drivers for ID project success

Based on literature reviews (Ika, 2012; Muriithi & Crawford, 2001; Samset, 2010; Youker, 2003) there are tree aspects that determine the likely wood of an ID project success or failure. Since success in development projects goes beyond the traditional criteria of time,cost and quality and are much more concerned with impact, relevance and sustainability the of the project as described in Section 3.5.1, the social aspects become more important. Social aspects of project is also important because of the complexity of the social environment in most developing countries.(Ika, 2012) identified potential sources of socio-cultural problems as diversity of religion and language, gender roles and other culturally distinct traditions and historic problem dues to tribalism, colonialism and previous experience with development. Awareness of these problems is the first step in their solution, and project managers working in ID should pay closely attention to them in order to ensure a success.

Another aspect that drives success in ID project are the contextual aspect of the project as described in Section 3.5.3. Project context

is the description of the internal and external environment where the project is going to be undertaken, and the effect of the environment on the project (Thapa, 2019). In order to identify the contingency factors of a project and design a sound implementation strategy, the project need to be conceptualized as interconnected with history and future, as well as embedded in their surroundings environment context (Engwall, 2003). By narrowly focusing on the project implementation and ignoring the broader context, one run the risk of getting a narrow understanding of the problem resulting in the implementation of the wrong project with zero impact and no relevance. Project managers in ID should analyze and always monitor the project environment to ensure project success.

The last identified key driver for success is the project management methodology applied in ID projects, see Section 3.5.2. (Institute, 2021) defines project management as the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. This definition implies that in order to achieve project success one has to use specific tools and techniques to plan, organize, monitor and control the project. This is especially true for ID projects where there is often a lack of consensus on project objective, differing and somewhat contradictory agendas among stakeholders and poor stakeholder management (Ika, 2012).

One of the most used tool and technique used to achieve project success is strategic guidance of projects (Samset, 2010). The primary goal of strategic planning is to attain structured and effective continu-

ous management and to conduce decision makers at various levels to pull in the same direction by providing a common long-term goal to keep in mind while making decisions. Having a strategic guide and plan can guide and even "force" project manager to care more about the impact and sustainability factors of project than time, cost and quality. Without the use of tools and techniques the project run the risk of focus too much on delivering the project on time and within budget and neglecting the impact goals and other "soft-aspect" of the project. (Ika et al., 2009) found that African project coordinators for ID projects did not care about project impact, they instead care deeply about project management success as well as project profile.

Project planning have been recognized as being critical driver to project success. When 600 project managers in the US were surveyed about which critical factors influence the level of achievement in project, they concluded that planning the project was by far the most important factor (Samset, 2010). However (Ika et al., 2009) found that project success in ID is insensitive to the level of project planning effort. When considering that the project managers in the ID sector, are only involved in the project implementation and not in the early major planning stages, this stand in contrast to PM literature (Ika et al., 2009; Samset, 2010; Zwikael, 2008) that came to the conclusion that involving the project manager during initiation phase have a significant impact on project success.

3.5.5 ID projects success enablers

In order to for the drivers for success to be successful implemented, there are some factors that have to be met and analyse in order to achieve success. These activities are identified by literature as the "gateway" to ID projects success, and ignoring them will be detrimental to the achievement of sustainability and impact on the project, and may even cause the implementation of the project to not be completed.

A throughout application of **stakeholder management and analysis**, a careful consideration of the **local needs** and an effort to create a **local ownership** of the project are what enables the social aspects of the project to be fulfilled. (Samset, 2010) implies that in order to achieve a lasting positive impact, the project must be both sustainable and relevant. (Youker, 1989) found that over half of agricultural aid projects done i Africa did not sustain the expected level of benefit five years after the completion of the project implementation. One of the conclusion of the study was that more attention needs to be paid to socioeconomic and cultural issues to enhance sustainability (Youker, 1989). ID projects should be identified and planned by the local communities to ensure ownership and relevance, unfortunately too often the selection of projects reflects the donors ideas rather than the country's priority (Youker, 2003).

Another enabler of success is a deep understanding of the local context and culture, this includes understanding of the local history and politics, analysing if there is the needed infrastructure and institu-

tions that can facilitate project success this includes roads, security situation, political stability, local resources, languages etc. Once the success enablers for social and contextual aspects have been established, one will then have a clear and deep understanding of what the project needs and ought to do to ensure success, and will there be in a better position to implement the project with the help of professional methodology.

4 Methodology

The following chapter presents the processes of the study, we start by presenting my motivation for the project, followed by a presentation of the methodology of working that was applied for the study. Research Strategy, Research method, Data Collection method and Data Analysis method are presented and explained. In addition to this, an ethical consideration of these kind of project is presented followed by a presentation of my percieved limitation of the study. To a significant extent, the approach used is based on information provided by Jacobsen (2018) and Clark et al. (2021).

I started this process together with my classmate and friend Amin Jahangir, but after some time we decided it would be beneficial for both if we wrote separate thesis based on the shared data we collected. We had planned to use the knowledge of our empirical study and our understanding of project management to help design a project management plan for a NGO conducting a project in Senegal. We made a trip to Senegal and gathered data, but unfortunately we had to abandon the joint project and focus on our own. Parts of the methodology described in this chapter was developed in collaboration with Amin Jahangir. Figure 7 presents the process followed when working with the thesis, the literature study was done twice, before the interview and after the interview in order to confirm our findings.
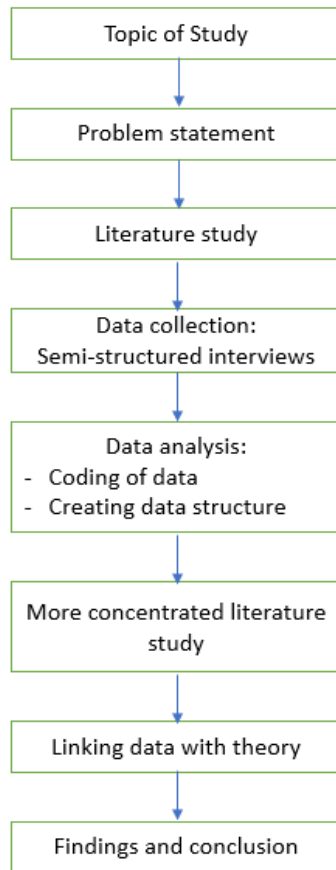
Figure 7: Outline of the research process

4.1 Motivation for the project

My aspiration with regard to my specialization project and master thesis was to get an understanding of why development projects seems to fail to make a sustainable difference for people developing countries. I have long been passionate about development issues and poverty alleviation, especially in sub-saharan Africa. I have always heard of development projects and programs through books, new articles and different friends and family member who works in the field, but i never really grasped what they meant, this curiosity led me to the choice of this topic for my thesis.

My newly gained knowledge within the field of project management, and my passion for International Development prompted me to want to look at development aid from a project management perspective, and to investigate why these projects have a higher change of failure and that despite so many years and billions of dollars the impact of these projects seems to be lacking.

4.1.1 Literature Review

In order to ensure a scientific approach, a thorough literature review has been conducted. The rationale of the literature review was to establish what is already known about the topic at hand and provide a theoretical background and justification for the investigation that we plan to undertake (Clark et al., 2021).

Through a literature study i did for the specialization project in fall 2021, I realized that the issue of sustainability and lasting impact was not addressed by many the project management community. Based on this, I decided to do a literature study paper,on designing sustainable project in developing countries. I will be referring to this paper, because of it importance of laying the groundwork for this thesis.

A literature review is essential, as by reviewing what others have done and identifying gaps in research, it helps identify where the study fits within the academic field and how it will offer something different (Clark et al., 2021). The aim is to select and appraise as much as possible of the research relevant to the research question defined.

Three databases were selected for the search: Google scholar, Oria

Name of articles	Key words	Authors & Year
Project Management for Development in Africa: Why Projects Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It	project failure;problem; traps;international development projects;Africa	Lavagnon A.Ika, 2012
Plans are nothing, changing plans is everything: the impact of changes on project success	Project planning; project success; Goal changes; Plan-changes	Dov Dvir, Thomas Lechler, 2003
Complex adaptive systems as a valid framework for understanding community level development	Aid; Development policies; Aid effectiveness; Methods	Kate Neely, 2015
Rhetoric versus Reality: The Best and Worst of Aid Agency Practices	Foreign aid; best practices; transparency; bureaucracy; incentives	William Easterly and Claudia R.Williamson, 2011
...	...	...

Table 3: A sample of the matrix created to get an overview of the literature

and Scopus. These databases should cover enough scientific journals to give us satisfying search results. A document was created, were I wrote the summary of the articles I deemed relevant or that captured my attention. These articles were carefully selected since they would lay the backbone of the literature review. I used other article to complement the core articles and expanded my search horizon as I learned more. I lost track of the number of articles and books chapters after a while, but a total of 107 articles and book chapters are documented in the matrix, I also watched countless YouTube videos and interviews on the topic of international aid.

Initially the search was done using a combination of keywords and terms such as "sustainability AND non-profits" or "international development AND project management", etc. More specific searches were conducted when needed to learn more about specific topics such

as stakeholder management and sustainability. With the theoretical framework formed in the literature review, we developed a model which, when applied, will ensure that a project's long-term impact is considered. This work was essentially completed in the specialization project. The original model was modified from the specialization project to include other important aspects we found to be relevant from the empirical data gathered from the interviews.

4.2 Research Strategy

Most researchers including Clark et al. (2021) distinguishes between 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 well as a logical approach to the link between 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 between 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

(Clark et al., 2021).

Considering the limitations in published theory on sustainability in development aid projects, we realised that we 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 between 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. However, 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 us to gain a detailed understanding of the circumstances of international aid projects.

4.3 Research Design

Next in our research process, we 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 our selection of research design, it was evident that we needed to

collect in-depth data from a multitude of sources. This is followed by analyses of the data collected by designing a framework of the drivers of success in development aid projects.

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 our case, this strategy would have required us to formulate a hypothesis to be tested. However, 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.

An important dimension for us to design a framework that would be applicable to all development aid projects. This would require us 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.

4.4 Data Collection Method

Having selected a research strategy, research design as well as a research method, it was imminent to begin the interview process. We applied semi-structured interviews as the method for research, we had a list of questions to be asked(see Appendix A). we followed (Clark et al., 2021) recommendation and framed the questions in a way that en-

couraged the interviewee to articulate a detailed response. We wanted the interviewee to speak their mind and share what they thought was relevant, and often we strayed from our list of questions because we wanted to pick up on some of the interviewees response and to get them to elaborate more. This was especially true for informants who had long experience in the field, who had allot of real-live examples to draw from. We made sure to ask all the questions in our interview guide as we thought it would be beneficial for the analysis and enabled comparability between answers.

We wanted an international and diverse sample size, so we made an interview guide in both Norwegian and English. All our interviews were made in Norwegian, six of them were remote through video chat and two were written through emails, we sent the questions to the respondent and got answers back in written email. It was unfortunate that we had to do some interview through emails, as this did not allow us to ask for elaboration and ask follow up questions.

We sent out an email to all the participant of the interview with details about what the interviews is going to be about, and asked them for their consent about taping the interview, we also asked them to sign a letter of consent Appendix B. All The interview consisted of two people, the interviewers and one interviewee at a time.

The following sections will encompass the sampling strategy, present the sample and detail the empirical data collection process.

4.4.1 Sampling Strategy and sample of informants

We began the sampling process by getting in touch with relevant informants already in our network, we target those people we knew have worked for, or was currently working for either NGO or a development institution. We presented our project and asked if they could be interested to be interviewed, we also enquired if they had some one in their network who they could refer to for further interview. We also made social media post, presenting our project in different groups and forums, with a focus on international development. We sent emails to the biggest NGOs in Norway and also contacted The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation(Norad) for an interview. We wanted to collect data from informants with a broad experience with aid projects and with a deep knowledge of the aid industry. We also applied "snowball sampling", were we asked our informants to put us in contact with other people with the knowledge and experience within aid projects (Clark et al., 2021). To decrease the chances of our result being dependent on a single context, we contacted multilateral aid organisation, unilateral aid organisations, global NGOs and local NGO operating in developing countries.

Table Table 4 summarize the information about the informants, we have emitted the names and broads categories are used to describe their current and former roles in the aid industry. This is done for privacy concerns and for securing the anonymity of our informants. The list demonstrates the homogeneous sample of informants applied to this study, six out of the eight informants have background from

NGOs who implement the projects, one have a background from bilateral organisation that finance the projects and one have experience from private aid initiatives. Five of the informants have more than 10 years experience in the field of aid, this is valuable since they have a greater number of projects and experience to base their arguments on, this was also reflected in our interview time. The interviews were longer and with more in depth answer with the informants with more experience. We also planned to interview an economist from the World bank, but the interview got cancelled due to personal reasons. We would have like to interview more people with a background in bilateral and multilateral aid organisation, since these are often the one who finance NGOs, unfortunately these were not interested to participate in our study, this would have given us a more balanced picture of the realities in the aid industry.

Current and former roles	Years of exp	Interview length
International programs director for a global NGO, former consultant for non-governmental organisations and bilateral agencies	25	1h30 min
Project Manager for a global NGO, former project co-ordinator and manager of an NGO	12	2h 6min
Former project coordinator for a development project on behalf of a Government	7	56min
Former diplomat, board member in aid organisation and director of a bilateral aid organisation	45+	email
Head of planning,monitoring,evaluation,accountability and learning for an NGO, former program manager and donor representative	12	42min
Former project manager for a capacity building project in east Africa(private initiative)	4	31min
Program advisor for a international NGO	16	40min
Project manager for an NGO	6	email

Table 4: Sample of informants

4.5 Data Analysis Method

The interviews with the informants were recorded and decoded, we used the function in Microsoft teams software that takes spoken words and convert it to written, this made it is easy to decode the interview. It helped us to keep the originality of the interviews, and preserved the integrity of the study. We followed the analysis approach proposed by (Gioia et al., 2022),in the first order concepts(see Figure 8) we tried to faithfully to present the view of the informant as originally presented, we grouped together the answers according to the questions. Figure 8 is only a representation, the original data structure table was much bigger containing hundreds of 1st-order categories, this stages was

confusing as i felt that I couldn't make sense of all the information.

After we had organised the questions and all the corresponding answers, we started to look for differences, similarities and to detect patterns in the answers, this led to the creation of the second order themes. This reduced the categories and a clear "picture" started to emerge. This pattern of information that emerged in the second theme analyses was analysed and compared to the theory, we tried to see if our findings agreed with the theoretical frame work. We also focused on concept that emerged that was not mentioned in the theory, when this concept was identified, we searched relevant theory on the subject and studied it. The "aggregate dimensions" is a consolidation of the second order themes and this formed the basis of building our data structure.

As we analysed the data, some of our empirical findings conflicted with our theory and some of the findings was absent in the theory. The new finding that was absent from our theory was studied and added to the theory part. The part from the findings that did not match with theory is presented in Section 6. The interview guide Appendix A was designed so that we could validate the theory, we wanted to see if the theoretical understanding of how to conduct ID projects is in alignment with practice
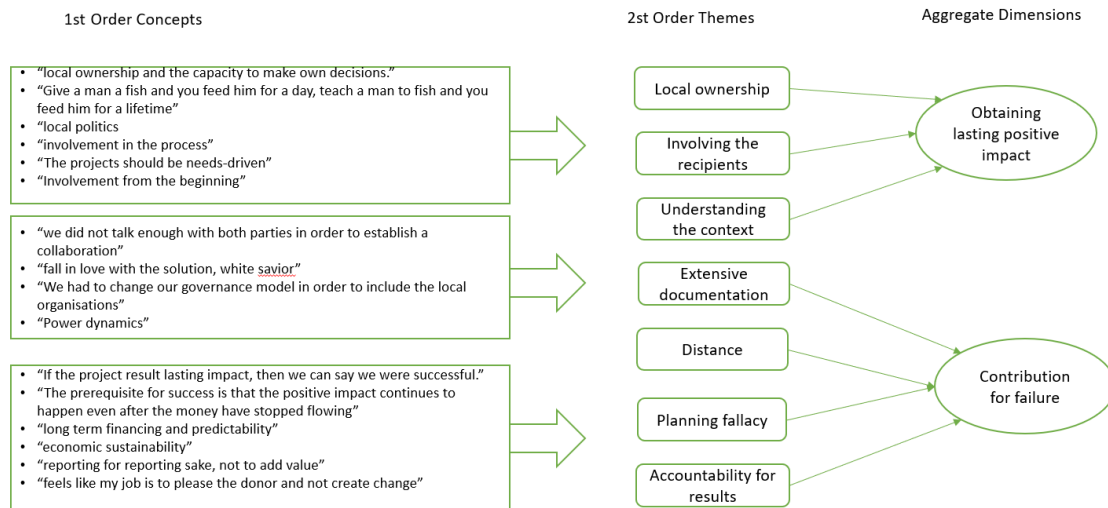
1st Order Concepts   2st Order Themes   Aggregate Dimensions

- "local ownership and the capacity to make own decisions."
- "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime"
- "local politics
- "involvement in the process"
- "The projects should be needs-driven"
- "Involvement from the beginning"

- "we did not talk enough with both parties in order to establish a collaboration"
- "fall in love with the solution, white savior"
- "We had to change our governance model in order to include the local organisations"
- "Power dynamics"

- "If the project result lasting impact, then we can say we were successful."
- "The prerequisite for success is that the positive impact continues to happen even after the money have stopped flowing"
- "long term financing and predictability"
- "economic sustainability"
- "reporting for reporting sake, not to add value"
- "feels like my job is to please the donor and not create change"

Local ownership
Involving the recipients
Understanding the context
Extensive documentation
Distance
Planning fallacy
Accountability for results

Obtaining lasting positive impact

Contribution for failure

Figure 8: Data structure adapted from (Gioia et al., 2022)

4.6 Limitations of the Study

There is some significant limitations with this study, the limitations stems from the choice of research method, time constraint and availability of resources. Qualitative research is often criticized for being impressionistic and subjective, its findings rely to much on the researchers own views about what is important or not. (Clark et al., 2021). This study is difficult to replicate, since it is impossible for external to establish how I arrived at the conclusions I did.

For the integrity of the study, it would have been better if we had a larger and more diverse sample size. I would have like to interview more males and informants with other ethnic background. Having a more diverse and bigger sample size would have given a more realistic picture, since people have biases and these biases often stems from their upbringing and life experiences. Another clear limitation of the study is that we only interview people who worked for NGO and on

"soft" projects as described in Section 3.1.2,it would have enriched the study to had the point of view of someone who has worked on "hard-project" as I believe the nature of the project is essential. The study would have been enriched if we could have had the point of view of someone who has experience from the multilateral development organisation who often finance ID projects, this would have given the study a more balance view of why projects ID projects fails.

4.7   Ethical Considerations

There are some ethical considerations that must be faced when dealing with International development projects, because of it top-down approach and the distance and power dynamics between project organisations that funds and implement these projects and the beneficiaries.

One of the clearest difference between ID projects and traditional project is accountability, in traditional projects, the implementer of a project is bound by contract to be accountable for his/her result toward the client/beneficiaries. This incentive of accountability is lacking in the development context where the intended beneficiary of the project is often not consulted on the matter regarding the project.According to (Collier, 2016) western aid have been used as a means of imposing modern western values on the poor, traditional societies, neglecting its predominant ethical rational. This imposing of cultural values and managerialisation can be interpreted as new for for colonialism, one can ask if aid is being to done to help the local communities or to advance the agenda of the donor. (Girei, 2022) found that local

NGOs in east-Africa are resisting donor-driven accountability policies and practices, the study by (Girei, 2022) found that modern accountability schemes curtails the emergence of agendas and practices not aligned with those of the donors.

Not only it seems that the donors are requiring the beneficiaries to be accountable to them, but the donor themselves have no one to answer to. This power imbalance, is worried some and can possibly attract actors who want to exploit the power-asymmetry to their own interest.

5 Empirical Data

In this chapter we will present the key findings from our empirical research as described in Section 4. It is important to note that all the participant in the interview have worked on "soft" project as describe in Section 3.1.2, so we dont know if these findings applies to "hard" projects.

5.1 Importance of Local Ownership and Involvement

Contrary to traditional projects where the project financing entity is also the beneficiary,in ID projects there is a donor who finances the project and a recipient who benefits from the project. The relationship dynamic between these two, and the extent to which the recipient should be included and given authority in the project organizations were widely elaborated by all the informants. A common thread among the informants were the emphasis on the need to build resilient local communities that can be self-sufficient long after the project is done and for the local to own the project.

Project management in ID is confronted with demanding local constrain and many stakeholder, to ensure sustainability the project should be anchored in local needs and be initiated, developed and conducted by the local communities with the assistance and financing of the donor. Local people need to have a real stake in and be responsible for their community's own development, otherwise aid projects run the risk of being seen as donor project with no real benefit for the locals. This is emphasis by one informants who said that:

"Changes in a society largely comes from inside. Any nation, and in particular those who have a colonial history, will resist external pressure. With lack of involvement and support by those most affected by a donor initiated project, the project is almost bound to fail."

When asked about criteria for successful projects, all the informants highlighted local ownership as critical. Without local ownership and support of the projects, there is no hope of achieving any lasting impact, the project may achieve it intended objectives, but those achievement will be conditioned on the presence of the donor in the communities. As one of the respondent noted:

"Donors tends to fall in love with the solution, and as a consequence of that, they develop tunnel vision and underestimate the complexities and nuances of the problem. The locals are the ones who know the needs and challenges of the communities and are best suited to come up with solutions."

Social-cultural factors plays a important role in determining attitudes and belief about a projects, by involving the local communities early in the project and giving them authority in the project planing and execution, one increases the chance of project sustainability. Early involvement ensure that the interest and need of the local population are addressed and thus create an incentive for the local to put in effort in order to maintain the project.

5.1.1 The importance of involving local authorities

Another important theme that was brought up in the context of local ownership is the importance of getting the support and sponsorship of the project by the local authorities. A recurring sentiment among the respondents is that the project should be anchored in the local authorities in order to ensure forward momentum and avoid being hampered by extensive bureaucracy and corruption. By involving and working closely with the local authorities, the donors avoid the risk of creating a parallel organisation to doing the project and instead integrate the projects as a part of existing local organisations. As one respond puts it:

> *"Donors should avoid building up their own state within the state with parallel structures. This might be efficient and give good short term results, but it does not create development."*

Another of the respondent who worked as a project manager for a capacity building and knowledge exchange project in Africa noted that:

> *"The project legitimacy is dependent on the support of the local municipality and people with political power. When the project is sponsored by powerful persons and organisation, it gives the personnel working on the project the legitimacy to do their job without interruption. By co-signing on the project, the local authorities have an incentive for the success of the project."*

Elites are especially important stakeholders in developing countries,the

support of the economic, political and sociocultural elites can make or break a project (Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith, 1992). Obtaining local ownership and authorities support often requires that we sacrifice efficiency and effectiveness for a more slower, more costly and often ambiguous and complex process of building thrust with the communities and understanding the complexities of the environment. Informants repeatedly acknowledged that they did not have the time nor resources to prioritize local ownership of the project, many stating that the strong requirement of financial reporting and accountability schemes by donor could not be met since activities that lead to local ownership can not be quantified, thus they struggled to get funding for these activities.

5.2 Donors adaptation to local Context and Culture

The importance of grounding the project in local ideas, context and culture were mentioned several times by the informants. Many emphasized the danger of a one-size fits-all approach that assume that all types of aid projects share the same characteristics.

> "At the start of a new project, we need to put what we know on a shelf and start with a blank slate because every project and every community work in are unique and we need to find a unique way to implement the project and improve the live of the communities. I can not rely upon my logic since it is biased by the influence of my European culture and my previous experience, therefore before every projects I rely fully on

the locals to come with suggestion on the the project can best serve the community."

ID projects failure can not be addressed by the use of better procedure, tools and techniques, but by understanding and adapting the projects to the complexity of the local custom, culture and way of life. Examples were given of situations where a project plan were designed and projects objective were set in the donor country only to find out at time of implementation that it was almost impossible to achieve the objective due to the local culture and customs. It is not uncommon for donors to try to solve a problem that the local population does not see as problem, often times these introversion without local knowledge creates more harm than good. Therefore, for a project to have a significant, positive impact, a in depth knowledge of the local situation and conditions is essential. Many respondents paraphrases the word of (Johnston & Clark, 1982), echoing that "We need to recognise that the challenges of development and development projects are not well structural problems that can be 'thought through' by clever people. Rather they are 'messes' of extreme complexity that have to be acted out by social experimentation and interaction, context therefore is of uttermost importance." Almost all of the mistakes that were reported in the interviews were because of a failure to understand culture and context, and the success stories were almost always attributed to the understanding of culture. As one of the informant, who has lived for many years in several sub-Saharan African countries said:

"I was a project manager for projects that we were conduct-

ing in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, even though it was exactly the same project it turn out very successful in the African countries and 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 and have spent a lot of time there in my adult life, I know the African way of doing things and i speak their 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 guess the project failed because i failed to understand the local culture and adapt the project to it, meanwhile in Africa in knew exactly how to design the projects and had an idea of what action to take if it did not go as I planned."

This project manager was not the only one of our informants who attributed their success in managing ID to their knowledge of the local culture, language or customs and their ability to use this knowledge in order to implement a successful project.

5.3 The need for flexibility, adaptability and long-term financing

The majority of the people we interviewed worked for NGOs, they all applied for project funding to governmental agencies and other multilateral development organisations. The respondents stressed the need to change the current structure and power dynamics between the implementing parties, the founder and recipient of international aid. They reported that there is too much emphasis within aid agencies

and other donors on strong procedures and guidelines, which leads to a culture that emphasize performance measurement for external reporting only, with little attention and resources given to putting the performance information to use in the improvement of the project. One respondent who works as a project manager for a multinational NGO described her working conditions like this:

> *"I think I spend 60 percent of my time writing reports and applications for funds, I also spend a lot of time tracking and documenting the project progress because i know that is what I will be judged on. Our organisation is dependent on grants from donors and we know that a good report and well documented results increase our chances of getting more founding in the future. I would rather spend more time in the field,getting to know the locals and monitoring the impact my projects are having on the local society."*

Development agencies should refocus on managing for long-term development results and shy away from the emphasis on visible short-term outcomes and efficiency. It was rather surprising to us when conducting the interviews that all the participant seemed to agree that the founding of development projects should be more flexible and have a longer time horizon. They believed that it would increase the chance of obtaining lasting impact on their projects if aid agencies moved away from the constant pressure of demonstrating result to a culture where projects managers are given more flexibility and are incentives to do projects whose impact will lead lasting development.

The short duration of the founding combined with the deadlines for reporting, caused the project managers we interviewed to deprioritize sustainability and long term approach to project implementation.

> "The donors want to have a detailed five years framework for what the funds are going to be used there, this gives us no flexibility to negotiate and make changes on the project once the five years proposal have been made. It is difficult to be flexible, adaptable and innovative if you have to set up a five years framework for what you are going to do, these requirement from donors is a impediment for sustainability."

The director of international program elaborated on how the founding agencies rigidity and bureaucracy hinders the design and implementation of sustainable projects. The director stressed the importance of long-term and predictable funding so that project managers can plan and commit long-term to local employees and partners organisations.

> "There is a lot of delays and bureaucratic procedures when we apply for projects funds, the uncertainty this creates have caused us to stop projects and this have resulted in loss of key local personnel who were dependent on us."

Obtaining sustainability and ownership requires a competent and motivated project team and local partner who can contribute to the development, implementation and operation of the project, sustainability requires continuity of personnel. Uncertainty and delay of payment caused key local personnel to look for other employment opportunit-

ies.

We example from one informant of one concrete case where long term financing yielded sustainable results. this respondent defined sustainability as "the ability to maintain positive change after the funding has stopped, and the ability to funds own projects" the informant describe a case where they got long term funding:

> "We just evaluated a projects that had 25years of guaranteed funding, the evaluation shows sustainable results two years after we pulled out of the country. The 25year that we were guaranteed founding made it possible for us to strategise for and work patiently for sustainability."

It is undeniable that having time at ones disposal increase the chance of success, especially when it comes to matter like ensuring sustainability. Unfortunately, many of our respondent seemed to be working under tight deadline and a grueling reporting scheme.

5.4 The absence of the use of professional methodology

In Section 3.5, we saw that professional methodology was a key part of driving success in ID projects, to my surprise this was not mention by the respondent. Some informants said that they used to logical frame work, but most of them had no concrete methodology in place to guide their project management. When asked what is important to think about if one want to achieve success, none of the respondent mentioned project management methodology as important, stating that only the

minimum is needed to ensure that the project is on track.

> *We dont use any management tools, we only use the one that are necessary to keep track on cost. But we do use guidlines such as to how to conduct stakeholder meetings osv.*

6   Discussion

Now that we have established the theoretical foundation, have reviewed the interviews and presented the key findings of our interviews, we are ready to dig deeper into our research question:

How can International development projects be planned to ensure sustainable positive impact?

In this chapter we will present key empirical findings and compared how they relate to the theoretical findings. The discussions will be anchored in the research question, and we will look at the divergence or convergence of the empirical finding and the theory.

To guide our discussion, we will start by looking at the divergence between the theory and empirical findings on the importance of professional methodology, we will then investigate the difference between ID projects and traditional projects and argue why ID projects needs a different approach and mindset. We will then look at the project success criteria and what these means for design and implementation of ID project, a analysis and discussion of the complexity of development project will be presented and we will look at what this complexity means for ID project design.

6.1   Project management methodology

In Section 3 we showed that professional methodology is seen as a key driver for achieving success in ID projects, to our surprise, this was not shared by our informants. The informant acknowledged the im-

portance of methodology but bid not see it as key to achieve success in ID project, some of them even saw it as a hinder for success. The theory and literature on project management is based on traditional western projects and context, it is then not so surprising that the scholars value sees methodology as a prerequisite for success. However the environment of ID project are different from the the ones that the traditional projects are conducted in and the use of methodology designed for western society will can do more harm than good. The complexity and uncertainty is to high for project managers to relies on methodology, most of the informants expressed that they use minimal methodology only those that helped them to keep track on spending and time scheduled like the gantt chart was used. We will now look at why development projects cant relies on traditional project management methodology and needs to develop different approach that are design to address the issues these project faces.

6.1.1 The need for flexibility and a different approach

In chapter Section 3 we defined ID projects and the nature and challenges of these projects, we have noted that ID projects tend to differ from other projects, whether they are hard or soft, regarding the intangibility and ambiguity of their end-goal of poverty reduction and the high socio-political complexity.

Despite the growing interest in project based work(Ika et al., 2020a), and trillions of dollars spent on ID projects, ID projects seldom features in the mainstream project management literature (Ika et al.,

2020b). Project management scholars often makes assumptions that, they deals with projects with a tangible deliverable, done in and by the private sector and in modern developed economy(Munro & Ika, 2020). These assumptions exclude ID projects that typically involve high degree of change in weak institutional setting.

It can be argued that this lack of academic exposure and attention, contribute to the mismanagement and failure rate of ID projects. This is because complexity of these projects are either poorly understood by the funding agency or ignored. When trying to achieve sustainability in aid project, it is helpful to have a clear understanding of the ramifications of the project and to have developed an appropriate approach to address these issues. ID practise is currently based on a linear outcome-oriented perspective, which focuses on individual institutions within the system to a degree it excludes attention to the relationship among actors (Groves & Hinton, 2004).

Subsection Section 5.3 states that there is too much emphasis within aid agencies on strong procedures and guidelines, which leads to an overemphasis on performance measurement for external reporting only. This approach may be suitable for projects that have low on intangibility of objective and socio-political complexity as seen in Figure 5 but is inadequate in achieving sustainability in ID project that are highly complex as described in Section 3.2.1. This can be confirmed through the information given by the informants, Section Section 5.3 made it clear that there is a need for flexibility and long-term financing since ID context requires to deal with increasingly intangible objectives.

The current dynamics in the aid and development industry with an overemphasis on reports and planning leads to a vulnerability of ID projects to fall into the "malevolent hidden" hand or "planning fallacy" as defined by (Flyvbjerg & Sunstein, 2015). When forced to plan a project many years in advance and to follow these plans, many ID projects are likely to fall into the planning fallacy, the planning fallacy blinds excessively optimistic planners not only to unexpectedly high costs but also to unexpectedly low net benefits (Flyvbjerg & Sunstein, 2015). Because of the complexity and uncertainty in ID projectsSection 3.2.1, it makes sense to have an agile, long-term approach when it comes to financing and implementation of these projects, since they have intangible and ambiguous goals that may change. This is especially true since it is difficult in ID project to involve the target beneficiaries or end-users in project discussion and thus creating the lack of defined customer that can define the project success criteria.

From our findings, it was clear that our informants felt pressured to abide to the guidelines and procedure requirement from the donor, even if this went against their professional opinion. In their research (Munro & Ika, 2020) found that aid organisation have a different approach to project management than the standard, recognised academic standard of the Association for Project management(APM) and Project Management Institute(PMI).

ID and aid organisations have an emphasis on beneficiary participation, environmental impact, unintended consequences of projects, soft objectives, evaluation techniques, and cross-cultural issues more than

the conventional standard. The conventional standard have more emphasis on scoping and scheduling (Munro & Ika, 2020). The empirical findings imply that the conventional standard of project management, with a emphasis on scheduling and scoping still prevails, this have fostered an attitude where the real purpose of aid is partially forgotten. This emphasis on project management success Section 3.3.1 and output rather than outcome focus, does not guarantee project success and sustainability it may rather hindered it.

6.2 Extensive bureaucracy and a focus on results

Our informant expressed that, the lack of flexibility and rigid project plans and procedures reduced their capacity of delivering project success. Project management practices as defined in Section 3.3.1 are poorly adapted to operating in environments characterized by volatility and uncertainty as describe in Section 3.2.1. Deviation from the initial project plan and unexpected situations are the norm in development context and needs to be handle in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Based on our interviews it seems that there a different approach to projects between the financing and implementing parties in ID projects. Our findings suggest that the funding agencies operates by a management by results(MBR) principles, while the NGO's that are implementing the projects are more concerned with the outcome. The power dynamic between the financing and implementing part, forces the implementing parties to concentrates on the mechanics of project

planning, reporting and and controlling, ignoring the project goal in the process.

All informant acknowledged the important of having a project plan and scheduled, but they were also aware, based on their experience that, things seldom goes as planned when the project have started, they seems to agree with the saying "plans are nothing, change of plan is everything" described in Section 3.1.1. The physical and cultural distance between the project planner and the project implementer and beneficiaries makes it almost impossible to foresee and anticipate the many unexpected changes, unpredictable reactions and needs that may exist and emerge in the project context. Development projects requires a different approach than 'traditional' projects, the generic checklists and manuals are not suited for ID projects, and they will need to vary between every project and every context.

When asked about their personal description of a successful project, many of our respondent answered that, "a successful project is one that creates positive extended effects beyond what was planned and that these effects are sustained overtime". This kind of success is difficult to achieve in a organisation operated by management by results approach, with it focus on effectiveness and accountability, and our informant expressed a feeling that the results and reporting protocols constrained their ability to ensure sustainability in their projects and programs.
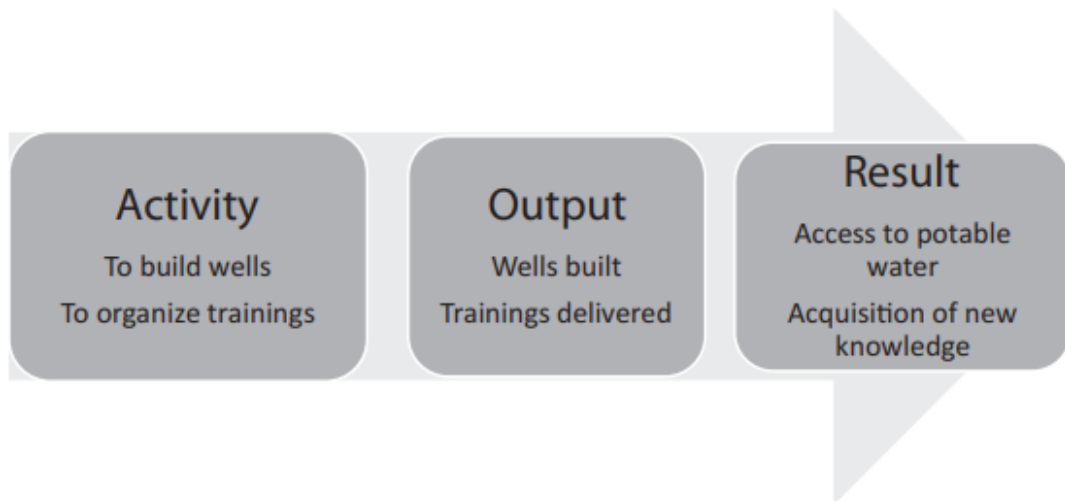
Figure 9: Output versus Results

As we can see in Figure 9, the end goal of result base management is the results, this paradigm in of itself is not conductive for sustainability. It is a simplistic and rather naive way of conducting projects, it is bound to underestimate the complexity of ID projects as described in Section 3.2.1. In Figure 9, the purpose of the output is to induce a result(change) in the the target population, it is then easy to assume that every activity has a output and every output leads to a change, in a linear fashion. This can be true in stable, western democracies where most of the projects are founded and where these requirements of result accountability stems from. In reality, ID project are more like Figure 3.

As seen in Figure 3, ID projects are highly complex and adaptive and must therefore be dealt with by personnel who understand and have experience this complexity. Our informant emphasised the importance of knowing the local language and the local culture and context, in order to achieve project success. This thesis call for project founders to

understand more thoroughly the contextualised nature of development and the communities in which development projects are implemented. As (Groves & Hinton, 2004) argues that for international development to move beyond the rhetoric of aid to a reality where the well-being of poor people is truly prioritized, there need to be a far clear understanding of the uncertainty, complexity and dynamics of the entire aid system.

6.3   The importance of contextual understanding

The theory states the importance of having the right contextual understanding in order to achieve project success, knowing the context and culture of the project makes it more likely that the project project will do sound needs assessment in the front-end phase and will likely be better prepare to navigate the complexity of the environment (see Section 3.2.1). Since the beneficiaries of the projects are not involved in planning and decisions making process (see Section 3.1.1), it becomes very important that the project manager have the right understanding of the project. The informants expressed a problem with perceived need and actual need, and how the project beneficiaries often have had a different perspective than the planer.

The empirical data are in line with the theory on the importance of context and context understanding. It is easier to achieve local ownership when you know the context and can navigate local politics and tribal conflict to get the whole community to collaborate on the project. Some of the informant experienced large success in the projects

where they knew the culture and local languages where the project were done, the same success could not be replicated when the project were to done in a different context where the informant did not know the culture.

A project manager should have an understanding of the context before being appointed, but in cases where that is not the case he/she should be given time and flexibility to get understanding. The project manager have to have an understanding of the local context in order to ensure local ownership, he/she need to know about all the stakeholder and the culture and history of the place the project is going to be done in. The informants largely agreed that having a contextual understanding is of crucial importance, and a lack of it almost guarantee failure. having a contextual understanding decreases the complexity of the projects and increase the chances that the relevant solution is chosen.

6.4   The Need for local to 'own' the project

The empirical findings and theory all agrees that in order to achieve project success, the local population and beneficiaries of the projects should be the ones making decisions.This is contrary to the dominant practice, where a culture where result-based, reductionist thinking dominates development have proven not to work in the dynamic and complex context of aid. Our empirical findings suggest that an attention to, and inclusion of local citizen in project plans and decision making processes often reveal the true complexity of the project that

may have been overlooked by the donors. Much less attention should be given to reports and the donors need, and instead effort should be focused on learning and downward accountability to the beneficiaries of the project.

Instead of using the traditional project management tools based economic rationality and an ideology of control as described in Section 3.5.2, one should encourage more open, locally adapted reporting formats and procedures.

It is noteworthy that (Cox & Healey, 2000) found that most European development agencies country strategies were almost always drawn up by the donors in a top-down way, with little consultation within the recipient country. Although the study of (Cox & Healey, 2000), is more than twenty years old and practices may have changes, our informants echoed a sentiment of power asymmetry, where the locals where not consulted before major decisions were made on their behalf. By excluding the locals in the planning and decision making process, ones increases the probability of the project falling into the planning fallacy described in Section 3.1.1. By bypassing locals, the projects run the risk of being seen as being "impose" to the population and can it can even run the risk of being actively undermined. Understanding the dynamic of power and exclusion have important implications for the development of effective strategies for addressing sustainability issues in ID projects.

It is understandable that it takes time, effort and financial resources to create ownership, despite this knowledge most aid projects are based

on applications that includes a specific plan and time frame for the project (see Section 3.1.1). This gives the project a narrow and limited opportunity to spend time on creating relationships with the local, establishing ownership and adapting to the local context and culture. As the empirical finding Section 5.1 and Section 5.2 shows, one should spend time getting to know the local population, their culture and overall context, in order to ensure that the project manager understand their need and than plan the project accordingly. As discussed in Section 5.3 and Section 6.2, the extensive focus on planning and reporting is experienced as time and resources consuming. One could argues that the time and resources used for reporting and bureaucracy can be utilized to working on creating ownership and understanding the local environment so one can act according to the need of the project at any given time.

7 Conclusion

International aid projects is a multi billion dollar industry, but is being neglected by the project management community. This has led to an attitude of a "one size fits all" approach, where the same project management approach that are being done in conventional projects are applied to aid projects. In this study I have highlighted the complexity of ID projects and what makes them different than conventional projects, I have discussed and argued that ID projects needs a different approach of management in order for it to succeed and be sustainable. I showed that it is important that the project manager in ID get the time and flexibility when managing projects due to the complexity and uncertainty.

Most conventional projects have the same funder, implementer and beneficiaries of that project, this paradigm is what most of the project management literature and studies is based on. However when the funder, implementer and beneficiaries are different and may have different objective with the project, new ways of working must be developed, this is the case for ID project. I have shown that project founders and implementer have different approach to project management. The empirical findings and literature suggest that local ownership is essential for project success and sustainability. The dynamics of ID projects leaves the project managers with little freedom and flexibility to decide how to best achieve sustainable positive results, I therefore recommend that the project manager be given flexibility because ID projects are too unpredictable and context dependents for

today's planning obsessed culture. Conventional project management works best in stable environment with surrounding infrastructure and institutions, it is easier to obtain project success when contractual obligations with sponsors and employees can be enforced with speed and fairness.

7.1   Success driver model

The findings in this thesis have reveal that the model presented in Section 3.5 is not quite accurate. The original model had project management methodology as a driver for success, this may be true for conventional projects, but our informants did not consider professional methodology as important to achieve project success. ID projects should have a focus on "outcome" rather than "output", project managers should focus on pleasing the recipients rather than the donors. Focusing on meeting donors demands increases the chances of focusing on efficiency in the project rather than relevance, impact and sustainability.

The success driver model can help project managers and project planer to to achieve success in their projects. It presents three key drivers that must be in place in order for ID projects to be successful. Firstly, the project manager have to have a good contextual understanding of where the project is going to be conducted, this helps him/her anticipate the complexity of the project and mitigate the risks in the project planing, secondly the local population should have full ownership of the project, when the local population have ownership of a project the

chance of success increases because they will likely identify solutions that are relevant. When local ownership is achieved the chances of the project having sustainable positive impact also increases exponentially because the project will have strong local support. Lastly in order to achieve local ownership and project success, project managers needs to have flexibility when implementing the projects. The flexibility given to project managers will enable them to adapt to emerging situations that are, ID project doesn't only fail because of mismanagement but also because of the sheer complexity of the project setting. Creating ownership takes time, and the project team must be given the time and flexibility to do that.
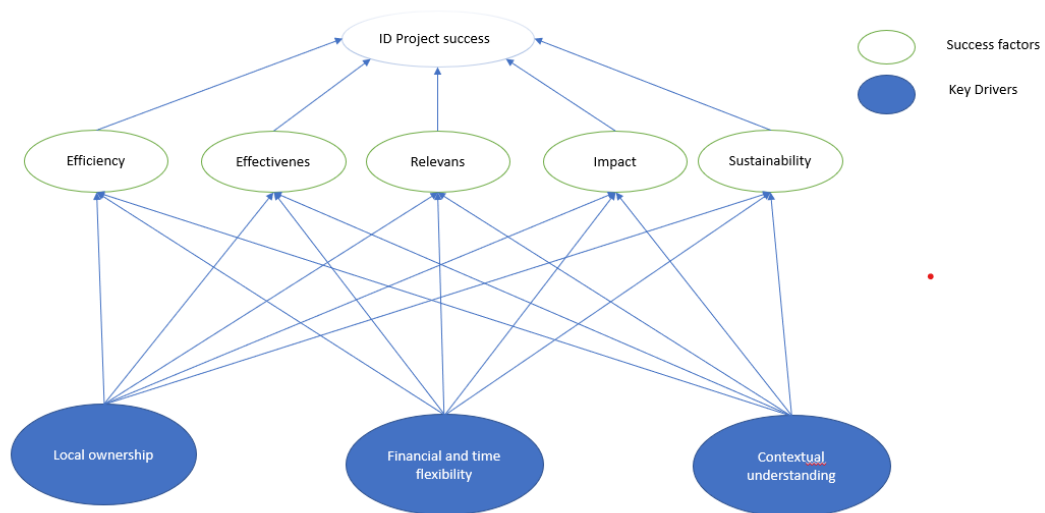

Figure 10: Success drivers-model

To answer the research question Section 2.2, we can ensure sustainable positive impact of international aid projects by understanding the context and complexity of these projects, by focus on the beneficiaries of the project and making sure they "buy inn" and "own" the project and by giving the project team flexibility and time to navigate the

complex environment.

Bibliography

Atkinson, R. (1999). Project management: Cost. time and quality, two best guesses and a phenomenon, its time to accept other criteria. *International Journal of Project Management.* https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna22380448

Bank, W. (1986). Twelfth annual review of projects performance results. *World Bank review.*

Brinkerhoff, D. W. & Goldsmith, A. A. (1992). Promoting the sustainability of development institutions: A framework for strategy. *World Development.*

Chauvet, L., Collier, P. & Duponchel, M. (2010). What explains aid project success in post-conflict situation? *World Bank Policy Research.*

Clark, T., Foster, L., Sloan, L. & Bryman, A. (2021). *Social research methods* (6th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Collier, P. (2016). The ethical foundations of aid: Two duties of rescue.

Cooke-Davis, T. (2002). The "real" success factor on projects. *International journal of Project Management.*

Cox, A. & Healey, J. (2000). *European development coorperation and the poor.*

Crawford, L. & Pollack, J. (2004). Hard and soft projects: A framework for analysis.

Crawford, P. & Bryce, P. (2003). A method for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of aid project implementation. *International journal of Project Management.*

Diallo & Thuillier, D. (2005). The success of international development projects, trust and communication: An african perspective. *International journal of Project Management.*

Dugger, C. W. (2007). World bank agency finds its africa projects are lagging.

Dvir, D. & Lechler, T. (2003). Plans are nothing, changing plans is everything: The impact of changes on project success.

Dvir, D., Tzvi & J.Shanhar, A. (2003). An empirical analysis of the relationship between project planning and project success.

Engwall, M. (2003). No project is an island: Linking projects to history and context.

Flyvbjerg, B. & Sunstein, C. R. (2015). The principle of the malevolent hiding hand; or, the planning fallacy writ large.

Gioia, D., Corley, K. & Hamilton, A. (2022). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the gioia methodology.

Girei, E. (2022). Managerialisation, accountability and everyday resistance in the ngo sector: Whose interests matter.

Golini, R., Kalchschmidt, M. & Landoni, P. (2003). Adoption of project management practices: The impact on international development projects of non-governmental organizations.

Groves, L. & Hinton, R. (2004). Inclusive aid changing power and relationships in international development.

Hekala, W. (2012). Why donors should care more about project management.

Hermano, V., Lopez-Parades, A., Martin-Cruz, N. & Pajares, J. (2012). How to manage international development (id) projects successfully. is the pmd pro1 guide going in the right direction?

Hodgson, D. & Cicmil, S. (2006). Are projects real? the pmbok and the legitimation of project management knowledge, 29–50.

Ika, L. (2012). Project management for development in africa: Why projects are failing and what can be done about it. *Project Management Journal*.

Ika, L., Diallo, A. & Thuillier, D. (2009). Project management in the international development industry: The project coordinator perspective. *International journal of managing project in business*.

Ika, L., Diallo, A. & Thuillier, D. (2011). The empirical relationship between success factors and dimensions: The perspectives of world bank project supervisors and managers. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*.

Ika, L. & Donnelly, J. (2016). Success conditions for international development capacity building projects. *International Journal of Project Management*.

Ika, L. & Hodgson, D. (2014). Learning from international development projects: Blending critical project studies and critical development studies. *International Journal of Project Management*.

Ika, L., Søderlund, J., Munro, L. & Landoni, P. (2020a). Cross-learning between project management and international development: Analysis and research agenda.

Ika, L., Søderlund, J., Munro, L. & Landoni, P. (2020b). When project management meets international development, what can we learn?

Institute, P. M. (2021). What is project management. https://www.pmi.org/about/learn-about-pmi/what-is-project-management

Jacobsen, D. I. (2018). *Hvordan gjennomføre undersøkelser?* (3rd ed.). Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Jagustović, R., Zougmoré, R. B., Kessler, A., Ritsema, C. J., Keesstra, S. & Reynolds, M. (2019). Contribution of systems thinking and complex adaptive system attributes to sustainable food production: Example from a climate-smart village.

Johnston, B. F. & Clark, W. C. (1982). Redesigning rural development : A strategic perspective. *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*.

Khang, D. B. & Moe, T. L. (2008). International development projects: A life-cycle-based framework. *Project Management Journal*.

Ladyman, J., Lambert, J. & Wiesner, K. (2013). What is a complex system.

Landoni, B., P. Corti. (2011). The management of international development projects: Moving toward a standard approach or differentiation? *Project Management Journal*.

Martens, M. L. & Carvalho, M. M. (2017). Key factors of sustainability in project management context: A survey exploring the project managers' perspective. *International Journal of Project Management*.

Maylor, H., Brady, T., Cooke-Davis, T. & Hodgson, D. (2006). From projectification to program-mification. *International Journal of Project Management*.

Morris, P. W. (1994). *The management of projects*. Thomas Telford, London.

Munro, L. & Ika, L. (2020). Guided by the beauty of our weapons: Comparing project management standards inside and outside international development.

Muriithi, N. & Crawford, L. (2001). Approaches to project management in africa: Implications for international development projects. *International Journal of Project Management*.

Nanthagopan, N., Y.and Williams & Thompson, K. (2018). Levels and interconnections of project success in development projects by non-governmental organisations (ngo). *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*.

Norad. (2020). Support to strengthen civil society in developing countries - norwegian organisations. https://grants.mfa.no/#call/1301/details

Nzigo, E. (2021). Can we design sustainable projects in developing countries, or are we doomed to repeat the failure of the past?

of Project Management, A. (2020). What is sustainability in project management? https://www.apm.org.uk/resources/what-is-project-management/what-is-sustainability-in-project-management

Pellegrinelli, S. (2009). What's in a name: Project or programme? *International Journal of Project Management*.

Pinto, J. K. & Mantel, S. J. (1990). The causes of project failure. *Transactions on Engineering Management*.

Pinto, J. (2013). Lies, damned lies, and project plans: Recurring human errors that can ruin the project planning process.

Pinto, J. & Slevin, D. (1987). Critical factors in successful project implementation.

Project Management Institute. (2000). A guide to the project management body of knowledge. *Project Management Institute*.

Project Management Institute. (2021a). A guide to the project management body of knowledge.

Project Management Institute. (2021b). What is project management. https://www.pmi.org/about/learn-about-pmi/what-is-project-management

Samset, K. (2010). *Early project appraisal*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Thapa, P. (2019). What is the project context for ngo grant applications? https://proposalsforngos.com/what-is-project-context-ngo-grant-application/

The Associated Press. (2007). Examples of failed aid-funded projects in africa. https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna22380448

United Nations. (2021). Bærekraftig utvikling. https://www.fn.no/tema/fattigdom/baerekraftig-utvikling

USAID. (2021). Usaid/ofda guidlines for proposals. http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/crisis-response/resources.

USAID. (2022). *Frequently asked questions*. https://www.usaid.gov/div/FAQs

U.S.Meltzer Commission. (2000). International financial institutions reform: Report of the international financial institution advisory commission.

Youker, R. (1989). Managing the project cycle of time, cost and quality: Lessons from world bank experience. *International Journal of Project Management*.

Youker, R. (2003). The nature of international development projects. *PM World Journal*.

Zwikael, O. (2008). Top management involvement in project management. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*.

A Interview Guide

Interview Guide [Norwegian]

Information

- Jeg ønsker å informere om at samtalen blir tatt opp for analyse formål men vil bli slettet når oppgaven er levert 10.juni. All empirien og personal info vil bli anonimisert og vi har taushetsplikt.

- Med bistandsprosjekter, så mener vi prosjekter som har som hensikt å hjelpe mennesker i utviklingsland.

- Med Langsiktighet og bærekraft, så mener vi effekt av prosjekter etter at prosjektet er ferdig og giver organisasjonen har trukket seg ut.

Introduksjonsspørsmål

1. Hvor mange år har du jobbet med bistand?

2. Hvilken typer prosjekter jobber/jobbet du med?

   - kompentanseheving?

   - Utvikling av infrastruktur

   - Helsefremmende hjelp

   - Politisk hjelp (opprette demokrati, avholde valg, bekjempe korrupsjon, utdanning, osv

   - Andre typer

3. Hva erdin rolle i prosjektene du jobbet med?

4. Hvor mye kunnskap hadde du om lokal kultur og historie før du begynte å jobbe på prosjektet?

5. På hvilken måte fikk du nytte av din kjenskap til lokal kultur og historie?

6. Ettersom vi ser på prosjekter i utviklingsland, er vi nysgjerrige på hvor mye kontakt du har hatt med mennesker fra utviklingsland, på deres hjemsted?

7. Hvor viktig tror du det er å kunne lokal kontekst for å kunne lykkes som prosjekt leder?

Tanker om bistandsprosjekter

1. Hva tenker du er viktig for at bistandsprosjekter gir en varig positiv endring i samfunnet?

2. Hva tenker du om måten dagens hjelpe- og bistandsprosjekter blir utført?

3. Hva tenker du om begrepet hjelp til selv hjelp? Føler du at det er stor nok fokus på det i dag?

4. Hvordan ville du beskrevet et vellykket prosjekt?

   - Hvordan oppnår man dette?
   - Hvilken feller burde man unngå?

5. Det finnes mange ulike måter å hjelpe på, hvilken type prosjekter mener du er mest effektive?

Lokal representasjon i prosjektene

1. Hva tenker du om lokalt eierskap til prosjektene?

2. Kan du fortelle litt hvordan dere jobber for å sikre at den lokale befolkningen tar eierskapet til prosjekter dere gjennomfører?

3. På hvilken måte ble den lokale befolkningen representert når viktig beslutninger skulle tas?

4. Følte du at prosjektet hadde lokalt støtte?

5. Hvis ikke, hva tror du er årsaken til manglende støtte

6. Hva kan bli gjort for å oppnå lokal støtte?

Prosjekt planlegning

1. 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?

   - Hvordan burde man i tilfelle planlegge?
   - Hva burde man i tilfelle planlegge?

2. Hva tenker du påvirker den langvarige effekten etter at giverorganisasjonen har trukket seg ut?

   - Hva kan man gjøre for å sikre at den langvarige effekten er positiv?
   - Hvordan har dere gjort dette i de prosjektene du har jobbet i?

3. Hva mener du er de 3 viktigste tingene å tenke på når man planlegger et bistands- eller hjelpeprosjekt?

Prosjekt strategi

1. Hadde prosjektene dere jobbet med en klare, langsiktige mål dere ville oppnå med prosjektet?

   - Følte du at disse målene ble oppnådd?
   - Hvis ikke, kunne bli gjort annerledes for å oppnå dem?

2. Brukte dere profesjonelle prosjektledelse verktøy for planlegging og gjennomføring av prosjektet?

   - Hva er dine tanker om bruk av generiske prosjektleder verktøy

Takk og veien videre Takk for at du tok deg tid til å snakke med oss.

Som vi sa innledningsvis skal vi skal vi gjennomføre flere intervjuer før vi analyserer det

datamaterialet vi har samlet inn. Hvis vi ser at det er noe mer vi burde spurt deg om, tar vi kontakt for å høre om du har mulighet til et oppfølgingsintervju. All empirien vi benytter i oppgaven vil bli anonymisert, og vi har taushetsplikt.

Masteroppgaven vår skal leveres i juni, og når oppgaven er levert sletter vi informasjonen hentet fra dette intervjuet.

B   Information and informed consent form

The following information letter was sent out to all the informant upfront by email in accordance with the guidelines from NSD.

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet Masteroppgave: Sustainability in developement projects Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i en

studie om langsiktigheten i hjelpe- og bistandsprosjekter i utviklings-
land. 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 pros-
jektene 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 per-
spektiver 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 relev-
ante 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 utgangspunk-
  tet ett personlig intervju. Det vil ta ca. 60 minutter. Intervjuet
  vil inneholde spørsmål om dine erfaringer med hjelpe- og bistand-
  sprosjekter, 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 anonymisert.

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

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.

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.

.