Who are the chosen poor?:

An Examination of Cross-Sector Partnerships for Development Projects Between MNCs and Local NGOs in Thailand

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Abstract

This PhD thesis aims to investigate the cross-sector collaboration or social partnership between Southern development non-governmental organisations (SDNGOs) and Northern multinational corporations (NMNCs) in terms of the selection process of their potential beneficiaries from the entire population in need for development projects. To address this question of 'who are the (chosen) poor?', this study's core research questions ask (1) how do SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and (2) what implications do SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs?

To answer these questions, this study moves beyond the concept of 'authentic partnership'—the most commonly used scholarly approach towards partnership under NGO and Development Studies—instead opting to employ the framework of development as service delivery. This thesis addresses a gap in the literature by utilising this framework to specifically analyse SDNGO–NMNC partnerships working on development projects to develop more comprehensive understandings of the practice on the ground, drawing on two case studies, EDF–IKEA Thailand and FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand.

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups involving both partnership members and their relevant stakeholders, including selected beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the case studies, were conducted to provide multidimensional perspectives for the analytical focus of this thesis, taking a qualitative and interpretivist philosophical approach, with particular emphasis on Bourdieu's 'theory of practice'. Moreover, this study uses NGOs' conceptualisation of poverty; the stakeholder theory; the willingness, capacity, and capability of the beneficiaries; and the theory of project management as the means to analysing SDNGOs' decision making with regard to their selection of their intended beneficiaries, providing fresh insights to the discipline of Development Studies.

This thesis ultimately highlights the significance of SDNGO–NMNC social partnerships with regard to their activities in the Global South, where there is a critical need for ongoing developmental efforts.

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Table of Contents

Contents	Pages
Chapter 1: Introduction	**1**
1.1 Introduction: How does it Matter?	1
1.2 The Conceptual Starting Point and Main Focus of the Thesis	3
1.3 Central Research Questions and Research Objectives	7
1.4 Why Thailand? Justification of the Case Study Location	9
1.5 Structure of the Thesis	14
Chapter 2: Exploring and Unpacking the *Field*: Insights from the Literature of Decision Making and Partnership of NGOs	**18**
2.1 Introduction	18
2.2 Tackling Concepts of Partnership: The Global Development Agenda and Authentic Partnership of NGOs	21
2.3 NMNC–SDNGO Partnership and Development as Service Delivery	31
2.4 (Re)-Conceptualisation of Beneficiaries via the Lens of SDNGOs	44
2.5 SDNGOs' Decision Making: Theories and Approaches for the Selection of Beneficiaries	49
2.5.1 Conceptualisations of Poverty	50
2.5.2 Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Beneficiaries	58
2.5.3 Stakeholder Theory	65
2.5.4 Theory of Project Management	68
2.6 Conclusion and Summary of the Limitations of the Existing Literature	73
Chapter 3: Theory and Methodology	**85**
3.1 Introduction	85
3.2 Conceptual Overview, Ontology, and Epistemology	86
3.2.1 Conceptual Overview: Conceptual and Analytical Frameworks	86
3.2.2 Qualitative and Interpretivist Ontological Approach	90
3.2.3 NGO-ism Ontology	94
3.2.4 Field of Practice: An Epistemological Application	96
3.2.5 Research Positionality and Reflexivity	100

3.3 Theoretical and Methodological Approaches 104
3.3.1 Introduction and Linkages to 'Theory of Practice' 104
3.3.2 Theory of Practice as Analytical Tools 106
3.3.2.1 Field 107
3.3.2.2 Habitus 108
3.3.2.3 Capital 110
3.3.3 Field, Habitus, and Capital: Analytical Tools for An Organisational Study of SDNGOs 112
3.4 Approach to Data Collection: A Toolkit of Methods 117
3.4.1 Organisational Case Study Design 118
3.4.2 The Sampling Framework to Select SDNGOs as Case Studies 122
3.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews 129
3.4.4 Focus Groups 133
3.5 Data Analysis: Coding and Thematic Analysis: *Habitus* and *Capital* through NGOs' Decision Making 137
3.6 Ethical Research Considerations, Implications, and Challenges 145
3.7 Conclusion 146

Chapter 4: Analytical Insights and Findings of the EDF-IKEA Thailand Case Study 147
4.1 Introduction 147
4.2 Organisational Background of EDF Thailand: Development Approaches, Development Projects, and Partnerships 149
4.3 Partnership and Development Project Background of EDF and IKEA Thailand 159
4.4 Conceptualisation of Poverty 164
4.4.1 Meanings and Causes of Poverty 166
4.4.2 Dimensions of Poverty 178
4.4.3 Who are the (Chosen) Poor? 186
4.4.4 Conclusion 189
4.5 Stakeholder Theory 190
4.5.1 Theory of CSR 191
4.5.2 Where are They? 198
4.5.3 Conclusion 204
4.6 Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Beneficiaries 205

4.6.1 Willingness of the Potential Beneficiaries 207
4.6.2 Capacity and Capability of the Potential Beneficiaries 212
4.6.3 Conclusion 229
4.7 Theory of Project Management 230
4.7.1 Timeline, Reporting, and Budgeting 231
4.7.2 Conclusion 240
4.8 Conclusion 241

Chapter 5: Analytical Insights and Findings of the FOPDEV-Prudential Thailand Case Study **244**
5.1 Introduction 244
5.2 Organisational Background of FOPDEV: Development Approaches, Development Projects, and Partnerships 246
5.3 Partnership and Development Project Background of FOPDEV and Prudential Thailand 251
5.4 Conceptualisation of Poverty 255
5.4.1 Meanings and Causes of Poverty 256
5.4.2 Who are the (Chosen) Poor? 263
5.4.3 Conclusion 266
5.5 Stakeholder Theory 267
5.5.1 Theory of CSR 268
5.5.2 Where are They? 272
5.5.3 Conclusion 276
5.6 Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Beneficiaries 276
5.6.1 Willingness of the Potential Beneficiaries 277
5.6.2 Capacity and Capability of the Potential Beneficiaries 279
5.6.3 Conclusion 282
5.7 Theory of Project Management 282
5.7.1 Reporting, Timeline, and Budgeting 283
5.7.2 Conclusion 288
5.8 Conclusion 288

Chapter 6: Discussions of Case Studies Through the Lens of Research Objectives **291**

6.1 Introduction 291

6.2 Cross-Sector Partnership Re-conceptualisation: Discussions of Research Objective 1 292

6.3 Provisional Drivers of SDNGOs' Decision Making on Beneficiary Selection: Discussions of Research Objective 2 296

6.4 Conceptualisation of Poverty of SDNGOs: Discussions of Research Objective 3 301

6.5 Stakeholder Theory: Discussions of Research Objective 4 306

6.6 Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Potential Beneficiaries: Discussions of Research Objective 5 311

6.7 Theory of Project Management: Discussions of Research Objective 6 316

6.8 Conclusion 321

Chapter 7: Conclusions **322**

7.1 Research Conclusion 322

7.2 Summary of the Main Contributions to the Existing Literature 329

7.3 Future Research Suggestions 339

Bibliography 342

Appendices **386**

Appendix 1 386

Appendix 2 389

Appendix 3 390

Appendix 4 393

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List of Tables

Table		Page
1.1	Central research questions and research objectives	**8**
2.1	Summary of the limitations of the existing literature	**75**
3.1	Analytical example forms of Bourdieu's *capitals*	**116**
3.2	Case study data collection and analysis schedule	**129**
3.3	Research participant profiles	**131**
3.4	Research participant characteristics by case study	**132**
3.5	NVivo documents by case study and data source	**143**
3.6	NVivo quotations for each thematic code and case study	**144**
4.1	Comparison of the total revenues of EDF Thailand from 2012 to 2018	**155**
4.2	An analytical summary of beneficiary profiles with other details of development projects partnering with NMNCs	**158**
4.3	Details of the six types of students in need with different sub-dimensions of poverty	**184**
4.4	A summary of EDF Thailand's beneficiary numbers and development project types from FY 2013 to FY 2018	**187**
4.5	A summary of EDF Thailand's understandings of the theory of CSR on national newspapers	**193**
4.6	Summary of the analysis and summary report of the 15-school survey	**217**
4.7	Examples of selected quotations regarding *developmental capital* from EDF staff members during the interviews and focus group	**222**
5.1	A summary of the source of donations or incomes of FOPDEV from 1999 to 2000	**250**
5.2	Selected NVivo quotations regarding the capabilities approach from practices of FOPDEV, based on Sen's five categories of material basis of well-being indicator	**260**
7.1	Summary of the main contributions to the existing literature	**330**

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List of Figures

Figure		Page
3.1	Typology of NGOs working with/against the private sector	123
3.2	Contrasting orientations and attributes of MBOs and development NGOs	125
3.3	Locations of the two SDNGOs' development projects in Thailand	127
3.4	Coding table and thematic analysis process via NVivo application	139
3.5	Example of the coding process and development of the findings through the NVivo application	140
3.6	Example of the coding process and development of the findings through the NVivo application	141
3.7	Example of the coding process and development of the findings through the NVivo application	141
4.2	Map of Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, Thailand	161
4.3	News article from Mr. Akiko, one of the board members of EDF Thailand	170
4.4	News article from Mr. Akiko, one of the board members of EDF Thailand	170
4.5	EDF Thailand's scholarship profile application for its scholarship programme	172
4.6	A summary of the final screening process for the scholarship programme	174
4.7	Fundraising advertisement (in English) for EDF's scholarship programme for students with disabilities	176
4.8	Fundraising advertisement (in English) for EDF's scholarship programme	176
4.9	Building conditions of the 15-school survey in Bangyai, Nonthaburi Province	181
4.10	Analysis and summary report of the 15-school survey: Chalermprakieat 60 Pansa Queen Sirikit School	181
4.11	A map of Bangyai District in Nonthaburi Province	201
4.12	A map of nearby communities of the IKEA Bangyai branch	202

4.13	A map of nearby communities of the IKEA Bangyai branch	**203**
4.14	Analysis and summary report of the 15-school survey: Anuban Bangyai School	**214**
4.15	Analysis and summary report of 15-school survey: Chumchon Wat Ton Chueak School	**214**
4.16	Analysis and summary report of 15-school survey: Wat Thabanthoengdham School	**215**
4.17	An example of capacity and capability assessment at Wat Srirat School prior to a Social Day activity	**226**
4.18	Examples of capacity and capability assessment at the chosen schools prior to a Social Day activity	**226**
4.19	An example from IKEA's social initiatives document	**227**
4.20	Examples of capacity and capability assessment in terms of agriculture at five chosen schools for a Self-Reliance School activity	**228**
4.21	An example of the project timeline of the first-year development project between EDF and IKEA Thailand for Self-Reliance and Social Day activities	**233**
4.22	An example of a project timeline of the third-year development project between EDF and IKEA Thailand for Self-Reliance and Social Day activities	**234**
4.23	An example of project output and outcome of the first-year development project between EDF and IKEA Thailand for Self-Reliance and Social Day activities	**235**
4.24	An example of development project output and outcome evaluation reported by EDF	**238**
4.25	An example of development project output and outcome reported by EDF	**238**
4.26	An example of budget allocation for the first-year development project prepared and presented by EDF to IKEA Thailand	**239**
5.1	An example of FOPDEV's organisational development work throughout their history	**248**
5.2	The three pillars of Prudential's CSR approach	**253**
5.3	A sample picture of the 'End Poverty' campaign in Chiang Mai Province by FOPDEV	**256**

5.4	An example of a FOPDEV annual board meeting presentation about living with poverty	**257**
5.5	An example of a news clipping of the CSR event for Prudential–FOPDEV in Chiang Mai	**270**
5.6	A map of FOPDEV's development work in 2018	**273**
5.7	An example of the Logical Framework used by FOPDEV for the DRR development project	**284**
5.8	An example of the timeline for the DRR development project	**286**

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List of Abbreviations

ACE	AMCHAM's CSR Excellence
AMCHAM	American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand
ASEAN	Southeast Asian Nations
BOI	Board of Investment (Thailand)
BOP	Bottom of the pyramid
CBO	Community-based organisation
CCF	Community Children Foundation Under the Royal Patronage of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn
CCI	Corporate community involvement
CP	Corporate philanthropy
CR	Community relation
CSC	Cross-sector collaboration
CSI	Corporate social investment
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
CVC	Collaborative value creation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DMP	Data management plan
DNGO	Development non-governmental organisation
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EDF	Education for Development Foundation
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FOPDEV	Foundation for Older Persons' Development
FORDEC	Foundation for Rehabilitation and Development for Children and Family
GDP	Gross domestic product
HDI	Human Development Index
HHN Foundation	Human Help Network Foundation Thailand
ICP	International Comparison Program
IMF	International Monetary Fund
K.I.Asia	Kenan Institute Asia
LM	Logical Framework or LogFrame
MBO	Membership-based organisation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MNC	Multinational corporation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NMNC	North multinational corporation
NPA	New policy agenda
NPM	New public management
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCA	Prudential Corporation Asia
PPP	Public–private partnership
PPP	Purchasing power parity
PSC	Public service contractor
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

ROK-ASEAN	Republic of Korea Commemorative Summit, Association of Southeast Asian Nations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDNGO	Southern development non-governmental organisation
TICA	Thailand International Cooperation Agency
TNI	Transnational Institute
TSEO	Thai Social Enterprise Office
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UREC	University Research Ethics Committee
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Dedication

To all the intended beneficiaries and populations in need
who have been *chosen*, and those who *have not*.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction: How does it Matter?

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are considered important facets of civil society that further human development worldwide, playing a critical role in addressing complex global issues, such as poverty, inequality, conflict, and environmental degradation, in order to generate social change, deliver positive contributions, and/or improve quality of life for people in need around the world. To achieve their organisational contribution aims, there has been an increasing tendency for international and local NGOs across the Global North and South to affiliate themselves with other agencies, forming a partnership within the development sector itself and/or across the sectors together and ideally working collaboratively for the benefit of both parties (Brehm, 2004). To be more specific, in recent years, there has been a rising trend towards cross-sector collaborations or social partnerships between local development NGOs (DSNGOs) and multinational corporations (MNCs) around the world. This phenomenon is especially prevalent between MNCs from the Global North (Northern MNCS or NMNCs) and NGOs that are involved in the development of the Global South (Southern development NGOs or SDNGOs), and the significance of this cannot be overstated. The scholarly literature suggests that when NGOs collaborate with MNCs, the projects they develop often become integrated into the broader corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives of these MNCs, with this often being the principal method by which the corporation develops its business performance with the aim of addressing broader societal concerns (Fowler, 2000), attempting to provide a win–win situation wherein both NGOs and MNCs benefit.

The majority of the literature on this topic (as discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis) focuses on the effectiveness of the project, value co-creation from the partnership, and social relationship development or power equality between the two parties, forming an 'authentic partnership' of mutuality and reciprocity (Brehm, 2004). In following the 'language of partnership' that ensures and upholds a collaborative relationship (Fowler, 1998), organisations such as NGOs, MNCs, or other parties come to work together with their shared focus on the intended positive change, impact,

or project results. Although this is understandable and necessary, it appears to be the case that none of these actors can help or support the entire population in need at the same time (nor can any government in the world, for that matter). Instead, only a select few are chosen at a specific *time* and *place*, and not all of these individuals in need are chosen or helped at the same time. We are thus left to face the limitations of these partnerships for the development projects and how then to accurately conceptualise such relationships and their capacity to bring about broader social development on the ground. To this, scholars have argued that this process of NGOs implementing development projects in partnership with other actors such as MNCs becomes a framework of development as service delivery on the part of the NGO (Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015). Such a framework provides a potential avenue to investigate the nature of MNC–NGO partnerships in terms of the dynamics between the two parties and the real-world impact of their relationship. However, there has been very little focus on questioning or studying the work of NGOs through the framework of development as service delivery. More significantly, there has only been a limited scholarly attempt to study and unpack the perspectives of how the populations in need or the potential beneficiaries are chosen to be included in their development projects (see Krause, 2014; Beck, 2017).

In light of this, this thesis takes a close and critical look at the central focus of development itself—the beneficiaries, or the 'poor'—before they become a part of the development project (i.e., become identified as the 'chosen poor'). This is the conceptual starting point and a major focus of the research of this thesis, examining the process of how the poor are chosen, as this is a crucial central concern of development-oriented work. Despite the importance of this issue, very little attention has been paid to it in the literature of Development, NGO, and Social Partnership (Business) Studies. This represents a significant gap in the literature, and this is the area in which this thesis aims to contribute. By building a deeper and more thorough understanding of this issue, this study seeks to make academic and practical contributions to these disciplines.

This thesis, in its awareness of the limitations of the current literature across disciplines, thus developed its central core around the research question of 'who are the chosen poor?', taking this as the point of focus to which it conducted its research

on the partnerships between SDNGOs and NMNCs in their endeavours toward development in the Global South.

1.2. The Conceptual Starting Point and Main Focus of the Thesis

At its core, this research aims to focus on the ways in which SDNGOs select the beneficiaries of their development projects, looking into the criteria they draw upon, as well as the influence of NMNCs and other considerations, on who it is that is ultimately chosen. The decision-making process by which NGOs select their beneficiaries in the environment they are situated in is described in this study as following an *NGO-ism* ontology (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010), which sets the framing of the main focus of this study. Although NGOs are delineated by their issue of focus and their method of execution, they nonetheless are largely compromised in their need to select only certain beneficiaries out of the broader population of focus due to resource constraints such as limited funding and personnel, which pertains to their *field of practice* (Krause, 2014). By doing so, this thesis also contributes more comprehensive understandings of the process of selection of intended beneficiaries from the entirety of the 'populations in need' (Krause, 2014) by using the concept of *field of practice* as an epistemological application to reconceptualise the field of SDNGO–NMNC partnerships. This research therefore contributes to the empirical evidence and situates itself within the discussions in the main literature and key debates regarding the recent roles, processes, and practices of SDNGOs in terms of how they view and select their beneficiaries, as well as understanding NGOs' perspectives of beneficiaries.

This study aims to understand the challenges faced by SDNGOs under these partnerships in order to achieve their desired aims. Many development NGOs in the Global South rely on the support of non-governmental agents such as MNCs from the Global North, who typically have high levels of economic and human resources that can be used to assist NGOs in their operations, with the caveat being that the NMNCs have something to gain from this situation also, being seen to be addressing their CSR or with the project(s) aiding in the advertising and promotion of the corporation's brand, to give some examples. Scholars have argued that this places NGOs in the position

of service delivery (Savas, 1987; Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015) to compensate for the failures of the state and the market alone to address issues in civil society. This is particularly pertinent in the Global South, where social welfare is more limited and yet more needed. Organizations such as the United Nations are also influential in this area, with their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) providing a framework that guides the efforts of NGOs and MNCs alike (United Nations, 2015). The SDGs encourage partnerships between various sectors to address global challenges such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. These goals highlight the importance of collaborative efforts and resource-sharing, emphasizing that achieving sustainable development requires contributions from all sectors, including private corporations and civil society organizations. Consequently, the intersection of NGO operations, MNC involvement, and international frameworks like the SDGs shapes the landscape in which NGOs in the Global South navigate their resource constraints and strategic partnerships to deliver impactful services to their beneficiaries.

Drawing on this, this research challenges the idea that there is an 'authentic partnership' (Brehm, 2004; Kinsbergen et al., 2023) between NGOs and MNCs, that there is a mutuality and balance of power between the two parties. Instead, this thesis follows other scholars in the literature in making the argument that NGOs operate in providing service delivery to MNCs, wherein NGOs become 'contractors' of MNCs to serve functions adhering to the interests of and targets set by MNCs, moving them away from their grassroots orientation of addressing the social issues they were established to help solve (Bebbington, Hickey, and Mitlin, 2013; Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023). Recent critiques on how this relates to donor–recipient power relations between NGOs and MNCs also are relevant here, making the case that this service delivery relationship allows MNCs to impose agendas upon NGOs that are paternalistic and patronising (Theunis, 1992), establishing a 'donorship' as opposed to 'partnership' relationship (Ahmad, 2006), as well as causing NGO 'contractors' to behave more like their donors (Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023) in terms of meeting quantifiable targets instead of promoting long-term qualitative change (Jorgensen, Larsen, and Udsholt, 1993). This thesis aims to understand if this is the case in the relationships between the NMNCs and SDNGOs used as case studies in this research, drawing on the criticisms provided in the academic literature.

It is further important to note that the criteria for selecting beneficiaries are also something that can be influenced by the partnerships NGOs form with MNCs (Chege, 2023). These corporations may have their own interests and priorities, which can shape the focus and direction of the NGO's efforts, particularly as such NGOs are largely dependent on the resourcing provided by MNCs (Fowler, 1991; Fowler, 2000), and thus an agreement must be reached where both parties are able to meet their desired objectives in a satisfying way. Understanding these dynamics and practices is crucial, as it can reveal how external influences shape the operations and impact of NGOs. This interaction often results in a delicate balance, where NGOs must align their mission with the strategic goals of their corporate partners without compromising their core values and objectives. The influence of MNCs may steer NGOs towards projects that generate higher visibility or align with the corporations' marketing strategies, sometimes at the expense of addressing more important but less visible needs (Fowler, 2000; Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023). This dynamic emphasises the importance of governance, accountability, and power negotiation in these partnerships (Belal, Thomson, and Cordery, 2023; Kingston et. al, 2023), ensuring that the collaboration remains beneficial for both the NGOs and the communities they aim to serve as well as reflecting the maintained roles of NGOs in the changing development environments. By critically examining these relationships, the research conducted in this thesis aims to gain deeper insights into the complexities of aid distribution and the factors that drive decision-making processes, situating itself within the debates found in the field of global development.

Drawing on Krause's (2014) *field of practice* as an epistemological and interpretivist ontological application (Bryman, 2008; Littlejohn and Foss, 2009) to conduct organisational case studies in Thailand, in analysing SDNGO–NMNC partnerships in development projects, this thesis utilises Bourdieu's (1977; 1989; 1994; 1996) 'theory of practice' as a theoretical and methodological tool in order to explain the operations of SDNGOs within this relationship, taking an interpretivist approach to the research data. This includes the use of Bourdieu's (1977) terms *field*, the social world in which social agents interact; *habitus*, systems of functioning of these social agents based on their background; and *capital*, resources that determine a social actor's power within the social world. Specifically, this thesis offers theoretical contributions by providing an understanding of SDNGOs' organisational *habitus* and

developmental *capital* in the *field* of SDNGO–NMNC partnerships, drawing on the two development project case studies between EDF-IKEA Thailand and FOPDEV-Prudential Thailand situated in the Global South. This is done through exploring four provisional internal and external drivers, namely, conceptualisation of poverty; stakeholder theory; theory of project management; and willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries, which all have the capacity to inform and challenge SDNGOs' decision making to select 'the poor' or beneficiaries. Following this, the organisational *habitus* of SDNGOs is used as a means of understanding the various aspects of SDNGO decision making (Pickering-Saqqa, 2019) through their processes and practices of beneficiary selection for development projects in partnership with NMNCs. By doing so, this study also positions the findings of these four provisional drivers in the broader discussion on the roles, processes, and practices of SDNGOs in the field of partnership. By using Bourdieu's 'theory of practice' as an analytical tool, not only is this research able to unpack and investigate context-based roles, processes, and practices (Walther, 2014), but also by using Bourdieu's concepts of *field*, *habitus,* and *capital* (1977; 1989; 1994; 1996), this research is able to move forward the understandings of SDNGOs in the field of partnership and development studies from daily practices and engage more with theory, which this PhD thesis considers to be a significant contribution to the field of Development Studies, particularly within the context of Thailand.

The over-arching aim is to provide an answer to the question of who the 'chosen poor' are in the collaboration between SDNGOs and NMNCs, with organisational case study examples provided to illustrate this process of selection and the ways in which this support is implemented. More specifically, this thesis looks at how Southern development NGOs define, choose, and approach their intended beneficiaries in their development projects supported by MNCs from the Global North and what the implications they consider in this process are. This has broader impacts in terms of how widespread social issues such as poverty are addressed, given that the criteria and processes used to select beneficiaries can influence the governance, accountability, and justice of development interventions for both present and future development landscapes and constructs. These decisions can shape who and which communities receive aid, the type of support provided, and how sustainable the outcomes are. Understanding these dynamics is critical for ensuring that development

efforts genuinely reach and benefit those most in need, rather than reinforcing existing inequalities or excluding marginalized groups. By examining these processes, the thesis contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the role of SDNGOs and NMNCs in global development and the potential for establishing more equitable and accountable poverty alleviation strategies.

1.3. Central Research Questions and Research Objectives

This thesis specifically explores the process in which SDNGOs decide to define, choose, and interact with stakeholders around them, focusing on the process rather than the outcomes. The main study goal is to understand the decision making of Southern development non-governmental organisations (SDNGOs) on their beneficiary selection processes for development projects under cross-sector partnerships with Northern multinational corporations (NMNCs).

This study also aims to explore and develop deeper understandings and insightful perceptions of cross-sector or social partnerships between actors from corporate and third sectors. In doing so, there are two central research questions:

Firstly, how do Southern development NGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries for development projects supported by MNCs from the Global North?

Secondly, what implications do Southern development NGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs?

In order to work on the two central research questions, this study sets out six related research objectives, which are summarised in Table 1.1 on the next page:

Table 1.1. Central research questions and research objectives.

Central Research Questions	Research Objectives
1. How do Southern development NGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries for development projects supported by MNCs from the Global North?	1. To re-define and re-conceptualise concepts of partnership between SDNGOs and NMNCs from the academic literature and empirical data of two SDNGO case studies.
2. What implications do Southern development NGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs?	2. To examine the theoretical and empirical literature in order to understand the provisional drivers behind SDNGOs' beneficiary selection for development projects, using this as an exploratory framework to analyse the two case studies.
	3. To understand how conceptualisation of poverty informs or is used by SDNGOs' decision making to define, choose, or approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.
	4. To understand how stakeholder theory informs or is conducted by SDNGOs' decision making in order to define, choose, or approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.
	5. To understand how willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential

Central Research Questions	Research Objectives
	beneficiaries inform or are applied by SDNGOs' decision making in order to define, choose, or approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.
	6. To understand how theory of project management informs or is implemented by SDNGOs' decision making to define, choose, and approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.

1.4. Why Thailand? Justification of the Case Study Location

Why is geographic location important and why does country selection matter for development studies, especially in order to explore how SDNGOs choose the poor or potential beneficiaries under cross-sector partnerships with MNCs from the Global North? To be more precise, why, in this particular piece of research, was Thailand chosen as the country of focus? In order to answer these questions, a brief rationale as to why this research chose Thailand as its location for the fieldwork is provided here, discussing the justification, history, and context of NGOs and partnership for development projects in Thailand.

First of all, it needs to be clarified that Thailand was not only chosen as the 'physical or social space or boundary', but also as the case study of this research. When choosing a case study, the decision-making process typically requires much consideration. In an intrinsic case study, the object of focus is chosen on the basis of its own merits—it is chosen because it is distinctive and genuinely interesting to the researchers, not because it is representative of other cases (Stake, 1995). Case study research could be adopted to explore, explain, and understand a phenomenon or

event in daily contexts or practices (Yin, 2009, p. 83). Case study research engages a comprehensive and in-depth investigation of a particular time, social setting, situation, or establishment. A typical case study has a specific location as well as period of time or some type of phenomenon in a specific context (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, 2014, p. 28).

This research has its focus on the decision making of the development-oriented NGOs of the Global South in terms of their selection of beneficiaries for development projects under cross-sector partnership with multinational corporations (MNCs) from the Global North. As a Thai researcher myself, my position offers greater advantages as an 'inside person' (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009) who is able to access information and deeply comprehend the Thai context, as opposed to making these observations as an outsider who has limited understanding of the context.

Thailand was chosen as the site of the research for a variety of reasons. Firstly, international corporations have made significant investments in Thailand. Secondly, Thailand is one of the Global South's regional hubs for development projects and has a large number of NGOs. Thirdly, social partnerships between both actors from the Global North and the Global South exist in Thailand. Fourthly, despite numerous development initiatives, scholars of development studies have long ignored Thailand, and thus there is a gap in the research literature in this area.

Expanding on the first point, Thailand has massive investments from MNCs from around the world, especially from the Global North. Providing some history of foreign direct investment (FDI), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) found in 2014 that FDI into ASEAN countries had increased steadily since 2010. Over £216,000 million was invested in ASEAN countries between 2011 and 2013, with the largest investment (over £63,900 million) coming from Global North MNCs (from the USA and the EU).

According to one of the latest investment reports issued by ASEAN (2017), the EU is the largest investor group in ASEAN by value, accounting for more than 22% of all FDI flows in the region between 2000 and 2016. That number has more than doubled over the recent decades, reaching an all-time high of £28 billion in 2014.

Despite the recession in 2015, in 2016, the FDI increased by 46% to over £22 billion. The investment report notes that Thailand is one of the largest recipients of this value compared to other developing countries (such as Vietnam and Myanmar) (ASEAN, 2017).

In 2020, the Thailand Board of Investment (BOI) revealed that there were 490 foreign projects, with a total value of ฿161 billion or £3.6 billion, invested in Thailand (Thailand Board of Investment, 2020, p. 13). It is well understood that the COVID-19 pandemic during this time caused a slowdown in FDI into Thailand, as it did elsewhere. Nevertheless, it was raised again in 2021. Between January and December 2021, there were 783 foreign projects in Thailand, with a combined value of ฿455 billion, or £10 billion (Thailand Board of Investment, 2021, p. 14). Recently, in 2022, CEIC Data reported that Thailand's net foreign investment position reached $19 billion, or £16 billion, in September 2022 (CEIC, 2022). These figures demonstrate the massive inflow of foreign direct investment into Thailand, signifying the trend that the investments will continue to grow.

Second, Thailand's increase in foreign investment is accompanied (as has been the case in many other nations) by an unequal distribution of wealth. Thailand had "the highest income inequality rate in the East Asia and Pacific region", according to a Rural Income Diagnostic by the World Bank published in 2020. The average monthly income of rural households was roughly 68% that of urban households. Rural dwellers had to endure a lack of education, a high dependency rate, and challenging living conditions (World Bank, 2020). Since poverty is still the country's greatest challenge, NGOs are crucial in the fight against it.

There are over 70,000 NGOs across Thailand, with the country being among the top benefactors of NGOs in the Asia–Pacific region; however, only around 3,000 NGOs are legally registered with the Thai government (Kenan Institute Asia, 2013). In this research, the two selected SDNGOs are legally registered with the government as this is one of the legal requirements to contract with NMNCs (Kenan Institute Asia, 2013). According to a National Economic and Social Development Board and Johns Hopkins University report from 2010, in 2008, these local Thai NGOs contributed more than £1.376 billion in economic boost (0.8% of GDP) and generated more than

792,500 jobs in the development sector. This is the most up-to-date research on the economic contributions of Thai NGOs.

Additionally, these 70,000 Thai local NGOs were established to address various development issues, such as social welfare, public health, education, human rights, the environment, animals, and other organisations working in socially relevant fields. According to their organisational missions and objectives, these NGOs provide various segments of society a significant voice, allow people to express their opinions, collaborate with other sectors and stakeholders to address a variety of issues, and help the nation move forward. Therefore, these Thai NGOs are essential to Thailand's economy, social justice, and overall development.

Importantly, Thailand took on a decentralization agenda in the late 1990s to remove structural and economic barriers and subsequently pursue open market policies. As a result, the government approved and oversaw the National Decentralisation Act 1999, which reduced governmental dependence on local organisations (mostly NGOs). During the same period, the funding and resources provided by foreign organisations to Thai NGOs working to promote sustainability in Thailand have steadily decreased (Kenan Institute Asia, 2012). These elements have a direct impact on the viability of Thai NGOs' finances, creating sectoral limitations. According to Jones et al. (2004), this signalled a turning point for Thailand's third sector and paved the way for additional NGO business. It is also important to note that Thailand has long served as the hub of development projects in the region. This is evidenced by the presence of the UN office and its agencies located in Thailand,

Third, social partnerships and cross-sector collaborations between two actors from the Global North and the Global South exist in Thailand. Data on donations made to Thailand's development efforts indicate this. Data from the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) indicate that even though Thailand is now a donor country of official development assistance (ODA), it has continued to receive technical support from a number of other nations and international organisations that specialize in development work. A portion of ODA that Thailand receives is included in the existing technical cooperation agreement (TICA, 2022). Through the TICA, Thailand received ODA in the amount of £55 million in 2018. The largest donors were the USA (£23

million), the UN (£12 million), and France (£9 million). The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, and Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, as well as international NGOs and local Thai NGOs, received the most ODA (TICA, 2022).

In a similar vein, according to data from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Thailand received ODA totalling £2.4 billion in 2016, £575 million in 2017, and £4.1 billion in 2018. These were both direct contributions to organisations and through TICA. The OECD also states that the top 10 donors who donated to Thailand during 2017–2018 were Japan (£273 million), the USA (£39 million), Germany (£14.8 million), the Global Fund (£14.3 million), France (£14 million), the EU (£10 million), the UK (£8.8 million), the UNHCR (£5.6 million), South Korea (£3.9 million), and Australia (£2.9 million) (TICA, 2022).

As for the number of corporate donations in Thailand, these data have not been officially compiled. This is also the same case for CSR projects. Thailand has no law requiring the private sector to undertake CSR, and thus CSR initiatives in Thailand are entirely voluntary. It should be noted that while there are calls for the private sector to engage in CSR on the basis of responsibility, CSR in Thailand is currently typically conducted on the basis of charity, voluntary work, or business purposes (this is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis).

Fourth, despite being a country with a great deal of development projects, having a huge flow of donations into the country, and being significant from a geopolitical standpoint, Thailand has always been an area neglected by scholars in the field of Development Studies. As shown in the extensive literature on partnership, provided in Chapter 2, it appears that within the Global South, countries in Africa and a select part of Asia (especially India) have received the greatest amount of scholarly attention, while much of the huge, complex continent of Asia is still neglected. Existing partnership scholars and international organisations have called for research in the Asia–Pacific region—the world's most economically, politically, and culturally diverse region—focusing not on the entire continent but on particular areas in order to fill partnership research gaps under development studies regarding recent political,

economic, and development ties and changes (IMF, 2006, p. 75; Bendell, Collins, and Roper, 2010, p. 353). Moreover, it is important to mention that development studies in the Global South are mostly conducted by scholars from the Global North (Amarante et al., 2022; Cummings and Hoebink, 2012), influencing the ways in which such research is conducted in that it is based in outsider perspectives instead of those from researchers from the countries themselves.

In order to select a specific Global South country within the Asia–Pacific region as a case study where SDNGO–NMNC partnerships under service delivery for development projects have been established and yet where no scholar in the field of Development Studies has conducted previous research, this project chose Thailand as its country of focus, as it appears to be one of the most appropriate national contexts, and considering this, this thesis aims to contribute to the knowledge emerging alongside other studies from the region.

Thailand matters for the aforementioned reasons and more. The researcher is confident that using Thailand as the study site will fill the gaps in development studies. Since this PhD thesis does not claim that the study represents SDNGOs in general or in other contexts, it nonetheless reveals the complexity of development issues and make use of fruitful resources from SNGOs, NMNCs, and the development projects in Thailand, contributing knowledge to Development Studies at both regional and global levels.

1.5. Structure of the Thesis

This PhD thesis consists of seven chapters, including the introduction. Chapter 1 introduces the background of the thesis and briefly addresses the significance and justification of the research topic. Then, it discusses the conceptual starting point and main focus of the thesis. Accordingly, it further defines the central research questions and research objectives. Significantly, the justification of the case study location ('why Thailand?') is also discussed. The thesis structure is also presented in the chapter.

Locating itself within the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs under partnership, Chapter 2 explores the literature and unpacks debates of Southern development NGOs' decision making and their practices under the *field* of cross-sector partnerships with Northern MNCs. It begins with an effort to tackle and disrupt the academic notions of partnership that are present in the existing academic literature on development and NGO studies. Moving beyond the concept of 'authentic partnership', the next section of the chapter discusses the concept of 'development as service delivery', focusing on the relationship between NMNCs and SDNGOs on development projects. Significantly, the discussion develops a heuristic of four sets of criticisms within a framework of development as service delivery.

Following this, Chapter 2 discusses how NGOs conceptualise and select the poor or intended beneficiaries from among all 'populations in need' for the development projects with NMNCs. The (re)-conceptualisation of beneficiaries through the lens of NGOs is a crucial theoretical approach that offers fresh academic considerations and critical arguments to unpack the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990) of SDNGOs; thus, it is imperative to discuss it. Later, the chapter concludes by examining possible theoretical implications and considerations in practice that might impact SDNGO decision making regarding the choice of beneficiaries in partnership with NMNCs. There are four in total, as follows: (1) the conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries; (3) the stakeholder theory; and (4) the theory of project management. At the end, the chapter provides a summary of the academic gaps identified from the existing literature before discussing the original contributions this thesis will make.

Chapter 3 aims to outline the study's theoretical and methodological frameworks as well as the research parameters. It begins with a summary of the conceptual overview of this study, including the qualitative and interpretivist philosophical approach taken, the ontology of *NGO-ism*, the use of *field of practice* as an epistemological application, and the research's positionality and reflexivity. Next, it adapts Bourdieu's (1990) 'theory of practice' to explain the theoretical and methodological approaches. It then discusses the theory of practice in terms of

analytical tools, using the concepts of *field*, *habitus*, and *capital* to address the collected data.

Later in Chapter 3, the rationale for the deliberate choices made in the research design is laid out in order to examine the decisions and assumptions that underlie the research's theory and methodology. It covers the method used for gathering data, including organisational case study design, a sampling framework for choosing SDNGOs to be case studies, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. Following this, the chapter discusses data analysis, including coding, as well as thematic analysis with the NVivo application using *habitus* and *capital* as they relate to NGO decision making. Finally, this chapter offers ethical research considerations, implications, and challenges.

Chapters 4 and 5 develop the conceptual framework drawn up in Chapters 2 and 3 by applying it to the two selected organisational case studies. This part of the thesis presents analytical insights and findings of the two case studies, namely, EDF–IKEA Thailand and FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand, discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively. Each chapter begins with the organisational background of its case study before discussing the partnership and development project background. Next, each case study's conceptualisation of poverty and stakeholder theory are discussed. The chapters then proceed to talk about the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries, including the project management theory. Finally, the analysis findings and conclusion are presented at the end of each chapter.

The discussion of the research theories and findings is presented in Chapter 6. Following the introduction, the chapter presents discussions and conclusions of research objectives 1 and 2 which re-define and re-conceptualise concepts of partnership including provisional drivers on SDNGOs' decision making in a process of selecting a beneficiary for development projects. The chapter then moves on to the introduction of the conclusions of the research and a discussion pertaining to the research questions: (1) how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and (2) what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs. The chapter then moves to the findings and discussion with regard

to research objective 3: conceptualisations of poverty. Following this, the chapter presents the findings and discussion of research objective 4: stakeholder theory. Then, it presents the findings and discussion of research objective 5: willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries. Lastly, it presents the findings and discussion of research objective 6: the theory of project management. At the end, the discussion of the conclusions from the applications of Bourdieu's theoretical and analytical work are presented.

Finally, Chapter 7 provides a summarized picture and main contributions of what the thesis is about. It also provides a summary of the original contributions to both academics and practitioners of the thesis as well as future research suggestions.

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Chapter 2: Exploring and Unpacking the *Field*: Insights from the Literature of Decision Making and Partnership of NGOs

2.1. Introduction

Literature reviews within the social sciences are normally designed to determine the way in which the research project in question fits within the larger field of knowledge by summarising and synthesising relevant sources (Fink, 2013). Within this framework, literature reviews are anticipated to be a starting point from which a methodologically heuristic empirical study is conducted. Although they may have different sorts of typologies (for example, systematic, theoretical, historical, or methodological), literature reviews rarely attend to the ways in which they themselves are influential fields of knowledge (re)production (Tamboukou, 2017). As this thesis situates itself in the recent debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership under the changing development contexts, one of the methodological approaches adopted in this chapter is the systematic exploration and consideration of the available literature on the concepts of partnership under the field of NGO and Development Studies. This study, hence, adopts Bourdieu's concept of *field* to investigate this specific form of knowledge in which each field has its own unique *logic of practice* (Bourdieu, 1992).

In order to develop greater understandings and critical discussions, this chapter explores the literature and locates the central research questions in debates of Southern development NGOs' decision-making processes and their practices under cross-sector collaborations with Northern multinational corporations (NMNCs) in order to seek to understand how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs.

Importantly, there has recently been an increasing demand and thus necessary changes made to reform the roles, structure, and practices of the development system,

especially by challenging and altering current power dynamics (Kumi et al., 2023, p. 190), particularly within North–South collaborations (van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023). This shift has led to significant calls for development to be approached in new ways (Kumi et al., 2023, p. 190), particularly under the collaboration between NGOs and other actors who play significant roles in the process of development. Hence, the literature and discussions on SDNGOs' decision making discussed within this chapter and later in the findings and discussion chapters in this thesis are the main contributions and focus of the research, wherein it locates itself in the debates of the recent roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

The cohesive set of relevant discussions in the literature from the 1980s until the 2020s found within this chapter, reflecting the changing and challenging roles of NGOs under partnership, present the existing research gaps and key debates this study is focused on. Moreover, the subsections below further present and discuss the theoretical perspectives of a framework of development as service delivery, the conceptualisation of beneficiaries via the lens of SDNGOs, the four provisional internal and external drivers of SDNGO decision making, and Bourdieu's 'theory of practice', employed to analyse the empirical evidence from the two organisational case studies in Chapter 4 (EDF–IKEA) and Chapter 5 (FOPDEV–Prudential), accordingly. Key debates and core constructs are unpacked, which are considered significant to build deeper understandings of SDNGOs' decision making, particularly their beneficiary selection process in the context of cross-sector collaboration for the development projects with NMNCs, where no existing research is available.

In this Chapter, Section 2.2 firstly attempts to tackle and disrupt the academic concepts of partnership through the existing extensive academic literature on development and NGO studies since 1980s. Although global development agendas since the 1980s have attempted to conceptualise and theorise meanings, definitions, and settings of 'partnership' on the basis of the ideal concept of 'authentic partnership', this study, however, does not situate itself in the redundant theoretical and empirical debates of 'authentic partnership' but moves forward understandings by using an epistemology of *field of practice* to re-define and re-conceptualise the *field* of partnership in the area between SDNGOs and NMNCs. It draws upon a cohesive set

of literature to contribute deeper understandings via the discussions of the concept of partnership regarding debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs.

Secondly, it is found that little is known about the relationship between NGOs and MNCs in terms of development as 'service delivery' in the context of development practice. This reveals a significant gap within the academic debates in Development Studies examining NGO partnerships between institutions from different sectors and regions, particularly between the Global South and Global North. Hence, a framework of 'development as service delivery' is discussed in Section 2.3, which focuses on the relationship between SDNGOs and NMNCs for their development projects. Within the framework of development as service delivery, this section also draws up four sets of heuristic critiques that provide questions as well as challenge the recent roles of SDNGOs. These critiques also build working hypotheses of this research from the exploratory literature in order to question and investigate the relevant theories and approaches that might affect the decision-making process of SDNGOs' *habitus* on their selections of the potential beneficiaries. Positioning itself within the narrower debates of development as service delivery, this thesis contributes to this heuristic set of literature by providing deeper and fresher understandings of the roles of SDNGOs in partnership.

Following from this, Section 2.4 later focuses on the key debates of how NGOs conceptualise, define, and choose the 'poor' or intended beneficiaries from the entire 'populations in need' for development projects with NMNCs. It is necessary to discuss the (re)-conceptualisation of beneficiaries via the lens of NGOs as it is another key theoretical approach that provides academic notions and critical arguments to unpack SDNGOs' *habitus* on how they include (and also exclude) and choose the intended beneficiaries from the whole populations in need when working with NMNCs. The key literature of (re)-conceptualisation of beneficiaries not only provides fresh academic perspectives on the relationship between SDNGOs and their beneficiaries to the field of Development Studies but also allows this research to present and analyse empirical data from two organisational case studies, reflecting SDNGO decision-making practices on the ground, as academic contributions to the key debates of SDNGOs' processes and practices within the Global South.

Finally, Section 2.5 explores theoretical implications that might inform and challenge SDNGOs' decision making on their selections of the chosen beneficiaries under partnership with NMNCs. These include (1) the conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries[1]; (3) stakeholder theory; and (4) the theory of project management, for which the study of SDNGOs in terms of these implications is under-researched.

As explained earlier, the discussion of the key literature in Sections 2.2 to 2.5 not only showcases the existing literature gaps regarding SDNGO decision making during the beneficiary selection process but also situates this research within the debates on NGOs' roles, processes, and practices in the field of partnership from the 1980s until the 2020s, wherein the roles of NGOs have been consistently changing over time. Following this, a summary of the academic gaps discovered within the literature of development and NGO studies in this chapter; cohesive sets of the main contributions; key debates in the field; and theoretical perspectives, including original contributions to knowledge that this thesis has the possibility to impart, are provided in the last section of this chapter.

2.2. Tackling Concepts of Partnership: The Global Development Agenda and 'Authentic Partnership' of NGOs

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been considered central drivers of development since the late 1980s (Lewis, 2014, p. 9). A variety of definitions of civil society and NGOs are currently in use that are widely debated and have a long history (Bendell, 2000, p. 17). Lewis and Kanji (2009, p. 121) explain that civil society usually means a space or realm where there exists a form of organisational actors who are not a part of a household, market, or state. These organisations may include citizens' groups; people's movements; associations; women's organisations; and, significantly, NGOs. Similarly, Bendell (2000, p. 17) claims that state-centred explanations of civil society have robust historical paths—even Karl Marx offers definitions of the third sector and the state, which were taken up with new enthusiasm by political activists in

[1] This study also applies Bourdieu's concept of *capital* to analyse this driver—a full discussion is provided in Chapter 3.

Western countries who understood civil society as markets and networks that exist outside the authoritarian state (Walzer, 1995). Given the three-sector model perspectives in the twentieth century, clearer explanations that draw on the work of Gramsci (1992) to differentiate the roles of the state, corporate sector, and civil society have provided vibrant understandings. In these definitions, the governments represent the state, businesses represent the market, and NGOs represent civil society. Each of these has different primary roles and objectives. Whilst the government's primary role is to govern the country through the political structure, and businesses' primary role is to secure monetary profit for their owners through the economic system, NGOs' principal concerns focus on social networks and systems that are based on beliefs and values, giving them the 'power of civil society' to voice community traditions, the public's values, and societal benefits (Bendell, 2000, p. 17).

Since the 1990s until recently, the literature on NGOs as actors in development has been extensively increasing. The literature acknowledges power and growth, as well as the consequently necessary accountability of the sector (Hulme and Edwards, 2013), including its challenges and failure (Dolšak and Prakash, 2022) and, significantly, its roles and practices under partnership (van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023). As discussed above, scholars and practitioners have been attempting to clarify the definitional complexities of NGOs with identities, roles, and terminologies (Najam, 1996b; Hulme and Edwards, 2013; Waerder et al., 2021). On the basis of a rigorous search, Najam's (1996b, p. 206) study shows that NGOs are referred to in at least 47 other ways by scholars and practitioners in other countries and contexts. However, although NGOs might be called by different names, their roles, objectives, and activities remain the same, driven by a desire for social values and (developmental) changes of some kind (Lewis, 2007) in terms of driving civil society.

Therefore, this study chose to make use of the definition and approach that NGOs belong to the 'civil society' together with charities, non-profit organisations, foundations, civil society organisations (CSOs), and community-based organisations (CBOs). However, it is undeniable that, still, civil society has problematic identifications due to the sector's diversities (Heyse, 2016). This thesis, hence, recognises NGOs as *processes* rather than *objects* (Hilhorst, 2003, p. 5), which brings the attention of this

study to a focus on what SDNGOs address and interact with in terms of the conditions and environment around them. However, this research is mindful that organisational studies in the field of NGO and Development Studies might have a wide range of different definitions of how organisations interact, coincide, dominate, divide, or facilitate. Instead of questioning what an NGO is, the proper question then is how these processes (which the author refers to as *NGO-ing*) are enacted (Hilhorst, 2003):

> We must follow how NGO actors define the situation, choose their goals and find room for manoeuvre to realise projects. We must try to make sense of people's motivations, ideas and activities by taking into account their past and present surroundings, social networks and histories. And we must observe the way they deal with NGO-ing, because this conveys practical knowledge, implicit interpretations and power processes taking place in these organisations. (Hilhorst, 2003, p 6)

Following Hilhorst (2003), Fowler and Biekart (2013, p. 466) argue that NGOs are not only processes but could also be assumptions, expectations, and performance values of 'public benefits' (this research later refers to one of these public benefits as 'beneficiaries'). The scholars term this ontological concept as an *NGO-ism*[2], involving the challenge of incorporating NGOs (and also SDNGOs) into the development process and into relationship with donors or partners, especially corporate actors such as NMNCs, which this thesis focuses upon.

Since the 1990s, global transformations have challenged the strategies and capacities of NGOs in both the Global North and Global South. The swift process of globalisation as well as the rise and spread of the market have led to development reform across the Global South, especially in developing countries. Banks, Hulme, and Edwards (2015, p. 707) suggest that this phenomenon has increased the influence of non-state actors in terms of their involvement in the development industry, including big philanthrocapitalists and institutional donors, significantly those from the private sector such as MNCs (Herzer and Nunnenkamp, 2013). This development reform and phenomenon could be explained as a *variety of development* (Edwards

[2] NGO-ism ontology and its linkage to this research are provided and discussed in Chapter 3: Theory and Methodology.

and Hulme, 1996, p. xiii–xiv) that has moved practices in development from the 1960s until the current time.

Scholars propose that 'development' originally was a notion connected to post-war decolonisation and bipolarity (ibid., p. xiii–xiv). In the 1960s, 'development' was promoted in the 'third world', often being related to 'state socialism'; however, this was superseded by neoliberalism and the Washington Consensus (originally from the USA). Even though there was a later critique that this decline seemed to be due to fragile states (Brock et al., 2012), the ideology of 'developmentalism' (Kyung-Sup, Fine, and Weiss, 2012) has reached the Global South (UNECA, 2011). However, Sumner and Mallet (2012) suggest that 'development' in the recent period is significantly different from earlier eras. They explained how the global middle class is growing in the South, as well as income inequality, and that the poor have now become concentrated in the emerging middle-income countries. Therefore, the ideology of the third world has recently begun to be ignored, and the 'aid processes' from the Global North to the Global South have changed.

There is an extensive and still-growing amount of literature suggesting that aid and development processes are now about (but are not limited to) cooperation, participation, collaboration, and partnership (for instance, see Brehm, 2004; Baaz, 2005; Beck, 2017) as the Global South is increasingly attracted to foreign direct investment (FDI), private capital, and philanthropy (Shaxson, 2012).

Given the global development agenda focusing on the new tendency towards development, it is evident that the global development agenda has significantly shifted over the past three decades. This has been placing and promoting diverse emphases on the relative roles of the civil society, states, and the market, due to the principles shaping the development agenda at each particular time (Hulme, 2013). The United Nations (UN), one of the most significant global development influencers, has legitimately established 'participatory development' in its global development agenda. In 2000, the UN proposed the purposive partnership agenda in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were the eight international development goals for the year 2015. Goal number eight aimed to "develop a global partnership for

development" (The United Nations, 2000), in which the sub objective 'target 8F' stated clearly the engagement with the private sector that

> In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications (The United Nations, 2000).

However, due to the critiques on 'elusiveness' and other limitations of the MDGs (for example, see Wilkinson and Hulme (2012)), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, were launched in mid-2015 in order to replace MDGs. The SDGs present a campaign of '*Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*' or, in short, the '2030 Agenda'. The SDGs, which were developed from the MDGs, provide a collection of 17 broad global goals with aims to achieve 169 sub-targets covering a large range of economic and social development issues including climate change; education; energy; gender equality; health; hunger; sanitation; social justice; urbanization; water; and, unquestionably, poverty (The United Nations, 2015). Significantly, Goal 17, the last goal, clearly discusses the 'Partnerships for the Goals': "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" (The United Nations, 2015). The explanation and the sub-targets of this goal clearly state that this goal aims "to enhance North-South… cooperation and promoting international trade… including:

> Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (ibid.).

It can be seen that NGOs have become important developmental actors for partnerships between different sectors, encouraged by the global development agendas. In addition, an extensive amount of the Development Studies literature tends to agree that one of the core tendencies of increasing partnership with NGOs is that NGOs have become the 'sweethearts' of development. This is because NGOs are favourably perceived by other actors for their abilities and resources to engage directly with beneficiaries in their roles and identities in order to work closely with 'the poor'. (Lewis, 2005; Murray and Overton, 2011; and also, for example, see Barr, Fafchamps, and Owens, 2005; O'Hearn, 2007; Krause, 2014; Chege, 2023).

Before proceeding to examine the core literature of SDNGOs working with MNCs from the Global North, it is important to understand the ideologies and theories beyond the ideal definitions and meanings of 'partnership' under Development Studies and the international development context. However, in order to re-conceptualise the knowledge of the *field* of partnership that exists within the literature of Development Studies, this study adopts the concept of *field of practice*[3] (Krause, 2014) as an epistemological approach as a starting point in order to critically explore and examine the literature on the *field* of partnerships between SDNGO NMNCs. By using this epistemological approach, the neo-institutional analysis of fields directs the attention to a meso level of analysis, between interactions and large-scale structures of partnerships. Centring on a specific *field of practice* offers insights about single actors and models of relationships in order to see how SDNGOs interact with NMNCs, with which a *field of practice* usually provides a realm in which actors take each other into account (Powell and DiMaggio, 2012). Krause (2014, p. 22) explains that the *field of practice* mediates values, ideas, and problems on the ground, and, at the same time, on the other hand, also includes outside interests[4].

By using this epistemological application to explore the literature of partnership, it is discovered that the vast literature of partnership is characterised by idealised understandings and definitions of partnership which might be opposite to the practical partnership issues in reality. However, the majority of the literature is constructed on anecdotal evidence and is based on some case studies of the experiences of the individual organisations from different contexts and times. For example, the 'language of partnership', which presents an idea of equal partnership, has encompassed almost the entire range of development institutions from the UN, to the World Bank, to NGOs[5]. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, for instance, describes its partnership policies, which tend to provide equal relationship with the aid recipients, in the following way:

[3] The epistemological application of field of practice for this study is discussed in Chapter 3: Theory and Methodology.

[4] Krause enhances this epistemology by drawing from Bourdieu's *field* and *doxa* of his 'theory of practice'. Full details of the theoretical and methodological approaches are provided and discussed in Chapter 3.

[5] However, not all organisations have set up their partnership policies (Baaz, 2005, p. 3).

> In a partnership, development co-operation does not try to do things for developing countries and their people, but with them. It must be seen as a collaborative effort to help them increase their capacities to do things for themselves. Paternalistic approaches have no place in this framework. In a true partnership, local actors should progressively take the lead, while external partners back their efforts to assume greater responsibility for their own development (OECD, 1996, p. 13).

The debate of partnership definitions has been going on since the 1990s for both scholars and practitioners. Fowler (1991, p. 5) argues that the term 'partnership' is overused and ill-defined, meaning that the terminology is at risk of losing its serviceable meaning. Moreover, there has been an increasing debate the topic of the conditions and circumstances that make partnership a 'realistic solution' to poor aid/development performance (Fowler, 1991; Maxwell and Ridell, 1998; Lewis, 1998; Lister, 1999; Fowler, 2000, p. 3). Besides this debate, the extensive literature on business–NGO partnerships shows that the conceptualisation of partnership was derived extensively on an ideal notion, seen to be a 'formal relationship' between two or more agencies that is based on shared or mutual objectives, values, and resources, and that includes risks and obligations.

Noticeably, the majority of this set of literature is constructed on theories and practices grounded from business schools of thought (see key studies such as Crane, 1998; Austin, 2000; Elkington and Fennell, 2000; Murphy and Coleman, 2000; Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004; Scott and Seglow, 2007; Seitanidi and Ryan, 2007; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012; O'Connor and Shumate, 2014; Rufin and Rivera-Santos, 2014; Kark et al., 2015; Esposito and Antonucci, 2022). However, in the international development context, partnership definitions draw on two key themes. Firstly, they focus on the exchange of resources (both tangible and intangible) between parties (Hudock, 1999). Such a functional partnership understanding is linked to the way in which agencies share and use resources within the wider atmosphere of the organisations (Brehm, 2004):

> Partnerships are strategic alliances that involve a sharing of resources and responsibility to achieve a common objective (Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1998, p. 2).

Secondly, the partnership notion has a linkage to 'trust-based' meanings, of which these descriptions and conceptualisations are offered on the basis of a more idealistic notion of 'authentic partnership' (Brehm, 2004):

> Authentic partnership implies… a joint commitment to long-term interaction, shared responsibility for achievement, reciprocal obligation, equality, mutuality and balance of power (Fowler, 2000).

Brehm (2004, p. 18) further denotes, with a particular focus on the development interventions context, that partnerships based on the trust-based concept between NGOs have been considered an essential component of processes of the 'participatory development' in the notion of *accompaniment*. It is connected to the ideology of being *with* partner(s), grounded in the experiences and practices of grassroots movements such as those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

It is found that in the international development context, research suggests that there are three different forms of partnership for development and aid interventions: firstly, grassroots organisations (and members of the communities); secondly, local partners; and thirdly, the international institutions for development, such as NGOs or official donors from the Global North (Hoyer, 1994). However, Brehm (2004) extends this further by observing the nature of partnerships. The author concentrated on the 'equation' links between the local grassroots organisations and their local (Southern) partners and NGOs in the Global North and their own domestic constituency. Brehm (2004, p. 19) also denotes that the partnership between Southern and Northern NGOs act as a channel between two separate constituencies.

However, the four-way relationship argument suggested by scholars is unhelpful for this particular study as the definitions and argumentations significantly exclude the institutional actors from other sectors including the government (for example, public–private partnership, PPP) and private sectors (social partnership/cross-sector collaborations, CSC). In fact, these institutional actors play important roles in development nowadays. This is another critical academic gap of partnership in the field of Development Studies.

Furthermore, the majority of the literature on the history of development situates itself in the need to create a more equal partnership (Kinsbergen et al., 2023). These scholarly points of focus are based on the theoretical notions of 'authentic partnership' which construct concepts such as 'ownership', 'empowerment', and 'participation' and put forward contributions such as 'putting the last first (or later)', 'putting the first last (for example, see Chambers, 1997), and 'development aid on the terms of the receiver' (Baaz, 2005). Arguably, Baaz (2005) strongly proposes that the creation of an equal relationship that is non-paternalistic (a notion of paternalism will be discussed later this section) has been proven difficult in practice. As Crewe and Harrison (1998, p. 188) contend,

> a yawning chasm remains between the stated goals of development and its practices and outcomes. Ambitious aims of partnership… often appear disappointing empty (ibid., p. 188).

Whilst the extensive literature focuses on analysing and theorising the partnership issues, Baaz (2005) indicates that the concepts of participation and partnership function as 'political slogans' in order to hide other objectives. The author explains that this perspective constructs 'implicit and explicit' assumptions about purposes (ibid.). It is usually conceptualised and presented as 'empty rhetoric', as a 'strategy' functioning to hide other motives such as lowering the development costs or improving accountability in order to legitimate the organisation's challenges toward increasing criticism (Baaz, 2005). In his study, Baaz (2005) concludes that donors never have the intention of creating an equal partnership, whilst another set of scholars also agreed and viewed partnership as a relationship between 'landlord and tenant' (Scott, 1997; Crewe and Harrison, 1998). They argue that the centre of the 'donor–recipient' relationship is an exchange of compliance and deference by the 'client' in return for the provision of the patronage of minimal social rights in which the exchange is at times characteristically unequal and coercive (Scott, 1997, p. 34; Crewe and Harrison, 1998).

As discussed above from the literature focusing on the debate of the definitions and meanings of partnership under the international development context, the term 'partnership' is one that is not clearly defined (at least not in the broad context of

development), and, as such, it must be provided "meaning within a specific context" (Pickard, 2007, p. 576). Even though the term 'partnership' includes a notion of solidarity, it is "constructed in order to mean equal power among participants, with possibly responsibilities" (ibid.). In general, on the basis of the ideology of 'authentic partnership', it is assumed that partnerships between institutions from the Global North and South and within or outside the sectors should enable more effective and efficient use of shared resources in order to achieve sustainability (Lister, 1999, p. 3; Hulme and Edwards, 2013; van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023; Khan, 2023; Kinsbergen et al., 2023), as well as to create values and benefits to participants in achieving the mutual goals (Zook, Temple, and Malisa, 2023, p. 139). In contrast to the concept of 'authentic partnership', in reality, the variety of forms of partnership is broad, and not all concepts necessarily encompass equality, ranging from partner, donor–recipient, and client–subcontractor relations (Schöneberg, 2016, p. 73; also see Henriques, Velarde, and Pesqueira, 2021; Stühlinger and Hersberger-Langloh, 2021).

The significant weakness of the literature of partnership, particularly in Development Studies, as discussed above, seems to be the incapability of moving beyond identifying and measuring forms of relationships because it views the relationships on the basis of the ideal concepts of 'authentic partnership' which rarely exist on the ground. Lewis (1999) also provides the critique that the literature based on 'authentic partnership' is usually considered passively as a means of entering access to resources, and, instead, it needs to be viewed as a 'dynamic process'. By doing so, this study denotes that powers of donors/between partners do exist and, hence, chooses to view 'development' as "neither an ideal nor a catastrophe" but rather an object of study (de Sardan, 2005, p. 25). In alignment with the research questions, this study moves beyond the ubiquitous debates and critiques in the existing extensive literature which are based on the perspective of 'authentic' or 'ideal' partnership in an attempt to further explore the diverse interactions, practices, and experiences on the ground that take place between SDNGOs and Northern institutions from the private sector, namely, NMNCs.

2.3. NMNC–SDNGO Partnership and Development as Service Delivery

With a focus on the *field* of partnership between institutions from the Global North and Global South in the context of international development, there are two sets of scholars who distinguish the types of partnerships by looking at the power relations and organisational perspectives. With a perspective of power relations, Hoyer (1994) first draws the distinction between the mutual-trust-based partnership and the donor–recipient relationship, suggesting that, as a result, the latter relationship often leads to partnership 'paternalism'. Drawing on Hoyer's points of view, Fowler (1991; 1997) describes the 'paternalism' of partnership between North–South partners as the interaction between parent and child, emerging from resource dependence and funding processes and resulting in imbalanced relationships. On the basis of equality (and also inequality) and organisational breadth, Fowler (2000) then developed a partnership typology that recognises the broad spectrum of North–South NGO relationships. He suggests five categories, namely, (1) partner, (2) institutional supporter, (3) programme supporter, (4) project funder, and (5) development ally. However, 'development ally' at the end of the spectrum does not involve financial transaction but is found in coalitions, networks, and alliances. Brehm (2004, p. 20) defines 'development ally' as the lowest level of collaboration.

The second piece of the literature drawn up from the organisational standpoint suggests six models of partnerships based on the degree of shared governance (Brehm, 2004). It includes (1) mutual governance; (2) collaborative operations; (3) visionary patronage; (4) spin-off NGOs; (5) dependent franchising; and, most significantly for a new shift of funding processes to Southern NGOs nowadays, (6) contracting for payment, for which the Southern NGOs provide a 'well-defined package' determined by the Northern NGO (Brehm, 2004).

There are two significant components of the extensive partnership literature from which contracting NGOs in the South for development projects has become a popular funding process for Northern institutional donors, including NGOs, governments, and private donors. These two problematic components were analysed

and suggested on the basis of the 'New Policy Agenda' (NPA) that was challenged and constructed in the aftermath of the Cold War and as a result afforded Southern NGOs a considered alternative.

Firstly, one component of the literature against this new funding method referred to the inefficiencies, counter-productiveness, and corrupt structures of aid and development delivery of the governments in the South that were unable to address problems of poverty (see Moore, 1994). Therefore, NGOs and the private sector were viewed as a better way of addressing efficient means for delivering services for development and economic expansion (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Robinson, 1998; Riley, 1999). However, in order to approach the poorest members of society, there is a critique that the private sector is unable to achieve this challenge as the poorest individuals are unable to be reached through the market, whilst NGOs have a longer history of experience providing welfare as well as development services to the poor (Fowler, 1991; Meyer, 1992; Fowler, 1997; Fowler, 2000; and also see Fowler, 2008; Hulme and Edwards, 2013; also see Dolšak and Prakash, 2022; van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023). Although Prahalad (2005) later proposed the 'Bottom of the Pyramid' (BOP) theory, presenting the concept of MNCs contributing to the alleviation of poverty across the world by implementing non-traditional strategies of corporate and market engagement in order to help the lowest segment of the global income pyramid, Edwards (2008, p. 26) argues that no development issues will ever be resolved by the market alone as there is no real money to be made from them (Edwards, 2008, p. 26).

Secondly, another component of the literature is the concept of 'good governance', democratisation in particular, which Northern institutional donors believe to be significant for the development of the economy and may potentially address the corruption that has disturbed the economic development in the South (Dibley, 2014). Southern NGOs were acknowledged as an important element of forming as well as retaining the governance structures of democracy (Fowler, 1991; Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Harriss-White and White, 1996; Fowler, 1997; Fowler, 2000; Hulme and Edwards, 2013; Banks, Hulme, and Edwards, 2015). Through these two components, therefore, Southern NGOs (at least at the time of writing) were considered valuable for being driven by social values, specialised, and skilled in terms of addressing these

problematic issues, which neither private nor public sectors were able to offer (Dibley, 2014, p. 60).

On the basis of the 'authentic partnership' perspective, scholars tend to suggest that the 'language of partnership' of contracting between Global North–South actors would be participatory, collaborative, and equal (for example, see Fowler, 1991; Fowler, 1997; Fowler, 2000; Crawford, 2003; Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Kinsbergen et al., 2023; Zook, Temple and Malisa, 2023)—that this contractual relationship for development projects would reflect a donor–patron 'contract' paradigm. This paradigm frames pre-defined and regulated tasks in the ways in which they are required to be achieved and delivered by the required timelines (Dibley, 2014, p. 60), generally as one of a 'fee-for-service' agreement (Fowler, 1991; Fowler, 1997; Fowler, 2000). Arguably, the consideration and application of a fee-for-service arrangement are that the partnership shall work only for the period of time under the contracting, and there might be no funding or budget available for the organisation's operation expenditures (Sobhan, 1997). These contract-based development projects have been critiqued in that the short-term-funding framework of the projects weakens the accountability as well as legitimacy of Southern NGOs and, most importantly, that development projects under such partnerships are unable to create sustainable changes (Dibley, 2014, p. 60; Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023). Even though these problems under a contract paradigm between Northern and Southern NGOs persist, this option of relationship remains widespread and has become a popular approach of engagement, not only within the sector but also across other sectors.

Turning to a discussion on the concise history of the first fee-for-service arrangement across sectors, this model of relationship was first established in the 1970s under public–private partnerships (PPP), in which the state contracts with private sector and/or NGOs to provide needed public services (Smith, 2009) in the form of 'service delivery' (Savas, 1987, p. 251). As part of the new public management (NPM), governments were pushed to reduce costs and be more flexible and responsive in the administration, implementation, and provision of services to the poor (Meyer, 1992; Colclough and Manor, 1993; Smith, 2009). With their volunteer participation, community connections, and greater programme flexibility, NGOs have become attractive to governments in this political environment, appearing to offer a

strategy for governments to achieve multiple NPM goals (Smith, 2009). In addition, there was a belief that NGOs could compensate for 'failures of government', specifically the provision of public services (Roth, 1987). This perception was derived from neoliberal critiques of the democratic consensus of the welfare states from the Global North, which as a result exerted a heavy influence on development ideology, such as in the USA (see Bernstein, 1991). There was also such a trend taking place in the UK. Scholars defined this phenomenon as a 'contract culture', in which charities compete in the 'third-sector market' as they are competing to win contracts from the government (Hawley, 1992); later, this was referred to as the 'development marketplace' by Banks, Hulme, and Edwards (2015, p. 709). Alongside the NGOs' growth of service delivery, however, critiques have questioned the roles of NGOs as service delivery providers to PPP. Korten (1990) coined the term 'public service contractors' (PSCs) to define those NGOs which provide development as service delivery to the governments and function as market-oriented non-profit organisations to serve public purposes. He argues that such organisations sell their services to the governments and aid institutional donors to implement development projects (ibid.). Drawing on Korten's work, Robinson (1997) later distinguishes PSCs from voluntary organisations in the ways in which they are driven more by values of market considerations rather than social and public values; therefore, they have more in common with for-profit organisations. These market-driven PSCs usually begin with an assessment of potential funding or grant sources and define their projects on this basis (ibid., p. 59). In contrast, those NGOs could also be viewed as 'value-driven NGOs', defining their programme on the basis of their social and public missions and then seeking funding to implement and achieve their missions (Brown and Korten, 1991, p. 62).

Although the debate of these scholars tends to reflect the line of distinguishing between 'social-value-driven' NGOs and 'market-driven' PSCs, in fact it is difficult to make a clear-cut distinction between them since many PSCs also share strong commitments to social goals and NGOs heavily depend on governments for funding (Robinson, 1997). Most importantly, as a result, the intended beneficiaries as (the poor) *citizens* defined by governments receive the services as contracted. Hulme and Edwards (1996) were the first set of scholars who addressed their concerns about the roles of NGOs working with institutional donors from the public and third sectors for

service delivery. However, their study was critiqued as “a generalized and ill-informed attack on NGOs” (Green, 2012) because it was based on ideological grounds rather than evidence. This critique reflects the theoretical perspective that Hulme and Edwards used in 1996 was also based on the idea of 'authentic partnership' in that it did not investigate the real practice on the ground. However, Hulme and Edwards, later with Banks (2015), re-visited the issues and found more evidence on the ground regarding development as service delivery.

According to the evidence of the development *field* in the Global South, scholars (such as Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015) suggest the implications of technocracy and transformation, which include grassroots orientation and innovation of NGOs to propose the arguments of distinguishing between development NGOs and membership-based organisations (MBOs). These drivers lead to challenging the roles of NGOs working with governments and institutional donors from the development industry as a bridge to the future of development. Although the scholars re-visited NGOs’ service delivery issues to bridge the gaps by answering the questions that were unanswerable after the first article published in 1996, they made no attempt to conclude a missing component of a framework of NGOs’ service delivery and roles of NGOs under this framework with actors from the private sector. This provides a massive critical gap of academics to Development Studies in terms of a framework of service delivery for development projects to measure NGO partnerships under an international context between institutions from the Global South and Global North.

Moving now to considering the partnership between NGOs (also including Southern NGOs) and another actor from the private sector, MNCs, for development projects, the partnership tendency has also shifted from between NGOs and governments under PPP to NGOs and MNCs for partnerships, especially in the Global South in the 2000s[6] (see Heap, 2000). The scholars in the field of Development Studies suggest a shift that began in the 1970s, starting with the idea of ‘the myth of state’, believing that states could provide all needs to all citizens (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Edwards and Hulme, 2013, p. 276–277). Later, in the 1980s, ‘the myth of the

[6] The concept of business–NGO partnership has become popular, especially in the Global North, since the late 1990s (Seitanidi, 2010).

market' arrived, arguing that the private sector could provide consumption needs to 'consumers' (ibid.). Then, in the late 1980s, 'the myth of the market plus civil society' emerged as the scholars claimed civil society was weak and the market was poorly regulated and non-competitive. The tendency towards 'market plus civil society will yield development' (ibid.) therefore finally arrived in the form of cross-sectoral partnership.

Scholars and practitioners have witnessed that partnerships between MNCs and NGOs for development projects have continuously increased because of the economic expansion of globalisation from the North to the South under various types of interactions through both philanthropic and transactional relationships (Gray, 1989; Austin, 2000; Googins and Rochlin, 2000; Bennett, 2002; Seitanidi and Ryan, 2007; Perez-Aleman and Sandilands, 2008; Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Lalzai, 2020; Osegowitsch, Trenholm, and McCabe, 2022). These NMNCs have also been persistently trying to become involved with social, environmental, and other development issues in the Global South where they operate or have investments (Bennett, 2002; Perez-Aleman and Sandilands, 2008; Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Lalzai, 2020; Osegowitsch, Trenholm, and McCabe, 2022).

Over three decades, the extensive literature of Business and Development Studies still strongly debates and critiques the real motivations or objectives of corporations or NMNCs in being involved with development issues and partnership with NGOs (for example, see Edwards, 2011). Scholars suggest that it could be due to forced changes (Dienhart and Ludescher, 2010) arising from increasing pressure and demand for more social and environmental responsibility from confrontational NGO protests, shareholder activism, consumer boycotts (Bendell, 2000, p. 32; Campbell, 2007), and social audit (Henriques, 2001). It also could be due to the voluntary willingness of corporations to pursue corporate philanthropy (CP), corporate social investment (CSI), community relations (CR), corporate community involvement (CCI), corporate citizenship programmes (Carroll, 1991; Seitanidi and Ryan, 2007), or corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Bennett, 2002; Seitanidi and Ryan, 2007; Perez-Aleman and Sandilands, 2008; Seitanidi, 2010; Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Lalzai, 2020; Ann, 2023), with the latter being the most well-known. Both forced

and voluntary changes are implemented by NMNCs with or without the involvement of corporate self-interest in the financial returns that might result (Sasse and Trahan, 2007). The study suggests that all relevant CSR theories (also under a NMNC–SDNGO partnership context) could be categorised into four groups: political, integrative, instrumental, and value theories (Garriga and Melé, 2004). Each of these theories points to an incisive method to observe the business roles in societal spectrums, in turn including (1) using corporate power in a responsible manner; (2) meeting objectives to create long-term profits and sustainable development; (3) satisfying social demands; and (4) conducting what is ethically right by contributing to a good community (Seitanidi, 2010). With regard to this CSR framework, extensive literature from Business Studies found that CSR contributes to increased collaboration between MNCs and NGOs, acting as the principal mechanism by which companies aim to develop their business performances by dedicating their corporate resources to address social challenges or issues (Heap, 1998; Fowler, 2000; Googins and Rochlin, 2000; Hemphill and Vonortas, 2003; Seitanidi, 2010; Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Lalzai, 2020; Osegowitsch, Trenholm, and McCabe, 2022; Ann, 2023).

These interactions of partnerships between MNCs and NGOs may include corporate philanthropy, corporate foundations, sponsorships, transaction-based promotions, licensing agreements, joint issue promotions, and joint ventures (Wymer and Samu, 2008). Supporting these claims, Austin and Seitanidi (2012a; 2012b) developed the Collaborative Value Creation (CVC) framework in order to propose the win–win values of business–NGO partnerships by using organisational case studies.

Evidently, due to the rigorous exploratory literature on partnerships under an international context and in the discipline of Development Studies discussed earlier in this section, it is argued that the CVC approach is framed on the ideal concept of ‘authentic partnership’ which rarely exists on the ground. It has also been found that the CVC framework applies the comparative advantage theory from Business Studies. Although these CSR and CVC frameworks seem to be accepted without constructive critiques within the field of Business Studies, in contrast, these claims have been strongly contested in recent years within the field of Development Studies. Another set

of major arguments against these frameworks has been summarised by Edwards (2008; 2011). He critiques comparative advantage theory as a core ideology of business studies: "focus on what businesses do best and leave the rest to others" (2008, p. 88). Edwards also argues that even if the original comparative advantage theory works for the market, there will be social and environment issues resulting in negative impacts on people's lives, as we have seen in all continents around the world in recent times (ibid., p. 88).

Therefore, CSR and CVC frameworks for development projects offered by MNCs partnering with NGOs is considered uncritical, exaggerated, and one-sided: such frameworks focus only on the commercial benefits to both parties, ignoring the potential negative impacts that may lie behind them such as lobbying, transparency and accountability, bias or selective reporting, commercially led behaviours of NGOs, profit-orientated projects, and so on. Later, drawn up from Edwards' work, Baur and Arenas (2014, p. 1) claim that the CVC theory is not able to account for 'unregulated' interactions between civil society and the corporate sector. These authors call on other scholars to conceptualise business–NGO partnerships, especially with MNCs, more critically.

Although the debates around and literature on CSR and NGO partnerships discussed above are massively on-going and very diverse, it at least proves that the partnership approaches of NMNCs working with SDNGOs are heavily based on CSR theories and initiatives from NMNCs. It has also been discovered that NMNCs consider SDNGOs as one of their relevant stakeholders in order to achieve their objectives. Buar (2011), one of the first scholars taking on political-theoretical views, explains this phenomenon in that CSR approaches of corporations are formulated, defined, and initiated on the basis of stakeholder theory[7]. Therefore, this thesis acknowledges the location of NGOs in the CSR debates, as discussed above, and aims to generate a deeper understanding of how stakeholder theory, which is considered the core of CSR approaches, informs SDNGOs' decision making in order

[7] The author concludes this argument on the basis of two strands of CSR, instrumental and political approaches, in order to locate NGOs as another political actor in the CSR debate.

to select their intended beneficiaries (this is further discussed in Section 2.5 of this chapter).

Due to the recent exploratory literature in the field of Development Studies discussed earlier, this study's concept is drawn up by using a framework of development as service delivery of SDNGOs for development projects with NMNCs. No scholarly literature from the fields of Development Studies, NGO Studies, and Business Studies has been found on this topic. Before proceeding to the next section of the literature within this chapter, it is also considered necessary to acknowledge and draw up the working hypotheses of this study, focusing on the *habitus* of SDNGOs that have been constructed on the recent critiques of the decision making of NGOs for development projects by the service delivery framework, which is a main focus of this study.

From a rigorous search, this study found and then developed four specific interconnected themes of scholarly critiques of NGOs and SDNGOs, particularly those working as service providers for development projects to institutional donors within and/or across sectors. The contribution of these four sets of critiques constructed from the exploratory literature moves understandings forward and offers useful insights into NGO partnership for development projects.

To begin, the first critique questions SDNGOs in the role of service providers for short-term development projects that usually work on the basis of a contract model. This model, according to the critiques, defines unrealistic time scales with short-term goals and limited activities based on provided budgets which are not sufficient to alleviate the poverty roots or provide sustainability (Brehm, 2004, p. 25). Rather, SDNGOs should focus on their organisational missions, long-term impacts, or the sustainability which they work towards—this service delivery model limits NGOs' *habitus* to a focus on achieving the promised activities outlined with the donors, who might be consumed with administrative tasks and hardly spend time or resources on engaging in institutional development or development reflection (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Sobhan, 1997). Researchers see this as challenging the legitimacy and accountability of SDNGOs which appear to remain receptive towards the Northern donors' requirements rather than the beneficiaries or communities in need (Edwards

and Hulme, 1996, p. 967; Eade, 2007; Banks, Hulme, and Edwards, 2015; Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Zook, Temple, and Malisa, 2023). The authors later explain that this type of donation or funding process establishes an 'aid chain' in which it prioritises the administrative needs of Northern donors; therefore, SDNGOs appear to fail to sufficiently provide real development or services to the local communities (ibid.). As a result, the service delivery for short-term development projects only alleviates the symptoms of poverty, not the roots of the poverty (Guijt, 2008, p.165; also see Banks, Hulme, and Edwards, 2015).

The second critique focuses on SDNGOs moving away from their grassroots orientation. Scholars see this as a tendency of aid and development processes to focus on calculable poverty reduction. It moves NGOs away from the roots and foundations of social movements and focuses on the particular measurable targets of development more attentively (Bebbington, Hickey, and Mitlin, 2013, p. 16; Zijlstra and Spierenburg, 2023). This tendency increases the popularity of service delivery for NGOs, and NGOs become framed as 'contractors' working under the interests of the donors (ibid.). Many scholars argue that SDNGOs have suffered from the service delivery dilemmas on staff professionalisation, cost recovery, charging for services, the rise of tender, and the dominance of competition (Townsend and Townsend, 2004). Furthermore, another scholarly reference is made to the 'mentality of grant-worthiness' (Obibi, 1995), meaning that SDNGOs design the development projects in order to attract funding from institutional donors and not primarily because of the relevance to their communities. This concept is against the 'charity mentality' of NGOs for their main focus to be on long-term development goals. Due to the conditions and pressures under the development as service delivery discussed, this tends to push SDNGOs towards institutionalisation and away from their grassroots orientation (Brehm, 2004, p. 25) and perhaps even the main focus on beneficiaries.

The third critique is donor power relations (Zook, Temple, and Malisa, 2023). Although this study does not situate itself in the debate of donor power relations, of which an extensive amount of literature already exists, the recent critiques on donor power relations focusing on development of service delivery in particular are considered useful to move forward the understandings in order to bridge the scholarly

literature gaps regarding the central research questions of how SDNGOs make decisions regarding the populations in need or beneficiaries in terms of their project developments with NMNCs. The evidence of empirical studies reveals that the problematic nature of all kinds of funding processes including service delivery emerge from the financial input relationship (Brehm, 2004). The research shows that the financial input of Northern institutional donors is usually given a greater value than any sort of non-monetary inputs (knowledge, goods, and services) provided to SDNGOs (Muchunguzi and Milne, 1997; Brehm, 2004; Reith, 2010; AbouAssi and Trent, 2016; also see Zook, Temple, and Malisa, 2023, p. 130). This is a growing concern for the process of development as service delivery as it is used as a guise for the donors to impose their own agendas on the development project approaches and activities of the SDNGOs, with these impositions considered paternalistic and patronising (Theunis, 1992; also see the previous academic debate provided). This reflects the fact that the classic equitation in the colonial library, between the colonised 'Other' and the 'child', is still functioning on new modes of partnerships in modern development (see Pieterse, 1992; McClintock, 1995; Baaz, 2005). On the basis of the colonial theory reflecting on 'paternalism', Baaz (2005, p. 168) argues strongly in his study on partnership discourse in Tanzania that although partnerships have new ideas and processes that constitute appropriate development strategies of upbringing, paternalistic behaviour of donors remains characteristic for SDNGOs in that the donors hold the power to make a decision. In addition, the significant emphasis in the literature of service delivery between SDNGOs and the institutional donors from the North asserts that donors mostly regulate in order to dictate the terms of partnership (Folwer, 1991; Fowler, 1997; Hoksbergen, 2005; also see the two case studies of Dibley, 2014). Even though scholars argued that this might not essentially be an indication for financial dependency on donors, critiques question whether SDNGOs are able to operate as independently as initially claimed (Schöneberg, 2016, p. 61):

> NGOs align their interests to their donors and formulate and conceptualize plans respectively. Particularly problematic is the question of continued funding as this is not only dependent on the validity of the proposal but also on the success of previous projects. (ibid.)

Kontinen and Ndidde (2023; p. 99) recently coined this circumstance as the 'logic

of professionalism', wherein Southern NGOs seem to possess particular management practices, often related to the global trend of managerialism, especially in partnership with donors or partners from the North. This directly results in a management of development projects. Project proposals, which include the goals, activities, development framework, time scales, budgets, and measurement, are developed to align with priorities and interests of the donors from the North (Perera, 1997, p. 17). Scholars describe this mode of funding process as 'donorship' rather than 'partnership' (Ahmad, 2006, p. 630). For instance, Perera (1997) highlights a disagreement between the Northern donors and SDNGOs in Sri Lanka. His study reveals that the SDNGO found their 'partners' treated them as a 'subcontractor' by forcing them to change the policies and other priorities of the SDNGOs in order to adhere with the donors; this is considered a 'top-down' approach and a 'centralisation' of power relations (ibid.; Crewe and Harrison, 1998, p. 75). The final consequence of this centralisation of power is that Northern institutions' decision making is located in the South (Derksen and Verhallen, 2008). Significantly, Perera pointed out that

> while espousing participation, devolution, stakeholder analysis and so on, donors sought to impose hastily prepared plans produced by visiting consultants… The temptation for donors (who are ordinary humans after all) to throw their weight about is almost impossible to resist (1997, p. 167).

Focusing on corporate donors, Savas (1987, p. 251) argues that giving roles to NGOs as agents of service delivery as subcontractors is dangerous. The author suggests that the hidden agenda behind the ideology of privatisation of contractual relationships is more political than economic (Savas, 1987). As the political scientist Rosenau (1997, p. 145) explains, any actors resorting to command dynamics to frame goals, issue directives, make demands, and pursue policies are participating in governance, "[Whereas] government exercises rule, governance uses power… [with] each party trying to induce, or to force the other party to do certain things it otherwise would not have done" (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992, p. 250). Despite the essential roles SDNGOs continue to play, they have limitations to perform as 'countervailing powers' against the power of the market (Banks, Hulme, and Edwards, 2015, p. 708; Esposito and Antonucci, 2022).

The final critique refers to the development conceptualization by donors (Chege, 2023, p. 68). This critique began with the argumentation that "NGOs having close relationships to donors become more like donors" (Jorgensen, Larsen, and Udsholt, 1993). Providing service delivery with the institutional donors for development projects frames NGOs within the working approaches of quantifiable outputs, unit costs, time scales, and so on. These become the organisational norm and way of thinking for NGOs (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Hulme and Edwards, 2013, p. 8). Even though scholars argue that there is nothing inherently wrong with these approaches, they appear inconsistent with NGOs who claim to promote long-term qualitative change. Furthermore, approaches of donors to the 'participation of the beneficiary' remain instrumentalist, which is contradictory to the proclaimed visions of NGOs who conceptualise 'participation' as a 'means' to empower the disadvantaged and the poor when in fact this is not simply achievable in short-term development projects (see Bhatnagar and Williams, 1992). This critique also argues that donor conceptualisation has imperative implications for *which* populations in need NGOs seek to help. The processes of distinguishing between the poor, pro-poor, core poor, and those vulnerable to NGOs might become irrelevant when donors consider 'who to help'. It is suggested that donors might have different understandings, perceptions, historical background, and goals compared with NGOs (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Hulme and Edwards, 2013). In the past, for example, donors from the North used to consider almost all women in the South as 'poor', regardless of caste, class, ethnicity, and so on, as they defined the 'poverty line' used to choose populations in need in a way that was disaggregated by gender (Hulme and Mosley, 1996; also see van Wessel, 2023).

Because of the nature of the four themes of critiques that challenge the roles of NGOs as service providers, there is a strong call from scholars to urge NGOs to move from 'development as service delivery' to 'development as leverage', with this move requiring new (power) capacities (for example, mediation and bridging), more equal relationships, and strong horizontal accountability mechanisms (Fowler and Malunga, 2010, p. 18) in order to address the challenges and critiques discussed earlier.

In contrast to this, this thesis acknowledges the four sets of critiques as the starting implications of working hypotheses with a position that SDNGOs realistically

accept the power relations with institutional donors from the North (van Wessel, 2023; van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023; Khan, 2023) and from different sectors for partnerships (Fowler and Malunga, 2010, pp. 35–36). SDNGOs, in fact, deal with donors/partners who certainly contest the *processes* of development and seek opportunities to fit into the gaps and begin a negotiation process (Fowler and Malunga, 2010, p. 36) as hybrid NGOs (Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023, p. 109) in order to deliver development and aid interventions.

This notion also supports this research in terms of moving beyond the concept of 'authentic partnership' and providing another positioning of how NGOs deal with the recent changing power dynamics from donors or partners in terms of their roles, processes, and practices in the field of partnership. From this point of view, this study seeks to provide a fuller understanding of how SDNGOs interact with such partnership negotiation *processes* with NMNCs, particularly in terms of how they choose beneficiaries for their collaborative development projects and the ways in which to consider the real practical interactions between them. Significantly, the concise and cohesive exploration of the literature of this sub-section also provides a positioning of the discussions in the debates of roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership, which is a main focus of this thesis.

2.4. (Re)-Conceptualisation of Beneficiaries via the Lens of SDNGOs

The critical review of up-to-date scholarly literature on SDNGOs and the *field* of partnership as service delivery provided in the previous section of this chapter constructs a heuristic framework which incorporates the working hypotheses of this study. In this section, with a framework of development as service delivery, the review now turns to the literature focused on another perspective on how SDNGOs conceptualise their intended beneficiaries as another process prior to the selection of beneficiaries for their development projects with NMNCs. This research considers this cohesive set of literature as outlining the one of most significant processes of SDNGOs, wherein their decision-making processes of choosing the poor eventually have an impact on the development landscape. The discussions here in this sub-

section also situate this thesis's position within the debates around the processes and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

Due to the four themes of critiques against development as service delivery of SDNGOs discussed in the previous section, there were indications that the limitations and conditions have directed a number of NGOs (by default, SDNGOs) in order to prioritise their roles as service providers at the expense of their civil society functions (Edwards and Hulme, 2013). It has been investigated that this has made NGOs increasingly pull themselves further away from the 'poor groups' they used to claim responsibility for (Edwards, 2008; Shutt, 2009; Wallace and Porter, 2013). For the service delivery to governments under PPP, there is a proposed argument from scholars stating that although governments pre-defined their intended beneficiaries by using the concept of serving the 'citizens' in the country, the poor in need are instead viewed as 'consumers'. This resulted from the forces of contract competitions in an open market between NGOs and companies in that both actors need to manage the projects on the basis of cost and service efficiency (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; 2013, p. 10).

A noteworthy critique is raised to the concept of service delivery to the 'citizens' that the governments themselves could be biased in terms of influencing or forcing NGOs, through the use of the contract relationships of NGOs' provision of service delivery, to provide welfare and services to the intended groups of the poor on the basis of the self-interest of politicians and political parties for their popularity in upcoming elections (for example, see Beck, 2017). From this point, research has described how this mode of funding, from the perspectives of NGOs, has changed their participation to one that is instrumentalist—from village groups to branches of NGOs, rather than autonomous social groups, and, most significantly, from the poor and disadvantaged to voters (Montgomery, 1995)—in order to satisfy donors under the mask of civil society functions.

Turning now to the perspective of NMNCs, the extensive debates in the literature provide critiques of the hidden agendas of the CSR practice that funds the development projects of SDNGOs. In the debates, it is argued that CSR is the responsibility of corporations in order to address the negative social outcomes caused

by businesses themselves—thus, it is not a form of social responsibility but a business responsibility (Drucker, 2001). Friedman (1970) exclaims that the "business of business is business", meaning that for all actions corporations initiate, the bottom line is that it is for profit and nothing else. Porter and Kramer (2002) also agree with Friedman's argument. The authors explained that philanthropy undertaken by companies with no justified corporate objective is unwarranted. Therefore, all sorts of CSR interactions are implemented for companies' self-interest—hidden goals with resulting financial profits (Stendardi, 1992; Hamann and Acutt, 2003). The potential results of working with SDNGOs for development projects may include the sales of products (Burlingame and Young, 1996), improving corporate image (Alsop, 2004), collecting social capital (Millar, Choi, and Chen, 2004), approaching existing networks (ibid.), and developing employees' motivation (Lewin and Sabater, 1996). All of these directly and indirectly involve the stakeholders of the companies. Furthermore, the research shows that whilst corporate management seems to have a powerful role in the allocation of corporate philanthropy or budgets for CSR to support the development projects with SDNGOs (Useem and Kutner, 1986), the majority of these contributions appear to be part of their marketing plans or cause-related marketing (Froelich, 1999) rather than disconnected acts of generosity (Useem, 1987). Interestingly, drawing from the critiques discussed above, the research reveals that NMNCs often define their intended recipients (or beneficiaries) of CSR programmes or project developments (with SDNGOs) by using a 'stakeholder theory' as a defensive foundation for CSR (for both internal and external stakeholders) in order to deliver safeguards against the potential negative effects of their business operations and maintain good relationships with any stakeholders (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004; Gourville and Rangan, 2004; Pearce and Doh, 2005; Sasse and Trahan, 2007; Seitanidi, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi (2012a); Austin and Seitanidi (2012b); Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Lalzai, 2020; Ann, 2023). This critical argument also indicates another dimension of this research with regard to how stakeholder theory, initiated by NMNCs, might inform SDNGOs to define and choose their potential beneficiaries for the development projects funded by NMNCs.

Significantly, the exploratory literature discovers another essential aspect and complexity of development projects with different institutional donors from different sectors that SDNGOs need to address. Development as service delivery of project

developments provide pressure and conditions for NGOs to be accountable to donors as well as being able to deliver what was promised to the beneficiaries. In achieving both the delivery of services to the poor and maintaining good relationships with donors, Beck (2017) raises an interesting point that NGOs do not "only seek to *'help'* but also to *'govern'* their beneficiaries" (p. 23). Therefore, they need to select the beneficiaries whom they could govern and ensure that they can deliver results on the basis of the promises on the development project framework. This is the case for the interventions that academics suggested in terms of how NGOs claimed their development project as being 'successful' by prioritising project management rather than focusing from the 'bottom up', with the 'controlling balance' placed within the NGOs that manage the development projects (Craig and Porter, 1997, p. 229; Beck, 2017). Accordingly, NGOs and the beneficiaries who have been chosen to participate regularly cooperate in order to produce the outcomes not entirely through intention but in that they can be claimed as a 'success' in order to contribute to the endurance of their development projects (Beck, 2017). From this point of view, Krause (2014) suggests that NGOs tend to treat their development projects as "products" (p. 47), describing the fact that although the primary function of a development project is to help people, it is also the primary unit of fundraising. However, Waters' (2001) insightful text, *Bureaucratizing the Good Samaritan*, argues that the 'product' of NGOs is mercy, and its goal is not for profit. Hence, it makes sense for NGOs to do that, only by bringing in money can the agency continue exist and only by continuing to exist can the agency provide relief to the needy (Waters, Abdallah, and Santillán, 2001).

In contrast, Krause (2014, p. 48) highlights her argument of 'development projects as products' by considering the role of the projects rather than the emotions of donors or NGOs. She reflects that NGOs want to help and need to provide assistance in order to raise funds (ibid.). From this point of view, MNCs 'pay' NGOs for development projects and insist on their visibility displayed in the *field* to report back to their stakeholders what they have done. Certainly, NGOs often make the connection between donations, projects, and the beneficiaries to present their progress donors as directly as possible (Krause, 2014). Urged by a Marxist perspective, it is necessary to look beyond the 'tangible good' outcomes at the overall exchange. NMNCs do not give directly to the beneficiaries but to SDNGOs in order to source beneficiaries with the needs to address them, package them, and sell them

back to NMNCs (Krause, 2014). As a result, this finding process allows NMNCs to choose projects (ibid.). Within this system, Derksen and Verhallen (2008, p. 229) also explain that the 'expected results' of development projects are ones of powerful distorting drivers in that they lead NGOs to 'safe' spaces of interventions and occasionally to ignoring their key beneficiaries. For instance, a case study from their studies showed that NGOs who joined the micro-credit scheme development projects (which were a very famous development trend by that time in the Global South) chose target beneficiary groups with more opportunities of project success (certainly by their own measurable tools). As a result, the poorest segments of the communities were not chosen (ibid.).

From the working hypotheses developed above from the exploratory literature of considering the 'development projects as products' suggested by Krause's (2014) study, this current study is provided with a new perspective on the understandings of the development processes in order to point where SDNGOs define, choose, or reach the intended beneficiaries from the entirety of populations in need, not just the fundraising aspect which reflects the gaps of the literature and bridges this study's central research questions. This has been ignored by economics researchers and development theorists (Krause, 2014). Rather than simply just being primary 'beneficiaries', they are part of the product being sold and treated as 'commodities' (ibid., p. 38).

To clarify the terms of this study, 'populations in need' refers to the entirety of potential populations who need help, or to interest groups involved in obtaining help from NGOs and donors. Actual 'beneficiaries' are a subset group of 'populations in need' who have been chosen by NGOs and donors to receive services or benefits from the development projects. This study draws on the provisional hypotheses of the exploratory literature with the proposed ideology of 'beneficiaries as commodities' by Krause (2014) as another point of view of how SDNGOs conceptualise their intended beneficiaries and the entire populations in need. This highlights the way in which development projects are produced by SDNGOs in order to work with NMNCs, not to maximise profit but as an orientation to exchange interventions for money to survive. This also does not mean that SDNGOs do not deliver services or development to their communities; in fact, the chosen 'beneficiaries' do benefit. Therefore, this cohesive

perspective proposed by Krause (2014) provides a useful standpoint for this thesis to locate its research questions within the recent debates surrounding the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs and how they choose their intended beneficiaries.

In summary, under the field of partnership and development as service delivery, the rigorous exploratory literature in this section builds on the heuristic framework of (re)-conceptualisation of beneficiaries through SDNGOs' eyes by splitting the ideas of 'populations in need' and actual 'beneficiaries'. This offers insightful perspectives of the working hypotheses of this study in terms of the manner in which SDNGOs choose their beneficiaries and what the implications of their decision making are. Significantly, the debates of this sub-section build a focused set of literature wherein the academic discussions are located within and contribute to the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership, in which NGOs hold complex perspectives in terms of their conceptualisation of how to choose the beneficiaries for development projects in collaboration with donors or partners.

2.5. SDNGOs' Decision Making: Theories and Approaches for the Selection of Beneficiaries

According to the rigorous empirical and theoretical literature discussed above, this study constructed the working hypotheses in order to highlight the significance of the realm and knowledge of SDNGOs' decision making on beneficiary selections for development projects under partnership with NMNCs as service delivery providers. These constructs are situated in the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership. Using the same arguments, this study built an exploratory framework from the diverse critical perspectives of Partnership Studies, Development Studies, and the NGO and International Development literature which provide two important elements to this framework. The first element is a *field* of partnership that moves beyond notions of the roles of SDNGOs under the concept of 'authentic partnership' to their role as service delivery providers. The second element is SDNGOs' *habitus* in their decision making regarding their development projects with NMNCs that is based on the (re)-conceptualisation of beneficiaries via the SDNGO perspectives discussed in the previous section.

As this thesis locates itself in the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership or cross-sector collaborations, particularly with NMNCs, the central research questions seek insights beyond the implications and considerations of casual decision making into more fundamental academic insights of SDNGOs' roles under partnerships with NMNCs in the development industry. A detailed review of the NGO and Development literature in the international context is required for understanding other implications and factors which might shape and limit the decision making within SDNGOs' *habitus* in terms of choosing their beneficiaries on development projects with NMNCs. The next part of this chapter moves to the sub-literature of the additional important information that discusses (1) the conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries; (3) the stakeholder theory; and (4) the theory of project management. The main purpose of this sub-literature review on these theories and approaches is to draw out the possible theoretical and pragmatic tools and notions in order to address the central research questions where no evidence of scholarly literature is found on this particular topic across the discipline of Development Studies. This study makes use of this cohesive set of literature and contributes to the exploration and understanding of how SDNGOs choose their beneficiaries for their development projects with NMNCs.

2.5.1. Conceptualisations of Poverty

Alleviating poverty has been central for sustainable development globally. The significance of poverty reduction is emphasized in the declaration of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), where it is prioritized as the first goal (SDG 1), endorsed by all 193 member states of the United Nations (The United Nations, 2015). One of the critical concerns in the development in both the Global North and Global South is a fundamental concern derived from the debate about poverty, namely, that any definition or conceptualisation of poverty one may suggest or argue for will shape or constrain the understandings, discussions, and agreements, often narrowing its scope. For development projects under NMNC–SDNGO partnership, understanding the conceptualisations of poverty of SDNGOs is primarily important because this might entail judgments about poverty of their 'populations in need' in

order to choose their potential beneficiaries, although these might be unnoticed and unintended. It is argued that many NGOs lack theories of poverty (see Kumar et al., 2009)—these include unstated implications about the roots (and also symptoms) of poverty (see Green and Hulme, 2005; Tiwari, 2007); the effects of poverty; and, most significantly, what should be implemented by NGOs (Monson, 2013; also see Fowler, 1991; Fowler, 1997; Fowler, 2000; Kumar et al., 2009), especially when the development project is not implemented alone by the NGOs but instead in partnership with MNCs from the Global North.

From a rigorous search, this research mainly found three distinct sets of global literature on the fundamental theories of poverty that relate to this study and the field of Development Studies that might shape and constrain the decision making of SDNGOs on development projects with NMNCs. They are (1) absolute poverty, (2) relative poverty, and (3) the capabilities approach. This sub-literature review looks at these theories of the debate on poverty which potentially offer the emerging notions from the empirical data in terms of the case studies of focus for SDNGOs in Thailand and also situate its contributions within the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

The first set of scholarship tends to define poverty through the concept of 'absolute poverty'. Within this approach, poverty is defined in monetary terms and is quantified by establishing a minimal level of income consumption as a benchmark (Laderchi, Saith, and Stewart, 2003). It is based on the economic hypothesis that a universal unit of monetary measurement might be created to fairly account for the many disadvantages or poor conditions that people may experience, wherever they may be located in time or space (Monson, 2013). As a result, people who fall below the indicated level are considered as being in 'absolute poverty' and are treated as such. On the basis of this approach, Rowntree (1902), a British social researcher, used it to calculate the financial costs of food, clothing, and shelter. Moreover, the U.S. government started using the Orshansky scale to determine the poverty line in 1963, building on an approach proposed by Rowntree in assessing the least costs required for adequate nourishment and combining these costs with the costs of other significant expenses (Beaudoin, 2006).

In order to provide examples of a concept of absolute poverty in terms of global development, in October 2015, the World Bank defined a daily income requirement of USD $1.90 (£1.59) as the present global poverty line. This value, which is based on the International Comparison Program's (ICP) purchasing power parity (PPP) estimates, is the equal to what USD $1.90 (£1.59) would have bought in 2011 in other countries (World Bank, 2015). Significantly, this poverty threshold increased, with the extreme poverty threshold in 2008 of USD $1.25 (£1.05) per day and the moderate poverty threshold of USD $2 (£1.67) per day (World Bank, 2008).

On the basis of these projections, Chen and Ravallion (2008) predicted that there were 1.2 billion people living at a moderate level of poverty and 1.4 billion people living in extreme poverty. Nevertheless, it is claimed that there are only more than 700 million people in extreme poverty according to the revised global poverty standard in 2015 (World Bank, 2015). In order to further understand poverty more contextually, since 2017, the World Bank has been using two different daily thresholds for poverty measurement: USD $5.50 (£4.60) for upper-middle-income countries and USD $3.20 (£2.68) for lower-middle-income countries (World Bank, 2017).

The international poverty threshold of USD $1.90 (£1.59) per day is adopted to track the poverty target of the World Bank of decreasing the percentage of people living in extreme poverty to less than 3 percent by 2030 (World Bank, 2017). However, it is noted that the World Bank revised the global poverty lines in September 2022 after the COVID-19 outbreak, which happened after the data collection for this thesis, at the beginning of 2020. The new poverty lines were published in May after the release of new purchasing power parities (PPPs) in 2020, being the key data needed to convert several currencies into a single, equivalent unit and account for price variations between countries. On the basis of 2017 PPPs, the new extreme poverty line is now USD $2.15 (£1.80), replacing the previous one of USD $1.90 (£1.59) per person per day (World Bank, 2022).

Looking at Thailand from the World Bank's poverty approach and official analysis (World Bank, 2018), the country's poverty level has risen twice in the last two years, in 2016 and 2018. Since the first official publication of poverty statistics in 1988, Thailand has significantly improved in terms of social and economic growth, showing

a drop of official poverty rate from 65.2 percent in 1988 to 9.85 percent in 2018 during the past three decades. On the other hand, household earnings and consumption growth have recently stagnated nationally, with falls among households at the bottom of the income distribution. Thailand's poverty rate went from 7.21 percent in 2015 to 9.85 percent in 2018, while the total number of poor people increased from 4.85 million to more than 6.7 million. During 2015 and 2018, the number of poor people in the Central and Northeast climbed by over 500,000 in each area. Moreover, in both 2016 and 2018, Thailand's official poverty rates worsened. The official poverty rates have risen since the first three occurrences (1998, 2000, and 2008), which coincided with financial crises, with these two instances marking the fourth and fifth occurrences. For the first time in 2017, the South of Thailand had the highest rate of poverty. In 2018, there was a significant rise in poverty that affected all regions and 61 of the country's 77 provinces. Thailand's growth rate has recently lagged behind other significant economies in the developing East Asia and Pacific area. With a GDP growth rate of just 2.7 percent in October 2019, Thailand had one of the lowest GDP growth rates in the region (World Bank, 2018).

The main criticism of the absolute poverty approach, which applies to development organisations or NGOs, is its overgeneralization. Firstly, Alkire and Fang (2019, p. 26) argue that for the absolute poverty index, income data are simple for policymakers to use in their own nation in observing poverty and focusing on the poor. The authors further discuss the income indicator of 'income poverty' (Alkire and Fang, 2018), where each country might set their income poverty rate differently in their own domestic areas or in comparison with other countries. They also argue that the markets are flawed, as many non-monetary characteristics cannot be traded in the market. In terms of policy, money is an outcome which cannot account for why these people are living in poverty. Policies such as cash transfers, which do not address the underlying causes, may become ineffective as a result of insufficient knowledge or signals.

Secondly, it is also noted that the absolute poverty approach is oversimplified for complex phenomena, having influence over other significant factors including cultural consumption norms, variations in household sizes and compositions, links between poverty and phases of life, public goods, and so on (Beaudoin, 2007, p. 4).

In terms of public goods, lastly, Monson (2013) gives the example that people or families who live in areas with access to sanitary conditions, clean water, and other necessities are less likely to contract crippling illnesses that are frequently linked to extreme poverty than people who live in areas without those necessities. However, the examination of the 'absolute poverty' approach does not take public goods or these variations into account.

The second approach of scholarly literature regarding poverty under development studies, called 'relative poverty', is used to describe poverty in terms of the national or communal standard of living. Therefore, rather than emphasizing individual income, it offers more emphasis on income inequality on average (Beaudoin, 2007, p. 5). This 'relative poverty' approach intentionally lowers a person's disposable income in comparison to the average wealth and standard of living benchmarks for a whole population (Monson, 2013). This approach is also employed somewhat by the World Bank, which raises the poverty rate in industrialised countries by revising the requirements of daily income for both underdeveloped and developed nations.

The 'absolute poverty' approach outlined above seems to have been avoided in favour of the approach of 'relative poverty'; however, the latter contains substantial flaws that are important for development studies as well. According to Beaudoin (2007), the main issue with this approach is how the income is distributed. First, this approach has some risks as it disregards the normally higher degree of poverty when measuring household income, as larger families may have similar income levels to smaller families or even have unequal income distribution within their own families (Monson, 2013). Second, the national average income ignores income disparities between the rich and the poor at the national level, which are often present in a specific population (Monson, 2013).

According to Monson (2013), this approach might be challenging in terms of deciding whether items are necessary or unneeded from the perspectives of various groups or organisations of people who live in various social contexts. In fact, Rahnema (1992) was the first one who argued against the 'relative poverty' approach. He offers four perspectives of poverty that are useful to study, as follows:

> the materialities; the 'subject's own perception of his condition'; other people's view of the 'subject', and finally 'spimes' or the contextual 'social-cultural space-times' (ibid., p. 160).

The final approach to poverty is the 'capabilities approach', which is the one that development practitioners and academics most frequently use and favour because it defines and describes the multi-layered and complicated nature of poverty. This approach perceives poverty as largely limiting freedoms or options of people, such as opportunities in terms of school, employment, healthcare, social status, and interpersonal connections (also see Tiwari, 2007). The most notable and popular definition under the development industry for the 'capabilities approach' was coined and developed by Amartya Sen, a Nobel Prize-winning economist who emphasizes that the main goal and means of development are to increase people's actual alternatives, freedoms, and skills so that they can live their own lives according to their own ideals (Sen, 1999)[8]. Sen's primary two interconnected terms in his theories of poverty are 'capabilities' and 'functionings', with 'agency' coming later (Comim, 2008). Derived from Aristotelian foundations, his idea of 'functionnings' represents many things a person may value doing or being, ranging from simple instances to extremely complex human states or sophisticated activities (Sen, 1999).

This argument links to his next key idea, called 'agency', which also reflects and highlights the critiques and challenges how SDNGOs define and choose their potential beneficiaries to accomplish their long-term objectives, as well as in the meantime to deliver 'satisfactory' results back to NMNCs,

> The expression 'agent' is sometimes employed … to denote a person who is acting on some one else's behalf … and whose achievements are to be assessed in the light of someone else's … goals. I am using the term 'agent' … who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives … with the agency role of the individual as a member of the public and as a participant in economic, social and political actions (Sen,

[8] Another sub-definitional way of defining poverty that draws on the capacities approach is the 'Subjective Well-Being Approach'. This approach is designed for a more participatory approach and provides a criticism of the predominately used well-being and poverty conceptualisations in development boundaries (see Rojas, 2009).

1999, pp. 18–19).

In addition, Sen (1999) contends that we need to take into account both the inherent value of investments in health, education, and other social services as well as how these investments affect economic productivity to reduce poverty, not only income factors. Sen (1999) makes a significant contribution by advocating for the capability approach and connecting poverty to a lack of skill across multiple dimensions.

As a recent example at the global development level, the 'capabilities approach' is employed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), together with the Human Poverty Index (HDI) (centring on deprivation), in developing the HDI focusing on the life expectancy at birth, education enrolment ratios, and adult literacy levels. These two indicators are adopted for the purpose of obtaining a more thorough and nuanced picture of the possibilities for satisfaction among the specified populations, as well as the nature of poverty affecting those members of the populations who are denied those opportunities (Monson, 2013).

Significantly, there is another area of the literature that argues that poverty is complicated and should be assessed from various perspectives rather than one of the approaches mentioned above (see Bourguignon and Chakravarty, 2003). For example, the 2016 Report of the Tony Atkinson-led Commission on Global Poverty recommended that non-monetary elements of poverty should be measured and included into a measurement of overlapping deprivations by the World Bank, or a Multidimensional Poverty Index (World Bank, 2016). As a result, it is increasingly recognized that it is important to analyse poverty from other perspectives in addition to the monetary perspective. However, this research also discovered that there are few essential terms whose definitions and practices might overlap with or relate to some notions of the multidimensional perspectives of poverty. Nonetheless, these terms have not been widely used by the academics in the field of poverty globally and are not relevant to the development work of the two organisational case studies in this thesis. These include 'period poverty' (Sacca, 2023), 'cyclical poverty'[9] (Muffels and

[9] According to Thailand's 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, 6.5 percent of the population will be considered poor by 2021. However, the population of the poor expanded in Thailand

Fouarge, 2009), 'collective poverty' (Corsi, Botti, and D'Ippoliti, 2016), 'concentrated poverty' (Iceland and Hernandez, 2017; Kneebone, Nadeau, and Berube, 2011), 'energy poverty' (Bonderup and Middlemiss, 2023), 'asset poverty' (Haveman and Wolff, 2004; Naschold, 2012; Rothwell, Kim, and Kim, 2013; Ottusch and Finders, 2019), and 'disability and rural poverty' (Grech, 2023).

As can be seen from the above discussions, there are ongoing complications of theories, implications, and considerations of poverty in both academia and practice within the field of development studies. Tiwari (2021, pp. 38–44) pointed out, from her Convergence Framework study in fragile and non-fragile states in developing countries, that the key concepts of poverty reduction or living quality improvement from agencies across sectors at both micro and macro levels have different approaches. Some successful implications and practices at the micro level are not always connected to the macro framework, one way or the other. Significantly, the author also denoted that, within such interventions, some NGOs could address poverty (due to their own specific priority or conceptualisations of poverty) at both micro and macro levels (Tiwari, 2021, p. 39). Significantly at the macro level, Grech (2023, p. 110) argues that the conceptualisation of poverty in the Global South might be shaped from influences from the Global North, in which

> colonialism framed the Southern subject and space as Other and positioned them as inferior and sites of interventions, in need of 'development' (ibid., 2023, p. 110).

Especially in cases of Global North–South partnership, Grech (2023, p. 110) also criticized development projects, for example, those with poverty reduction goals derived from partners and donors based in the Global North who set the development agenda, processes, and conditions (see also Khan, 2023, p.177; van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023, for a call towards decolonization and the localization of development projects that include poverty reductions in the Global South). Thus, understanding how poverty is conceptualised and applied by SDNGOs under partnership with NMNCs is accordingly necessary.

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during several periods when there was a macroeconomic crisis, such as in 1998; 2000; and 2020–2021, the 'COVID-19 era'. This posed a threat to the 1.2 million vulnerable Thai households.

From above notions and debates, their argumentation also encouraged this thesis to further explore how such a conceptualisation of poverty is intertwined and implemented by SDNGOs or how they inform, shape, or constrain SDNGOs' *habitus* in order to choose the beneficiaries for their development projects. Particularly, when SDNGOs work in partnership with NMNCs, it is significant to explore how SDNGOs' *habitus* is shaped, maintained, and challenged by NMNCs' conceptualisations of poverty at the same time.

Drawing up on the sub-literature of various concepts of poverty, the idea of partnership for development projects between NMNCs and SDNGOs might be relatively subjective, which may result in identifying or interpreting something in different ways for diverse individuals, organisations, communities, countries, and social space. This growing sub-literature from development studies leads to the emergence of an insightful question regarding partnerships between NMNCs and SDNGOs on how these actors define or interpret the concept of poverty as they both have backgrounds, roles, and identities that are based in different continents, sectors, sizes of operations, development positions, and so on. This thesis makes use of this emerging question and this set of literature as a means to understand the significant drivers of how SDNGOs chose the poor for their development projects in order to build up a deeper understanding from the empirical evidence obtained from the two case studies described in Chapters 4 and 5. In addition, the understandings and discussions from both the academic literature and empirical evidence of the conceptualisations of poverty from the two organisational case studies establish the contributions to the debates of roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership, particularly regarding a recent call for significant contributions to the debate on the necessary changes to be made in Global North–South collaborations (van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023).

2.5.2. Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Beneficiaries

From an exhaustive review of the exploratory literature on 'populations in need' and 'beneficiaries as commodities' for development projects as service delivery, this study found little academic attempts to suggest that the *willingness, capacity,* and

capability of beneficiaries might affect SDNGOs' *habitus* in the beneficiary selection process while delivering development projects to donors or partners. The recent key debates of Kabonga (2023) and Cordery, Belal, and Thomson (2023) emphasized and concluded that NGOs realised that the beneficiaries themselves play an important role in poverty reduction and development work at every level of development projects. Their capacity, capability, and willingness to be a part of the development project might be one of main the crucial drivers to inform and challenge SDNGOs' *habitus* in terms of selecting them, as the development projects themselves might not only be giving something to but working with the beneficiaries with the aim of poverty reduction. From this notion, this study considers them as a part of the significant emerging literature for NGO and Development Studies and another potential driver for NGO decision making under the cross-sector partnerships for development projects, situating itself in the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs.

The first concept refers to the capacity or resources of beneficiaries. Wisner (2013) explains that this concept was coined from the view of an ideology of social 'vulnerability'. Social vulnerability frames humans as one of many 'elements' with varying degrees of vulnerability, a set of elements with specific characteristics of hazards and varying possibilities for destruction or loss (i.e., healthcare systems, bridges, the structural vulnerability of buildings, and people). Wisner (2013) summarized these examples as material vulnerability, economic vulnerability, or event social capital itself, which is considered a similar concept of Bourdieu's *social capital*. Other vulnerability examples of motivation, competence, or education consist of a lack of obtaining right of entry to facts and knowledge, a lack of self-protection, a lack of public awareness, and a lack of basic welfare or livelihood resilience (Wisner, 2013). In addition, in the analytical shuffling of administrators seeking to reduce the vulnerability of systems, objects, or resources, this type of vulnerability consists of loss of obtaining entry to resources (Aysan, 1993), susceptible homes or individuals (Aysan, 1993), social capital (social cohesion or networks) (Cannon, 2000, p. 47), or safety of life (Sanderson, 2000).

Nonetheless, some literature in the field of NGO and Development Studies employs the terms 'capacity' and 'capability' interchangeably and sometimes utilizes the term 'capacity' to replace 'capability'. In the practice of global development, for

example, the UNDP (1988) states that 'organisational capacity' involves the knowledge, resources, and processes utilized by an organisation, and capacity factors comprise people, the management of procedures and programs, the network, the infrastructure, and strategic leadership, as well as including the connection with other agencies.

According to an academic study by Bryan (2011), the nature of NGO capacity is still debatable. Some literature regards NGO capability as a resource (see Christensen and Gazley, 2008), others as assets and elements of organisational capability (Bryson, 2004), and others still as organisational capacity (Harvey et al., 2010). In order to avoid the complications of analysis and provide clarity for this concept, Morgan (2006, p. 708) indicates that the term ‘capability’ refers to a wide set of competencies that may not only be

> … technical and logistical but also ‘harder’ (i.e. policy analysis, marine resources assessment, financial management) and generative or ‘softer’ (i.e. the ability to earn legitimacy, to adapt, to create meaning and identity) (ibid.).

This may also consist of sub-concepts, referred to as 'competence', that relate to an individual's energies, skills, behaviour, influence, and capacity (Morgan, 2006, p. 708). Therefore, this thesis adopts Morgan’s implication in order to avoid the confusions of research analysis. This study also found another important academic gap in the concept of capacity and capability within NGO and Development Studies. In this area, Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page (2016, p. 1610) claim that capacity and capabilities can be categorized into three stages: the individual stage, the organisational stage, and the system stage. At the individual stage, the talents, viewpoints, knowledge, responsibility, and encouragement of NGO staff, volunteers, values, and beliefs are emphasised (see UNDP, 1998; Vallejo and Wehn, 2016). Conversely, the organisational stage comprises total organisational capacities and resources under the NGO's management, technical resources, information resources, physical resources, human resources, and financial resources and structures at the individual stage. At the systems level, on the contrary, it investigates the interrelations between NGOs and environments where it is rooted. For this wider stage, the scope of research explores the effects of the political circumstances, infrastructures of

regulations, sponsors, and source of funds on the ability of NGOs to facilitate in specific settings (Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page, 2016, p. 1610). Apparently, as can be seen at both the individual, organisational, and system levels, the existing literature in this domain has not attempted to explore how SDNGOs interact or manage capacity or capability with their beneficiaries, especially from the perspective of development projects where beneficiaries might not be only the recipients of help but also a part of the projects. This leaves significant questions found within the debates in the field of Development Studies: What if the potential beneficiaries do not have sufficient capacity or capability to attend to the development project, despite being poor and wanting to receive help? What if the intended beneficiaries who have sufficient capacity and capability to meet the criteria of the development projects set by SDNGOs are not the most vulnerable or the poorest when compared to the entirety of the populations in need? How would SDNGOs decide on selecting them? What justifications or implications do SDNGOs employ in such dilemmas?

Significantly, this process of NGOs selecting the potential beneficiaries by assessing their capacity and capability could be considered as the governance and accountability of NGOs. Some scholars recently argued that NGOs must ensure such a process is a part of accountability and governance, not only towards donors but also the beneficiaries themselves (Belal, Thomson, and Cordery, 2023; Kingston et al., 2023). Such a limitation of the literature leaves an important question for this thesis to further explore, allowing it to contribute its fresh insights to the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs.

Notably, there is another similar example in a study of an NGO in Afghanistan that supports the concept of capability of beneficiaries. Krause (2014) reveals that beneficiaries are also usually asked to collaborate as ‘labours’, contributing to developing projects in a variety of ways. By turning the populations in need into ‘beneficiaries as labours’ within the process of project development, the researcher drew this process into the continuum that NGOs originally measured the populations in need as ‘capable’ or ‘skilled’ in their work together with NGOs and that they do not interfere with the ‘security’ of NGO projects and organisations (Krause, 2014, p. 52). In addition, Stoddard (2006) states that acceptance is an essential component of NGO 'security' by populations in need. Having an ‘acceptance’ to turn populations in need

from the local communities into 'beneficiaries as labours', trust and familiarity are important factors for NGOs (Stoddard, 2006; Krause, 2014). This argumentation initiates another conceptual exploring point of this set of literature for this research, not only about the 'acceptance' of the potential beneficiaries to join the development project or receive help offered by the NGOs but the ideology of 'willingness' as the third concept of this section.

The third concept within the literature suggests that populations in need or the potential intended beneficiaries are not passive recipients of development projects. Despite their poverty, they may insist on utilizing the development project for their own purposes (Beck, 2017, p. 209). From this point of view, even populations in need or target beneficiaries seem to be a means to intervene in development projects and their communities. Krause's humanitarian case study of *'The Good Project' (*2014) shows that converting populations in need into target beneficiaries can conflict with the '*Eigensinn'* (or 'obstinacy'*)* of the active recipients. She explained *Eigensinn* from the viewpoints of Negt and Kluge (1981), in that it is the method by which 'subjects' outline their very own wants, conditions, choices, and interactions. Apparently, the concept of *Eigensinn* has been featured heavily in objectivist analysis or easily acknowledged as 'resistance'. Krause (2014, p. 65), however, argues that *Eigensinn* is not undoubtedly a scheme of resistance; instead, it is an additional scheme of non-identity, determining the two meanings of the word 'wilful'.

On the contrary, *Eigensinn* has been interpreted by conservative interpreters as "having more will than necessary, or rational or allowed" (Krause, 2014, p. 65), or read as resistance by crucial approaches; on the other hand, it simply means that the subject has an irreducible will of its own. In this way, Krause (2014) emphasized that this idea is more consistent with developmental knowledge of collective behaviour and responses to the developmental apparatus than is the concept of 'resistance'. In practice, during development project implementation, the beneficiaries' *Eigensinn* could also be the means to affect the way of a smooth service delivery of projected outputs (Krause, 2014) to SDNGOs. For example, from Krause's study (2014), one group of the populations in need refused to receive latrines from a Christian humanitarian relief NGO in Afghanistan as they did not want to build latrines for free (although it was for their own benefit) and instead demanded a wage from the NGOs.

This might leave a fair and critical question to NGOs as to whether those populations in need are real populations who need be prioritised for help. Within this context, if they are, how does *Eigensinn* affect SDNGOs' decision making in terms of the selection of their intended beneficiaries for their long-term development goals and, in the meantime, deliver results back to their donors on the basis of a short-time development project framework?

There has also been another recent similar case study in the literature, specifically one of understanding Vietnamese farmers' perceptions of the importance of forests and their willingness to participate in REDD+ programs (Khuc et al., 2021). This study noted that the proportion of local residents who agree to participate in REDD+ projects appear to be directly proportional to the amount of income received (Khuc et al., 2021, p. 8). It reveals that poor households valued forests more highly, and thus their interests in this climate protection project were expected to be higher than non-poor households. From this point of view, it suggests that monetary drivers could be an important factor for beneficiaries to have more willingness or interest to participate in the development project. This study, however, argues that the arguments from the above sub-literature might be only applied to the case in which the development project requires labouring or participation from the potential beneficiaries, as Krause (2014) mentioned earlier.

Noticeably, there are only a few studies on the willingness of beneficiaries found in this sub-literature, while most of the literature in NGO and Development Studies discusses and explores the organisational willingness of the NGOs or volunteers (see Hailey, 2000; Brown and Kalegaonkar, 2002; Schloms, 2003; Okorley, Owusu, and Akuamoah-Boateng, 2017; Igene, Onyemekonwu, and Ehiwario, 2018; Tran et al., 2022). Due to the limitation of this sub-literature, this study realises the significance and aims to develop a deeper understanding towards the willingness of the beneficiaries. This study considers empirical evidence and discussions from the two organisational case studies as contributions to such academic gaps within the debates of roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership. This thesis therefore also considers the capacity, capability, and willingness of beneficiaries to be one of the significant drivers against SDNGOs' decision making as this is related to the idea of designing the development projects in an 'upside down' manner, instead

prioritising localisation and a local-context-sensitive approach (Zijlstra and Spierenburg, 2023) in order to closely observe what happened (the processes and practices) on the ground in reality.

In summary, the complicated implications of beneficiaries' *Eigensinn and* 'labouring role' are useful in order to reflect on the implications of the fact that the capacities and willingness of beneficiaries might be another driver that effects SDNGOs' decision making. Accordingly, this thesis considers and develops the concept of *Eigensinn* or 'obstinacy' as a starting point for a beneficiary's willingness, a descriptive term of the beneficiary's wilfulness (Krause, 2014), in terms of interacting with subjects and objects of development projects under social partnerships. Hence, this study also asks how the willingness, alongside the capability and capacity, of potential beneficiaries or populations in need impact, interplay, or inform SDNGOs' organisational *habitus* during their process of beneficiary selection. These theoretical and methodological applications are also contributions to the recent call of critical analysis of the form, processes, and dynamics of accountability towards beneficiaries by interrogating beneficiaries as another centre of analysis (Cordery, Belal, and Thomson, 2019, p.12). Additionally, in order to assess the capacity, capability, and willingness of the potential beneficiaries, this study also employs the theoretical application of Bourdieu's (1977) *capital* to analyse the empirical data from the two organisational case studies (this is later discussed in Section 3.3) and demonstrate how such *capitals (*capacity, capability, and willingness of the potential beneficiaries) inform and shape SDNGOs' *habitus*. This also extends knowledge and bridges the literature gaps of cross-sectoral partnership regarding SDNGOs' *habitus* for development projects with NMNCs and contributes to the academic debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs. Such a question has never been asked previously in other studies.

Following from this, the next section of this chapter discusses the other relevant implications and theories that might shape and constrain the decision making of SDNGOs on the selection of beneficiaries for development projects under the process of partnership as service delivery with NMNCs.

2.5.3. Stakeholder Theory

In Sections 2.3 and 2.4 of this chapter, this research demonstrated the exhaustive literature which highlights and suggests that stakeholder theory is one of the significant roots of corporate social responsibility (CSR), as CSR managerial philosophy is based upon a stakeholder primacy viewpoint (Munilla and Miles, 2005, p. 374; Poret, 2014; Fontana, 2018; Ann, 2023). This also includes corporate donations (financial and non-financial resources exchanged) and cross-sector partnership between NMNCs and SDNGOs (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004; Gourville and Rangan, 2004; Pearce and Doh, 2005; Sasse and Trahan, 2007; Arenas, Lozano, and Albareda, 2009; Seitanidi, 2010; Van Huijstee and Glasbergen, 2010; Burchell and Cook, 2013; Poret, 2014; Fontana, 2018; Ann, 2023; Zook, Temple, and Malisa, 2023). However, none of the existing literature implies or addresses how implications of stakeholder theory might interact or imply SDNGO decision making, especially for the process of beneficiary selection in which this study focuses on and considers to be one of the significant processes and practices to the field of development and partnership between the Global North and Global South. Therefore, this sub-section discusses the *field* of stakeholder theory concerning the research topic in order to refine and make use of the existing literature to move forward notions of how stakeholder theory might inform the organisational *habitus* of SDNGOs or, in practice, how stakeholder theory is implemented by the SDNGOs in the process of selecting a beneficiary for the development project under such a relationship. Accordingly, this study uses this set of emerging literature with the empirical evidence obtained from the two organisational case studies to contribute fresh insights and greater understandings to the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

The stakeholder theory was first identified and developed by Freeman (1984). Freeman (1984) first coined the simple idea that stakeholders can be viewed as people who are influenced by and/or can influence the achievement of business goals of an organisation. Additionally, stakeholder theory is based on evaluating relationships between organisations and stakeholders, relying on exchange transactions, power dependencies, legitimacy claims, or other claims to determine what stakeholders

pursue in order to systematically indicate the question of which stakeholders deserve the attention of another group of stakeholders and which ones do not (Mitchell, 1997). The stakeholder theory then holds that, for ethical reasons, an organisation must consider the needs of various individuals and groups who may be directly or indirectly impacted by the organisation's operations (Gibson, 2000). It generally assesses how an organisation relates to both the microenvironment and the macroenvironment and how its activities impact them (Golja and Požega, 2012). Consequently, stakeholder theory posits that various stakeholders influence organizations, exerting pressure that may impact strategies, actions, and decision making (Freeman, 1984; Reith, 2010; AbouAssi and Trent, 2016; Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke, 2023).

Hill and Jones (2012) argue that stakeholder theory is important for successful execution because a project demands consensus among organisational stakeholders. It also arranges a way to identify and address community problems (Walumbao, 2011). According to Danny (2014), project success is almost guaranteed if this process is performed before the project starts. Evidence from research on the implementation of project management practices in international development projects by NGOs (Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni, 2015) also focuses on the stakeholder theory playing an important role as an indicator of project management in practice. Examples of this research consist of stakeholder participations, stakeholder matrices, or the number of stakeholder engagements. Likewise, although stakeholder theory has been widely employed recently by actors across various sectors, Bosibori and Otieno (2021) indicated that NGOs can adopt stakeholder theory to articulate stakeholder engagement in any setting in which they operate, specifically in development projects. In their research, the empirical evidence also recommends that suitable project control can be accomplished by utilizing project management tools which consist of project design planning, identification of stakeholders, and selecting a competent team or key stakeholders including monitoring and evaluation systems. The authors emphasize that this generates a focused approach and consultation among stakeholders that lead to project success (Bosibori and Otieno, 2021, p. 23). Whist this specific area of the literature suggested that stakeholder theory may influence the project success of NGOs alone or with other partners for collaborations (Adem et al., 2018), this thesis argues that it has not attempted to explain how the stakeholder theory informs and

shapes NGOs' decision making under its project management process, particularly its beneficiary selection process. This thesis considers this to be a significant academic gap.

Focusing on the project success, this study moreover denotes that such a notion of stakeholder theory as a factor for improving or using project management in practice has been criticized. Frynas and Yamahaki (2016) debate that stakeholder theory has been analysed as being overly prescriptive, with weak normative grounds and limited explanatory power. From this perspective, the approach of stakeholder theory relies on the normative management theory (Richter and Dow, 2017). This perspective of stakeholder theory targets the development of foundations and procedures for successful management, including provisions for moral agency based on definitions of corporate purpose (Cragg, 2002). However, for this perspective, this thesis argues that this is not surprising for NGOs, as NGOs are social businesses and their obligations are sincerely more greatly associated with stakeholder theories (Ibrahim, 2007).

In addition, considering other critical literature, a study by Golin and colleagues (2015, p. 651) suggests that for development projects, the target beneficiaries in developing countries may not be clearly defined. This is because international development projects are often carried out in challenging environments in terms of social, natural, or political factors. These development projects also associate many stakeholders from different sectors and often have tangible results (education and training, social empowerment, etc.) or outcomes (poverty alleviation, improved living standards, basic human rights protection, etc.) (Youker, 2003). Therefore, for some organisations, the boundaries and implications of stakeholder analysis can be more complex or ambiguous and have different implications. Importantly, Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke (2023, pp. 866) also recently emphasized that while stakeholders play significant roles in the collaborations between NGOs and their partners, there is little empirical evidence and knowledge about how stakeholder pressure influences the process and practices of NGOs under partnerships. Drawing on stakeholder theory, the authors also called for deeper investigations on how donors and partners influence NGOs' decision-making processes on the ground (ibid.). Importantly, most of the existing literature on stakeholder theory focuses on strategic

organisational management, improving project performance, and social impact (from a CSR perspective). No studies have examined how stakeholder theory informs or is implemented in practice by NGOs in order to select beneficiaries. This thesis exploits this academic gap in this sub-literature to explore and contribute a broader understanding of SDNGOs' decision making for choosing potential beneficiaries for development projects when working with NMNCs.

As mentioned earlier in Section 2.3., the exploratory literature above argues that the partnership approaches of NMNCs working with SDNGOs are heavily based on CSR theories and initiatives from NMNCs as NMNCs consider SDNGOs as one of their relevant stakeholders in order to achieve their objectives (Osegowitsch, Trenholm, and McCabe, 2022), especially SDNGOs who have accessibility to the community or other stakeholders who might be considered as target stakeholders of NMNCs. Mu, Xu, and Chen (2024) recently coined this phenomenon as 'stakeholder-oriented CSR', where CSR activities are implemented to satisfy a company's stakeholders from various perspectives. This thesis acknowledges this argumentation of the exploratory literature and locates its research question into the debates of NGOs' roles, processes, and practices in the field of partnership. Hence, in light of this, this study aims at generating a greater understanding of how stakeholder theory, which is considered the core of CSR approaches, informs SDNGOs' decision making in order to select their intended beneficiaries, drawing on the empirical evidence of the two organisational case studies.

2.5.4. Theory of Project Management

In recent years, the development sector has embarked on large-scale development projects, teaming up with other actors from different sectors, including public authorities, governments, MNCs, financial institutions, international organisations, and even NGOs themselves (Michalopoulos, 2017). Under a contractual relationship, many NGOs may recognize this significance in strengthening activities and/or development projects funded by various types of donors (Beck, 2017; Andersen, 2019). In addition, many NGOs may place great emphasis on project management tools to deliver development assistance or development projects to their

beneficiaries (Alkhater, 2021, p. 10), and finally, from this, the project will be reported to the donors. According to Ogunde and colleagues (2017), the theory of project management is one of mankind's oldest and most cherished efforts due to the contributions of draftsmen, designers, and masons.

From the literature of Business Studies, Koskela and Howell (2002, p. 2) contributed the idea that the notion of project management is built on three concepts: management as planning, the dispatch model, and the thermostat model. Firstly, in management as planning, this management approach holds that there is a vigorous informal relationship between the actions of management and organisational outcomes. Secondly, the dispatch model suggests that scheduled assignments could be executed by informing the executor while beginning the task. Thirdly, the thermostat model refers to performance criteria—performance is evaluated at the outcome or output, and potential deviations between the evaluated value and the standard are adopted to modify the methods or means. Accordingly, the expected standard can be delivered (Koskela and Howell, 2002). From their research, the authors also suggest that planning theory, execution theory, control theory, and project theory are essential elements of the theory of project management (Koskela and Howell, 2002, pp. 5–9).

Recently, the concept of project management has been admired and widely accepted in fields around the world. However, the application of project management may change from time to time due to global business or management trends in response to economic and social circumstances, including the discussion of new knowledge. For an example of trends in the effective employment of project management, project goals are achieved or more easily managed in terms of scope, size, and industry and are expected to be completed in the shortest possible time with minimal use of resources, producing high-quality results (Mkutano and Sang, 2018).

With a focus on NGO and Development Studies, there are few studies on the adoption of project management, and they are mostly concentrated on the usage of methodologies and tools in the development field (see the studies of Landoni and Corti, 2011; Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni, 2015). A recent study by Golini, Landoni, and Kalchschmidt (2018), on the basis of questionnaires of about 500 NGOs, shows that log frames are the most commonly used and most important means of

managing development projects in NGOs worldwide (see also Landoni and Corti, 2011).

The Logical Framework (LM), or LogFrame, in terms of international development activities can originally be tracked back to 1969. At this time, it was developed by a duo of U.S. consulting companies (Practical Concepts, Inc., and Fry Associates) for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Solem, 1987). Since then, this logic framework has widely been employed by multiple governmental organisations worldwide (Landoni and Corti, 2011). Although various versions and terminology variations are in use today, the LogFrame retains its typical matrix framework that decomposes the development projects into their constituent components for the perspectives and expectation of management ease (Cracknell, 2000). The most famous edition of this application is the one endorsed by the European Commission (Golini, Landoni, and Kalchschmidt, 2018).

One of the reasons why project management theories, tools, or logical frameworks are used all over the world, both in the Global North and the Global South, especially in the development department, can be fear, risk, or experience of project failure; inefficiency; or ineffectiveness. Various studies have exposed the fact that developing countries, many of them in the Global South, have very high failure rates when implementing projects within their organisations (Bosibori and Otieno, 2021). Reilly's (2015, cited in Bosibori and Otieno, 2021, p. 25) study of the public sector on project management practices indicates that poor management practices account for approximately 30% of public sector project failures. In terms of the project management of NGOs in particular, Gregg and Ana (2016) state that the implementation remains disappointing. As Ochieng (2018) shows, nearly 70% of these projects fall short of resource allocation, including estimated schedule, quality, and budget. Significantly, Andersen (2019) also provided an example from NGOs in the Global North, including its related key stakeholders of their development project in Nigeria, which only presented the positive results, removed mention of any failures, and pretended that failures never occurred. Therefore, project failures are both monotonous and frightening to NGOs, as most projects operate under hardship, limitations, complexity, and unforeseen and inefficient resources. As a result, projects may experience delays and cash flow problems due to poor planning (also see Ika et

al., 2012). In addition, inefficiencies can lead to project abandonment (Bosibori and Otieno, 2021), which can be viewed as an organisational threat by NGOs worldwide.

Looking at the NGOs in developing countries, because of the excessive failure rate, such situations require the need for corporations to cope with, improve, and challenge management. Even though this idea has permeated into a few organisations, Bosibori and Otieno (2021, p. 25) propose that an understanding of the application of the principles to project management practices in developing countries is needed. Moreover, the authors indicate that donors from the Global North are frustrated by the bureaucracy and ineffectiveness of inter-governmental projects. Consequently, donors considered NGOs as an alternative that was more likely to successfully achieve the organisation's project goals in comparison with working with the governments (Turner and Muller, 2015). This ultimately puts pressure on NGOs to engage in better project management.

According to the above dilemmas of project management, Keleckaite and Meiliene (2015, p. 177) argued that for NGOs, specifically NGOs that lack sufficient financial and human resources, the theory of project management can significantly improve communication among project team members, improve work performance, manage resources better, help in building skills, and enhance capacity. Most importantly, simplifying the project management process to achieve project results is the most efficient approach (also see Ismail et al., 2014; Batti, 2015; Montes-Guerra et al., 2015).

While the majority of the project management literature has focused on improvements in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of the development projects, Beck (2017, p. 8) argued that NGO and Development Studies should focus on the interactions of the development projects conducted by NGOs in other dimensions without the view of becoming ‘best’ practices or a ‘best development’ model. On the other hand, Krause (2014, p. 76) criticizes project management tools as logical frameworks that shape rather than determine people's behaviour. They shape the way people think about what they see and know about the world and the underlying tasks of the people in front of them. She also claims that this framework has changed the landscape for all assistance organisations, whether or not the NGO employs the

framework (ibid., p. 77). Significantly, Kontinen and Ndidde (2023, p.106) noted the phenomenon of NGOs being focused on project management theory as having a 'logic of professionalism', coining this term. The authors also argue that such professional substantive and management expertise from global managerialism trends for local NGOs to focus on managing their development projects following the needs and directions of donors might push them away from their own grassroots orientation and activism (ibid.).

Starting with a discussion of project management theory, this thesis argues that the majority of this sub-literature focuses solely on the importance, quality, and improvement of project management by NGOs. No study in the literature has examined how project management theory informs or influences SDNGOs when beneficiary selection is initiated. There is only the little attempt from Krause's (2014, p. 77) study, wherein the author denotes that according to the LogFrame application, the potential beneficiaries may be presented or sold as commodities to higher-level bureaucrats or outside donors while having aid or help delivered by NGOs. Also, later, Kontinen and Ndidde (2023) extended the ideology of the theory of project management as the logic of professionalism of local NGOs in order to explain their attempt to manage their project developments under partnerships in which NGOs might follow partners' or donors' project management requirements until moving away from their own grassroots orientation. This thesis acknowledges both Krause's (2014) critics over the applications of the logical framework and Kontinen and Ndidde's (2023) critics over the logic of professionalism regarding NGOs, as mentioned above; however, this leaves a literature gap as to whether it is true if the notion of the LogFrame or a theory of project management inform or influence SDNGOs' *habitus*. If this is the case, how does such a concept influence and/or how is it implemented in practice by an NGO's decision making in the process of beneficiary selection prior to starting the development project under a cross-sector partnership, especially with the donors coming from the corporate sector in the Global North? This thesis, therefore, addresses the literature gaps in this sub-literature to further provide a deeper understanding from the empirical evidence developed from two organisational case studies and contributes, in its discussions around the findings, to the debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

2.6. Conclusion and Summary of the Limitations of the Existing Literature

As this thesis constructs its central fundamental around the research question of 'who are the chosen poor?', this research approaches NGOs' decision making with the ontological emphasis of *NGO-ism* (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010; Fowler and Biekart, 2013), with this being the point of focus to which it conducts its study on the cross-sector collaboration between SDNGOs and NMNCs in their endeavours toward the development projects in the Global South. This study, therefore, places itself within and contributes to the debates regarding the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership. In this, drawing on the application of Bourdieu's *field* of partnership (Bourdieu, 1977), Sections 2.2 to 2.5 in this chapter utilised the heuristic exploratory literature which acknowledges and argues for the significant weakness of the existing literature of partnership, particularly in the field of NGO and Development Studies. This includes the incapability and failure to move beyond the idealised notions of 'authentic partnership', which in practice, this study argues, rarely exists. On the basis of the viewpoint of 'authentic partnership', it is usually considered 'partnership' passively as a means of entering access to resources, where, in fact, it needs to be viewed as a dynamic process (Lewis, 1999). This chapter suggests that the development field and institutional relations shall be conceptualised by not having an ideal relationship of 'authentic partnership' which is based on mutual interests, goals, and power equality but as 'a battlefield of knowledge' (Long and Long, 1992; Long and Villarreal, 1993; Saasa and Carlsson, 1996).

Therefore, this study does not situate itself in the redundant theoretical and empirical debates of 'authentic partnership' but moves forward understandings by using an epistemology of *field of practice* (Krause, 2014) to re-define and re-conceptualise the *field* of partnership on the ground between SDNGOs and NMNCs. A framework of 'development as service delivery' *(*Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015), discussed in Section 2.3, is employed, for the first time in the field of Development Studies, to assess the relationship between SDNGOs and NMNCs for their development projects. Significantly, a slight attempt from academic research to investigate the relationship between NGOs and MNCs in terms of development as

service delivery in the context of development practice was found. In addition, this chapter has also discussed the particular interconnected academic critiques of NGOs (and SDNGOs) for their roles under the positionality of development as service delivery. As a result, these sets of academic critiques construct and move forward greater understandings to provide useful insights into the debates of roles of NGOs in the field of partnership. This thesis adds to the knowledge in these areas. Moreover, from this emerging perspective, the theoretical departure outlined above initiates another dimensional space to reorient the critical lens on SDNGOs' decision making in selecting their 'intended beneficiaries', one which is separated from the understanding of 'populations in need' (Krause, 2014). The sub-literature in Section 2.4 of this chapter gathers and argues in favour of the critical literature within the *field* to re-conceptualise the possible understandings of 'beneficiaries' via the lens of SDNGOs.

Accordingly, Section 2.5 suggests that there is a set of potential complex internal and external organisational drivers that might potentially shape, constrain, or inform NGOs' *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977) on decision making during the process of beneficiary selection for development projects in the Global South in partnership with MNCs from the Global North. These provisional internal and external organisational drivers include (1) the conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the willingness, capacity, and capability of the beneficiary; (3) the stakeholder theory; and (4) the theory of project management. However, there is a limited number of existing studies and debates, from both academics and practitioners, concerning such topics. This is another significant area of focus that this study aims at contributing original research to from the different dimension of development practice with a focus on SDNGOs' selection and identification of their potential 'beneficiaries' from the entirety of 'populations in need'. This study considers this as another set of significant contributions, with fresh insights emerging from the empirical data obtained from the two organisational case studies, adding to the literature and key debates about NGOs' roles, processes, and practices in the field of partnership between the Global North and Global South.

In addition, this thesis also draws upon the original contributions of a range of theoretical and methodological applications for data collection and analysis (which is later discussed in detail in Chapter 3 but is also included in terms of its limitation here

for the ease of structuring this research) for use with two SDNGO organisational case studies in Thailand. These applications include Krause's *field of practice*; Bourdieu's *habitus*, *capital*, and *field* from his 'theory of practice'; and Bendell's and Bank, Hulme, and Edwards' NGO characteristic identification frameworks.

Lastly, a summary of the main contributions to the existing central literature and key debates is provided in Table 2.1 below. The next chapter presents the theory and methodology of this study.

Table 2.1. Summary of the limitations of the existing literature.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Fowler (2008); Fowler and Malunga (2010)	Ontology of *'NGO-ism'*, the ways NGOs think, act, and interact with a range of issues in a changing social and political environment.	Theoretical/ontological approach.	Application of this ontological approach to the two selected SDNGOs in Thailand in different situations of delivering development projects to NMNCs.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Krause (2014)	Epistemology of *field of practice* within humanitarian relief organisations in East Africa.	Theoretical/epistemological approach.	(1) Application of this epistemological approach to re-define and re-conceptualise the *field* of partnership between SDNGOs and NMNCs from the existing theoretical and empirical literature on development studies. (2) Application of this epistemological approach to two SDNGO case studies in Thailand for delivering development projects with NMNCs.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Bourdieu (1977); Bourdieu (1989); Bourdieu (1990); Bourdieu (1991); Bourdieu (1992); Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992); Bourdieu (1994); Bourdieu (1996); Bourdieu (1999); Bourdieu (2006) Bourdieu (2010); Moore (2012)	Grand theory of 'theory of practice', later employed by scholars of Development Studies such as Ebrahim's (2005) organisational change and NGO–funder relations, Bebbington's (2007) development studies and development alternatives, Krause's (2008, 2014) decision making on humanitarian organisations, Bristow's (2008) SDNGO transformation on training health promoters, and Pickering-Saqqa's (2019) NDNGOs' decision making on domestic programmes.	Theoretical/methodological/analytical approach.	(1) Application of the concept of *field* as a theoretical, methodological, and analytical tool for assessing the *field* of partnership. (2) Use of the concept of *habitus* as a methodological and analytical tool to examine how the organisational *habitus* of SDNGOs on decision making is shaped, constrained, and made to select their beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs. (3) Use of the concept of *capital* as an analytical tool to examine how the *capital* of beneficiaries affect an SDNGO's decision-making process in terms of

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
			selecting their beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs. (4) All contributions above move forward the understandings of SDNGOs on partnership and development studies from daily practices and engage more with theory.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Bendell (2000); Bank, Hulme, and Edwards (2015)	Bendell (2000) offers an NGO characteristic identification framework of typology of NGOs working with/against the private sector, whilst Bank, Hulme, and Edwards (2015) offer a framework of contrasting orientations and attributes of MBOs and development NGOs.	Methodological approach/Development Studies/partnership/ NGO.	Development of these frameworks as a methodological application to identify and select two SDNGOs in Thailand by their partnership and orientation characteristics in order to generate new empirical data.
IMF (2006); Bendell, Collins and Roper (2010); Kumi et al. (2023); van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole (2023)	Calls on research on development and partnership studies in the Global South to move away from Africa and India to instead focus on other developing countries in Asia.	Empirical studies/ partnership/ Development Studies/ International Development Studies.	Collecting and generating empirical data from two SDNGO case studies in Thailand where no evidence on partnership with NMNCs was found.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Crane (1998); Austin (2000); Elkington and Fennell (2000); Murphy and Coleman (2000); United Nations (2000); Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright (2004); Brehm (2004); Guo and Acar (2005); Seitanidi and Ryan (2007); Austin and Seitanidi (2012a); Austin and Seitanidi (2012b); Burgos (2013); Kolk (2014); O'Connor and Shumate (2014)	Empirical studies offering concepts of participatory development, functional partnership, trust-based partnership, formal partnership, and language of partnership in the global development agenda coined by intuitions and donors in the Global North—all based on the concept of 'authentic partnership'.	Empirical studies/ partnership/ International Development Studies.	Moving forward understandings beyond the concept of 'authentic partnership' by (1) drawing critiques from the exploratory literature of a framework of development as service delivery and (2) providing new sets of empirical data based on two SDNGO case studies in Thailand.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Banks, Hulme, and Edwards (2015); AbouAssi and Trent (2016); Lalzai, (2020); Esposito and Antonucci (2022); Khan (2023); Kinsbergen et al., (2023); van Wessel (2023)	Revisiting the old publication in 1996 *'Too Close for Comfort'* and highlighting concerns of weak roots in civil society and of technocracy, as well as bridging opportunities to suggest that adopting new roles as a 'service delivery provider' to governments and development institutional donors of NGOs could challenge their identity.	Empirical studies/ Development Studies/International Development Studies/ NGO.	Use of development as a service delivery framework to bring new sets of empirical data of SDNGOs working with NMNCs, enabling and providing empirical evidence for further conceptualisation and theorisation of this phenomenon.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Fowler (1991); Theunis (1992); Hoyer (1994); Edwards and Hulme (1996); Hulme and Mosley (1996); Folwer (1997); Muchunguzi and Milne (1997); Sobhan (1997); Lewis (1998); Lewis (1999); Brehm (2004); Hoksbergen (2005); Fowler and Malunga (2010); Reith (2010); Bebbington, Hickey, and Mitlin (2013); Hulme and Edwards (2013); Banks, Hulme, and Edwards (2015); AbouAssi and Trent (2016); Lalzai, (2020); Esposito and Antonucci (2022);	Four major challenges to the critiques of roles of NGOs, especially in the Global South, as service delivery providers of development projects, affecting their organisational decision making.	Empirical studies/ Development Studies/International Development Studies/ NGO.	Drawing the study's working hypotheses from these four major challenges and from critiques of development as service delivery to examine SDNGOs' decision making toward their beneficiary selection, which facilitates empirical evidence for further critical understandings.

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Kontinen and Ndidde (2023)			

Key Literature	Main Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Gap and Original Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Research
Edwards (2008); Shutt (2009); Hulme and Edwards (2013); Wallace and Porter (2013); Krause (2014); Beck (2017); Chege (2023); van Wessel (2023); Kontinen and Bawole (2023)	Empirical studies on NGOs' decision making and relationships with their beneficiaries in terms of perspectives of service delivery with governments and institutional donors from the development industry—the proposed claims of populations in need/ development projects as products and beneficiaries as commodities.	Empirical studies/ Development Studies/International Development Studies/ NGO.	(1) Generating and providing a new differentiated set of empirical data from SDNGO–NMNC partnership case studies for development projects focusing on decision-making processes of beneficiary selections. (2) Conducting further research into SDNGOs' decision making that is shaped and constrained by organisations' conceptualisation of poverty; stakeholder theory; theory of project management; and the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries.

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Chapter 3: Theory and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This thesis aims at exploring and understanding how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs. The principal goal of this chapter is to outline the parameters of this study as well as to explain the theoretical and methodological approaches that this study adopts. Chapter 2 explored the literature and located these questions in debates of SDNGOs' decision making, processes and practices under cross-sector collaborations with NMNCs for development projects. Four issues, namely, (1) the conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the stakeholder theory; (3) the willingness, capacity, and capability of potential beneficiaries; and (4) the theory of project management, are derived from the literature and hypotheses that are considered potential drivers toward beneficiary selections of their collaborative development projects. This dimension of understanding of SDNGOs is one that is under-researched.

As this study, including the working possible drivers explored in Chapter 2, situates itself within the discipline of Development Studies, it is important to consider the various epistemological, ontological, and theoretical applications and positions from the Development Studies and NGO literature that have been used for a variety of development issues in both the Global North and South. Over time, scholars and practitioners have used a range of approaches via cross-disciplinary areas in undertaking various methods to tackle development and NGO issues. This PhD study acknowledges those existing diverse methods but only adopts the most appropriate and useful ones to answer the central research questions.

Therefore, the first section of this chapter summarises the conceptual overview of this study, including its interpretivist ontological approach, drawing

on the concept of *NGO-ism*; its epistemological basis in the concept of *field of practice* (Krause, 2014) and Bourdieu's (1977) notion of *field*; and the research positionality and reflexivity, reflecting on the perspectives in the literature and drawing on the experiences and background of the author. It then moves to explain the theoretical and methodological approaches by adapting Bourdieu's (1992) 'theory of practice' as an analytical tool, drawing on his themes of *field*, *habitus*, and *capital* as a means of understanding the decision-making processes of SDNGOs on their beneficiary selection within development projects with NMNCs. Finally, this chapter establishes the rationale for the conscious options, discussed and explained in the design of this research for investigating the assumptions, perceptions, and decisions behind theories and methodologies adopted by this study. A summary of the approach to data collection and analysis is provided at the end of this chapter.

3.2. Conceptual Overview, Ontology, and Epistemology

3.2.1. Conceptual Overview: Conceptual and Analytical Frameworks

This thesis has the aim of understanding who the 'chosen poor' are by exploring SDNGOs' decision making in partnership with NMNCs working on development projects. The aim is to understand the two main research questions: (1) How do Southern development NGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries for development projects supported by MNCs from the Global North? (2) What implications do Southern development NGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs? Thus, in order to adequately provide answers to these questions on how this selection process is employed, it was necessary for this research to situate itself in an ontological and epistemological framework that would allow sufficient data to be obtained and that these data could be used to effectively answer the research question. This section provides a conceptual overview of the research and explains the choice of ontological and epistemological frameworks that this research establishes itself in. The framing of the research in this way further

enables this thesis to be situated in the recent debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

Given a brief discussion on the ideology of 'authentic partnership' as a critical conceptual starting point of this study (a full discussion is provided in Chapter 2), the majority of the NGO literature tends to conduct its research on the basis of notions of (authentic) partnership as solidarity, which is "constructed in order to mean equal power among participants, with possibly responsibilities" (Pickard, 2007, p. 576). On the basis of this perspective, it is generally assumed that partnerships between Global North and Global South institutions and within or outside the sectors should enable more efficient and effective results of the use of shared resources in order to achieve sustainability (Lister, 1999, p. 3), as well as to create values and benefits to actors and participants in achieving their mutual goals. In contrast, the variety of partnership in reality is broad (see Pickard, 2007), and not at all of it necessarily encompasses 'power equality', which ranges from partner–partner, to donor–recipient, to client–subcontractor relations (Schöneberg, 2016, p. 73), especially the collaborations between Global North and Global South (Wessel, Kontinen and Bawole 2023), where complexities and conditionalities exist and seem to be the recent critical challenges and debates of the roles, processes, and practices of SDNGOs in the field of partnership.

In Chapter 2, the rigorous exploratory literature denotes the significant weakness of the existing literature of partnership, particularly in the discipline of Development Studies, in terms of its incapability and failure to move beyond identifying forms of relationships and measuring these forms. The majority of the literature views the relationships based on the ideal concepts of 'authentic partnership' which rarely exist on the ground. By conducting research based on the ideology of 'authentic partnership', it is usually considered a passive 'partnership' that acts as a means of entering access to resources when, in fact, it needs to be viewed as a dynamic process (Lewis, 1999). To move notions of this study beyond the ideal authenticity of partnership, it is suggested that development interventions and institutional relations should be conceptualised not as an ideal relationship based on mutual interests and goals but as 'a

battlefield of knowledge' (Long and Long, 1992; Long and Villarreal, 1993; Saasa and Carlsson, 1996). This study, therefore, moves beyond the ubiquitous debates and critiques on the existing extensive literature which are based on the normative perspective of 'authentic partnership' and instead employs the perspective of 'development as service delivery' (Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015) in order to further explore the diverse interactions, practices, and experiences from the *field* of practices on the ground that take place under the label 'SDNGOs' with the Northern institutions from the private sector, NMNCs.

From this conceptual starting point and the central research questions aiming to explore how SDNGOs choose the intended beneficiaries for the development projects under cross-sector collaboration with NMNCs, the conceptual framework of this thesis is thus built upon a qualitative and interpretivist ontological approach that uses the ontological approach of *NGO-ism* (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010; Fowler and Biekart, 2013) and the epistemological application of the *field of practice* (Krause, 2014). Adopting a qualitative paradigm based in constructivism and interpretivism allows this thesis to develop an in-depth understanding of how Southern development NGOs (SDNGOs) define, choose, and approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects supported by Northern multinational corporations (NMNCs). This ontological approach facilitates a deeper understanding of the social meanings and realities constructed by the key stakeholders involved in their development projects, not only SDNGOs and NMNCs but also the populations in need (potential beneficiaries) and the chosen poor (intended beneficiaries) (Krause, 2014).

In using the concept of *NGO-ism* (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010; Fowler and Biekart, 2013) as a central framework to understanding the roles, identities, and development processes of SDNGOs, this thesis moves beyond traditional debates of 'authentic partnership' by employing the positionality of 'development as service delivery' (Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015) to explore practical interactions, dynamic processes, and daily practices of SDNGOs in their decision-making processes. In order to answer central

research questions, *NGO-ism* involves not only the activities and roles of NGOs but also the assumptions, expectations, and performance values attributed to them by various stakeholders. This perspective allows SDNGOs to self-define within the broader third sector, focusing on their interactions and decision-making processes, which might be influenced by internal and external significant drivers under their contractual relationships with NMNCs. Following from this, this research also utilises four provisional internal and external organisational drivers, namely, (1) the conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the willingness, capacity, and capability of the beneficiary; (3) the stakeholder theory; and (4) the theory of project management, that might potentially shape, constrain, or inform SDNGOs' habitus (Bourdieu, 1977; Pickering-Saqqa, 2019). In this way, habitus is used as a way of understanding the dimensions of SDNGO decision making (Pickering-Saqqa, 2019) during the process of beneficiary selection for development projects in partnership with NMNCs. The use of the *NGO-ism* framework together with the four provisional internal and external organisational drivers thus allows this thesis to explore the processes of SDNGO–NMNC partnerships and answer the research question of who are the 'chosen poor'.

In order to build up the exploratory literature review as working hypotheses and to analyse the empirical data from two organisational case studies, the epistemological notion of the *field of practice* (Krause, 2014), informed by Bourdieu's (1992) 'theory of practice', is also employed in this thesis to analyse the meso-level interactions between SDNGOs and NMNCs, considering the field of partnership as a space where shared meanings and interpretations mediate between values on the ground and external interests. By mapping this field, this thesis uncovers the interconnections and practical implications of these partnerships, particularly how they affect the decision-making processes of SDNGOs regarding beneficiary selection and project development. This is done through the use of Bourdieu's (1977) concepts of *field*, *capital*, and *habitus*, which are used in this thesis as theoretical and analytical tools to understand the decision-making processes of SDNGOs in their partnerships with NMNCs, including the interconnections and practical implications of these partnerships; how different types of resources influence

the practices and decision-making processes of SDNGOs; and how the dispositions, values, and strategies of SDNGOs (shaped by their past experiences and interactions) influence their decision-making processes, respectively. Critical reflexivity is also maintained throughout this research to acknowledge both insider and outsider perspectives, which ensures a balanced and thorough understanding of the research topics while recognizing the power dynamics and complex mechanisms at play. This conceptual and analytical framework allows for the generation of empirical evidence through the research process of this thesis, developing understandings and discussions on SDNGO–NMNC partnerships in order to answer the thesis's central core research question of 'who are the chosen poor?' as a necessary contribution to the field of NGO and Development Studies.

3.2.2. Qualitative and Interpretivist Ontological Approach

To address the main research concerns and purposes of this thesis, it is necessary to first discuss the debates on qualitative and quantitative research as an emerging ontological, methodological, and analytical justification, since the academic research on development and NGO studies outlined in Chapter 2 utilised both qualitative and quantitative (and mixed methods) methodologies in various ways. The qualitative and quantitative paradigms, in the paradigm of debates, are most likely incomparable. Because they focus on different occurrences, they are originally from different paradigms. The positivist approach supports the quantitative paradigm, which is characterized by objective reality, empirical evidence, and independence from people's experience (Sellitz, Wrightsman, and Cook, 1976).

As stated by Bryman (1984, p. 77), the quantitative approach involves replicability, objectivity, and causality, whereas the qualitative approach focuses on observing the social environment through the eyes of the actor. People believe the quantitative approach is more trustworthy than the qualitative approach because it provides empirical indicators, particularly numbers. Even though it enables people to access objective truth, the quantitative approach may not be appropriate for all research topics. The

inclusive comprehension of humans cannot be measured by indicators from many scales. Comparatively speaking, qualitative research seems to be a better approach to understanding people's lives. However, one technique should not be compared to another, and one technique should not be thought of as better than the other. There will always be some research topics where one technique is a better fit.

In contrast to quantitative research, the qualitative paradigm depends on constructivism and interpretivism, which are both intertwined with numerous realities and the building of reality by the researcher (Sellitz, Wrightsman, and Cook, 1976). According to Berger and Luckman (1966 p. 45), reality is continually changing and socially produced. Qualitative research helps us to understand how people construct and conceptualise reality and how they comprehend and interpret this social event. One social phenomenon cannot be judged by a single standard; rather, it is related to several realities, each of which depends on the interpretation and experience of the individual. Moreover, Bryman (2007, p. 9) emphasises how these two approaches differ from one another, each of which is intended to identify unique study issues. This is so that we can respond to various studies, as each of them has a unique paradigm.

For this study, there are two central research questions: (1) How do Southern development NGOs define, choose, and approach their potential intended beneficiaries for development projects supported by NMNCs? (2) What implications do Southern development NGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs? Therefore, the qualitative paradigm is considered to be an appropriate fit for these research issues since it enables the collection of various social event realities. Furthermore, quantitative research is not necessary for this thesis since its purpose is to explore the explanations and gain deeper understandings of SDNGOs and their various stakeholders.

Because each social circumstance can be understood differently, employing qualitative research also allows this thesis to explore many social realities. Social circumstances and phenomena may not always exist, yet they

are nonetheless constructed by society. For instance, the entirety of 'populations in need' and the chosen beneficiaries for the development initiatives provided by SDNGOs and NMNCs may have distinct attitudes, tendencies, mindsets, and behaviours according to this paradigm. Therefore, the qualitative approach is appropriate for this thesis because it provides various social meanings and enables the researcher to comprehend how individuals build reality, through interviews that extract social meaning from respondents, for example.

In accordance with the qualitative method, this thesis also adopts an interpretivist ontology, which is considered appropriate to work with contested notions and allows for knowledge claims for the critical deep understanding of SDNGOs under partnerships for development projects with NMNCs as service delivery providers[1]. Due to the positivist subjective criticism, the interpretivism approach was developed. Interpretivism views individuals as distinct from physical phenomena due to the assumption that people generate deeper meanings that cannot be explored in the same way that scientific things are. Hence, it is important to distinguish between natural science and social science research. The interpretivism approach considers numerous historical, cultural, and social contexts in which it contributes to development through diverse social experiences. The interpretivist approach aims at incorporating richness into the learned insights as opposed to positivism's attempt to provide simple, universal laws which could be employed to anyone without considering certain key components and variables (Myers, 2008; Bhattacherjee, 2012; Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

There are four primary methods for interpretivist research (Bryman, 2008; Littlejohn and Foss, 2009). First, hermeneutics is the interpretation and comprehension of philosophy. Biblical and philosophical writings are the main sources used. Second, phenomenology is the study of the way to understand the universe through the direct observation of phenomena. Third, symbol

[1] There are a number of studies on development and NGO studies in particular that have adopted an interpretivist philosophical approach since the 1990s until the present (see Gómez, 1998; Mpofu, 2019; Lalzai and Rana, 2020; Jewu, 2021).

interactionism considers symbols to be social objects that help people comprehend one another. According to this thought, it is believed that symbols provide resources for reality construction (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020, p. 42). Lastly, the examination of cognition and perception is emphasized by *Verstehen* from the viewpoint of research patients or participants in order to understand the reasons of the occurrence of a phenomenon or a particular behaviour (Ryan, 2018, pp. 8–9).

Nevertheless, Interpretivism has a 'relativist' ontological perspective (Ryan, 2018, p. 9). There is no single shared reality, according to relativist theory, and the only way to know reality is through societal constructions of meaning (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). For example, beneficiaries might have their own views, assumptions, or experiences in terms of the development aid provided, informed by their interactions with NGOs, government agencies, community leaders, donors, other related stakeholders, or from previous experiences. This supports the idea that different people perceive reality differently, leading to multiple realities. Meanings are described as the groups that comprise a participant's conception of reality and with which actions are defined. These groups include culture, norms, understanding, social reality, and definitions of the setting. According to Krauss (2005), meanings are fundamental to human existence as they are the most basic element of the social environment.

However, for this thesis, there are two relevant critiques against perspectivism that need to be considered for theoretical and methodological approaches. Firstly, Ryan (2018, p. 42) disputes that since the interpretive research rejects information as a foundation basis shared as a general law, questions its validity, and calls for standards other than those used in the positivist paradigm, it might have its own criticism. However, this thesis never aims to develop knowledge or construct an academic contribution as a universal law but instead offers more thorough understandings of the research topics from different case studies. Such an absolute truth is not at all taken as the aim of this thesis. As for the validity and research criteria, Section 3.4 later

in this chapter discusses the validity and criteria of sampling selection through research design.

Secondly, the assumption of the interpretivist approach is that reality is subjective and able to vary depending on the viewpoint of the individuals. However, this thesis employs an epistemological application of *field of practice* and Bourdieu's concept of *field* which allows it to have the capacity to gain a more thorough understanding by exploring a wider range of views, voices, and contexts of different stakeholders by using SDNGOs as centres to learn from more perspectives within the interactive space. Greater details of the epistemological and theoretical applications are discussed later in Sections 3.2.4 and 3.3.

3.2.3. *NGO-ism* Ontology

The interpretivist approach enables this study to contribute to the critical academic notions of roles, identities, and development processes of SDNGOs, which this thesis aligns with the concept of *NGO-ism* (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010) in a changing world order. This is to define NGOs under the recent changing social and political environment which showcases the ontological approach of *NGO-ism* (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010; Fowler and Biekart, 2013), bringing the focus of this study towards what SDNGOs address and interact with in terms of the conditions and environment around them. Whilst an extensive amount of NGO literature in the discipline of Development Studies is prone to situating itself in the normative debate that is based on the concept of 'authentic partnership', this study moves beyond the existing extensive literature in order to re-conceptualise and investigate the diverse partnership *field* of practices on the ground that takes place under the label of 'SDNGOs' with NMNCs in terms of the ways in which to consider the real practical interactions between them.

However, this research is mindful that organisational studies in the discipline of NGO and Development Studies might have a wide range of different definitions as to how organisations interact, coincide, dominate, divide,

or facilitate. Most importantly, from summing up almost 500 studies in Chapter 2, this research finds that the majority of key studies of cross-sector collaborations or social partnerships between companies and NGOs, including MNCs and NGOs in particular, focus on the co-creation values, power dynamics, partnership improvement, methods, and status of such relationships between two actors. There has only been a slight attempt to study the process of being an NGO, what an NGO is doing, or how an NGO is NGO-ised in its partnership with an MNC. Most scholars focus on the partnership itself or the effects of the partnership as the ontological focus of their studies.

In addition, Fowler and Biekart (2013, p. 466) add that *NGO-ism* is not only about processes of the being or doing of NGOs but could also be assumptions, expectations, and performance values of *public benefit* (including beneficiaries) towards being NGOs. Therefore, there is a challenge to incorporate *NGO-ism* into the development and especially under the cross-sector partnership with NMNCs. As an example of its application, Xaba (2015) conducted an NGO study in post-apartheid South Africa toward *NGO-ism* and the perpetual tutelage of communities. The study questioned functions and capacity transfers between NGOs to communities from their development projects against *NGO-ism*. This thesis also takes a similar approach to *NGO-ism* to answer the central research questions.

To this extent, the ontological application discussed above allows SDNGOs to self-define, within the domains (means and ends) of the 'third sector', in order to focus on what SDNGOs think, do, and interact with based on the understandings and practices of their staff members, board of trustees, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and other relevant stakeholders through either informal and formal structures of decision making (Heyse, 2016) or characterisations as organisations under cross-sector collaborations with NMNCs, alongside the processes of neo-liberalism through a contractual relationship for the development projects (Fowler, 2000; Ebrahim, 2005).

3.2.4. Field of Practice: An Epistemological Application

As mentioned earlier in Section 3.2.2 on the second critique of interpretivism relevant to this PhD study, Hilhorst (2003) denotes that academics and researchers in NGO and Development Studies need to consider all relevant stakeholders and see how NGOs relate and interact with those stakeholders in order to understand the networks and linkages that exist between individuals or agencies at points where different, and often incompatible, social fields or life worlds intersect (Long, 1999, p. 1), for example, in interactions between a variety of different stakeholders of NGOs (Hilhorst, 2003, p. 214)[2]. By doing so, this study employs the notion of *field of practice* as an epistemological application, informed by the work of Krause (2014)[3].

In her study focusing on humanitarian relief organisations, Krause (2014) uses the concept of *field of practice* to provide neo-institutional analyses of *fields* which directs the notions of analysis to a meso level between organisational interactions and large-scale structures. This epistemology focuses on a specific *field* of partnership, complementing insights on a single organisation and model or process designed to demonstrate which SDNGOs and NMNCs interact with each other. Therefore, a *field of practice* is a 'realm' in which actors take each other into account (Powell and DiMaggio, 2001). Krause (2014, p. 22) develops the idea of a *field of practice* as a space of 'shared taken-for-granteds' and interpretations, as well as a means to mediate between values, ideas, and problems on the ground, on the one hand, and outside interests, on the other. It is evident that Krause (2014) developed this epistemological application by heavily drawing from Bourdieu's (1977) terms *doxa* and *field,* elements of his grand theory, the 'theory of practice' (Bourdieu, 1992), described as follows:

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[2] Hilhorst (2003, p. 214–9) refers to the concept of 'room for manoeuvre' and the interface analysis approach.

[3] This epistemological application is also used in order to re-conceptualise and avoid the definitional hazard of partnership as 'authentic partnership', as discussed in Chapter 2.

> ... a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence … they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power … whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions ... (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 97).

According to the epistemological application of *field of practice* (Krause, 2014), this study works with and interplays against the *field* of partnership in order to trace the ways in which the 'language of partnership', 'authentic partnership', and 'development as service delivery' surface across a range of texts, individuals, and spaces.

In June 2017, I produced an initial mapping of the *field* of partnership. From this preliminary ensemble of ideas of the theoretical and empirical literature, a number of potential interconnections started to emerge which helped to structure further conceptual and empirical reading until I was able to form a clearer sense of the practical partnership that occurs on the ground.

After conducting the pilot study and first fieldwork in Thailand in November–December 2017, I gained some critical empirical insights on the ground; therefore, I later developed another mapping of the *field* of partnership which helps to unlock and uncover a series of interconnections between individuals, institutions, academia, and practice. Moreover, by using this cartographic approach, I was able to begin identifying how the *field* of partnership in practice could affect the decision making of SDNGOs for development projects under partnerships with NMNCs as service delivery providers (for example, links of historical shifts of development as service delivery from PPP to the private sector, the paternalism of such institutional relationships, donor conceptualisation, and populations in need against the intended beneficiaries). Such a process, informed by Bourdieu's concept of the *field,* occurred iteratively back and forth since I started conducing this study until I reached the writing process.

Furthermore, in alignment with the re-conceptualisation of partnership in development as service delivery, this study advances the understandings drawn from the challenges and critiques of partnerships with NMNCs to situate itself in the debates around the roles of SDNGOs and the effects of the ways in which SDNGOs make decisions. This study focuses of SDNGOs' decision making in terms of how to define, select, and approach their intended beneficiaries from the 'populations in need' for development projects in order to achieve their organisational long-term goals, but also, in the meantime, to deliver satisfactory results back to NMNCs as donors.

Accordingly, setting out working hypotheses in Chapter 2, based in the empirical and theoretical literature, this study also locates itself in debates about theories of poverty, stakeholder theory, the capacities and willingness of potential beneficiaries and institutional drivers, and the practices of these subjects that may be the significant drivers on SDNGOs' decision making toward their beneficiary selections under partnership development projects with NMNCs. By adapting the *field of practice* (Krause, 2014) as an epistemological application to investigate the *field* of partnership for this study, two organisational case studies of SDNGOs in Thailand were purposively selected, from which the qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the staff, board of trustees, corporate donors, beneficiaries, and non-beneficiaries, including the use of focus groups and drawing on archive and corporate documents of SDNGOs and NMNCs. This analytical case study application was adopted in order to answer the central research questions and research objectives (Yin, 2003). Greater detail of the case study design is provided in Section 3.4.1 of this chapter.

In accordance with the central research questions of this study, it focuses on how SDNGOs make decisions on their beneficiary selection processes where they are situated in the *field* of partnership with NMNCs as service delivery providers. This *field* is reflected and linked back to the ideology of the 'theory of practice' coined by Bourdieu (1977; 1989; 1994; 1996; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

This thesis considers Bourdieu's theory of practice, which includes the ways in which the concepts of *field* and *capital* facilitate and offer the ability to consider how an organisational *habitus* on decision making is informed, shaped, or enacted in practice. This offers potential analytical implications to examine the SDNGOs' decision making toward beneficiary selections for development projects with NMNCs as service delivery providers from the design of this thesis's theoretical framework in order to discover and develop the provisional hypotheses and to analyse the collected data for answering central research questions. Significantly, these theoretical and methodological frameworks will examine the effects of roles of SDNGOs as service delivery providers for development projects with NMNCs on their organisational *habitus* against the ontological concept of *NGO-ism* and their impacts on the knowledge of the international development context, aid interventions, and development studies.

The organisational *habitus* of SDNGOs is used in this study to investigate how SDNGOs and NMNCs interact and how project developments are influenced by the institutional implications of their intended beneficiaries (who were helped) and the rest of the populations in need (who were not helped, i.e., non-beneficiaries), which is consequently key to understanding social reality and *NGO-ism* in the Global South. These are important as this study views 'development' as *interactive processes* that a diverse range of meanings, assumptions, attitudes, interconnections, and conflicts interpenetrate while adjustment, struggle, and reinterpretation are still taking place (Hilhorst, 2003).

Beck (2017, p. 4) suggests that what happens on the ground is composed of international development trends, development model products, and formal politics, and this is also structured by how "different stakeholders engage to each individual and with materials (technologies, databases, paper, and assessment reports) over time in a specific context" (ibid.). Therefore, it is not possible to ask what development does for individuals without asking what individuals do for development. This thesis also makes use of this complication in order to diversify and identify the stakeholders involved with the development projects by SDNGOs and NMNCs.

3.2.5. Research Positionality and Reflexivity

As this study moves its positionality beyond the debates of 'authentic partnership' in order to explore the diverse interactions, experiences, and practices that take place under the label 'SDNGOs' within the re-defined and re-conceptualised *field* of partnership with NMNCs on the ground, the working hypotheses of this study are drawn up from theoretical and empirical literature with interconnections under the fields of partnership, NGO management, and Development Studies. In order to situate the positionality of this study, from this point of view, firstly, it is necessary to avoid the one-dimensional analysis of characteristics of some post-development literature that appears to construct dichotomies between 'good' and 'bad' including imperialists and anti-imperialists, wherein 'donors' or 'developers' are the Eurocentric imperialists in opposition to the open-minded, anti-imperialist critical researcher Self (for instance, Apffel-Marglin and Marglin, 1996).

Secondly, some of the research from the partnership and NGO management literature tends to seek evidence of and to suggest the effectiveness of NGOs in order to present their values in the development industry with the purpose of addressing recent challenges and critiques. These characteristics are frequently situated in the normative debates of either post-developmentalism, positivist empiricism, or post-modernism. These sorts of 'effectiveness' elements are considered problematic in that they interfere with the understandings of a variety of complex mechanisms between actors in the *field* that might be changing all the time, especially under different social contexts.

Thirdly, the extensive literature reveals its problematic concerns of development as service delivery as it is used as a power-relation form for the donors in order to enforce their own agendas on the development project approaches and activities of the SDNGOs which are considered *patronising* and *paternalistic* (Theunis, 1992). This paternalism reflects the fact that the classic equitation from colonialism, between the colonised 'Other' and the 'child', is still functioning on new modes of partnerships in modern development

(see Pieterse, 1992; McClintock, 1995; Baaz, 2005). Consequently, paternalism of donors remains in order to characterise SDNGOs in which the donors hold the power to make a decision (Baaz, 2005, p. 168). To move forward the critical understandings beyond the existing rich literature on donors' paternalism, this study acknowledges the power of donors that exists in the *field*. However, it rather views 'partnership' and 'development' as "neither an ideal nor a catastrophe" but rather an 'object' of study (de Sardan, 2005, p. 25; also see Pieterse, 2001; Baaz, 2005). This study, therefore, rejects all three positions of post-developmentalism, post-modernism, and colonialism but situates itself within the investigation and exploration of SDNGOs in development as service delivery.

Significantly, while this study does not claim to represent SDNGOs in general or in other contexts, it aims to reveal the complexity of development issues through the lens of Thailand's unique socio-political landscape. By utilising insightful resources from SNGOs, NMNCs, and development projects in Thailand, this study highlights the intricacies and challenges faced within the country, one of the significant development locations of the Global South. Thailand serves as a critical case study, offering insights into the broader implications for Development Studies, not only for Thailand itself, but also at both regional and global levels. This positionality acknowledges the specificities of Thailand's context, contributing valuable knowledge that may resonate with similar or different contexts worldwide, thereby enriching the discourse on the development practices.

From the interpretivist ontological starting points and research positionality of this research provided above, it is also necessary to explain how this study is shaped by the researcher's underlying assumptions of the research objectives, epistemological strands, ontology, analysis, human nature, and methodology.

After my undergraduate graduation, I started working at The American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand as a Membership Relations Assistant for

almost a year. My job was to develop and maintain relationships with over 2,000 American companies as well as companies from other countries from the Global North who operate businesses in Thailand. One of the responsibilities that I had was to encourage those corporate members to conduct corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes in Thailand. Every month, we invited speakers to talk on several topics related to CSR programmes, and every year, we organised AMCHAM's CSR Excellence (ACE) Recognition Programme, which has honoured member organisations that create long-term economic and social benefits in Thailand's communities. Over the years, the programme has grown in size, from two companies receiving ACE awards in 2007 to 62 member companies that carried out CSR programs in 2016.

Since then, I moved to a role as an assistant consultant at Kenan Institute Asia (K.I.Asia), a local NGO that aims to promote sustainability in South East Asia. K.I.Asia's work is based on 'development projects' for education, healthcare, and economic and sustainable development. All the projects are funded by institutional donors such as the UN, Global Fund, USAID, governments, INGOs, and of course NMNCs that are based in Thailand. During my three years with K.I.Asia, my main responsibility was as the project manager of four development projects. Two of them were funded by the CSR programme of Citibank that were partnered with UNDP and other local organisations for a financial literacy development project for at-risk women in Bangkok and a social and environment development project for small hotels in Bangkok and Central Thailand. Moreover, I initiated a peace-building development project funded by USAID in order to build learning capacity and entrepreneurial skills for local high-school students of 10 communities in the conflict areas of three southern provinces of Thailand. Lastly, I organised the Thailand NGO Awards programme from 2011 to 2013. This project was co-funded by The Rockefeller Foundation in New York and The Resource Alliance in London. Being a project manager of this awards programme, I travelled across the country to organise workshops for NGO capacity building whilst promoting the awards at the same time. Each year, there were over 400 NGOs in attendance, and over 100 NGOs applied for the awards.

From my brief background provided above, I realise that my working experiences have shaped and linked my research starting points on CSR programmes of NMNCs, cross-sectoral partnerships, project developments, and SDNGOs. Moreover, as I am Thai, I am aware that for the case study location, I am an *insider*. During data collection and analysis, I was aware that I might have taken advantage of being an insider in terms of information accessibility, language advantage, and local contexts. However, having an awareness of taking insider advantages, I also claim myself as an *outsider* since I came to study in the UK in 2014, learning different schools of thought and philosophies outside of the Thai context. This allows me to kept asking myself about my research and thinking critically against my insider thoughts during the processes of research planning, collecting data, analysing data, and even writing up this thesis, back and forth reiteratively. By having an awareness of being an *insider* and *outsider* for this study, I am provided the *space between* (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009), allowing me to be fully aware of every process while conducting the research.

In addition, in the conducting of my own research, I am aware of the distinction of the researcher roles or the researcher's relationships in which being researched is significant as

> Schramm (1971) argues that a research strategy aims to explain 'why […decisions] were taken, how they were implemented, and with what results in order to achieve the objectives of a research' (Yin, 2003, p. 12).

In order to make sense of my own relationship to this study, I begin with the viewpoint that a 'researcher' is a subject position which is shaped by virtue of doing research. Althusser (1971; 2006) explained, in this sense, that as a researcher, we are 'interpellated' or hailed into this subject position by our relation to the research field. In the unconscious acceptance of this position, it could make sense that we are already there. Althusser denotes this as 'interpellation' by drawing on Lacan's psychoanalytical concept of the 'mirror phase', which he attempted to re-interpret from the 'historicism' and 'economic determinism' of Karl Marx (Benton, 2008). Althusser (1971; 2006) explains that

'interpellation' is a form of misrecognition wherein an externalised image (for example, a researcher) is perceived as both 'self' and 'other'. He links the idea of the externalised image and the Ideological State Apparatus to include the role of education in reproducing a notion of what a 'researcher' should be (ibid.). To claim the position of a 'researcher', one is both to accept the power which comes with that position whilst also being subjugated by it (Althusser, 1971; 2006). For all processes of conducting this research, whether it involves an interview or focus group with research participants, reading through organisational archives, studying the literature, analysing data, or writing a thesis, in the process of identification—the hailing by another subject or object—I therefore come to recognise and accept myself as a 'researcher'.

3.3. Theoretical and Methodological Approaches

3.3.1. Introduction and Linkages to 'Theory of Practice'

The previous section of this chapter theoretically portrays conceptual starting points from on NGO research and literature on an ontology of *NGO-ism* informed by Fowler (2008), Fowler and Malunga (2010), and Fowler and Biekart (2013), as well as an epistemology of *field of practice* informed by Krause (2014). It is now necessary to discuss the theoretical and methodological tools that this study uses in order to tackle central research questions and demonstrate how these tools intertwine with the ontology and epistemology used by this study. For this section, theoretical and methodological approaches including analytical tools that this research employs are provided and discussed in this chapter. These include an epistemology of *field of practice* and 'theory of practice'.

As mentioned above, this study situates itself within development studies under international contexts in which there are a variety of ontological and epistemological approaches used by scholars to study on NGOs within this cross-disciplinary area.

Firstly, this study uses an interpretivist approach which allows for an extensive and multi-layered investigation of the research question. As this study aims to address central research questions on the basis of two case studies with a diversity of views, voices, and contexts of development from SDNGOs under partnership with NMNCs, it is suggested that an interpretivist approach is considered appropriate for the study, aiming to generate a deeper understanding with more considered perspectives, although this might be challenging due to the different viewpoints. However, one of the privileges of interpretivist application is that it allows this PhD thesis to learn, construct, and deconstruct knowledge from those different viewpoints in a way that is suitable for the study's central research questions that explore considerations and implications of NGOs' decision making under the cross-sector partnerships with NMNCs. Of course, there are multiple possible factors and drivers in this study environment.

Secondly, as mentioned in the previous section, this study makes use of the epistemology of *field of practice* informed by Krause (2014), allowing this study to privilege knowledge of a critical investigation by re-conceptualising and re-defining the *field* of partnership on the ground between SDNGOs and NMNCs in order to move beyond the concept of 'authentic partnership'. This epistemological approach facilitates this study's focus on a specific *field* of partnership as service delivery, complementing insights on a single organisation and model or process designed to demonstrate which SDNGOs and NMNCS interact with each other.

Therefore, a *field of practice* is a 'realm' in which actors take each other into account (Powell and DiMaggio, 2001). Krause (2014, p. 5) suggests that it is needed to understand the new forms of different linkages that are created by globalization, and that it is necessary to reconstruct knowledge on the basis of careful attention to 'practices of linkage'. Therefore, she enhances a *field of practice* to be a *space* of 'shared taken-for-granteds' and interpretations, mediating between ideas, values, and problematic complications on the ground, on the one hand, and outside interests, on the other (ibid., p. 22).

This brings this research forward in terms of seeking to understand the processes, attitudes, motivations, and ideas behind SDNGOs' decision making toward their intended beneficiaries for development projects funded by NMNCs. Considerably, it is evident that Krause (2014) has developed her epistemology through drawing on and adopting the synonymous usage of *field* from the *social fields* concept of Bourdieu's 'theory of practice' (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu, 1989; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 1994; Bourdieu, 1996). According to this viewpoint, this thesis, hence, also adopts the concepts of *field*, *habitus*, and *capital* in order to take what can be best and relevant as theoretical, methodological, and analytical tools to be used to develop deeper understandings in order to achieve the research questions and objectives.

3.3.2. Theory of Practice as Analytical Tools

Bourdieu worked to transcend the binary propositions which governed the debate of structure and agency—on the basis of his empirical study, he suggests that his theoretical position was as much a theory as a method: an analytical method for a dynamic and context-based process which he called *practice* (as discussed by Walther (2014)). Bourdieu (1977) maintains that the properties of social structure are aligned in everyday events, and therefore structure and action could only be explored by observing actors involved in everyday events. Bourdieu (1977) names his method a 'theory of practice', which later scholars across disciplines have classified as a grand theory that can be productively applied to different areas of research and circumstances (Skinner, 1985). In his 'theory of practice', Bourdieu (1977) defines practice or strategy as the complex interaction of three key notions: *field*, *habitus*, and *capital*.

In the discipline of Development Studies, scholars widely use this 'theory of practice' for their research. The relevant examples that inform theoretical and methodological tools of this study include Ebrahim's (2005) organisational change and NGO–funder relations, Bebbington's (2007) development studies and development alternatives, Krause's (2014) decision making on humanitarian organisations, Bristow's (2008) SDNGOs transformation on

training health promoters, Pickering-Saqqa's (2019) NDNGOs' decision making on domestic programmes, Kuruppu and Lodhia's (2020) NGO accountability, and Jenderedjian and Bellows's (2021) rural poverty and gender mainstreaming by NGOs. All of them have employed Bourdieu's concepts of 'theory of practice', providing relevance and utility to the discipline of Development Studies, and, more specifically, to the area of NGO research, which is a core focus of this study.

3.3.2.1. *Field*

As discussed on the conceptual starting points and epistemological approach of *field of practice* informed by Krause (2014) in the prior section of this chapter, *field* is a departing theoretical and methodological approach of this study. Bourdieu (1977) uses the concept of *field* as a central pillar to his framework. He conceptualises a *field* as a social world, demonstrating the interactions between different sorts of resources (he termed this as *capital*) and links the actions of *habitus* to the classifying power structures. He defines *field* as

> ... a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.). (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 97)

The everyday life of social agents is determined by a variety of interactions. To understand these interactions, it is necessary to first understand the situation(s) and the place(s) in which these interactions are produced (Accardo, 2006). Interactions must be considered in their particular 'social space', subdivided into differentiated *social fields* (Bourdieu, 1966) that are allocated as the ground of practice (Chudzikowski and Mayrhofer, 2011).

Bourdieu (1997) defines these *social fields* as microcosms or universes into which institutions and agents are incorporated, and in which they interact with each other following field-specific rules. According to Bourdieu's definitions, a *field* is a social space that strives to exist and happen. Each *field* has and demands an implicit agreement of the regulations before entering (Bourdieu terms this as *illusio*) (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). He recognises that agents need to internalise their rules in order to demonstrate strategies and practices (Bourdieu, 1983). There is no single universal rule that could be applied to all fields (Walther, 2014).

Thus, Bourdieu (1996) attests that *fields* are autonomous; however, their autonomy is only relative, as *fields* are enclosed in a social space. For example, a social *field* may be influenced by economic, religious, or political conditions (Walther, 2014). In short, a *field* could be seen as places of 'power relations' where agents' practices are not arbitrary (Walther, 2014). However, a *field* is not merely a 'battlefield' for power relations (Yang, 2013, p. 1526); each *field* has its own systematic structure that is shaped by a distinctive rationality of social statuses, engaged and positioned by either institutions or individuals (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

3.3.2.2. *Habitus*

Along with the conceptual development of the *field*, Bourdieu (1990) developed *field* in relationship to *habitus*, which is another core element is his 'theory of practice', as he stated,

> The habitus, like every 'art of inventing' is what makes it possible to produce an infinite number of practices that are relatively unpredictable, even if they are limited in their diversity (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 63).

The theoretical term *habitus* and its concepts are debatably the most easily recognised and often cited when referring to the 'theory of practice' developed by Bourdieu (Yang, 2013). However, it is also one of the most contested, misused, and misunderstood ideas by scholars across the discipline

of Organisational and Development Studies, as Bourdieu endows *habitus* with a range of meanings (Yang, 2013). In Bourdieu's terms, he refers to *habitus* as 'practical sense', 'second nature', 'embodied history', 'distinction operators', 'practice-generating schemes', 'philosophies of classification', 'defence mechanisms', and 'forthcoming future' (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu 1990; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu 1998).

According to Bourdieu's understanding of *habitus*, he aims at transforming the distinguishment of mind and body existing, including individual and group existence, subjective and objective existence, and past–present–future existence, as well as deterministic and voluntary approaches (Maton, 2008). Bourdieu referred to *habitus* as

> ... systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is as principles of generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72).

This denotes that *habitus* forms a set of durable, transposable dispositions on which it regulates mental actions where individuals are habitually unconsciously aware of their influence.

Similarly, the concept of *habitus* reflects a *space* of describing how cultural and social environment shape and constrain an individual's present and future mindset, including actions. Therefore, *habitus* is not solely structured; it is also shaped and challenged by historical, social, and other cultural contexts. Another important point of the notion of *habitus* is the withdrawal of consciousness from this concept development. Bourdieu (1990, p. 73) notably describes *habitus* as functioning "beneath the consciousness stage". Conversely, *habitus* could also be described as a product of the system, having

a limitless capacity to produce perceptions, expressions, thoughts, and practice (Yang, 2013, p. 1525).

3.3.2.3. *Capital*

The word *capital* is typically based on and related to monetary exchange and the sphere of business (Moore, 2012). However, the idea of *capital* is a resource that gives its owners authority and a favourable position in social space (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu (2006; 2010) was aware of this and originally developed the idea of *capital* from economy theory[4]. However, Bourdieu's definition of *capital* is broader than the economics literature's focus on money—it is a generic 'resource' that can take on both tangibles and intangibles, monetary and nonmonetary (as discussed by Anheier, Gerhards, and Romo, 1995, p. 862).

The distinctive attributes of Bourdieu's *capita*l concept set it apart from other approaches (Greenspan, 2014, p. 101). Bourdieu (2006; 2010) offered analysis that is accumulative, relational, and convertible by connecting the characteristics of *capital* to certain sectors. The social sphere is divided into several fields, including the organisational, political, and economic spheres. The amount of capital an actor has in comparison to other players in the field determines whether they have power or not (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008).

In order understand the concepts of Bourdieu's *capital*, he highlighted that each aspect of *'capital'* might alter or depend on the operating field, including the cost and the precondition in the *field*. Moreover, he demonstrated clearly how *capital* might appear in three categories

> …as economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalised in the forms of property rights; as cultural capital, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the forms of educational qualifications; and as social capital,

[4] Also see the brief discussions of Grendell (2012, p. 98) towards the ideology of the structure and functioning of the social world regarding the root of Bourdieu's *capital*.

made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the forms of a title of nobility (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243).

The diverse forms of *capital* that Bourdieu noticed are not completely covered by these 'three essential guises' (Greenspan, 2014, p. 103). He held the view that in modern society, *capital* may be found in various areas, such as politics, culture, and education, as well as in several forms, including ethnicity, language, and even symbols. Three types of cultural capital—embodied, institutionalized, and objectified—are at the heart of his theory (Bourdieu, 1986).

However, it is asserted that various types of *capital* have varying levels of liquidity, convertibility, and loss potential, resulting in various scenarios for social field actors. For instance, Anheier, Gerhards, and Romo (1995, pp. 862–863) stated that certain positions are highly valued for cultural *capital* but are valued relatively lower in other respects, whereas others will be distinguished by a high amount of economic capital but lower amounts of cultural and social capital. These kinds of scenarios may differ on the basis of various power dynamics, processes, factors, times, or spaces. To objectively and subjectively interpret the concept of *capital* further, it is not only relevant to non-economic exchange or indifference, but also one's own self-interest, the world of trade, or the development of capitalism (Moore, 2012, p. 98). As a result, Bourdieu's definition of *capital* aims to broaden the meaning of the definition by applying it to a wider system of exchanges wherein assets of various types are transformed and transferred within complicated networks and across various disciplines (Moore, 2012, p. 99). However, this study also accepts that a capital exchange never has intrinsic value; rather, it is only ever used as a tool to achieve other goals, such as profit, interest, or payment (Moore, 2012, p. 100).

3.3.3. *Field*, *Habitus*, and *Capital*: Analytical Tools for An Organisational Study of SDNGOs

To apply the 'theory of practice' for organisational analysis, Greenspan (2014, p. 60) emphasised that for Bourdieu, *field, habitus,* and *capital* are essentially interconnected empirically and conceptually. Therefore, any attempt to analyse and explain practice by adopting one alone without understanding, mentioning, or using the others might not be able to provide the fuller understandings of such a phenomenon within the social space and the particular time as each of them have a relational structure wherein their significance lies in relation to each other (Greenspan, 2014, p. 60).

In order to study the organisational practices of SDNGOs under the *field* of partnership within the context of development studies, this research therefore considers the use of the concept of *habitus* which allows SDNGOs to self-define, focusing on what they think, do, and interact with in terms of their beneficiaries in the process of the development of projects with NMNCs from their dispositions, values, and strategies of action, informed by their previous experiences and interactions. This concept of *habitus* reflects the understandings and practices of their staff members, board of trustees, partners, corporate donors, beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, and other stakeholders in relation to development project with NMNCs. Through their subsequent practices to materialise their values, positions, and visions, these contribute to the organisational *habitus* of SDNGOs in ways that influence their meanings, decision making, and behaviour into the future (Ebrahim, 2003; Lewis, 2008; Yarrow, 2011; Beck, 2017; Pickering-Saqqa, 2019).

To this extent, the concept *of habitus* enables this study to contribute a more nuanced view of SDNGOs toward *NGO-ism* which is needed in research (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010). Using *habitus* to characterise SDNGOs' decision making on their beneficiary selection for development projects with NMNCs, the exploratory theoretical and empirical literature in Chapter 2 portrays two key working hypotheses relevant to this study. These are (1) the history of the SDNGOs and (2) institutional implications which

include organisational theories of poverty, stakeholder theory, capacities and willingness of beneficiaries, theory of project management, and institutional drivers and practices.

As discussed above, the concept of *habitus* and the 'theory of practice' are often misused; for this study, it is also necessary and helpful to discuss them in order to provide a clear understanding of how *field* and *habitus* are intertwined and how these two approaches are employed in order to make relevant use for this research's theoretical, methodological, and analytical tools. Yang (2013) denotes that Bourdieu developed a concept of *habitus* that became central in this theory of practice whilst he was also developing the concept of *field*. Bourdieu (1992) enunciated the 'bilateral' association between *field* and *habitus* in his text '*An Invitation of Reflexive Sociology'*. Firstly, the conditioning association in which a *field* is referred to in terms of the social and physical realm where we exist shapes the *habitus* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 127). Secondly, in contrast, there is an association of cognitive structure or knowledge where *habitus* represents our thinking foundations towards our existing as well as external space (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 127).

The foundation to comprehend the relationship between *field* and *habitus* is not one of conscious awareness; instead, the realistic knowing of *habitus* is in terms of the space that it occupies (Yang, 2013), which Bourdieu (1980) refers to as the unconscious mechanisms of *habitus* and *field*. This practical sense produces harmony between the *field* and *habitus*, positioning practices of (social) agents without deliberating and bringing out their practices, following the rules that they are aware of in terms of the *field* (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 143). Bristow (2008) later describes how the relationship between *habitus* and *field* can be the best concept to explain the 'unconscious process' which she uses as a key practical theoretical, methodological, and analytical tool in her research on SDNGOs' healthcare system. She indicates that *habitus* refers to the ways actions, standards, and representations are involved by a specific group of society which is incorporated, constructed, and reconstructed within individuals (ibid., p. 246). Past experiences shape present practices, and

present practices without consciousness affect their practices in the future in turn (ibid.). According to this notion, characters of the organisation or group are retained, and systems are reproduced. As a result, it directs and guides the behaviour of each individual whilst still providing options; however, it is also still limited to those decisions (Bristow, 2008) which may be consistent with the *habitus* of each *field*, as Bourdieu described,

> Agents shape their aspirations according to concrete indices of the accessible and the inaccessible of what is and not 'for us', a division as fundamental and as fundamentally recognized as that between the sacred and the profane (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 117).

In order to explain how this unconscious process could be reflected from the interviews and focus groups of the level of individual staff members, board of trustees, volunteers, and other stakeholders of SDNGOs' *habitus*, this thesis is aware that there might be some other factors (such as their own different individual experiences and perspectives from the past) that might disturb the effective use of this theoretical and methodological tool.

In order to address this methodological and analytical issue, this study adopts only the secondary *habitus* to analyse the empirical data. Bourdieu explains that there are two types of *habitus*—primary and secondary—regarding daily practices and jurisdiction (Bourdieu, 1999; also see Bristow, 2008). Firstly, primary *habitus* refers to the group into which humans are born and learn through daily practices, which could involve the influence of one's ethnic group (or class) or their family (May, 2013). Secondly, secondary *habitus* refers to that which is influenced and developed by daily practices within educational schools, institutions, or one's later career. This, again, reflects back to Bourdieu's notion of *field*, which is defined as social space—an ideology that is divided up into spaces within spaces, moulded by dispositions of domination or authoritative class, including the social group itself. Therefore, the class is a *field* itself (Bristow, 2008, p. 247); so too is a partnership. Bourdieu (1989, p. 16) referred to such a space as

> …constructed in such a way that the closer agents, groups or institutions which are situated within the[se] space[s], the more common properties they have; and the more distance, the fewer (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 16).

However, Greenspan (2014, p. 103) suggests that although the notion of *habitus* is difficult to apply to organisations, there are two possible approaches: first, keep the *habitus* analysis at the individual level in organisations, and second, convey the shared organisational habits of those individuals, such as organisational culture, symbols, norms, patterns of behaviour, viewpoints, actions, and values (Schneider, 2009). Therefore, the shared norms, values, attitudes, actions, interactions, and practices within such a space and boundary of each NGO within the field of 'partnership' are considered a *process* which could be influenced or interplayed by the organisation's *habitus* of its composing individual staff members or stakeholders of the organisation (Lizardo, 2004). Following this, *habitus* is employed as a way of comprehending the various dimensions of SDNGO decision making (Pickering-Saqqa, 2019) via the processes and practices of beneficiary selection for development projects in partnership with NMNCs. This thesis, hence, takes this implication of *habitus* to tackle the research data.

As for the pragmatic application of Bourdieu's *capital* for this study, it is necessary to develop the distinction or clear-cut notions of what type it is and how this *capital* might exist or present in the *field* of social partnership for the development projects by NMNCs and SDNGOs. This is because *capital* can be compared to the 'energy' steering the evolution of a *field* over time. Bourdieu (2010) explained that *capital* can take on various forms, including objectification, embodiment, institutionalization, and *habitus* itself.

However, Moore (2012) claimed that institutionalized capital may not be applicable for the two case studies for this research, which focuses on NGO decision making as it is typically realised in the field of education, wherein the institutionalized *capital* in this case might just stand for a certificate or degree in education. This thesis is mindful of this form of *capital* but chose not to engage due to the different specific *fields* of ontological and epistemological

focus, as mentioned above. To further explain why *habitus* could occasionally be viewed as *capital* in research analysis, Moore (2012) distinguished that *habitus* is only known through its realisations in practice—in the actual *field*—even though *habitus* has no existence in any material forms because *habitus* includes assumptions, dispositions, perceptions, and attitudes. Thus, from this analytical point, *habitus* could only occasionally be regarded as *capital*.

Given the discussions above about the pragmatic distinction of *capital* types, this thesis employs the selected analytical forms of Bourdieu's *capitals*, adopted and developed from Moore (2012) and shown in Table 3.1 as follows.

Table 3.1: Analytical example forms of Bourdieu's *capitals* (developed by Moore (2012); applied by the researcher).

Forms	Objectified	Embodied	Habitus
Economic	- Money - Wage - Salary - Incentive - Assets	- Principles of consciousness in predisposition and propensities - Ability to bargain or making money	- Knowledge of managing money or bargaining - Dispositions, realisations, or attitudes regarding economic concerns
Social	- Positions in the community - Uniforms	- Ability to deal with relationships in the community - Recognition of social status - Lifestyle choices	- Knowledge of the rules of the game - Knowledge of relationship or power management

Forms	Objectified	Embodied	Habitus
Developmental	- Land - Agricultural space - House - Career tools - Properties - School facilities	- Ability to implement the project - Desire, willingness, or interest to attend the project - Ability to engage or build relationships with the community - Experience of working with other MNCs, corporate donors, or other NGOs	- Knowledge of project management - Knowledge of organisational or project sustainability - Knowledge of working with others or communities

It is now necessary to explain how this study chose and adopted the data-collection approaches as a toolkit of methods in order to achieve the research objectives. This is discussed in the next section.

3.4. Approach to Data Collection: A Toolkit of Methods

This section provides an overview of data collection approaches to accomplish research objectives. Primarily, the foundations of research design, data collection, and data analysis approaches are driven by the central research questions and research objectives of this thesis. In addition, as the conceptual starting points of this research have also been produced and influenced by the epistemology of *field of practice* (Krause, 2014) in order to re-conceptualise the *field* of a partnership between SDNGOs and NMNCs for development projects on the ground, Creswell (2003, pp. 4–5) points to the

stages of interrelationship in terms of what epistemology conveys to research, namely, the fabrication behind the relevant methodologies and methods. However, Ritchie and Lewis (2003) discuss how any study goal could be achieved by employing a range of methods—not only a single method, however. It is therefore significant to identify rationales and types of settings where this might be so (Walker, 1985; Patton, 2002; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Therefore, this study also reviews and portrays its frameworks on the basis of a variety of interrelated normative theories, debates, and ontological and epistemological approaches.

This thesis considers a range of interpretivist qualitative data-collection techniques derived from the mentioned theoretical framework that are appropriate and have the potential to achieve central research objectives. The justification of choosing relevant data collection methods of this study is discussed below.

3.4.1. Organisational Case Study Design

From the approximately 500 exploratory theoretical and empirical papers in the literature on the topic of partnership under development studies from which this study portrays the heuristic framework and working hypotheses, it was found that the majority of scholars used organisational case studies as their empirical data collection methods in order to achieve their research objectives. It is suggested that an organisational case study is one of the most appropriate data collection tools used to investigate and produce a deeper understanding of partnership (Seitanidi and Crane 2014). All of the relevant studies that adopted a similar epistemological approach (see Krause, 2014), ontological approach (see Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010), theoretical approach (see Ebrahim, 2005; Bebbington, 2007; Bristow, 2008), and NGO decision making (see Ebrahim, 2005; Krause, 2014; Pickering-Saqqa, 2019) for this study used organisational case studies as data collection tools to achieve their research objectives.

This study, therefore, considers the organisational case study as a useful, capable, and relevant tool to address its central research questions. The case study design also addresses the different and complicated variables with this study's central research question of *how* each of the selected SDNGOs might have a different range of organisational drivers (Engel and Nicolai, 2012), as well as how there might be no control over the (contemporary) circumstances or context (Yin, 2009).

The case of Thailand was selected in relation to this qualitative study in order to allow for an empirical investigation which examines and explores the contemporary real-world context of SDNGO–NMNC partnership for development projects under the development as a service delivery framework. A case study is considered to be informative from "numerous sources of evidence to utilize" (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 51; see also Yin, 2003, pp. 13–14). Gerring (2007, p. 20) states that the case study approach is a thorough and focused investigation of an individual case, and the goal of such research is to provide insightful understandings as a form of guidance into a greater level of population or case. This definition helps to find the 'specific rooted context' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 76) of the roles, identities, and processes of SDNGOs. This is explained a fair amount in the context of Thailand:

> Contextual research is concerned with identifying what exists in the social world and the way it manifests itself… it offers the opportunity to 'unpack' issues, to see what they are about or what lies inside, and to explore how they are understood by those connected with them. (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 27)

Significantly, the major critique of this data-collection approach is that the findings of an individual case study cannot be representative and that they have an external validity weakness in terms of moving from a generalisation to a theoretical proposition (Bryman, 2004). This critique, however, argues that although a case study may not provide a solid groundwork for (at least, scientifically) generalizing from traditional categories, it provides insightful general relevance (Stake, 2000; Gomm et al., 2000, pp. 7–8). For instance, Stake (2000) argues that the research is intended to be of value to the individual

and should be designed to 'learn' directly about the world. Furthermore, Yin (2003, pp. 10–11) notes that another weakness of a case study is that researcher bias and the use of unsystematic procedures lead to a lack of precision. However, a properly designed and implemented case study facilitates 'naturalistic generalisation' given that case studies provide local experience and practice in the form of comprehensive, deep, and complete knowledge of each particular case (Stake, 2000, pp. 19–24; Gomm, Hammersley, and Foster, 2000, pp. 7–8).

In contrast, besides achieving its research objectives, this study does not aim to use the findings of each individual case study of SDNGOs to represent the majority of the entire SDNGO or NGO populations, nor to use empirical inquiry to generalise NGOs' decision making, nor the concept or language of partnership. It aims to present and highlight the critical findings of each different organisational case study of the selected SDNGOs in Thailand in order to bring about diverse examples to fill the gaps in the literature and contribute these critical findings to international scholarship for discussion, debate, and feedback from researchers and practitioners across disciplines and around the world.

More importantly, in order to address the challenge of external validity weakness of an organisational case study design, this study selected two different organisational case studies for its research data collection (the criteria and justification of the case studies will be discussed later below). Martinussen (1997, p. 346) suggests that good theory must be subject to falsification claims, and therefore two case studies are considered sufficient in order to enact an important falsification role within the interpretivist and epistemological approaches, rather than asserting the collected data as claiming a positivist 'truth'.

Thus, this research is justified in its use of an organisational case study approach as a method to explore SDNGOs' decision making through the process of their relationships with NMNCs, given the broad scholarly usage of this methodological approach and the academic arguments as to why this

approach is most effective. The interpretivist approach used in this research considers numerous historical, cultural, and social contexts in which it contributes to development through diverse social experiences. Unlike positivism, which seeks to establish simple, universal laws applicable to any context without considering specific key components and variables, the interpretivist approach aims to incorporate richness into the learned insights by deeply understanding the unique perspectives and meanings individuals attach to their experiences (Myers, 2008; Bhattacherjee, 2012; Saunders and Lewis, 2012). This approach recognizes that social phenomena are constructed through interactions and are best understood within their particular contexts.

The interpretivist approach also allows for a specific understanding of a topic, enabling this thesis to explore and investigate what happens on the ground in great detail between SDNGOs and NMNCs in their partnerships by examining the multiple social realities and meanings constructed by the stakeholders involved. While scholars such as Ryan (2018, p. 42) critique interpretivist research for rejecting universal laws and questions its validity compared to the positivist paradigm, this thesis does not aim to establish absolute truths. Instead, it seeks to provide thorough understandings of the research topics from different case studies, offering a comprehensive and nuanced picture of the dynamics at play.

This form of organisational case study design also has the ability to uncover patterns, practices, and insights that might be overlooked by broader surveys or purely quantitative studies. Although the interpretivist approach assumes that reality is subjective and varies depending on individuals' viewpoints, this thesis utilises an epistemological framework grounded in the *field of practice* approach and Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *field* to position SDNGOs as focal points to gather insights from diverse perspectives within the interactive space by facilitating a comprehensive understanding through the examination of a broad spectrum of views, voices, and contexts from various stakeholders. Therefore, the organisational case study approach taken by this thesis enables the contextualisation of findings within the specific fields of socio-economic and cultural environments of the two partnerships of focus,

namely, EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential, using them as examples of NGOs in the Global South (within Thailand) that are in partnership with Northern MNCs, thus providing a richer and more nuanced picture of the factors that influence such collaborations.

Furthermore, in order to address these concerns, informed by *field of practice* as an epistemological application (as discussed in Section 3.2.4 earlier of this chapter), this epistemological application allows this thesis to develop the extensive amount of literature on SDNGOs and partnerships, drawn from various case studies across the world under the discipline of NGO and Development Studies, which can be used to assist practitioners and policymakers in the development sector. Secondly, it allows this thesis to identify, collect, and develop deeper understandings from practices on the ground. Hence, this research considers both solutions to be efficient and appropriate in order to address the criticism of conducting a single organisational case study.

3.4.2. The Sampling Framework to Select SDNGOs as Case Studies

In order to select the SDNGOs as organisational case studies in this study, purposive sampling was used to choose a sample that was able to provide the most relevant information necessary to achieve the research objectives (Kumar, 2005) and to enable the researcher to comprehend the phenomenon or develop existing knowledge (Kumar, 2011). This study developed a framework to purposively choose two SDNGOs as organisational case studies on the basis of (1) SDNGO characteristics working with/against the private sector (Bendell, 2000), (2) characteristics of development NGOs (Banks, Hulme, and Edwards, 2015), and (3) selection criteria of non-random sampling for purposive sampling (Dattalo, 2008; Kumar, 2011).

Firstly, in terms of the indicative paradigms from the academic literature specifically on partnership between businesses and NGOs, as shown in Appendix 2, the majority of these studies focused on the development, management or business nature of the NGOs (the environment, animal welfare,

social welfare, health, etc.). A minority of the studies considered the characteristics of NGOs, including whether they were confrontational or collaborative. From the heuristic framework portrayed from the exploratory literature in Chapter 2, this study makes a clear standpoint to move forward understandings beyond 'authentic partnership' by employing a development as service delivery approach as a conceptual starting point. Therefore, this study's objectives make it appropriate to use this 'characteristics' approach in the selection of SDNGOs for inclusion. However, on their own, the characteristics of being simply 'confrontational' or 'collaborative' might not be sufficient in order to identify and select SDNGOs for this partnership study, since the study must define SDNGOs not only by their behaviour and practice but also by how they generate income—with/against NMNCs, inside or outside the market—which assigns different roles to NGOs (and by default, SDNGOs).

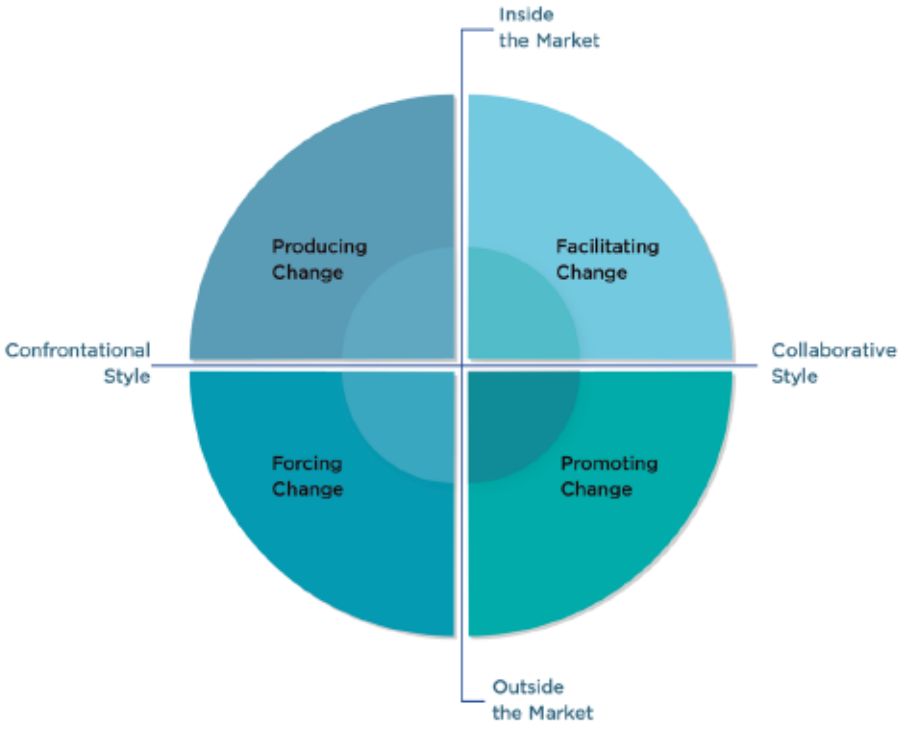

Figure 3.1. Typology of NGOs working with/against the private sector (Bendell, 2000; redesigned by the researcher).

According to Bendell's NGO typology framework (2000, p. 242) (see Figure 3.1 above), NGOs are categorised by both 'styles' and 'markets'. For NGO activities, there are confrontational characteristics (protesting or providing products against companies) and collaborative characteristics (collaborations aiming for corporate behavioural change or providing social services to companies). With regard to the market, 'inside the market' refers to NGOs that make money by providing consultancy or service delivery to companies or that have business identities to generate profit, such as the Fairtrade Foundation, Traidcraft Exchange, and Oxfam Trading Company (Bendell, 2000, p. 244). NGOs 'outside the market' rely on donations or revenue from the public or government sectors, but not from the corporate sector. Through the NGO characteristic gaps mentioned above, this framework is considered one of the most appropriate approaches to identify and to select SDNGOs on the basis of 'characteristics' for this study. Since this study focuses on development projects as service delivery, 'facilitating change'-style SDNGOs were chosen. These are inside the market and have collaborative characteristics.

Secondly, as this study developed its working hypotheses on the basis of a development as service delivery framework, the typology of NGOs working with/against the private sector proposed by Bendell (2000) is a useful framework to begin with, although it is not sufficient in terms of providing the rigorous definitive characteristics to identify SDNGOs on the basis of their social and historical complexity. Banks, Hulme, and Edwards (2015), in their recent re-visited article on NGO–donor relations, investigated the interrelations of the disappearance between the increasing tendency of technocracy and fragile roots of NGOs in the realm of civil society through international development practices. One of the insightful findings and critiques that sheds light on this study are that the scholars adopted another notion of organisational characteristics that was based on how they work with the (institutional) donors in order to create a split between membership-based organisations (MBOs) and development NGOs (see Figure 3.2 below).

Although all descriptive criteria in their arguments and findings might not be applicable to this study, they provide a clearer picture to this study on how to identify and choose SDNGOs for case studies. Firstly, development NGOs (DNGOs) seemingly work on a project-based basis, even though they have long-term goals to achieve sustainable change. It seems rare for DNGOs to generally implement long-term programmes or provide long-term services to the beneficiaries, as many of DNGOs work on a project basis. Secondly, DNGOs' strategies appear to work on development as service delivery, wherein they seem to be accountable for donors. Significantly, as DNGOs do not have members as MBOs, this characteristic suits this study's central research questions in that it seeks to explore how SDNGOs make a decision against their beneficiary selection.

ORIENTATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES	MEMBERSHIP-BASED ORGANIZATIONS	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
Relationship with the State	Oppositional	Accommodating
Constituents	Members	Staff
Accountable to	Members	Donors
Program design	Demand-side approach	Supply-side approach
Community participation	Political	Non-political
Strategy	Development as leverage	Development as service delivery
Development ideology	Development as social, political and economic change	Project-based and target - oriented 'Development'
Tackling/addressing	Root causes of poverty	'Symptoms' of poverty

Figure 3.2. Contrasting orientations and attributes of
MBOs and development NGOs
(Banks, Hulme, and Edwards, 2015, p. 709; redesigned by the researcher).

Finally, beyond the double-layered characteristics of SDNGOs discussed previously, this research considers non-random sampling as the most suitable sampling method to achieve research objectives (Kumar, 2011). The non-random sampling selection criteria for purposive sampling are

described through four considerations: (1) accomplishing research objectives, (2) providing accurate assessments of sampling variability, (3) validating viability, and (4) maximising the economy by minimising expenditure within a timeline but with the research objectives still achieved (Dattalo, 2008).

On the basis of the case study criterion framework discussed above, two SDNGOs (and their individual relationship with NMNCs) were chosen (1) EDF–IKEA and (2) FOPDEV–Prudential[5], which have different development goals (some of them are similar), are located and work in different areas across Thailand (see Figure 3.3), have a different range of incomes, and have a different number of staff. They, however, have similar characteristics defined by both frameworks mentioned above in Figure 3.1 (Bendell, 2000) and Figure 3.2 (Banks, Hulme, and Edwards, 2015) in terms of working with NMNCs for development projects. More importantly, they have direct experience working with NMNCs as service delivery providers for at least five years. Although this study later presents the analysis of each organisation independently for Chapters 4 (EDF) and 5 (FOPDEV), this study also analyses data and looks at two case studies on interconnections and discontinuities on the diversity of each organisation in order to address the central research questions. The findings and discussions of the interconnections, discontinuities, and validity of data from EDF and FOPDEV will be provided in Chapter 6.

[5] Brief details of each organisation will be provided and analysed later in Chapters 4 and 5 separately.

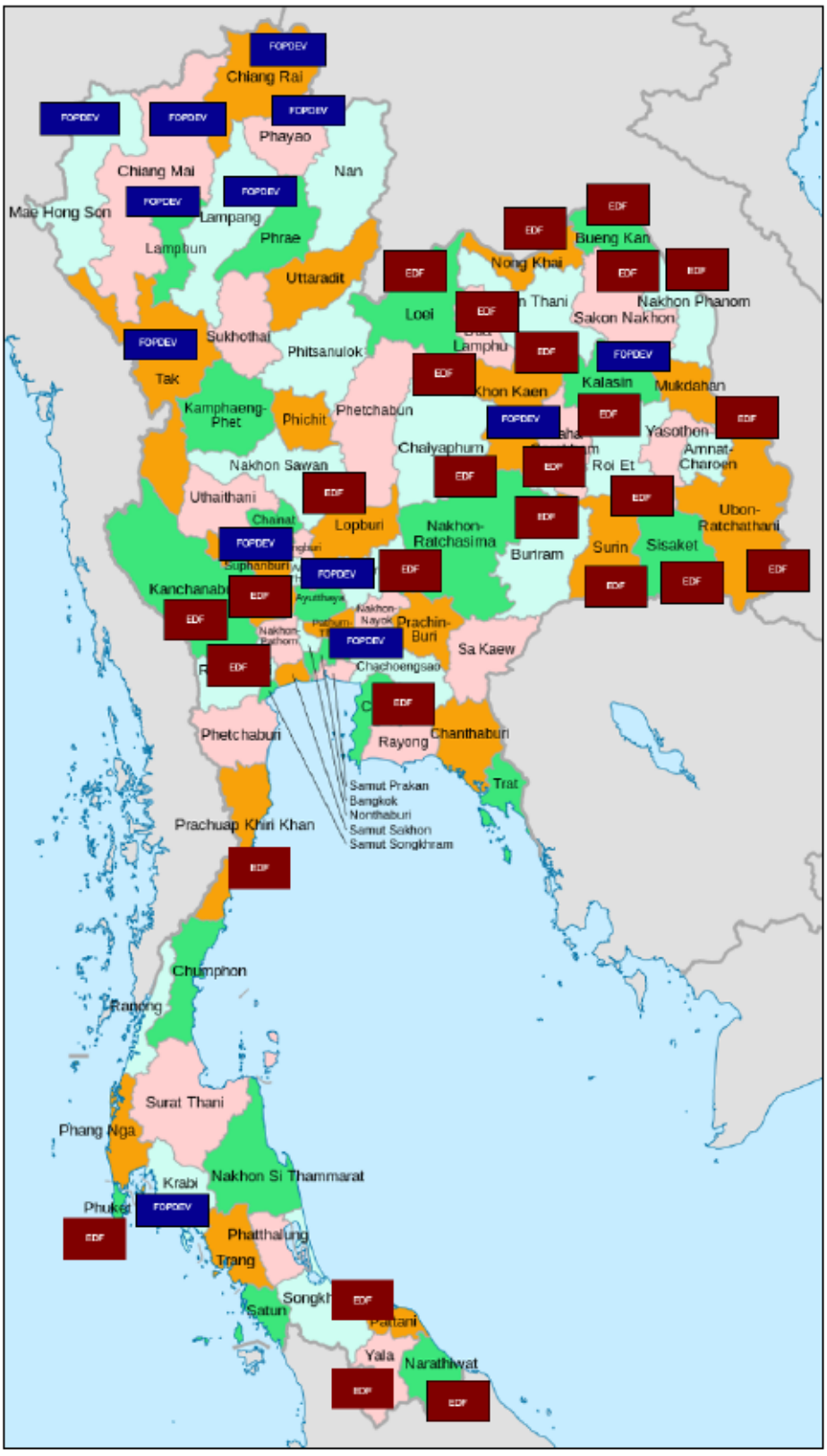

Figure 3.3. Locations of the two SDNGOs' development projects in Thailand (source: the researcher).

For this interpretivist approach, primary data are considered appropriate in order to research the two organisational case studies. For both of the SDNGO case studies, there are three sets of data collection methods: (1) semi-structured interviews, (2) focus groups, and (3) organisational archives and documents. Prior to the data collection and analysis sections, it is necessary to acknowledge that this study worked on the *iterative process* of data collection, including data analysis at the same time. According to Morgan and Nica (2020, p. 3), data analysis should start when a piece of data allows the researcher to re-examine the existing notions. Iterative processes are in line with the pragmatic emphasis that new information frequently reformulates both the understandings of the initial issue and the interpreted means to solve that issue. As a result, new discoveries must be assessed as prospective themes that can convey important findings (Morgan and Nica, 2020).

Table 3.2 on the next page illustrates the relations of timeline and the *iterative process* of data collection including data analysis from the two case studies. This research's preliminary analysis began during the first interviews (and also after interviewing when concept notes were explored through recorded tapes and field notes) and going through corporate documents and news clippings. Some research data had to be updated due to the development project updates. Moreover, some interview data led to another key significant interview. Hence, I had to conduct the interviews with the same interviewees or new relevant research participants while analysing the data, going back and forth to explore the empirical data as much as possible. These iterative processes were repeated from the beginning of the data collections until data analysis. Therefore, this also enabled me to realise that undertaking an exploratory interpretivism study is not a linear process but one that is iterative and flexible.

Table 3.2. Case study data collection and analysis schedule.

SDNGO Case Studies / Research Processes	EDF (with IKEA Thailand)	FOPDEV (with Prudential Thailand)
Access contacted and requested	July 2017	July 2017
Access granted	September 2017	September 2017
1st Data collection	November 2017	November 2017
2nd Data collection	July 2018	July 2018
3rd Data collection	September 2018	September 2018
4th Data collection	February 2019	March 2019
5th Data collection	April 2019	April 2019
6th Data collection	January 2020	January 2020
Data analysis began	November 2017	November 2017
Data analysis completed	December 2020	January 2021

3.4.3. Semi-Structured Interviews

If the topic is complex, an in-depth interview may be appropriate, providing an opportunity for research participants to re-evaluate the information they originally brought with them and conduct research to find a more reliable structure (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). However, probing may demand the researcher to request more detailed information to verify, correct, clarify, and extend from previous studies the research participant may have had (Devine, 1995). To ensure quality control over data collection and address this challenge, semi-structured interviews are considered appropriate in that they are the method between structured and unstructured interviews in terms of

format, having the potential to solicit more relevant data that add value to the research (Lavrakas, 1998). Unlike structured interviews, unstructured interviews ask open-ended questions, and answers are enabled to develop in ways that may not have been anticipated before the interview (Robson, 2011, p. 285). An unstructured interview, therefore, can be more useful for inductive research where the understanding of an issue of the research is still evolving.

Fundamentally, in semi-structured interviews, the researcher sets the interview schedule prior to the interviews and follows them. The interview schedule of this study contains an interview model and agenda of open-ended questions or topics to explore (Oka and Shaw, 2000; Denscombe, 2003); however, Cohen and Crabtree (2006) suggest that space is given to allow for 'divergence' from the key points of research focus but could be insightful for the study to explore more. Therefore, semi-structured interviews are more flexible but also retain the benefits of a structured procedure in order to achieve research objectives. In conclusion, scholars tend to suggest that the semi-structured interview is the most utilised data collection method in qualitative research studies (Oka and Shaw, 2000).

As this research adopted an interpretivist ontology and *field of practice* as the epistemological application as research starting points, this study defined and approached a wide range of different stakeholders under each SDNGO–NMNC relationship that was as appropriate and relevant as possible. These stakeholders include the SDNGO board of trustees, SDNGO management members, SDNGO staff members, and NMNC corporate partner/donors including intended beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (populations in need/target communities). Furthermore, in-depth interviews with these different stakeholders within the *field* of each 'social space' were mainly used to generate the entire picture of understanding and compare it with what they perceive from others (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 36).

Arguably, many scholars often question the nature of semi-structured interviews in terms of the number of interviews that are sufficient in developing one single case study. Baker and Edwards (2012) state that an attempt to

identify the numbers of interviews in qualitative research is regularly met with the answer “it depends…”. However, as this research adopted the purposive sampling approach, the sufficient interview number can be determined from the diminishing number of new insights about each phenomenon or issue. For the two case studies in this research, there is an extensive range in terms of staff numbers due to the different organisational sizes of SDNGOs in terms of their incomes. At the time of the research, FOPDEV had around 15 staff members and EDF had approximately 30 staff members with different numbers of relevant stakeholders including beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. As discussed earlier in the sampling framework section, only relevant stakeholders of each case study were invited to attend semi-structured interviews and focus groups (the focus group process is discussed in the next section) in order to answer each research question. As illustrated in Table 3.2, there were six lots of data collection for each case study, wherein some of the interviewees were interviewed twice or three times due to the updates of their development project progress since project starting points, implementations, reporting, and continuations for new-year projects including other research-related updates. In total, there were 51 participants from two case studies interviewed. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 below describe the participant profiles and participant characteristics of each case study.

Table 3.3. Research participant profiles.

Case Studies	NGO Board/Management/Staff members	Corporate Donors/Partners	Beneficiaries & Non-Beneficiaries	Total
Group Code	*A & B*	*C*	*D & E*	
EDF	16	2	9	**27**
FOPDEV	15	2	7	**24**
Total	**31**	**4**	**25**	**51**

Table 3.4. Research participant characteristics by case study.

Case Study No.	Name of SDNGO	Organisational Development Visions	Name of NTNCs	NTNC Business Products and/or Services	Interviewee Group Codes	Interviewee Positions	Organisations/ Affiliations	Focus Group Attendance	Gender	Research Objective Number
1	EDF	To improve education opportunities and the quality of life for less fortunate children and youths in remote areas of Thailand. Sponsored students receive many opportunities to develop necessary life skills and gain valuable knowledge that can be applied throughout their lives	IKEA	Home Furnishing	A	Board of Trustee	EDF	No	Male	R1, R3, R4, R5, R6
					A	Managing Director	EDF	No	Male	
					A	Director of Management	EDF	No	Female	
					A	Director of Management	EDF	No	Female	
					A	Director of Development Projects	EDF	Yes	Female	
					A	Director of Development Projects	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Manager of Development Projects	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Manager of Development Projects	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Manager of Student Scholarships	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Development Project Officer	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Development Project Officer	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Development Project Officer	EDF	Yes	Male	
					B	Development Project Officer	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Development Project Officer	EDF	Yes	Female	
					B	Development Project Officer	EDF	Yes	Male	
					B	Student Scholarship Officer	EDF	Yes	Female	
					C	IKANO Group Sustainbility Manager	IKEA Thailand	No	Male	R1, R3, R4
					C	PR and Marketing Manager, Bangyai Store	IKEA Thailand	No	Female	
					D	School Principle	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Male	R5
					D	School Teacher	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					D	School Teacher	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					E	School Principle	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Male	
					E	School Principle	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					E	School Principle	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Male	
					E	School Teacher	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					E	School Teacher	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					E	School Teacher	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Male	
2	FOPDEV	To improve the quality of life of disadvantaged older people in Thailand in an empowering and sustainable way, identified in its current missions by contributing to the empowerment of the civil society network on ageing, training volunteer home-helpers to encourage independent living for disadvantaged older people, and strengthening community-based organisation capacity to consolidate the Disasters Risk Reduction in terms of elderly life quality	Prudential	Insurance	A	Board of Trustee	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	R1, R3, R4, R5, R6
					A	Managing Director	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					A	Director of Development Projects	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					A	Director of Development Projects	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Manager of Evaluation and Measurement	FOPDEV	Yes	Female	
					B	Manager of Evaluation and Measurement	FOPDEV	Yes	Female	
					B	Manager of Development Projects	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Manager of Development Projects	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Development Project Senior Officer	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Development Project Senior Officer	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Development Project Officer	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Development Project Coordinator	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Development Project Advisor	FOPDEV	Yes	Female	
					B	Public Relations Officer	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	
					B	Public Relations Officer	FOPDEV	Yes	Male	R1, R3, R4
					C	Public Relations Manager	Prudential Thailand	No	Female	
					C	Public Relations Coordinator	Prudential Thailand	No	Female	
					D	Community Leader	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Male	R5
					D	Community Leader	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					D	Community representative	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					D	Community representative	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					D	Community representative	Intended Beneficiaries	No	Female	
					E	Community Leader	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Male	
					E	Community Leader	Non-Beneficiaries	No	Male	

Prior to conducting the 51 semi-structured interviews, this study also conducted pilot interviews, considered an important element in the design of interpretivist qualitative research (Weiss, 1995; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). These pilot interviews were conducted after ethics approval was granted. They may not have guaranteed the success of the project, but they had the ability to help identify potential challenges and pitfalls. Therefore, this study conducted 24 pilot interviews and 2 focus groups[6] with the selected additional three SDNGOs: 2 interviews from the Foundation for Rehabilitation and Development for Children and Family (FORDEC) located in Bangkok, 4 interviews from the Human Help Network Foundation Thailand (HHN Foundation Thailand) located in Chonburi province, and 18 interviews including 2

[6] The input from these 24 pilot interviews and 2 focus groups were not included in this research.

focus groups from the Community Children Foundation under the Royal Patronage of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn (CCF)[7]. The interviewees include SDNGO board members, management members, staff members, project partners, an NMNC corporate donor (Citibank Thailand), beneficiaries, and non-beneficiaries. This proved to be a very useful learning experience. The pilot interviews with these two SDNGOs revealed that the framing of my initial interview schedule did not offer many opportunities for personal reflections on the processes of beneficiary selection on their development projects with NMNCs. Moreover, most of them spent too much time on introducing their personal work and their organisations, meaning that their answers did not reflect on and address the research questions much, and therefore I had to ask further questions. Consequently, I spent an average of 1–1.30 hours per one interviewee, wherein much of the interview records were irrelevant to the central research questions. Therefore, I developed the interview schedule and interview question format by amending the subtle shifts in the wording of questions. The final topic guide and interview questions including the literature and the suppositions that informed the semi-structured interview questions are provided in Appendix 3.

3.4.4. Focus Groups

There are three main reasons why this thesis conducted both semi-structured interviews and focus groups for data collection, instead of simply conducting semi-structured interviews alone. Firstly, the aim of conducting focus groups of two organisational case studies was to cross-check the data to be able to achieve better validity and reliability (Gray, 2009). Secondly, it was to increase confidence in the study findings and balance the weaknesses and strengths of the two organisational case studies (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Lastly, both focus groups were used to gain a more tangible sense of the opinions and experiences of the key informants selected from the semi-structured interviews for the two organisational case studies of this research (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Drawing on Gray (2009) and Bryman and Bell (2015) with the main objectives of focus groups for this research explained earlier, this study therefore developed the topic guide and focus group questions outlined in

[7] The pilot interviews and focus groups began in the first weeks of November 2017.

Appendix 4. The table also provides the relevant literature to demonstrate the suppositions that informed the focus group questions.

Drawing on this approach, Stewart and Shamdasani (2014) point out that focus groups can be practical and useful methodological tools for gaining insight into shared mutual understandings and different perspectives or disagreements. Focus groups are different from group interviewing, as group interviewing emphasises the relationship between the researcher and the research participants within the group whilst a focus group decentres the researcher and can foreground the responses between participants (Morgan, 1997). However, focus groups have been critiqued in that with the potential discovery of similarities and differences within a group, not everyone will feel comfortable or have equal power or opportunity to share their opinion and experiences (Krueger, 2014). That being said, an analysis of interactions shaped in a focus group in the coming together may provide useful insights into the dynamics between actors:

> The researcher has been interested in who says what [can be opinion leader] dominating the discussion … how they say it [practical word that they employ]… size of the groups, the level of moderator involvement, selecting participants and asking questions, which if was not well planned could have posed problems (Bryman, 2004).

However, as a researcher, it is suggested that one carefully design and plan a series of discussions in order to gain observations for a specific scope of research interests in restrictive, non-threatening surroundings (Krueger and Casey, 2000, p. 5; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Hence, two focus groups were conducted after finishing all the semi-structured interviews with a schedule of discussion series that was generated and designed from the interview data of each organisation (see Tables 3 and 4 in the previous section). The schedule of discussion series and all participant name lists were provided to focus group participants prior to the discussion. This was to address the challenges of any potential threatening environment that may make participants feel uncomfortable. As a result, all interview participants were individually invited with official letters with details, and all were volunteers. As seen in Table 3.4 earlier, both EDF and FOPDEV had one focus group for each case study.

Providing exhaustive details about criteria to select participants for both semi-structured interviews and focus groups, both groups of research participants were selected on the basis of the criteria of being purposively sampled 'key informants' (Marshall, 1996; Bryan, 2008). As discussed above, this study interviewed 51 interviewees from two SDNGO case studies. Given this study's criteria to select interview participants to allow for a deeper understanding of research themes, key informants (Marshall, 1996; Bryman, 2008) of SDNGOs who are able to provide particular and more in-depth data were selected for the semi-structured interviews. Four criteria were considered appropriate to determine the main beneficiaries' participants. These were (1) willingness to volunteer information to the researcher; (2) availability of relevant, useful, and informative data; (3) efficiency in understandably providing information; and (4) objectivity and impartiality (Marshall, 1996). In this sense, predictive validity relates to the problem or question about whether an index (or group of indexes) designed for assessing a framework actually evaluates that idea (Bryman, 2008, pp. 151–155).

On the basis of these criteria, all interviewees held at least a middle-level position in their organisation (consultants, managers, executives, or board members) in order to ensure that respondents had at least five years' working experience. Moreover, they worked or had responsibilities in departments that are directly involved with development projects with NMNCs. However, if they were not middle-level position staff members but were involved with or had relevant information on development projects with NMNCs, they were also considered informative key informants to this study. This was to ensure that they provided precise information relevant to the research objectives (Marshall, 1996).

As for the language of data collection, the data collection processes were conducted in both Thai (primarily) and English. Both Thai and English languages were offered as 'language choices' (Decker and Grummitt, 2017) to all research participants to choose before the data collection began. This implication was adopted to ensure that there was no communication barrier in data collection. Specifically, all semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted exclusively in Thai by the researcher. The majority of organisational archives, corporate documents, organisational media, and news clippings were predominantly in Thai, with a few

documents available in English. Communication, such as emails, was sometimes conducted in English only when the research participants of the organisations preferred English over Thai (it is important to note that all research participants were native Thai speakers).

As for the data transcription and analysis, the researcher was solely responsible for translating and interpreting all collected data. The researcher, a native Thai speaker, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Thailand. Subsequently, the researcher pursued a career in the development sector and continued higher education in Development Studies and Social Sciences in the UK. This background ensured that the researcher possesses not only high proficiency in both Thai and English but also a profound understanding of the specific contexts related to development work and the research topics under study. Throughout the data collection phases, the researcher demonstrated an acute awareness of local norms and customs, avoiding the use of technical or theoretical terms that could potentially confuse the research subjects in either language. This careful approach ensured clear and effective communication and accurate data interpretation.

Before explaining how this thesis analysed the data collected in the next sub-section, it is necessary to elaborate on how data from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups were systematically combined. Firstly, for transcription and coding, this research transcribed the recordings from both the semi-structured interviews and focus groups from two organisational case studies and used a consistent coding framework to analyse the transcripts with key themes, sub-themes, codes, and text segments (this is discussed later in this sub-section in greater detail).

Secondly, for data integration, this research combined the codes and themes from both sets of data by using the Nvivo application, a qualitative data analysis software, to manage and integrate the data. Since the questions were similar and the participants were the same, this research merged the data in order to explore how the themes aligned or differed across the two methods.

Thirdly, this research employed triangulation to enhance the validity of the findings and compared the data from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups

to access whether both sets of data corroborated with each other, including a cross-verification the information. However, during this process, this research also considered the context in which the data was collected. During the focus groups, some answers from the participants seemed to provide insights into group dynamics and consensus, whilst some of their semi-structured interviews provided in-depth individual perspectives. This research, hence, was also aware of how the context may have influenced the responses.

Therefore, lastly, this research synthesised the findings from both methods in order to draw comprehensive and critical discussions. Later, in Chapters 4 and 5, this study highlights the discussions on the narratives where the data from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups converged and where they diverged.

3.5. Data Analysis: Coding and Thematic Analysis: *Habitus* and *Capital* through NGOs' Decision Making

Sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 detail and discuss the ontology, epistemology, theoretical and methodological approaches, sampling framework, and research design. This section presents an analytical framework and tool from which the data were discovered and interrogated. The analytical frameworks, tools, and processes of this research were also designed on the basis of and with the purpose to achieve the research objectives, as well as the theoretical and methodological approaches, sampling framework, and research design discussed in Sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4. These analytical frameworks, tools, and processes allowed this research to analyse the data from the two organisational case studies, drawing upon the working hypotheses from Chapter 2, including the conceptual and theoretical frameworks discussed earlier in Chapter 3 in order to address the research objectives, focusing on SDNGOs' decision-making process to select the beneficiaries for the development projects in partnership with NMNCs. The findings, especially the sub-debates with four provisional internal and external organisational drivers informing SDNGOs' *habitus* from the empirical evidence of this study, contribute to greater understandings and the debates of roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in partnerships under the field of Development Studies.

To perform the data analysis, thematic analysis and coding were considered essential processes for this study. In this, this thesis applied two types of coding and thematic analysis, namely, theory-driven coding (or pre-established coding, arising in Chapter 2) and data-driven coding. Designing coding and thematic frameworks can be based on theoretical interests and emphasis on research, with research questions guided on the basis of key issues of note that were derived from the data itself or based on both (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 390). Therefore, this research employed coding and thematic analysis, integrating theoretical frameworks from the literature with recurring issues from the data. This approach enabled the study to connect empirical data to established theories while remaining open to new codes and themes emerging directly from the data and the field. The data analysis of this chapter is, hence, rooted in the interplay of theoretical concerns and recurring questions from the collected data. The research methods, to some extent, provide advantages to engage with the interplay of the theoretical framework with empirical evidence (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p. 317).

As for the coding and thematic analysis framework, Attiride-Stirling (2001, p. 391) suggests that codes and themes must be utilized with text data in order to divide them into text segments. To do so, from the coded sections of the text, sub-themes are analysed and categorised into the theoretical concerning themes, derived in Chapter 2, in order to answer the research questions. In addition, Bourdieu's *habitus* and *capital* are used as analytical tools along with the coding and thematic processes from coded segments of texts to themes, as shown in Figure 3.4 below:

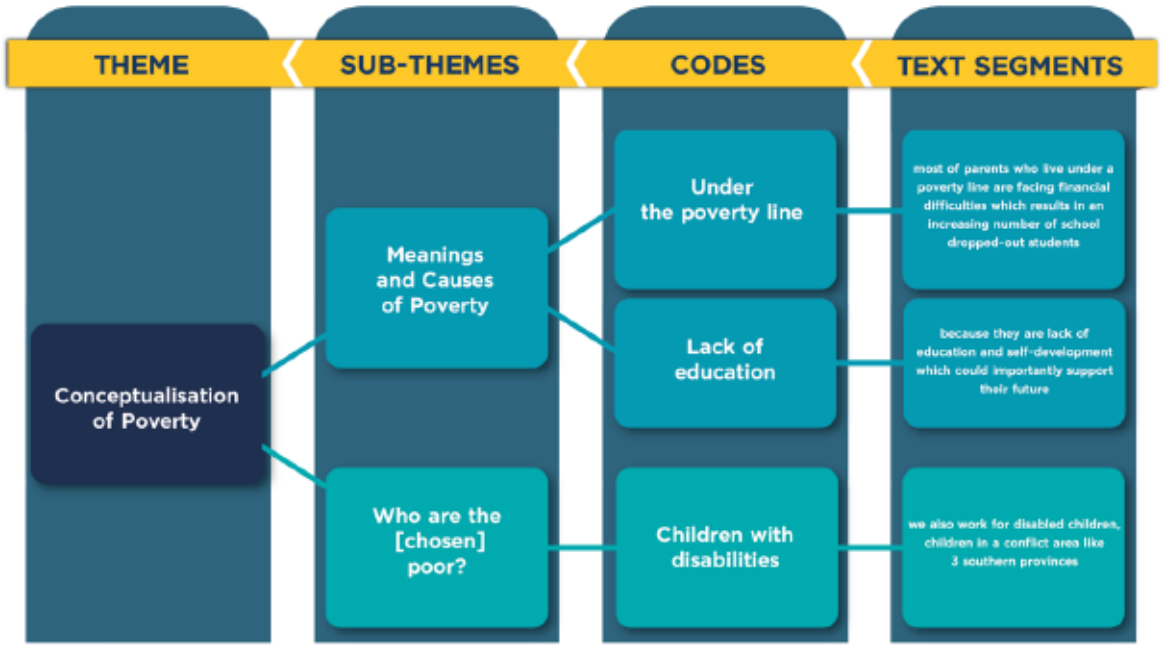

Figure 3.4. Coding table and thematic analysis process via NVivo application (source: the researcher).

In order to illustrate the coding process and how findings developed under each working hypothesis or provisional internal or external organisational driver, as shown in Figure 3.4 above with an example of the conceptualisation of poverty, this research began by codifying the segments of text in the empirical data sentence by sentence and then analysed the codes (under the poverty line, lack of education, children with disabilities), wherein codes were able to emerge from the pre-defined codes or themes drawn up from the literature outlined in Chapter 2 and/or fresh codes emerged from the empirical data collected via the two organisational case studies.

Later, the codes were categorised into the sub-themes (meanings and causes of poverty, who are the (chosen) poor?), and then the sub-themes were connected to the suggested mainstream theoretical ideas (or themes in the above figure, with 'conceptualisation of poverty' in Figure 3.4 as an example) from the literature, wherein four of them were situated in the debates of SDNGOs' decision making towards beneficiary selection for development projects. All these processes were conducted via the NVivo data analysis application, where all sets of data from all semi-structured

interviews, focus groups, organisational archives, corporate documents, organisational media, and news clippings were uploaded to the NVivo application.

Figures 3.5 to 3.7 below illustrate how findings developed from the coding process in the NVivo application in which the highlights and significant findings under this process were used to answer the main research questions: how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries, and what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs. This thematic analysis and coding process via the NVivo application allowed this research to explore, investigate, and develop the findings as contributions to the main focus of the study and the debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership, particularly in terms of SDNGOs' decision making.

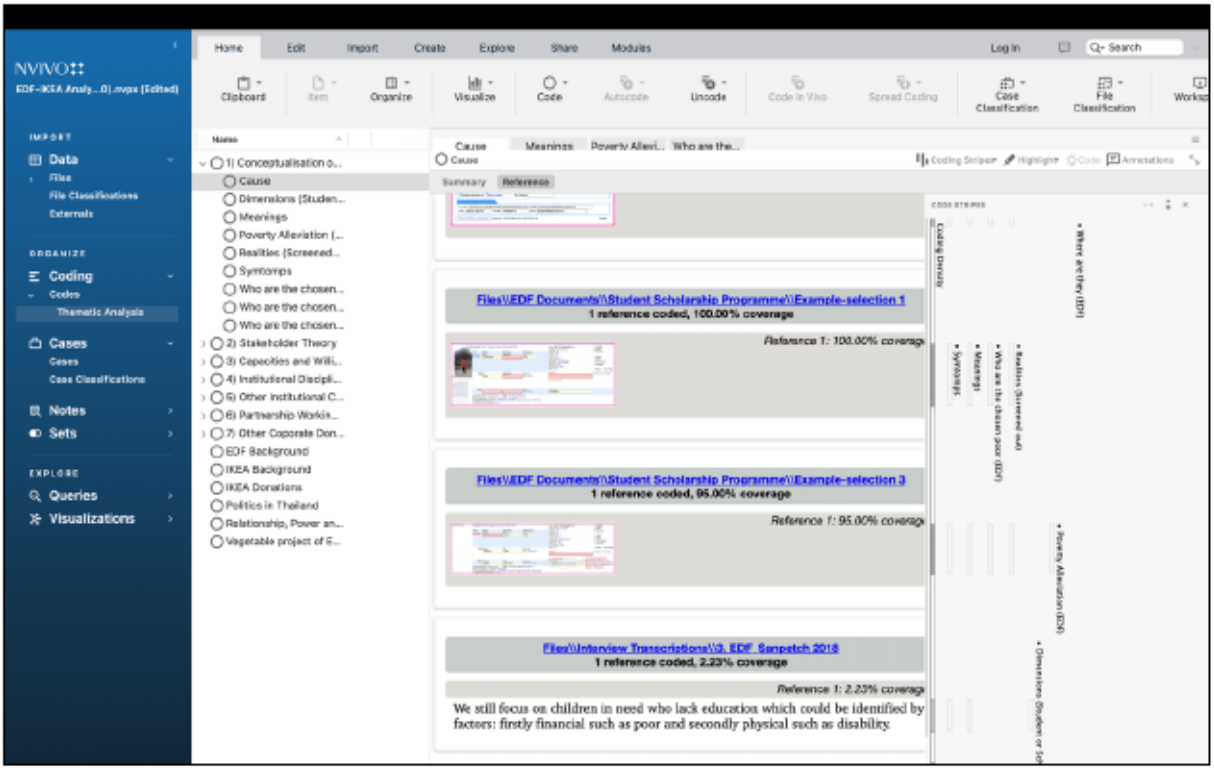

Figure 3.5. Example of the coding process and development of the findings through the NVivo application (source: the researcher).

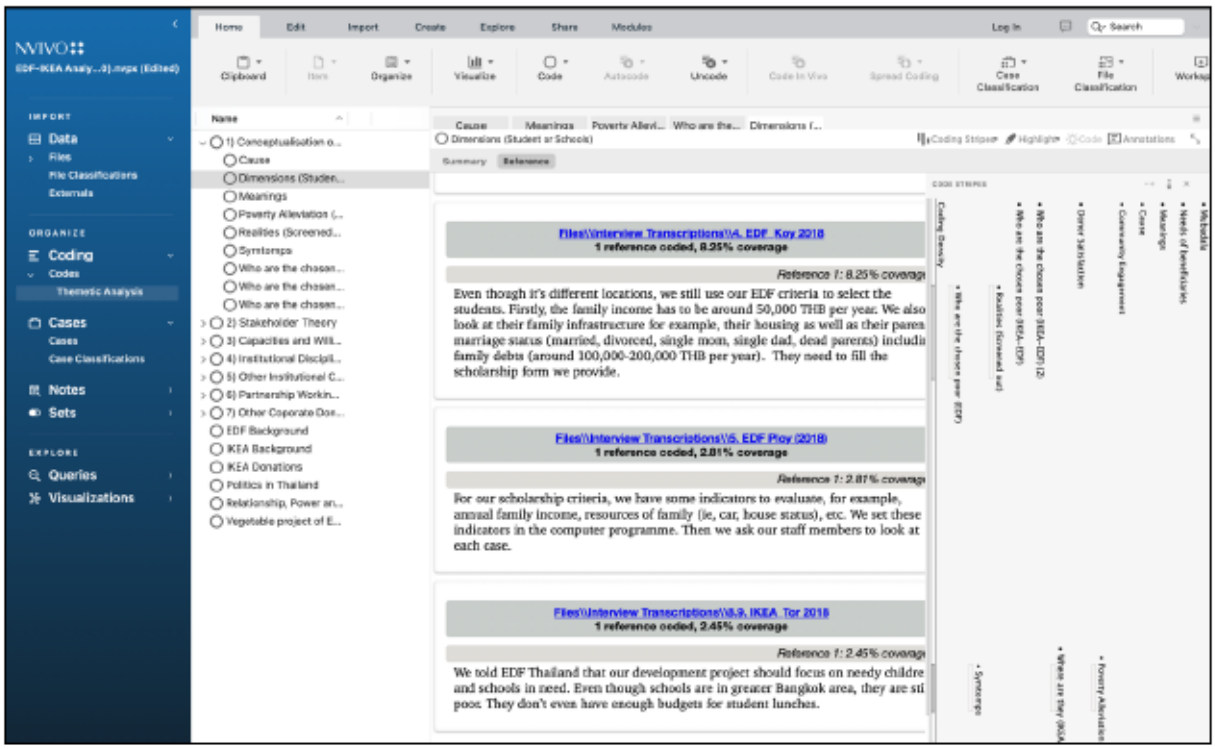

Figure 3.6. Example of the coding process and development of the findings through the NVivo application (source: the researcher).

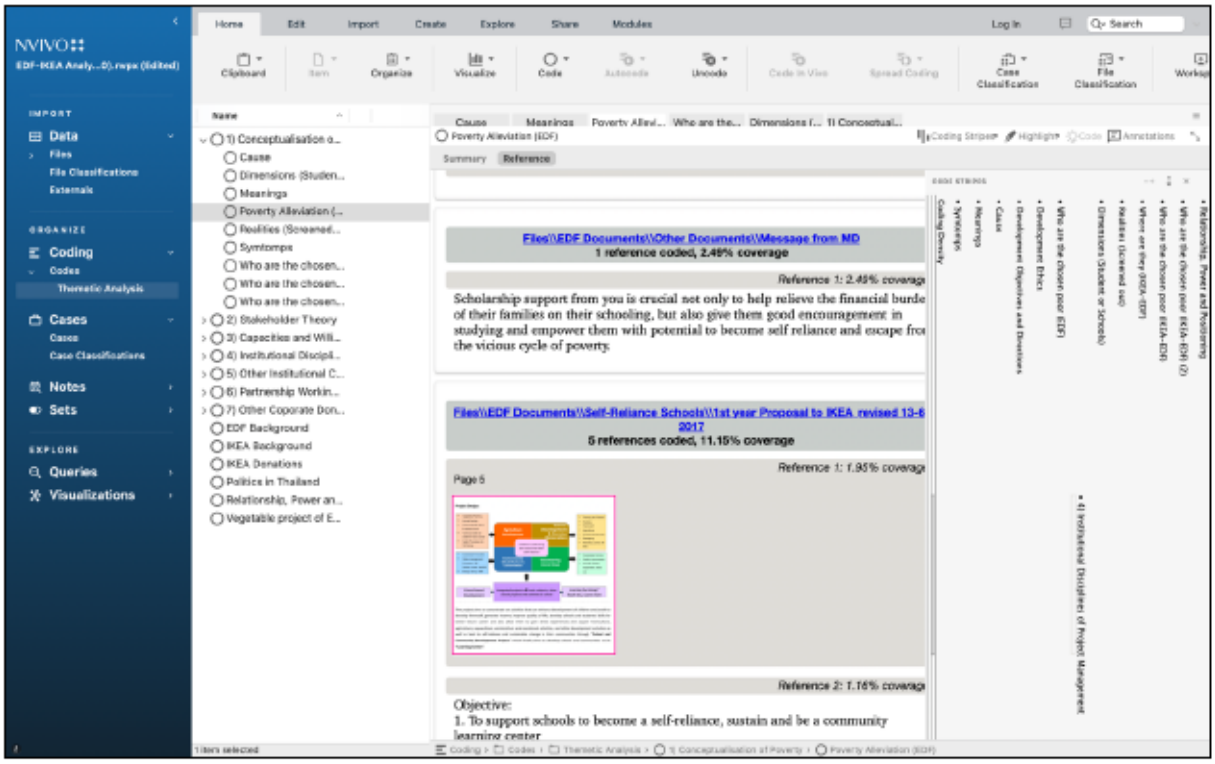

Figure 3.7. Example of the coding process and development of the findings through the NVivo application (source: the researcher).

Although under the same core theme, some sub-themes might have had more or less quotations, figures, and discussions from the collected empirical data when compared with others, this does not mean that they are more significant or more powerful drivers than other sub-themes. It is not the purpose of this research to measure the sub-theme power against other sub-themes over SDNGOs' decision-making processes. This study considers that all heuristic sub-themes and major themes are considerably rational and have their own particular operative roles on SDNGOs' decision-making processes of beneficiary selection for their development projects in partnership with NMNCs.

In Chapters 4 and 5, four key elements of NGOs' decision-making processes derived from Chapter 2 are used as an interpretative approach for this study to interpret, analyse, and provide fresh insights from the empirical data for each case study. Moreover, this research travels from the current exploratory literature to the collected empirical data, then cross-references back and forth in the analytical chapter to present, discuss, and strengthen the study's arguments. However, the major theoretical discussions and conclusions against argumentations from the literature in Chapter 2 are provided with a particular focus in Chapter 6. Therefore, the analysis and findings of Chapters 4 and 5 aim to mainly present the stories in practice from the different *fields of practice* of each setting.

In addition, the NVivo software (*Mac version*) was used on all semi-structured interviews, focus groups, internal archive documents, corporate documents, and media report data from the two case studies in order to address the research questions as an analytical tool and to provide an analysis for qualitative contents dealing with meanings, views, and perspectives whilst being aware and mindful of the research's positionality and theoretical settings. Table 3.5 on the next page illustrates the input documents on NVivo, separated by case study and data sources of the two case studies.

Table 3.5. NVivo documents by case study and data source.

Case Studies / Primary Input	EDF (with IKEA Thailand)	FOPDEV (with Prudential Thailand)
Semi-structured interviews	27	24
Focus groups	1	1
Internal archive documents	13	19
Corporate documents	27	22
Media reports	1,243	467
Total	**1,311**	**533**

Moreover, an analytical framework was designed and developed from Bourdieu's 'theory of practice' and his concepts of *habitus* and *capital* (as discussed in Section 3.3), in line with the research hypotheses developed in Chapter 2, including thematic analysis. Following the suggestion by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), the deductive approach was adopted to identify thematic hypotheses from the literature in Chapter 2 and was grounded in the research questions, while the inductive approach was used to explore data-driven themes (this is discussed later in Chapters 4 and 5 regarding the fresh research insights) which recurred in the datasets.

As a result, four main thematic coded quotations were isolated from this analytical framework (see Table 3.6 on the next page for the thematically coded quotations for each case study), allowing this study to tackle how SDNGOs chose their intended beneficiaries for the development projects in partnership with NMNCs. However, some of the sub-coded quotations (presented separately in Chapters 4 and 5) under these four main thematic quotations may vary depending on the different results of each case study. Nevertheless, all coded and sub-coded quotations were analysed on the basis of the analytical frameworks of *habitus* and *capital*. This offers

thorough, critical, and fruitful insights and stories of different settings through each case study's *space* and *time*.

Table 3.6. NVivo quotations for each thematic code and case study.

Case Studies Primary Input	EDF (with IKEA Thailand)	FOPDEV (with Prudential Thailand)	Total
Conceptualisations of poverty	**257**	**178**	**274**
Stakeholder theory	**189**	**202**	**391**
Willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries	**224**	**129**	**353**
Theory of project management	**87**	**54**	**141**
Total	**757**	**563**	**1,320**

Thus far, this section has demonstrated how this thesis makes relevant use of theoretical, methodological, and analytical tools against concepts of *field, capital*, and *habitus* from Bourdieu's 'theory of practice'. It also draws from the epistemology of 'field of practice' informed by Krause (2014) to re-define and re-conceptualise the *field* of partnership on the ground through the label of 'SDNGOs' toward *NGO-ism*, an ontology proposed by Fowler (2008), Fowler and Malunga (2010), and Fowler and Biekart (2013), for addressing the central research questions on the decision making of SDNGOs toward their beneficiary selections for development projects with NMNCs. Lastly, this section also explains how coding and thematic analytical processes are understood in terms of the concepts *habitus* and *capital* in order to analyse the collected data systematically under the focused concept of the study's *field*.

3.6. Ethical Research Considerations, Implications, and Challenges

The ethical evaluation of this thesis was completed, and it was approved by the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) of University of East London (UEL), which was considered by the UREC in October 2017 before the collection of data began. With a valid ethical assessment of the UREC, this thesis used an information sheet and consent form, which provided important details such as the main goal of the research, the purposes of the research, the participants' anonymous status, the confidentiality of information, the voluntary consent of the participation, gratitude for taking part, the right for withdrawal of the participants, the interview duration, and the timeframe of data usage. These documents were sent either by email, by post, or by hand to both gatekeepers and interviewees before all focus groups, and interviews were conducted so that participants were informed and confident that it was voluntary participation, as well as the fact that their privacy would be safeguarded. Before starting the interviews and focus groups during the fieldwork, the consent form was again explained by the researcher and confirmed by each participant's signature.

In addition, the interviewees were only questioned about their experiences and viewpoints that were related to the study topics to respect their confidentiality. According to the ethics application, the respondents' data were handled confidentially during analysis and storage. There is no written work containing the particularity of interviewees that would have identified a participant. Organisational archives, news articles, focus group transcripts, interview transcripts, and corporate documents were securely kept and used for the purpose of this study only, following UEL's Data Management Plan (DMP): lite approval[8].

Nevertheless, there was one challenge regarding the ethical considerations in October 2019. An article proposal of the analysed findings from one of my case studies, the EDF–IKEA partnership, was accepted to be published in the TNI report: the Corporation for State of Power 2020 during the World Economic Forum 2020 in Davos. However, after receiving feedback from the publisher to develop my article, I

[8] Copies of UREC approval and DMP approval are provided in Appendix 1.

learned that the publisher might use my article for political purposes in order to question or urge the corporate sector in terms of sustainability and corporate power issues at the global economic level. Therefore, I, as the researcher of this PhD thesis, consulted this issue with my supervisors and school immediately. As a result, I decided to withdraw the paper before the stage of editing and publishing in order to protect my research participants from both MNCs and NGOs from all ethical issues. This process also followed every step of the UREC's ethical directions.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided justifications for and discussion around employing various applications of the interpretivist qualitative research approach, the epistemology of the *field of practice*, and the ontology of *NGO-ism* and Bourdieu's 'theory of practice' as analytical tools, aiming at addressing the central research questions, including the research objectives of this thesis. It also discussed data collection approaches, which include case study design; a sampling framework used to select SDNGOs as case studies; semi-structured interviews; focus groups; and data analysis through NGOs' decision making. Lastly, the chapter has provided and discussed ethical research considerations, implications, and challenges.

The next chapter is the first analytical findings chapter from one of the two organisational case studies.

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Chapter 4: Analytical Insights and Findings of the EDF–IKEA Thailand Case Study

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed and provided methodological, analytical, and theoretical applications used by this research in order to explore and understand the central research questions: (1) how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and (2) what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs. This chapter now turns to present the discussions of the analysis and findings for the first of the two case studies of this research.

As this thesis juxtaposes the inductive and deductive approaches, the exploratory literature, derived in Chapter 2, suggests four provisional mainstream drivers that are insightful and critical to employ in order to answer the central research questions. The four thematic issues are as follows: (1) conceptualisation of poverty; (2) stakeholder theory; (3) willingness, capacity, and capability of potential beneficiaries; and (4) theory of project management, all of them focused on NGOs' decision making towards beneficiary selection under cross-sector collaborations with NMNCs for development projects, wherein this study locates its discussions and findings in terms of the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

Moreover, in order to move analytical and interpretative applications beyond the four exploratory drivers, this chapter uses Bourdieu's concepts of (1) *field*, (2) *habitus*, and (3) *capital*, as part of the 'theory of practice' (Bourdieu, 1991; 1992; 1994; 1999; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), as additional theoretical and analytical tools to offer deeper, manifold, and multidimensional understandings according to the interpretivist ontological approach of this thesis, as mentioned earlier in Chapter 3. In addition, these analytical processes also work along with the coding and thematic

processes from the coded segments of texts to themes, as also explained in Figure 3.4 in Chapter 3.

The interpretive qualitative approach and Bourdieu's concept of *field* also allow this study to provide more comprehensive understandings in order to answer research questions from empirical data such as interviews, news clippings, corporate documents, and organisational archives from the most possible relevant key informants of this research including SDNGO staff members, volunteers, board of trustees, NMNC staff members, project partners, intended beneficiaries, and other populations in need who were not chosen to receive help from the development projects. These data collection and analysis designs are considered sufficient to answer the central research questions.

However, this research does not make any claims that any part of the analysis findings of this case study in Chapter 4 could apply to other organisations or settings, or even other SDNGO–NMNC case studies in this research, due to the different societal and political contexts. The main organisational drivers towards SDNGOs' decision making that were analysed and discussed in this chapter only present the practices and notions from the collected empirical data of EDF and IKEA Thailand in the specific period of time and on particular projects and settings or *fields*, and thus it cannot be used for generalisation in any other cases. Importantly, this thesis did not use the comparison approach to analyse how EDF's decision making changed after working with IKEA. Informed by Krause's (2014) epistemological application, this study aims to explore how EDF defined, chose, or approached beneficiaries for the development projects and with what implications in working with IKEA Thailand in particular.

The first introductory section of this chapter provides a brief research starting point, theoretical interests, and analytical approaches linked to the case study of this chapter. The next section summarises the brief organisational history and background of EDF Thailand. Section 4.3 then moves to providing a rational summary of how EDF and IKEA Thailand worked on its first development project in Bangyai, Nonthaburi Province, wherein a new IKEA store opened. This is followed by Sections 4.4, 4.5, 4.6,

and 4.7 in order to explore the four mainstream internal and external organisational issues, adopting the empirical research data, NVivo analytical application, and theoretical tools to develop a deeper understanding of how EDF Thailand decided to choose its intended beneficiaries for the development project when partnering with IKEA Thailand. These are to achieve research objectives 3, 4, 5, and 6. Finally, Section 4.8 of this chapter provides a conclusion of its analysis and findings, including EDF's organisational external variable drivers that might also shape its decision making. What follows now are the analytical insights and the story on the ground.

4.2. Organisational Background of EDF Thailand: Development Approaches, Development Projects, and Partnerships

This section provides a brief organisational background of EDF Thailand, the first SDNGO case study of this thesis. This organisational background will elaborate on how the organisation took its development paths to form, grow, and develop its organisation and work-of-development directions through its emphasis on poverty reduction approaches towards beneficiaries and partnership from 1987 until 2019. This is to investigate their conceptualization of poverty and how they selected their intended beneficiaries from their past until the time the development project started with IKEA.

EDF Thailand, or the Education for Development Foundation Thailand, was founded in 1987[1] with the philosophy of poverty reduction and education development by using 'education' as a central approach of its organisation to achieve its organisational goals. At the time it was founded, according to their first registration document, the organisation set four charitable and development goals, as follows (EDF Thailand, 1987):

1) To provide scholarships to the youth in poverty who have finished compulsory education and require higher education.

[1] EDF Thailand is also recognised and registered by the government of Thailand as a non-profit, tax-exempt organisation: registration number 255 (EDF Thailand, 1987).

2) To support the career path of the youth in poverty until they are able to be independent and support their families, including their communities.
3) To help and develop international affairs on educational and cultural issues.
4) To provide public charitable contributions or collaborate with other charitable/non-profit organisations.

In the beginning, the organisation was known as MSP Foundation Thailand, belonging to the foundation group that has a headquarters in Japan. Later, the board of trustees and management members in Thailand rebranded and restructured the organisation from MSP foundation to EDF Thailand (this research uses 'EDF' and 'EDF Thailand' interchangeably). The entire MSP foundation group later changed its name to EDF group, and the board of the group appointed EDF Thailand as the new headquarters for the EDF group, wherein the group's decision making regarding organisational administrations and plans for development projects was produced and agreed through its annual and half-year board meetings (EDF Thailand, 2005). Although EDF is rooted in Japan, one of the management staff stated during the interview that EDF has been freely operating with their own autonomy in Thailand, claiming that EDF considers themselves to be a Thai local NGO (EDF_GroupA_Male_1).

This confirmation from the interview denotes that although EDF's organisational *habitus* might have been informed by its Japanese roots, one of the individual agencies in the organisation claimed its own autonomy for decision making. Such a shared attitude, awareness, or value reflects a consciousness of EDF having a primary and secondary *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1999) in terms of its independence through organisational decision making.

In the beginning, the organisation tried to alleviate poverty in Thailand by only providing scholarships for school tuition fees, including necessary allowances for underprivileged students and schools, as its single organisational activity. In 1987, the organisation only provided 41 scholarships to the students in need in Udonthani Province and later provided more funding in another 20 provinces nearby in the

northeast of Thailand, only because the organisation discovered that the north-eastern region accounted for nearly half of all Thailand's poorest households at that time (EDF Thailand, 1988). None of the evidence from this document in 1988 reveals how EDF defined or explained the term 'poverty' in terms of specific meanings. However, according to some of the EDF's board annual meetings between 2010 and 2017, it shows that the board discussed the populations who lived under the poverty line (identified by the World Bank) and the national income rates by the Royal Thai government (EDF Thailand, 2017a; EDF_GroupA_Male_1). Although there was ambiguity on how the board defied EDF's concept of poverty, it is evidenced that the global and national poverty lines informed or challenged with their organisational *habitus*.

However, evidence from its annual board of trustee meeting minutes in 1997/1998 denotes that it later geographically expanded the working area across the country due to three major factors: Firstly, EDF Thailand stated that there were 'the poor' everywhere in Thailand, not just in the northeast due to the national 'Tom Yum Goong' economic crisis in 1997 (EDF_GroupA_Male_2). Secondly, donors tended to change their donation interests towards other areas of Thailand (EDF_GroupA_Male_2). Thirdly, fundraising competitiveness to help the poor in the northeast from other SDNGOs and INGOs was very high (EDF Thailand, 1997). Accordingly, these dilemmas of development in Thailand and difficult fundraising situations at that time challenged the organisation to survive only after a decade of establishing itself. Therefore, the organisation decided to conduct the first geographical development area expansion into other provinces across the country in order to enlarge its geographical groups of beneficiaries, namely, 'vulnerable students and schools' (EDF_GroupA_Male_2).

Moreover, EDF Thailand had its second geographical development area expansion to reach its new group of beneficiaries in the three southern border provinces (3SBPs) of Thailand, in which the ethnic and religious separatist insurgency conflict began in 2001. This ongoing conflict was centred in the three southernmost provinces of Thailand and nearby areas, originating in 1948 as an ethnic and religious

separatist insurgency in the historical Malay Patani Region. The conflict has become more complicated and desperately violent since 2001 (Parks et al., 2013).

However, evidence from annual board meeting minutes in 2003 show how there was an internal debate on how they would select a new group of potential beneficiaries in the 3SBP areas. As a result, the board agreed that the organisation take a different multidimensional approach to define and reach beneficiaries who were not only 'vulnerable students and schools'. On the basis of its central organisational development approach, 'providing education scholarships for poverty alleviation', EDF Thailand decided to help 'disabled children' as the first priority in 3SBP areas (EDF Thailand, 2003). Sources of donation for the 3SBP scholarships and projects were international NGOs, international organisations, foreign governments, and public individuals (EDF_GroupA_Male_1).

According to the conflict occurring in the 3SBP zones in 2001, after 2 years, for the first time, the board of the organisation considered choosing vulnerable students and schools as scholarship recipients on the basis of 'disability' priority and criteria[2]. This significantly illustrates how the cause and symptoms of poverty in 3SBP areas informed and challenged EDF's organisational *habitus*, which as a result, led the board of this SDNGO to have mutual decisions for adding a new group of beneficiaries (as one criteria) and new areas of organisational work (as another criteria) due to their shared attitudes, values, and realisations.

For over 32 years, evidence from its annual reports shows that EDF Thailand and its affiliations have played an active role in the field of education development and poverty reduction in Thailand by providing scholarships. In 2019, EDF scholarship provision covered all the 61 provinces of Thailand. The organisation has granted a total number of 373,414 scholarships, valued at a total of 636,940,999 baht (around £16,761,605) for poor and vulnerable students[3] in 5,554 schools throughout Thailand,

[2] Later, in 2007, EDF also added orphanage and violence-affected criteria for scholarship recipients in 3SBP areas.

[3] According to all of the interviews and corporate documents, EDF most often used the specific term 'poor students' in the Thai language. Other less used terms include 'vulnerable students', 'less fortunate students', 'underprivileged students', 'needy students', and 'students in need', which they used interchangeably.

with good cooperation from the Primary Educational Service Area Offices under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.

EDF Thailand also expanded its scholarship support to less fortunate students in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) countries from 2012 by working with the EDF group. In FY 2018, EDF granted 5,636 scholarships valued at a total of 15,417,678 baht (around £405,728) to more than 22,000 disadvantaged children in Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Vietnam for their basic education (EDF Thailand, 2018).

However, at the beginning of 2007, its board and management team, through debate, realised that having only education in schools or formal education is not sufficient enough to help children in need to meet long-term development goals and poverty reduction. The organisation later believed informal education or learning outside classrooms was also important to build up students' capabilities in order to escape poverty. "Only knowledge from the schools without career development or life experience outside classrooms is not good enough for them to have better lives in the future" explained a management member (EDF_GroupA_ Female_3).

Therefore, its board decided to considerably review its organisation direction to re-define its charitable policies and development approaches. From only providing student scholarships, EDF Thailand since then revised and added their organisational development activities to five main undertakings, which were as follows (EDF Thailand, 2010, p. 2):

1) Lower secondary scholarship programme: for students from impoverished families.
2) Upper secondary/vocational scholarship programme: for students with good academic performance from impoverished families.
3) Capacity-building scholarship programme: for children with disabilities in inclusive education settings.
4) "Under the Same Sky" scholarship programme: for violence-affected, disabled, or orphaned students in the three southernmost provinces.
5) Learning and life improvement projects: for students and schools in remote rural areas.

These projects also include library, ICT, education development, agriculture knowledge, a borrowed bicycle programme, career skill development, and health promotion.

According to the development approaches above, it could be evidenced here that EDF had added 'orphanage', 'disability', and 'violence-affected' criteria for the scholarship recipients in 3SBP areas into their new organisational goals, which affirms how the cause and symptom of poverty since 2001 impacted EDF's organisational *habitus*. It is highlighted here that it took 4 years since EDF showed their initial practice against their first actions of helping the students in 3SBP in 2003 to change their organisational objectives.

Moreover, it is significantly highlighted that the board agreed to add one more undertaking in order to allow EDF Thailand to officially start its development projects for the first time. Although there was a debate within the organisation that 'learning and life improvement projects' was too broad a development approach at poverty reduction, it was approved by its board as EDF Thailand considered education as not the only key element in sustainably alleviating the poverty of vulnerable students in Thailand, but also recognised other essential factors that are significant to improving the standard of living of the students (EDF_GroupA_Male_1). Such a debate during the board meeting against the definition of the term 'learning and life improvement projects' in their organisational objective also indicates the rupture and agreement of attitudes and values of how the individual *habitus* of the board members are deconstructed and constructed in the collective organisational *habitus* of EDF.

A year later, the reports from its annual report and annual board meeting minutes in 2005 disclosed that the organisation began to launch its development projects, wherein the 'concept of partnership' was formally introduced to the organisation for the first time. Its report in 2005 also indicates that the organisation did not have an intention to manage development projects alone but to collaborate with other organisational partners from both domestic and foreign organisations across different sectors, such as Thai companies, resident MNCs in Thailand, or non-resident

corporations from abroad. The development projects, as a result, not only allowed EDF Thailand to have more diverse groups of intended beneficiaries with different multidimensional and geographical expanding implications but also changed the organisation's core activity structures and development approaches to poverty reduction, which included fundraising and partnership strategies.

Table 4.1. Comparison of the total revenues of EDF Thailand from 2012 to 2018 (summarised by the researcher, data as of April 2020).

Fiscal Year	Donations for Scholarship Programme (THB)	Donations for Project Development Programme (THB)	Other Income[4] (THB)	Total (THB)
2012	39,117,660 (£936,320) (51.72%)	35,629,153 (£852,819) (47.10%)	886,535 (£21,220) (1.17%)	75,633,349 (£1,810,359) (100%)
2013	47,579,272 (£1,138,857) (53.91%)	39,031,671 (£934,261) (44.23%)	1,631,980 (£39,063) (1.84%)	88,242,924 (£2,112,181) (100%)
2014	48,667,619 (£1,164,907) (53.32%)	41,979,913 (£1,004,830) (46%)	610,788 (£14,620) (0.68%)	91,258,321 (£2,184,357) (100%)
2015	41,513,868 (£993,675) (50.25%)	40,350,648 (£965,832) (48.84%)	755,900 (£18,093) (0.91%)	82,620,416 (£1,977,600) (100%)
2016	44,981,594 (£1,076,679) (61.15%)	27,456,301 (£657,194) (37.32%)	243,960 (£5,839) (1.53%)	72,681,855 (£1,739,712) (100%)
2017	42,404,837 (£1,015,001) (54.76%)	34,211,104 (£818,876) (44.18%)	828,170 (£19,823) (1.07%)	77,444,111 (£1,853,700) (100%)

[4] Such as interests from fixed deposits or dividends from other investments.

2018	44,981,594 (£1,076,679) (61.15%)	27,456,301 (£657,194) (37.32%)	1,127,913 (£26,997) (1.53%)	73,565,808 (£1,760,870) (100%)

Table 4.1 above shows the comparison of the entire revenues of EDF Thailand from 2012 to 2018, indicating the similar proportions between donations for scholarship programmes and development projects. Although the annual percentages of scholarship programme donations might be slightly higher than the development projects in every year, this set of figures asserts that after EDF Thailand had officially launched the development projects in 2006, it became one of the dual major revenues of the organisation. This, hence, reveals that development projects in collaboration with other partners played considerable roles to the organisation's execution and development works over a decade since it started.

According to their annual reports from 2010 to 2018, none of the specific numbers of each source of funding were revealed. However, the data from the annual reports indicate that around 70-80% came from the public donations and 20-35% was donated by organisational donors from the governments, international organisations, INGOs, local companies, and NMNCs (EDF Thailand, 2010; 2013; 2015; 2017; 2018). However, no financial reports between 2000 and 2009 were provided, with a member of management stating that the largest donation proportion had been from individual donations from the public whist organisational donations started from around 5% and later increased and kept fluctuating between 20% and 35%.

Although EDF Thailand did not consent to showing how much each sectoral partner donated to the organisation, one of the management members confirmed the total donations from NMNCs was the highest donation for the development projects since 2012 when compared to other organisational donors of development projects (EDF_GroupA_Male_2). However, having project development partnerships from diverse sectors did not guarantee financial stability and organisational sustainability. Due to the resource mobilisation tendency in Thailand, EDF Thailand recently experienced 10–20% declines in total revenue generation from governments,

international organisations, INGOs, and local corporate donors, caused by reduced government grants and Thai domestic economic recessions.

In response to government funding changes, EDF Thailand's board and management set a new fundraising plan in 2012 to ensure its future sustainability which focused more on corporate donors, especially on corporate donors through their corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes. Although the discussions of how the theory of CSR informed EDF's decision making, analysed through EDF's organisational *habitus*, is provided later in this chapter, it is also significant to acknowledge here that EDF had begun learning and experiencing CSR projects or programmes of corporate donors or partners since 2012. During the interview in 2017, one member of the board revealed organisational shared interest and plans for EDF's upcoming corporate fundraising strategy in that

> … we have been realising the increased donations of corporate donors, especially MNCs. We discussed putting forward a focus to raise more funds from them… (EDF_GroupA_Male_1)

After launching new fundraising strategies, the organisation gained experience working and partnering with corporate donors, especially with NMNCs who resided in Thailand such as UBS; Barclays; Toms; CitiBank; Starbucks; Chevron (EDF Thailand, 2019); and, more recently, IKEA Thailand in 2017, when this thesis started to conduct research with the organisation.

Focusing on the development project with NMNCs, on the basis of the available recent organisational archives provided by EDF Thailand in the past 5 years (2015–2019), Table 4.2 below summarises the categorised details for EDF's development projects in partnership with NMNCs resident in Thailand (EDF Thailand, 2017c; 2018b; 2018c; 2019c). This table emphasises the other essential implications such as donor profile, development project focus, locations of the beneficiaries, and number of intended vulnerable schools and students. Applied from the work of Bourdieu (1977), these considerations from practice provide a starting point to provide multiple understandings and perspectives of how EDF Thailand chose the poor against different project focuses, donor profiles, and locations of the chosen poor. This table extracts empirical data that led this study to explore how such organisational

implications informed, impacted, or were implemented by EDF's organisational *habitus* in terms of decision making in order to choose the potential beneficiaries. The full discussion and details are provided in Sections 4.4–4.7 of this chapter.

Table 4.2. An analytical summary of beneficiary profiles with other details of development projects partnering with NMNCs (summarised by the researcher).

NMNC	Donor Business Nature	Project Focus	Locations of the Poor	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Special Notes on Sub-Dimensions of Poverty
UBS	Finance	Career, agriculture, learning facilities, and scholarships with EDF's criteria	Loei, Nong Bua Lamphu, Prachin Buri, and Nakhon Prathom provinces	8	4,000	EDF used its usual poverty dimensions and criteria
Starbucks	Beverage	Career development and scholarships	Khon Kaen, Udonthani, Chaingmai, Phuket, Chonburi, and Pathumthani provinces	14	150	For vocational schools and students (female 60%, male 30%, and other genders 10%)
CitiBank	Finance and banking	Career development	Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) areas	10	2,500	For vocational schools and students

Chevron	Natural resources	Career and community development	Across Thailand	12	75–100	For university students
IKEA	Home furnishing	Career, agriculture, environmental, and social days (volunteering)	Bangyai and Nonthaburi provinces	5	1,265	* Full details will be discussed in the next theme

In order to explore and examine EDF's organisational *habitus*, in a focus of conceptualization of poverty and how they selected their intended beneficiaries since the beginning of organisational establishment, this section has provided, analysed, and discussed the organisational background and development history of EDF Thailand through the analysis, with an emphasis on its poverty reduction approaches, development policies, development projects, and partnerships. Even though EDF Thailand might have worked in partnership with a number of NMNCs for its development projects, this research chose to focus on one particular cross-sector partnership between EDF and IKEA Thailand starting in 2017 when this research began. The next section aims to provide a concise overview, focusing on EDF's development project with IKEA Thailand, wherein this study considers it significant to also look at the history and background of NMNC partner as IKEA's organisational *habitus* might also shape, challenge, and interplay with EDF's *habitus* in terms of the beneficiary selection process (this is later discussed in Sections 4.4–4.7 of this chapter).

4.3. Partnership and Development Project Background of EDF and IKEA Thailand

This section provides IKEA's (worldwide and in Thailand) business profile, including its decision-making hierarchy; its development work or corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals; a brief introduction of how the partnership between EDF

and IKEA Thailand began; and, finally, a summarised background of their development project with EDF in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, Thailand.

IKEA was founded in 1943 by a 17-year-old carpenter named Ingvar Kamprad and later became a Swedish-founded transnational corporate group that designs and sells ready-to-assemble home furniture, kitchen appliances, and accessories, including other home products and services. Since 2008, IKEA has been the world's largest home furniture retailer. Nowadays, IKEA, which belongs to the Ikano group, operates in 29 countries with over 350 IKEA stores worldwide, being managed by complicated organisational structures of for-profit and not-for-profit entities (such as the IKEA Foundation). Its corporate organisation is separated into two fundamental segments: operations and franchising (EDF Thailand, 2017).

In Thailand, IKEA Thailand operates under IKEA South East Asia, which includes Singapore, the Philippines, and Malaysia. The IKEA South East Asia group is under a franchisee system, belonging to the Ikano group based in Luxemburg. One of the companies chaired at Ikano is a management director (MD) at IKEA South East Asia. Therefore, the Ikano group is a worldwide head office in which visions, policies, and directions for all of its business operations, including CSR, community, or partnership CSR projects for IKEA subsidiaries around the world. In order to run business activities followed by its global and regional corporate directions, however, each regional and national management team, such as IKEA Thailand, make their own independent decisions on the basis of different contexts of the country and are supervised by the MD of IKEA South East Asia who also chaired at Ikano. On the basis of the corporate structures for its business operations and decision making, this research collected data from its global, regional, national, and sub-area inputs (Bangphil and Bangyai districts) in order to produce a richer understanding from multiple sources.

Figure 4.2. Map of Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, Thailand (source: EDF, 2017).

In 2011, IKEA Thailand opened its first branch in Bangphli District, Samut Prakan Province, and later in March 2018, it expanded to open the second branch at Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, which is considered the largest IKEA store in South East Asia. Since mid-2017, while the second store (IKEA Bangyai or IKEA Bangyai Branch) was being constructed and prepared to open, IKEA Thailand approached EDF Thailand, a local SDNGO, in order to partner with them and implement a development project together in Bangyai before and during the opening of its second store. One of the management staff members at IKEA Bangyai stated

> Our sustainability policy is in our business plans as it will achieve IKEA's vision that will create better everyday lives. We don't create better homes for our customers, but we create better

> environments, including people. For Bangyai area, it's different with Bangphil district. We had to look at our Bangyai neighbourhood, Nonthaburi Province in particular. We decided that we could implement the sustainability [development] project in our Bangyai area so we were looking for a local partner in Bangyai who understands the locals and has local connections. (IKEA_GroupC_Female_2)

IKEA Thailand found EDF Thailand on the Google Search Engine by looking at the potential Thai local SDNGO who worked for education and poverty reduction in Nonthaburi Province, and they later phoned EDF Thailand for a blind-date meeting (IKEA_GroupC_Female_2). Although EDF Thailand might be known by its reputation from the scholarship and development projects with a focus on education for poverty alleviation, this SDNGO had never worked within Nonthaburi Province, let alone Bangyai District in particular. IKEA Thailand, however, set the proffered agendas of its prospective development project in Bangyai and informed the EDF team during the first meeting. The evidence from data on this sub-section shows how EDF's organisational *habitus* was firstly informed and challenged in order to understand and learn more about working on poverty in Bangyai by IKEA Thailand. From this process, this empirical evidence suggests that EDF's *habitus*, as part of the conceptualisation of poverty and stakeholder theory, was interplayed by IKEA's interests and needs.

After the first blind date, EDF Thailand conducted a field survey in Bangyai and nearby communities in Nonthaburi Province in order to produce a brief presentation from the survey in order to pitch the development project for IKEA Thailand (the detailed discussions of criteria, agendas, and preferences of the field survey are discussed later in Section 4.5 of this chapter). The entire pitching and negotiating process took around three months before both parties arrived at a partnership agreement (EDF_GroupA_Female_5).

After signing the partnership agreement, EDF Thailand set plans to implement the development project, named the 'Self-Reliance School and Social Days' project, with IKEA Thailand for three years, but the proposal and MOU were signed on a yearly basis for financial procedures. The first-year development project, which is a main focus of this research, was granted 1,500,000 baht (approximately £40,000). The main goal of this development project was "to create the inclusive well-being and peaceful

co-existence between the people from schools and communities which leads to a sustainable development" (EDF Thailand, 2018). In terms of the activities of the project, this development project focused on four areas: (1) agriculture development, (2) career development, (3) environmental rehabilitation and conservation, and (4) social day volunteering. As a result, for the first year of project implementation, EDF Thailand claimed via its project report that there are 1,265 direct beneficiaries and 6,927 indirect beneficiaries who attended four activities in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province (EDF Thailand, 2018).

As discussed earlier in Chapter 3, this thesis does not aim to argue or make a judgement on the nature in which the project was set and conducted, but instead to move beyond the concept of authentic partnership power literature, using the perspective of development as service delivery (Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015) in order to further investigate how and with what considerations SDNGOs, for this case, EDF Thailand, made their decision to choose and include the intended beneficiaries into its development project, for which no scholarly research has been conducted.

Although this study is aware that there has been many scholarly discussions of donors' power and interests in the partnership literature, as discussed in Chapter 2, the goal of the partnered development project discussed above indicates that in this partnership, EDF Thailand agreed and took IKEA's corporate interests into its development approaches, at least at a project level. Two of the staff members realised that IKEA Thailand might not only aim at helping the student and schools that they had identified as being in need according to their criteria, but also might desire establishing a 'peaceful relationship' and its 'co-existence identity' of the new branch in Bangyai District (EDF_GroupA_Female_6; EDF_GroupB_Female_8; EDF_GroupB_Female_9). Their realisations here reflect how the donor's desires and needs informed their shared collective *habitus* since the start of project planning by providing this development project to build and strengthen the relationship between its new store and the nearby communities via schools through the implementation of EDF.

This section has provided a brief analytical detailing of the development project between EDF and IKEA Thailand for its first-time partnership in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, with a focus on the processes and practices of how the partnership started and how EDF's *habitus* was shaped, influenced, and challenged by IKEA since before the development project in Nonthaburi started. In order to answer two of the central research questions and research objectives 3, 4, 5, and 6, the next section of this chapter provides analytical discussions on the basis of the primary empirical data collected from this case study by using theoretical and analytical tools, as discussed in Chapter 3. The analytical discussions and findings from this case study are presented in terms of four internal and external organisational implications: conceptualisation of poverty; stakeholder theory; willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries; and the theory of project management. As a result, the analytical empirical evidence and discussions of these four provisional drivers provides fresh insights and offers contributions in relation to the comparable and relevant key literature outlined in Chapter 2, situating itself in the debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

4.4. Conceptualisation of Poverty

The exploratory literature in Chapter 2 suggests that the conceptualisation of poverty might be one of the influencing drivers in informing an SDNGO's organisational decision making in terms of their development work. In order to answer research question objective 3, this research takes the conceptualisation of poverty as a first provisional theme in order to investigate the case study. However, this research argues that it is not sufficient to only look at EDF Thailand's organisational level of conception of poverty but must also explore its development project dimension that demonstrates how its organisational poverty conceptualisation was informed and challenged when working with IKEA Thailand. Therefore, the set of EDF Thailand's organisational *habitus* of this section (also in Sections 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7) in this chapter is analysed and presented in both organisational and project dimensions as the dynamic interplay from its particular practices in a particular setting or social space: EDF–IKEA Thailand's Self-Reliance School and Social Days project in Bangyai, District, Nonthaburi Province, 2017–2018.

In order to interrogate and examine how EDF's decision making was shaped by and interacted with its conceptualisation of poverty, as part of EDF's organisational *habitus*, in the process of selecting the beneficiary, this research began by focusing on how EDF defined and conceptualised the ideology and notion of poverty for its development works in both organisational and project dimensions. These analytical processes were conducted via Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* by looking at EDF Thailand's past (and also present during the period where the data collection was conducted) everyday practice motivations, attitudes, dispositions, beliefs, concepts, decisions, perceptions, appreciations, actions, decisions (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53; Maton, 2012, pp. 48–64), and relationships to power (and also powerlessness) as a mixed set of organisational collective patterned and/or un-patterned ideas and practices (Maton, 2012, p. 50). This includes prior to, during, and after the period of time in which EDF worked with IKEA.

Therefore, this section analyses and displays empirical data from the EDF–IKEA Thailand case study in order to explore and also challenge the first provisional theme, conceptualisation of poverty, that arose in the exploratory key literature in Chapter 2. The empirical data and discussions in this sub-section are systematically debated in relation to the key literature of Sen (1999); Tiwari (2021); Grech (2023); Khan (2023); and van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole (2023). To do so, this section breaks down the main theme presentations into three sub-themes for more critical and in-detail discussions, namely, (1) meanings and causes of poverty, (2) dimensions of poverty, and (3) 'who are the chosen poor?' However, some analytical parts of the content of sub-themes may have overlapped due to the complicated nature of EDF–IKEA Thailand's development works.

Before moving to the sub-section of 'conceptualisation of poverty', it is also noted here that according to all of the interviews and corporate documents, although EDF Thailand used a variety of terms when referring to the students (who are populations in need and selected beneficiaries) such as vulnerable students, less fortunate students, underprivileged students, needy students, and students in need,

the most often used term was 'poor students' when translated from its equivalent in the Thai language.[5]

4.4.1. Meanings and Causes of Poverty

This first sub-theme offers the highlights of the analysis and findings of the first dimension of conceptualisation of poverty, namely, the meanings and causes of poverty.

Evidence from the annual board meetings from 1988 to 2017 show that every year, EDF Thailand discussed the populations who lived under the poverty line (identified by the World Bank). In 2017, annual meeting minutes mentioned that the management realised Thailand had around 8.5 percent of the entire of population living under the poverty line (EDF Thailand, 2017a). The debates between its management team and board concerned the fact that growth failure or recessions of the Thai economy resulted in more poverty, greater economic gaps, and pervasive economic inequality to Thai citizens, especially those who are without education or have poor education. It is evidenced in the meeting minutes that the board and its management staff also mentioned the poverty anxieties of those who remained in the domestic economy, such as small-scale farmers, one of the most common occupations for Thai people living outside the urban areas, who might have received fewer benefits or less access to the provided economic infrastructure from the government. The organisation considered this economic issue as one of the causes of poverty that might affect children or students in Thailand, as EDF Thailand believe that children are 'marginalised ones' who cannot be dependent on their own, and therefore they are considered 'vulnerable ones' not only at the bottom of the economic pyramid but facing other social considerations such as poor-quality nutrition, hygiene, health conditions, and education. The textual data of the organisation's concern from the board meeting minutes of FY 2017 can be seen below:

[5] The researcher is mindful there are different definitions according to each specific term under the discipline of Development Studies. This study, however, uses, explains, and discusses the terms interchangeably and directly from the empirical data derived from the fieldwork.

> As a result, poverty is a genuine concern, still widespread in the rural northeast, far-east, and far-west of the country, resulting in the fact that children are not healthy due to malnutrition; are not hygienic; or even suffer under-consumption, lack of exercise, as well as proper education on healthcare. (EDF Thailand, 2017a)

From the above quotation, it can be initially perceived that although the debates of the board and management staff discussed not only the individual or inequality-on-average monetary terms of poverty but also other indications of poverty as a whole such as healthcare, hygiene, nutrition, and education. Although there is no clear evidence as to how different types of poverty concepts informed and challenged EDF's organisational *habitus,* the above quotation appears to primarily indicate the existence of ideas of absolute poverty, relative poverty, and capabilities approaches. These were dynamically aligned and shaped the organisation's *habitus* in its internal discussions and debates about Thailand's poverty, which impacted EDF's organisational decision making for their beneficiary selection process.

However, the above textual data (and also that in Section 4.1) show that EDF Thailand had an emphasis on the specific location of choosing and helping 'the poor' in its early work stage, which was "in the rural northeast, far-east, and far-west of the country", known as Isaan, which the organisation perceived was the poorest region and where the lowest domestic poverty line was most prevalent (EDF Thailand, 1988). This set of data on meanings and causes of poverty evidenced how the domestic poverty line, on the basis of a fundamental indicator of absolute poverty and income poverty, played an important driver in terms of EDF's organisational *habitus* in order to choose where to work when helping the poor at its early stage.

In *Krungthep Turakij Newspaper* on 29th September 2014 (page 16), Mr. Chewpreecha, one of the board members, in his capacity as a trustee of EDF, urged the Royal Thai Government to start taking care of children before they were born. He suggested that due to the domestic economic gaps causing over 20 percent of Thai citizens to live in poverty, EDF Thailand should strongly advise the Royal Thai Government to take care of expectant mothers and new-borns until they were 5 years old (known as the pre-school period). Otherwise, the organisation suggested that it would be more difficult for SDNGOs to solve the cause of the problems and it might

be too late and thus impossible for EDF Thailand to help all students in need once they started school.

A similar example showcasing evidence of EDF Thailand's meanings and causes of poverty that resulted in conceptualising students in need was discovered in its development project proposals, wherein the organisation applied for poverty alleviations. These proposals were submitted and proposed to a variety of NMNC donors who were resident in Thailand from 2012 to 2018. One of the recent examples was written in a development project proposal to UBS company in 2018[6] that

> Due to Thailand's domestic economic downturn nowadays, most parents who live under the poverty line are facing financial difficulties which results in an increasing number of school drop-out students who cannot complete even compulsory education. Children who remain in this situation hardly attempt to have a better quality of life because they lack education and self-development which could importantly support their future in breaking from the cycle of poverty. (EDF Thailand, 2018a)

In looking at how EDF defined, approached, or chose the beneficiaries for their development projects from research objective 3, evidenced from the above quotation, it appears that the way in which EDF Thailand conceptualised absolute poverty and/or relative poverty could be the first process of defining meanings, roots, and causes of poverty in Thailand for which the organisation later emphasised the symptoms of poverty which not only caused financial issues but also other living standard issues from the poverty causes. The empirical textual data above indicate that EDF Thailand also emphasised the symptoms of poverty from its earlier mentioned poverty causes from its capabilities approach. However, this study argues that EDF might not have taken one single notion of poverty at the time but a mixture of poverty conceptualisations. Hence, it might not be the single only concept of poverty within EDF's organisational *habitus* that informed and challenged the definition of poverty in practice but a mixture of poverty concepts that were influential to EDF's decision making of beneficiary selection. A mixture of poverty conceptualisations could be

[6] The proposal was written and developed from 2017 at the same time the relationship with IKEA began. However, it took longer for EDF to finalise working with UBS. This thesis is mindful of the time overlap here that might have affected EDF's organisational *habitus* of forming such a proposal for the development project with another MNC.

explained to the extent that EDF Thailand might have applied these conceptualisations and applications dynamically, either intentionally or unintentionally.

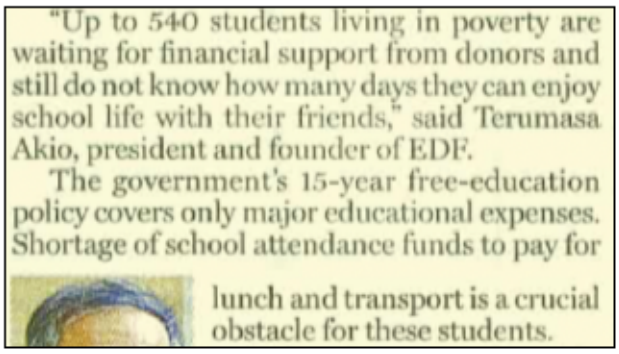
An example of empirical data that reflect a mixture of poverty concepts challenging EDF's organisational *habitus* to poverty conceptualisation is evidenced by its EDF poverty blueprint sections in the board annual meetings from 1998 to 2017, written by one of the Development Project Directors,

> Looking at the family sector, with little income per year, parents cannot pay attention to their children but need to go to cities for better payment, leaving kids to stay with old-aged grandparents who cannot be the main breadwinners. This is why the children need to stand on their own feet, looking for a job while studying, resulting in low study results as they must pay attention, not to education, but to feeding themselves to be alive. (EDF Thailand, 2017a; EDF_GroupA_Female_5)

One of the management members also added that although its scholarship programme only provided monetary support to the vulnerable students, the organisation believed scholarship could also 'empower' students in order to fight against their own poverty or poor living conditions as well. As a result, EDF Thailand had a belief that scholarship could also encourage students in need to escape poverty, as stated as follows:

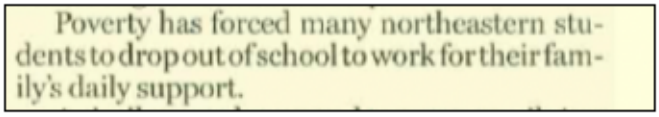
> Scholarship support from donors is crucial not only to help relieve the financial burden of their families on their schooling, but also to give them good encouragement in studying and empower them with potential to become self-reliant and escape from the vicious cycle of poverty. (EDF_GroupA_Male_2)

A similar example is found in the news article of *The Nation* newspaper on 8th June 2009 (page 2b) by one of the boards of EDF Thailand, as shown in Figures 4.3 and 4.4 on the next page:



"Up to 540 students living in poverty are waiting for financial support from donors and still do not know how many days they can enjoy school life with their friends," said Terumasa Akio, president and founder of EDF.

The government's 15-year free-education policy covers only major educational expenses. Shortage of school attendance funds to pay for lunch and transport is a crucial obstacle for these students.



Poverty has forced many northeastern students to drop out of school to work for their family's daily support.

Figures 4.3. and 4.4. News article from Mr. Akiko, one of the board members of EDF Thailand.

The above quotations demonstrate that the organisation looked beyond the monetary meanings and causes of poverty, including its symptoms. A mixture of the poverty approach of EDF Thailand also has its concerns in terms of the everyday living struggles of the children, which would result in poor education or difficult living qualities. The texts from the news article also demonstrate that the organisation also conveyed that children in school who were in poverty might not be able to "enjoy school life with their friends" or were short of lunch or transport to go to school. It is noticeable that the organisation perceived that poor education or non-access to education would consequently cause children to live under poverty. This is an example of EDF Thailand's perception towards causes of poverty and its symptoms. Therefore, this set of data from EDF's *habitus,* as part of conceptualisation of poverty, provide empirical evidence to support the argumentation of Tiwari (2021, pp. 38–44) in which the key concepts of poverty reduction or living quality improvement from NGOs at both micro and macro levels have different approaches.

In addition, it is also evidenced that some elements of the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999) might have informed EDF's organisational *habitus* via their every practice and decision (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53) of defining the beneficiary criteria. In 2003, EDF's board decided to begin including helping children with disabilities as one of its beneficiary criteria. One of the management team members claimed that the organisation still focused on children in need who lack education but that the helping criteria could be identified by two factors: firstly, the financial dimension (this thesis considers this the absolute/relative poverty framework), and secondly, physical

disability (this thesis considers this the capabilities approach), for which both of them were considered obstacles to living opportunities (this thesis considers this the capabilities approach) (EDF_GroupA_Male_2).

Moreover, a variety of poverty conceptualisations, including concepts such as cyclical poverty, might have shaped EDF Thailand's decision to its geographical development area expansion in order to reach its new group of scholarship recipients in the three southern border provinces (3SBPs). As explained earlier in Section 4.2 of this chapter, it was the first time EDF worked outside the north-eastern (Isaan) area in order to reach the beneficiaries who were not only 'vulnerable students and schools' but also children with disabilities affected by the ethnic and religious separatist insurgency conflict circumstances. Such a mixture of meanings and causes of poverty were part of EDF's organisational *habitus* and informed and challenged on how they chose beneficiaries, even before working with IKEA Thailand.

In terms of how EDF Thailand chose recipients for its scholarship programme that granted the total number of 373,414 scholarships across 61 provinces of Thailand[7], the two-page figure below illustrates how the organisation collected profile data of potential beneficiaries of its scholarship programme in the computer application programme (EDF Thailand, 2019a).

[7] According to its annual report in 2019.

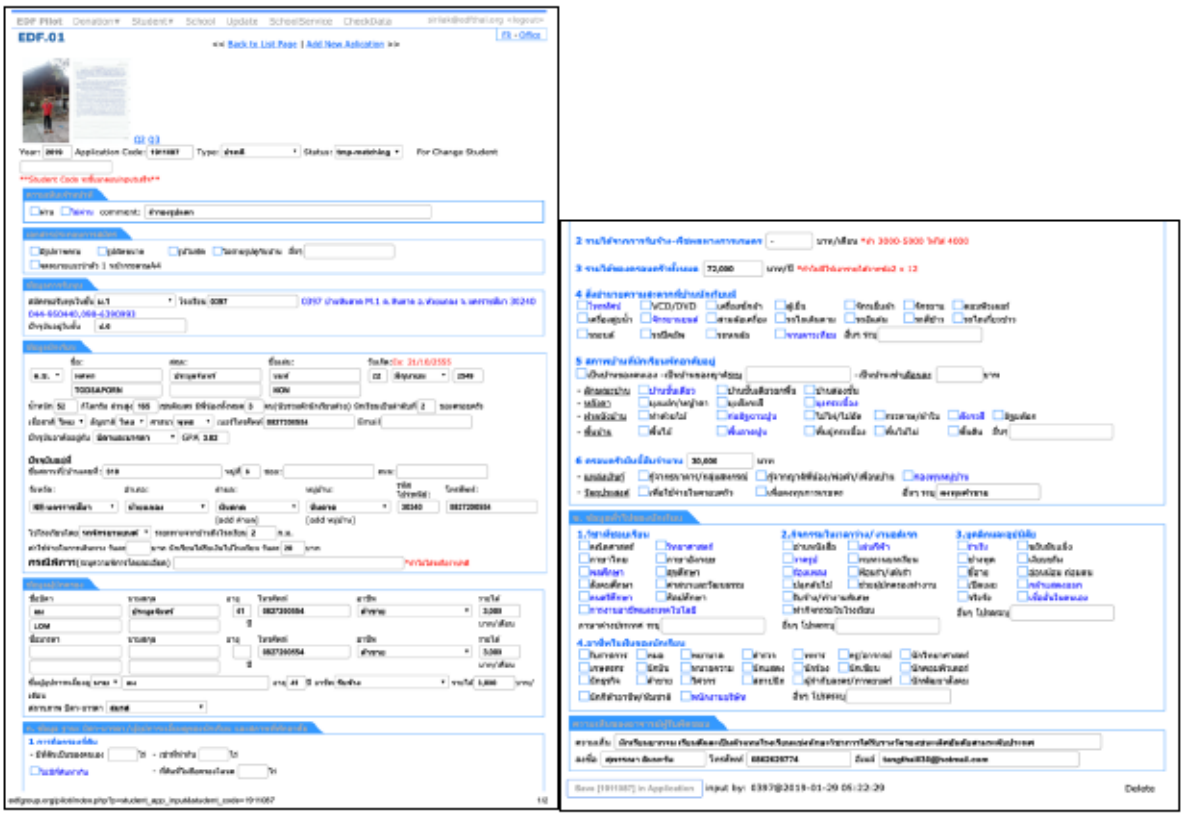


Figure 4.5. EDF Thailand's scholarship profile application for its scholarship programme (source: EDF, 2019a).

One of the staff members stated that EDF developed this scholarship criteria and application in order to select poor students from 2009. This was first in the Excel file format, which then developed into a proper computer programme, as displayed in Figure 4.5 (EDF_GroupB_Female_12). Although none of the available information shows how each criteria was discussed and developed by the organisation, it indicates a mixed set of organisational collective patterned ideas and practices in order to reflect how EDF's organisational *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53) was shaped or informed by which implications of poverty by looking through EDF's criteria to identify, classify, and select scholarship student recipients including organisational perspectives of meanings and causes of poverty.

According to Figure 4.5, there were three main elements of poverty conceptualisation and application by EDF in order to select the scholarship student recipients. The first element of this form included basic information such as name, age, home address, health conditions, school address, and family details including a picture

displaying the student in front of his/her accommodation. The second element of the application also required deeper confidential information such as individual parent income, parent occupations, household income details, housing status, accommodation details (ceiling, wall, and floor details), facilities at home (TV, fridge, computer, water pump, laundry machine, etc.), family-owned transportation, and family debt details. The final element of this application asked about the student's study interests, hobbies, personal characters, future occupation plans, and living obstacles, as well as opinions from the student's supervisor.

After collecting the above information from the potential scholarship recipients, the staff members of EDF later screened and categorised the applications to choose the scholarship recipients on the basis of organisational particular preferences, directions, and priorities (EDF_GroupB_Female_13). These might not only be the monetary indication or absolute poverty approach (Laderchi, Saith, and Stewart, 2003) but also other considerations of relative poverty (Beaudoin, 2007), the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999), cyclical poverty (Muffels and Fouarge, 2009), and assets poverty (Ottusch and Finders, 2019) as a mixture of poverty conceptualisations as discussed above, in order to decide who shall be a recipient for EDF Thailand scholarships.

One of the staff members in the Scholarship Department also stated that EDF Thailand applied this three-element criteria for its scholarship programme screening and selection across the country as follows:

> Even though there are different locations across the country, we still use our EDF criteria to select the students. Firstly, the family income has to be around 50,000 THB (£1,197) per year. We also look at their family infrastructure, for example, their housing as well as their parent marriage status (married, divorced, single mom, single dad, dead parents) including family debts (around 100,000–200,000 THB (£2,394-4,787) per year). (EDF_GroupB_Female_9)

Although none of the staff mentioned when (or which occasions or with which donor) either absolute or relative poverty was used or prioritised to choose the beneficiaries, Figure 4.6 below highlights that EDF emphasised the household

incomes and other family assets including debts and other indicators into their considerations.

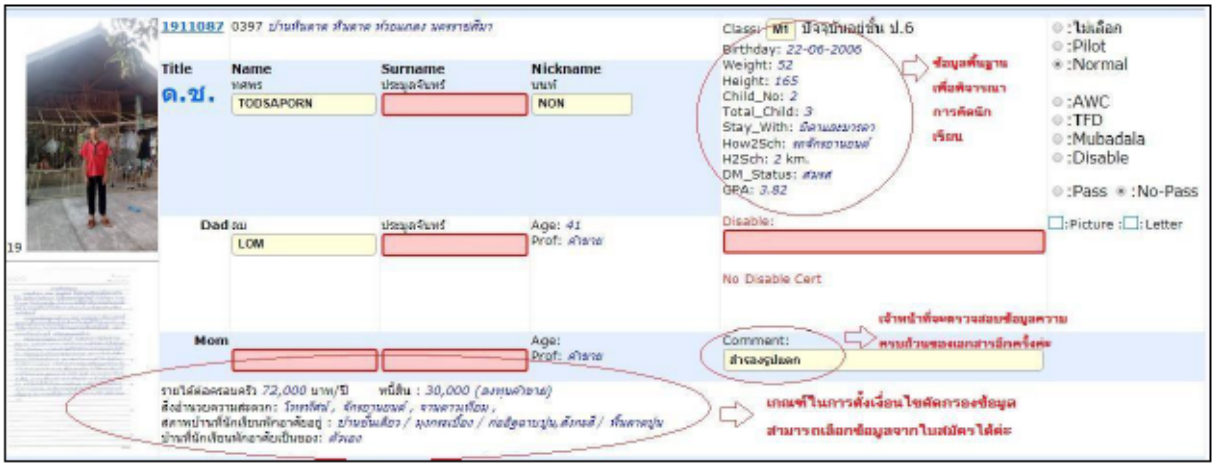


Figure 4.6. A summary of the final screening process for the scholarship programme (source: EDF Thailand, 2019b).

More significantly, the emphasised red circles in Figure 4.6 show the final considerations taken by EDF for which both financial (absolute and relative) and other capability conditions (such as parental marriage status, occupations of parents, gradient conditions, and limitations) informed its decision making. However, the interview data from the staff members argued that there was no 'one-for-all direction' on this process in terms of choosing the recipients (EDF_GroupB_Female_9). The decision making could vary from the board and management team decisions, organisational new directions, or donor preferences for the time being. This evidence supports the understandings of how the organisation chose the beneficiaries with the implication of a mixture of poverty conceptualisations in EDF practices such as flexible dynamics. EDF's organisational *habitus* could be impacted or challenged by the collective *habitus* of the board, or by management or the donor's preferences.

Looking at the EDF–IKEA development project in particular, EDF Thailand, under the Self-Reliance School and Social Days programme with IKEA Thailand, did not grant any scholarship to the students in need in Nonthaburi Province, but the entire project focused on short- and long-term development. This time, EDF Thailand focused on activities that develop (1) agriculture development, (2) career

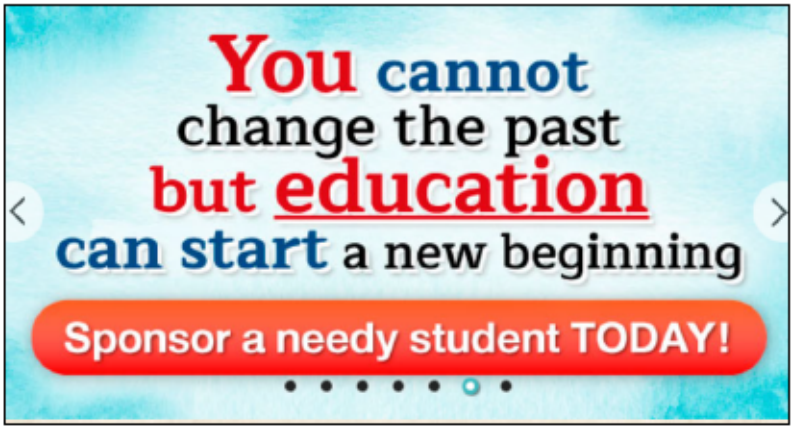
development, (3) environmental rehabilitation and conservation, and (4) social days in which IKEA staff members organised activities with the chosen students and schools (EDF Thailand, 2017c). As evidenced from four areas of activities, the activities focused on a human-centric development approach such as agriculture development for nutrition and food security and career development for working capabilities. It is considerable that the capabilities approach was one of the most important implications in shaping how EDF Thailand applied and addressed causes and meanings of poverty for the vulnerable students and schools in Nonthaburi Province.

In addition, in EDF's latest added organisational objectives (mentioned earlier in Section 4.2), they denote some evidenced signs and focus on how the organisation aims to reduce the poverty by adopting a capabilities approach:

> learning and life improvement projects: for students and schools in remote rural areas… include education development, agriculture knowledge, … career skill development and health promotion (EDF Thailand, 2010, p.2)

During the interview, staff members also supported the idea that EDF Thailand has been aware that giving out scholarships alone is not a one-for-all solution to tackle poverty. They believe the development projects have potential to address poverty, including other "opportunities" (EDF_GroupA_Male_1; EDF_GroupA_Female_2) and "capabilities" (EDF_GroupA_Female_2) for poor students to defeat "living difficulties and conditions" (EDF_GroupA_Female_2; EDF_GroupB_Female_8; EDF_GroupA_Male_12) and achieve their "own life goals" (EDF_GroupA_Male_2). In addition, the two figures below (Figures 4.7 and 4.8) from EDF's scholarship fundraising advertisements on their website (2018, 2020) support this argumentation, demonstrating a sign of the *accessibility obstacle* to include education of students with disabilities and an *opportunity* to begin a better life.

Figure 4.7. Fundraising advertisement (in English) for EDF's scholarship programme for students with disabilities (source: EDF Thailand, 2018; 2020).



Figures 4.8. Fundraising advertisement (in English) for EDF's scholarship programme (source: EDF Thailand, 2018; 2020).

Although the above evidence claims that EDF Thailand employed the capabilities approach to implement the project, it nevertheless does not claim that EDF Thailand took only the capabilities approach for the development project with IKEA Thailand. EDF staff members also tried to provide scholarships on the basis of absolute or relative poverty. From the interview data, the organisation admitted that EDF tried to convince IKEA Thailand to provide both a scholarship programme and development project but the negotiation failed. One of IKEA's staff members explained that IKEA Thailand tried not to give away gifts in cash to the beneficiaries but that they were interested in conducting more development projects at the school level as they considered the fact that not all students in one school could be granted scholarships,

which may cause a sense of inequality in the school (IKEA_GroupC_Male_1). As an SDNGO, EDF Thailand decided to only establish a development project with IKEA as they realised that at least they could provide some contributions to development without scholarships being provided (EDF_GroupA_Female_5).

This study acknowledges the power of the donor in EDF in terms of negotiation. As noted in Chapter 2 that this thesis moves beyond the notion of 'authentic partnership' or donor power against NGOs, it is evidenced that such relationships in terms of power and also powerlessness (Maton, 2012, p. 50) for EDF reveals another example of organisational collective *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990) by accepting to work with IKEA, even though the negotiation with the scholarship programme failed. However, when EDF Thailand chose and recruited the intended beneficiaries, the organisation still applied poverty approaches from the scholarship programme to survey and conceptualise the poverty in Nonthaburi Province, although the scholarship itself was no longer provided under the partnership with IKEA (EDF_GroupA_Female_6). This study considers this set of empirical data significant. It demonstrates that although EDF's organisational *habitus* has its own development approach, containing a mixture of poverty conceptualisations, to tackle poverty for both schools and students in Nonthaburi, IKEA's interests challenged and influenced EDF's *habitus* in terms of their decision making in designing the development project, and this eventually affected the students who needed scholarships in particular. This evidence supports the debates of Grech (2023); Khan (2023); and van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole (2023), proposing that the conceptualization of poverty informing development projects in the Global South might be shaped by influences from the Global North.

In that this empirical set of data supports the argumentations of Tiwari (2021) and Grech (2023), there are complicated implications or preferences that might shape or challenge organisational decisions over the meanings and causes of poverty, partially resulting in how EDF Thailand chose the beneficiaries and designed the project. This argument leads to another dimensional interrogation that is discussed in the next sections of this chapter: the dimensions of poverty and 'who are the (chosen) poor?', where more details about the development project with IKEA Thailand are discussed. The empirical data analysis and theoretical discussions of the first sub-

theme section argue that EDF Thailand took not only a single poverty approach but a mixture of poverty approaches, including absolute poverty, relative poverty, and capabilities approaches, among other poverty approaches, through the meanings and causes of poverty of its development works since it was established until 2019.

4.4.2. Dimensions of Poverty

This sub-section, as a second sub-theme of conceptualisation of poverty, investigates the dimensions and sub-multidimensions of poverty by examining and analysing the empirical data of the case study. Evidence from EDF Thailand argues that sub-multidimensions of poverty beyond the main dimensions of poverty could also have been discovered with different types of beneficiaries. This was developed from a mixture of poverty conceptualisations mentioned in a previous section.

From when it was established, EDF used 'education' as a central approach and organisational philosophy of its organisation in order to achieve poverty reduction and education development. When looking at the data on conceptualisations of poverty on how EDF Thailand worked with other organisational donors and developed such works to partner with IKEA for the development project, this sub-theme emerged from the empirical data as fresh insights from the practices in Bangyai area. The empirical data suggest that EDF Thailand looked at the dimensions of poverty of its beneficiaries at two separate core levels: (1) vulnerable schools and (2) vulnerable students. Although the organisation only provided scholarships to student recipients from when it was established in 1987, the organisational archives revealed that EDF Thailand started to provide small donations to schools in the Isaan area as well from individual donors' requests (EDF Thailand, 1997). Even though school donations were not considered an official development programme or activity in organisation directions during that time, the meeting minutes disclosed that there were internal discussions in 2003 during the annual board meeting in order to review and extend the programmes and activities of the organisation. One of them was the support to schools (EDF Thailand, 2003).

One of the significant examples is seen in the form of a published national newspaper. In 2007, a news article in *Matichon* from the 7th October 2007 (page 9) published that EDF Thailand, as a Thai SDNGO who worked for domestic education, unveiled the untold struggles of small schools (under 300 students for each school) in Isaan province. The organisation complained that the Ministry of Education of the Royal Thai Government (the army-led government at that time), by former General Director Surayud Chulanont as Prime Minister, provided a schooling budget of only 3,000 THB (around £75) for one student per year to the schools in rural areas for daily and yearly administrations. EDF Thailand claimed that this budget was insufficient for any public school to manage all bills including electricity, water, books, study tools, school infrastructure, and other maintenance fees[8]. The organisation also revealed that under this budget, for instance, for a small school with 300 students, only 2,500-4,000 THB (£60-96) was granted for library expenses, which was not even sufficient to buy books for every student in the school.

EDF Thailand took over seven years from 2003 to 2010 through internal debates between the board, management team, and staff members to develop the development blueprints on how to support and help schools in need. In 2010, as a result, its board had a significant review on its charitable policies and development frameworks. Consequently, the school development programme became one of the official organisational development activities of EDF Thailand (EDF Thailand, 2010, p. 2). Another vivid example of EDF Thailand that demonstrates its organisational movement on a schooling campaign at the national level was published in *Krungthep Turakij Newspaper* on 29th September 2014 (page 16). The organisation urged and advocated for the Office of the Basic Education Commission to recruit and provide more qualified teachers to small schools in rural areas, rebrand the vocational schools to attract more students, and revise the academic curriculum to have more occupational subjects including advising schools to work in collaboration with corporate workplaces.

The evidence shown above provides some noteworthy examples from the empirical data on how EDF Thailand identified its groups of beneficiaries into two main

[8] This budget excluded the salaries of teachers which were directly paid by the central government.

dimensional levels, not only in terms of the marginalised students but also the schools in need. This relates to the ideology of poverty of Tiwari (2021) in her Convergence Framework study that details how NGOs work on poverty reduction at micro (individual student) and meso (organisational school) levels. This evidence from EDF's *habitus* demonstrates that the organisation also looked at the potential beneficiaries and populations in need in Nonthaburi through the lens of differentiating the beneficiaries. Importantly, a mixture of poverty conceptualisations was part of EDF Thailand's organisational *habitus*, shaping and interacting with its conceptualisation of the needs of the schools, not only for individual or on-average monetary indicators but also other capabilities and functioning development frameworks such as infrastructure, books, curriculums, quality of teachers, and public perceptions towards the schools. More significantly, the empirical data from the EDF–IKEA case in particular also provide fresh insights that EDF Thailand identified beyond the needs of the main dimension of beneficiaries (schools and students) to sub-multidimensional indicators with a mixed dynamic of including absolute poverty, relative poverty, and the capabilities approach.

As EDF Thailand had never worked in the Bangyai area or Nonthaburi Province before, one of the EDF Thailand staff members responded that the organisation had to organise school visits in the field for a survey (EDF_GroupB_Female_10). However, IKEA Thailand demanded that EDF firstly prioritise vulnerable schools, followed by students in need as the second priority (EDF_GroupB_Female_7). To this point, these empirical data suggest that IKEA, as a donor, prioritised the schools (meso level) over the student (individual level), for which such motivation and action (Bourdieu, 1977) reflect another significant implication regarding stakeholder theory that was part of IKEA's organisational *habitus* that also influenced and became part of EDF's organisational *habitus*. This is discussed later in Section 4.5 of this chapter.

Therefore, the first evidential examples of empirical data are school presentations (Figures 4.7 and 4.8 below) that EDF Thailand analysed and summarised regarding the 15-school survey data in Nonthaburi Province in 2017 in order to propose that IKEA Thailand's sustainability committees choose only five schools before signing the MOU to implement the development project (EDF Thailand, 2017b).

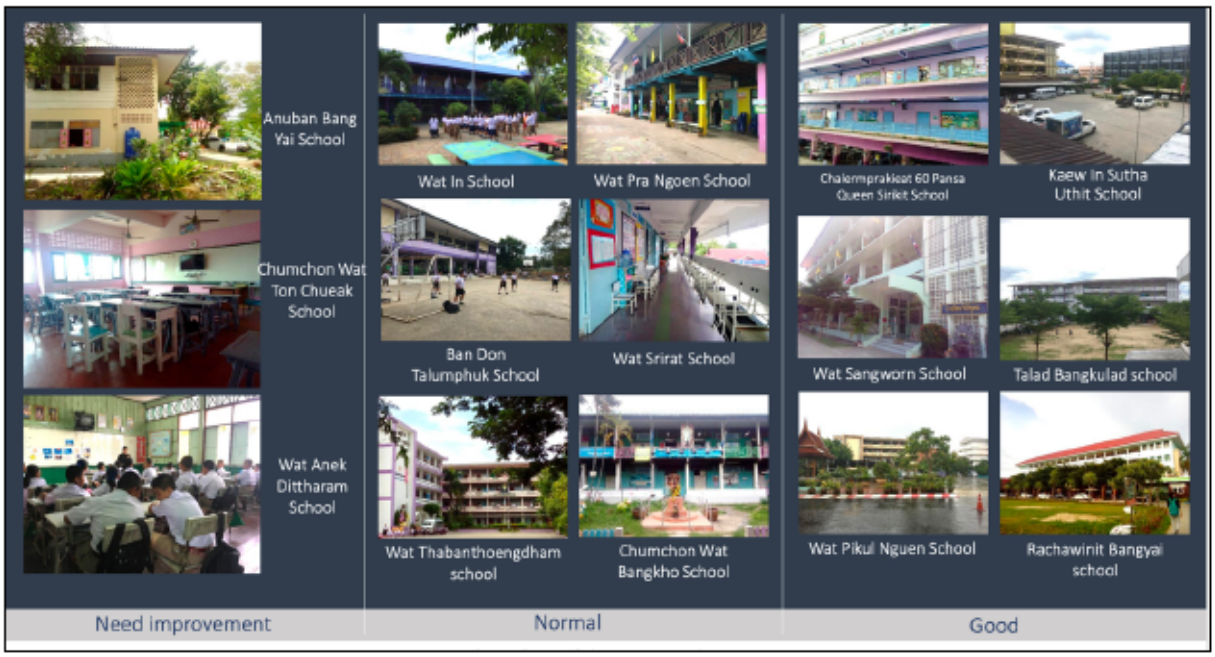


Figure 4.9. Building conditions of the 15-school survey in Bangyai, Nonthaburi Province (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

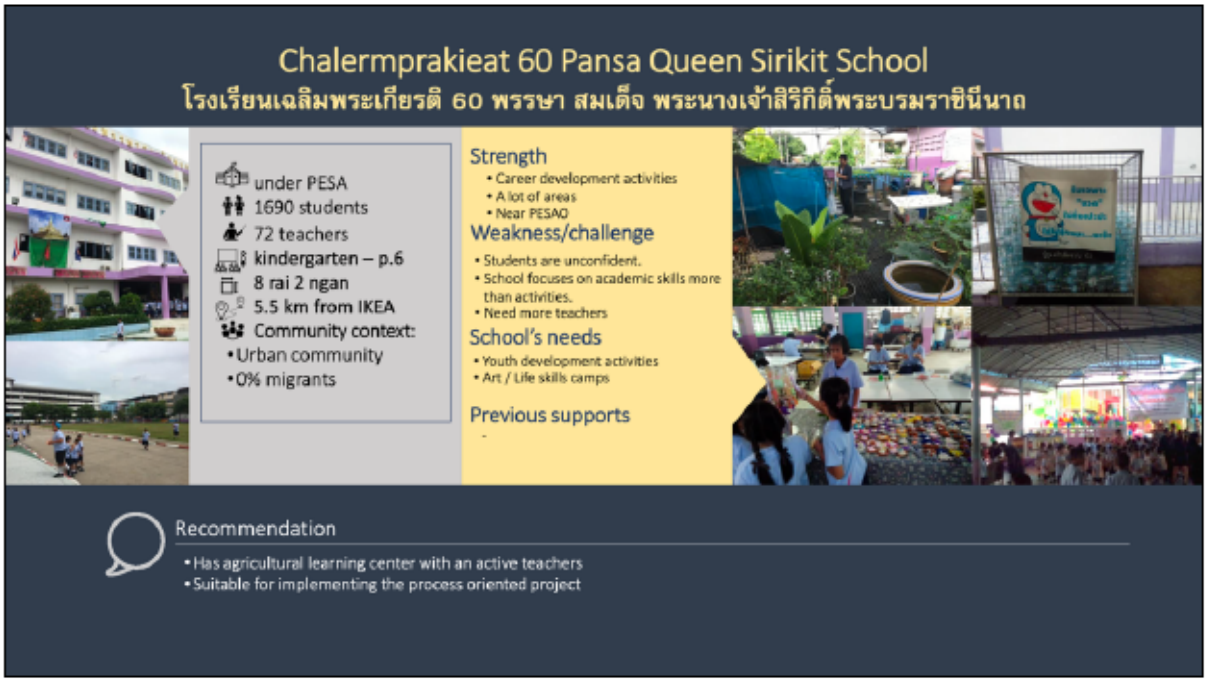


Figure 4.10. Analysis and summary report of the 15-school survey: Chalermprakieat 60 Pansa Queen Sirikit School (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

Figure 4.9 on the previous page illustrates the overview of 15 schools, concentrating on building conditions in need of improvement. The overview pictures also offer ideas of how each school looked in reality. As can be seen, EDF Thailand also categorised the building conditions into three stages: (1) requires improvement, (2) looks normal, and (3) considered in good condition.

As for Figure 4.10, the evidence revealed more details of how EDF defined and assessed their choice of the schools with another set of multidimensional indicators. For Wat Thabanthoengdham School, its location was identified as a flood risk area, considered an indicator for potential disaster. For the other 14 schools' sub-multidimensional indicators, it included old/dangerous learning buildings; shortage of teachers; new/inexperienced school principals; sub-standard libraries; shortage of study tools; lack of budget support from the government; insufficient learning atmospheres; and, last but not least, conflicts with the surrounding communities.

However, one of EDF Thailand's staff members who paid a visit in the field emphasized that vulnerable schools may not mean that there must be vulnerable students there (EDF_GroupB_Female_10). This clarifies that there is a clear-cut boundary of the beneficiaries on the first dimensions of poverty to EDF–IKEA Thailand's development project which separates schools in need (meso level) from students (individual level) in need. Knowingly, as mentioned earlier in this sub-theme, IKEA Thailand required EDF to prioritise (public) schools, not the students in need.

Thus far, this sub-theme has discussed 'the school in need' as one of the beneficiary groups (meso level) on the first dimension of poverty from EDF's organisational history and development project with IKEA, including its sub-dimensions of poverty. This section now turns to present a brief of the second beneficiary group, 'the students in need' (individual level) of the first dimension of poverty of EDF Thailand.

In the 2019 annual report of EDF, it claimed that 373,414 scholarships were granted to the students across 61 provinces over 32 years since it was founded. There is no systematic record or well-managed archives in full detail from EDF Thailand to illustrate or measure how many or what type of students in need (both direct or indirect

beneficiaries) were helped or chosen to be a part of its development projects in the past. Due to this limitation, the evidence that might demonstrate the sub-dimensions of poverty towards its students in need could be collected and analysed via its latest available scholarship applications (which was already discussed earlier by a mixture of poverty approaches) and its annual reports from 2010 to 2019 in which the organisation had reviewed its development work directions and provided more details on the beneficiaries.

The written evidence in annual reports denoted that the organisation elaborated and included more details of six types of students in need with different sub-dimensions of poverty (EDF Thailand, 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019). Table 4.3 below denotes EDF's extracted dimensions of poverty against the vulnerable students by forming a combination of beliefs, values, perceptions, and concepts of EDF's organisational *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977) which had been developed since 2010 until after the start of the partnership with IKEA Thailand. There are six criteria with one main dimension and three sub-dimensional indicators. An analytical summary is provided in the table on the next page:

Table 4.3. Details of the six types of students in need with different sub-dimensions of poverty (summarised by the researcher).

Criteria No.	Main Dimension of Poverty with Absolute or Relative Poverty Approach	First Sub-Multidimensional Indicator with a Mixture of Poverty Approaches	Second Sub-Multidimensional Indicator with a Mixture of Poverty Approaches	Third Sub-Multidimensional Indicator with a Mixture of Poverty Approaches
1	Poor, vulnerable, or less fortunate students	with good academic performance	from impoverished families	whose parents are not government officials, public enterprise employees, or permanent employees
2	Poor, vulnerable, or less fortunate students	without good academic performance	from impoverished families	whose parents are not government officials, public enterprise employees, or permanent employees

3	Poor, vulnerable, or less fortunate students	with disabilities	in inclusive education settings	whose parents are not government officials, public enterprise employees, or permanent employees
4	Poor, vulnerable, or less fortunate students	for capacity building (scholarship programme)		whose parents are not government officials, public enterprise employees, or permanent employees
5	Poor, vulnerable, or less fortunate students	with disabilities or from an orphanage	from violence-affected areas	whose parents are not government officials, public enterprise employees, or permanent employees
6	Poor, vulnerable, or less fortunate students	for learning and life improvement (development) projects	in remote rural areas	whose parents are not government officials, public enterprise employees, or permanent employees

This section has discussed and presented analytical findings of the dimensions of poverty as a sub-theme of the conceptualisation of poverty. On the basis of EDF's empirical data, the fresh insights of this section demonstrate that different dimensions of poverty existed, which emerged from the empirical data from the case study. The next section offers analytical insights of the final sub-theme of this organisational driver, 'who are the (chosen) poor?'

4.4.3. Who are the (Chosen) Poor?

This final sub-theme of the section of conceptualisation of poverty defines and presents analytical findings of who the poor were that were chosen to be intended beneficiaries of EDF Thailand in order to produce a fuller understanding of how conceptualisation of poverty informed or shaped organisational decision making to EDF.

The previous sections covered much of the details about the scholarship programme including a number of scholarship recipients with the analytical descriptions of meanings, causes, and dimensions of poverty from the empirical data. As for the development projects, this research also noted in the earlier sub-theme that there is no available internal systematic record at EDF Thailand in the past 20 years. This limits the study's ability to elaborate in full detail the intended beneficiaries of both school and student levels.

Looking at how EDF chose the potential beneficiaries for the development project with IKEA Thailand, it is necessary to investigate how EDF's organisational *habitus* was maintained and developed to choose the beneficiaries. The table on the next page summarises the overall picture in order to establish understandings of who the (chosen) poor are by EDF Thailand for its development projects for the 6 years between FY 2013 and FY 2018, including empirical data before and during EDF partnership with IKEA. These sets of information were collected from their written annual reports (EDF Thailand, 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018).

Table 4.4. A summary of EDF Thailand's beneficiary numbers and development project types from FY 2013 to FY 2018 (summarised by the researcher, data as of April 2020).

Dimensions of Beneficiaries	Number of Schools						Number of Students					
Development Project Types/Objectives	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Education and capacity building	141	10	144	565	227	12	N/A	5,770	31,075	69,616	17,147	3,190
Career	40	189	36	24	17	18	N/A	29,588	10,800	7,200	5,385	5,505
Agriculture	40	189	36	24	17	18	N/A	29,588	10,800	7,200	5,385	5,505
Healthcare	103	149	431	147	139	50	N/A	34,800	88,840	6,057	38,000	12,650
International cooperation and development	N/A	N/A	158	181	189	138	N/A	N/A	6,577	3,040	8,057	5,882
Others	5	84	23	193	91	67	N/A	6,116	3,917	44,100	3,101	3,571

As can be seen, Table 4.4 provides details on who the poor were for EDF Thailand's development projects in the past six years only at a surface level. As this study employed a qualitative interpretivist approach, the numbers in Table 4.4 might not be significant data for further analysis to observe who were the chosen poor or to provide a fuller concrete picture of beneficiaries. However, it reveals that EDF's development projects focused most on education and capacity building including healthcare for both schools and students. In addition, the number of selected schools and selected students under the development projects of EDF were significantly correlated, meaning that when the number of schools increased, the number of students also increased; furthermore, when the former dropped, the latter also dropped. This highlights that when EDF chose the poor individuals to become beneficiaries of the development projects, they might have implemented it for the students in the same schools. Therefore, this set of empirical data reveals the confirmation how EDF looked at beneficiaries at two levels: school and student, as discussed in Section 4.4.2. This implication played a significant consideration for EDF in terms of defining, approaching, and selecting the (chosen) poor under their development projects, at least since 2013, from which the numbers were provided. According to such evidenced actions of EDF Thailand, it shows how EDF's decision making was informed and shaped by the conceptualisation of poverty, demonstrated in their attitudes and actions, as part of their collective organisational *habitus*, by selecting the poor through their perceptions of the dimensions of poverty.

Focusing on the development project with NMNCs, on the basis of the available recent organisational archives provided by EDF Thailand in the past 5 years (2015–2019), Table 4.2 earlier in Section 4.2 of this chapter summarised who the (chosen) poor were for EDF's development projects in their partnership with NMNCs resident in Thailand (EDF Thailand, 2017c; 2018b; 2018c; 2019c). The table emphasises other essential implications that are missing from the previous table such as donor profile, development project focus, locations of the beneficiaries, and number of intended vulnerable schools and students. These considerations provide more understandings and perspectives of how EDF Thailand chose the poor against diverse considerations of poverty (project focus, donor profile, and donor's preference, which are a significant

link to the discussion in the next theme) and locations of the chosen poor ('where are they?', which is provided in the next theme).

According to Table 4.2, it is also noticeable that the recent five development projects partnered with five NMNC partners including IKEA Thailand had a variety of groups of beneficiaries such as vocational students and university students in different provinces. This table identifies various factors of poverty and other implications, especially how corporate donors' preferences seem to have another important implication in the SDNGO's decision making. This implication is also drawn from an extensive amount of exploratory literature in Chapter 2, suggesting it might also shape and challenge the SDNGO's decision making against its beneficiary selection process. This research explores beyond the suggestion of the existing literature by seeing how these implications informed, interacted with, and disrupted the SDNGO's decision making. These factors are discussed in the next provisional theme, stakeholder theory.

4.4.4. Conclusion

The first theme discussed and provided analytical data in order to illustrate how conceptualisation of poverty informed or shaped EDF Thailand's decision making over its beneficiary selection. Three sub-themes, namely, meanings and causes of poverty, dimensions of poverty, and who are the (chosen) poor, presented the interplays between the intertwined empirical data against the mixture of poverty conceptualisations which mainly are absolute poverty, relative poverty, and the capabilities approach. Although the evidence suggests that EDF had their own conceptualisations of poverty, IKEA's *habitus* informed, challenged, and intertwined with EDF's *habitus* in terms of decision making, resulting in only conducting the development project without proving student scholarships, as well as, importantly, prioritising the first poverty dimension in order to choose potential beneficiaries with a focus on schools (meso level) as opposed to students (individual level). More interestingly, the narratives of the empirical evidence demonstrated the processes and practices of how EDF tried to negotiate with IKEA since the project design, as a result, impacted on their own decision making in terms of beneficiary selection in Bangyai

District, Nonthaburi Province, where IKEA was opening a new store. The empirical data presented in this sub-section were discussed and debated alongside the key literature, drawn up from Chapter 2 of Sen (1999); Tiwari (2021); Grech (2023); Khan (2023); and van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole (2023). The fresh insights offered by understanding the conceptualisation of poverty also allow for the application and use of complications of poverty approaches in terms of the way in which EDF Thailand considered and employed its scholarship programme and development project with IKEA in practice.

4.5. Stakeholder Theory

One of the noteworthy scholarly critiques derived from the heuristic literature in Chapter 2 indicated that stakeholder theory might be one of the significant drivers to shape SDNGOs to define and choose their potential beneficiaries for the development projects funded by NMNCs. Drawing from the critique, the studies reveal NMNCs might often define their intended recipients (or beneficiaries) of a corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme or projects (with SDNGOs) by using stakeholder theory as a defensive rationale for CSR (for both internal and external stakeholders) in order to deliver safeguards against the potential negative effects of its business operations and maintain good relationships with any stakeholders in the community where they operate (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004; Gourville and Rangan, 2004; Pearce and Doh, 2005; Sasse and Trahan, 2007; Seitanidi, 2010). By developing this critical thematic argument for data collection and analysis, the empirical data of the EDF–IKEA Thailand case study suggests that stakeholder theory is one of the influencing elements that shaped how EDF chose the intended beneficiaries in the Bangyai area for the IKEA development project. Focusing on NGOs' decision making in the beneficiary selection process, two sub-themes also emerged from the empirical data, namely, the theory of CSR and 'where are they?', which situate the discussions in relation to the cohesive set of literature and debates of stakeholder theory proposed by Freeman (1984); Hill and Jones (2012); Danny (2014); Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni (2015); Bosibori and Otieno (2021); and Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke (2023). Bourdieu's organisational *habitus* was

employed in order to analyse data and provide a more comprehensive notion of this provisional mainstream.

4.5.1. Theory of CSR

It is evidenced from IKEA's organisational CSR and sustainability reports from 2012 to 2018 that IKEA worldwide had been implementing a variety of key CSR projects globally, such as 'Play' and 'Children's IKEA' (focusing on education), 'IKEA Social Entrepreneurs' (focusing on startup and social entrepreneurship), and 'Climate and Energy' (focusing on the environment) (IKEA, 2012; 2014; 2015; 2018).

The extensive number of debates and amount literature on CSR and NGO partnership discussed in Chapter 2 indicated that the partnership approaches of NMNCs working with SDNGOs are heavily based on CSR theories and initiatives from NMNCs. As noted earlier, stakeholder theory might often be used by NMNCs as a defensive foundation for its CSR projects (for both internal and external stakeholders). Buar (2011) explains this phenomenon, through political-theoretical views, that CSR approaches of corporations in practice may be coined, defined, and initiated on the basis of stakeholder theory[9]. Therefore, this sub-section aims at observing how EDF's organisational decision making was shaped and impacted by stakeholder theory and the theory of CSR, as part of EDF's organisational *habitus*, in order to choose the intended beneficiaries for the IKEA development project.

Table 4.5 contains extracts of data from national media newspapers written about or interviewing EDF Thailand's board, management, or staff members at different times in public mediated spaces. These notions, perceptions, attitudes, motions, and actions representing EDF individuals in Table 4.5 unveil the collective organisational viewpoints towards CSR, corporate donations, and cross-sector collaborations with the corporate sector, which is a constituent part of EDF's collective organisational *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990). This study collected 1,032 news articles over

[9] The author concludes this argument on the basis of two strands of CSR: instrumental and political approaches, in order to locate NGOs as another political actor in the CSR debate.

10 years focusing on EDF Thailand but only selected the relevant mediated pieces with this sub-theme, as shown in Table 4.5 on the next page.

Table 4.5. A summary of EDF Thailand's understandings of the theory of CSR on national newspapers (analysed and summarised by researcher).

Date of Publishing	Newspaper	Page	A Summary of Textual Data
14 August 2006	*Prachachat Turakij*	52	EDF Thailand suggested that CSR projects shall offer a competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy to the companies.
11 December 2006	*Prachachat Turakij*	48	EDF Thailand offered an NMNC/SDNGO working model which used education and CSR theory including cause-related marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, cause promotions, and corporate social marketing to reduce poverty.
16 April 2007	*Prachachat Turakij*	33, 34	EDF Thailand urged NGOs to have effective M&E tools for the development or CSR projects.
28 May 2007	*Prachachat Turakij*	42	EDF Thailand suggested the use of PDCA as an implementation framework in order to implement development projects with NTCs.
8 November 2007	*Poo Jadkarn Daily*	30	EDF Thailand stated that CSR programmes could offer a positive image and reputation to companies.
19 November 2007	*Prachachat Turakij*	37, 38	EDF Thailand agreed that a win–win CSR approach existed from partnership with MNCs.

3 December 2007	*Prachachat Turakij*	41, 42	EDF Thailand claimed that the organisation has the ability to design creative philanthropy as an alternative option to corporate partnership.
12 May 2008	*Prachachat Turakij*	34	EDF Thailand believed that the theory of CSR has already settled in Thailand and would be a sustainable partnership alternative for SDNGOs and MNCs.
15 July 2008	*Prachachat Turakij*	30	EDF Thailand stated that the 'end results' of the development project implemented by SDNGOs were an attractive indicator to establish partnership with corporate partners.
1 September 2008	*Prachachat Turakij*	29, 30	EDF Thailand revealed that the organisation took stakeholder theory into CSR project design, including input, process, output, and outcome.

It is seen from Table 4.5 that the mediated articles since 2006 showed EDF Thailand had understandings of concepts and complications of CSR theory. The organisation also tried to encourage other SDNGOs and NMNCs in Thailand to apply or follow its CSR development work models and tools. EDF Thailand also had a belief in a win–win approach towards working with NMNCs, whereas some of the academic literature indicates that certain SDNGOs believe that the win–win approach does not exist (Fowler, 1991; Fowler, 1997; Hoksbergen, 2005; also see the two case studies of Dibley, 2014). Importantly, the organisation also clearly spoke publicly in the news about its positive attitudes towards corporate partnership with NMNCs. The interview quotations from EDF Thailand staff members, which are provided below, also contain the same shared positive mindsets and attitudes over CSR theory in partnership with IKEA Thailand for its development project:

> We would rate the relationship between EDF and IKEA at around 8-9 out of 10, which is very good when compared with other corporate or governmental donors. (EDF_GroupB_Female_7)

> For our relationship, I think IKEA treats EDF like a partner. They listen to our suggestions. They didn't order us to do things. We talk quite a lot. We also listen to them on what they want. (EDF_GroupA_Female_6)

> We work with IKEA as partners. We discuss and make decisions together. (EDF_GroupB_Female_11)

The empirical evidence from Table 4.5 and the quotations from interviews above not only demonstrate the understandings of CSR theory through its practice but also indicate positive attitudes as a significant implication from its corporate partner or IKEA Thailand's preferences over its organisational decisions to choose the beneficiaries. This also reflects to the positionality debates and understandings of roles of NGOs for development as service delivery (Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015), wherein this thesis adopts its framework to explore the working hypotheses. For its Self-Reliance School and Social Days project, IKEA Thailand requested that EDF implement the project in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, where a new IKEA store was opening. Although, EDF Thailand had not conducted any development work and had no known beneficiaries there, the organisation, once again, decided to expand its geographical development area to Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province,

in order to start this partnership project with IKEA. This set of data provides a fresh academic insight into how an SDNGO could be willing to partner with an NMNC, including under atypical circumstances for the SDNGO, as in this case, IKEA asked EDF to implement the development project (a CSR project from IKEA) when EDF had no previous key stakeholders in Nonthaburi Province, the location of the project. EDF Thailand also stated that the organisation was treated with full respect from IKEA Thailand as a partner and also that they had a willingness and agreement to organise the development project in the new location and select the beneficiaries, as requested by IKEA Thailand.

On the other hand, one member of the management team stated that in 2015, EDF's staff members, working in partnership with one MNC from the Global South (a South East Asian country) for a development project, felt that they received mistreatment and an unequal partnership agreement. Therefore, they rejected the deal after the first meeting (EDF_GroupA_Male_2)[10]. This evidence demonstrates that even though EDF might situate themselves as a development service provider with an understanding, willingness, and acceptance of the idea of working under the CSR projects of MNCs, they had their own organisational decision-making process before the development project started, wherein EDF chose to reject potential donors or partners who offered unequal partnership agreement. This evidence exhibits the *habitus* in terms of attitude and action from the staff members of the organisation against relationships to power and also relationship to powerlessness as a mixed set of organisational collective practices (Maton, 2012, p. 50), which this study considers as empirical evidence of another power (and powerlessness) conditionality against the willingness of understanding and accepting the theory of CSR under partnership.

Although this research did not investigate whether the social partnership between IKEA and EDF was equal from all perspectives, as this study moved beyond the notion of authentic partnership to partnership as service delivery, it is evidently noted that EDF staff members were willing participants and had positive attitudes towards partnering with IKEA Thailand for the development project when compared

[10] Two staff members of EDF also stated that EDF has also rejected working with some NMNCs whose products or services were involved with alcohol, tobacco, carbonated soft drink (sweet soda), and unhealthy snacks (EDF_GroupA_Male_2; EDF_GroupA_Female_6).

with other MNCs. Although the scholarly literature suggests that donorship and conceptualization of power relationships of NMNCs might politically force SDNGOs in terms of their decision making (Savas, 1987; Ahmad, 2006, p. 630; Derksen and Verhallen, 2008; O'Brien and Evans, 2017; van Zyl and Claeyé, 2019; Girei, 2022), this study argues that it might not be the case when SDNGOs realise their willingness and motivations when working together are viewed positively and the treatment from the donor is fair. Furthermore, not all NMCs can politically force SDNGOs into decision making. From the empirical evidence, EDF showed that they rejected some MNCs due to mistreatment, even before agreeing to partner.

Moreover, according to the proposal for this development project drafted by EDF after meetings with IKEA, it is also evidenced that EDF's organisational *habitus* was informed by and maintained a theory of CSR, a part of the stakeholder theory. EDF clearly mentioned that what they will contribute is not only for schools and students but also to the community around the Bangyai store (EDF, 2017g). Evidentially, this is also stated in one of the separate sections of the proposal, which shows EDF's perceptions and motivations behind their development project partnering with IKEA in order to address the poverty issues by adopting a 'social engagement' approach or to achieve the social engagement goals prior the start of the project (arguably, this study acknowledges that stakeholder or social engagement was not stated as one of the goals of this development project under the EDF–IKEA partnership but instead that it was focused on vulnerable schools and students). It was written in one of the developed implementation plans (first year project) and proposals (of the second-year project) that

> …the **social engagement** aims to encourage **communities to engage** with the project from the start and provide insights and approaches required for effectively addressing local needs… the approach entails an open and honest discussion about social issues with **stakeholders** – villagers, teachers, children, villagers, local NGOs, and government sectors - in the target area….to create…**co-exitance** between schools and communities…. (EDF, 2017h, 2018b, [emphasis added])

Thus far, this sub-section has demonstrated EDF Thailand's understandings, attitudes, and actions on the theory of CSR in the past of the organisation including its organisational motivations and perceptions during the beginning of the partnership to

extend the way in which it might have shaped its organisational decision making in agreeing to choose its intended beneficiaries in Bangyai area, the same community of IKEA Thailand's second branch. Bridging from the stakeholder theory's first sub-section, the next sub-section 'where are they?' provides more discussions and details on how the organisation chose schools (as the first priority) and students in need in Bangyai District.

4.5.2. Where are They?

This sub-theme is a connecting argument developed from the ending conclusions of the previous sub-theme 'theory of CSR' to investigate the empirical data on where the individuals are located in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province. Although the findings from the first theme of this chapter revealed that the conceptualisation of poverty with a mixture of poverty approaches including identifying types of potential beneficiaries into individual and meso levels is one of the elements that shaped EDF Thailand's decisions to choose intended beneficiaries, this sub-theme argues that the stakeholder theory also plays an important role, interacting with EDF Thailand's decision making in several perspectives, in which the discussions stemming from the empirical data provided from EDF support the argumentations of stakeholder theory in that various stakeholders exert influence on organizations, thereby affecting their strategies, actions, and decision-making processes (Freeman, 1984; Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke, 2023). Drawing on this, this research further explores how it affected EDF's decision making in the beneficiary selection process.

Chapter 2 suggests that NMNCs might usually implement a CSR programme or project developments with SDNGOs by using a 'stakeholder theory' for CSR strategies in order to deliver safeguards against the potential negative effects of its business operations and maintain good relationships with any stakeholders (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004; Gourville and Rangan, 2004; Pearce and Doh, 2005; Sasse and Trahan, 2007; Seitanidi, 2010; Symaco and Tee, 2019).

With regard to this CSR framework, an extensive amount of literature (mainly from Business Studies and NGO Social Partnership Studies) also discovered that CSR contributes to increased collaboration between NMNCs and SNGOs, acting as the principal mechanism by which companies aim to develop their business practices by dedicating corporate resources to address social issues (Heap, 1998; Fowler, 2000; Googins and Rochlin, 2000; Hemphill and Vonortas, 2003; Seitanidi, 2010; Hoelscher and Rustad, 2019).

As explained earlier, EDF Thailand itself had been expanding its work locations since it was established. From only 20 provinces in Isaan area at the beginning, the organisation covered up to 61 provinces by 2019. One of them was Nonthaburi Province. Every time EDF Thailand expanded or moved to the new location, the organisation had its own reasons, drivers, or some other external factors. However, this research found out that its arrival in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, was influenced by the stakeholder theory implication informed by IKEA Thailand.

IKEA Bangyai strives to be your good neighbour since pre-opening. (IKEA, 2018)

The above statement (available in both Thai and English languages) was seen on an advertisement sign on one of the entrance walls at IKEA's Bangyai branch. It is an obvious statement that shows that IKEA Thailand is aimed towards stakeholders, who could be customers or people in the communities, to see that IKEA Bangyai is a 'good neighbour' to the community. This practice was explained by a set of scholars as the way in which corporate agency uses a theory of CSR in actions to build or address 'community engagement' (Carroll, 1991; Seitanidi and Ryan, 2007; Seitanidi, 2010; Hoelscher and Rustad, 2019; Symaco and Tee, 2019). The management staff at IKEA Thailand elaborated this advertisement statement during the interview for the development project partnering with EDF Thailand that aimed to provide IKEA Thailand a chance to get to know the communities and to contribute back to the communities at the same time. An interview quotation is provided as follows:

> My staff in Bangyai approached them [EDF Thailand] as we were about to open a new store in Bangyai. We believed we should have development projects to get to know communities in Bangyai and to give something back to the communities. (IKEA_GroupC_Female_2)

Informed by Bourdieu's *habitus* (1990), the above sample attitudes and actions evidently show that EDF decided to start looking to help the beneficiaries in Bangyai due to a stakeholder theory preference challenged by IKEA Thailand, as mentioned above. Without IKEA Thailand, especially in the context of the Bangyai store opening, EDF might not have provided such a development project during the time frame.

For EDF Thailand, however, there was an internal debate as to whether the organisation should step into the new location in Bangyai where the organisation knew no one, which was likewise the case for IKEA Thailand. After the field survey, the organisation realised there were needs for the schools and students in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, even though the province is located next to Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand and its most developed city.

> Even though Nonthaburi Province is next to Bangkok, schools are still vulnerable. They still need help from us. We found one wooden building that is 47 years old which is very old and risky to use for students in Bangyai. We were shocked. (EDF_GroupB_Female_12)

One of the management staff explained during the focus group that "there is poverty everywhere in Thailand. If looking carefully, every province in Thailand has poverty, including Bangkok" (EDF_GroupA_Male_1). This also underpins, strengthens, and supports why EDF Thailand decided to introduce itself to the new location at Nonthaburi Province. It shows how EDF's own conceptualisations of poverty maintained and challenged its organisational *habitus* while also, at the same time, it was influenced by IKEA's stakeholder theory.

Moreover, it is written in EDF Thailand's recent organisational archive (2017d) and the field survey report (2017c) that Nonthaburi Province is the 75th smallest province out of the 77 provinces in Thailand, close to Bangkok. There were small schools that had not been fully supported in terms of their facilities and educational materials and were without a good learning atmosphere for the students. At some schools, there were groups of disadvantaged students who were in need of financial assistance in order to ease their education expenses. The majority of the students' parents were employed as daily-wage labourers or workers at the local factories,

earning them little money and meaning that they were potentially unable to spend enough time looking after their children in terms of both their physical and emotional health. In addition, realising that the schools have a limited number of teachers to manage the class for all students was also one of the key concerns.

From the textual data above, it could be seen that EDF Thailand also accessed, measured, and conceptualized the poverty of the schools and students in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, by using a mixture of poverty concepts including its sub-dimensions of poverty before a process of defining 'where are they?' in Bangyai (the entire populations in need) and choosing the intended beneficiaries. By doing so, the empirical data from the internal documents indicates that EDF Thailand had three steps of defining 'where are they?' (in Bangyai area). The organisation used stakeholder theory as a central approach, wherein the organisation pinned the IKEA Bangyai store as a centre of the community. This is illustrated in Figures 4.11, 4.12, and 4.13 provided by EDF as follows:

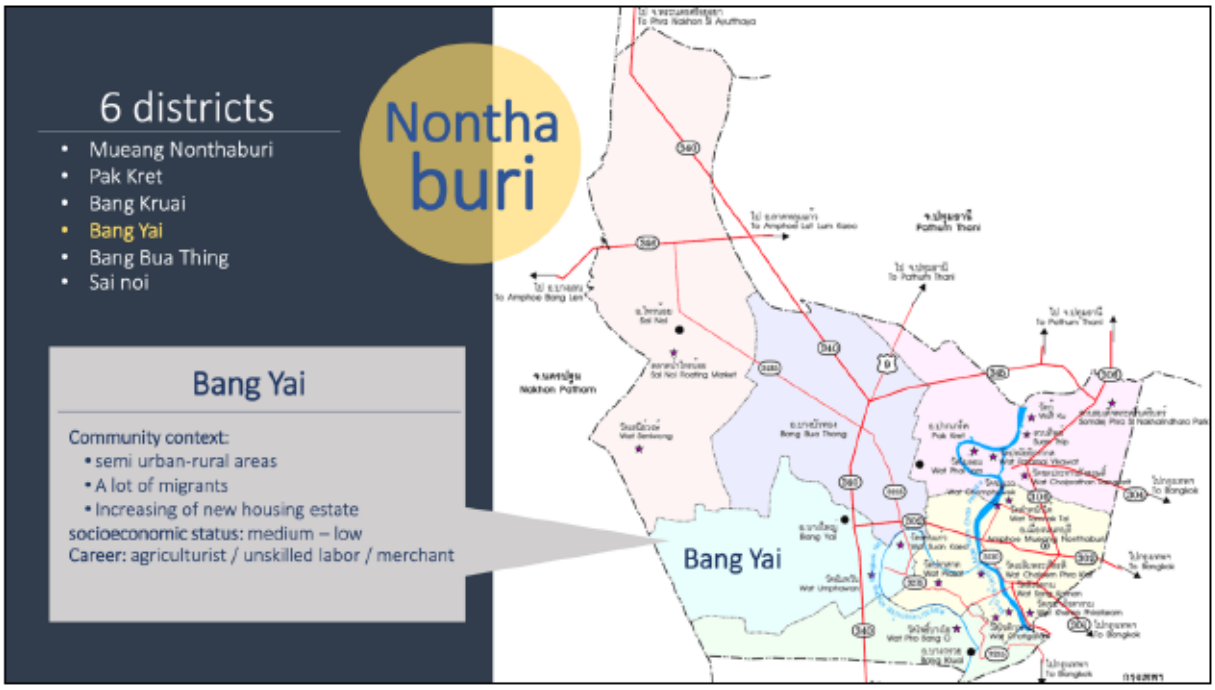


Figure 4.11. A map of Bangyai District in Nonthaburi Province (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

Firstly, Figure 4.11 illustrates that EDF drew up a map, focusing only on the Bangyai area among the other five districts of Nonthaburi Province. By pinning the IKEA Bangyai store as a point of focus in the map, the organisation also identified the community context in Bangyai as a semi-urban-rural area with a large number of migrants and increasing house estates. EDF also found that Bangyai had a medium-to-low socio-economic status, with the major roles of employment being agriculturists, unskilled labours, and entrepreneurs. This action reflects how EDF adopted the stakeholder theory at first to identify the poverty in the target area.

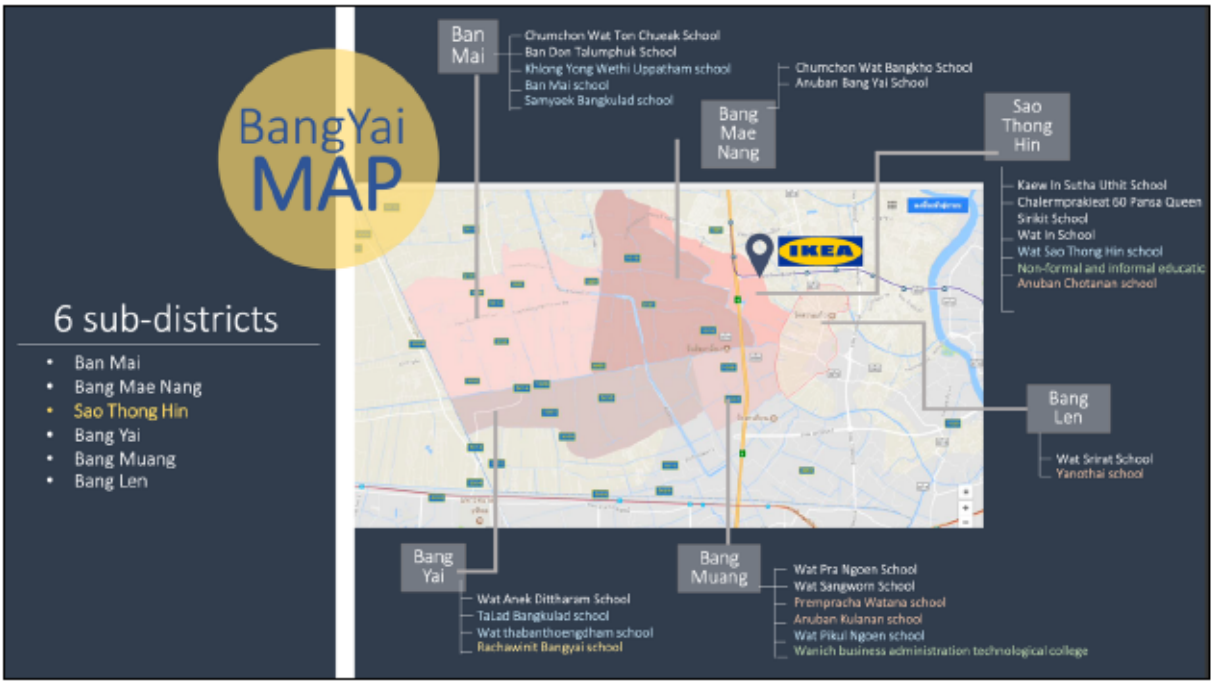


Figure 4.12. A map of nearby communities of the IKEA Bangyai branch (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

Figure 4.12, as a second step, illustrates the IKEA Bangyai branch in the Sao Thong Hin sub-district at a centre of the community map in order to discover the potential nearby communities. It is disclosed that IKEA Thailand offered six neighbouring sub-districts (including the sub-district where IKEA Bangyai was located) with the name lists of potential schools in need across six sub-districts.

Figure 4.13. A map of nearby communities of the IKEA Bangyai branch (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

The above figure offers the illustration of the third step of defining 'where are they?' in Bangyai in order to see the potential entire population in need before making the final decision of choosing the intended schools as beneficiaries. Regardless of the school locations, EDF used the third step to observe more details from the close-up map from which the organisation categorised the potential schools for its development project with IKEA Bangyai into five categories. The five categories are being a school under the Nonthaburi primary educational service area office, being a school under the provincial administrative office, being a private school, being a school under the secondary educational service area office 3, and other schools such as a business college or non-formal school. The figure also demonstrates that EDF Thailand visited 15 schools (cross signs in the figure), for which most of them were schools under the Nonthaburi primary educational service area office and schools under the provincial administrative office. However, according to their development project goals, only five schools were selected as participants for the implementation of their development project.

These sets of empirical data regarding the question of 'where are they?' offer fresh insights, illustrating how stakeholder theory, as part of EDF's organisational *habitus*, informed EDF's decision making to access the populations in need and set up the criteria to choose the intended beneficiaries in Bangyai District. The empirical evidence in this sub-section not only show how IKEA's stakeholder theory informed and shaped EDF's decision-making process, but also the sample criteria analysis alongside of the map shown in Figure 4.11 demonstrates how EDF themselves also considered their new potential stakeholders in Bangyai as their own soon-to-be stakeholders for the development project. Such empirical data from EDF support the argumentations of Hill and Jones (2012) and Danny (2014), who claimed that stakeholder theory is crucial for the successful execution and overall success of a project. Achieving consensus among organizational stakeholders is essential, and this process, if undertaken prior to the commencement of the project, significantly enhances the likelihood of project success (Danny, 2014; Bosibori and Otieno, 2021).

In addition, as Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke (2023, pp. 866) also recently emphasized, while stakeholders play significant roles in the collaborations between NGOs and their partners, this sub-section contributes further empirical evidence to how the stakeholder in question, namely, IKEA Thailand, influenced the processes and practices of the NGO EDF under their cross-sector partnership. Although the stakeholder theory analysis provides clearer pictures of how EDF's habitus was influenced by IKEA's interests to select the potential beneficiaries from the entire populations in need in Bangyai District, this study also argues that EDF's own stakeholder theory, as part of their organizational *habitus*, also had a significant influence regarding their own project success in terms of choosing the intended beneficiaries. This leaves another area to further explore in the next topic of this chapter.

4.5.3. Conclusion

This second theme was discussed in terms of the analytical data in order to demonstrate through the stakeholder theory how IKEA Thailand informed, challenged, and influenced EDF Thailand's decision making over its beneficiary selection for their

first development project in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, where the new IKEA store was opening. Two sub-themes, namely, the theory of CSR and 'where are they?', showcased the interactions of organisational considerations that were intertwined with the process of beneficiary selection. Thus far, the empirical data of this theme demonstrated that stakeholder theory also played a role as another significant element in shaping EDF Thailand's decisions in order to select the schools and students for the first-year development project with IKEA Bangyai. The next theme of this chapter discusses and explains how another set of implications informed and challenged EDF's organisational decision making towards a beneficiary selection process by investigating and exploring their organisational *habitus* in action.

4.6. Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Beneficiaries

The heuristic exploratory literature drawn up in Chapter 2 from NGO and Development Studies suggests that one of the potential implications that might inform, maintain, challenge, or influence SDNGOs' organisational decision making in their beneficiary selection process for development projects is the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries. Informed by the implications of conceptualisation of poverty and stakeholder theory, the previous sections of this chapter have partially told stories, crafted narratives, and discussed analytical practices from on the ground in terms of how EDF defined, approached, or chose the beneficiaries. The earlier two implications alongside the support of considerations emerging from the collected empirical data led to the third implication of this PhD thesis, which addresses two central research questions and research objective 5 of the study.

Developed from the work of Krause (2014), the recent key debates of Cordery, Belal, and Thomson (2023) and Kabonga (2023) have highlighted that NGOs realise that the beneficiaries themselves play an important role in poverty reduction and development work at every level of development projects. This informs this study to also consider both the potential beneficiaries (populations in need) and the chosen beneficiaries (intended beneficiaries) as another significant key driver that might

challenge and intertwine with NGO's organizational *habitus* in the process of beneficiary selection.

For this sub-section, there are two sub-themes which arose from the collected empirical data: (1) willingness and (2) capacity and capability of beneficiaries. The empirical data from this organisational case study are discussed in relation to the key debates and literature of Stoddard (2006); Krause (2014); Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page (2016); and Khuc et al. (2021). Along with organisational *habitus,* Bourdieu's concept of *capital* (Bourdieu, 2006; 2010) is also introduced and used in terms of this third implication (as discussed in Section 3.3.2.3 and 3.3.3 earlier in Chapter 3), aimed at analysing the empirical data and providing a deeper understanding from the provisional driver of this study.

Although it is noted that there are a variety of types of *capital* depending on the specific types of *fields* (Krause, 2014), they exist as either a non-economic form or economic form of *capital* (Bourdieu, 2010), such as scientific, linguistic, cultural, or educational *capital* (Moore, 2012, p. 98). Informed by Bourdieu's analytical application, investigations on the logic of each specific *field* and examinations of *capital*'s different forms allow researchers to explore the nature and internal dynamics of each *field* which reflect the relationship that exists between *capital* and *field* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). In terms of application in this study, it is suggested that the *developmental capital* in terms of its objectified and embodied forms, as well as *habitus* itself, informed, disputed, maintained, and was part of the organisational *habitus* of SDNGOs in order to choose the potential beneficiaries for the development projects. This emerged from and was reflected in the collected empirical data which denotes another dimension of self-interested or disinterested advantage or disadvantage (Moore, 2012, p. 98) through SDNGOs' decision making while working with NMNCs for development projects.

According to the 'differential association' perspective of Crossley (2012, p. 91), it is suggested that individuals who have similarity or mutuality in composition, element, or volume of *capital* tend to meet, cooperate, and establish relationships. It is fundamental to comprehend the similarity, mutuality, and interest (Grenfell, 2012) of those individuals in terms of their *habitus* (Crossley, 2012, p. 91). Forms of *capital*

could be comprehended in terms of qualitative diversities in consciousness forms within the social groups in each *field*, which refers to *habitus* as a realization of consciousness and a known technique or skill mastery (Moore, 2012, p. 99). In order to build a more thorough understanding of what occurred in the relationship on the ground between EDF and their relevant stakeholders for the development project with IKEA Thailand in such a particular social space, this study follows what Tatli (2017) emphases in that it is significant to employ and explore the different forms of *capital* in order to understand, construct, and conceptualise a specific *field* (Bourdieu, 1987, pp. 3–4). Therefore, informed by Bourdieu's *capital*, this analytical application facilitates this thesis in addressing the research questions and research objective 5 of this study, including fresh insights, discussed as follows.

4.6.1. Willingness of the Potential Beneficiaries

According to the exploratory literature in Chapter 2, one of the sub-themes that suggests the willingness of the potential beneficiaries or the entire populations in need could be the potential implication that is part of and challenges SDNGOs' *habitus* in terms of their decision making in order to select who participates in development projects. From Krause's (2014) and Stoddard's (2006) studies, their argumentations about 'acceptance' or 'security' from the beneficiaries create another conceptual room for this thesis to further explore the willingness of the potential beneficiaries as one of the forms of development *capital* that might inform, challenge, or maintain an SDNGO's organisational *habitus* in terms of decision making.

For this first sub-theme under this sub-section, firstly, it is evidenced regarding the 15-school survey report from EDF Thailand, presented to IKEA Thailand before they agreed to select the schools (and also the students within each selected school), to be included in their first development project together. Looking at one of the examples of how EDF assessed one of the 15 schools, as shown in Figure 4.10 (displayed again below), the empirical data show that EDF took a recommendation note at the bottom of the slide in that the teachers at Chalermprakieat 60 Pansa Queen Sirikit School were *active* in the agricultural learning centre. Such an 'activeness' of the teachers shows the attitudes or perceptions through EDF's written survey report,

concerning the willingness of the potential beneficiaries as one of the additional considerations, apart from other criteria, in order to select the beneficiaries for their Self-Reliance School or Social Day activities under their development project with IKEA.

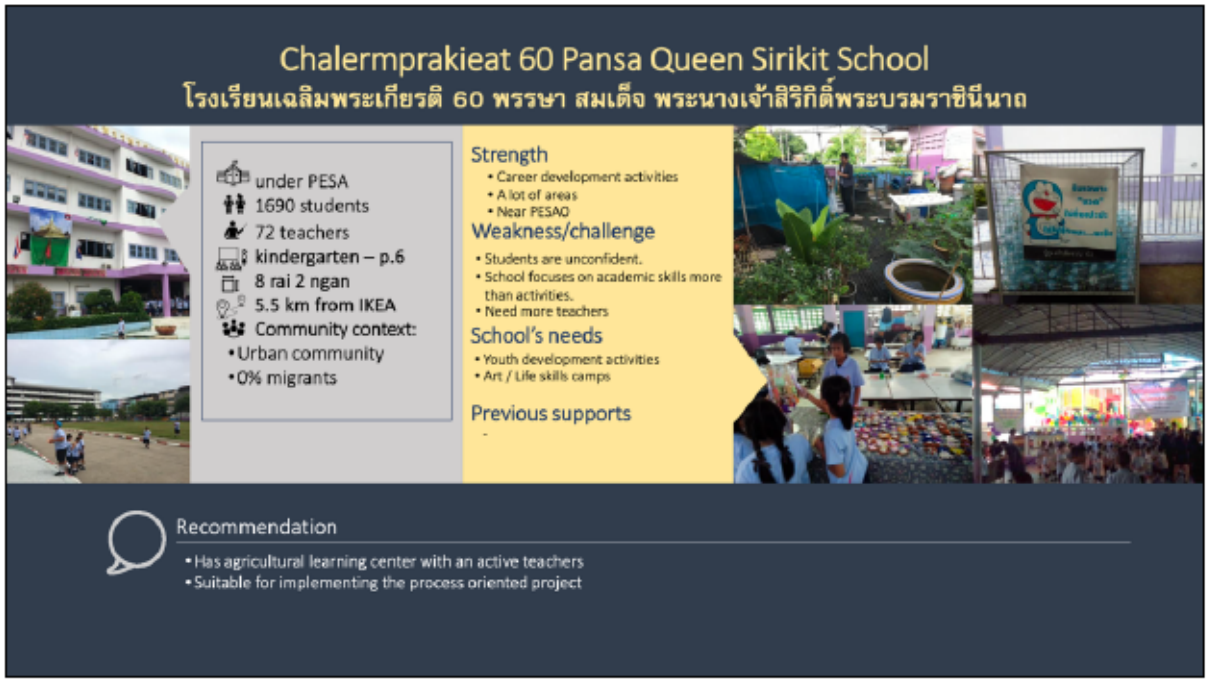


Figure 4.10. Analysis and summary report of the 15-school survey: Chalermprakieat 60 Pansa Queen Sirikit School (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

Informed, applied, and developed by Bourdieu (2010) and Moore (2012) regarding the conceptualisation of *capital*, and as discussed earlier in Sections 2.3, 3.3, and 3.3.3 of Chapter 3, the concept of *embodied capital* includes the ability, desire, rationality, and preference of choice to make for each individual, which informs and influences their *habitus.* In this case study, the willingness of the potential beneficiaries is considered *embodied capital* that appears to inform and challenge EDF's organisational *habitus* in terms of a process of beneficiary survey and selection. The quotations from the empirical data below from the interviews and focus groups indicate that willingness of the potential beneficiaries was one of the important drivers for EDF Thailand to approach and recruit them to be included in their development

project or leave them as part of the entire population in need as before. The empirical data suggest that the willingness of the principal, head, or management board of the school was likely one of the significant drivers that influenced EDF's decision making,

> At first, the school wanted to develop themselves to be a centre of agriculture, but they agreed that they are not ready. However, the principal seemed to be very willing to work with us, so we decided to work with them. (EDF_GroupB_Female_14)

> We looked at the vision and willingness of the principal or school management board including their teachers. Sometimes, the principals were willing to [engage] but the teachers were not supportive or insufficient or vice versa. (EDF_GroupA_Female_6)

According to the second quotation above (EDF_GroupA_Female_6), not only the willingness of the head principal or management board of the school but also the willingness of the teachers seemed to challenge or interplay with EDF's decision making in order to decide which school would be selected for their development project with IKEA. However, when looking into more detail through perceptions, attitudes, and actions of EDF staff members, the empirical data show that EDF had been aware and cautious about the different types and volumes of the willingness of each school. It was mentioned during the interviews and focus groups that some schools were willing to join only for the Social Day activity, some were willing to participant in the Self-Reliance School activity, and some were not willing or interested to attend either of them. Relevant quotations are shown as follows:

> There were some big and small schools that looked good [potential to be recruited] for us too but they didn't want to implement Self-Reliance School activity but only to attend the Social Day activity, so we cut them off too from the first 5-school list. (EDF_GroupB_Female_7)

> When I chose schools for Social Day activities, I chose small schools whom they were willing to work with us but they were incapable or unwilling to implement long-term Self-Reliance School projects. (EDF_GroupB_Female_8)

The empirical data from the interviews and focus group mentioned above allowed the researcher to make further explorations during the fieldwork in order to interview some of the key representatives from the schools who rejected or were not willing to attend the development projects between EDF and IKEA Thailand. This

allows this thesis to contribute a deeper understanding from another perspective of different groups of agencies in the specific *field* and comprehend a logic of practice (Bourdieu, 1987; Krause, 2014) under such a circular relationship.

> We didn't want to join them as we don't have enough teachers to support their projects. EDF staff also explained we might need to have some activities with the communities around our school. We are not sure if we could do that. Plus recently, we just had some issues with the community next door. I don't think our neighbouring people will join us. It sounds difficult. (Non-Beneficiary_GroupE_Female_23)

> From what I understand, the teachers in our school have to spend some time with them for the whole year [and] I don't think we could do that. We are so busy with teaching and other school focus rather than joining such a project. (Non-Beneficiary_GroupE_Male_22)

These two sample quotations from the non-beneficiaries demonstrate that the schools, who were considered by EDF Thailand as part of the entire population in need in the Bangyai area, were not willing to participate; therefore, they rejected EDF's offer to be a part of their development project. According to the interviews, this study denotes that the rationality behind the unwillingness, disinterest, or rejection is that the schools were aware that by attending Self-Reliance School or Social Day activities, such a development project required or demanded some level of capacity, capability, or resources from the schools. Indeed, two of the non-participating schools quoted above were noticeably aware that they lacked some capacity and capabilities such as an insufficient number of teachers, limited time, and lack of relationships or ability to engage with the communities near the schools. Therefore, their willingness to be included in EDF's development project with IKEA Thailand was non-existent.

Significantly, the evidenced selected quotations below highlight that the willingness of the potential beneficiaries, through the motivations and actions of EDF's staff members, was still maintained as one of the organisational considerations of EDF in order to define, choose, or approach the potential beneficiaries for the coming phase 2 of their development project (Year 2: 2018–2019) with IKEA Thailand. The quotations are provided as follows:

> … for the second year, we are still looking at willingness, support, and responsiveness of the principals and teachers from the schools we have been working with … we might need to cut some schools and keep some schools because some of them were not very responsive and slow to get back to us. We don't feel they really focused on our projects. (EDF_GroupB_Female_10)

> There are some schools willing to continue joining the projects with us in the second year, but they didn't seem capable to meet all of our requirements according to their first year working with us. I don't think we will choose them … because we needed to ensure it's achievable. (EDF_GroupA_Female_6)

The selected quotations above appear to insist that willingness of the potential beneficiaries was still maintained and thus influenced EDF's decision making for the present and future development project with IKEA Thailand. The empirical data suggest that the willingness of the potential beneficiaries or the populations in need influenced and challenged EDF's organisational *habitus,* impacting their essential consideration in terms of the project's stability and security (Stoddard, 2006). More significantly, this study follows the argumentation of Khuc et al. (2021), who proposed that the monetary factor could be a crucial influence on beneficiaries to have more willingness to participate in a development project. The empirical data shown above denote that although the schools were offered both gifts in cash and in kind as an exchange as part of EDF's project development, some principals and teachers at the potential schools in Bangyai District still rejected EDF and IKEA.

In addition, the empirical data of this sub-section highlight that not only was willingness a considerable driver for their organisational decision making in order to choose the target beneficiaries, but also capacity and capability as implications during the process of beneficiary selection. By employing Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus* and *embodied capital* as analytical tools, this sub-section thus far has discussed how EDF's organisational decision making in order to define and choose the beneficiaries was informed, disputed, and maintained by the willingness of the potential beneficiaries. Emerging from the empirical data mentioned above (EDF_GroupA_Female_6; EDF_GroupB_Female_10), the study now brings the considerations of capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries in order to discuss in the next sub-section under this theme.

4.6.2. Capacity and Capability of the Potential Beneficiaries

The previous sub-theme provides the interconnections from the evidenced pragmatic implication of how EDF Thailand's decision making was informed and disputed by the willingness of the potential beneficiaries in order to define, choose, or approach the schools and students on their development project with IKEA Thailand. Such an implication, appearing from the empirical data, suggests there are another two possible sub-themes that are interrelated with the willingness of the potential beneficiaries when SNDGOs recruited them from the entire populations in need, namely, capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries. Continuing from the previous section under this theme, the study maintains the adoption of Bourdieu's *capital* and *habitus* as a useful analytical application for this sub-section in order to answer the central research questions and address research objective 5.

According to the analysed codes and text segments from the NVivo application, some of the most often mentioned terms from the interviews and focus group when asking about the process or criteria of beneficiary selection for their first-year development project with IKEA in Bangyai area, Nonthaburi Province, were the terms 'capacity', 'capability', 'resources', 'skills', 'competency', and 'ability', which were raised and mentioned repeatedly by EDF staff members; EDF's board member; IKEA staff members; and, significantly, the non-beneficiaries as well.

This set of terms was also noticeably evidenced in the Analysis and Summary Report of the 15-School Survey, prepared and presented to IKEA Thailand by EDF before the development project began (also earlier mentioned in Section 4.4.2 of this chapter). Looking closely at three examples of the analysis and summary report from three schools that were not chosen to be a part of both Self-Reliance School and Social Day activities in Figures 4.14, 4.15, and 4.16 below, the empirical data illustrate that EDF Thailand considerably employed some indicators to access the capacity and capability of the potential schools before selecting and approaching them to be a part of their development projects. For Chumchon Wat Ton Chueak School shown in Figure 4.15, for instance, EDF made a recommendation note that the school did not have *social capital*. Moreover, for Wat Thabanthoengdham School in Figure 4.16, it

was reported that the school has 'good *social capital'* under the community context section.

In order to build and recheck the same understanding between the researcher and the research participants, EDF staff members were asked by the researcher about and explained their definition of *'social capital'* with reference to the relationship or network with the community nearby the school (EDF_GroupA_Female_6; EDF_GroupB_Female_10). Bourdieu (1986), in his concept of *social capital*, referenced the fact that it is constructed from social obligations such as networks, connections, and relationships in which, under some inevitable circumstances, are transferable or convertible into other types of *capital* such as economic, cultural, or other symbolic capital and, perhaps, "institutionalised in the forms of a title of nobility" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243).

Informed by this notion of *capital* by Bourdieu, it is considered that such *social capital*, extracted from EDF's perceptions, attitudes, and actions, could be one of the implications that informed and influenced EDF's decision making on a process of beneficiary selection for the development project with IKEA Thailand, in which it interrelates with the stakeholder theory, accordingly, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

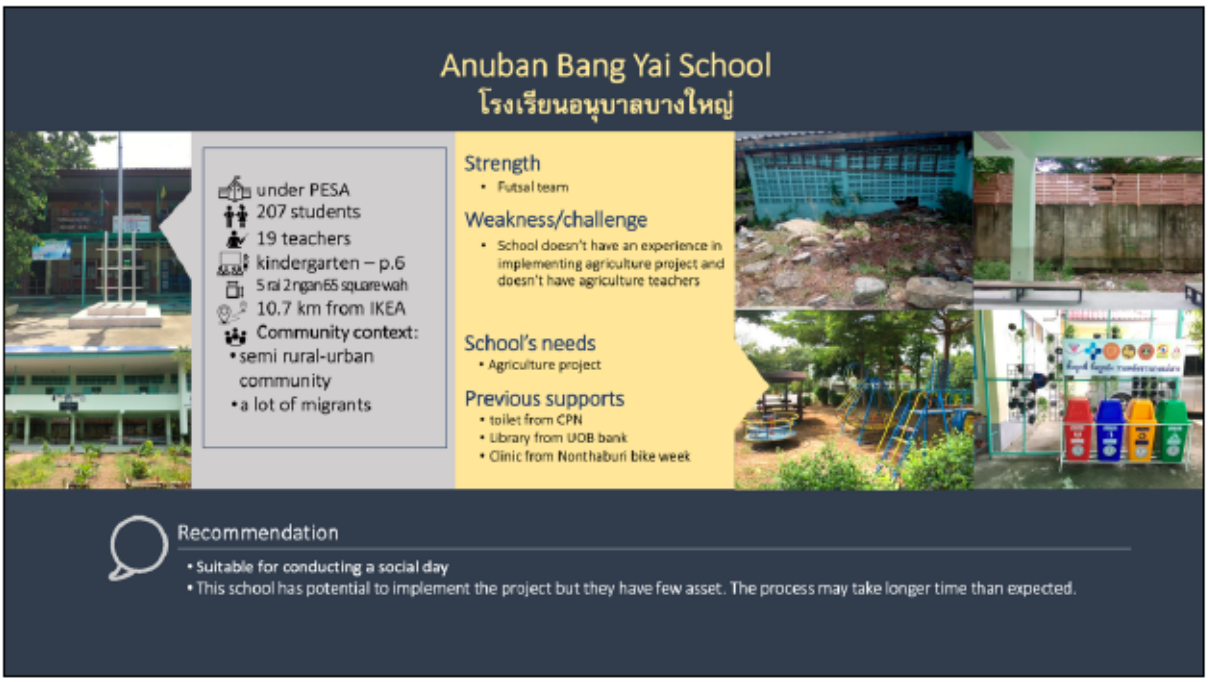


Figure 4.14. Analysis and summary report of the 15-school survey: Anuban Bangyai School (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

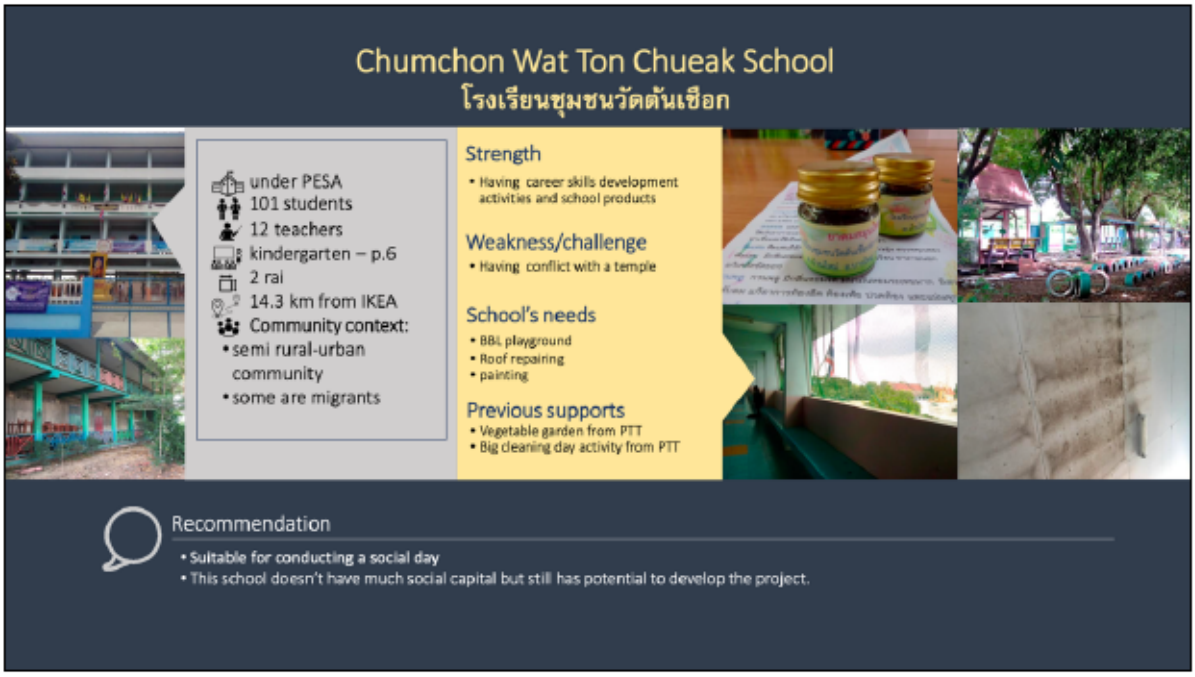


Figure 4.15. Analysis and summary report of 15-school survey: Chumchon Wat Ton Chueak School (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

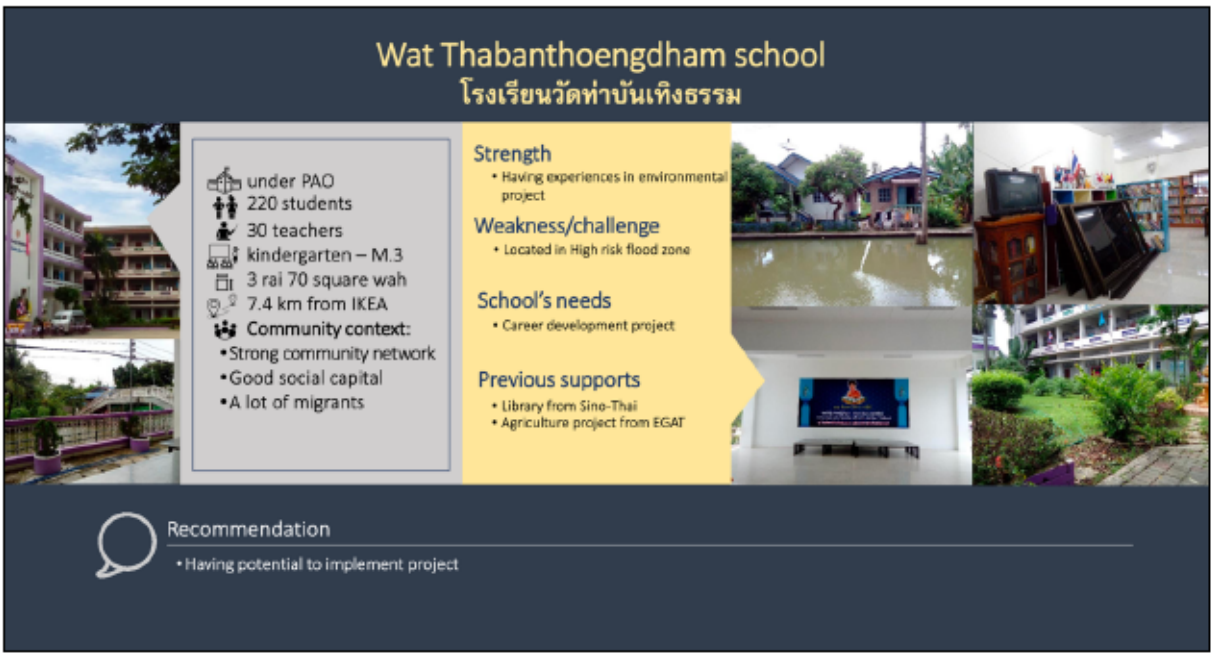


Figure 4.16. Analysis and summary report of 15-school survey: Wat Thabanthoengdham School (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

According to Figures 4.14, 4.15, and 4.16, the empirical data suggest that besides *social capital*, EDF Thailand also employed other developmental considerations to access the capacity and capability of each school in terms of whether they were ready or had potential to be included in EDF's Self-Reliance School activity or Social Day activity with IKEA Thailand. Noticeably, and evidently, EDF Thailand adopted this set of capacity and capability assessments of their 15-school survey (the entire population in need) in order to define and choose the potential beneficiaries. The developmental considerations included numbers of teachers and students; available developmental resources of the school; distance of the school measured from the IKEA Bangyai Store; previous development project experience of the school; ability or knowledge in some particular development areas; experience of working with MNCs, corporate donors, or other NGOs; and the community context where the school was located.

Looking at the Analysis and Summary Report of the 15-School Survey thoroughly, this thesis compiled and summarised the empirical data in Table 4.6 below in order to provide a more detailed and exhaustive discussion and analysis alongside the analytical applications of *capital* and *habitus* informed by Bourdieu (1996). In Table

4.6, schools numbered 1 and 2 in green were chosen for both the Self-Reliance School and Social Day activities, and schools numbered 3 to 5 were selected for a Self-Reliance School activity only, while schools numbered 6 to 8 were chosen for a Social Day activity alone. Schools numbered 9 to 15 were not included in the EDF–IKEA development project.

Table 4.6. Summary of the analysis and summary report of the 15-school survey (developed, analysed, and summarised by the researcher).

No.	School Name	Chosen for Self-Reliance School Activity	Chosen for Social Day Activity	Number of Teachers	Number of Students	Community Context	Strengths	Weaknesses/Challenges	Recommendations
1	Rachawinit Bangyai School	Yes	Yes	63	1,157	• Strong community network • Good social capital • A lot of migrants	• Having experiences in agriculture projects	None	• Has the potential to implement the project
2	Wat Srirat School	Yes	Yes	8	62	• Agricultural community • Strong community network • Good social capital • Few migrants	• School is close to community • Strong network	• Few students	• Suitable for implementing the project
3	Chumchon Wat Bangkho School	Yes	-	61	675	• 80% migrants • Weak community network • Broken families	• Director supports	None	• Suitable for implementing career development project
4	Ban Don Talumphuk School	Yes	-	27	424	• Agricultural community • Strong community network and social capital	• Has a school company • Being a school model in career development, and having a sufficiency economy	None	• Suitable for implementing the project

5	Wat Pra Ngoen School	Yes	-	15	200	• Weak community network because of a lot of migration • Various socioeconomic statuses	• Has experience in doing projects • Has a lot of space that can be developed • Good academic performance	• New school director	• Suitable for implementing an agriculture development project • Project candidate
6	Wat Anek Dittharam School	-	Yes	17	139	• A lot of migrants • Weak community network	• School areas can be developed to be the learning space for the children	• School director does not support a long-term project • Community network is weak • Surrounded by 3 schools	• Suitable for conducting a Social Day
7	Wat In School	-	Yes	14	102	• A lot of migrants • Community can support only manpower	• Waste recycle • Has clubs	• Old building • Limitation of teachers • Limitation of school areas	• Suitable for conducting a Social Day
8	Chumchon Wat Ton Chueak School	-	Yes	12	101	• Semi-rural-urban community • Some are migrants	• Has career skills development activities and school products	• Has conflict with a temple	• Suitable for conducting a Social Day • This school does not have much social capital but still has the potential to develop the project
9	Kaew In Sutha Uthit School	-	-	55	999	• Urban community • Parents do not have time	• Zero-waste school • Student market • Thai ensemble •	• Limitation of school areas • School focuses on academic skills more than activities	• Suitable for conducting a Social Day • School has the

							Facilitator/hosting schools competition events	• Director will retire in September	potential to implement the projects
10	Chalermprakieat 60 Pansa Queen Sirikit School	-	-	72	1,690	• Urban community • 0% migrants	• Career development activities • A lot of areas • Near PESAO	• Students are unconfident • School focuses on academic skills more than activities • Needs more teachers	• Has an agricultural learning centre with active teachers • Suitable for implementing the process-oriented project
11	Wat Sangworn School	-	-	17	208	• Good social capital • Strong community network	• Inventor club	• Limitation of school areas	• Suitable for implementing the process-oriented project • The school is very clean
12	Anuban Bang Yai School	-	-	19	207	• Semi-rural–urban community • A lot of migrants	• Futsal team	• School does not have experience in implementing an agriculture project and does not have agriculture teachers	• Suitable for conducting a Social Day • This school has the potential to implement the project, but they have few assets; the process may take longer time than expected
13	Wat Pikul Nguen School	-	-	90	1,520	• Agricultural community • Strong community network • Good social capital • Few migrants	• Being a career development school model	• Located in a high-risk flood zone	• Has the potential to implement the project

14	Wat Thabanthoengdham School	-	-	30	220	• Strong community network • Good social capital • A lot of migrants	• Has experiences in an environmental project	• Located in a high-risk flood zone	• Has the potential to implement the project
15	Talad Bangkulad School	-	-	52	1201	• Strong community network • Good social capital • A lot of migrants	• Has experiences in an environmental project	None	• Has the potential to implement the project

According to the summarised empirical data in Table 4.6, it is revealed that although EDF staff members mentioned that the *social capital*, network, or relationship with the community in Bangyai was one of the significant implications to approach and select the potential beneficiaries for their development project, it is suggested that other particular types of capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries also challenge, dispute, and influence the decision making of EDF as well. Not all schools that had good *social capital* with regards to the community nearby were chosen; not all schools that were willing to attend were chosen; not all large schools with many teachers and students were chosen; not all small schools with few teachers and students were chosen; and not the most resourceful schools nor the least resourceful schools were selected. This finding offers a fresh insight beyond the argumentation of Krause (2014) that NGOs evaluate the populations in need in order to see their potential skills before the development projects start. This set of empirical evidence, utilising the analytical tool of Bourdieu's *capital*, argues that the *social capital* of the potential schools also influenced EDF's organizational *habitus* to select the intended beneficiaries.

In order to look into exhaustive details and critical data analysis, this thesis employed the analytical forms of Bourdieu's *capitals* as developed by Moore (2012), which has already been discussed earlier in Section 3.3.3 of Chapter 3. Table 4.7 below offers fresh insights from the empirical data for this study, displaying the selected quotations, extracted from EDF staff members during the interviews and focus group. This empirical evidence reflects the complicated and diverse elements of different forms of *developmental capital* in the process of approaching and selecting their potential beneficiaries for the development project partnering with IKEA Thailand. This mixed constituent formation of dispositions, feelings, attitudes, and actions of EDF staff members show how their formation as part of organisational *habitus* (Bourdieu,1996) was influenced and contested by the implications of capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries when looking at each form of *developmental capital*, developing new insights to add to the debates of Krause (2014) and Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page (2016), wherein the scholars suggested that only skills, talents, knowledge, and responsibility of beneficiaries are among the few main drivers that influence NGOs' decision making in the selection process.

Table 4.7. Examples of selected quotations regarding *developmental capital* from EDF staff members during the interviews and focus group.

Forms of Capital	Objectified Capital	Embodied Capital	***Habitus*** *(specialization of consciousness and a known technique or skill mastery)*
Developmental capital	"We also looked at their resources such as their spaces in the school in case they wanted to do farming" (EDF_GroupA_Female_6) "…I mean the schools were small [and] therefore not quite ready" (EDF_GroupA_Female_4) "…they had split the zones for each farm" (EDF_GroupB_Female_10)	"…principals at some schools really wanted to work with us" (EDF_GroupA_Female_4) "…they seemed not to be able to implement our projects" (EDF_GroupB_Female_9) "They could not even succeed their own academics so we thought it might be too difficult for them to also achieve our	"This school has done some projects with agriculture in 2014-2015…" (EDF_Group_Female_6) "This school also has career development activities for students such as they teach students for haircuts, and they also have 'doing-good' company to make money by students providing haircuts for the

Forms of Capital	Objectified Capital	Embodied Capital	*Habitus* *(specialization of consciousness and a known technique or skill mastery)*
	"For this school, they have big empty lands underneath the high-voltage electricity poles…" (EDF_GroupB_Female_14) "If they don't have sufficient space, maybe we can run a Social Day activity with them instead" (EDF_GroupB_Male_12) "…but they don't have enough staff or students so we dropped them down" (EDF_GroupA_Female_5)	projects at the same time" (EDF_GroupB_Female_11) "At the beginning, there was no farm at this school at all. They only had willingness to work with us" (EDF_GroupB_Female_7) "Importantly, we could see that the principal is very reliable" (EDF_GroupA_Female_4) "With us, they wanted to do vegetable farming and mushroom farming"	people in the community" (EDF_GroupA_Female_6) "They also teach students on how to be entrepreneurs including accounting and finance…" (EDF_GroupA_Female_5)

Forms of Capital	Objectified Capital	Embodied Capital	*Habitus* *(specialization of consciousness and a known technique or skill mastery)*
		(EDF_GroupB_Female_9) "…they only focus on agriculture, not career and environment" (EDF_GroupB_Female_7) "Local people from the community have also helped them on farming…" (EDF_GroupB_Female_13) "They can also engage with the community" (EDF_GroupB_Female_7) "He [the principal] was also able to	

Forms of Capital	Objectified Capital	Embodied Capital	*Habitus* *(specialization of consciousness and a known technique or skill mastery)*
		get high engagement with the community which is a main concept of this project from IKEA" (EDF_GroupB_Female_9)	

In addition, after the process of beneficiary selection, EDF staff members visited the schools for assessing, planning, and preparing with regards to the schools' capacity and capability before implementing both Self-Reliance School and Social Day activities. According to Figure 4.17 below, the data from EDF's internal document revealed EDF staff members paid a visit to Wat Srirat School in order to assess, plan, and prepare to organise the Social Day activity with IKEA Thailand. It is illustrated that there would be around 80 staff members from IKEA Thailand attending the event, for which there also would be some activities that required some sufficient space to be occupied during the event. This study argues and acknowledges that without such a capacity or *developmental capital*, the Social Day activity would not have occurred at Wat Srirat School accordingly. Figure 4.18, as additional evidence, shows more examples of a similar consideration performed by EDF Thailand.

Figure 4.17. An example of capacity and capability assessment at Wat Srirat School prior to a Social Day activity (source: EDF Thailand, 2017d).

Figure 4.18. Examples of capacity and capability assessment at the chosen schools prior to a Social Day activity (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

Although this study acknowledges that the example pictures in Figure 4.18 illustrate some spaces in the schools, it seemed there was a (reasonable) need for development and improvement, and it is also important to acknowledge here that

some schools that were not chosen might also have had similar or worse conditions that needed improvement; however, they were not chosen because the capacity and capability of the schools might not have satisfied EDF's considerations to organise the Social Day activity.

Moreover, the empirical data from Figure 4.19 show that schools having sufficient space for a Social Day activity might not have been the requirement from EDF alone but also IKEA Thailand. The IKEA Bangyai Social Initiatives document (2017) states that "when we [IKEA] see a lot of 'space', we think of opportunities to play". Considerably, Play, one of IKEA's global CSR and sustainability campaigns, likely informed, challenged, and influenced EDF's organisational decision making in terms of the way in which the school's space, as a capacity of the school, was considered as one of the implications to select the beneficiaries for their development projects together. It is important to also note here this is an example of how theory of CSR and capacity of potential beneficiaries intertwined and challenged EDF's *habitus* to select the schools for their development project with IKEA.

Figure 4.19. An example from IKEA's social initiatives document (source: IKEA Thailand, 2017a).

Figure 4.20. Examples of capacity and capability assessment in terms of agriculture at five chosen schools for a Self-Reliance School activity (source: EDF Thailand, 2017b).

Significantly, according to the survey report, the evidence in Figure 4.20 shows that all five chosen schools for a Self-Reliance School activity had *objectified capital* (land, farms, agricultural facilities, or tools) and likely *embodied capital* (ability of farming, competencies of agriculture, previous desire, or interest of agriculture). It is apparent that such agricultural capacity and capability of the schools significantly influenced or intertwined EDF's organisational decision making on the beneficiary selection process. Informed by Bourdieu's theoretical concept of *capital* that was further developed by Moore (2012), this thesis considers this as another fresh insight that emerged from the empirical data to not only the debates of processes and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership but also the theoretical notions of Bourdieu's 'theory of practice'.

For the future anticipated roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership and to observe how implications of willingness, capacity, and capacity of the potential beneficiaries were maintained in the organisational *habitus* in selecting the potential beneficiaries for the second-year development project of EDF–IKEA Thailand, the quotations below revealed that EDF wished to keep the first five schools

in the second-year project. However, it also depended on the willingness and capabilities of the schools as the project activities might have changed:

> However, I need to ask those five schools as well if they are still willing to work with us or capable to work with us for the second year. It's because we also aim to use them as a bridge to the community in the second year. We might need to work with students' parents too. (EDF_GroupB_Female_8)

> I plan to work with the same five schools and use them as role models to show other schools from the same province. However, I have to look at our next year budget … from IKEA. If we can, I wish to choose more schools to work with. It's really up for project budget (EDF_GroupA_Female_3)

Significantly, on the other hand, the second quotation above shows that there might be another implication/consideration that may affect their organisational decision making: project budget (EDF_GroupA_Female_3), which is a part of the theory of project management. This thesis considers this final sub-theme as another potential driver that informed, disputed, or influenced SDNGOs' decision making when selecting the potential beneficiaries to be included in their development projects when partnering with NMNCs.

4.6.3. Conclusion

With the development project goal to select only five schools for a Self-Reliance School activity and only five schools for a Social Day activity, only eight schools were selected to be a part of their development project with IKEA Thailand (two schools out of five schools who participated in a Self-Reliance School activity were also chosen for a Social Day activity). The empirical data that emerged here denote the pragmatic complications in which willingness and a variety of types of capacity and capability of the potential schools might have interplayed and intertwined with EDF's beneficiary selection process. Although it could not be concluded as to which one of them had the most significant and powerful implications to EDF Thailand, it is insisted that EDF's organisation was informed, challenged, and maintained by the capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries for their beneficiary selection process.

Thus far, the third theme of this chapter has provided analytical data necessary in order to demonstrate and debate how willingness, capacity, and capabilities of the potential beneficiaries influenced, challenged, or shaped EDF's organisational decision making in order to select the potential beneficiaries for the development project with IKEA Thailand. An additional analytical tool, *capital*, informed by Bourdieu (2006; 2010) and developed by Moore (2012), was adopted to analyse the empirical data and to provide a deeper understanding alongside with the two sub-themes, namely, the willingness of the potential beneficiaries and the capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries, as one of the provisional organisational drivers of NGOs' decision making. The empirical evidence in this section has provided fresh insights, discussions, and argumentations in relation to the key debates and literature of Stoddard (2006); Krause (2014); Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page (2016); and Khuc et al. (2021) drawn up in Chapter 2 in order to answer central research questions accordingly.

4.7. Theory of Project Management

The previous three themes of potential internal and external drivers, namely, conceptualisation of poverty; stakeholder theory; and willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries, emerged as outlined from Chapter 2 and were discussed, analysed, and presented with the empirical data from the EDF–IKEA Thailand partnership for their first development project in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province. The final theme of this chapter, the theory of project management, is that which the exploratory literature in Chapter 2 suggests as another potential implication that might shape or maintain SDNGOs' decision making towards their beneficiary selection for the development project partnering with NMNCs. The empirical evidence from this case study is discussed in the sub-sections of this theme in relation to the key argumentation of Koskela and Howell (2002), Krause (2014), Beck (2017), Mkutano and Sang (2018), Bosibori and Otieno (2021), and Kontinen and Ndidde (2023), providing fresh insights to this study and the broader debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

In order to answer the central research questions and address research objective 6, this thesis employed Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* as an analytical tool by extracting and analysing EDF's mixed formation of organisational collective ideas and practices (Maton, 2012, p. 50) through their shared daily attitudes, beliefs, motivations, perceptions, appreciations, and actions (Bourdieu, 1990) on the theory of project management.

The exploratory literature in Chapter 2 suggests that there is only the little attempt from Krause's (2014, p. 77) study, wherein she expresses that the LogFrame application might have changed the working environment of NGOs around the world, to explain potential beneficiaries being presented or sold as commodities and the development project being potentially sold as a product (also see Beck's (2017) study on the development project framework). In Chapter 2, this study argued that the majority of this sub-literature heavily focuses on the importance, quality, and improvement of project management (Koskela and Howell, 2002; Mkutano and Sang, 2018) by SDNGOs rather than how SDNGOs' decision making was shaped or influenced by the project management theory during the beneficiary selection process for the development projects with NMNCs.

Hence, this section presents and discusses the final provisional theme of this chapter with the collected empirical data from EDF–IKEA Thailand on how EDF's decision making was influenced by the theory of project management towards the beneficiary selection process for potential schools in the Bangyai area for both Self-Reliance School and Social Day activities. Emerging from the empirical data, there are three elements from the theory of project management that were most often mentioned by the EDF staff members during the interviews and focus groups: (1) timeline, (2) reporting of project output and outcome, and (3) budgeting.

4.7.1. Timeline, Reporting, and Budgeting

> We offered IKEA to work with us for three years, but they approved only one year first. However, [at the] end of this month [September 2018], we will be sending another proposal for the second year. The first-year project will be finished by this December 2018. (EDF_GroupA_Female_4)

Firstly, the above quotation from one of the management members of EDF Thailand indicates the development project between their SDNGO and IKEA Thailand was based on the development project framework. According to the above quotation, it reveals their development project began with the project proposal, which was based on a yearly basis; however, the end goal for this development project was to implement this project with the beneficiaries in Bangyai for three years. When looking at the proposal of its first-year development project plan, it states

> The project plan is based on the achievements within three years and aims to transform the selected schools and incorporate the best practices into community learning centers. The schools will be a model from which the local people can learn on how to create jobs or innovations by using local wisdom and continue their learning experience even when the program is finished. (EDF, 2017c)

It is noticeably evidenced that one of the significant elements from the theory of project management that can be seen from EDF's perceptions and actions from the interviews and proposal is timeline. In addition, the quotations below indicate the internal debate between EDF staff members during the focus group, sharing their shared ideas of whether and how they would select the same groups of beneficiaries from the first year to participate in the second year. Considerably, the timeline of the project management seems to be an important element for EDF's organisational decisions to select the potential beneficiaries for both first-year and second-year projects with IKEA Thailand:

> However, with some schools, we might drop them if we think they are not able to continue the projects in a timely manner. (EDF_GroupB_Female_7)

> … this school might not finish IKEA projects on time … even though they had problems but they seemed to be able to find other solutions and also get engagement with the community; we might consider to work with them next year in order to achieve our project goals. (EDF_GroupB_Female_8)

Looking at how EDF's organisational *habitus* was shaped *and* retained by the timeline as an implication of theory of project management in action, Figures 4.21 and 4.22 below, as examples, illustrate how EDF designed and proposed the implementation of their development projects with IKEA Thailand in 2017–2020.

Although EDF broke down the activities on a monthly basis, this set of empirical data might be able to answer the questions as to why not all potential beneficiaries, namely, schools and students, were able to join, or why they could not finish the project activities in a timely manner in terms of the proposed timeline by EDF to IKEA Thailand. As a result, these empirical data suggest how timeline, as one of the elements of the project management theory, informed and challenged EDF's decisions to select the potential beneficiaries, alongside other implications discussed earlier in this chapter.

Program Timing:
Project operation 1 year (2017-2018 / 12 months)

Date	Activity
2017	
June	Project Proposal and budget submit to IKEA Thailand
June	Project approval and sign MOU with IKEA Thailand
July	Social engagement and send its report to IKEA Thailand
July	Project PR to schools and schools submit the project proposal
August	School's proposal review and approval
August	Fund transfer #1 to schools
August	Project orientation
August-December	Project & career development trainings, workshops and study trips Implementation by schools • Agriculture activities • Career Development activities • Environment Rehabilitation & conservation Monitor and evaluation
December	Lessons learned and knowledge sharing Send progress report to IKEA Thailand
2018	
January-June	Fund transfer #2 to schools Implementation by schools
February, May	Monitor and evaluation
June	Final report submission to IKEA Thailand

Figure 4.21. An example of the project timeline of the first-year development project between EDF and IKEA Thailand for Self-Reliance and Social Day activities (source: EDF Thailand, 2017c).

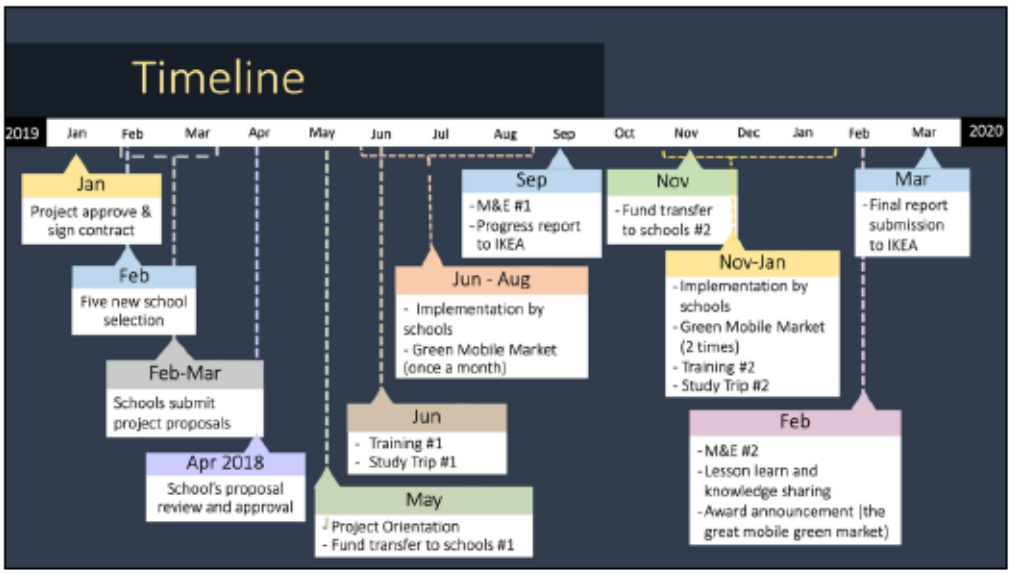


Figure 4.22: An example of a project timeline of the third-year development project between EDF and IKEA Thailand for Self-Reliance and Social Day activities (source: EDF Thailand, 2019d).

Secondly, the empirical data suggest that reporting is another component of the project management theory that challenged and shaped EDF's decision making prior to their beneficiary selection for their development project with IKEA Thailand. EDF made a claim and a promise in their development project proposal to IKEA Thailand that EDF staff members would evaluate and monitor the project on a timely basis on the basis of the framework which included 'inputs', 'processes', and 'outcomes' of the project activities (EDF, 2017c). Figure 4.23 below exhibits the details of project output and outcome, offered by EDF to IKEA Thailand before their development project began.

Project Output and Outcome:

Output	Outcome
• Career Creation • Income Generation • Produces and value-added products • Learning Center for other schools and communities • School Development policy for children development • Student first hand experiences • Good Leader and strong teamwork	• Encourage a sustainable development • Create a self-reliance • Build an assistance and cooperation school and communities network • Provide a career training and life long education promotion

Figure 4.23. An example of project output and outcome of the first-year development project between EDF and IKEA Thailand for Self-Reliance and Social Day activities (source: EDF Thailand, 2017c).

On the other hand, from the empirical data illustrated in Figure 4.23, this study observed the possible intertwined tensions and pressures that might exist from two elements of project management theory, namely, timeline and reporting, which seem to suggest that these two elements might possibly shape EDF's decision making to select only the beneficiaries who were likely able to deliver such project output and outcome mentioned above within the provided timeline. Not only does Figure 4.23 exhibit how reporting, as one of the implications of the theory of project management, was performed in practice by EDF for their development project with IKEA Thailand, it also reflects that EDF had clear end goals of what they would implement, what the expected project output and outcome would look like, and how the project results would be conducted and delivered by beneficiaries and reported to IKEA Thailand.

In addition, this study also investigated how there were also some concerns regarding the project management theory from some staff members from different departments of IKEA Thailand that might have challenged and disputed EDF's organisational decision making prior to choosing beneficiaries for the Self-Reliance

School and Social Day activities. The quotation below came from one of the EDF staff members who perceived the tensions of IKEA's project management practices:

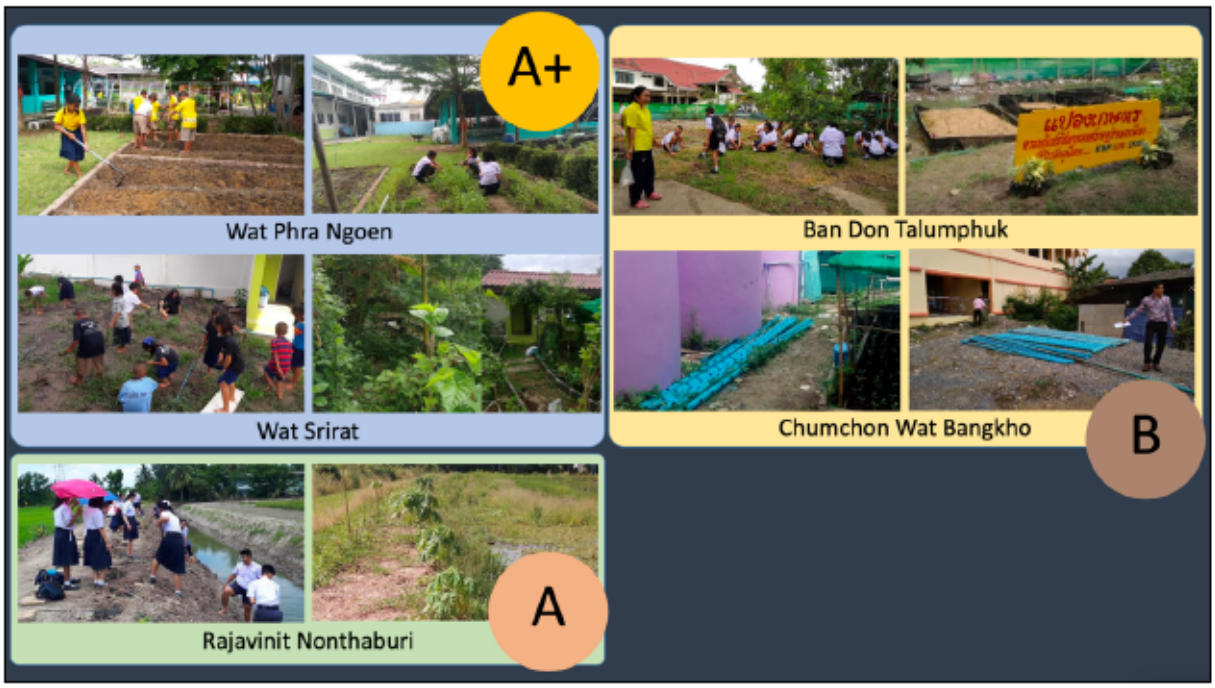
> When we work with IKEA [Thailand], we work with several people from different departments. Some of them [from marketing and public relations (PR) departments] are concerned about indicators, KPIs of the projects in terms of branding while staff members from [the] sustainability department didn't care about PR visibility at all. We tried to explain to all staff that we don't focus on PR visibilities but relationships with community. (EDF_GroupA_Female_4)

According to the above quotation (EDF_GroupA_Female_4), it is debatable that although there were some actions and motivations concerning project management theory from the marketing and public relations department of IKEA Thailand that challenged EDF to work on project reporting, it is denoted that EDF's own theory of project management was still maintained, and in turn, EDF rejected following some elements of PR reporting but focused on the project design they aimed to follow, alongside the directions of the sustainability department of IKEA Thailand. This evidence from attitudes and actions against elements of project management theory indicates how EDF's organisational *habitus* was challenged and maintained. As a result, this study further investigated the final report of their first-year development project written by EDF staff members and submitted to IKEA Thailand. The empirical data suggest that five chosen schools were able to deliver what they were asked, promised, and offered.

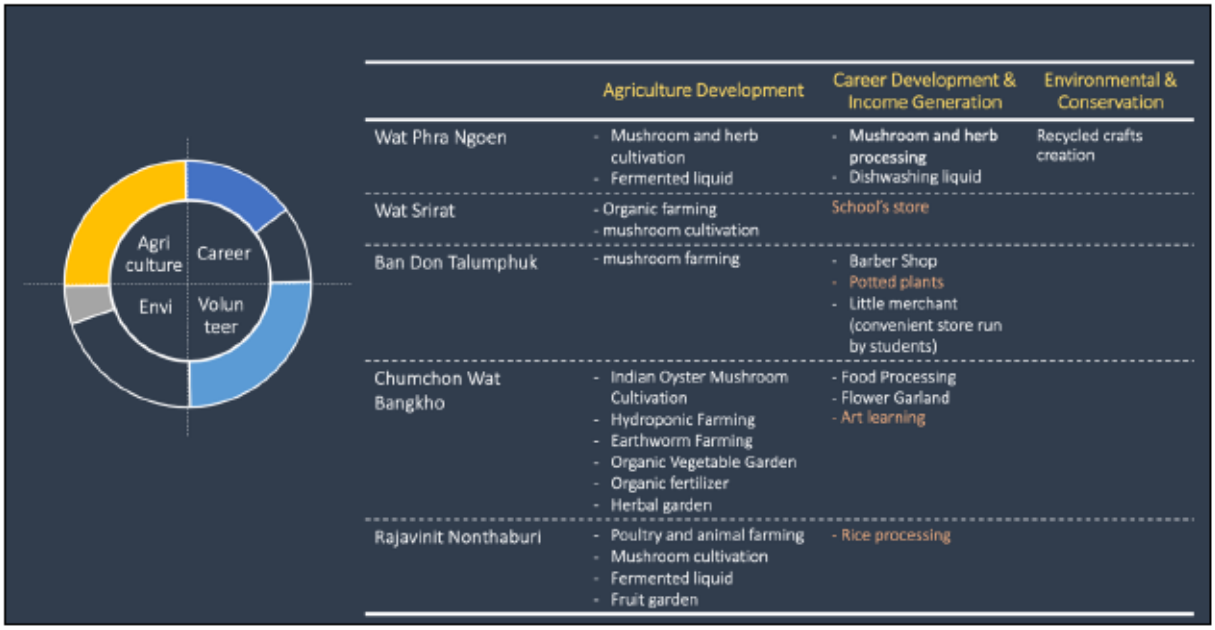
In this study, the focus was not on how the schools and students implemented or delivered the project results to EDF Thailand, as mentioned earlier that the majority of the literature on the theory of project management has discussed in detail the effectiveness and efficiency of such a process, as outlined in Section 2.5.4 of Chapter 2 (Koskela and Howell, 2002; Mkutano and Sang, 2018; Alkhater, 2021). Instead, this study focuses on how EDF's report to IKEA Thailand affected their own decision making in terms of selecting the intended beneficiaries. By doing so, the project development report written by EDF demonstrates their dispositions and actions in practice in terms of how their organisational decision making was shaped and maintained by the theory of project management. Figures 4.24 and 4.25 below illustrate some significant examples of the successful results of project implementation

that were reported in terms of project output and outcome. The photos of the development progress and deliverables of each school for Self-Reliance School activities were provided with a scoring system (A+, A, and B). Successful and ongoing implemented development activities by each school were reported as being aligned with the main development project objectives: agriculture development, career development and income generation, and environment and conservation.

With such aspects of development emerging from the empirical data, this study hence acknowledges that the implications of project management theory, maintained as part of EDF's organisational *habitus*, in practice seem to be another significant factor among the other possible three organisational considerations discussed earlier in this chapter in order to choose the potential beneficiaries who were considered capable of delivering such positive results for their development project. Without the consideration of project management theory as a constituent part of EDF's organisational *habitus*, this study argues that perhaps the beneficiaries without capability or capacity required by the Self-Reliance School and Social Day activities would be recruited. This empirical evidence, therefore, supports the argumentation of Bosibori and Otieno (2021) that project failures are both repetitive and alarming for NGOs as there might be difficult conditions, limitations, complexities, and the unpredictability of inefficient resources. This study hence denotes that reporting, as part of theory of project management, shaped EDF's organisational *habitus* in order to choose the intended schools in Bangyai for the development project with IKEA.



Figures 4.24. An example of development project output and outcome evaluation reported by EDF (source: EDF Thailand, 2018d).



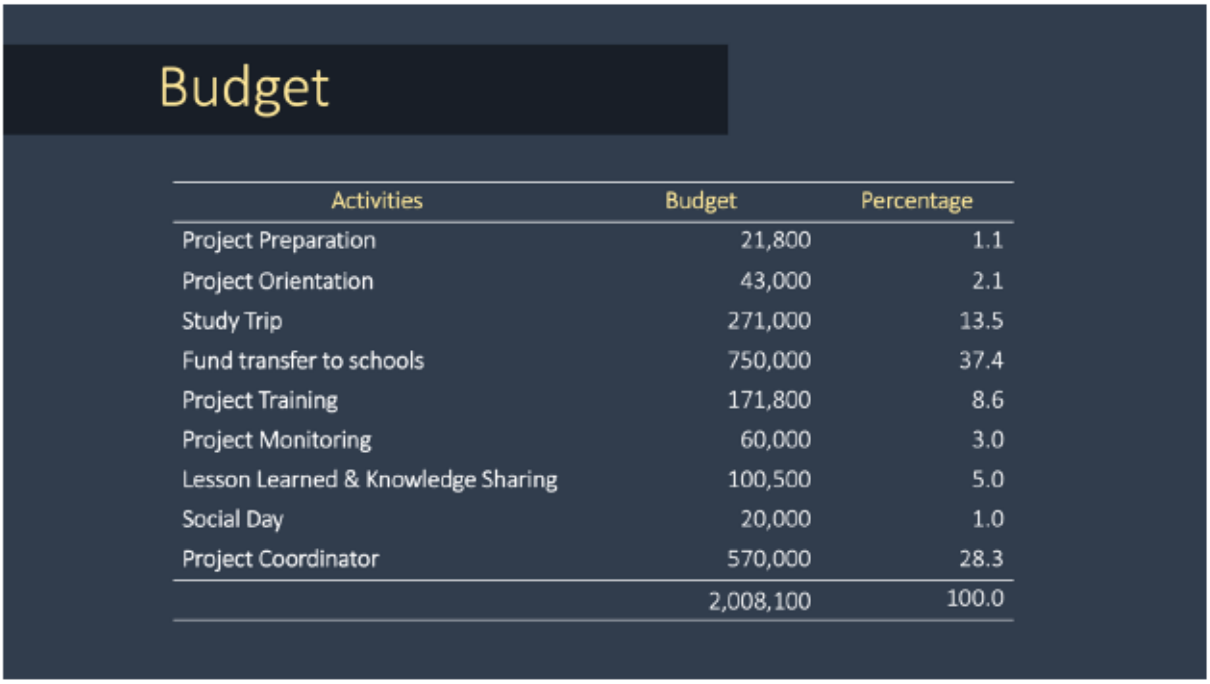
	Agriculture Development	Career Development & Income Generation	Environmental & Conservation
Wat Phra Ngoen	- Mushroom and herb cultivation - Fermented liquid	- Mushroom and herb processing - Dishwashing liquid	Recycled crafts creation
Wat Srirat	- Organic farming - mushroom cultivation	School's store	
Ban Don Talumphuk	- mushroom farming	- Barber Shop - Potted plants - Little merchant (convenient store run by students)	
Chumchon Wat Bangkho	- Indian Oyster Mushroom Cultivation - Hydroponic Farming - Earthworm Farming - Organic Vegetable Garden - Organic fertilizer - Herbal garden	- Food Processing - Flower Garland - Art learning	
Rajavinit Nonthaburi	- Poultry and animal farming - Mushroom cultivation - Fermented liquid - Fruit garden	- Rice processing	

Figures 4.25. An example of development project output and outcome reported by EDF (source: EDF Thailand, 2018d).

Lastly, the empirical data suggest that the third element of project management theory in which the collective organisational concerns were raised during the interviews and focus group is the budgeting of the development project. Although budgeting is not a new topic under the literature of project management theory, this study argues that it appears that none of the previous literature discussed in Chapter 2 indicate how project management theory, from the perspective of budgeting in particular, influence or shape SDNGOs' organisational decision making for their beneficiary selection.

> For my responsibilities, I focus on [the] budget of each development project proposal sent to our corporate donors. I need to see all activities and KPIs in detail. Is the donation enough for us to implement all those promised activities?... (EDF_GroupA_Female_3)

Using above quotation (EDF_GroupA_Female_3) as an example, it is evidenced that there was an internal discussion by one of the decision makers who supervised the budgeting and finance of EDF Thailand. Not only did she look at the organisational financial situations in overall pictures, from her organisational authorities and responsibilities, but she was also accountable for the budgeting and finance of each development project proposed and conducted by EDF Thailand.



Activities	Budget	Percentage
Project Preparation	21,800	1.1
Project Orientation	43,000	2.1
Study Trip	271,000	13.5
Fund transfer to schools	750,000	37.4
Project Training	171,800	8.6
Project Monitoring	60,000	3.0
Lesson Learned & Knowledge Sharing	100,500	5.0
Social Day	20,000	1.0
Project Coordinator	570,000	28.3
	2,008,100	100.0

Figure 4.26. An example of budget allocation for the first-year development project prepared and presented by EDF to IKEA Thailand (source: EDF Thailand, 2018d).

According to her quotations (EDF_GroupA_Female_3), the empirical data revealed that she looked into the details of project activities and KPIs against the project budget. The empirical data evidently show her concern as to whether the budgeting was sufficient and suitable for the project activities and deliverables in terms of returns to their corporate donor (or NMNC in this case), IKEA Thailand. To support this argumentation, Figure 4.26 above showcases the budget allocation in brief detail. As illustrated in Figure 4.26, the empirical data indicate that there were funds that were allocated to schools for their development activities including training and Social Day activities. This element of project management theory is likely to suggest that for the schools who did not have sufficient capacity or capability that EDF (and perhaps IKEA Thailand) were looking to access, the budget of this development project to fulfil or support this missing capacity or capability might increase and affect other budget allocations of the project or EDF's organisational finance as a whole accordingly. Reflecting on this set of empirical data, this thesis argues that the poorer schools or schools that have less capacity and capability might have not been chosen to be a part of this EDF–IKEA development project, despite potentially being more in need. This illustrates how budgeting, as part of theory of project management, interplayed and shaped EDF's organisational *habitus* on how they chose their intended beneficiaries for the development project with IKEA Thailand. Such a result of EDF's decision making emerging from the empirical evidence supports the argumentation of Beck (2017, p. 8), who encouraged NGOs to focus more on other dimensions (both means and ends) of the development projects rather than presenting best practices or proving their professionalism (Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023) on managing the project by not concerning themselves with governance, accountability, and justice towards their own populations in need, who may have indeed been the original focal population that the NGO was established to address.

4.7.2. Conclusion

This sub-section, as the final theme of this chapter, has provided and discussed the analysed empirical data in order to demonstrate and debate how the theory of project management challenged, maintained, or shaped EDF's organisational decision making in order to select the potential beneficiaries for the development project with

IKEA Thailand. Working on the academic gaps suggested from the literature in Chapter 2 and the emerged empirical data, elements of project management theory, namely, project timeline, reporting, and budgeting, were discussed and analysed in this sub-section, along with the analytical application of *habitus*, informed by Bourdieu (1996), in order to answer the central research questions and address research objective 6. The next section provides the conclusion of the analytical insights and findings of this case study as the final section of this chapter.

4.8. Conclusion

In line with the primary goals of this thesis—exploring and understanding how SDNGOs decide on their beneficiary selection processes for development projects in partnership with NMNCs, as discussed in Chapters 1, 2, and 3—this research focuses on the 'processes' and 'practices' rather than the outcomes. This approach is informed by the ontological framework of *NGO-ism* (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010; Fowler and Biekart, 2013). In order to answer the two central research questions, namely, (1) how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and (2) what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs, this chapter has followed the working hypotheses and potential implications drawn up from the literature outlined in Chapter 2 (research objectives 1 and 2) and discussed them in terms of the collected empirical data of the first case study: the EDF–IKEA Thailand development project in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province. To address research objectives 3, 4, 5, and 6, an epistemological application of *field of practice* by Krause (2014) and an analytical framework of 'theory of practice' by Bourdieu (1990; 1996; 2006) were used by this study to explore, analyse, and discuss the topics of focus in this chapter.

By employing a mixed set of the theoretical, analytical, ontological, and epistemological applications, this chapter has conveyed the stories and practices occurring on the ground in the particular contextual setting and social space between EDF and IKEA Thailand in which their first development project was initiated and implemented in another impoverished area at the location where IKEA Thailand's

second store (a new store) was opening in Nonthaburi Province. The stories and practices between them were provided and debated in this chapter with the collected empirical data through the specific *field* of cross-sector partnership with the development as service delivery framework.

Starting with the conceptualisation of poverty, this chapter reveals that EDF Thailand seemed to use a mixture of concepts of poverty with different employments of causes and symptoms of poverty, dimensions of poverty, and a variety perspectives of beneficiary conceptualisation ('who are the (chosen) poor?') under their scholarship programme and development projects with different groups of donors. One of the fresh insights from the case study empirical data also suggests that by implementing the development project, EDF defined 'the poor' differently from their scholarship programme. While the scholarship programme aimed to provide support only to the students, their development project, also with IKEA Thailand, also defined and approached 'the poor' or beneficiaries in terms of two levels: schools (meso) and students (individual). In terms of IKEA Thailand in particular, this chapter then continued to discuss and disclose how stakeholder theory shaped and challenged EDF's decision making in order to select the beneficiaries for their development project. The empirical evidence suggests two sub-themes: the 'theory of CSR' from EDF's CSR understandings and positive attitudes towards IKEA's CSR strategies, and 'who are they?', a conceptualization of locations in Bangyai District, mapped out by pinning the new IKEA store as a centre that eventually influenced EDF's decision making.

In addition, this chapter also employed the concept of *capital* as another analytical tool to build deeper and more critical understandings of how willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries or the entire populations in need are interplayed and intertwined with EDF's decision making through the mixed formations of attitudes and practices of EDF's organisational *habitus*. This chapter also used three forms of *capital*: '*embodied capital*', '*objectified capital*', and '*habitus*' (as a '*specialization capital*' of knowing mastery skills), in order to thoroughly analyse the empirical data from the case study. One of the fresh insights from the analytical findings of the provisional theme suggests that *developmental capita*l, alongside *social capital*, was one of the possible significant implications that informed, disputed, and

shaped EDF's organisational decision making towards their beneficiary selection process when working with IKEA Thailand.

Lastly, on the basis of the emerged empirical data of EDF's practices, this chapter discussed how project management theory maintained and influenced the decision making of EDF in order to define, approach, and choose the potential schools to be included in their development project with IKEA Thailand. The empirical evidence demonstrates that timeline, reporting, and budgeting, as part of theory of project management, challenged and eventually shaped EDF's organisational *habitus* to choose the schools with greater sufficiency of capacity and capability to be a part of their development project with IKEA Thailand, wherein the poorer schools were not chosen.

In the formation of analytical stories and investigated practices from this EDF–IKEA Thailand case study, working with key four provisional exploratory implications from Chapter 2, this chapter accordingly contributes more comprehensive understandings and fresh insights that emerged from the empirical data in order to explain who the chosen poor were for a development project under a cross-sector social partnership. The theoretical discussions, new insights, challenges, and limitations of working with the analytical applications from the EDF–IKEA Thailand case study are further discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6 and are concluded within the summary of the six research objectives in Chapter 7 of this thesis. To this end, the next chapter presents the analytical findings and insights of the second case study: FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand.

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Chapter 5: Analytical Insights and Findings of the FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand Case Study

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter of this study, Chapter 4, provided and discussed the empirical data from the first case study between EDF and IKEA Thailand, for which their first development project together was implemented in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, when the new IKEA store was being opened. The analyses and discussions in Chapter 4 were conducted on the basis of the analytical, theoretical, and methodological applications developed in Chapter 3. The fresh insights that emerged from the empirical data collected in the specific contexts of time, field, and space through the EDF–IKEA Thailand partnership were critically discussed alongside the cohesive set of key literature drawn up in Chapter 2, which allowed this study to investigate and address the central research questions: (1) how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and (2) what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs.

In this chapter, the study now presents and discusses another social partnership case study between the Foundation for Older Persons' Development (FOPDEV) and Prudential Thailand, being the second case study of this PhD thesis, in order to provide a greater understanding with an *NGO-ism* ontological focus of SDNGOs' decision making towards the process of a beneficiary selection for their development project with NMNCs. In doing so, this thesis employs both deductive and inductive research approaches which allow for a discussion on the empirical data in order to explore fresh insights, alongside addressing the four potential implications drawn up from the exploratory literature in the discipline of Development Studies listed in Chapter 2, namely, (1) conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the stakeholder theory; (3) the willingness, capacity, and capability of potential beneficiaries; and (4) the theory of project management.

Again, in this chapter, Krause's (2014) *field of practice* and Bourdieu's (1990; 1991; 1992; 1994; 1996) 'theory of practice' including (1) *field*, (2) *habitus*, and (3) *capital* are adopted and applied to facilitate the analysis of the empirical data and develop multiple and comprehensive understandings from the interview and focus group data from a variety group of case study key informants such as FOPDEV's board, management, and staff members as well as Prudential Thailand's staff members, project advisors, beneficiaries, and non-beneficiaries with a focus on their development project. This also includes the data collection from news clippings, corporate documents, and organisational archives.

Before focusing on the insightful and fruitful stories on the ground from the second case study, it is necessary to justify that this study does not aim to use this FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand case study to support the findings or argumentations alongside the first case study (EDF–IKEA Thailand) in order to generalise the analytical insights or findings from both case studies of this thesis so as to apply implications for other SDNGO–NMNC partnerships or any other form of partnership. Instead, this study is mindful that each 'social space' and each '*field*' (Bourdieu, 1990) might have its own particular societal contexts, different power environment (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010; Fowler and Biekart, 2013), different agencies, different *capital* (Bourdieu, 2006; 2010), or different rules of each game (Bourdieu, 1996), including the variation of time; therefore, the key goal of analysing and presenting this case study is to develop and contribute a more thorough understanding of this research topic in order to address research objectives 3–6. However, to provide deeper understandings and critical discussions between the two organisational case studies, in Chapter 6, this study brings in the empirical data from both case studies to discuss the similarities and differences of each case study in relation to relevant key literature, constructing and providing knowledge that situates itself in the debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

By doing so, Chapter 5 begins with the brief organisational background and work history of FOPDEV, discussed in Chapter 5.2; then, it turns to explain the analytical brief of FOPDEV–Prudential's relationship, including the structure of how such a cross-sector collaboration worked, which is provided in Section 5.3. The four mainstream implications are discussed and analysed in Sections 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7

of this chapter, respectively, in to answer central research questions and research objectives 3–6. At the end of this chapter, a summary is provided in Section 5.8 before moving to Chapter 6, which contains the findings and theoretical discussions.

5.2. Organisational Background of FOPDEV: Development Approaches, Development Projects, and Partnerships

This section not only discusses in brief the analytical organisational background of FOPDEV Thailand as the second SDNGO case study of this thesis, but also its organisational history and background are used to explain and unpack how FOPDEV began its developmental journey, forming and developing its organisation through its development-oriented focus on the improvement of the living quality and alleviation of poverty of the 'elderly', as their organisational target beneficiaries, beginning in 1999 until January 2021 (when the data collection of this study was completed). Such an analysis will investigate their conceptualization of poverty and the criteria used to select intended beneficiaries, from their inception to the commencement of the development project in partnership with Prudential Thailand.

> FOPDEV was founded because when I was working with HelpAge International … I saw how I could strategize the development work differently [when compared with HelpAge International]. I was impressed by how HelpAge [International] helped old poor people in Thailand, but they were not local Thai NGO who truly understood the local context … at that time, none of [the] Thai NGO[s] worked to help the elderly to address their specific issues directly … so since we could not find the right NGO [for the elderly], I decided to raise funds to establish one since 1997. Based in Chiang Mai Province, we [FOPDEV] finally registered in 1999 with the Royal Thai Government as a local NGO and started working by using the northern part of Thailand as our base. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1)

FOPDEV was officially registered with the Royal Thai Government and founded in 1999 with the organisational main goal to help and support the elderly in Thailand as a local NGO. Although the individual *habitus* of one of the founding members and board members from above quotation (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1) demonstrates his realisation of a focus to help the elderly that is interconnected with his work experience with an international NGO from the Global North, HelpAge International, his intention to establish FOPDEV was to assist the elderly in Thailand through different strategies

as a local Thai NGO. The quotation above also illustrates that from their base in Chiang Mai Province, the organisation focused on working in the northern region of the country. However, it is denoted that from the time it was established until 2008, FOPDEV received some fundings from HelpAge International and worked in partnership with them, even though at that time, HelpAge International focused on a 'welfare approach' whilst FOPDEV emphasised a 'community-based development approach' (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1). This set of empirical data emerging from the interviews reflects the starting 'structured and structuring' root (Bourdieu, 1990; 1991) of FOPDEV in terms of a developmental starting point of organisational establishment, organisational roots, and the central development approach of the organisation including the locations of where it started and focused.

According to their registration documents and organisational archives, FOPDEV set up the central approach towards their development goals and missions, revealing that the organisation aims (1) to enhance the living quality of the vulnerable and underprivileged elderly; (2) to strengthen and develop the capacity for the elderly in terms of the sustainable self-independence, including the ability to help other elderly people in poverty and life-struggling conditions; and (3) to cooperate and work in partnership with communities and other stakeholders in order to create and empower 'the elderly's power' in society (FOPDEV, 1999; 2007). According to the board meeting minutes and report from their annual meeting in 2018, it is shown that FOPDEV claimed they had helped over 10,000 direct beneficiaries, the "underprivileged, disadvantaged, less fortunate and poor elderly" (ibid.) since it was established through its four main programmes, namely, (1) volunteer network establishment, (2) the care programme (i.e. Buddy Home Care), (3) the promotion of rights of the elderly and income security, and (4) the disaster risk reduction campaign (FOPDEV, 2018).

In order to closely observe and discuss the overview of FOPDEV's organisational works, in terms of development issues; development programmes; or activities that were developed, expanded, or adjusted since the organisation was founded in 1999, Figure 5.1 below illustrates the various projects of the organisation, including how the organisation worked on HIV/AIDs issues in 2005; promoted a concept of ageing society in 2008; became involved with disaster risk reduction in

2012; and started a youth volunteer campaign in 2013, a Buddy Homecare activity in 2015, a promotion campaign against ageism in 2016, and campaign for pre-elderly women in 2020.

Figure 5.1. An example of FOPDEV's organisational development work throughout their history (source: FOPDEV, 2020).

As can be seen from the motivations and actions shown in Figure 5.1 reflecting FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1992; 1994; 1996) which had been maintained, adjusted, and developed over the two decades, FOPDEV developed, adjusted, or expanded its development activities by working with several issues; however, their principal focused group of intended beneficiaries, the elderly, was retained and never changed. However, as this thesis only focuses on how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach the potential beneficiaries for their development projects in partnership with NMNCs, this study specifically chose to explore how at the time of the disaster risk reduction project first being launched in 2012, this was the development project for which FOPDEV partnered with Prudential, and significantly, it was the first development project that FOPDEV had ever implemented in the realm of disaster relief, yet it interplayed, intertwined, and interconnected with their central

focus of life improvement and poverty alleviation of the elderly. Therefore, this study departs from the theoretical discussions and presents the collected empirical data of this case study from this particular 'space' of interactions where the development project between FOPDEV and Prudential Thailand was introduced and maintained until 2020 whilst analysing and presenting data, informed by the analytical application of *habitus*. This chapter analyses, discusses, and presents the empirical data by considering FOPDEV's past (prior to the period of time that FOPDEV was introduced Prudential) and present (for the duration in which the data were collected by the researcher) attitudes, dispositions, beliefs, decisions, perceptions, and actions from their everyday practices (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53; Maton, 2012, pp. 48–64).

Finally, before moving to the discussion of the background of partnership between FOPDEV and Prudential, it is necessary for this study to also elaborate on the source of donations/incomes of FOPDEV in order to analyse and acknowledge when the organisation started to officially work with NMNCs, including observing what types of donors or partners FOPDEV had been working with. It is also revealed that although the organisation opened itself up to receiving public donations, less than 0.3% of the public donations were received in the 20-year period, in comparison with annual donations or income from the development projects. However, the only source of income FOPDEV had was the donations for their development projects. Table 5.1 on the next page displays the summarised data (FOPDEV, 2005; 2007a; 2016; 2017a; 2019; 2020)[1].

[1] Due to the limitations of FOPDEV's organisational archives and their confidentiality, some donation amounts were missing, and some were unable to be revealed, for which the researcher was informed but only allowed by FOPDEV to present in terms of percentages.

Table 5.1. A summary of the source of donations or incomes of FOPDEV from 1999 to 2000 (source: FOPDEV, 2005; 2007a; 2016; 2017a; 2019; 2020; summarised by the researcher).

Fiscal Year	Types of Donors	Percentage of Donations/ Funding
1999–2011	**International Organisations** (such as UNFPA, EU, ROK-ASEAN)	**40%**
	International and local NGOs (such as HelpAge International, HelpAge UK, HelpAge Korea, Thai Health Promotion Foundation)	**60%**
2012–2016	**International Organisations** (such as the EU, ROK-ASEAN)	**30%**
	International and local NGOs (such as Thai Health Promotion Foundation, UnLTD Thailand, TSEO)	**25%**
	NMNCs (only Prudential UK, Thailand, and Hong Kong)	**45%**
2017–2020	**International and local NGOs** (such as Thai Health Promotion Foundation, UnLTD Thailand, TSEO)	**45**
	NMNCs (only Prudential UK, Thailand, and Hong Kong)	**55%**

According to Table 5.1, the empirical data considerably reveal that the source of donations and income to FOPDEV started with the donations from international organisations and INGOs from its foundation in 1999 until the year 2011. Donations from NMNCs started in the fiscal year of 2012 when the disaster campaign was launched, as mentioned and emphasised earlier. Significantly, in terms of the corporate donations from NMNCs for the development projects, only those from

Prudential could be considered a major donation (55% from 2017 to 2020). This revelation brings this study to further discussing their partnership background, story, and practices in the next sections of this chapter.

5.3. Partnership and Development Project Background of FOPDEV and Prudential Thailand

This study focuses on NGOs' decision making in terms of the beneficiary selection process, following the *NGO-ism* ontological approach (Fowler, 2008; Fowler and Malunga, 2010), which implicates not only the processes and roles of NGOs but also the assumptions, expectations, and performance values attributed to them by various stakeholders. Informed by the interpretivist ontological approach, this study therefore also aimed to explore and examine Prudential Thailand's organisational *habitus* through their background and relevant practices relating to the development projects. This is because Prudential's organisational *habitus* itself, alongside other provisional organisational mainstreams, might challenge, shape, and intertwine with FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* in terms of selecting the intended beneficiaries.

Following from this, this section provides Prudential's brief corporate profile, including their decision-making hierarchy, particularly with regards to its development work or corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals (their global and local Thai perspectives). A brief analytical introduction of how the partnership between FOPDEV and Prudential Thailand started is provided, including a summary of their development project background, which is a focus of this second case study.

To begin with, Prudential was established in 1848 in London, the United Kingdom (Prudential, 2017). Over 175 years, Prudential, as a British multinational corporation, now offers life and health insurance including financial and asset management to individual and corporate clients around the world; however, the company's main business portfolio and markets are mostly within Asia and Africa, with almost 20 million customers (Prudential, 2021) across continents in the Global North and South.

In 1995, Prudential started its businesses in Thailand, and their Thai office has been based in Bangkok, the capital and financial centre of the country, for over 25 years. As Prudential Thailand is a part of Prudential International, the business directions, missions, visions, and strategies of the branch in Thailand followed its global guidance from the London office and was co-supervised by regional managers from the Asian headquarters (Prudential Corporation Asia or PCA) in Hong Kong (Prudential_GroupC_Female_1). This also includes the way in which their national corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme was planned and implemented in Thailand through its global directions in London (Prudential UK) and regional supervisory guidance (Prudential Asia and Prudence Foundation) in Hong Kong (Prudential_GroupC_Female_1).

> … as the community investment arm of Prudential in Asia and Africa … Prudential's … long-term approach and geographical scale [is] to make communities safer, more secure and resilient by addressing key issues in education, health and safety … (Prudential, 2018)

One of the sample quotations from Prudential's CSR documents indicates that the company's CSR strategies focus on three pillars, namely, 'education', 'health', and 'safety' (also see Figure 5.2 below), all of which are interconnected with the company's main products: life and health insurance, as well as financial and asset management. Significantly, the quotation from the document also emphasises that the key locations of CSR activities were focused on Asia and Africa. It was also discovered that the company claimed their three CSR pillars were also linked to work with the UN's SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health and well-being), 4 (quality education), 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 13 (climate action), and 17 (partnerships for the goals) (Prudential, 2018; 2019). However, up to the date of data collection, there was no evidence found on how the company addressed each of the UN's SDGs by the contributions of their three CSR pillars.

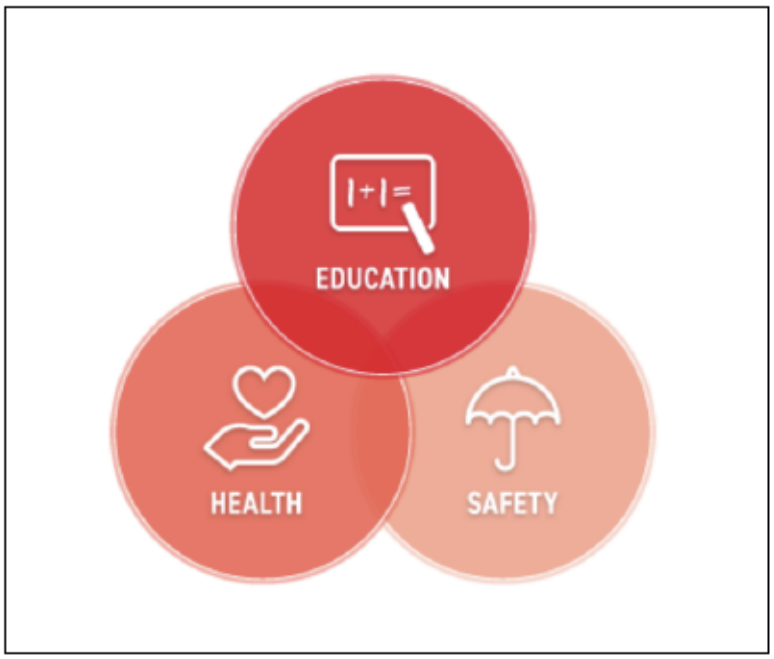

Figure 5.2. The three pillars of Prudential's CSR approach (source: Prudential, 2018).

To elaborate more on how education, health, and safety—as Prudential's organisational *habitus,* which were formed by a mixed organisational set of motivations, perception, and actions (Bourdieu, 1990; 1992, 1996) and were defined and implemented through its CSR activities, particularly in Thailand—one of the staff members of Prudential Thailand explained that, according to its global and regional directions, the company focused on a financial literacy programme (education) in which they worked with some INGOs such as UNICEF and Plan International in Thailand (Prudential_GroupC_Female_2). For health and safety, the company is concerned with individuals' health (quality of life in general) and safety, such as road safety or protection from natural disasters, wherein the company officially started to partner with FOPDEV in 2012 for their first development project (a period of three years: 2012–2015) called 'Building Capacities for Empowerment and Resilience in Thailand', and later developed a second development project called 'Building Network for National DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction) platform in Thailand' (a period of three years: 2016–2019)[2]. Two of the development projects had the same developmental issue focus, namely, disaster protection and relief (Prudential_GroupC_Female_1).

[2] The same period when this PhD study was collecting the data.

In order to manage CSR activities or projects (or the development projects) with INGOs and local SDNGOs in Thailand, Prudential separated its financial transactions and work allocations of CSR projects to their partners through four organisational entities: Prudential Thailand, Prudential UK, Prudential Corporation Asia (PCA), and the Prudence Foundation (both PCA and the Foundation are based in Hong Kong), depending on the activities and projects (Prudential_GroupC_Female_1). For FOPDEV, as the organisation was considered to have received a large amount of donations from Prudential every year since 2012, there had been a large number of activities under the development projects; therefore, the donations came from all four entities of Prudential (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_3). Indeed, although FOPDEV had to submit proposals, send project or activity updates, and report the output and outcome of the development project to all four entities, the staff members of FOPDEV had to discuss with, work with, and ask for agreement or approval from the local key contact staff member of Prudential Thailand directly before sending proposals or reports to the entities in the UK and Hong Kong (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_3). Significantly, in the majority of cases, agreements and conversions including the daily decision making between Prudential (as a whole) and FOPDEV occurred only between FOPDEV staff members and Prudential Thailand staff members (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_4). In this case, this study acknowledges that the decision-making processes between FOPDEV and Prudential were conducted through staff members or decision-makers of Prudential Thailand in all circumstances (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_3), to which this study applies the concept of *habitus* in order to analyse such attitudes and practices between them. In addition, Prudential Thailand also implemented their CSR projects aligned with and following its global and regional directions. From the rationale of such practices and its work structure focusing on CSR activities and projects from Prudential, this research, therefore, uses the terms 'Prudential' or 'Prudential Thailand' in this thesis and throughout this chapter to refer to Prudential Thailand, Prudential UK, PCA, and/or the Prudence Foundation in general, unless of course the specific entity is mentioned.

In terms of how this SDNGO and NMNC first met, Prudential was introduced to FOPDEV in 2005 when HelpAge International implemented the development projects

in Thailand in partnership with Prudential. During that time, FOPDEV helped HelpAge International in Thailand to implement some activities, but the organisation never worked directly with Prudential for the development project (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1; FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_2):

> … PCA discussed with Prudential Thailand about their interests of working with us [FOPDEV] … later Prudential Thailand informed their interests to us around in 2011 in order to set up the development project for people affected by disasters … (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1)

After 6 years of acquainting themselves with each other indirectly via HelpAge International, these two agencies became official partners in 2012 for their first development project which focused on disaster risk reduction with the main target group of the elderly in Northern part of Thailand, FOPDEV's main location of their development work; however, the development issues of disaster risk reduction were not the organisational development focus of FOPDEV prior to this. As this study positions itself in the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership, the later sections of this chapter further discuss this in detail, observing what emerged from the empirical data from this case study as fresh insights, alongside the four potential implications, drawn up from the scholarly exploratory literature in Chapter 2, in order to answer central research questions and to address research objectives 3, 4, 5, and 6.

5.4. Conceptualisation of Poverty

This section demonstrates and analyses empirical data that emerged from the FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand case study, aiming at examining and exploring the first provisional theme, the conceptualisation of poverty, suggested and derived in the exploratory literature in Chapter 2. By doing so, informed by the coding and thematic analysis, this section elaborates on the main provisional theme discussions into two sub-themes for more thorough and analytical presentations, namely, (1) meanings and causes of poverty and (2) 'who are the (chosen) poor?'. The discussions and analysis of the empirical data emerged from this organizational case study presented in this sub-section are contested systematically in relation to the relevant and comparable key literature of Sen (1999); Tiwari (2021); Grech (2023); Khan (2023); and van

Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole (2023). Indeed, due to the complex work nature of the development projects between FOPDEV and Prudential Thailand, some analytical details of each sub-theme may have overlapped and have been discussed iteratively back and forth.

5.4.1. Meanings and Causes of Poverty

This first sub-section, focusing on the meanings and causes of poverty, discusses the highlights of the analysis and findings of the first mainstream implication, the conceptualisation of poverty, out of the four provisional mainstreams derived from the scholarly literature in Chapter 2.

Figure 5.3. A sample picture of the 'End Poverty' campaign in Chiang Mai Province by FOPDEV (source: FOPDEV, 2015).

The illustration in Figure 5.3 demonstrates how FOPDEV staff members stood in front of the Three Kings Monument, one of the most famous tourist attractions in Chiang Mai Province, at night in order to promote FOPDEV's 'End Poverty' campaign. According to their 'End Poverty' campaign internal report (FOPDEV, 2015), it was revealed that the organisation had awareness, realisations, and perceptions toward the overview concept of 'poverty' as one element of their organisational development work. According to their registration document, it was also further explained and stated in particular that not only the poverty of everyone in Thailand but also the (meanings and causes of) poverty of the elderly is one of difficulties that blocks or obstructs their

organisational end goals towards their sustainable development (FOPDEV, 2015). Such shared organisational motivations and actions link to the analysis of how they were aware of, conceptualised, and applied the notions of poverty, intertwined against the ideology of their existing potential populations in need, as FOPDEV's beneficiary and development focus, in their practices.

Looking closely into details on how FOPDEV Thailand conceptualised poverty as part of their organisational *habitus* through their shared daily and organisational practices, according to their board meeting minutes and presentations from 2009 to 2018 (FOPDEV, 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018), the board and staff members always mentioned and discussed the 'poverty line' as an indicator that they used to tackle the poverty issues of the elderly in the northern region and in Thailand as a whole. One of the examples from one of their annual board meeting presentations is shown regarding 'living with poverty' in Figure 5.4 as follows:

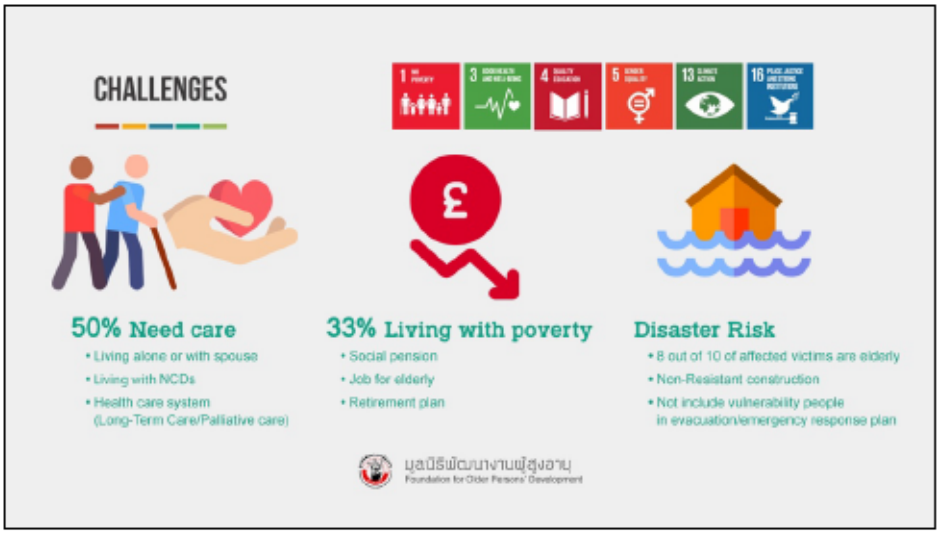

Figure 5.4. An example of a FOPDEV annual board meeting presentation about living with poverty (source: FOPDEV, 2018).

From Figure 5.4, it is evidenced that FOPDEV realised there was a proportion of 33% of the elderly population living in poverty, consisting of poverty that includes lack of a social pension, lack of a job, and lack of a retirement plan (FOPDEV, 2018). According to their annual board meeting minutes in 2017, it is demonstrated that the organisation discussed how they conceptualised poverty by applying a measurement

of the income and household indicators on the basis of the national poverty line provided by the Royal Thai government in comparison with the absolute poverty line provided by the World Bank from when FOPDEV was established in 1999 until 2017 when such discussions took place:

> We look[ed] at the national poverty line. It was THB 1,500 (£35.69) per person/month in 1999. Now [2017] it is around THB 2,500 (£59.47) while the absolute poverty line from World Bank is USD 57 (£47.64) per person/month … but the elderly in Thailand now only receive monthly cash allowance amounts from THB 600 to 800 (£14.28 to £19.04) per person based on the thresholds of age from the Thai government which is considered one around 25% under the national poverty line or around 30% when comparing to the World Bank's poverty line… (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_2)

Another example was found during the interviews on how FOPDEV addressed the poverty of the elderly in Thailand:

> … we called the Thai Government to use a flat rate allowance based on [the] national poverty line (approximately THB 2,500 (£59.47) per person) … but the government only agreed to provide a flat rate [monthly] allowance based on [the] food poverty line at THB 1,300 (£30.10) per person. However, the approval was suspended when the previous government was taken over by the military. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1)

Evidently, according from collective organisational *habitus* of FOPDEV on how this SDNGO conceptualised the notions of poverty from their perceptions of the poverty lines and motivations including actions to call for a policy change, it shows that the concept of absolute and relative poverty seemed to be adopted by FOPDEV on one of their organisational works towards the poverty of the elderly.

However, compared with other organisational activities from its annual report from 2009 to 2018, this study found that FOPDEV's organisational focus was not only the calls towards the Thai government to increase the monthly cash allowance for the elderly or the establishment of a social pension for the elderly in Thailand (FOPDEV, 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018). Indeed, their main organisational activities and development projects were focused on tackling the other perspectives of the 'quality of life' of the elderly:

> … our main focus [of beneficiaries] is the elderly. We look at all aspects of elderly's life especially rights and income stability for them. For the elderly, it doesn't only mean that they have to generate income, but also to preparing the society to take care of the elderly... (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1)

The above quotation denotes that the theory of absolute poverty or relative poverty was not the only approach FOPDEV adopted to tackle the poverty issues of the elderly. It was demonstrated that other approaches of the concept of poverty might have informed, challenged, and influenced FOPDEV's decision making on their development practices when it was directed to the beneficiaries—the elderly. In this case, the set of empirical data begins to demonstrate that a mixture of types of poverty, not only the approaches of absolute poverty or relative poverty, were maintained as part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*. In order to conduct a deeper examination on this point of view of which other concepts of poverty informed and shaped FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, as part of the conceptualisations of poverty, this research analysed the interview quotations, focus group transcripts, annual reports, development project reports, and other corporate documents including news clippings of this SDNGO from 2000 to 2019, with one of the most often mentioned thematic quotations being related to the indicator of the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999).

In order to observe and present in detail how FOPDEV conceptualised, perceived, and employed the capabilities approach from their practices from their beginning until 2019, this thesis further adopted a set of five categories from the material basis of well-being indicator developed by Sen (1999, pp. 70–71), shown in Table 5.2 below. These five categories of the material basis of well-being indicator developed by Sen (1999) allows this study to analyse and construct deeper understandings of how the capabilities approach, as one of the conceptualisations of poverty, intertwined in FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* which, as a result, might influence their decision making to select the intended beneficiaries for their development project with Prudential Thailand.

Table 5.2. Selected NVivo quotations regarding the capabilities approach from practices of FOPDEV, based on Sen's (1999) five categories of the material basis of well-being indicator.

Individual Physiology/ Heterogeneities	Local Environment Diversities	Variations in Social Conditions	Differences in Relational Perspectives	Distribution within the Family
"…especially respiratory issues amongst the elderly and the elderly with disabilities…" (FOPDEV, 2013) "…to assist the elderly to access to their entitlements" (FOPDEV, 2016)	"… due to climate change and increased usage of natural resources, there has been a reduction in natural water sources and an increase in local forest fires in the village area…" (FOPDEV, 2017) "…strengthen capacities of the elderly … on disasters risk reduction (DRR) … for building community resilience in Thailand…" (FOPDEV, 2012)	"problems of social inequality…" (FOPDEV, 2009) "Lacking opportunities for lifetime learning…" (FOPDEV_GroupA_ Male_3) "No opportunity to get a quality work" (FOPDEV, 2014) "…to be aware of older people's rights" (FOPDEV, 2010) "This enables older people's groups to	"…to encourage independent living for disadvantaged older people…" (FOPDEV, 2017) "and to lighten the burden on families…" (FOPDEV, 2018) "…and make them visible in the society…" (FOPDEV, 2018) "…the elderly still lack … readiness when facing such events in their communities…" (FOPDEV, 2018)	"…serves care for the older persons at home by providing educational opportunities" (FOPDEV, 2017) "…helping families reduce the burden of health protection care…" (FOPDEV, 2013)

		raise awareness and self-advocate for the elderly's needs…" (FOPDEV, 2016)	"…in order to advocate for the rights of older people and raise awareness of the issues of an ageing society…" (FOPDEV, 2015) "…it is important that the issue of ageing is mainstreamed into the different sectors of government and civil society…" (FOPDEV, 2014)	

As evidenced in Table 5.2, the sample quotations illustrate that the capabilities approach was informed and maintained through FOPDEV's organisational conceptualisation of poverty, which was part of their organisational *habitus*. Evidence of the 'types of life' of the beneficiaries including opportunities to live, barriers to life opportunities, and reason to value the beneficiary's life are shown via the five categories of the material basis of well-being. These include (1) individual physiology/heterogeneities, (2) local environment diversities, (3) variations in social conditions, (4) differences in relational perspectives, and (5) distribution within the family (Sen, 1999, pp. 70–71). The empirical data emerged from FOPDEV reflected the organisation's heavy emphasis on tackling poverty issues with the capabilities approach. Not only the monetary concerns were mentioned via the quotations in Table 5.2 but also the narratives such as capacities of the elderly, opportunity to obtain quality work, awareness of older people's rights, visibility of the elderly in society, and advocacy for the rights of the elderly, which interplayed and intertwined with other poverty and development issues.

As discussed above, the five categories of the material basis of well-being, as one element of the capabilities approach developed by Sen (1999, pp. 70–71), facilitated this thesis in its analysis of the different perspectives of poverty through the capabilities approach practices of FOPDEV, alongside the poverty approach of absolute or relative poverty mentioned earlier. These empirical insights of the conceptualisation of poverty, as part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, provide an example from this organisational case study of how a mixture of poverty approaches interplayed with the ideology of the elderly and other development and social issues alongside the concepts of poverty, for which absolute or relative poverty approaches alone did not exist in FOPDEV's *habitus*. This finding testifies and supports the proposal of Tiwari (2021), arguing that key concepts of poverty reduction or living quality improvement from NGOs have different approaches at various levels. Thus, this study contributes recent empirical data from another setting within the Global South as a fresh insight informing the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs. This accordingly develops a more comprehensive and multidimensional understanding of how an SDNGO, FOPDEV in particular in this case, conceptualised poverty in order to define, approach, and choose the beneficiaries for their development projects.

As can be seen and evidenced from Table 5.2 and earlier discussions of Sections 5.2 and 5.3 of this chapter, however, disaster risk reduction, as one of the elements of FOPDEV's conceptualisation of poverty in the category of local environment diversities of the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999), began to be another focus of FOPDEV in 2012 when their first development project partnering with Prudential was implemented. This study considers this as another further gap for this research to further investigate how and why disaster risk reduction was added as a new development interest of FOPDEV's conceptualisations of poverty since 2012. As a result, it might have impacted how FOPDEV chose their intended beneficiaries for their own development projects, particularly in partnership with NMNCs. The next sub-section of this chapter further discusses 'who are the (chosen) poor?' of the development projects of FOPDEV since it was established.

5.4.2. Who are the (Chosen) Poor?

The previous sub-section discussed the analytical findings of the collected empirical data on causes and meanings of poverty, as part of the conceptualisation of poverty, in order to understand FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* to answer the central research questions on how SDNGOs defined the concepts of poverty to choose their beneficiaries for development projects. In order to look at how FOPDEV chose the intended beneficiaries from the past until the period in which this thesis collected the data, this sub-section provides brief details around this particular sub-theme of who the (chosen) poor are.

Although the empirical data in the previous sub-section suggests that FOPDEV added disaster risk reduction in their development work in 2012, it is important to also examine how this SDNGO usually chose the beneficiaries for other development projects from its time of establishment to the time of their cross-sector partnership with Prudential began in 2012 until the beginning of 2020 (when this thesis's data collection process was completed) through their organisational decision-making practices, reflecting FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* via analysing who the (chosen) poor are from their past records.

In its first decade since it was established, the period between 1999 and 2010, FOPDEV claimed their main indented group of beneficiaries was the elderly (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1). However, in terms of calling for and developing a national policy with the Thai government, one of the board members claimed that the elderly in the whole of Thailand could also be their main intended beneficiaries (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1), while for the development projects, only the elderly in four provinces in the northern part of Thailand, namely, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son, and Chai Nat provinces (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1), were included.

However, in order to improve the variety of perspectives for improving the quality of life of the elderly, FOPDEV stated that the organisation had to work with a range of stakeholders related to the elderly as an indirect group of beneficiaries such as the family of the elderly in the aforementioned four provinces, hospital staff members, other NGO partners, and government officials (FOPDEV_GroupB_Feale_4). By doing so, it is evidenced in their annual reports that between 2012 and 2015, where they began to have massive donation support from Prudential for their first 3-year development project[3], the organisation worked with over 9,435 people: 1,221 elderly individuals (as the main group of intended beneficiaries) and 8,241 related stakeholders (as mentioned above) (FOPDEV, 2013; 2014; 2015) from 14 villages across the four provinces.

However, according to the annual report of FY 2018 including its development project reports of the Building Network for National DRR platform in Thailand (which this thesis later calls the DRR development project), the second development project between FOPDEV and Prudential, it is demonstrated that the main groups of direct beneficiaries were expanded (FOPDEV, 2016a; 2017a; 2018). For example, the organisation claimed that in 2018, FOPDEV worked with and helped 10,092 people in which the DRR development project (partnering with Prudential) alone supported and worked with 1,221 underprivileged and disadvantaged elderly individuals, including another group of 8,214 indirect beneficiaries across disaster-affected communities of twelve provinces in Thailand. For other development works and development projects

[3] Namely 'Building Capacities for Empowerment and Resilience in Thailand'.

with other partners, FOPDEV claimed they worked and helped 219 underprivileged and poor elderly individuals who might be relevant to support the quality of life of the beneficiaries.

From the empirical data, this study argues that looking at who the (chosen) poor by FOPDEV are since the establishment until 2018, the partnership with corporate donation from Prudential played significant parts in FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, as part of their conceptualisation of poverty. Since 2012, not only their new development focus on disaster risk reduction was added to their development practices, but the emerged empirical data denote that FOPDEV claimed 10,092 beneficiaries were helped by their development projects with Prudential whilst only around 600 direct and indirect beneficiaries were helped through other development projects or existing organisational programmes. From such empirical evidence, this study argues FOPDEV's *habitus* might have been intertwined, disrupted, and shaped by the stakeholder theory or CSR of Prudential*'s* organisational *habitus*. As Grech (2023); Khan (2023); and van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole (2023) argued, the conceptualisation of poverty of NGOs involved in development projects in the Global South might be shaped by influences from the Global North, and the findings of this organisational case study of this sub-theme provide examples on the ground from the processes and practices of FOPDEV in partnership with Prudential, a global corporate player from the Global North. However, this study does not have a judgement of evaluation whether these processes and practices are right or wrong. Instead, this study uses the empirical data to illustrate how and why the development landscape with a focus of conceptualisations of poverty of NGOs, particularly in the SDNGO–NMNC partnership, might have recently changed. This extends the knowledge of the debates and provides fresh insights from the particular settings and field.

Emerging from the empirical data in this sub-section, in addition, there were another two considerable implications[4] suggested from the collected empirical data when looking at who the (chosen) poor were in the DRR development project, as the

[4] Besides the additional disaster risk reduction area which has already been discussed earlier in this section.

second development project from 2016 to 2019, in partnership with Prudential. Firstly, it is evidenced that the community location of the chosen poor was expanded from four provinces to twelve provinces across four regions of Thailand, including the North, Northeastern, Central, and Southern regions. These empirical data highlight that under the DRR development project, FOPDEV not only focused on the elderly at the individual level but also the disaster-affected community at the macro level when choosing their beneficiaries. This illustrates the poverty dimensions at two distinct levels of agency in their decision making (later, Sections 5.5 and 5.6. discuss in detail how two distinct levels of agency shaped and intertwined with FOPDEV's *habitus* in the process of choosing the intended beneficiaries for the DRR project). Secondly, the students or youth who did not live in those twelve provinces were recruited to attend the development project, meaning they were not directly related to these elderly individuals, the direct beneficiaries of focus of the organisation.

Such empirical data led this thesis to further explore and discuss the next provisional theme, stakeholder theory, in this chapter in order to understand the central research questions of how FOPDEV approached and selected the potential beneficiaries of the development project, especially the DRR development project between 2016 and 2019, in partnership with Prudential.

5.4.3. Conclusion

The first theme of this chapter provided and discussed the analytical data to demonstrate how the conceptualisation of poverty, as part of the organisational *habitus* of FOPDEV, informed, shaped, or was implemented in practice by FOPDEV's decision making for their beneficiary selection process. Firstly, meanings and causes of poverty illustrated how a mixture of theories of poverty including absolute poverty, relative poverty, and the capabilities approach maintained and developed the organisational *habitus* when defining or choosing the group of beneficiaries included in the delivery of developmental work. The five elements of the material basis of well-being developed by Sen (1999) were additionally adopted to analyse the data, as FOPDEV seemed to heavily base their conceptualisation of poverty and developmental approaches on such an approach. Secondly, the focus on who were

the (chosen) poor provided an analytical discussion on the developed organisational *habitus* journey of the indented beneficiaries through FOPDEV's decision making since the organisation was established in 1999 until the period of 2012–2019, where the disaster risk reduction project was established through the development projects with Prudential. The empirical data seemed to suggest that the SDNGO extended itself, with altered conceptualisations of poverty as part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, to include more types of beneficiaries when working for an extended period of time with Prudential. This thesis considers this as a potential element of providing fresh insights that are discussed in the following themes of this chapter.

5.5. Stakeholder Theory

From the exploratory scholarly literature in Chapter 2 and the analytical findings that emerged from the empirical data of this second case study earlier in this chapter, this thesis considers stakeholder theory, as part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, to be a significant potential tool for exploration in order to answer central research questions and to address research objective 4. In this section, there are two sub-themes: (1) the theory of CSR and (2) 'where are they?', used in order to investigate how these implications maintained, challenged, influenced, or disputed FOPDEV's decision making. The examination with these two sub-themes of the stakeholder theory is discussed and debated in line with the key literature of stakeholder theory suggested by Freeman (1984); Hill and Jones (2012); Danny (2014); Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni (2015); Bosibori and Otieno (2021); and Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke (2023). This aims to explain the process of defining, approaching, and selecting the beneficiaries (especially the new ones in the DRR development project with Prudential) through stakeholder theory, understanding this as a constituent part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus,* accordingly locating the discussion and findings within the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs.

5.5.1. Theory of CSR

> They [the CSR department of Prudential] support us because this is their CSR … they also use their CSR to engage in visibility or public relations while working with us. (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_14)

> …recently, many corporations start[ed] looking at social impact and how it can contribute to the society. According to the global trends, corporate image alongside with CSR activities becomes one of the important topics when discussed [about the development project] with [the] donor. (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_8)

> The funding from [the] CSR programme is useful and resourceful … we are targeting to raise more funds from [the] CSR programme from the companies. We also aim at approaching the CSR budgets from the listed companies in the stock market of Thailand. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_4)

This sub-section, under the provisional theme of stakeholder theory, begins with the attitudes and perceptions from the sample quotations during the focus group with FOPDEV when asking how they worked with Prudential and other potential NMNCs who engaged with FOPDEV staff members to begin partnership. It can be seen that the shared understandings of such individual *habitus* among FOVDEV found the corporate donations under the development project from NMNCs, Prudential in particular, came from the CSR budgets. Significantly, the staff members seemed to understand that such a budget from the CSR programme may have preferences or a demanding nature in terms of corporate image or visibility engagement from NMNC partners or donors. However, the last quotation from one of the management members stated that FOPDEV is still focused on raising funds from the CSR programme, including listed companies in the Thai stock market as well.

> After 2012, we depend[ed] so much on CSR money [from Prudential] … the most stable resource of income now is donations from Prudential's CSR programmes. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_2)

> Prudential granted their CSR money … they calculated on cost per volunteer head and grant in that amount for the CSR day or camping activity. (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_7)

> In 2011–2012, we didn't have money from other sources to run our organisations but only the CSR project [the first development project] from Prudential. That was the period we fortunately received money from them to survive. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_2)

> In terms of their CSR budget, the impact and activities that we [FOPDEV] have done deserve the budgets they gave. (FOPDEV_GroupB_Female_5)

From the four selected quotations above, one of the insightful perspectives that arose from the empirical data through the realisations of FOPDEV's shared attitudes when discussing the CSR donations (the development project budgets) from Prudential specifically revealed that the management and staff members of FOPDEV tended to perceive and agree that, firstly, the donations from Prudential for their development projects were apparently perceived as donations from Prudential CSR budgets (and sometimes, the staff members mentioned the terms between the development project and CSR programme interchangeably), and secondly, it seemed that all of the board, management, and staff members realised the donations from CSR programmes or the development project under social partnership with Prudential were significant and valuable to their organisation, especially during the time FOPDEV almost did not manage to financially survive.

It is, however, demonstrated that FOPDEV did not owe anything to Prudential; they realised that they contributed some value in return. Therefore, they deserved to receive and manage such CSR donations from Prudential. Moreover, Figure 5.5 below, from one of almost 500 news clippings, illustrates that FOPDEV accepted and agreed to be one parties of the CSR activity in Chiang Mai where Prudential also organised its insurance lunching event at the same time and same place alongside their CSR activity. The title of this news article in the Thai language can be translated as saying "Prudential launches its insurance operations in the market of the Northern part of Thailand while delivering social contributions in Chiang Mai Province".

‘พรูเด็นเชียล’ตีธงบุกตลาดภาคเหนือ

ปั้นยอดตัวแทน/ช่วยเหลือสังคมพื้นที่เชียงใหม่

Figure 5.5. An example of a news clipping of the CSR event for Prudential–FOPDEV in Chiang Mai (3–9 February 2018 in *Siam Thurakij Newspaper*).

On the other hand, by agreeing to work with Prudential for the development project and, at the same time, realising that such a project consists of corporate motivations and goals of the NMNC's CSR programme, it is argued by one of the management members that if the CSR objectives are not equivocal to FOPDEV's organisational goals, FOPDEV would terminate the partnerships:

> If their objectives don't match ours, we'll stop. If we're strategic partners, our objectives should be matched. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Female_2)

However, as stated earlier in Section 5.2 of this chapter, FOPDEV started to expand their organisational development focus onto the disaster risk reduction for the elderly in 2012. This study explored the fact that although there was an ideology of partnership termination if the organisational goals were mismatched, it was identified that FOPDEV found their potential to expand their work development scales (while still focusing on the elderly) and that perhaps the meaning and causes of poverty, informed and influenced by their NMNC partner, Prudential, had challenged, ruptured, and

intertwined with their organisational *habitus* in terms of the means of defining, approaching, or selecting potential beneficiaries over time:

> Based [on] my experience, it is possible that we [FOPDEV] will expend the work scale if it responds to their CSR goals. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Female_4)

According to the three CSR pillars of Prudential, their corporate interest in disaster risk reduction seems to be one of the apparent examples that challenged and influenced FOPDEV's development projects. Although disaster risk reduction was not the main focus of their first development project together, it started as a small activity wherein FOPDEV realised that they had to expand their organisational development work in 2012, as discussed in Section 5.2 of this chapter. Significantly, after 3 years of establishing the social partnership, in 2016, FOPDEV agreed to pay full attention to addressing the disaster issues for the elderly by implementing the second 3-year development project with Prudential under the DRR development project accordingly. With the evidence of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* insisting that the organisation would not work or was willing to terminate the partnership if the development goal was not mutual, this study argues that theory of CSR from Prudential had a significant influence that might have shaped FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* on selecting the beneficiaries, especially for the DRR project funded solely by Prudential. Drawing on the argumentations of Freeman (1984) and Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke (2023), this study also argues that stakeholder theory still influenced the organisational processes and practices of NGOs, wherein it impacted FOPDEV's strategies, practices, and processes on DRR projects via their decision-making process of selecting the intended beneficiaries. From this, this study also further investigates how CSR theory, as part of stakeholder theory, effected FOPDEV's practices and processes to choose their direct and indirect beneficiaries for the DRR projects.

By doing so, looking closely at Prudential's CSR theory, it was found that another focus of Prudential's three CSR pillars that evidently influenced and shaped FOPDEV's decision making is education. As Prudential also focuses on the issue of education in terms of engaging with students and the youth as their target stakeholders, FOVDEV was asked to also engage with the students or youth (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_8; FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_11). It could be argued that

FOPDEV had also been working with youth and students as the indirect group of beneficiaries (discussed earlier in Section 5.4.2) who were directly related to the elderly in selected provinces and who were able to support all perspectives of the quality of life of the elderly. However, the empirical data of the next sub-section under this second provisional implication, 'where are they?', reveal another group of youth and students who lived outside the selected twelve provinces who were also recruited to be involved in their CSR day and annual camping activity that were a part of the Prudential Chairmans' Challenge global campaign. This also provides another set of fresh insights to this study.

5.5.2. Where are They?

Emerging from the empirical data of this FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand case study, it is suggested that stakeholder theory, as a component part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, informed, challenged, and shaped the organisational decision making over the process of beneficiary selection for the development project with Prudential. This sub-theme, linked to the first sub-theme of this section, highlights how FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* was challenged and shaped in order to extend their choice of focus to groups other than their initial intended beneficiaries in new provinces for the DRR development project between 2016 and 2019.

Firstly, it is evidenced from their annual reports and organisational documents that for the DRR development project, it was the first time FOPDEV fully expanded the locations of development projects from four provinces in the Northern region of Thailand to twelve provinces in the Northern, Northeastern, Central, and Southern regions (see Figure 5.6 below) of the country (FOPDEV, 2016; 2017; 2018). Secondly, the youth and students who were not directly engaged with the elderly in these twelve provinces were also chosen to be part of the DRR development projects.

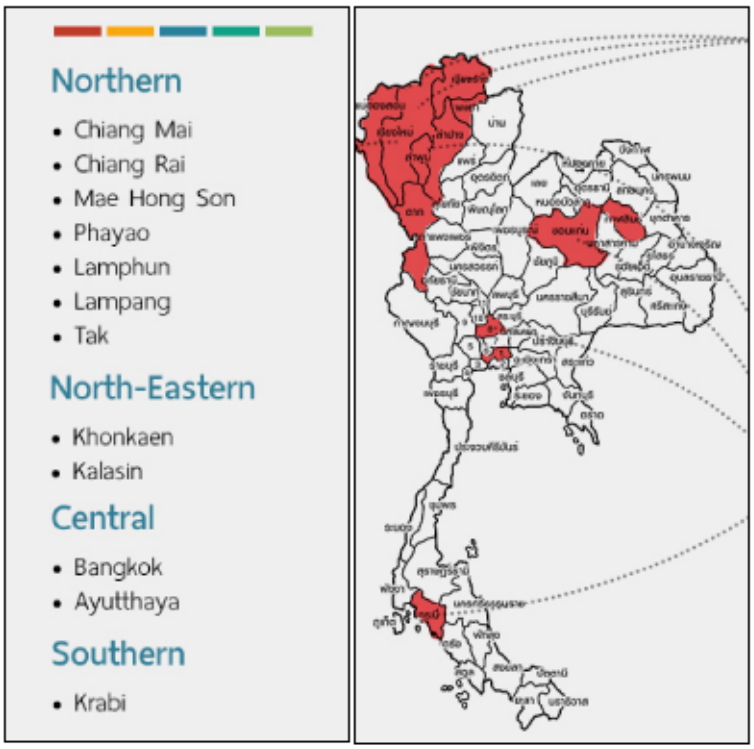

Figure 5.6. A map of FOPDEV's development work in 2018 (source: FOPDEV, 2018a).

According to the empirical data from individual interviews and the focus group, this study explores two major considerations that challenged and influenced FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* in order to define, approach, or choose the intended beneficiaries for the DRR development project.

Firstly, although it was already discussed earlier that the issues of disaster and education were part of Prudential's three CSR pillars, FOPDEV had the capacity to define and choose the community locations of focus which were affected by natural disasters on the basis of their and causes of poverty. However, it was discovered that every year, as a part of the Chairman's Challenge global campaign (Prudential_GroupC_Female_1), Prudential brought their staff members to organise and attend the CSR day or CSR camping activity (2–3-night stay) with the activities engaged with the beneficiaries from the development project. These activities were fully prepared, facilitated, and run by FOPDEV (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_8). Since 2012, it was mainly organised within the four provinces where FOPDEV worked.

However, for the 2016–2019 period, there were discussions between FOPDEV and Prudential staff members about the next locations of the upcoming years in terms of planning and budgeting (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_7). The Chairman's Challenge global campaign, as one of their CSR activities, influenced and encouraged staff members of Prudential Thailand to find "exotic or interesting locations" (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_8) in order to receive global rewards by competing with other CSR activities from other countries worldwide.

In addition, it is also explored that not all CSR activity organised in the four provinces by the CSR department of Prudential Thailand and FOPDEV gained the attention or engagement from other staff members of Prudential Thailand to attend (Prudential_GroupC_Female_2). Indeed, the company expected high engagement from their internal staff on CSR activity or annual camping activity (Prudential_GroupC_Female_2). As a result, new locations of the elderly communities with profiles or potential risk of natural disaster indicators were chosen. The empirical data from the interviews also reveal that a variety of locations might also attract different groups of their internal staff members—for example, Krabi Province for those who prefer the beach, Ayutthaya Province for those who do not want to travel far away from Bangkok, or Khon Kaen Province for those who prefer to go to the Isaan (north-eastern) area (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_8). Accordingly, this study acknowledges how such implications, as part of stakeholder theory, informed, challenged, and shaped FOPDEV's organisational decision making in the beneficiary selection process for the development project with Prudential.

Secondly, as the company identified students and youth as one of their stakeholders for education, one of Prudential's three CSR pillars, it was the aim of Prudential Thailand to engage more with students and youth, not only the ones directly involved with the elderly in the twelve provinces under the DRR development project (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_11). Therefore, since 2016, FOPDEV opened itself for the first time to students and youth applications across Thailand who wanted to join the CSR day or participate in the annual camping day with Prudential Thailand for volunteering, training, and engaging in activities with the elderly in the selected disaster areas (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_12). Nevertheless, it was also explained by one of the management staff during the focus group that although they extended their

recruitment to include youth and students to be a part of their potential beneficiaries, the ideology of having young people in the DRR projects still focused on helping and supporting the elderly (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_3; FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_4). This study argues that even though FOPDEV has their rationale in supporting their own practices of selecting the youth or students to be their new intended beneficiaries, the empirical evidence still insists that such a practice could be the consequence of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* that was influenced by CSR theory and 'where are they?', as part of the stakeholder theory of Prudential.

As part of both the donor's and partner's interests and the project success, the empirical evidence here discovers the question of 'where are they?' as being part of the stakeholder theory, playing an influential part in challenging and finally shaping FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* in order to design the activities and choose the communities or locations wherein Prudential's interests informed FOPDEV's decision making. As a result, this study argues the locations of development activities were moved to Krabi and Ayutthaya where the development needs were not a priority. Significantly, the youth or students across the country were recruited and selected as a new group of intended beneficiaries of the DRR projects as well. This finding provides supportive alignment with the debates of Hill and Jones (2012); Danny (2014); Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni (2015); and Bosibori and Otieno (2021), arguing that stakeholder theory is essential to NGOs in terms of the success of their projects. Having a satisfied consensus among organisational stakeholders, especially with partners or donors, seems to be considered by NGOs for their project success. As Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke (2023 pp. 866) recently highlighted, stakeholders play crucial roles in the collaborations between NGOs and their partners, and the scholars called for more empirical examples from the Global South to be examined. From the empirical evidence with fresh insights provided and discussed above in this section, this study therefore contributes to such a debate by demonstrating how stakeholder theory informed, maintained, and shaped FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* to choose their intended beneficiaries from the entirety of the populations in need.

5.5.3. Conclusion

Informed by Bourdieu's (1990; 1992; 1996) concept of *habitus*, the second theme of this chapter was discussed with the provided analytical data in order to highlight and entail how stakeholder theory shaped and challenged FOPDEV's decision making to define and choose the potential beneficiaries of the DRR development project with Prudential Thailand. Thus far, the theory of CSR and 'where are they?', as two sub-themes under stakeholder theory, were interplayed on how FOPDEV chose the indented beneficiaries (the elderly in communities with disaster risk or damage) in twelve provinces including students and youth across the country. Plus, the new locations of the CSR day or CSR camping activities, as part of the Chairman's Challenge global campaign, were chosen with the priority of Prudential's interests, not FOPDEV's development goals. From here, the next section of this chapter further discusses the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries as another provisional factor of how FOPDEV defined, approached, or chose their beneficiaries for the DRR project.

5.6. Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Beneficiaries

The key debates of Krause (2014); Kabonga (2023); and Cordery, Belal, and Thomson (2023) emphasise how NGOs learn, with or without a conscious awareness, that the beneficiaries of development projects are one of the key factors in development work and in poverty reduction in particular. From this point of view, this study further explores this working hypothesis of how the beneficiaries themselves informed, maintained, and shaped FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* in terms of selecting them. For this sub-section, there are two sub-themes that are suggested from the exploratory literature in Chapter 2 that emerged from the collected empirical data: (1) willingness and (2) the capacity and capability of beneficiaries. The empirical data from this organisational case study are discussed alongside with the key debates of Stoddard (2006); Krause (2014); Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page (2016); Beck (2017); and Khuc et al. (2021). In order to address research objective 5 of the study, Bourdieu's concept of *habitus,* along with the concept of *capital* (Bourdieu, 2010), were adopted to analyse empirical data of this third provisional theme for building a more

comprehensive and thorough understanding on how SDNGOs defined, approached, or chose the potential beneficiaries for the development projects in partnership with NMNCs.

5.6.1. Willingness of the Potential Beneficiaries

> Although we [FOPDEV] have a variety of activities offering to the elderly, not all of them wanted to join our activities… (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_9)

> After discussions with staff members of Prudential Thailand, we [FOPDEV] conducted a field survey in each community to see the willingness and the potentials of the elderlies including their readiness of community before we finalise whether we should implement the development projects there or not… (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_10)

> Not all communities of the elderly were willing to work with us. When we talked to them some of the community leaders were not interested to join our [DRR] development project. It should have been difficult for us to implement the project if the community leaders are not supportive or willing to help. (FOPDEV_GroupB_Female_13)

> For some communities, we did not have a field survey. We talked to our local networks or partners who work to help the elderly in that community. When we explained about the DRR development project, some of our elderly networks were interested in but some of them said that the elderly in their communities might not be willing to join us due to some limitations. (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_6)

After the preliminary discussions with Prudential Thailand (on the basis of their location interests of CSR activities) including their realisations of the new community profiles regarding the natural disaster risks or damage in order to implement the DRR development project partnering with Prudential, FOPDEV had interest in working with a variety of new communities across various regions. However, the above four selected quotations that emerged from the empirical data of the interviews and focus group suggested that the willingness of the potential beneficiaries seemed to be one of the significant implications under this provisional theme that challenged and disputed the organisational *habitus*, which is part of FOPDEV's decision making to recruit the beneficiaries, namely, the elderly in the disaster area communities.

As is evidenced, not only did the organisation perceive the different levels of willingness from the beneficiaries directly from the potential beneficiaries themselves from their own field survey, but it was the case that the willingness of the community leader also seemed to play a part as one of the important drivers that influenced FOPDEV's decision making. From this perspective, this study employs Bourdieu's concept of *capital*, which was later developed by Moore (2012), for analytical discussion along with the emerging empirical data of this sub-section. It could be denoted that the willingness of the beneficiaries potentially exists as *embodied developmental capital*, playing a role as one of the significant drivers that disputed, challenged, and maintained FOPDEV's decision making in order to choose the beneficiaries for the DRR development project.

As shown in Figure 5.5 above, this study notes that this was the first time FOPDEV decided to initiate their developmental works in Krabi Province, the southern beach part of Thailand, an area considered far from the location of FOPDEV's work base and office. One of the staff members explained that there were internal discussions within the FOPDEV team as to whether they should have even considered selecting the community in Krabi Province because the limitations and challenges of traveling costs, logistic expenditures of project implementations, and the long distances due to which the staff were concerned as to how they would implement and monitor the project properly (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_8). As FOPDEV's collective attitudes and perceptions (discussed in Section 5.4.2 earlier) were that Krabi (or other coastal communities) was one of the preferences from Prudential Thailand for the DRR development project, FOPDEV decided to conduct a field survey in Krabi along with their network in the South. As a result, one of the staff members explained that

> … we were surprised the elderlies and community leaders in the community [in Krabi] seemed so willing to work with us for the [DRR development] project. However, we were also still concerned if they could actually hold to stay [to implement the project] with us until the end of the [DRR development project]. (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_12)

Significantly, it could be demonstrated that although there were other implications that challenged and produced concerns to FOPDEV staff members for choosing Krabi as one of the new communities to implement the DRR development

project, the willingness of the potential beneficiaries including the community leaders (which also could be considered as one of their potential indirect or direct beneficiaries) was one of the influential considerations informing FOPDEV's decision making. The empirical data denote that the willingness of the potential beneficiaries or the populations in need in Krabi Province was one of the key implications that and shaped FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*. This finding supports the argumentation proposed by Stoddard (2006), claiming that NGOs considered and measured the acceptance and beneficiary relationship in the community as the stability of the project and security of their organisations in term of project success. This thesis acknowledges that this *embodied developmental capital* has potentially informed, challenged, disputed, and shaped FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* over its beneficiary selection process. This study considers examples from the empirical data from what happened in Krabi to FOPDEV as fresh insights back to the debates in which this study is located.

5.6.2. Capacity and Capability of the Potential Beneficiaries

As mentioned earlier in Section 5.6.3, FOPDEV conducted an assessment prior to beneficiary selection for their DRR development project with Prudential Thailand, including their CSR day and annual camping activity, as a part of the Prudential Chairman's Challenge global campaign. The assessments were conducted by two methods: (1) field visit or field survey and (2) discussions with FOPDEV's elderly networks, which includes other NGOs, volunteer networks, and government authorities (FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_6).

With reference to the interviews, focus group, and organisational documents, the empirical data show that the measurement of capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries such as the elderly, their stakeholders, and their communities as whole, in the new locations, including youth and students who applied to attend the CSR activities, was conducted. In order to provide comprehensive understandings, this thesis analysed the empirical data by employing Bourdieu's (2010) and Moore's (2012) applications of three forms of *capital*.

Firstly, due to one of the most common quotations derived from the empirical data from the interviews and focus group, it was revealed that the *social capital* such as the community networks of the elderly including the relationship of their stakeholders in the communities (for example, their family members, other NGOs, health volunteers, or government authorities) were one of the first criteria mentioned by FOPDEV staff members (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_2; FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_4; FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_8; FOPDEV_GroupB_Male_9; FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_14).

Secondly, the concerns regarding the capacity and capabilities of the potential beneficiaries from the assessments of FOPDEV were analysed from the interviews, focus group, and corporate documents (FOPDEV, 2012a; 2013a; 2014a; 2015; 2016; 2017a; 2018a; 2019a), which could be summarized with three forms of *developmental capital*.

First, the *objectified developmental capital* includes the smartphone, iPad, or laptop of the elderly; Internet (WIFI) community meeting area; and community camping area including the damage properties or construction sites that were affected by the disaster.

Second, the *embodied developmental capital* includes the willingness, activeness, and ability of the elderly, community leaders, students, and youth to manage the interactions or relationships with each other in the community, or other stakeholders (such as Prudential and FOPDEV staff members), where the DRR development project took place.

Lastly, the individual *habitus*[5] itself of the beneficiaries, as one of the forms of *developmental capital*, includes the knowledge to use the smartphone, iPad, or laptop as one of the DRR activities required by elderly to engage with one of the software FOPDEV developed for disaster risk reduction and preparedness for disaster, for instance. This also includes the knowledge of project management to the community

[5] Specialisation or realisation of consciousness and a knowing of a technique or skill mastery.

leaders and knowledge of volunteering to the students or youth when it comes to the camping activity (FOPDEV, 2012a; 2013a; 2014a; 2015; 2016; 2017a; 2018a; 2019a).

According to the analytical and empirical evidence found from FOPDEV's measurement of capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries for their DRR projects including the CSR day, annual CSR camping activity, or Chairman's Challenge global campaign, this study argues that three forms of *developmental capital* , as part of the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries, informed and shaped FOPDEV's organisational habitus to choose their intended beneficiaries for the development projects with Prudential Thailand. The findings support the argumentation of Krause (2014), wherein she suggested the skills of potential beneficiaries were required by NGOs before the project starts. This set of analytical findings also contributes fresh insights in that it provides greater understandings to the arguments of Krause (2014) and Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page (2016). The scholars claimed that the skills, talents, knowledge, and responsibility of beneficiaries could be one of only a few main drivers to influence NGOs' decision making for this selection process in which they also called for further investigation. This study contributes this empirical evidence from three forms of *developmental capital* from FOPDEV as the contributions to their calls and debates.

This study, however, argues that, emerging from the empirical data of the FOPDEV–Prudential case study, the process of NGOs treating beneficiaries as labour did not occur, in contrast to what Krause (2014) proposed. This study also argues the argumentation of Khuc et al. (2021), in which this research found no evidence of the monetary factor being one of the factors influencing the willingness of the beneficiaries to join FOPDEV's DRR projects. However, this study claims here that the study did not investigate this argumentation by examining other development projects or activities of FOPDEV outside the partnership with Prudential to testify the monetary factor against the willingness of the potential beneficiaries. Therefore, the argumentation here explains only to the particular context of the development projects of FOPDEV–Prudential.

5.6.3. Conclusion

The third provisional theme of this chapter analytically highlights and provides a point of discussion in order to demonstrate how the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries influenced, challenged, or shaped FOPDEV's decision making to define and recruit the potential beneficiaries for the DRR development project including the annual CSR activities, in partnership with Prudential. An extra analytical tool, *capital*, informed by Bourdieu (2006; 2010) and developed by Moore (2012), was used to analyse the data, along with the implications of the willingness, capacity, and capability of the intended beneficiaries. This application allows this study to offer fresh insights, which will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

5.7. Theory of Project Management

The previous three factors of potential implications: conceptualisation of poverty; stakeholder theory; and the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries, were drawn up from the literature in Chapter 2 and were presented and discussed alongside the empirical data from the FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand partnership for their development projects. The findings with fresh insights were also discussed in relation to significant and relevant key literature with this thesis's argumentation. This chapter now turns to the final implication, the theory of project management, which might be a constituent part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* for which contingent or constituent elements of such a theory might shape or constrain FOPDEV's decision making in terms of the beneficiary selection process. The analytical empirical data that emerged from the FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand case study is presented and discussed alongside the key debates of Koskela and Howell (2002); Krause (2014); Beck (2017); Mkutano and Sang (2018); Bosibori and Otieno (2021); and Kontinen and Ndidde (2023), where this study locates its fresh insights and contributions within the debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership where the central focus of the research questions are situated.

5.7.1. Reporting, Timeline, and Budgeting

According to the empirical data in Figure 5.7 below, it is revealed that FOPDEV employed and used the Logical Framework (LogFrame) as their reporting framework for both the Building Capacities for Empowerment and Resilience in Thailand project (2012–2015) and the DRR development project (2016–2019) in partnership with Prudential Thailand. One of the Prudential staff members stated that it was not a requirement for Prudential to demand FOPDEV to adopt the LogFrame or any specific type of reporting, but it was on their (FOPDEV's) own will (Prudential_GroupC_Female_1).

According to the interviews and focus groups, staff members agreed that it was their internal collective choice to adopt the LogFrame in order to plan, implement, monitor, and report the activities of their development projects (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_3; FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_4; FOPDEV_GroupB_Female_5; FOPDEV_GroupB_Female_13). Significantly, although it was not a requirement from Prudential to use the LogFrame in terms of reporting, the organisation considered LogFrame as a useful application of their project management, learning to apply this framework when working with the EU, prior to working with Prudential. This study, therefore, denotes the LogFrame reporting framework as part of a theory of project management, maintained as part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* prior to working with Prudential Thailand.

Logical Framework for the Project

	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Objective	To strengthen the DRR network and to collecting the best practices and success models to promote consolidation and expansion of the rights of older people, income security, and the Disasters Risk Reduction (DRR) for marginalised and vulnerable older people in Thailand.	• DRR network register • Case studies/Best practices of DRR in Thailand • Information system for vulnerable group • Older people participate in planning development and be part of the community workgroup for DRR	• DRR network profiles soft copy/hard copy • Case studies/Best practices book • Database and information system • Older people work/activities are included in LA's DRR annual plan • DRR workgroup	
Specific objective	1. The action will support Pong Nam Ron to train 5 older people groups (OPGs) in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Son in group management/planning, resource mobilisation, and advocacy and facilitate interactions with LAs, then establish and train DRR Watch Groups within OPGs, in order to educate older people about their rights and monitor access to benefits. FOPDEV will promote networking between OPGs and with other civil society networks through exchange visits, joint meetings and participation in related events.	• Systematic training approach • Community plan • Older people's projects included in the LA's DRR annual plan • Community DRR workgroup	• Training manual/guide book • Agendas and meeting schedules with policy makers. • OP/OPG need assessment surveys and records • OPG government funding records. • Feedback from key informants. • Follow up and project reports.	• Older people participate in community activities • LA's annual plan and budget cover older people activities • LA have a clear structure of DRR workgroup which older people are included • Community and LA aware of preparedness of DRR and older people are prioritized.
	2. The action will conduct action research of the best practices and/or the DRR models from all over Thailand to better understand older people's contributions and their ease of access to work and entitlements, the safety environment based on universal design and vulnerable group affected by disasters. It will then sensitise LAs on older people's rights and income security and DRR plan and strategies.	• Case studies/best practices/DRR models • Network/Workgroup on DRR • Evidence based information	• DRR network profiles soft copy/hard copy • Case studies/Best practices book •	

Figure 5.7. An example of the Logical Framework used by FOPDEV for the DRR development project (source: FOPDEV, 2016b).

However, through the application of the LogFrame as one of project management theory, this study found that there were two significant themes of the quotations which most often were mentioned by FOPDEV management and staff members. Informed by the LogFrame reporting framework, these two implications, timeline and budget, seemed to be those of most concern for FOPDEV management and staff members in terms of their mention of planning, implementation, and reporting of the DRR project development with Prudential.

> They [Prudential] transfer the donations once a year, the first transaction was transferred after we signed the contract. Then after we [FOPDEV] submitted the annual report of the first-year project, we sent in the second-year proposal and invoice for the second-year payment. (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_2)

> …it was already outlined on the concept note ... that means we [FOPDEV] already have a specific timeline of activities and under the specific budgets … If we don't manage properly, we might not have enough money for the project or to run our organisation… (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_4)

The above selected quotations from the interview and focus group from one board member and one management member show that although it was FOPDEV's own choice to employ the LogFrame in order to plan, implement, monitor, and report the output, outcome, and impact of their development project, the concerns raised from the empirical data reflect organisational attitudes and actions, forming part of FOPDEV's *habitus*. This indicates that by having a timeline of annual reporting, the organisation had to finish and submit the report by the end of the year, or otherwise it was not possible for them to receive the next year's funding or continue the second-year project.

One of the above quotations also emphasised that the organisation had to manage the budget properly when implementing the DRR development project. Otherwise, it would affect the other part of the project and the financial situation of FOPDEV as a whole accordingly (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_4). To illustrate how FOPDEV planned the DRR project activities on the basis of the timeline application, Figure 5.8 below provides such an example, showing a long list of activities.

Activity	Semester 1						Semester 2						Implementing body
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Result 1 To expanded FOPDEV success model the other disaster prone area by the CBDRM team with technical support from FOPDEV.													
1.1 Training of Trainers in Chiang Rai (Earth quake)			X		X		X		X		X		FOPDEV and DDPM
1.2 Report, Monitoring and Evaluation in Chiang Rai					X		X		X		X	X	OPA and FOPDEV
1.3 Technical support for Pong Nam Ron to expand success model (Flash flood)			X		X		X						FOPDEV
1.4 Report, Monitoring and Evaluation in Chiang Mai				X		X		X					OPA and FOPDEV
1.5 Technical support for Mae Hong Son to integrate work with a provincial office of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security			X		X		X						FOPDEV and Provincial office of MSDHS
1.6 Report, Monitoring and Evaluation in Mae Hong Son				X		X		X					OPA and FOPDEV
Result 2 To collecting the best practices and success models all over Thailand and develop the vulnerable group data base.													
2.1 Consultation meeting with network (Northern)			X										FOPDEV and Network
2.2 Consultation meeting with National network (National)					X								FOPDEV and Network
2.3 Network exchange visit (Northern)					X								OPA and FOPDEV
2.4 Network seminar (National)										X			FOPDEV and Network
2.5 Collecting network best practice						X	X	X	X				FOPDEV and Network
2.6 System analysis and Database design						X	X	X	X				FOPDEV and Network (Consultant)
2.7 Develop database						X							FOPDEV and Network (Consultant)
Result 3 To promote communities participation in DRR model to national policy.													
3.1 Lesson learn of CSO network on DRR book										X			FOPDEV and Network
3.2 Information system of vulnerable group database						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Consultant
3.3 Attending National event on DRR										X			FOPDEV and Network
3.4 Attending DRR course/policy making meeting						X				X			FOPDEV and Network
Result 4 To promote communities participation in DRR model to ASEAN and globally.													
4.1 ASEAN Day for Disaster Management										X			FOPDEV and Network
4.2 International Day for Disaster Reduction										X			FOPDEV and Network
4.3 Attending ASEAN event on DRR						X				X			FOPDEV and Network
4.4 Attending DRR course/policy making meeting in ASEAN level						X				X			FOPDEV and Network

Figure 5.8. An example of the timeline for the DRR development project (source: FOPDEV, 2017b).

As discussed earlier in Sections 5.1, 5.5, and 5.5.1, the organisation realised the importance of CSR donations from Prudential and, at the same time, was concerned with their organisational financial situations outside of the development project with Prudential. More significantly, to discuss how budgeting and timeline shaped or challenged FOPDEV's decision making towards their beneficiary selection for the DRR development project, this study highlights one of the quotations from the focus group showing that if the beneficiaries had any conditions, limitations, or considerations (this refers back to the previous sub-themes of the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries) that might affect the timeline or

budget of the project, FOPDEV tended to avoid approaching or choosing those beneficiaries to be a part of their development project with Prudential:

> We never want to leave anybody behind … all the underprivileged, disadvantage[d] or poor elderlies are our organisational focus … but with our capacity and budget limitation to manage the project within the timeline, sometimes we could not help them ... maybe we will go back and help them later when we can… (FOPDEV_GroupA_Male_1)

From the empirical evidence above, it proves that the LogFrame, as part of theory of project management, maintained and shaped FOPDEV's organizational *habitus,* especially in the process of selecting the intended beneficiaries for DRR projects with Prudential Thailand. It shows that the staff members of FOPDEV showed concerns regarding the success and quality of project management (Koskela and Howell, 2002; Mkutano and Sang, 2018) before selecting their beneficiaries. This supports the argumentations of Koskela and Howell (2002), Beck (2017), Mkutano and Sang (2018), and Alkhater (2021), proposing that the theory of project management raised awareness on the effectiveness and efficiency of NGOs in their project management. This study, as a fresh insight, brings in the empirical data of FOPDEV on the ground to further demonstrate how the theory of project management shaped and affected an SDNGO's decision making in terms of their beneficiary selection process.

In alignment with Bosibori and Otieno (2021), this study also argues the collective concerns of FOPDEV regarding reporting, timeline, and budgeting, showing that FOPDEV was precautious about the project failure before the project started due to conditions, limitations, complexities, and the unpredictability of inefficient resources (Bosibori and Otieno, 2021). This empirical evidence emphasized the debates wherein Beck (2017, p. 8) called for NGOs to pay attention less to the project effectiveness and efficiency measured by elements of project management theory such as the LogFrame (which Krause (2014) also critiqued). This study also considers such a practice of professionalism (Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023) as a challenge of accountability and governance to the recent and future roles of NGOs in the field of partnership, wherein the theory of project management might have left someone

behind. This thesis calls for greater justice for the potential beneficiaries who have not been chosen.

5.7.2. Conclusion

Consequently, this section of this chapter highlights the importance of reporting, timelines, and budgeting as key elements of project management theory, ones that have shaped FOPDEV's organisational processes and practices in selecting intended beneficiaries, specifically the elderly and students, for the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) project in collaboration with Prudential Thailand.

In order to answer the central research questions and address research objective 6, as the final theme of this chapter, this sub-section has discussed and offered the analysed empirical data to illustrate how project management theory, as a composed part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, maintained or influenced their decision making in the potential beneficiary selection process of the DRR project development with Prudential Thailand. The fresh insights of this section are also discussed in relation to the relevant key debates and exploratory literature drawn up in Chapter 2.

5.8. Conclusion

This second case study provides and discusses the collected empirical data from FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand along with the four main provisional themes derived from the exploratory literature in Chapter 2 in order to examine and contribute more comprehensive and multidimensional understandings of SDNGOs' decision making in the beneficiary selection process when working with MNCs from the Global North. This case study is provided and discussed alongside the theoretical, analytical, and methodological approaches explained earlier in Chapter 3 in order to address research objectives 3, 4, 5, and 6 of this thesis.

In this chapter, firstly, this study explored how FOPDEV Thailand seemed to employ a mixture of concepts of poverty such as absolute poverty, relative poverty,

and the capabilities approach in order to conceptualise the concept of vulnerability or poverty, including other issues around the quality of life of the elderly. Adopted from Sen (1999), the five elements of the material basis of well-being application facilitated this study to thoroughly analyse the indicators of meanings and causes of poverty conceptualised and used in practice by FOPDEV in order to define, approach, or select their potential beneficiaries. Significantly, the organisation extended itself to work on the issue of disaster relief in 2012 when the first development project with Prudential was implemented. Therefore, this study also discussed such a conceptualisation of poverty regarding the interest in disaster work, influenced by Prudential in the 'who are the (chosen) poor?' section and then further discussed stakeholder theory, including the theory of CSR and 'who are they?' as the second theme of this chapter. It was discovered that the theory of CSR, as part of stakeholder theory, has potentially acted as one of the important drivers that shaped, challenged, and informed FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* in order to choose their potential beneficiaries. As a result, new locations (such as Krabi and Ayutthaya) and a new group of direct and indirect beneficiaries (youth and students) were approached and selected to be a part of the DRR development project in 2016.

However, there are two more implications, namely, the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries and the theory of project management, which also seemed to be significant considerations in terms of FOPDEV's decision making. Firstly, informed by Bourdieu (2006; 2010) and Moore (2012), this thesis was facilitated by the application of *capital* in order to analyse the empirical data of how FOPDEV assessed the communities and the elderly individuals before choosing the locations of the DRR development project. The analysed empirical data suggest fresh insights in terms of how the willingness of the potential beneficiaries and the relevant stakeholders in the communities, including their developmental capacity and capability, challenged and ruptured FOPDEV's decision making. In addition, in terms of the theory of project management, as a last provisional facet of this chapter, although there was no specific requirement from Prudential in terms of reporting, FOPDEV was willing to use the LogFrame in order to implement their DRR project development. Emerging from the empirical data, budgeting and timeline, as two implications of project management theory, suggest that such implications were maintained and intertwined with their organisational *habitus*. As a result, such

attitudes, motivations, decisions, and actions in practice regarding the concerns of budget and timeline seemed to shape and challenge how FOPDEV defined, approached, and chose the potential beneficiaries of the DRR development project with Prudential. All of these analytical discussions of this second case study were provided in order to address the key aims of this PhD thesis.

The next chapter, Chapter 6, now provides discussions of theoretical implications and findings from two organisational case studies aligned with the six research objectives to answer central research questions of this thesis.

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Chapter 6: Discussions of Case Studies Through the Lens of Research Objectives

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings and theoretical discussions centred around the research objectives in order to answer the central research questions: (1) How do SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries for development projects supported by NMNCs? (2) What implications do SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs? This study situates the findings and theoretical discussions of this research to the debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership through their decision making, with a focus of their beneficiary selection process for development projects.

Following this introduction, this chapter presents discussions of research objective 1, which re-defines and re-conceptualises concepts of partnership between SDNGOs and NMNCs using academic literature and empirical data from two SDNGO case studies. It then presents the discussion of research objective 2, which examines the provisional and potential drivers on SDNGOs' decision making in the process of beneficiary selection for the development projects using the theoretical and empirical literature as an exploratory framework to create and analyse two SDNGO case studies. This section also discusses and concludes with considerations of the theoretical and analytical applications derived from the applications of Bourdieu's concept of the 'theory of practice', which includes (1) *field,* (2) *habitus,* and (3) *capital* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1989, 1990, 1992).

The chapter continues on to a discussion of research objectives 3, 4, 5, and 6 centred on four thematic provisional themes contained in the debates of SDNGOs' decision making in terms of the beneficiary selection and their practices under cross-sector collaboration with NMNCs for development projects. They are (1) the conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the stakeholder theory; (3) the willingness, capacity, and capability of potential beneficiaries; and (4) the theory of project management. Following this, this study also adopts a comparative analysis between the two

organisational case studies, EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential, in order to illustrate and discuss the similarities and differences, where possible, in order to provide greater understandings and fruitful debates in relation to the central research questions.

6.2. Cross-Sector Partnership Re-conceptualisation: Discussions of Research Objective 1 - *To re-define and re-conceptualise concepts of partnership between SDNGOs and NMNCs from the academic literature and empirical data of two SDNGO case studies.*

From the extensive exploration of the literature on Development and NGO Studies discussed in Chapter 2, this study argues that the significant weakness of the literature of partnership, particularly in Development Studies, is the inability to move beyond identifying and measuring forms of relationships. It evaluates relationships on the basis of idealised notions of 'authentic partnership', with the majority of literature based in the concept of 'authentic partnership' in the history of Development Studies situating itself in the need to create a more equal partnership that rarely occurs in practice (Kinsbergen et al., 2023). In accordance with Lewis (1999), who proposes understanding 'partnership' as a 'dynamic process', this study contends that there is a need for more research into the numerous interactions, practices, and experiences that occur on the ground between SDNGs and NMNCs. As this study argues that the scholarly and pragmatic concepts of 'authentic partnership' appear not to be easily able to exist on the ground in the development sector, the concept of this study, therefore, moves beyond such a notion and is formulated utilising a framework of 'development as service delivery' (Hulme, Edwards, and Banks, 2015) in order to construct knowledge on the basis of real practices.

To discuss the re-conceptualisation of the *field* of partnership in particular, there have been various models and frameworks of NMNC–SDNGO relationships, including public–private partnerships (PPP), 'public service contractors' (PSCs), the collaborative value creation framework (CVC), and corporate social responsibility (CSR). None are devoid of rational criticism. It is essential to highlight that CSR is the most recognizable concept to date, and that the discussions and literature around CSR and NGO collaborations are largely ongoing and are quite diverse. Furthermore, it has

been revealed that NMNCs regard SDNGOs as one of their relevant stakeholders for achieving their goals and becoming partners. Buar (2011) asserts that CSR methods of corporations are invented, defined, and initiated on the basis of stakeholder theory. This study acknowledges the position of NGOs in the CSR debates and situates itself in the discussion on how stakeholder theory, which is considered the foundation of CSR approaches, influences the selection of SDNGOs' intended beneficiaries.

More significantly, as this study adopts a framework of 'development as service delivery' by SDNGOs for development projects with NMNCs, it facilitates the study to more critically explore the literature across the disciplines of Development, NGO, and Business Studies. From a rigorous search, this study built up four specific interconnected themes of scholarly critiques of NGOs and SDNGOs, particularly those working as service providers for development projects to institutional donors within and/or across sectors. The first criticism is the function of SDNGOs as service providers for short-term development initiatives, which often operate under a contract model. The second criticism focuses on the departure of SDNGOs from a grassroots orientation. The third criticism concerns the power relations of donors. The fourth critique focuses on how donors conceptualise development. This argumentation asserts that NGOs with tight ties to donors grow more similarly to donors.

Under the framework of development as service delivery, this study approaches the four sets of critiques as initial implications of working hypotheses from the position of the metaphor of 'NGOs as jelly' proposed by Fowler and Malunga (2010, pp. 35–36) or 'hybrid NGOs' proposed by Kontinen and Ndidde (2023, p. 109) in that SDNGOs accept power dynamics with the Northern institutional donors and various sectors for partnerships. To offer development and aid initiatives, hybrid SDNGOs negotiate with donors/partners who challenge the processes of development and seek opportunities to fill in the gaps (Fowler and Malunga, 2010, p. 36; Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023, p. 109). In terms of expanding beyond the concept of 'authentic partnership', this re-definition and re-conceptualisation of notions and positionality of partnership also lend credence to this study. Having advanced understandings beyond the idea of 'authentic partnership' by drawing critiques from the exploratory literature of a framework and position of development as service delivery, this study now argues and further offers new sets of discussions under the *field* of cross-sector collaborations or social

partnership for the development projects between SDNGOs and NMNCs, based on empirical data from two organisational case studies of SDNGOs in Thailand where no research on partnership with NMNCs has yet taken place.

For the first case study, EDF–IKEA Thailand, it is evident that EDF Thailand adopted the concept of cross-sector collaboration for the first time in 2005. This study found that EDF Thailand did not intend to administer development projects on its own, but rather to engage with other domestic and international organisations across sectors. Later in 2017, IKEA Thailand, which was expanding to construct a branch in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, sought EDF Thailand to partner with them and to conduct a development project in Bangyai prior to the launch of the store. After a period of pitching and negotiations, both sides reached a social partnership agreement. Following the signing of the partnership agreement, EDF Thailand and IKEA Thailand made plans to conduct the 'Self-Reliance School and Social Day' development project. The primary objective of this development project was to foster inclusive well-being and peaceful coexistence amongst schools and communities, hence fostering sustainable development.

The objective of the partnered development project in this instance suggests that EDF Thailand consented to incorporating IKEA's corporate interests into its development strategies. This reflects how the donor's desires and needs influenced, challenged, and shaped the shared collective *habitus* of EDF Thailand from the beginning of project planning by providing this development project to build and strengthen the relationship between the donor's new store and the surrounding communities via EDF-implemented schools. However, the empirical data also suggest that EDF rejected some partnership proposals from some MNC donors in the past due to their unequal power of relationship and mismatched goals, for instance. Significantly, drawing on the roles and positionality of 'hybrid NGOs' proposed by Kontinen and Ndidde (2023, p. 109), during the project design process, the empirical data show that EDF also had attempts to both negotiate and compromise with the needs of IKEA Thailand to find the balance of the relationship whilst providing interventions to the beneficiaries in Bangyai.

As for FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand, as the second case study, Prudential was first introduced to FOPDEV in 2005 through HelpAge International, with whom FOPDEV assisted in the implementation of various programs. Following six years of knowing each other informally, Prudential and FOPDEV became official partners in 2012 for their first development project, which focused on disaster risk reduction with the elderly as the primary target population in Northern Thailand, where FOPDEV's major development work areas were. It is important to emphasise that the disaster risk reduction work had not been the focal point of FOPDEV's organisational development before. From this point of view, this study acknowledges that it is necessary to look back at the background of Prudential in order to reflect on their organisational *habitus* in actions and how it developed FOPDEV's decision making in order to initiate the development project on disaster risk reduction in which the organisation had no direct experience or interest.

In terms of its background, Prudential is a British multinational corporation that has been in the insurance business for 175 years. It began operations in Thailand in 1995, with global guidance provided by its London headquarters and co-supervision from regional management in Hong Kong. The company's CSR efforts centre on three pillars: education, health, and safety, all of which are linked to the company's core products: life and health insurance, as well as financial and asset management. This also explains how Prudential's CSR directions were conceived and implemented, which the study later discusses, suggesting that it challenged and influenced FOPDEV's decision making in order to choose beneficiaries for their development projects. Eventually, following the interests and conditions of Prudential, new groups of direct and indirect potential beneficiaries including new locations of the aid interventions were taken into FOPDEV's considerations for their development projects. Although FOPDEV claimed that they have their own development standpoints, at the same time, regarding their willingness to work dynamically with Prudential (as one of hybrid NGOs), the empirical data from FOPDEV show that the organisation seems to be more compromised in their relationship with Prudential and had less negotiation processes and practices when compared with how EDF dealt with IKEA during the same decision-making process regarding beneficiaries. Although such different practices occurred between the two case studies due to different organisational factors, conditions, and other circumstances, this study acknowledges

the differences of its practices with the similar positionality of both SDNGOs under the development as service delivery.

Therefore, prior the broader discussions on the similarities and differences between the two organisational case studies that emerged from the empirical data, covered later in this chapter, this study considers it significant to re-define and re-conceptualise the cross-sector partnership from what happened on the ground in the Global South as its first starting process to critically answer the central research questions. Informed by the idea of development as service delivery under the *field* of cross-sector collaboration for the development projects of SDNGOs and NMNCs, according to the two case studies, this study contends, with reference to the arguments surrounding the power relations of donors and the criticism of the CSR model. Although the influences from MNC partners or donors seem to exist and that they sometimes challenge or shape SDNGOs' organisational *habitus* in terms of decision making, as partnered under the framework of service delivery, SDNGOs themselves seem to also have their own power and will either accept work or will adjust their work plans under such a partnership with the contingent challenges that might occur with the organisation, or they will drop their deals eventually. However, this study argues that although SDNGOs seem to be aware of the influence of donors' CSR preferences and, of course, their own roots and organisational strands, over time, their organisational *habitus* might be informed, challenged, and developed, or, on the other hand, disputed and ruptured, under such a cross-sector partnership whilst working on development projects. Such practices accordingly challenge the recent roles of SDNGOs as development service providers in the field of partnership.

6.3. Provisional Drivers of SDNGOs' Decision Making on Beneficiary Selection: Discussions of Research Objective 2 - *To examine the theoretical and empirical literature in order to understand the provisional drivers behind SDNGOs' beneficiary selection for development projects, using this as an exploratory framework to analyse the two case studies.*

Within the framework of development as 'service delivery' in place and according to the conclusion of research objective 1, this research focuses on

SDNGOs' decision making in terms of the selection process of their potential beneficiaries while working with NMNCs for the development projects and as the *field* of this study.

Owing to the four themes of critiques against development as service delivery of SDNGOs, there were indications that a number of SDNGOs had prioritised their roles as service providers over their civil-society activities (Edwards and Hulme, 2013). This has caused NGOs to distance themselves further from the 'poor groups' for which they formerly claimed responsibility (Edwards, 2008; Shutt, 2009; Wallace and Porter, 2013). Similarly, for the service delivery to governments under PPP, scholars argue that, despite the fact that governments pre-defined their intended beneficiaries by employing the concept of servicing the 'citizens', the poor in need are considered to be 'consumers'. This is the outcome of the pressures of contract competitions in an open market between NGOs and businesses (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; 2013, p. 10).

Conversely, from the NMNCs' perspective, a vast body of literature questions the hidden intentions of the CSR programme that funds development projects for SDNGOs. In the debate, it is asserted that CSR is the obligation of corporations in order to address the negative social impacts created by the business itself; hence, it is not social responsibility but business responsibility (Drucker, 2001). Yet, a number of academics contend that the bottom line of CSR is company profit (Friedman, 1970; Stendardi, 1992; Porter and Kramer, 2002; Hamann and Acutt, 2003). Intriguingly, the literature review, on the basis of such critiques, reveals that NMNCs frequently define the beneficiaries of CSR by employing a 'stakeholder theory' as a defensive foundation for CSR in order to provide safeguards against the potential negative effects of its business operations and maintain good relationships with any stakeholders (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004; Gourville and Rangan, 2004; Pearce and Doh, 2005; Sasse and Trahan, 2007; Seitanidi, 2010). This critical argument also highlights an additional aspect of this research, namely, how the 'stakeholder theory' developed by NMNCs may help SDNGOs define and select their potential beneficiaries for NMNC-funded development projects.

Notably, the scholarly literature also suggests that development as service delivery of project advancements creates pressure and conditions for NGOs to be accountable to funders and provide what was promised to beneficiaries. This causes NGOs to prioritise 'successful' project management (or theory of project management) over empowering the people on the ground, hence impacting their beneficiary selection (Craig and Porter, 1997; Beck, 2017). NGOs tend to perceive their development programs as 'products' (Krause, 2014, p, 47). Yet, Waters (2001) contends that the product of non-governmental organizations is not profit but mercy. Nonetheless, encouraged by a Marxist viewpoint, it is necessary to look beyond the 'tangible good' outcomes at the overall exchange (Krause, 2014).

Using the provisional hypotheses 'development projects as products' and 'beneficiaries as commodities' by Krause (2014), this study constructs the heuristic framework of (re)-conceptualisation of beneficiaries through the eyes of SDNGOs by separating the notions of 'populations in need' and actual 'beneficiaries'. Rather than being the primary 'beneficiaries', they are classified as 'commodities' and are considered part of the product being sold (Krause, 2014, p. 38). This cohesive perspective proposed by Krause (2014) provides a useful standpoint for this thesis to explore and emphasise the values of SDNGOs' domain and knowledge when selecting beneficiaries for development projects in conjunction with NMNCs as service providers. The contributions of these standpoints, supported and illustrated by the collected empirical evidence from both the EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential case studies, provide answers to this thesis's research questions of how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries and what implications SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs.

Following this, there are two theoretical components to the framework of this study. The first theoretical component is a *field* of partnership that transcends notions of the duties of SDNGOs under the notion of service delivery providers. The second theoretical component is the *habitus* of SDNGOs on decision making for their development initiatives with NMNCs, which is predicated on the (re)-conceptualisation of beneficiaries from the SDNGO perspectives.

To contrast the developmental goals of both SDNGOs, the results of the two case studies, EDF–IKEA Thailand and FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand, indicate that their direct beneficiaries differed. Whereas EDF–IKEA Thailand targeted the schools and students who lived under poverty, FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand mainly targeted the elderly as their potential beneficiaries. Drawing on the exploratory literature and the fresh insights that emerged from the empirical data of the two organisational case studies, this study suggests the similarity between the two SDNGOs that both EDF's and FOPDEV's decisions were shaped, challenged, maintained, ruptured, and constrained by the (1) organisations' conceptualisations of poverty; (2) stakeholder theory; (3) project management theory; and (4) the beneficiaries' willingness, capacity, and capability, as constituent parts of their organisational *habitus*. These are four provisional aspects of SDNGOs' decision-making processes in their beneficiary selection that this study suggested from the exploratory literature that was able to be usefully applied to the collected empirical data from the two organisational case studies.

Following this, to analyse and discuss the four provisional themes under these research objectives in order to build and contribute more thorough understandings under the *field* of social partnership for the development projects between SDNGOs and NMNCs, this study applied Bourdieu's 'theory of practice', which covers the ways in which the ideas of *field*, *habitus*, and *capital* facilitate and allow considerations of how EDF's and FOPDEV's organisational decision makings are informed, shaped, or performed in practice to choose the intended beneficiaries.

This study acknowledges that the useful and insightful application of the concept of *habitus* is that it can be developed, maintained, and changed over the time by contingent internal and external implications as collective organisational *habitus*. However, sometimes this study found different attitudes, practices, motivations, and actions of the individual *habitus* within the same organisational *habitus (habituses within habitus)*, showing that it informs, ruptures, structures, challenges, and maintains itself all the time. This study was aware of such an issue when analysing the collected empirical data and made best use of it along with the interpretivist philosophical approach, allowing the researcher to gain understandings from different

multidimensional perspectives. Therefore, for research objectives 3, 4, 5, and 6, *habitus* is used as an analytical tool.

For research objective 4, *capital* is employed as an additional analytical tool in order to develop deeper and more critical understandings of how the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries or the entire populations in need interplay and are intertwined with the decision making of SDNGOs through their mixed formations of attitudes and practices of organisational *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977). However, due to the complications and complexity of the empirical data that emerged from two organisational case studies, this study also further employed and developed the application of three forms of *capital* suggested by Moore (2012) in order to conduct a deeper analysis and to strengthen the findings from the case studies.

In both of the two organisational case studies, this study used three forms of *capital*, namely, *embodied capital*, *objectified capital*, and *habitus* (as a *specialization capital* of knowing mastery skills) to analyse the empirical data. As a result, this facilitated the study to discover the similarity of both EDF and FOPDEV case studies that might have *developmental capital*, as fresh insights of the study, as their considerations to select the intended beneficiaries for the development projects with IKEA and Prudential accordingly. To illustrate the similarities between them, the analytical findings in the EDF–IKEA Thailand case study suggests that *developmental capita*l such as existing empty school land and farms, the willingness of teachers, and the knowledge of agriculture were some of the possible significant implications that informed, disputed, and shaped EDF's organisational decision making towards their potential school selection process for the Self-Reliance School project when working with IKEA Thailand. Similarly in the FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand case, this study found that the *developmental capital,* such as the iPads or laptop of the elderly; Internet (Wi-Fi) access; a community meeting area; the willingness, activeness, and ability of the elderly; and interest in or preparedness for disasters were some of the crucial drivers of organisational assessments before the intended beneficiaries were chosen for the development projects. Therefore, alongside *social capital*, this *developmental capital* seemed to play an important role in shaping, maintaining, and challenging both EDF's and FOPDEV's organisational *habitus*, offering a fresh insight from this study. However, this study notes that how *social capital* and *developmental*

capital maintained, shaped, and ruptured both EDF's and FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* might have been different between the two SDNGOs during the selection process. This varies due to different organisational backgrounds, developmental goals, partners, contexts, time, and space. This study discusses such differences in terms of the *social capital* and *development capital* of both organisational case studies in the later sections of this chapter.

6.4. Conceptualisation of Poverty of SDNGOs: Discussions of Research Objective 3 - *To understand how conceptualisation of poverty informs or is used in SDNGOs' decision making to define, choose, or approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.*

The theories and considerations of poverty in both academic and development studies are continually complex. As a starting point, to examine how the conceptualisation of poverty informs or is used by both EDF's or FOPDEV's decision-making processes, this research identified three distinct sets of relevant literature on the core conceptions of poverty that may influence and constrain the decisions of SDNGOs regarding development initiatives with NMNCs. The first is absolute poverty, the second is relative poverty, and the third is the capabilities approach.

The first set of literature tends to describe poverty as 'absolute poverty'. Within this framework, poverty is quantified by setting a minimum amount of income consumption as a baseline (Laderchi, Saith, and Stewart, 2003). The second approach is 'relative poverty', which is used to characterise poverty in terms of the national or community standard of living. Hence, rather than focusing on 'individual income', it emphasizes 'average income inequality' (Beaudoin, 2007, p. 5). This 'relative poverty' approach purposefully reduces an individual's disposable income relative to the average wealth and standard of living benchmarks for a whole population (Monson, 2013). The third approach is the 'capabilities approach', which development practitioners and academics favour since it defines and describes the multi-layered and complex nature of poverty. This perspective views poverty as substantially restricting people's freedoms or alternatives, such as their access to education, job, healthcare, social standing, and interpersonal connections (Tiwari,

2007). The most famous concept of the 'capabilities approach', created by Amartya Sen, argues that the primary purpose and means of development are to improve people's skill, freedoms, and actual choices so that they can live their own lives on the basis of their ideas (Sen, 1999). Sen's two key interrelated concepts in his theories of poverty are 'capabilities' and 'functionings', with 'agency' appearing later (Comim, 2008). Sen's (1999) definition of agency reflects and emphasises the criticisms and difficulties associated with how SDNGOs identify and select their potential beneficiaries to achieve their long-term goals, as well as provide 'satisfactory' results to NMNCs in the meantime.

Although EDF and FOPDEV have different organisational, developmental and partnership backgrounds, including different social contexts, the empirical data demonstrate the similarity of how the conceptualisation of poverty from both organisational case studies interplayed and intertwined with their organisational *habitus* when choosing their potential beneficiaries.

This study discovers that both EDF and FOPDEV did not use a single approach of poverty theory alone but a mixture of poverty concepts in order to define, approach, and select potential beneficiaries from the entirety of the populations in need. This set of findings aligns with the argumentation of Tiwari (2021), emphasising that the major concepts of poverty reduction or living quality enhancement from agencies across sectors and at both the micro and macro levels are approached differently. Some successful micro-level implications and practices are not necessarily tied into the macro one. Crucially, this approach signified that some organisations could target poverty at both levels, on the basis of their own conceptions of poverty (Tiwari, 2021, p. 39). This concept encourages this study to further investigate how such a conceptualisation of poverty is linked and executed by both EDF and FOPDEV under the cross-sector partnership in order to choose the beneficiaries for the development projects.

By the similar use of mixture of different poverty approaches between two organisational case studies, EDF Thailand used a variety of terms when referring to the students (who are the populations in need and selected beneficiaries), such as 'vulnerable students', 'less fortunate students', 'underprivileged students', 'needy

students', and 'students in need'. However, the term 'poor students' was the most used term. The empirical data of this case study illustrate that from 1988 to 2017, EDF Thailand discussed the World Bank-identified populations living below the poverty line on an annual basis. In addition to the individual or average monetary terms of poverty, other indicators of poverty, such as healthcare, cleanliness, nutrition, and education, were also discussed within the organisation.

This study argues, on the basis of an empirical data analysis, that EDF Thailand did not adopt a single poverty approach, but rather a combination of poverty approaches, including absolute poverty, relative poverty, and capabilities approaches, when addressing the causes and meanings of poverty in its development projects from its inception until 2019. Therefore, this study denotes that it may not have been a singular idea of poverty within EDF's organisational *habitus* that informed and challenged the organisational conceptualisation of poverty in practice, but rather a combination of poverty concepts that influenced EDF's beneficiary selection decisions. Insofar as EDF Thailand may have dynamically applied various poverty conceptualisations and applications, either intentionally or unintentionally, a mixture of poverty conceptualisations may be explained.

Secondly, 'dimensions of poverty' is a subtheme that emerged from the empirical data as fresh insights from EDF Thailand's efforts in the Bangyai region. The empirical evidence suggests that EDF Thailand considered the poverty dimensions at two distinct levels of agency: (1) vulnerable schools (meso level) and (2) vulnerable students (individual level). In addition, a mixture of poverty conceptualisations was part of EDF Thailand's organisational *habitus*, influencing and interacting with its conceptualisation of the needs of the schools, not only for individual or average monetary indicators but also for other capabilities and functioning development frameworks (both tangible and intangible) such as school infrastructure, books, quality of the curriculum, quality of teachers, and public engagement with the schools. Therefore, the empirical data from the EDF–IKEA case revealed fresh insights that EDF Thailand identified beyond the needs of the main dimension of beneficiaries (schools as meso level and students as individual level) to sub-multidimensional indicators with a mixed dynamic of absolute poverty, relative poverty, and the capabilities approach. It is worth acknowledging here that these two distinct levels of

agency were applied differently for FOPDEV case studies, which this section later discusses.

Significantly, according to the question of 'who are the (chosen) poor?' for this case study, this research argues that the conceptualisation of poverty influenced and shaped EDF's decision making, as evidenced by their attitudes and actions, as part of their collective organisational *habitus*, by choosing the poor on the basis of their perceptions of the aspects of poverty. This study acknowledges that there might also be other elements and implications of poverty, including how the preferences of donors appear to have had an additional significant impact on the SDNGO's decision making. However, this study suggests that the conceptualisation of poverty informed or influenced EDF Thailand's beneficiary selection decisions. Three sub-themes, namely, the meanings and causes of poverty, the dimensions of poverty, and 'who are the (chosen) poor?', interplayed with the organisational decision making and the mixture of poverty conceptualisations, including absolute poverty, relative poverty, and the capabilities approach.

As for the second study, FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand, this study also found two sub-themes for this case analysis, namely, (1) meanings and causes of poverty and (2) 'who are the (chosen) poor?' Indeed, due to the complex nature of the development projects between FOPDEV and Prudential Thailand, these two sub-themes overlapped and were discussed iteratively back and forth. Using their shared daily organisational attitudes and actions, this research investigated how FOPDEV Thailand conceptualised poverty as part of their organisational *habitus*.

According to FOPDEV's collective organisational *habitus* on how this SDNGO conceptualised the notions of poverty from their perceptions of poverty, lines, and motivations, including actions to call for policy change, the concept of absolute and relative poverty appeared to be firstly adopted by FOPDEV on one of their organisational works towards the poverty of the elderly. FOPDEV's organisational focus was not just on petitioning the Thai government to increase the financial allowance for the elderly; instead, its major organisational activities and development projects were aimed at addressing other aspects of the elderly's quality of life. This implies that the theory of absolute or relative poverty was not the only approach

FOPDEV took; other approaches towards the concept of poverty may have informed, challenged, and influenced FOPDEV's decision making on their development practices when they were directed toward the beneficiaries. In this scenario, FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* included a combination of poverty approaches.

Significantly, since 2012, the study explored how FOPDEV expanded its developmental cause to the disaster issue, which was the first time they officially worked with Prudential for their first development project. This provided fresh insights into how FOPDEV re-conceptualised their meanings and causes of poverty, which could also be challenged and shaped by Prudential's organisational *habitus*. Since then, similarly to the first organisational case study, this study also discovered that FOPDEV's organisational conceptualisation of poverty, which was part of their organisational *habitus*, mainly influenced and sustained the capabilities approach, alongside the absolute and relative poverty approaches.

Evidence of the beneficiaries' 'types of quality of life', including possibilities to live, impediments to living opportunities, and reasons to value the beneficiary's life, was profoundly discovered in this study. Drawing on five categories of the material basis of well-being (Sen, 1999), the analytical evidence from FOPDEV suggests that the difference between FOPDEV and EDF under the similar use of poverty concept mixture is that FOPDEV seemed to focus more on the capabilities approach in their development project with their NMNC. Moreover, another difference in the conceptualisation of poverty between the two organisational case studies is how EDF and FOPDEV focused on the poverty dimensions at two distinct levels of agency. While EDF focused on the schools (meso level) and students (individual level) in need, FOPDEV seemed to focus on the disaster-affected community (macro level) and the elderly (individual level) for their development projects.

This set of fresh insights provides supporting evidence to the debates of SDNGO role challenges, wherein scholars recently suggested that the conceptualisation of poverty informing development projects in the Global South might be shaped by influences from the Global North (Grech, 2023; Khan, 2023; van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023).

Consequently, this study, informed by Sen (1999), was able to unpack the organisational conceptualisations of poverty towards the capabilities approach to another, deeper level. The empirical data from both EDF and FOPDEV demonstrate both similarities and differences of how conceptualisations of poverty informed and were used by both SDNGOs on the ground. This facilitated this research and developed more thorough understandings of how FOPDEV defined, approached, or chose their potential beneficiaries. More importantly, under the disciplines of NGO and Development Studies, this research considers these theoretical discussions and findings of conceptualisations of poverty as fresh contributions to the debates of the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

6.5. Stakeholder Theory: Discussions of Research Objective 4 - *To understand how stakeholder theory informs or is conducted by SDNGOs' decision making in order to define, choose, or approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.*

The stakeholder idea is one of the major origins of corporate social responsibility (CSR), as CSR managerial philosophy is founded on a stakeholder primacy perspective (Freeman, 1984; Munilla and Miles, 2005, p. 374; Poret, 2014; Fontana, 2018; Ann, 2023). Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke (2023, pp. 866) also recently highlighted that stakeholders play important roles in the collaborations between NGOs and their partners, especially between the Global North and Global South. Nevertheless, none of the available literature implies or discusses how stakeholder theory implications may interact or shape SDNGO decision making, providing room for academic departure in this thesis. This section therefore discusses the *field* of stakeholder theory as it relates to the research topic in order to advance notions of how stakeholder theory might inform the organizational *habitus* of SDNGOs in the process of selecting a beneficiary.

The stakeholder theory was originally coined by Freeman in 1984. It is based on evaluating relationships between organisations and stakeholders. It uses exchange transactions, power dependencies, legitimacy claims, or other claims to determine which stakeholders deserve the attention of another group of stakeholders and which do not (Mitchell, 1997). This study acknowledges the position of the stakeholder theory

in which it suggests that, for ethical reasons, a business might consider the needs of many individuals and groups who may be directly or indirectly affected by its operations (Gibson, 2000). Hill and Jones (2012) suggest that stakeholder theory is essential for successful project execution since a project requires consensus among organizational stakeholders. Nevertheless, this study explored how a number of studies indicate that NMNCs may identify the beneficiaries of their CSR programs by employing stakeholder theory as a defensive rationale for CSR to provide safeguards against the potential negative effects of their business operations (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright, 2004; Gourville and Rangan, 2004; Pearce and Doh, 2005; Sasse and Trahan, 2007; Seitanidi, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi (2012a); Austin and Seitanidi (2012b); Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Lalzai and Rana, 2020; Ann, 2023). Although the exploratory literature indicates that donorship and conceptualisation of power relationships of NMNCs might politically force SDNGOs in terms of their decision making (Savas, 1987; Ahmad, 2006, p. 630; Derksen and Verhallen, 2008; Reith, 2010; AbouAssi and Trent, 2016; O'Brien and Evans, 2017; van Zyl and Claeyé 2019; Girei, 2022), this study, drawing on the framework of development as service delivery and roles of hybrid NGOs, argues that it might not be the case when SDNGOs realise their motivations when partnering together is viewed positively and the treatment from the donor is fair.

From this perspective, this study analysed the majority of the literature on stakeholder theory, focusing on strategic organisational management, increasing project performance, and societal impact (from a CSR perspective). However, this study discovers that no research has explored how NGOs identify beneficiaries using stakeholder theory or how it is applied in practice. This study, hence, used this academic gap to investigate the concept through two organisational case studies.

Under the framework of development as service delivery, the empirical data from both EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential revealed that the findings of both organisational case studies regarding stakeholder are similar. Stakeholder theory, as part of their organisational *habitus*, played an important role in challenging and shaping both EDF's and FOPDEV's decision making on the beneficiary selection process from various perspectives. This set of findings, emerging from the empirical data, supports the argumentation of stakeholder theory in that various stakeholders

exert an impact on organisations, thus influencing their strategies, actions, and decision-making processes (Freeman, 1984; Reith, 2010; AbouAssi and Trent, 2016; Morgan, Gomes, and Perez-Aleman, 2016; Moshtari, Zaefarian, and Vanpoucke, 2023).

In order to illustrate and elaborate on the similarities of stakeholder theory between the two organisational case studies, starting with the EDF–IKEA Thailand case study, drawing on this critical stakeholder theory as a justification for a CSR argument, this study discovered that stakeholder theory was one of the potential drivers that influenced EDF's selection of the beneficiaries in Bangyai District for the IKEA development project. The empirical data also revealed two subthemes: theory of CSR and 'where are they?'. The empirical evidence of this study demonstrated that since 2006, EDF Thailand has grasped the concepts and complexities of a CSR theory in practice. Moreover, the organisation believed in a win–win approach to dealing with NMNCs. Significantly, the organisation also had favourable attitudes regarding corporate partnerships with NMNCs known to the public. This dataset offers a novel academic perspective on how an SDNGO might be willing to cooperate with NMNCs without being considered as a development service provider. The empirical data also demonstrated that EDF Thailand agreed that IKEA Thailand treated them with the utmost respect and that EDF Thailand was eager and willing to organise the development project in the new site and with new beneficiary groups requested by IKEA Thailand when IKEA opened a new store in the Bangyai area.

Significantly, this study considers this as evidence that EDF's organisational *habitus* was influenced and sustained by a philosophy of CSR, which is a component of the stakeholder theory. Initially, however, there was internal dispute as to whether the organisation should move to its new location in Bangyai, where EDF knew no one, just like IKEA Thailand. Even though Bangyai is adjacent to Bangkok, Thailand's capital and most developed city, the organization determined that the schools and students there had unmet needs after conducting a field assessment. From such internal discussions within the organisation, as part of EDF's collective *habitus*, this study considers how it is important to note a point made in the focus group, wherein a member of the management team stated, "there is poverty everywhere in Thailand". This also supports, reinforces, and justifies EDF Thailand's decision to introduce itself

at the new location. It demonstrates how EDF's conceptions of poverty preserved and challenged its organisational *habitus* while at the same time was shaped by IKEA's stakeholder theory.

In addition, the empirical data also offer fresh insights emerging from this organisational case study in terms of using stakeholder theory to mapping potential schools in Bangyai District by using IKEA's new store as a centre of the Self-Reliance School project. Informed by the question of 'where are they?', this study argues that such processes and practices to select the potential schools demonstrates that EDF obviously did not prioritise the needs of the beneficiary as the goals of their development project but IKEA's needs as a central focus and location to target the beneficiaries or schools in Bangyai instead. As a result, this study also argues that not only does this finding denote the priority from EDF to IKEA over their potential beneficiaries, but also it portrays that from a stakeholder theory perspective, EDF's processes and practices were considered important for their successful execution of the project (Hill and Jones, 2012; Danny, 2014; Bosibori and Otieno, 2021).

Moving to discussing the similarities of the second case study of FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand, there are also two sub-themes to consider: (1) the theory of CSR and (2) 'where are they?', in terms of how implications maintained, challenged, influenced, or disputed FOPDEV's beneficiary selection process through the implications of stakeholder theory.

Regarding the notion of CSR, evidently, the common understandings of such individual *habitus* within FOPDEV acknowledged that the corporate donations under Prudential's development project was CSR funds. Moreover, FOPDEV staff members appeared to comprehend that a CSR budget may have preferences or a demanding character in terms of corporate image or visibility engagement from NMNC partners or donors. To this point, this study acknowledges from the empirical data that all FOPDEV members from management to operation levels realised and appreciated that the donations from Prudential's CSR programmes were significant and valuable to their organisation, especially during the financially difficult time FOPDEV faced. However, the study also found from their organisational attitudes that FOPDEV did not perceive themselves as owing anything to Prudential; they realised that they

contributed some value in return. This study finds this organisational realization insightful in terms of how an SDNGO perceived and challenged themselves under the theory of CSR. This set of findings is similar to EDF in which both SDNGOs had positive attitudes and understandings of the CSR theory of NMNCs, and they insisted on taking on the position as development service providers to negotiate with NMNCs in terms of partnership processes in practice. This supports the suggestion of NGO roles as hybrid NGOs by Kontinen and Ndidde (2023, p. 109), proposing that SDNGOs still perform with legitimacy and deliver aid interventions while balancing between their grassroots orientation and their relationship with their partners from the Global North.

However, from the emergent empirical data on FOPDEV's practices on the ground, this study argues that FOPDEV was not always able to hold their role as a hybrid NGO. CSR theory, as a part of stakeholder theory, significantly maintained and shaped FOPDEV's decision making to select the potential group of beneficiaries. This study discovered that, despite the belief that partnerships should be terminated if organisational goals are misaligned, as mentioned during the interviews and focus groups with FOPDEV members, FOPDEV found their potential and flexibility to expand or adjust their developmental work on the basis of their donor's preference.

According to Prudential's three CSR pillars, their corporate interest in disaster risk reduction appears to be one of the great examples of how they have challenged and affected FOPDEV's development programs. In addition, education is another one of Prudential's three CSR pillars that has evidently informed and shaped FOPDEV's decision making. As a result, FOPDEV expanded its developmental goal in 2012 to also focus on the disaster risk reduction for the first development project with Prudential. Moreover, FOPDEV also considered moving the locations of project implementation to the new communities that might meet the changing corporate interests of Prudential Thailand. By doing so, FOPDEV expanded the locations of its development projects from four provinces in Thailand's Northern area to twelve provinces in the Northern, Northeastern, Central, and Southern regions. Plus, FOPDEV also started to recruit and select the youth or students who were not directly involved with the elderly as direct stakeholders and who resided in another area across Thailand to participate in Prudential's Chairman's Global challenge campaign for the first time after the partnership began in 2012. All of this empirical evidence focusing

on how FOPDEV defined and chose their potential beneficiaries confirms that stakeholder theory, as part of their organisational *habitus*, plays a significant role, affecting FOPDEV's decision making in the development projects.

To this point, this study has demonstrated the empirical evidence that emerged from both the EDF and FOPDEV organisational case studies and discussed the comparative and contrasting factors between them in relation to the relevant cohesive set of literature. This offers greater understandings of how stakeholder theory, as a part of SDNGOs' composition, shaped organisational decision making towards the beneficiary selection process of the development projects in partnership with MNCs from the Global North.

6.6. Willingness, Capacity, and Capability of Potential Beneficiaries: Discussions of Research Objective 5 - *To understand how willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries inform or are applied by SDNGOs' decision making in order to define, choose, or approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.*

From a comprehensive review of the literature on 'populations in need' and 'beneficiaries as commodities' (Krause, 2014) for development projects (Beck, 2017) as service delivery, this study found few academic attempts to suggest that the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries may influence SDNGOs' organisational *habitus* on beneficiary selections when delivering development projects to donors or partners. Within the key debates, the works of Kabonga (2023) and Cordery, Belal, and Thomson (2023) have emphasised that NGOs learn that the beneficiaries of their development projects play a significant part in poverty reduction and development work at every level of the development project, including their own organisation stability (Stoddard, 2006). To address this academic gap, this study examined these possible implications that challenged or shaped SDNGOs' decision making when choosing their beneficiaries for the development projects with NMNCs.

This study explored how the first concept, 'willingness', relates to the capacity or resources of beneficiaries. According to Wisner (2013), this term was derived from

an ideology of social ‘vulnerability’ which frames humans as one of many 'elements' with variable degrees of vulnerability, a collection of 'elements' with distinct features of risks and varying destruction or loss possibilities. Wisner (2013) also described these as material vulnerability, economic vulnerability, and event social capital, which this study acknowledges is a similar idea to Bourdieu's *social capital*. The second concept, ‘capacity and capabilities’, can be divided into three stages: the individual stage, the organisational stage, and the system stage (Nanthagopan, Williams, and Page, 2016, p. 1610). Nevertheless, the existing literature has not explored how SDNGOs interact or manage capacity or capability with beneficiaries, particularly in the context of development projects in which beneficiaries may not be merely recipients of aid but also project participants.

In alignment the work of Krause (2014), the third concept implies that 'populations in need' or the prospective intended beneficiaries are not passive recipients. They may insist on employing the development initiative for their own goals, notwithstanding their poverty (Beck, 2017, p. 209). Even 'populations in need' or target beneficiaries appear to be a means to intervene in development projects and their communities from this perspective. Notably, there is very limited literature on the willingness of beneficiaries, whereas the majority of the available literature analyses and investigates the organisational desire of NGOs or volunteers. Yet, this thesis explored and extended the idea of *Eigensinn* or 'obstinacy' as a starting point to understand a beneficiary's willingness. Thus, this study explored in its two organisational case studies how the willingness of possible beneficiaries or populations in need influences, interacts with, or informs the *habitus* of SDNGOs during beneficiary selection. From such notions and argumentation, this research considered the willingness of both the potential beneficiaries (populations in need) and the chosen beneficiaries (intended beneficiaries) as another substantial driver that might intertwine with or rupture an NGO’s organisational *habitus* in the process of beneficiary selection.

To discuss this potential implication along with the analysis of empirical data from the EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential case studies, this study adopted Bourdieu's (2010) concept of *capital* to thoroughly analyse the (1) willingness and (2) capacity and capability of beneficiaries. Alongside *social capital*, this study discovered

and argued that *developmental capital*, in the form of being 'objectified' and 'embodied', as well as *habitus* itself, informed, contested, and maintained the *habitus* of SDNGOs in their beneficiary selection process. The findings from the empirical data demonstrate that the way in which both *social capital* and *developmental capital* maintained and shaped EDF and FOPDEV had similarities in terms of how the SDNGOs accessed and evaluated the potential beneficiaries before recruiting them.

To showcase the similarities between the two organisational case studies, for the first case study, potential beneficiaries' willingness is regarded as *embodied capital* that appeared to inform and challenge EDF's organisational *habitus* in the process of a beneficiary survey and selection procedures. The empirical data revealed that the willingness of the school's principal, head, governing board, or teacher was likely one of the most influential factors in EDF's decision making. In addition, the empirical evidence also shows that responsiveness of communication and activeness of the principal or teacher was also taken into consideration by EDF when choosing the schools. Yet, the empirical evidence demonstrated that EDF was aware of and cautious about the various levels of each school's willingness, activeness, and responsiveness. This finding offers fresh insights to the understandings of this thesis.

In addition, regarding potential beneficiaries' capacity and capability, the empirical data show that *social capital*, namely, network, or relationship with the community, was one of the significant implications for their beneficiary selection process, and other specific types of capacity and capability of potential beneficiaries also challenged, disputed, and influenced EDF Thailand's decision making. Moreover, using Moore's (2012) analytical forms founded on Bourdieu's *capitals*, this study discovered sophisticated and diversified features of distinct forms of *developmental capital* in EDF's beneficiary selection process. Notably, the data from the study demonstrated that all five chosen beneficiaries' (the schools) activities contained *objectified capital* (land, farms, agricultural infrastructure, or equipment) and possibly *embodied capital* (ability of farming, competencies in agriculture, previous desire or interest in agriculture). The agricultural aptitude and capability of the schools clearly affected or were entwined with EDF's organisational decision making in the beneficiary selection process. This is regarded as another fresh insight derived from the empirical data of the first organisational case study.

As for the second organisational case study, the empirical findings from the FOPDEV–Prudential case study have similarities to the first case study in terms of the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries influencing and shaping FOPDEV's decision making on beneficiary selection process.

After the preliminary discussions with Prudential Thailand, FOPDEV was interested in collaborating with a range of new communities in different geographies. Nonetheless, it clearly appears from the empirical data that the willingness of the potential beneficiaries was also one of the significant implications that challenged and contested the organisational *habitus*, which is a component of FOPDEV's decision to recruit the beneficiaries—the elderly in disaster-affected communities. As was evidenced, not only did the organisation perceive the different types of willingness from the beneficiaries directly from the potential beneficiaries themselves, but the willingness of the community leader also appeared to have been one of the major factors that influenced FOPDEV's decisions. From this viewpoint, this study indicated that the beneficiaries' desire may exist as *embodied developmental capital*, which is one of the important reasons that contested, challenged, and upheld FOPDEV's decision making on the beneficiaries.

Similarly to EDF, prior to beneficiary selection for their DRR project with Prudential Thailand, FOPDEV also performed an assessment of the capacity and capability of beneficiaries. This study found that *social capital* such as the community networks of the elderly, as well as the relationships of their stakeholders in the communities (such as their family members, other NGOs, health volunteers, or government agencies), was one of the primary criteria employed by FOPDEV in their decision making on the beneficiaries.

In order to provide more dimensional analysis of the empirical data of the second organisational case study, three forms of *developmental capital* were applied in FOPDEV's beneficiary selection process in order to provide more profound understandings. Firstly, the *objectified developmental capital* includes the smartphone, iPad, or laptop of the elderly; Internet connection (Wi-Fi); community meeting area; and community camping area, including the damaged properties or

construction sites that were affected by the disaster. Secondly, the *embodied developmental capital* includes the willingness, activeness, and ability of the elderly, community leaders, students, and youth to manage the interactions or relationships with each other in the community or with other stakeholders where the DRR project was implemented. Lastly, the individual *habitus* itself of the beneficiaries, as one of the forms of *developmental capital*, includes the knowledge of how to use the smartphone, iPad, or laptop as one of the DRR activities required for the elderly to engage with one of the forms of software FOPDEV developed for disaster risk reduction and preparedness for the elderly. This also includes the knowledge of project management to the community leaders and knowledge of volunteering to the students or youth when it comes to the eventual camping. To this end, this study therefore considers these sets of findings as the fresh analytical insights under this provisional theme.

Additionally, there is also a similarity in both EDF and FOPDEV case studies. Drawing on the empirical data on both organisational case studies, this study considers the argumentation of Khuc et al. (2021), suggesting that a monetary driver could have a significant influence on the potential beneficiaries to have more willingness to participate in a development project with NGOs. However, the empirical evidence from both EDF and FOPDEV rejects such an argumentation as it could not be applied to these two organisational case studies. The potential schools in Bangyai and the ones of the communities in Chiang Rai and Krabi were offered both gifts in cash and in kind as an exchange as part of EDF's and FOPDEV's development projects, yet some principals of the schools in Bangyai District and community leaders in Krabi and Chiang Rai still rejected EDF and IKEA nonetheless.

To provide theoretical discussions regarding the similarity of the findings between EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential, by using three forms of *developmental capital* as another analytical tool to analyse the empirical data, this study discovered that the types of capacities and capabilities of the populations in need accessed by both EDF and FOPDEV were different. For example, while the *developmental capital* of EDF refers to the sufficient space, vegetable farms, or knowledge of agriculture of the potential schools, FOPDEV's *developmental capital* refers to damaged houses, tablets or smart phones, or the knowledge of how to use smart phone applications.

This provides deeper understandings from the reality on the ground from different organisational, developmental, and social contexts and time frames.

Importantly, when looking at each form of *social* and *developmental capital*, there were mixed constituent formations of dispositions, feelings, attitudes, perceptions, and actions of EDF and FOPDEV staff members, demonstrating how their formation as part of the organisational *habitus* was influenced and contested by the implications of the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential schools in Bangyai District, Nonthaburi Province, or the communities in Krabi or Ayutthaya provinces. The study found this set of theoretical and analytical tools useful in terms of analysing NGOs' decision making and constructing deeper understandings of how NGOs operate within the field of Development Studies.

6.7. Theory of Project Management: Discussions of Research Objective 6 - *To understand how the theory of project management informs or is implemented by SDNGOs' decision making to define, choose, or approach their potential beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs.*

The concept of project management, according to the Business Studies literature, is founded on three concepts: management as planning (planning theory), the dispatch model (execution theory), and the thermostat model (project theory). These three notions are critical components of project management theory (Koskela and Howell, 2002, pp. 5–9). The notion of project management has recently been recognised and extensively embraced in areas all around the world. However, owing to global business or management trends in reaction to economic and social situations, including the debate of new information, the application of project management may alternate from time to time (Mkutano and Sang, 2018).

Following this, this study explores how there have been only a few studies on the adoption of project management with an emphasis on NGOs in the field of Development Studies. The studies that exist are largely focused on the use of techniques and tools in the development area. According to a recent study, the LogFrame method is the most significant and commonly used method of managing

development projects for NGOs (Golini, Landoni, and Kalchschmidt, 2018). Despite the fact that numerous versions and language variants are in use today, the LogFrame retains its basic matrix architecture that decomposes development projects into their constituent components (Cracknell, 2000).

In light of this, this study argues that the majority of this sub-literature heavily focuses on the importance, quality, and improvement of project management (Koskela and Howell, 2002; Mkutano and Sang, 2018) by SDNGOs to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the development project itself. Beck (2017, p. 8) urges that the discipline of NGO and Development Studies should focus on the interactions of development projects conducted by NGOs in other dimensions without the goal of forming a 'best practices' or a 'best development' model. Krause (2014, p. 76), on the other hand, criticises project management tools as logical frameworks that influence rather than define people's behaviour. Furthermore, whether or not NGOs use such frameworks, they have altered the terrain for all aid organisations (Krause, 2014, p. 77).

This research contends that the majority of the project management literature focuses entirely on the importance, quality, and improvement of project management by NGOs. Except for Krause's (2014, p. 77) research that criticises the LogFrame application, no study has investigated how project management theory informs or impacts SDNGOs when beneficiary selection is underway. This provides a critical space for this research to focus and further explore SDNGOs' decision making. Although acknowledging Krause's (2014) critiques on NGOs' usage of the logical framework, this study questions whether the concept of the LogFrame as a philosophy of project management informs or influences an SDNGO's *habitus*. If yes, how does such a notion affect them and/or how is it applied in practice to define or choose the potential beneficiaries under a cross-sector partnership, particularly with corporate donors from the Global North?

It is important to note here before discussing and illustrating how the theory of project management maintained, shaped, and intertwined with organisational *habitus* that the difference in the practice of the theory of project management between the two organisational case studies was that EDF has their own reporting format while

FOPDEV chose to use the LogFrame reporting framework to measure and evaluate their development projects as reports to their NMNC partners. In terms of their reporting format, as part of project management theory, there is a similarity between EDF and FOPDEV in that both SDNGOs chose such reporting formats on their own terms. IKEA and Prudential did not suggest, provide, or inform such formats to either SDNGO. Significantly, the findings from both EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential have similarities in terms of how timeline, reporting, and budgeting, as part of theory of project management, maintained and shaped their organisational *habitus* to choose the potential beneficiaries from the design process of the development projects.

To start with the first organisational case study, the empirical data from EDF and IKEA suggest that EDF Thailand used three elements from project management theory: (1) timeline, (2) reporting of project output and outcome, and (3) budgeting.

One of the significant elements from project management theory that emerged from the data is timeline, which appeared to be an important element for EDF's organisational decisions in order to select potential beneficiaries for both first- and second-year projects with IKEA Thailand. Second, the empirical data revealed that reporting is another component of project management theory that shaped and challenged EDF's decision making prior to select the potential schools. In their development project proposal to IKEA Thailand, EDF claimed and promised that EDF staff members will review and monitor the project on a timely basis on the basis of the framework, which included the 'inputs', 'processes', and 'outcomes' of the project activities. Additionally, this study observed the possible intertwined tensions and pressures that may exist from timeline and reporting, suggesting that these two elements may influence EDF's decision to select only those beneficiaries who were likely capable of delivering the aforementioned project output and outcome within the given timeline.

Following this, the empirical evidence from the EDF case study also suggests that the third component of project management theory is the development project's budgeting that concerned EDF during the beneficiary section process. Referring to the previous discussions of the capacity and capability of potential beneficiaries, the empirical data showcase that EDF was also concerned if their limited budget could

provide sufficient resources to the potential schools that might have less capacity and capability when compared to other schools, resulting in the success and effectiveness of their development project and the eventual financial stability of EDF. As a result, some of the potential schools with less capacity and capability (for example, poorer or more vulnerable schools) that also needed help and had willingness to participate in the Self-Reliance School project were not chosen.

However, as discussed earlier in this section in that the findings of both organisational case studies have similarities on how the theory of project management maintained and shaped their organisational *habitus*, the findings that emerged from the FOPDEV case study show that, in terms of the theory of project management, there seemed to be a greater concern within FOPDEV to accurately choose the potential communities in need and elderly population when compared to the EDF case study.

Similarly to EDF case study, this study found that FOPDEV Thailand utilised three elements of project management theory: timeline, reporting, and budgeting, following the application of the LogFrame. Evidently, FOPDEV, in partnership with Prudential Thailand, used and utilised the LogFrame for the DRR projects from 2012 to 2019. By employing the LogFrame, the study investigated if FOPDEV's management and staff members referenced any components of project management theory. While discussing the planning, implementation, and reporting of the DRR project development with Prudential, timeline and budgeting appeared to be among the greatest concerns of FOPDEV.

Significantly, the organisation seemed to have good understandings of the significance of the CSR contributions from Prudential and, at the same time, was concerned about their financial status without the support from Prudential. This study found that if the potential beneficiaries such as disaster-damaged communities in Krabi or Ayutthaya had any conditions, limitations, or considerations that could affect the timeline or budget of the project, FOPDEV tended to avoid approaching or choosing those beneficiaries to be a part of their development project with Prudential accordingly. Instead, the empirical evidence also shows that with the interests and conditions of Prudential's CSR and stakeholder theories, FOPDEV had attempts to

look for alternative or similar communities in the same provinces to replace the first community option. From this set of empirical data, the study suggests that eventually timeline and budgeting, as part of the LogFrame reporting framework, evidently maintained, challenged, and shaped FOPDEV's decision making regarding beneficiary selection.

To this end, from the empirical data, it is important for this study to once again highlight that Prudential did not suggest or request FOPDEV to adopt the LogFrame or any specific type of reporting—it was FOPDEV's own will, coming from their internal collective choices and freedom, to employ the LogFrame in planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting the activities of their development projects with Prudential. Prior to working with Prudential, FOPDEV had considered the LogFrame as a useful application for their project management during their work with the EU. This study, therefore, denotes a theory of project management, maintained as part of FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* prior to work with Prudential Thailand, but that it eventually also challenged the organisation's decision making to define or choose the beneficiaries if there were any conditions or considerations affecting project timeline, budget, or reporting. Hence, this study considers that project management theory, as a constituent part of organisational *habitus*, accordingly both maintained and ruptured FOPDEV's decision making towards the beneficiary selection process for the development projects with Prudential.

In conclusion, the empirical evidence from both EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential similarly supports the argumentation of Bosibori and Otieno (2021), in which the scholars proposed that project successes and failures are both iterative and of concern for NGOs due to the predicted and unpredicted difficult conditions, limitations, and complexities which could be considered as project risks. Reflecting on this set of empirical data from both of the two organisational case studies, this thesis argues that the poorer schools or schools that have less capacity and capability in the case of EDF and the communities more damaged by disaster for FOPDEV's DRR project might have not been chosen to be a part of their development projects with NMNCs, despite potentially being more in need.

This empirical evidence portrays how budgeting, timeline, and reporting, as part of the theory of project management, maintained, interplayed with, and formed EDF's and FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* on how they chose their intended beneficiaries for their development projects. Such consequences of EDF's and FOPDEV's decision making stemming from the empirical data are a reminder of the recent challenges to the roles of NGOs, from which scholars have called on NGOs to prioritise other development dimensions (Beck, 2017) and have less of a logic of professionalism (Kontinen and Ndidde, 2023), keeping the global standard of managerialism with their partners, NMNCs. Although such developmental complications, organisational dilemmas, and partnership conditionalities impact the processes and practices of both EDF and FOPDEV in reality, this study denotes that the theory of project management shaped both EDF's and FOPDEV's organisational *habitus* in the process of choosing the intended schools and communities as a result. In this, this study contributes fresh insights from its empirical data from the case studies of EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential to the recent debates on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs in the field of partnership.

6.8. Conclusion

This chapter has provided the research findings and theoretical discussions of two organisational case studies through the lens of each research objective. The similarities and differences presented between the two case studies of EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential provide greater understandings of how different NGOs operate in the field. Moreover, brief new insights and analytical highlights were provided and discussed alongside the similarities and differences of the two organisational case studies in order to answer the central research questions of this thesis. The next chapter, as the final chapter of this thesis, turns to the research conclusion.

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Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.1. Research Conclusion

Situating itself within the ongoing critical debates of the roles, processes, practices of NGOs in the field of partnership, this thesis aimed to explore and examine NGOs' decision making under the cross-sector collaboration or social partnership between Southern development non-governmental organisations (SDNGOs) and Northern multinational corporations (NMNCs) with a focus on the selection process of their potential beneficiaries for development projects. In order to address the core question of 'who are the (chosen) poor?' for the development projects between two agencies through the specific *field* of cross-sector collaboration or social partnership, this study asks the following questions: (1) How do SDNGOs define, choose, or approach their potential intended beneficiaries? (2) What implications do SDNGOs consider when defining, choosing, and approaching potential beneficiaries for development projects with Northern MNCs? From these central two research questions, there are six objectives of this study.

The main conceptual contribution of this thesis is its focus on the roles, processes, and practices of NGOs as part of civil society, particularly their partnerships with MNCs from the Global North to address complex global issues such as poverty, inequality, conflict, and environmental degradation. These collaborations often integrate NGO projects into the CSR initiatives of MNCs, aiming for mutual benefit. However, the literature indicates a lack of attention on how these NGOs select their beneficiaries for development projects under such cross-sector partnerships. This thesis critically examines the process of beneficiary selection by Southern development NGOs (SDNGOs) and the influences around them, especially the Northern multinational corporations (NMNCs). By doing so, it aims to fill a significant gap in the literature and provide deeper understandings for both academics and practitioners into the operational dynamics and real-world impacts of these cross-sector partnerships.

In order to unpack and construct the understandings to the core question 'who are the (chosen) poor?', this thesis is grounded in a comprehensive conceptual overview and analytical framework, integrating both ontological and epistemological foundations to address the central research questions. The ontological approach of *NGO-ism* frames the roles, identities, and processes of Southern development NGOs (SDNGOs), emphasizing their self-definition within the broader third sector and their interactions with Northern multinational corporations (NMNCs). This study adopts a qualitative and interpretivist paradigm, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the social realities and meanings constructed by SDNGOs, NMNCs, and the potential and chosen beneficiaries. The epistemological framework employs the concept of *field of practice*, informed by Krause (2014), and Bourdieu's (1990; 1996; 2006) 'theory of practice', including the concepts of *field*, *capital*, and *habitus*, to explore the dynamic interactions and decision-making processes within SDNGO–NMNC partnerships. Methodologically, the thesis utilizes organizational case studies, focusing on the meso-level interactions and the socio-economic and cultural contexts of these partnerships, specifically in Thailand. The ontological and epistemological framework, as well as the broader literature, informed this study's analysis of the case studies, framed by the four provisional themes, namely, (1) conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the stakeholder theory; (3) the willingness, capacity, and capability of potential beneficiaries; and (4) the theory of project management. This approach provides a rich, detailed analysis of the factors influencing SDNGO decision making, contributing valuable empirical evidence and analytic insights to the academic debates within NGO and Development Studies.

In order to address the six research objectives and to answer the research questions, this research conducted an intensive exploratory literature review as well as field research. To provide multidimensional perspectives and broader understandings to the analytical focus, this research, from its qualitative and interpretivist philosophical approach, used semi-structured interviews, collected corporate documents, and conducted focus groups engaging partnership members and relevant stakeholders of the selected two case studies: EDF–IKEA Thailand and FOPDEV–Prudential Thailand. Alongside the exploratory literature, critiques, and working hypotheses systematically drawn up in Chapter 2, the empirical evidence emerging from the two organisational case studies provide greater understandings of

how such partnerships operate as contributions to the literature, especially in the field of NGO and Development Studies. The discussions and findings from this research not only advance academic knowledge but also offer practical insights for practitioners working in the field of development, especially to NGOs and MNCs. By shedding light on the decision-making processes and criteria used by SDNGOs in selecting beneficiaries from the two organisational case studies, this study provides discussions and findings that can be applied as actionable guidance for NGOs, MNCs, and other development actors in both the Global North and Global South seeking to improve their beneficiary selection strategies and processes, resulting in increased accountability, governance, and equity of the organisations and of the development sector accordingly.

Additionally, the hybrid application of Krause's (2014) *field of practice* and Bourdieu's (1990; 1996; 2006) 'theory of practice' offers a robust analytical framework that academics can utilise to better understand and navigate the power dynamics that are inherent in cross-sector partnerships with a focus on NGOs' decision making. These contributions are set to enhance the ethics, integrity, and sustainability of development interventions, ultimately leading to more impactful and sustainable outcomes for the poor and the communities being served. These impacts can be summarised in alignment with six research objectives as follows.

Firstly, for research objectives 1 and 2, the redefining and reconceptualising of the cross-sector collaboration or social partnership with the development as service delivery framework that moves beyond the idealised notion of 'authentic partnership', this research found critical gaps in the literature of NGOs' decision making on beneficiary selection. Drawn up from the exploratory literature review, this research identified four provisional main themes that could be implications which potentially influence, constrain, or challenge SDNGOs in terms of decision making during the process of beneficiary selection for development projects in partnership with MNCs from the Global North. The four provisional themes, namely, (1) conceptualisation of poverty; (2) the stakeholder theory; (3) the willingness, capacity, and capability of potential beneficiaries; and (4) the theory of project management, have constituted a conceptual framework for this research. Moreover, this research also found that Bourdieu's 'theory of practice', consisting of *field*, *habitus*, and *capital*, as a theoretical

and analytical tool to facilitate data analysis, was particularly useful in developing fruitful discussions and offering fresh insights. Significantly, the concept of three forms of *capital* developed by Moore (2012), in particular, was very beneficial to this study in its analysis of the 'willingness', 'capacity', and 'capability' of beneficiaries.

For research objective 3, this study then identified three distinct sets of literature on the core conceptions of poverty that may influence and constrain the decisions of SDNGOs on how they defined or chose potential beneficiaries for development projects when partnering with NMNCs. They are (1) absolute poverty, (2) relative poverty, and (3) the capabilities approach. Using these concepts to analyse the empirical data, this research found that EDF Thailand, as the first SNDGO case study, dynamically adopted a combination of these aforementioned poverty approaches in their process of beneficiary selection for development projects in collaboration with IKEA Thailand. In addition, EDF Thailand considered the poverty dimensions at two distinct levels of agency (students and schools). Similarly, for the second case study, this research found that FOPDEV also employed a combination of poverty approaches in their process of beneficiary selection for development projects in collaboration with Prudential Thailand. Importantly, this study used Amartya Sen's (1999) five categories of the material basis of well-being in order to facilitate the analysis of the poverty concept through FOPDEV's practices through their conceptualisation of poverty. From its analysis, this research argued that EDF and FOPDEV's organisational conceptualisation of poverty was part of their organisational *habitus*, clearly shaping their beneficiary selection processes dynamically as a result.

Next, in order to address research objective 4, this study examined how stakeholder theory, one of the major foundations of CSR, informs or is employed in SDNGOs' decision-making process in terms of their potential beneficiary selection in practices. The empirical data indicate that EDF acknowledged the CSR concept and believed in a win–win approach to deal with NMNCs. As for FOPDEV, it understood that corporate donations under Prudential's development project were CSR funds. Although believing that partnerships should be terminated if objectives are incompatible, this study found that EDF expanded their project development to the Bangyai area and selected potential beneficiaries with criteria that seemed to be aligned with IKEA's CSR and stakeholder theories. As for FOPDEV, this study

explored how the organisation realised their potential in expanding the developmental work into disaster-affected areas, one of Prudential's main interests. In addition, FOPDEV also realised their flexibility in adjusting their project development scope if it was relevant to the elderly, their main target beneficiaries. As a result, both new communities (in this case, those in Krabi and Ayutthaya provinces) and the target group of potential beneficiaries (representative students from across the country) were considered in FOPDEV's appraisals. From the two case studies, the research, hence, argues that organisational decision making of EDF and FOPDEV was influenced, challenged, and shaped by contingent implications of stakeholder theory, as part of their organisational *habitus*, in order to select the potential beneficiaries for the development projects with IKEA and Prudential, respectively.

Then, for research objective 5, on the basis of the exploratory literature on 'populations in need' for development projects and emerging from the empirical data, this research developed a thematic framework—comprising the concepts of 'willingness', 'capacity', and 'capability' of the potential beneficiaries themselves—and investigated how this might impact SDNGOs' decision making on their beneficiary selection process. The empirical data revealed that the willingness of the potential beneficiaries was likely one of the most influential considerations in EDF and FOPDEV's decision making. As for the capacity and capability of the potential beneficiaries, this study acknowledged the privileges of Bourdieu's concept of *capital* and the developed application of the three forms of *capital,* namely, *objectified developmental capital*, *embodied developmental capital*, and *habitus*, in order to analyse the empirical data under this provisional theme. As a result, this study offers fresh insights and developed a set of analytical tools to assess how the willingness, capacity, and capability of the potential beneficiaries as part of the organisational *habitus* and *developmental capital* including *social capital* interplayed and intertwined with the decision-making processes of EDF and FOPDEV when they defined, approached, or selected beneficiaries for their development projects in partnership with NMNCs.

To the final research objective of this thesis, this study examined the theory of project management which may have shaped the decision making of SDNGOs. The analysis found that both EDF and FOPDEV employed the theory of project

management in practice, such as in budgeting, timeline planning, and project reporting. Although these considerations might not be new to the discipline of Development Studies, recently, there have been calls from scholars to investigate how the theory of project management impacts NGOs in practice. This study discovers that these implications seemed to be maintained in their organisational *habitus* and as a result shaped their organisational decision making when recruiting the potential beneficiaries for their development projects with NMNCs. The empirical evidence from both EDF–IKEA and FOPDEV–Prudential demonstrates that the potential beneficiaries or populations in need who seemed to have difficult conditions; unpredicted circumstances; and, importantly, less willingness, less capacity, or less capability when compared to the other choices in the community, were not chosen to be a part of their development projects. None of existing the literature has discussed this topic. Therefore, this can be considered another fresh insight of this thesis.

Recently, there has been a call from scholars under interdisciplinary studies regarding the debates of the roles of SDNGOs in partnership with actors who operate between the Global North and Global South to restructure the development landscape of foreign aid interventions and development projects in the Global South (Khan, 2023; van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023). Decolonization, localization, and the prioritisation of the context-sensitive approach are suggested to empower and rebalance the power of SDNGOs who contribute to the development work in the Global South (Khan, 2023; van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole, 2023; Zijlstra and Spierenburg, 2023). This study considers the main contributions of this research as one of the contributory pieces of the jigsaw of the recent academic debates, wherein this study has demonstrated the decision-making processes of the selection of beneficiaries of two SDNGOs for their development projects in Thailand.

As concluded above, it is important to note again that this thesis adopted the approaches of the *field of practice* (Krause, 2014) and 'theory of practice' (Bourdieu, 1990; 1992; 1996; 2006) as a conceptual starting point for its epistemological and analytical applications to answer the central research questions. Not only did this research obtain empirical evidence from the real practices of two organisational case studies on the ground in order to discuss and engage with the theory, providing knowledge contributions to academics across interdisciplinary studies, but also the

argumentations, findings, and fresh insights of this thesis also provide a potential impact on the practitioners in the domain of development, especially NGOs and MNCs who play a part in the cross-sector partnership the between Global North and Global South. Therefore, this research considers its contributions to have both an academic and practical impact, offering a dual benefit for practitioners who seek to base their work on robust research whilst also advancing scholarly discussions in the field.

To highlight the potential impact on practitioners in particular, this study provides potential invaluable insights on NGOs' decision making in the complex process of beneficiary selection by NGOs in the Global South, particularly in cross-sector partnerships with MNCs from the Global North. This understanding equips practitioners with the necessary knowledge to make more informed and strategic decisions about selecting beneficiaries with the changing environment around them. Following this, this thesis highlights the potential key drivers, challenges, and complicated interactions (both internally and externally) of SDNGOs' organisational decision-making processes, with a main focus on the beneficiary selection process for development projects, offering practitioners a framework to navigate and manage these challenges under partnership. By emphasising the significant roles of SDNGOs within civil society and their collaborations with NMNCs to address pressing global issues such as poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, and other social issues, from the two organisational case studies in Thailand, the research underscores the broader impact of NGO work. This perspective can enhance strategic planning for practitioners, helping them design projects that not only achieve their own mutual benefits between NGOs and MNCs, but also to remind them that governance and accountability during the beneficiary selection are essential and needed.

Furthermore, this thesis critically examines the potential influence of NMNCs alongside other significant drivers such as the beneficiaries themselves in the decision-making processes of SDNGOs, providing practitioners with a deeper understanding of the power dynamics and strategies that are used to balance these influences for their development projects under such partnerships. Significantly, by integrating its ontological and epistemological foundations, this research offers a comprehensive conceptual overview of the recent challenging issues, enabling practitioners to deepen their theoretical understanding and improve their analytical approaches in real practice. The empirical evidence and practical applications

presented in the study therefore facilitate the translation of theoretical knowledge into actionable strategies, potentially enhancing not only the outputs, outcomes, and impact of practitioners' development projects, but also a fairer development process for the beneficiaries or the entirety of populations in need who are ultimately at the heart of the development projects. It could be argued that it is in fact not possible for SDNGOs (or even NMNCs) to help everyone at the same time, but this study argues for accountability and governance during the beneficiary selection process, calling for justice to those populations in need who might be left behind without appropriate considerations.

To this end, this study reminds us once again that the populations in need or beneficiaries are not only the recipients of aid interventions but also integral to achieving the broader goals of development, as they are active participants whose inclusion and empowerment are essential for making meaningful change and providing sustainable development in the end. This perspective shifts the focus from viewing beneficiaries as passive recipients to acknowledging them as crucial agents in the development process. This is a critical challenge to the recent and future roles of NGOs in the field of partnership between the Global North and Global South.

7.2. Summary of the Main Contributions to the Existing Literature

In order to provide the main contributions that could significantly impact academics under the field of NGO and Development Studies, this section illustrates a summary of the original contributions in terms of a range of theoretical, analytical, and methodological applications, derived from and developed in Chapters 2 and 3, for this research's data collection, analysis, and discussions. These sets of theoretical, analytical, and methodological contributions were developed and used to answer the two central research questions and to address the six research objectives of this study via the two selected SDNGO organisational case studies in Thailand.

A summary of main contributions to the existing literature is demonstrated in Table 7.1 on the next page:

Table 7.1. Summary of the main contributions to the existing literature.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Fowler (2008); Fowler and Malunga (2010)	Ontology of *NGO-ism,* the ways NGOs think, act, and interact with a range of issues in a changing social and political environment.	Theoretical/ontological approach.	Application of this ontological approach was used to analyse the two selected SDNGOs in Thailand in different contexts on how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach the beneficiaries for the development projects in partnership with NMNCs.
Krause (2014)	Epistemology of *field of practice* within humanitarian relief organisations in East Africa.	Theoretical/epistemological approach.	(1) Application of this epistemological approach was used by this study to re-define and re-conceptualise the *field* of partnership between SDNGOs and NMNCs from the existing theoretical and empirical literature on development studies.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
			(2) Application of this epistemological approach was used to analyse the empirical data of practices of the two SDNGO case studies in Thailand on how SDNGOs define, choose, or approach the beneficiaries for the development projects in partnership with NMNCs.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Bourdieu (1977); Bourdieu (1989); Bourdieu (1990); Bourdieu (1991); Bourdieu (1992); Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992); Bourdieu (1994); Bourdieu (1996); Bourdieu (1999); Bourdieu (2006) Bourdieu (2010); Moore (2012)	Grand theory of 'theory of practice', later employed by scholars of development studies such as Ebrahim's (2005) organisational change and NGO–funder relations, Bebbington's (2007) development studies and development alternatives, Krause's (2008; 2014) decision making on humanitarian organisations, Bristow's (2008) SDNGO transformation on training health promoters, and Pickering-Saqqa's (2019) NDNGOs' decision making in domestic programmes.	Theoretical/methodological/analytical approach.	(1) Application of the concept of *field* as a theoretical, methodological, and analytical tool was used by this study for assessing the *field* of partnership. (2) This study used the concept of *habitus* as a methodological and analytical tool to examine how the organisational *habitus* of SDNGOs on decision making is shaped, constrained, and made to select their beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs. (3) This study adopted the concept of *capital* as an additional analytical tool to examine how the *capital* of beneficiaries affects a SDNGO's

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
			decision-making process in terms of selecting their beneficiaries for development projects with NMNCs. (4) All contributions from the above applications used move forward the understandings of SDNGOs in the discipline of Partnership and Development Studies.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Bendell (2000); Bank, Hulme, and Edwards (2015)	Bendell (2000) offers an NGO characteristic identification framework of typology of NGOs working with/against the private sector, whilst Bank, Hulme, and Edwards (2015) offer a framework of contrasting orientations and attributes of MBOs and development NGOs.	Methodological approach/Development Studies/partnership/ NGO.	This study employed and developed these frameworks as a methodological application to identify and select two SDNGOs in Thailand by their partnership and orientation characteristics in order to generate new empirical data.
IMF (2006); Bendell, Collins, and Roper (2010); Kumi et al. (2023); van Wessel, Kontinen, and Bawole (2023)	Calls on research on development and partnership studies in the Global South to move away from Africa and India to instead focus on other developing countries in Asia.	Empirical studies/ partnership/ Development Studies/ International Development Studies.	This study collected and generated empirical data from two SDNGO case studies in Thailand where no evidence on partnership with NMNCs was found.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Crane (1998); Austin (2000); Elkington and Fennell (2000); Murphy and Coleman (2000); United Nations (2000); Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright (2004); Brehm (2004); Guo and Acar (2005); Seitanidi and Ryan (2007); Austin and Seitanidi (2012a); Austin and Seitanidi (2012b); Burgos (2013); Kolk (2014); O'Connor and Shumate (2014)	Empirical studies offering concepts of participatory development, functional partnership, trust-based partnership, formal partnership, *and* language of partnership in the global development agenda coined by intuitions and donors in the Global North—all based on a concept of 'authentic partnership'.	Empirical studies/ partnership/ International Development Studies.	This study moved forward understandings beyond the concept of 'authentic partnership' by (1) drawing critiques from the exploratory literature of a framework of development as service delivery and (2) providing new sets of empirical data based on two SDNGO case studies in Thailand.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Banks, Hulme, and Edwards (2015); AbouAssi and Trent (2016); Lalzai and Rana, (2020); Esposito and Antonucci (2022); Khan (2023); Kinsbergen et al., (2023); van Wessel (2023)	Revisiting the old publication in 1996 '*Too Close for Comfort*' and highlighting concerns of weak roots in civil society, technocracy, and bridging opportunities to suggest that adopting new roles as a 'service delivery provider' to governments and development institutional donors of NGOs could challenge their identity.	Empirical studies/ Development Studies/International Development Studies/ NGOs.	This study used a framework of development as a service delivery to bring new sets of empirical data of SDNGOs working with NMNCs, enabling and providing empirical evidence for further conceptualisation and theorisation of this phenomenon.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Fowler (1991); Theunis (1992); Hoyer (1994); Edwards and Hulme (1996); Hulme and Mosley (1996); Folwer (1997); Muchunguzi and Milne (1997); Sobhan (1997); Lewis (1998); Lewis (1999); Brehm (2004); Hoksbergen (2005); Fowler and Malunga (2010); Reith (2010); Bebbington, Hickey, and Mitlin (2013); Hulme and Edwards (2013); Banks, Hulme, and Edwards (2015); AbouAssi and Trent (2016); Lalzai and Rana, (2020);	Four major challenges to the critiques of roles of NGOs, especially in the Global South, as service delivery providers of development projects, affecting their organisational decision making.	Empirical studies/ Development Studies/International Development Studies/ NGOs.	This study built up the exploratory working hypotheses from these four major challenges and from critiques of development as service delivery to examine SDNGOs' decision making toward their beneficiary selection, which facilitates empirical evidence for further critical understandings.

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Esposito and Antonucci (2022); Kontinen and Ndidde (2023)			
Edwards (2008); Shutt (2009); Hulme and Edwards (2013); Wallace and Porter (2013); Krause (2014); Beck (2017); Chege (2023); van Wessel (2023);	Empirical studies on NGOs' decision making and relationships with their beneficiaries in terms of perspectives of service delivery with governments and institutional donors from the development	Empirical studies/ Development Studies/International Development Studies/ NGOs.	(1) This study generated and provided a new differentiated set of empirical data from SDNGO–NMNC partnership case studies for development projects, focusing on the decision-making processes of

Key Literature	Existing Literature Contribution	Academic Strand and Indicative Paradigm	Key Impact and Contribution to Knowledge Addressed by this Study
Kontinen and Bawole (2023)	industry—the proposed claims of populations in need/ development projects as products and beneficiaries as commodities.		beneficiary selections. (2) This study conducted further research into SDNGOs' decision making that is shaped and constrained by organisations' conceptualisation of poverty; stakeholder theory; theory of project management; and the willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries.

7.3. Future Research Suggestions

This thesis aims at providing a more thorough understanding of SDNGOs' decision making on their beneficiary selection processes for development projects under cross-sector partnerships with NMNCs. Thus far, to the author's knowledge, there has not been any research with a focus of *NGO-ism* in choosing the poor under a cross-sector collaboration or social partnership for development projects between SDNGOs and NMNCs. Future research may find it more useful to conduct other types of such a partnership for development projects, such as between actors in the same

sector or across sectors or different characteristics of any organisations, such as, for example, between NGOs and governments via public–private partnership (PPP) or between NGOs themselves, especially SDNGO–SDNGO partnerships or SDNGOs receiving funds from international organisations such as the UN or USAID. This is due to the fact that there are more likely to be other considerations or implications involved under different *fields*.

Furthermore, it is worth attempting to research other areas such as domestic development projects by NMNCs and NGOs in the Global North itself, or between SNGOs and MNCs from the Global South (such as MNCs from Malaysia, Indonesia, or even Thailand) where economies have been growing and expanding recently. In addition, it would be necessary for future research to explore other implications that emerged from this study's research data but were not significant to either case study nor the research focus of this thesis. Examples include discussions about government authority, the benefits of corporate donations toward corporate tax deduction, and some aspects of development ethics requiring further exploration. To this latter point, this research found that EDF Thailand rejected working with MNCs that were involved in alcohol, cigarette, junk food, and carbonated soft drink businesses because of its conflict with their developmental concerns against the quality of life of students, their intended beneficiaries. The reasoning behind such a decision could be an avenue for future research.

The partnership ethics between NGOs and MNCs might also be explored; for example, both FOPDEV and EDF refused to raise or receive funds from a corporate competitor of previous or existing donors as they were in the same line of business. In addition, in the first case study, EDF–IKEA Thailand, one of the interviewees from the school referred to their school activity with respect to the concept of a *sufficiency economy* (proposed by Thailand's King Rama IX). In this instance, there was no reference or quotations during the interview data collection to this topic with regard to SDNGOs' decision making for EDF Thailand, the focus of this research. However, there is potential for further exploration on this topic in a future study, especially in terms of the theory of poverty and the implementation of poverty alleviation projects in Thailand.

Finally, in terms of analytical tools informed by Bourdieu's (1990; 1992, 1996, 2006) 'theory of practice', an interesting perspective can emerge through further research employing the notion of *developmental capital* from this thesis in experimenting with it or applying it to other development projects of NGOs in their selection process for beneficiaries. On the other hand, in the case of the *habitus* of donors or other partners working with NGOs, further research could look at their organisational *habitus* and see if perhaps it could be informed, challenged, and disputed by NGOs' preference to explore more challenges or diversify any related implications in terms of social partnerships but from different perspectives. This could be one of the key reasons that Bourdieu intended to develop and experiment with the 'theory of practice' in order to build up more comprehensive and fuller understanding between different agencies of each social space or each specific *field*.

In sum, this study found a broad range of other potential avenues for future focus, providing assistance to the continued important research on NGOs, partnership, and social development.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Copies of UREC approval and DMP approval.

19th October 2017

Dear Sorawit,

Project Title:	**An Examination of Social Partnerships Between North Transnational Corporations and South Development Non-Governmental Organisations: Changing Dynamics and Behaviours of NGOs under Contractual Relationships with Cross-Sector Partners – A Case Study of Thailand**
Principal Investigator:	**Dr Meera Tiwari**
Researcher:	**Sorawit Lim-o-pas Pulsawasd**
Reference Number:	**UREC 1617 78**

I am writing to confirm the outcome of your application to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC), which was considered by UREC on **Wednesday 5 July 2017.**

The decision made by members of the Committee is **Approved**. The Committee's response is based on the protocol described in the application form and supporting documentation. Your study has received ethical approval from the date of this letter.

Should you wish to make any changes in connection with your research project, this must be reported immediately to UREC. A Notification of Amendment form should be submitted for approval, accompanied by any additional or amended documents: http://www.uel.ac.uk/wwwmedia/schools/graduate/documents/Notification-of-Amendment-to-Approved-Ethics-App-150115.doc

Any adverse events that occur in connection with this research project must be reported immediately to UREC.

Approved Research Site

I am pleased to confirm that the approval of the proposed research applies to the following research site.

Research Site	Principal Investigator / Local Collaborator
SDNGO offices, private meeting room in project venues - Thailand	Dr Meera Tiwari

Please note, it is your responsibility to retain this letter for your records.

With the Committee's best wishes for the success of this project.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Fernanda Silva
Administrative Officer for Research Governance
University Research Ethics Committee (UREC)
Email: researchethics@uel.ac.uk

From: **ResearchUEL** haplo@uel.ac.uk
Subject: Decision - Ethics ETH2223-0133: Mr Sorawit Pulsawasd
Date: 13 February 2023 at 18:58
To: Sorawit Pulsawasd u1526704@uel.ac.uk

ResearchUEL

Dear Sorawit,

Application ID: ETH2223-0133

Original application ID: UREC 1617 78

Project title: Who are the chosen poor?: An examination of cross-sector partnerships for development projects between MNCs and Local NGOs in Thailand

Lead researcher: Mr Sorawit Pulsawasd

Your application to Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee (EISC) was considered on the 13th February 2023.

The decision is: **Approved**

The Committee's response is based on the protocol described in the application form and supporting documentation.

Your project has received ethical approval for 4 years from the approval date.

If you have any questions regarding this application please contact your supervisor or the administrator for the Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee.

Approval has been given for the submitted application only and the research must be conducted accordingly.

Should you wish to make any changes in connection with this research/consultancy project you must complete 'An application for approval of an amendment to an existing application'.

Approval is given on the understanding that the UEL Code of Practice for Research and the Code of Practice for Research Ethics is adhered to.

Any adverse events or reactions that occur in connection with this research/consultancy project should be reported using the University's form for Reporting an Adverse/Serious Adverse Event/Reaction.

The University will periodically audit a random sample of approved applications for ethical approval, to ensure that the projects are conducted in compliance with the consent given by the Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee and to the highest standards of rigour and integrity.

Please note, it is your responsibility to retain this letter for your records.

With the Committee's best wishes for the success of the project.

Yours sincerely,

Fernanda Pereira Da Silva

Administrative Officer for Research Governance

Appendix 2

Indicative paradigms from the academic literature specifically on partnership between businesses and NGOs.

No.	Strands within cross-sector collaboration (CSC) or social partnership between business and NGO disciplines	Representative Studies of Business School	Representative Studies of Social Sciences School
1	**Nature of CSC:** Defining CSC, identifying characteristics, roles, values and evolutions of CSC	(Crane, 1998) (Austin, 2000) (Bendell, 2000) (Elkington & Fennell, 2000) (Murphy & Coleman, 2000) (Schneidewind & Peterson, 2000) (Berger, Cunningham & Drumwright, 2004) (Guo & Acar, 2005) (Seitanidi & Ryan, 2007) (Scott & Seglow, 2007) (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012) (Burgos, 2013) (Schiller & Almog-Bar, 2013) (Y. AlRifai, 2013) (Manning & Roessler, 2014) (O'Connor & Shumate, 2014) (Kolk, 2014) (Rufin & Rivera-Santos, 2014) (Harangozo & Zilahy, 2015) (Kark et al., 2015)	(Murphy & Bendell, 1999) (Heap, 2000) (Thompson, 2005) (Eweje, 2006) (Evans, 2007) (Jamali, 2010) (Muthuri, Moon & Idemudia, 2012) (Blowfield, 2012) (Morrow & Robinson, 2013) (Contu & Girei, 2014) (McAllister & Taylor, 2015)
2	**Management aspects of CSC:** Objectives, motivations, organisational structure,capacity building, personnel requirements, volunteering, financial, process, innovation and models of CSC development	(Waddock, 1988) (Froelich, 1999) (Austin, 2000) (Andriof,2000) (Bendell & Murphy, 2000) (Bray, 2000) (Crane, 2000) (Elkington & Fennell, 2000) (Lashowicz, 2000) (Plante & Bendell, 2000) (Rodgers, 2000) (Turcotte, 2000) (Waddell, 2000) (Weir, 2000) (Johnson, 2002) (Parker & Selsky, 2004) (Loza, 2004) (Seitanidi, 2004) (Themudo, 2004) (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006) (Seitanidi, 2007) (Edmond, 2007) (Wymer Jr. & Samu, 2008) (Seitanidi, 2009) (Seitanidi & Crane, 2009) (Clarke, 2010) (Wilson, Bunn & Savage, 2010) (Seitanidi, 2010) (Le Ber & Branzei, 2010) (Shumate & O'Connor, 2010) (Dahan et al., 2010) (Lucas, 2010) (Holmes, 2010) (Poloniaky et al., 2011) (Rábade, 2012) (Harris, 2012) (McDonald & Young, 2012) (Sua'rez & Hwang, 2012) (AL-Tabbaa et al., 2013) (Erakovich & Anderson, 2013) (Kolk, Rivera-Santos & Rufin, 2013) (Lefroy & Tsarenko, 2013) (Sanzo et al, 2013) (Ross, 2013) (Stafford & Hartman, 2014) (Walters & Panton, 2014) (Boletzagias & Koutiva, 2014) (Doh & Boddewyn, 2014) (Lefroy &Tsarenko, 2014) (Barroso-Mendez, Galera-Casquet & Valero-Amaro, 2014) (Hahn & Gold, 2014) (Manning & Roessler, 2014) (Vock, Dolen & Kolk, 2014) (Cho & Kelly, 2014) (Olakkankbo, 2014) (Tulder & Pfisterer, 2014) (Rituala, Salmi & Andersson, 2014) (Corni, Lurati & Zamparini, 2015) (Hond, de Bakker & Doh, 2015) (Kark et al., 2015) (Knight, 2015) (Shwom, 2015) (Singh, Bakshi & Mishra, 2015) (Tulder et al., 2015) (Boenigk & Schuchardt, 2015) (de Lange et al., 2016) (Denloni et al., 2016) (Shumate, Hsieh & O'Connor, 2016)	(Hamann & Acutt, 2003) (Metzger, Nunnenkamp & Mahmoud,2010) (Herrero, 2013)
3	**Strategic use, issues and challenges of CSC:** Identifying strategies associated with CSC, management and strategic issues and challenges of CSC	(Bendell, 2000) (Bendell & Lake, 2000) (Burchell & Cook, 2012) (O'Regan & Oster, 2000) (Seitanidi, 2007) (Seitanidi, 2008) (Chatterjee, 2009) (Kolk & Lenfant, 2012) (Bitzer & Glasbergen, 2015) (Skagerlind, Westman & Berglund, 2015)	(Ince, 1998) (Harman et al., 2015) (McAllister & Taylor, 2015)
4	**Legal and ethical considerations in CSC:** Issues of accountability, legitimacy, transparency, governance and culture	(Bendell, 2000) (Fowler & Heap, 2000) (Millar, Choi & Chen, 2004) (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006) (Hahn & Pinkse, 2014) (Rueede & Kreutzer, 2015) (Herlin, 2015)	(O'Laughlin, 2008) (Tuodolo, 2009) (Andonova & Carbonnier, 2014)
5	**Measurements of CSC:** CSC figures, evaluation, monitoring, estimating direct or indirect audiences/impact	(Clarke, 2010) (Le Ber & Branzei, 2010) (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012) (Austin &Seitanidi, 2014) (Khi et al., 2014) (Jose' Sanzo et al., 2015) (Murphy, Arenas & Batista, 2015) (Clarke & MacDonald, 2016)	N/A
6	**Politics of CSC:** CSC power, political, societal, conflict and policy issues and challenges	(Scherer, Baumann-Pauly & Schneider, 2012) (Arenas, Sanchez & Murphy, 2013) (Gray & Purdy, 2014) (Venn & Berg, 2014)	(Newell, 2000) (Tully, 2004) (Rosenbaum, 2006) (Sayer, 2007) (Baur & Arenas, 2014) (Mehrotra & Delamonica, 2015) (Frederiksen, 2017)
7	**Critiques to CSC:** Criticism and arguments to CSC and CSR/CP related partnerships including theories, frameworks, approaches	(Keim, 1977) (Shaw, 1988) (Stendardi Jr, 1992) (Selsky & Parker, 2005) (Sasse & Trahan, 2007) (Sesan et al., 2013) (Siitaoja, Malin & Pyykkönen, 2015)	(Hamann & Acutt, 2003) (Edwards, 2010) (Miller, 2010) (Gilbarthorpe & Banks, 2011) (Idemudia, 2011) (Sandoval, 2015) (Black & O'Bright, 2016)
8	**Others:** CSC studies review, CSC research methodology, etc.	(Mulligan, 1986) (Grant, 1991) (Brammer & Millington, 2005) (Kourula & Laasonen, 2010) (Hamann, 2014) (Jammulamadaka, 2015)	(Mailand, 2004)

Appendix 3

Topic guide and interview questions for the semi-structured interviews.

Topic No.	Topic Guide and Semi-Structured Interview Questions	Central Supposition	Key Literature or Source
1	**About yourself** • Tell me a little bit about yourself, and what is your specific role in the organisation/community? • How did you come to be working with/be a part of the development projects with SDNGOs/NMNCs under such a partnership? • How long have you been working with the organisation under this collaboration? • What is your specific role in the development projects under such collaborations? What do you do?	• Ice-breaking • Individual information • Individual roles and levels of decision making or engagement of the development project or partnership	Holstein and Gubrium (1995); Kvale and Brinkmann (2009); Blandford, Furniss, and Makri (2016)
2	**Roles, processes, and practices of SDNGOs and NMNCs under cross-sector collaborations** • Tell me a little bit about your organisation. What do you do? How was your organisation set up? What are your organisational visions and missions? What is your organisational focus? What kind of services does your organisation offer? What does your organisational structure look like? Who are your past and existing beneficiaries? What are your organisational development goals? Who are your donors? How do you raise funds? • Tell me a little bit about the development projects you work/participate in under the collaboration with SDNGOs/NMNCs. How	• Roles, processes, and practices of SDNGOs/NMNCs • Power, negotiation, and positioning of relationships • Challenges of partnership • Conceptualisation of poverty • Stakeholder theory	Bendell (2000); Brehm (2004); Edwards (2008); Fowler (2008); Fowler and Malunga (2010); Hulme and Edwards (2013); Wallace and Porter (2013); Bank, Hulme, and Edwards (2015); Krause (2014); Beck (2017);

	did it start? Why did you work with/join them? • Before the contract was signed until the development projects were finished, how did you work with your collaborative partner? And how did you work with your own internal team? • How do you find working under/being a part of such a partnership with SDNGOs/NMNCs? • Can you think of some examples of any issues/challenges that you think you found working with SDNGOs/NMNCs under cross-sector collaborations? • How do you define your current roles and satisfaction? How do you look forward to seeing your roles or yourself in the future for the development projects under the cross-sector collaborations with SDNGOs/NMNCs?		
3	**<u>Decision making in the beneficiary selection process</u>** • Tell me a little bit about your development project? What are the project goals? How did the development project start? What kind of activities or contributions the development project aimed at/delivered? • How did you design the development project or the proposal? And how did you implement it? • Who were the chosen beneficiaries in your development projects? How did you choose them? Why did you choose them? Why did you join them? Why did you not choose the rest? What are your selection criteria? Who did you involve in the process of choosing	• NGOs' decision making • Beneficiary selection process • Conceptualisation of poverty • Stakeholder theory • Theory of project management • Willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries	Freeman (1984); Green and Hulme (2005); Tiwari (2007); Kumar et al., (2009); Fowler (2008); Fowler and Malunga (2010); Bryan (2011); Landoni and Corti (2011); Hill and Jones (2012); Monson (2013); Wisner (2013); Krause (2014); Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni (2015); Beck (2017); Golini, Landoni, and Kalchschmidt (2018); World Bank (2018)

	them? Who decided to choose them? Is there any other condition on selecting/joining them?		
4	**Final reflections** • Do you have any questions you would like to ask me? • Do you have any recommendations you would like to suggest to me regarding interviews? • Is there anything else you would like to add, explain, or address on top of the earlier answers?	• Self-reflections	Kvale and Brinkmann (2009); Davies (2012)

Appendix 4

Topic guide and focus group questions for the focus groups.

Topic No.	Topic Guide and Focus Group Questions	Central Supposition	Key Literature or Source
1	**About you and your team** • Can each of you please introduce yourself and what your specific role in the organisation is? • What is your specific role in the development projects under the cross-sector collaborations with NMNCs? What is your work under these development projects?	• Ice-breaking • Individual information • Individual roles and levels of decision making or engagement of the development project or partnership	Krueger (2014); Liamputtong (2011)
2	**Roles, processes, and practices of SDNGOs and NMNCs under cross-sector collaborations** • Let's discuss your organisation. Tell me a little bit about your organisation. What does your organisation you do for the development work? How was your organisation set up? What are your organisational visions and missions? What is your organisational focus? What kind of services does your organisation offer? What does your organisational structure look like? Who are your past and present beneficiaries? What are your organisational development goals? Who are your donors? How do you raise funds? • Let's discuss your development projects with NMNCs. Tell me a little bit about the development projects you work/participate with under the collaboration with SDNGOs/NMNCs. How did it start? Why	• Roles, processes, and practices of SDNGOs/NMNCs • Power, negotiation, and positioning of relationships • Challenges of partnership • Conceptualisation of poverty • Stakeholder theory	Bendell (2000); Brehm (2004); Edwards (2008); Fowler (2008); Fowler and Malunga (2010); Hulme and Edwards (2013); Wallace and Porter (2013); Bank, Hulme, and Edwards (2015); Krause (2014); Beck (2017);

	did you decide to work with NMNCs? • Before the contract was signed until the development projects were finished, how did you work with NMNCs? How did you work with your own internal team? • How do you find working under such a partnership with NMNCs? • Can you think of some examples of any issues/challenges that you think you found working with NMNCs under cross-sector collaborations? • How do you define your current roles and satisfactions? How do you look forward to seeing your organisational roles in the future for the development projects under the cross-sector collaborations with NMNCs?		
3	**<u>Decision making in the beneficiary selection process</u>** • Let's discuss more in detail about your development projects with NMNCs? Tell me a little bit about your development project? What are the project goals? How did the development project start? What kind of activities or contributions did the development project aim at/deliver? • How did you design the development project or the proposal? And how did you implement and report it? • Who were the chosen beneficiaries in your development projects? How did you choose them? Why did you choose them? Why did you not choose the rest? What are your selection criteria? Who did you involve in choosing them? Who	• NGOs' decision making • Beneficiary selection process • Conceptualisation of poverty • Stakeholder theory • Theory of project management • Willingness, capacity, and capability of beneficiaries	Freeman (1984); Green and Hulme (2005); Tiwari (2007); Kumar et al., (2009); Fowler (2008); Fowler and Malunga (2010); Bryan (2011); Landoni and Corti (2011); Hill and Jones (2012); Monson (2013); Wisner (2013); Krause (2014); Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni (2015); Beck (2017); Golini, Landoni, and Kalchschmidt (2018); World Bank (2018)

	decided to choose them? Was there any other condition on selecting them?		
4	**Final reflections** • Do you have any questions you would like to ask me? • Do you have any recommendations you would like to suggest to me regarding the focus group? • Is there anything else you would like to add, explain, or address on top of the earlier answers or discussions?	• Group reflections	Krueger (2014); Liamputtong (2011)

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