

Tiina Kontinen

**Learning Challenges of NGOs in Development.
Co-operation of Finnish NGOs in
Morogoro, Tanzania.**

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University of Helsinki
Department of Education

Tiina Kontinen

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Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of OECD
KEPA	Finnish Service Center for Development Co-operation
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal

Learning Challenges of NGOs in Development. Co-operation of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro, Tanzania.

Tiina Kontinen

tiina.kontinen@helsinki.fi

Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research
Department of Education
Faculty of Behavioural Sciences

Institute of Development Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Helsinki

Abstract

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have gained an important role in development co-operation during the last two decades. The development funding channelled through NGOs has increased and the number of NGOs engaged in development activities, both North and South, has been growing. Supporting NGOs has been seen as one way to strengthen civil society in the South and to provide potential for enhancing more effective development than the state, and to exercise participatory development and partnership in their North-South relationships.

This study focuses on learning in the co-operation practices of small Finnish NGOs in Morogoro, Tanzania. Drawing on the cultural-historical activity theory and the theory of expansive learning, in this study I understand learning as a qualitative change in the actual co-operation practices. The qualitative change, for its part, emerges out of attempts to deal with the contradictions in the present activity. I use the concepts of developmental contradiction in exploring the co-operation of the small Finnish NGOs with their Tanzanian counterpart. Developmental contradiction connects learning to actual practice and its historical development. By history, in this study I refer to multiple developmental trajectories, such as trajectories of individual participants, organisations, co-operation practices and the institutional system in which the NGO-development co-operation is embedded.

In the empirical chapters I explore the co-operation both in the development co-operation projects and in micro-level interaction between partners taking place within the projects. I analyse the perceptions of the Finnish participants about the different developmental trajectories, the tensions, inclusions and exclusions in the

evolving object of co-operation in one project, the construction of power relations in project meetings in three projects, and the collision of explicated partnership with the emerging practice of trusteeship in one project.

On the basis of the empirical analyses I elaborate four developmental contradictions and learning challenges for the co-operation. The developmental contradictions include: 1) implementing a ready-made Finnish project idea vs. taking the current activities of Tanzanian NGO as a starting point; 2) gaining experiences and cultural interaction vs. access to outside funding; 3) promoting the official tools of development co-operation in training vs. use of tools and procedures taken from the prior activities of both partners in actual practice; and 4) asymmetric relations between the partners vs. rhetoric of equal partnership. Consequently, on the basis of developmental contradictions four learning challenges are suggested: a shift from legitimation of Finnish ideas to negotiation, transcending the separate objects and finding a partly joint object, developing locally shared tools for the co-operation, and identification and reflection of the power relations in the practice of co-operation.

Keywords: activity theory; expansive learning; NGO development co-operation; partnership; power

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Tiina Kontinen

1 Introduction

1.1 From well-meaning policies to exploring learning in practice

”NGO co-operation should not be regarded as aid only. At its best, it is true co-operation, in which the southern and northern hemisphere organisations work together to reach common objectives. The Finnish organisations may provide financial support – as well as technical assistance, at times – to its developing country partner, but the learning process may, and should – be two-way. The richness of the partner country’s culture and the experiences of the partner NGO provide a good basis for this”.

Foreword to the manual for the development co-operation of Finnish non-governmental organisations, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2005
(<http://global.finland.fi/english/projects/NGO/>)

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have become increasingly important actors in international development co-operation. In Finnish development policies the NGOs have gained more importance since the beginning of the 1990s. The development funds channelled through NGOs have been increasing from some 20 million euros in 1995 to over 40 million euros in 2004¹. In 2006 total of 13% of Finnish development funds are channelled through NGOs.

The excerpt above is from development co-operation project guidelines for Finnish NGOs issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. It condenses a number of the current characteristics of and challenges for development co-operation of NGOs. First, the guidelines stress that the relationship between Finnish and Southern NGOs is not only as “aid”, as it used to be, consisting of financial support but also co-operation of some other kind. Second, this new kind of co-operation different from “aid” includes working towards “common objectives”

¹ Source: <http://www.global.finland.fi>, the statistics in the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

and exercising “mutual learning”. A change towards a new kind of co-operation between Finnish NGOs and their partners in developing countries is anticipated.

It is easy to agree with the rhetoric of reaching common goals and exercising mutual learning in NGO-development co-operation. Learning and common objectives are terms – along with others such as partnership, participation, transparency, good governance, civil society and coherence, that are continuously repeated in the policy documents and guidelines produced by the civil servants and consultants engaged in development co-operation. Moreover, once the terms are written in policies they start to circulate among practitioners and other policy makers that reproduce the same rhetoric in their own policies, strategies, fund applications and reports. When the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD described a new way of doing development co-operation as “partnership” (DAC 1996), partnership quickly became the very notion used in the documents of aid agencies and NGOs in most of the corners of the world to describe the development relationship.

The circulating terms easily become what Terje Tvedt (1998; 2002) calls buzzwords that function as symbolic means of integration of international development system. The circulated buzzwords together with the funding in the NGO channel define the characteristics and borders of the system (ibid.). By following the latest development fads, the heterogeneous set of organisations all over the world belong to – or desire to enter into, a system of development. The phenomenon of circulating and spreading out new concepts and terms used in political rhetoric is not, of course, specific to development policies. For example Miettinen (2002) has analysed the spread of the concept of “National Innovation System” that occurred to OECD science and technology policies in the early 1990s. He shows how the concept initially outlined by the economists of innovation was turned into political rhetoric that was then referred to, copied and used in national policies and other fora at an accelerating pace.²

Such a phenomenon is familiar to anyone working with the NGOs in development. The terms such as grassroots participation, poverty reduction, gender, good governance among others move fast from the strategies of international organisations and aid agencies to the brochures and fund applications of NGOs both North and South.

² In the same vein, Cambrioso et al. (1990) showed in their ethnographic analysis of science policy making in Quebec what kind of *intertextual practices* created a new object, biotechnology. These included constant references to documents of government policies and OECD documents that were often made by anonymous circulation of word-to-word copying.

In development studies it is common to distinguish between development policy, development theory and development practice (e.g., Schuurman 1993b). Policy refers to the development policies of national governmental bodies and international organisations such as OECD about their goals and strategies on how to enhance development in developing countries.³ Development theory is used in the academic discussion and theoretical understanding about the nature and patterns of societal development. Development practice means the endeavours that different actors – governmental development agencies, international organisations and NGOs – undertake in order to implement the development policies and to bring about societal change and development. In the case of northern NGOs this usually means implementing development projects with their southern partners.

This research is not about the practice of drafting development policies⁴ or circulating the rhetoric of learning or strengthening Southern civil societies. The study deals with learning in the practice of NGO development co-operation. By the term “NGO-development co-operation” I refer to the practices the Finnish NGOs are engaged with their Tanzanian partners. The choice of using the term development co-operation instead, for example, of development aid is due to the standard way of speaking about development practice. At least in Finnish discussion the term “development aid” has been considered politically incorrect and the policy documents as well as the actors themselves refer to their activity as development co-operation. Therefore, the choice of the term co-operation is not a theoretical one. For example, Edwards (1999, 202) makes a conceptual difference

³ OECD defines the developing countries in terms of level of income. Some 59 countries in the world belong to the category of “low income countries” and some 208 countries that together belong to the category of “low and middle income countries”. The term developing countries is contrasted to developed countries that is high income countries by OECD definition. The United Nations uses a term “Least Developed Countries” (LDCs) to refer to the poorest countries in the world with the greatest need of assistance. This classification is based on quality of life and economic measures that include: life expectancy at birth, per capita calorie intake, combined primary and secondary enrolment, adult literacy, instability of agricultural production, instability of exports of goods and services, diversity of exports, percentage of GDP that is generated by manufacturing and service industries, and population size. Development literature sometimes refers to the developed countries as West that is a vast category referring the modern industrialised countries. The developing countries has been also referred to as the Third World, as opposed to the First and the Second (the socialist) world. However, today especially the literature on NGOs and development uses the terms North and South, and further, global North and global South. These terms refer to the position of the countries in the global political economy rather than their geographical location. For example, Australia is a part of global North even if situated in South.

⁴ In my master’s thesis (Kontinen 2000b) I analysed the drafting practices of the Decision-of-Principle of Finnish Development Co-operation in 1996 from a point of view of unit of expert advisers at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. In my PhD I wanted to shift from analysing policy making practice to practices of actual co-operation.

between aid and co-operation. For him, co-operation refers to a certain kind of social relationship implying reciprocity. In my research I discuss such relationship in the section considering the concept “partnership”. In my general use, the term co-operation could be substituted by collaboration, by doing something together notwithstanding the nature of the relationship.

The aim of my study is to open up the well-intentioned notions of learning, co-operation and common objectives used in policy documents and to explore the emerging learning challenges in the actual practices of Finnish NGOs and their members in their planning and implementation of concrete development co-operation projects with Tanzanian NGOs.

In this study, learning challenges are understood in a specific framework of activity theory and expansive learning (Engeström 1987; Engeström 2001; 2005b). In this framework, learning challenges refer to the possible avenues of change in co-operation, the movement towards the potential zone of proximal development⁵ of co-operation. The activity approach focuses my attention not on common objectives but on the construction of potentially shared objects; not on two-way learning from co-operation but to learning and change in co-operation itself.

This research is about learning in co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian non-governmental organisations in Morogoro. These Finnish NGOs under study are not professional development organisations. Thus, they could be considered “small” in terms of their development activities even if they would be large or medium-sized organisations in terms of their social activities in Finland. It has been shown by previous research on learning within activity theoretical framework in Northern hemisphere (e.g., Haavisto 2003; Puonti 2004; Seppänen 2004; Toivainen 2003) that neither learning nor co-operation is an easy and smooth process in any context. One can assume that if learning and co-operation are troublesome in contexts of a network of Finnish firms, it presumably is even more difficult within the context of development co-operation that entails co-operation of actors from different cultures, societies and positions vis-à-vis the global division of resources and power (Eyben 2006; Groves and Hinton 2004).

A change in activity of development co-operation requires far more than just change in rhetoric and objectives. It requires real reflection, new conceptual and material tools, novel division of labour between co-operating NGOs and new rules

⁵ The zone of proximal development is a concept that originally refers to the potential area of development of a child. Zone of proximal development refers to the zone in which a child in co-operation with an adult or more advanced peer can perform more demanding tasks she/he could master alone (Vygostky 1978). Engeström (1987) has redefined the concept. In his use the zone of proximal development refers to the “grey zone” of potential movement of a collective activity. In his conceptualisation the zone of proximal development can be presented by more advanced activities but is also formulated on the basis of inner contradictions of activity.

concerning co-operation. Further, learning and change means abandoning old ways of co-operating (Engeström 2005b, 13). This research seeks learning challenges by exploring the tensions in the present activities in concrete projects.

1.2 Development, civil society and NGOs

Development studies, as a specific field in social sciences, has been concerned with the processes of development in the so-called developing world or the Third World mostly situated in the Southern hemisphere. Development studies have traditionally been working at the analytical level of a state or a world system (Leys 1996; Hulme and Turner 1990). Economic aspects and macro-structures in development have been emphasised – whether as enabling factors as understood in modernisation theory or as factors causing underdevelopment as perceived in dependency and underdevelopment theory (see Long 1977). Since the late 1970s, partly due to the influence of the alternative development paradigm, there have been arguments for more local, community- and actor-oriented accounts of development.

The emphasis on more local analysis has been seen as one way out of so-called “impasse of development” (Schuurman 1993) in both theory and methodology. The central debates in development studies have considered the relationship between actors and structures, between economic and human development, and, between development as an indigenous and immanent process or an intentional intervention (Cowen and Shenton 1995; Leys 1996; Long 2001; Martinussen 1997; Schuurman *ibid.*; 1996). Alternative development thinking has argued for researching multiple development trajectories and advocated a community level and bottom-up approach in intentional development interventions (Bebbington and Bebbington 2001; Nederveen Pieterse 2001; Tandon 2000). These arguments have stressed the importance of shifting the agency of development from state to civil society. Gradually, in the 1990s the civil society and NGOs have become more important actors in development. Consequently, they have become emerging subjects of research in development studies (Howell and Pearce 2002; Lewis 2005).

Since its emergence in the development discourse in the 1990s civil society has so far been one of the most ambiguous concepts in development (Howell and Pearce 2002). Traditionally, civil society has been one of the objects of modern Western political theory (Ehrenberg 1999; Keane 1998; Cohen and Arato 1992) from which the conceptions have been taken – in their different forms – to development discourse and policies. In the use of the concept of civil society in development two main points of view can be identified (*ibid.*). The mainstream view is inspired by the liberal tradition (e.g., Ferguson 1969; Locke 1996; Smith

1961) and, further, de Tocquevillean (1988) concepts of civil society as any associational, voluntary organised life outside the realms of state and market. On the other hand, the critical point of view⁶ conceives of the civil society as a place for potential counter hegemonic action as proposed by Gramsci (1971, 206; Bobbio 1987, 139–161) or as a place for deliberation and communication inspired by the Habermasian idea of civil society as a space for rational discourse within a sphere of lifeworld.⁷

When it comes to the application of the concept of civil society in diverse Southern societies the problem of their interconnectness with certain historical contexts of development of modern society has been under discussion (Hawthorn 2001; Lewis 2002)⁸. The arguments vary from denial of the usefulness of the concept to suggestions for its adaptive use: civil society can be used as an analytical tool and inspiration for action in taking into account the specific societal and cultural contexts in different countries (Lewis *ibid.*). Central debates have touched on the question of civil society in the South as a place for counter-hegemonic collective action, counter power, or, as a place for individual and associational efforts in improving life. In the similar vein, there has been a debate whether the “civil society” in South is a place for enhancing democracy, good governance and change in power relations at the societal level, or, as a place for small-scale organisational economic action in order to enhance the economic situation of the members of associations and organisations (Hawthorn 2001; Robinson 1995; Haynes 1997; van Rooy 1998; Fowler 1991; Kelsall 2001; Ndegwa 1996).

The political aim of “strengthening civil society” has often been implemented through channelling development funds through Northern NGOs and to South-

⁶ The critical point of view is grounded in the Hegel-Marxian tradition. Hegel conceived the civil society as a phase in development from family to state. Civil society was a place of conflict of interests and a place in which inequalities emerged. For him, civil society needed to be overcome by state. Marx (1998, 574) argued that instead of “civil society” we should speak about “human society”. For Marx (*ibid.* 58), civil society entailed the industries and economic life which formed the “real theatre of history” in its real relations. For him, civil society could not have revolutionary potentials until private property was overcome since the civil society itself was defined by existing productive forces (*ibid.*). Gramsci (1971) continued the Marxian tradition, but turned the economic argument into a more cultural one. The position of the dominant class was not only based on economic relations, but also on that of cultural hegemony exercised especially in the sphere of civil society – for example in associations and the education system.

⁷ Habermas distinguishes between economy, state and life-world. According to him, the state is organized through power, economy through money and lifeworld through communication.

⁸ Early liberal theory (Ferguson 1969; Locke 1996; Smith 1993) stressed for example the emergence of the modern market economy as a precondition for a new kind of civil society to appear. This went along with the ideas of forming of a commonwealth of free individuals, freed from the traditional bonds of kinship and family. In the same vein, the Hegelian account of civil society as a kind of developmental stage in development from family to state and the Marxist (1998 [1845]) critique of the bourgeois civil society as a sphere of economic action in which the dominant class exercises its power dealt with the societies in peculiar historical situations in European development of industrialisation and capitalism.

ern NGOs. Gradually, this has brought up the question of “what are NGOs doing in civil society” (Jørgensen 1996). Especially the phenomenon of mushrooming of NGOs in Southern societies after the shift in donor policies has given reasons for critical arguments towards such organisations being a sign of people’s voluntary organising. Rather, it is claimed that there have always been multiple forms of voluntary organising in developing countries, and the organisational form of NGO is merely an imported form of institutionalisation of such activity. Being a registered NGO with certain organisational functions might reflect more the needs of the international donors than the needs and forms of action of the people. In some cases, then, the “Southern civil society” as conceived by Northern NGOs and donors is reduced to professional elite organisations fluent with the development discourse. (Igoe 2003; Howell 2000).

Due to the evident effect of the international discourse on some parts of the societal life in South, Tvedt (1998; 2002; 2006) has pointed out the importance of paying attention to the effects of the international NGO development system on what is called “emergence of civil societies” in the South. Such examination adds to the pondering of the existence and nature of civil society in the context of single states and its emergence due to the internal factors (Anheier 1987). Tvedt (*ibid.*) proposes an analytical framework of the DONSTANGO-system (donor, state, NGOs) to understand the phenomenon of NGOs in development. The DONSTANGO is defined as an empirical field consisting of certain patterns of relationship between actors, such as donors, states and NGOs, in development (Tvedt 2002, 372). The main aspects defining the system are the flow of resources (money) within the so-called “NGO channel” of aid and the particular rhetoric and buzz-words used in the system. A huge number of organisations, in both the North and the South are willing to be included in the system. Moreover, the managerial tools such as the project cycle model materialize the systemic properties. It is difficult to find any NGO development activity within the channel in a mode other than a project cycle. As Tvedt (1998) argues it is difficult to understand the emergence and mushrooming of similar kind of NGOs with quite identical strategies expressed with the idea of project cycle without taking into account the system.

In this study, the aim point is not to examine the Tanzanian civil society, nor to be puzzled over whether it fits with any of the concepts of civil society in Western theories, but to examine the practice of “strengthening a civil society” in development in concrete projects. The concept of the international DONSTANGO-system (Tvedt 1998; 2002) provides me with a specific analytical understanding of the institutional context in which the particular co-operation projects of Northern and Southern NGOs take place. Tvedt (1998) points out that it is in the actual interactions that the systemic features are reproduced, but he does not analyse these

interactions and actual encounters. In this research, I shall analyse the concrete interaction situations at micro-level.

In the development policies and literature there has been a recent shift in terminology. While in the 1990s it was common to speak about NGOs, the mainstream terminology now includes the term “civil society organisation” (CSO). In her profound review of the juridical and sociological meanings of the term “NGO” Martens (2002, 282) ends up with a following definition of NGO: “NGOs are formal (professionalised) independent societal organisations whose primary aim is to promote common goals at the national or the international level”. Further, in the development literature it is common to speak of non-governmental development organisations (NGDO) (Fowler 1997; 1998; 2000b). This term refers to the NGOs that have “development” as their aim, the non-profit organisations that are in one way or in another engaged with the aid system. For a definition of the term organisation, Fowler (1997, 20) suggests the following definition: “Organisation is group of individuals who allocate tasks between themselves to contribute to a common goal: to exist organisation needs a purpose and an organisation is made of people who know what their role is”.

I shall not go further into the endless debate of classification and definition of the NGOs and CSOs. However, considering the “NGOs” under study both of the definitions above are problematic. As will become evident, this study deals with un-professionalised organisations with promotion of goals in quite local level and with ambiguous purposes and aims for their activities. In legal terms, they are registered organisations, but in terms of function one could define them as emergent development organisations. By this I mean that both the Finnish and Tanzanian organisations are in a process of transforming themselves from groups of individuals into more established organisations. Therefore, in this study I use the term NGO in reference to the organisations participating in the projects. In reference to Tvedt (*ibid.*) I define an NGO as an organisation that receives funding from the so-called NGO-channel. That is, the channel through which the public developments funds are channelled through Northern and Southern NGOs. At the time when I collected the data the Finnish policies referred to the Finnish voluntary organisations engaged in development as NGOs in documents written in English. Further, both the Finnish and Tanzanian actors themselves defined their organisations as “NGOs” in their everyday communications. As such, the organisations under study are good examples of the heterogeneity of the category of “NGO” in development.

1.3 Contradictions in development practice suggested in the research literature

The concrete projects between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs take place within a context of development co-operation that is constituted by a number of international, national and local institutions, organisations and individuals engaged in “development”. Development literature has pointed out a number of tensions, dilemmas and contradictions inherent in development practice⁹ and historically formed institutions, discourses and ideas.

For example, the recent ethnographic studies¹⁰ on development practice (Crewe and Harrison 1998; Lewis 1998b; Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2005; Olivier de Sardan 2005; Rossi 2004) or “aidnography” (Gould 2004) have concentrated on inquiring how development is done in practice in different geographical locations and by actors such as governmental aid agencies and NGOs. They have employed different theoretical frameworks for understanding the practice of development. Mosse (2005) has made use of the Latourian framework of actor-network theory to depict a development co-operation project as a network of actors, documents and acts of translations taking place during the projects. Some ethnographies have subscribed to the Foucauldian idea of governmentality (Gould 2005a) to depict how the international aid uses technologies of power in defining what “development” practice is. Additionally, inspired by political anthropology Olivier de Sardan (2005) has proposed that any development project could be conceptualised as a meeting point of different logics employed by strategic groups meeting in arena of concrete project work, and, Long (2001) has proposed an approach in which a development project should be looked at as encounters and negotiation between different values, interests and life-worlds.

Even if the ethnographies of development are inspired by different theoretical frameworks they share the basic idea that the development co-operation should be understood as any other human practice which cannot be isolated from other processes taking place among “developers” and “developées” simultaneously with taking part in “development” projects (Olivier de Sardan 2005, 23–27). Moreover, the ethnographies stress the importance of looking closely on what people do in development – how they act, interact and network in doing what is called “development practice”.

⁹ The word “practice” is used here as an everyday term depicting of what people do in development co-operation on the basis of the common distinction between development theory, policy and practice. Thus, in my use in this section it does not refer to any particular theoretical understanding of practice, praxis or action.

¹⁰ In this I refer to “ethnographies of development” as pieces of research done on development projects and programmes from ethnographic approach. These studies have made use of both anthropological and sociological traditions and do not form any specific coherent paradigm.

The ethnographies of development projects have proposed that there are a number of incoherences, uncertainties, contradictions (Olivier de Sardan 2005, 5), or, conjunctures and contradictions (Mosse and Lewis 2005, 23–27) that are relevant in regard to any development practice. These contradictory elements of development practice emerge in their different forms in the situations in which people are “doing development”. Any practitioner in development deals with them in one way or another. In reviewing the debates in recent literature I have identified six contradictions¹¹ that in my view formulate a good starting point to study development practice.

First, a contradiction between rhetoric and practice (Mosse 2005) or discourses and practice (Olivier de Sardan 2005, 4) in development has attracted attention among development studies. Development policies have had different fashions and terms that are continuously changing. For example the Women in Development (WID) -approach has changed into the *Gender* approach for development. Moreover, the radical claims for need for people’s *participation* in their development (e.g. Chambers 1983; 1993) have at times been co-opted by the development system and the use of participation can be turned into a rhetoric mean of legitimating development projects rather than a real chance for participative transformation in planning and implementing the project (Cooke and Kothari 2001; Mosse *ibid.*). Accordingly, the notion of *partnership* claiming for radical transformation in the relationship between Northern and Southern actors can be used as a rhetorical means that actually mask the existing asymmetrical power relationship between NGOs (Fowler 2000a). The gap between the idealistic objectives expressed in policy rhetoric and achievements on the ground is often tried to be minimised by making use of rhetorical means in funding applications, plans and reports on the practice of co-operation. In so doing the main objective of development co-operation easily becomes the legitimating of any action by representing it as if it had fulfilled the wishes expressed in policy (Mosse 2005, 17). A good project is no longer the one that succeeded in solving practical problems, but the one which is represented as best following the latest development fads.

NGO development co-operation is usually realised through implementing development projects. The second contradiction much discussed in development literature considers the conceptualisations of the project either as rational blueprints or less tidy social processes (Mosse and Lewis 2005, 22; Mosse et al. 1998; Rondinelli 1993). The rationalist blueprint point of view refers to the tendency of development experts to conceive of the development projects as closed systems of development inputs, activities and outputs. It assumes that people’s lives can

¹¹ Following the literature on development practice I use here the concept of contradiction in reference to different dilemmas and tensions development entails. Further in this chapter I shall give a definition of the concept of contradiction as used in this study.

be turned into isolated problems which can be solved by technical interventions, in a specified form in a defined time-frame. This perception is well explicated in one of the most common tools of development workers, the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) (Gasper 2000). The process point of view towards development intervention points to the importance of the actions and interactions by which inputs are turned into outcomes, and stresses the conceptualisation of development intervention as a “learning process” (Korten 1980; Mosse et al. 1998, 5; Rondinelli 1993, 7). A learning project is flexible and can be adapted and changed during the implementation based on the reflection of different stakeholders. Additionally, the process approach emphasises on the simple fact that the development projects, regardless of how closed systems they are perceived, consists of different actors, relationships and societal, cultural and institutional environments. The project is a process of multiple negotiations and struggles (Long 2001) and a meeting point of different logics (Mosse and Lewis 2005, 22; Olivier de Sardan 2005, 145). According to the view of development intervention as a process the idea that the outcomes might be very different from those anticipated in planning is not an indicator of failure but an assumed presupposition (Mosse 1999, 5; Olivier de Sardan 2005, 26).

Third, in any development co-operation project there are contradictions between control and ownership (Mosse and Lewis 2005, 22) and equal partnership and unequal power relationships (Groves and Hinton 2005; Lister 2000; Robb 2004; Tvedt 2002). At least since the 1960s the international development policies have stressed the responsibility and ownership of the developing countries of their own development (Pearson 1969). The development policy of OECD development assistance committee DAC in 1996 strongly emphasised so-called partnership approach in development that once again stressed that the ownership of any development process should be in the developing world. However, in support of large development institutions such as World Bank and governmental aid agencies to developing countries the rhetoric of ownership is often realised in terms of conditionalities and control (Gayizzi-Mugerwa 1998; Gould 2005; Maxwell and Riddell 1998). The NGOs have been seen as fore-runners of such a partnership approach enhancing Southern ownership (Fowler 2000). However, in a situation of unequal access to resources and power the anticipated Southern ownership easily turns into Northern control. Most of the development relationships between northern and southern NGOs entail an aspect of resource transfer. This brings forth the logic of accountability according to which the control is legitimate and necessary (Ashman 2001). The control aspect of the co-operation is not only related to funding, but also to the agendas of the Southern NGOs. The priorities and working areas of NGOs might reflect more the agendas of the Northern partners than the priorities of the southern NGO itself (Ebrahim 2003; Lister 2000).

Fourth contradiction, that of between partnership and trusteeship, is connected to the very idea of the modern development itself that rests on the positive belief of possibilities of *intentional* development vis-à-vis *immanent* development (Cowen and Shenton 1996, *ix-ix*; 118)¹². The notion of intentional development is central to development co-operation. It is often assumed that development can be brought about by intended interventions, policies and planning (*ibid.* 56–58). According to this view, the course of immanent development can be directed and the subsequent negative outcomes can be ameliorated. The idea of intentional development within the development system leads to a tension between the ideal of equal partnership and the idea of trusteeship in development co-operation since trusteeship “is the intent which is expressed, by one source of agency, to develop the capacities of another” (*ibid.* *x*). In trusteeship there is somebody claiming and, simultaneously, is offered, and trusted, a position of knowing what would be best for the others and what directions the intentional development should take. During the colonial eras it was the role of colonial governance to act as a “trustee” for the colonised areas¹³. Exercising trusteeship in their colonies was perceived even a moral duty according to the civilization mission (Lugard 1922). In postcolonial times, trusteeship is not explicitly claimed, can but still emerge in development relationships (Mercer et al. 2003, 423).

Fifth, in debates on the development and NGO development co-operation there is a contradiction between what Mosse and Lewis (2005, 23) call the moral logic of appropriateness and instrumental logic of consequences. The moral logic implies that NGO development activity should be based on the ideas of responsibility, solidarity and global justice rather than the idea of solvable development problems and their management (Edwards and Sen 2000; Fowler 1998; van Ufford et al. 2003, 5). From a normative point of view, NGO development should start from a moral commitment of what one “must do” rather than from the ideas of what one “can do”. Accordingly, the “must do” -approach stresses the importance of concentrating on social change in Southern countries and radical politics rather than the discrete technical solutions of isolated problems in development activity (Hickey and Mohan 2005, 237).

Sixth, in regard to the role of research in development a contradiction between critic and commitment to improving practices have been discussed. On the one hand, development studies has a normative commitment for, and thus belief in, changing the unequal global conditions of human life; on the other it

¹² Hickey and Mohan (2004, 10) discuss Cowen’s and Shenton’s idea in terms of imminent/immanent development in which the imminent development refers to the specific interventions.

¹³ Legacy of this practice was seen in the trusteeship committees that were within the UN system after the Second World War.

has been critical of such a positivistic belief and practice of development (Schuurman 2000). The question of doing research either *for* or *critical of* development has been central also in the discussion on the position between ethnography and development practice. Researchers interested in examining practices and actors' points of views have struggled between the positions of being an outsider or an insider in development interventions (e.g., Ferguson 1994, 9–11; Gardner and Lewis 1996; Grillo 1997; Pottier 1993; Mosse et al. 1998).

The review of the recent development literature shows that development co-operation entails multiple contradictions and tensions that affect the actual interaction and action in planning and implementing development co-operation projects. Thus, an exploration of the learning challenges in co-operation requires an approach that acknowledges the different manifestations of tensions and contradictions in the actual development situations. In this research, the starting point is to explore the development practice on the ground. I conceive development projects as process of negotiations and pay attention exactly to these concrete negotiation situations. I shall observe whether, and how, tensions between control and ownership, partnership and trusteeship and moral and technical perceptions are shown in some specific cases of co-operation of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro.

1.4 Developmental contradictions, learning challenges and multiple trajectories in learning in NGO-co-operation

Learning and change in development co-operation of NGOs can be perceived from different angles. Many administrative documents and guidelines for practitioners stress the importance of development as a learning institution (Biggs and Smith 2000). Information about the failures and successes in development are gathered and disseminated in order to enhance learning and improvement of the development efforts. The development interventions are required to be learning processes that can be flexible and accommodate changing conditions and needs of the beneficiaries (Upphoff 1996). Moreover, the NGOs engaged in development co-operation can be conceived as “learning organisations” (Fowler 1997) that can adapt their strategies on the basis of the feedback from their environment. In addition to “learning projects” and “learning organisations” there are also “learning individuals”, the actors that act and interact in the concrete development projects. For example, Edwards and Sen (2000) argue that a personal transformation of the individuals engaged in development is a prerequisite of challenging the prevailing power relations.

In my research learning is not regarded primarily in terms of individual skills or conceptions or in terms of “ideal visions” and goals of development in organisations. Instead, it is connected to problems and challenges of present activity that

would presuppose new ways of co-operation, new tools and ways of organising the cooperation. The main purpose in this study is to depict the multiple learning challenges in particular co-operation of small Finnish non-governmental organisations in Morogoro, Tanzania. The notion of learning challenge connects the contradictions in the present practices with challenges of learning and change in co-operation. In this effort, I build upon a tradition of cultural-historical activity theory and the theory of expansive learning developed within the tradition (Engeström 1987; Engeström 2001; Engeström 2005; Engeström, Mietinen and Punamäki 1999).¹⁴ In researching learning in co-operation, the activity-theoretical approach and the theory of expansive learning provides theoretical ideas of, first, how to connect the tensions in practice of co-operation and learning challenges for co-operation and, second, how to deal with multiple trajectories of development that intertwine in the practices of NGO-development co-operation.

Developmental contradictions and learning challenges

According to the theory of expansive learning contradictions are the main source of change and learning of any activity (Engeström 1987; 2001, 64; Virkkunen and Kuutti 2000, 302). This principle grows out from the tradition of dialectical logic (Il'enkov 1977; 1982; Bakhurst 1991). For the reader from the academic field of development studies dialectics most often refers to the conceptualisation development of world capitalist system, its' expansion and crisis in the tradition of Marxists theories on imperialism (Hoogvelt 1997, 16–25). In the tradition of activity theory the foundations of which are in psychology (Vygotsky 1978; Leont'ev 1978), the concepts of dialectics and expansion are used in a different way. Engeström's (1987) formulation of the concept activity and the developmental research methodology¹⁵ applies the dialectical method in local settings. In his account of learning the expansion does not refer to the penetration of world capitalism into new areas having a negative connotation, but it is a positive possibility of change and learning in local activity systems. Expansion refers to learning in which the entire activity system is transformed. In expansive learning, the object of activity (e.g., the products and services produced) might be conceived in a radically new way, new tools developed and novel division of labour produced (Engeström 2001,

¹⁴ Activity theoretical approach has not been so far been very much applied in development studies. Studies with some focus on issues related to development studies include: Foot (2001) used theory of expansive learning for researching learning in a conflict monitoring network in former Soviet Union. Van Vlaenderen (2001) has applied activity theory in her research on community development activities in South-Africa.

¹⁵ An approach in which the activity theoretical principles are applied in development interventions in work activities is called Developmental Work Research (Engeström 1987; 2005, Virkkunen 2004).

139).¹⁶ In the developmental methodology of Developmental Work Research the expansive learning is depicted as a cycle (see Figure 1). The learning starts in realising a need for change that emerges for example in increasing questioning of the present practice by the practitioners. The learning then proceeds to analysis of the present situation, its history and identification of the contradictions within the activity. The next step is to form new kinds of objects and tools in order to find partial solutions to the inner contradiction, and finally, the new forms as applied to practice and might, after consolidation, result in a qualitatively new activity.

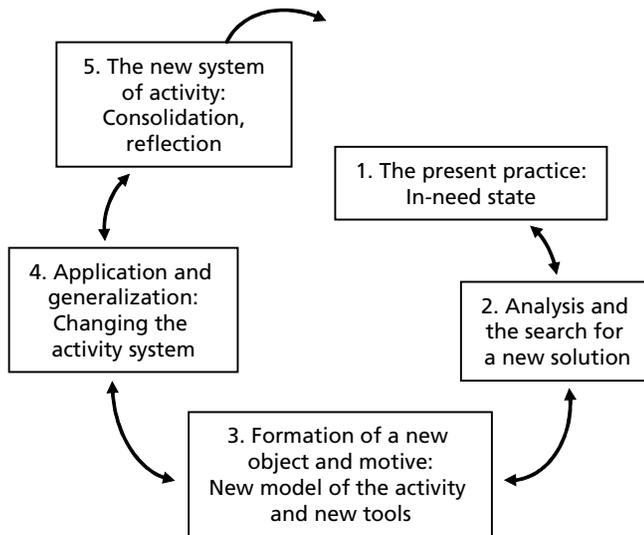


Figure 1. The cycle of expansive learning in developmental methodology (Engeström 1987; Virkkunen 2004, 45)

¹⁶ Il'enkov's (1982) contribution was to point out a metamethodological idea that in order to define any concept it should be understood in its interconnectness, relationships and historical development rather than an abstract and universal aggregate of certain characteristics. Marx's (1998, 1–23) understanding of production as an evolving phenomenon that should be understood in connection with exchange and distribution in the context of historically evolving societal relations of production was for Il'enkov an example of such endeavour. In research of learning in local activities these ideas of interconnectness and historical development are shown in principles of concentrating on the change processes, movement of the activity and analysing contradictions as driving forces of development and possibilities for learning (Engeström 1987; 2001).

In the methodology of developmental work research the cycle of expansive learning presents also the steps by the researchers conducting development intervention in work activities. In my study, I did not take an active role as an interventionist during the research process. The complexity of the NGO-development co-operation delimited my research in the first and second steps in the methodology. In this study I shall concentrate on profound analysis of the present co-operation and the identification of the learning challenges.

The theory of expansive learning and related developmental methodology has been applied in empirical research on learning in local work activities (e.g. Engeström 1987; Engeström, Engeström and Vähäaho 1999). In that effort, contradictions are defined (Engeström 2001; 2005b, 64) as “historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems” that manifest themselves in tensions, ruptures, conflicts and innovative ideas in present activity. I employ this idea by concentrating on different tensions in the present co-operation between the NGOs in my analysis. The identification of the tensions is based both on the literature review on the relevant tensions in NGO-development co-operation and on a detailed analysis of the practice of co-operation. The tensions identified and analysed in what follows include tensions inside the contents of co-operation project, tension between partnership and power and partnership and trusteeship as practiced in co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs.

The contradictions in present activity map the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky 1978; Engeström 1987) of activity, and in this case, co-operation. The zone of proximal development represents a moving area of possible development and not a unilinear direction. For example, Haavisto (2000, 291) discussed the zone of proximal development in court work on the basis of different developmental tensions and contradictory elements in dispute resolutions in court. These included (ibid. 293), for example, a tension between formal and informal elements of the hearings and a tension between controlled and uncontrolled proceedings. In her study of organic faming in two Finnish farms, Seppänen (2004, 138) identified two developmental challenges that constitute the zone of proximal development of organic vegetable farming: a move from the short-term and intensive use of resources to ecological and sustained use of resources, and, from independency and self-sufficiency to entrepreneurial integration into the society. In my work, I aim to elaborate developmental contradictions – and thus the area of zone of proximal development – in the co-operation between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs on the basis of different tensions identified in the practice of co-operation.

The theory of expansive learning (Engeström 2001) suggests that learning should be conceptualised as collective change in activity systems and in co-op-

eration in networks of activity systems. The concept of activity¹⁷ refers to practical and collective activity that is object-oriented and tool-mediated, historically formed and bears a societal meaning¹⁸ (Leont'ev 1978, 89; Engeström 1999a, 29–35). Engeström (1987) depicted activity by a structure of activity system in which the subject, object, instrument (later mediating artefacts), rules, community and division of labour are the basic elements of any activity. Interconnected relationship of these elements in any activity should form the basis for researching single activity systems.

In my study, I have made use of elements of activity as exploratory concepts that guide my interpretation of the developmental contradictions in co-operation. I will concentrate on analysis of object, mediating artefacts and division of labour emerging in the project work between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. The concept of object refers to the motives, purposes and raw material that constitute the process of production of certain outcome that is the “thing” (e.g. product, service) that is produced by one activity to be used, for example, in other activities. For example, in the general activity of development co-operation the object is the moving horizon of “development” aiming, for example, to reach the outcome of poverty reduction in general. In practical co-operation activities the object takes concrete forms such as training, building new irrigation systems or providing micro-credit loans for women’s’ groups. In addition to the general activity of development co-operation, the co-operation between organisations entails activities of the NGOs that have their own, historically formed objects. In co-operation, the concrete objects are moving from an “initial stage of unreflected raw material towards a potentially shared or jointly constructed object” (Engeström 2001; 2005, 63). For example, a development co-operation project between NGOs can be understood as a journey through vague initial ideas to constructing of joint object in negotiation and realization of a project.

The construction of and working upon objects is done through mediating artefacts that include tools and signs (Engeström 2005b, 63). The changing object might be in contradiction with the old tools, or, a new tool might bring needs in

¹⁷ The concept of activity comes to activity theory and theory of expansive learning from Soviet Psychologists A.N. Leont'ev (1978) who argued that development of individual personality should be understood in collective activities the individuals are taking part in. The origins of the concept of practical activity through which man as species creates his objective world and simultaneously himself, activity as transforming the real, were set by Marx in his account of productive activity as constituent of men as species being. (1988, 76–77).

¹⁸ Leont'ev (1978, 89–93) makes a conceptual distinction between a personal sense and societal meaning. According to him, societal meanings are produced by society and have their history in development in language. Personal sense is a subjectivized and individualised societal meaning that is partial, individual and intimate. There is a constant movement between the personal senses and societal meanings. According to Leont'ev (*ibid.* 52) society is not an “external condition” of individual action, but carries the motives, goals and means of activities for individuals.

change in the object. In development co-operation in general an example of such emerging contradiction could be between the movement towards long-term partnerships and short-term project-tool provided. However, means used in object construction cover the tools for material engagement with the object and tools for communication such as conceptualisation and language.¹⁹ Construction of objects takes place in a framework of certain division of labour between different practitioners. Accordingly there can be contradictions between emerging new objects and old division of labour, or new division of labour and old tools. In development co-operation such contradiction might emerge between the anticipated new division of power in partnership paradigm and the actual, “old” asymmetric division of power.

Developmental contradictions refer to the contradictions that pose challenges for change and learning specific to activity under study. According to Engeström (1987; 2005b, 64)²⁰ the primary contradiction in any activity system in capitalism, that of between the use value and exchange value, pervades all elements of the activity system. In my study, I shall not employ this contradiction as a starting point of the analysis for two reasons. First, whilst it is quite easy to conceptualise any work activity producing and selling goods and services in Northern hemisphere entailing this specific contradiction, in the NGO-development is not, at the first place, question of production for market, but as providing means for development of other people. In mainstream discussion, the logics of civil society and the logics of market are seen different (see Keane 2005). Therefore to take the primary contradiction in commodities as starting point in analysing voluntary activities is problematic and its occurrence remains, in my view, rather an empirical question.

Second, the concept of change value is related to a specific kind of exchange. In co-operation between NGOs the question of exchange is a complex one. For example Stirrat and Henkel (1997) and Tvedt (1998) have paid attention to the gift

¹⁹ In the formulation of the concept of mediated action (Vygotsky 1978, 54-55) the mediation takes place by material tools and meaningful signs. In Vygotsky’s view, tools and signs orient the activity in different ways: tools are used for influencing external objects whereas signs are internally oriented and used to master one’s own behaviour. While Vygotsky was writing in the context of development of higher psychological functions in child he also connects the development of tools and signs to the phylogenetic development of human being – in creating and developing new artefacts, tools and signs men themselves also change.

²⁰ Engeström (ibid.) categorizes the contradictions into primary, secondary and tertiary contradictions. The primary contradiction refers to the contradiction between use and exchange value in every element of activity, secondary contradictions refer to the contradictions between different elements of activity, e.g. between object and division of labour. The tertiary contradictions refer to contradictions between different activity systems. I shall not employ this ready-made categorization but use the concept of contradiction as more open concept the nature of which is to be explored in empirical analysis.

-nature of the exchange between Northern and Southern NGOs. In the relationships there are more question of exchanging money for success in bringing about improvements, and, good reputation of Northern NGOs as well-performing “development NGOs” than producing joint products for market exchange (Hudock 1999; Ebrahim 2004).

However, for example Foot (2001, 70) has used the concept of primary contradiction between use and exchange value in reference to the reports as tools in the conflict monitoring network, EAWARN, in former Soviet Union. In her conceptualisations the reports on conflicts the participant of the network produced were both used as tools for conflict monitoring (use value) and “currency” to be exchanged for membership of the network (exchange value). Following such interpretation of the primary contradiction between use value and exchange value is present in each report produced by the members of the network (ibid. 74). A similar interpretation would be possible for any report in NGO development co-operation. Reports and other documents are used both as tools for working upon the object of “improving the life and conditions” of any group of people and as a “currency” to buy and legitimate one’s position within the system of development funding.

I decided to use the concept of developmental contradiction in more open way. I use the concept of developmental contradiction to connect learning to the actual practice of cooperation and to the historical change present in current activities. Developmental contradictions include accumulated tensions in the NGO development co-operation: in the constructing of contents of co-operation, in the prevailing division of labour among the partners and the use of different tools in negotiating the projects. The elaboration of the developmental contradictions of co-operation is done on the basis of tensions identified in practice and makes use of the review of the literature that concerns NGO-development co-operation. Thus, the developmental contradictions as an outcome of the study are elaborated in dialogue between the analyses of tensions in particular co-operation projects and the problematic identified in NGO co-operation by previous research.

The developmental contradictions formulate a basis for learning challenges in co-operation. The learning challenges for co-operation include developing new means for dealing with and searching solutions to the developmental contradictions. These new means might include reconceptualisations of the object of the co-operation, rearranging the division of labour and employing and creation of new tools to enhance co-operation.

Multiple trajectories of development

The change and learning in activity and co-operation is connected to different trajectories of development that come together in activity. Engeström (1987) proposes that an inquiry into potentials of expansive learning in any specific activity entails analysing different historical developmental paths the understanding of which set the ground for understanding the contemporary contradictions and formulation of future directions. The different historical analysis proposed by Engeström include: a theory-history of the phenomenon, the object history of the general activity studied and the concrete histories of the activity systems at hand. The principle of historicity in researching learning requires that the history should be “analysed as local history of the activity and its objects and as history of theoretical ideas and tools that have shaped the activity” (Engeström 2005b, 64). In this research, I have not gone into a profound analysis of the history of theories of development and NGO-development co-operation. However, I have made use of the idea of analysing different historicities by depicting some of the relevant challenges of change in NGO-development co-operation in general in my literature review, histories of some of the Finnish NGOs taking part in the particular co-operation in Morogoro as well as micro-histories of particular projects.

Thus, learning in this research is understood as a co-evolution of the individual practitioners, NGOs and co-operation projects. In this effort I apply a notion of intertwining trajectories of development. Trajectories of development are understood as multiple, merely micro-historical developmental moves that have different time spans but are present simultaneously in any activity. For example Hutchins (1993, 372) has argued that any moment of human conduct, a “cube”, is at the same time development of the task performed, development of an individual practitioner performing it, development of working community and the development of professional practice the actors are engaged in. Accordingly, I argue that in any moment of practice of NGO-development co-operation project simultaneous development of individuals, organisations, co-operation and the institution of NGO development co-operation takes place. In my study the main focus is on the development of co-operation practices between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. The other developmental trajectories are discussed in their relationship to co-operation. I understand any concrete co-operation project between a Finnish and Tanzanian NGO in Morogoro as a crossing point of developmental trajectories of the individual practitioners, the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs, the NGO-development co-operation system constituted of different institutions and, the development of the co-operation practises themselves (see Figure 2).

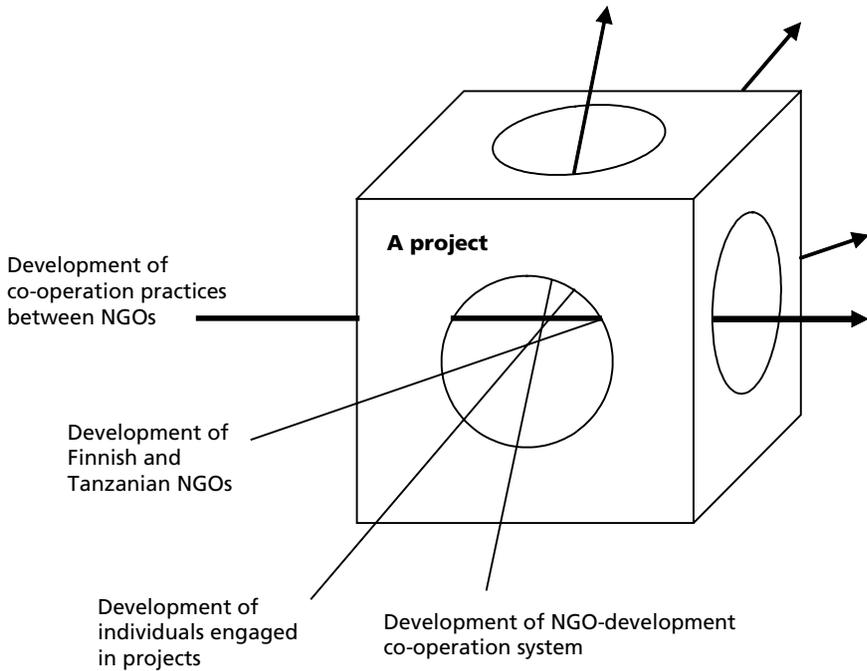


Figure 2. Development project of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro as a crossing point of multiple developmental trajectories. (Modified on the basis of Hutchins 1995, 372; see also Hyysalo 2004, 12.)

The challenges for learning and change take place with these diverse developmental paths and time scales. The learning takes place both ways – from local actions to wider scale and from above, from the societal patterns to local actions. However, even if the notion of developmental trajectory includes an idea of change into a certain direction, in reality trajectories are not linear ones. Trajectories entail tensions and contradictions; they shift in their directions and intertwine with each other. Thus, there is a need to concentrate on tensions within as well as the directions of the trajectories. If the diverse trajectories intertwine in any moment of practise, so do the different tensions and contradictions inherent in these trajectories. The tensions in individual behaviour, in organisational work and in the of development co-operation as a historically formed societal activity all are manifested in any situation in development co-operation project.

In her study of learning in networking firms in Finland Toiviainen (2003, 214) distinguished five levels of learning: worker, production, partnership, project and network-ideological level. She showed that learning across these levels is not easy. Sometimes, for example, the individual development and the development of the working community might become increasingly separated leading to an individual

crisis or problematic situation within the community. In her longitudinal study of development of research groups in aerosol technology Saari (2003) showed how gradually the object of individuals and the community might be distanced from each other, especially in the context of evolving division of labour. For example, the object of a research group might become too challenging to an individual researcher leading to impossible tasks and frustration.

In a similar vein, in the engagement in particular NGO-development co-operation project it might happen that the objects of individual actors will be distanced from the new collective objects emerging during the co-operation, or, the objects of specific NGOs do not meet the evolving contents of the NGO-development co-operation in general. Toiviainen (*ibid.*) and Saari (*ibid.*) discussed the relationship between individuals and local activities and networks of activities in the framework of local research groups and networks of firms. In development co-operation, interaction takes place also in the global system and institution of development co-operation including such actors and World Bank, governmental aid agencies, multilateral organisations and NGOs of different size. The individual actors, NGOs and concrete projects are faced with the challenges of development system consisting of funding procedures and changing emphasised in policies (Tevdt 1998). These challenges are especially related to historically formulated power relations in connection with funding and shaping the agendas of activities and co-operation (Eyben 2006; Groves and Hinton 2004).

As indicated above, at least at the policy level the societal practice of development co-operation changed from supporting states to strengthening civil society in the 1990s. Moreover, the conceptualisation of civil societies and NGOs has been moving from the context of single society into perceiving NGOs in their interconnectness with the international system. In exploring the particular projects I shall explore the learning challenges as the intertwining of different developmental trajectories including the developmental trajectories of the Finnish individual actors engaged in development co-operation, of the Finnish organisations active in Morogoro, of the means and perceptions of the development of co-operation practices between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs and the evolvement of concrete projects.

1.5 The research problems

In this research I take diverse viewpoints to NGO development co-operation and analyse multiple kinds of data. First, I shall look into the development co-operation of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro and the challenges of change in general by making use of interviews of Finnish actors. Second, I shall delve more deeply into two different development projects and examine the evolvement of the projects over a certain period of time on the basis of the observation of the projects, the

meetings and documents used in the projects. Third, I shall go deeper into the interaction in selected interaction situations between the partners in the projects by analysing three meetings in which the project is negotiated between the partners.

The first research problem aims to map out the multiple trajectories of change and learning challenges in the present development co-operation of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro as accounted by the Finnish actors. Tvedt (1998) pointed out that in development speech the group of “development NGOs” is easily seen a homogenic group of organisation whilst in reality there are a multiple kinds of organisations under the label of NGOs in development. The challenges of change as perceived by the Finnish actors shows the character of the particular “NGOs” and their relations to development. The first research problem is:

1. How do the Finnish NGO participants conceive the challenges for change in co-operation?

The second research problem concentrates on the construction of the contents of a concrete project in negotiations between Finnish and Tanzanian partners. Learning in the practice of co-operation is approached by examining the tensions and contradictions in the present activity. The typical activity, the ideal model in which the systemic feature of NGO development co-operation is manifested (Tvedt 1998) is the model of a project cycle with its assumed phases of initiating, planning, implementing and evaluation. The second research question reveals the idea of a project cycle and explores the project as a trajectory of negotiations between different actors (Long 2001). The second research problem is:

2. How is the content of a project constructed and negotiated in different phases of the project?

The third research problem deals with power relations in co-operation. One of the central themes in the literature on development and development co-operation is the asymmetry between developing and developed countries, between North and South. There has been normative preoccupation of reducing this gap and critical analysis in order to make the power relations visible (Schuurman 2000). In regard to the development co-operation of NGOs the issue of partnership has been one of the central challenges (Fowler 2000). A partnership-type relationship implies a shift in power relations between so-called donors and recipients. In order to map learning challenges and to enable change in the co-operation the analysis of practical exercise of power is needed. The third research question looks into the interaction between the partners in order to understand the construction of power relations at the level of actual action and utterances. The third research problem is:

3. How is power exercised in the project negotiations between partners?

The fourth research problem explores the possible emergence of the idea of trusteeship in co-operation. A project is a kind of intervention which aims to improve some aspects of people's lives. The idea that development and improvement are achievable through intentional development connects the particular projects with the wider institutional history of development, and further, to the birth of the modern idea of development itself (Cowen and Shenton 1996). Distinguishing the intentional development from the immanent is related to the idea of trusteeship: the idea that some actors could know how the lives of others could be improved and intervene accordingly. My fourth research problem is:

4. How does the rhetoric of partnership collide with trusteeship in the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian organisations?

The perceptions of the Finnish actors about the challenges of learning and change, the construction of the project in concrete negotiation situations, the exercise of power in interaction between partners and the emergence of trusteeship in the co-operation all offer different views of the learning challenges of co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs in their connections with the international development system.

1.6 Research strategy and methodological choices

The most important methodological principle in this study is a close engagement with practice: what people do and say when they are “practicing NGO-development co-operation”. It makes use of the methodological tradition of activity theoretical studies of expansive learning (Engeström 1987; Haavisto 2002; Seppänen 2004) in which both the detailed analysis of the action and interaction and the following of processes over time is central.

In the activity theoretically grounded studies of organisational learning a common research strategy has been to analyse in certain “authentic” work situations in great detail. The data is often collected by the technique of shadowing which is realised by videotaping or taping the typical work situations. For example, Haavisto (2002, 164–246) in her research on work on the court rooms videotaped the court proceedings and analysed the different initiatives put forward by the clients. In a same vein, Seppänen (2004, 528–534) in her analysis of the encounters between the organic farmers and inspectors analysed the communication and the actions that took place during one inspection visit, Saari (2003, 136–140) analysed an

encounter of research partners in her study on collaboration of research groups, and Hasu (2002) made a detailed analysis of an implementation situation of a new instrument in health care.

Additionally, in addition to collecting data on specific situations the strategy of following processes has been central to studies of expansive learning. For example, Kerosuo (2004; Kerosuo and Engeström 2003) has followed the trajectories of patients with multiple illnesses in the networks of healthcare, and Puonti (2004) observed the trajectories of economic crime cases in the network of different officials. Saari (2003) made an extensive collection of material in two research groups during several years.

In the studies of expansive learning also interviews have been used, but they have not been as significant means of data collection as capturing the real-life situations. In the analysis of the real-life encounters different strategies have been used. The prevailing strategy has been a detailed analysis of comparatively small amount of data taken from the critical situation (Hasu 2002). In that effort, some tools of different strands of discourse analysis have been used. However, the tradition of studies in expansive learning has no established methods for analysing data. What is common, though, to the studies conducted is the combination of very detailed analysis of certain critical situations and trajectories, and their interpretation within the conceptual framework of activity system, contradictions and challenges of change.

The theory of expansive learning (Engeström 1987, 2001; Virkkunen 2004) in organisational contexts advocates for interventionist and developmental research strategy. This is partly grounded in the principle advocated in the famous 11th thesis on Feuerbach by Karl Marx (1998, 574) in which he states that “the philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point however is to *change it*” (italics in the original). In that effort, the provisional analysis of the data collected is brought back to the research subject and the observed contradictions within activity are discussed together with the actors. Consequently, in the following steps there is an attempt to collectively develop new patterns of action in order to solve the present contradictions.

My research is an attempt to apply the methodological ideas of studying expansive learning in a novel research area, in studying NGOs in development cooperation. A number of the methodological principles of studies of expansive learning resonate with the area of the emerging field of ethnographic studies of development. For example, the approach of analysing the encounters in development interface put forward by Norman Long and his colleagues (Long 1989, 2001; Long and Long 1992; Long and Villarreal 1992) shares a similar research strategy of focusing of critical events and situations (Long 2001, 60) and putting them in a wider context. Moreover, Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan (1998; 2005) has pro-

posed a methodology in which the encounters taking place during a development project can be used as pathways to investigate the mechanisms of encounters between developmentalist configuration and local communities.

The strategy of following project trajectories and development projects as process has been used by increasing number of academic studies. In studying project as a learning process, Upphoff (1996) has done an extensive study on rural development project in Gal Oya, Sri Lanka. Uphoff documents the process leading to success of the projects. Similar approach, although documenting a failure, was applied by Porter, Allen and Thompson (1991) in their exploration of a rural resettlement project in Kenya. In concentrating on the encounters between development discourse and local people from a discursive approach Ferguson's (1994) study of development project in Lesotho is one of the most cited one. Whilst Ferguson focused on ethnographic investigation of the effects of development discourse in local contexts, most recent studies (Mosse 2005; Rossi 2004) have included the point of view of the developer's to their investigation.

In the studies on NGOs in development Crewe and Harrison (1998) in their exemplary study applied a multisided ethnography of two NGO projects. Their fieldwork in their exploration of "partnership" took place as well in the fancy offices of European NGOs as among the local women in Kenya. A number of studies have pointed out to the importance of focusing on the *relations* between the Northern and Southern actors instead of on one side only. Ebrahim (2003) studied the relationship between two large Indian NGOs and their Northern donors. In addition, Hilhorst (2003) explored the relationship between the Philippine women NGOs with the international discourse. In these studies, a special attention is put on different artefacts such as plans, reports and other documents that mediate the exchange between the partners. The practice of drafting policy documents in transnational networks is profoundly illustrated by Riles (2001) in her study of Fijian women's organisations in their preparation of the "Platform for Action" – document for the UN Conference in Beijing in 1995 within and out of the international networks.

In my study I attempt to combine some of the research strategies typical for the studies of expansive learning and to ethnographies of development. First, I shall focus on the co-operation, and thus, relationship between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs in certain location. To capture some period of movement and process I decided to collect material on some projects over a certain period of time. In that effort, I applied some principles of multisided ethnography by collecting data both from the Finnish organisations, Tanzanian organisations but with a focus on their *relations* as emerging in the actual encounters between the partners. This strategy differs from the research that is conducted mostly on the activities of Tanzanian organisations or the local perceptions on organising and development (Igoe 2003;

Green 2000; Mercer 2002). Following the principle of “following the object” I did the ethnography in organisations and of the co-operation as far as it concerned the *particular projects* selected. In data collection I emphasised the tape-recording of the situations, mostly meetings, in which the project was discussed. However, to get background information about the Finnish activities in Morogoro, I collected additional interview material from the Finnish participants.

In the analysis I followed the example of previous studies of expansive learning and conducted a detailed analysis of selected critical situations. In different empirical chapters different strategy was used ranging from capturing the diachronic processes during project trajectories to synchronic analysis of communication in selected events. This strategy reveals in detail the nature of co-operation and as such adds to the ethnographic tradition of narrative description. Moreover, the studies of expansive learning usually employ analytical categories such as “object” and “tools” that are derived from the theory, and additional analytical tools such as “script” (Saari *ibid.*), “initiatives” (Haavisto *ibid.*) for making sense of the micro-level communication. In my study I employed the categories of object and developmental contradictions provided by the tradition of studies in activity theory and expansive learning. Additionally, development studies offered me the categories of power and trusteeship.

These categories of power and trusteeship were novel to the tradition of activity theory and expansive learning. In the context of NGO co-operation Lister (2001) has studied power in partnership through interviews of different participants. In their recent study Mawdsley, Townsed, Porter and Oakley (2002) investigated power in NGO-relationships between Northern and Southern actors through extensive interviews and arranged workshops. In their study, the role of the Southern researchers was important. Such strategy is similar to a study I participated during preparing this dissertation (Hakkarainen et al. 2003; Kanyinga et al. 2003) in which the co-researchers in Vietnam, Thailand, Nicaragua, Mexico, Kenya and Nepal arranged interviews and workshops in which the issues of partnership and power were discussed among other subjects. In contrast, in this study similar co-operation with Southern researchers was not possible due to the financial constraints. Although in 1999 I did some co-operation with the University of Dar es Salaam my research is an effort of a single Northern researcher.

In contrast to many other studies of expansive learning, I did not employ the developmental and interventionist strategy in this research. In contrast, I remained more an “outside” ethnographer and did not attempt to change the practices through explicit interventions. I made this decision mainly for two reasons: first, I was not invited by the organisations to develop their activities as is the case in a number of previous studies of expansive learning but the initiative for the research came from me. Second, I found that during the process of data collection

I knew so little about the activities that I would have not had the courage to take an interventionist standpoint and “develop the development co-operation” from the beginning of the research. In so doing, I took advice from Olivier de Sardan’s (2005, 26) conversion of the above-mentioned thesis of Marx: “as far as development is concerned, [the problem] is to understand how the world changes, instead of claiming to change the world without first finding the means of understanding it”. However, in the later stage of the research I did arrange some feedback meetings for the organisations and provided my observations to their discussion.

1.7 Projects studied, fieldwork and data

The selection of geographical focus and the practical project to study was made on the basis of the importance of Tanzania to the Finnish NGO-development co-operation as well as my personal knowledge and familiarity of the potential research environment. The development co-operation of small Finnish non-governmental organisations in Morogoro, Tanzania was selected as the focus of the research since there were many of Finnish projects under way in Morogoro (over 20 at the time of the beginning of the research). Moreover, I had already visited Morogoro as a tourist twice. Morogoro is both a region and a town. The region is divided into two districts: Morogoro Urban and Morogoro Rural. Most of the projects of Finnish NGOs were located in Morogoro Urban.

The particular co-operation projects studied were selected using practical criteria of regarding the projects and data available in Morogoro. As a result, three different projects were selected²¹:

- 1) A project that retrained retired professionals
- 2) A project that supported an NGO engaged in women’s entrepreneurship
- 3) A project that arranged a capacity-building seminar for NGOs

The first project was in its planning phase in the beginning of my fieldwork in 1999. The project partners were a large and well-established Finnish NGO occupied with the welfare of elderly people in Finland and a small, recently established organisation of retired professionals in Morogoro. The project aimed to improve the standard of living of the retired professionals by retraining them in specific skills that might be of use after the professional life. This project was a new attempt for a large and well-established Finnish NGO engaged with the welfare of the elderly people in Finland. Although being a professional NGO, the organi-

²¹ In 1999 I also collected data from a fourth project in which a Finnish team of volunteers were building a doctor’s house in a Tanzanian village. However, this case was left out of the dissertation and will be reported in other forms.

sations did not have any expertise on development issues. The project studied turned out to be merely a voluntary effort of a few committed person than an organisational effort.

The second project was a project between two umbrella organisations: the Finnish partner in this project is an umbrella organisation of the Finnish NGOs active in Tanzania and especially in Morogoro, and the Tanzanian partner is a quite newly established umbrella organisation of the NGOs in Morogoro. Both umbrella organisations worked on a voluntary basis. The aim of the project was to arrange a joint training seminar in Morogoro for representatives of both Finnish and Tanzanian organisations in order to improve the development co-operation between these organisations. The project was planned and implemented in 2000 during my fieldwork in Tanzania.

The third project was a project between a medium large Finnish NGO that has quite long history in activities in Morogoro and a small, newly-established women's organisation in Morogoro. The Finnish organisation was a partly professional organisation that has mainly been occupied with social work in Finland. Development projects in Tanzania have formed only a part of its work. These two organisations had been planning a project since 1998 and in 1999 there was a short wine-making course arranged in collaboration. At the time of my fieldwork in 2000 the organisations continued their negotiations about continuing the co-operation. The women's organisation is preoccupied with small-scale entrepreneurship such as tailoring and food processing with an overall aim of improving the economic situation of women.

In my research focusing on the joint object construction the "field" can be understood in several senses. Firstly, there are some geographical places such as Morogoro in Tanzania that constitute a starting point of the research. Secondly, the co-operation processes of certain Finnish and Tanzanian organisations the co-operation processes constitute possible "sites" of the research. Thirdly, these co-operation processes are not whatever co-operation projects, but *development* co-operation projects situated in a larger context of what one could call the international NGO-development co-operation system (Tvedt 1998), the development apparatus (Ferguson 1994), the developmentalist configuration (Olivier de Sardan 1998) or arena of development (Long 2001). The co-operation of small Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs is a part of these fields, even if in a quite marginal position and not always consciously perceived by the actors themselves.

I define the field in this study neither as a geographical place or a local community as is the prototype in traditional anthropology, nor organisations that would be the starting point for an organisational ethnographer. Rather, the field is the international NGO-development system, or more specifically, certain co-operation processes within it. The fieldwork is done in multiple sites during a certain period

of time in order to capture the events and actors that constitute a certain process. This fieldwork can be done at home as well as in different locations. (Amit 2000; Gupta and Ferguson 1997, 4; 2000; Burawoy et al. 2000).

Therefore, the field in my research was at the same time a starting point as well as a construction of the researcher. The field changed, extended and became more focused in the course of the fieldwork when more actors and places joined in the projects. In terms of place the fieldwork was conducted in diverse geographical locations – in the large offices of NGOs in the Finnish capital area, in the cosy offices of voluntary organisations in small Finnish towns, in the living rooms of the Finnish activists in diverse municipalities in Finland, in the small offices of NGOs in Morogoro, in the small local pubs around the town of Morogoro and in the small huts in the rural area surrounding Morogoro. The periods in Tanzania involved “living in the field”, whilst the periods in Finland were spent “visiting research sites” and the interviewing people.

The fieldwork in Finland and in Tanzania in 1999–2001 resulted in diverse sets of data from the different cases. The fieldwork in Tanzania was performed in three different periods: three months in June-August 1999, a six months in February-August 2000, and one month in January-February 2001. In what follows I give a short description of the fieldwork in different cases. The reflections on the fieldwork practise itself and my role and position are given in the final chapter.

Project 1: Retraining retired professionals

In the beginning of 1999 I informed the umbrella organisation of the Finnish NGOs working in Morogoro about my research interests and asked what kind of projects would be starting soon. The chairperson of the umbrella organisation introduced me to the co-ordinator of the forthcoming project on the retraining retired professionals who welcomed me to observe the project. I started the observation in the planning phase of the project in June-July 1999. I travelled to Morogoro almost simultaneously with the representatives of the Finnish NGO. During the planning phase of the project I observed the planning meetings and participated in some visits and social occasions with the planning group. During the planning I also conducted some interviews with the Finnish participants, and after the planning process I interviewed the Tanzanian participants in their planning team.

In February 2000 I returned to Morogoro and participated in the meetings of the recruiting team. In these meetings, no representatives from the Finnish NGO were present. In June – July 2000 I participated in the training courses in two training institutions. During that time the representatives of the Finnish organisations were also present. I observed the meetings of the co-ordination team of the proj-

ect and participated in a number of trainings in the training institutions having informal talks with the participants. During the implementation I interviewed the Finnish representatives and the representatives of the training institutions. Right after the implementation I interviewed the Tanzanian participants in the co-ordination team as well as the executive members of the organisations involved in the discussions with the Finnish representatives. Before my returning to Finland in August 2000 I also participated in the meeting of the evaluation team of the project, and right after my return, in the meeting of the Finnish representatives.

In February 2001 I returned to Morogoro and had a chance to participate in the evaluation of the training with the Tanzanian evaluation team. This evaluation included a questionnaire sent to the participants by the Tanzanian NGO, a few visits to the training participants and a one-day evaluation meeting to which all the participants were invited by the Tanzanian NGO. Additionally I individually interviewed ten of the training participants. During that three-week trip I also arranged a feedback meeting for the Tanzanian NGO participants of the project based on my preliminary observations of the planning phase.

Project 2: Supporting women's entrepreneurship

The second project that was about to begin at the time I started my research was a project to support a women's organisation. The project had been already planned for a couple of years; for example the chairperson of the Tanzanian organisation had visited the Finnish organisation in 1998 and a training course in wine making was arranged in Morogoro on the basis of the negotiations during the visit. For the year 1999 project funding was applied to increase the support to the NGO. In September 1999 I visited the Finnish NGO and observed the preparation of the fund application. I also interviewed the Finnish actors involved in the project. In February 2000, after arriving to Morogoro, I visited the Tanzanian NGO and introduced the research more profoundly. It turned out that the NGO was mainly a one-woman effort and there were not a lot of activities going on. At the time I entered the NGO there were a lot of internal negotiations about the organisation; for example, a new constitution was being drafted. I interviewed some of the actors and participated in some activities of the NGO. I was not allowed to record the internal meetings of the NGO since the issues discussed were considered too sensitive. However, in June 2000 the Finnish partners arrived to Morogoro in order to discuss the project and I was allowed to observe and tape-record meetings that took place between the Tanzanian NGO and the Finnish actors.

Project 3: Arranging an NGO-seminar in Morogoro

The project of arranging a seminar was a first joint project between the Finnish umbrella organisation and the newly established umbrella organisation of the NGOs in Morogoro. The planning of the project started in Finland in 1998. The joint planning however with the Tanzanian NGO started in February 2000 when the chairperson of the Finnish organisation travelled to Morogoro and met with the newly elected leadership of the Tanzanian organisation. Until the election, there had been internal conflicts within the previous executives of the organisations that had hindered the smooth functioning of the organisation. A preparatory committee was set up in the Tanzanian organisation and a young Finnish female volunteer was appointed to be a representative of the Finnish NGO in the preparatory committee. I participated and recorded the meetings of the preparatory committee, collected the email-messages exchanged during the preparation, and participated in the seminar. In the seminar I also gave a presentation on my preliminary observations of the tensions and future challenges of the Finnish-Tanzanian NGO-development co-operation. In this project a problem of overspending the budget occurred after the seminar. I participated in the meetings that negotiated the possibilities of solving the problem in Tanzania. Simultaneously one of the members of the board of the Finnish organisations tape-recorded the meetings discussing the problem in Finland. After solving the problem I interviewed all the members of the preparatory committee. In February 2001 I arranged a feedback meeting on my preliminary analysis. In that meeting representatives from both the Tanzanian and Finnish organisations were present.

Interviews with the Finnish actors

I collected an additional set of interviews with the Finnish actors that had been active in the NGO-development activities in Morogoro. These interviews were conducted in Finland during 1999–2000 and in Tanzania in 2000 on the occasions when Finnish representatives visited Morogoro. The interviews included questions of the personal trajectories of involvement in the development co-operation activities, the questions of the Finnish organisations they represented and their view on the future challenges of the co-operation (see App.1 for the interview guide). These interviews helped me to more profoundly understand the general history of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro and the point of view of the Finnish actors towards co-operation.

The fieldwork resulted in different sets of data on the different projects (see Table 2). The data indicated in the table represents the tape-recorded data on the projects. However, it should be noted, that the face-to-face contacts, living and conducting the daily activities in Morogoro for all together 11 months contrib-

uted to the understanding and interpretation of the public, reported and tape-recorded speech. This data collected through experience is merely since I have not made systematic use of field notes in my analysis. Due to the decision of focusing on the actual situations in which the project was discussed, the emphasis in data collection was in the meeting situations. Additionally, I conducted interviews with the key individuals engaged in the project at the different phases in the project. Therefore, some individuals were interviewed a number of times. This was done also for the reason that two of the Tanzanian individuals were engaged in two projects, the project for retraining retired professionals and the project of arranging the seminar. In the project of retraining retired professionals I conducted some interviews with the participants in the training during the evaluation phase²². The recorded meetings were mainly collected in Tanzania since it was there where the encounters between Finnish and Tanzania actors mainly took place.

Table 1. The sets of data collected on the projects. The numbers in parenthesis indicate whether the interview was made with a Finnish (F) or Tanzanian (T), and whether the meetings took place in Finland or Tanzania.

A Project studied	Number of tape-recorded interviews	Number of tape-recorded meetings	Other data
1. Project to retrain retired professionals	33 (7 F) (26 T)	40 (1 F) (39 T)	Documents, correspondence, observation of the training courses in June-July 2000
2. Project to supporting women's entrepreneurship	5 (3 F) (2 T)	6 (1 F) (5 T)	Documents, correspondence, taking part in some of the NGO's activities
3. Project to arrange an NGO-seminar in Morogoro	5 (2 F) (3 T)	26 (2 F) (24 T)	Documents, correspondence, participating in the seminar
4. Interviews with the Finnish NGO members	25		Documents such as fund applications
Total	58	75	

The activity theoretical studies tend to combine detailed micro-level analysis of certain interaction and action situations and the more longitudinal description of processes (Saari 2003; Puonti 2004; Toiviainen 2003). This of course, sets challenges for selecting the level of analysis of the data. Firstly, for a detailed analysis of discourses and micro-interaction, the data gathered from processes over several

²² During the analysis I perceived the lack of interviews and the focus on meetings problematic. As I shall discuss in the last Chapter this choice resulted in lack of the profound point of view of the so-called beneficiaries, and difficulty to address the "why" questions in addition to "what" and "how" questions.

years is too extensive. Secondly, the assumption of the primary importance of the data on actual interaction in tape-recorded or video-taped form resulted in masses of tape-recorded data with inadequate field notes or observation logs that might have been useful.

Based on the primary handling of the data I selected some parts of the data for more detailed analysis. These parts were considered to be critical events during the project trajectory. The selection was guided by the initial research questions and my perceptions of the important and interesting issues to be examined. The selected data provides illustrative examples of the general characteristic and problems of the co-operation in Morogoro. This selection resulted in the following sets of data used for answering the particular research problems.

Table 2. Summary of the research problems and the data taken for more detailed analysis.

Research problem	Data selected for more detailed analysis
1. How do the Finnish NGO participants conceive the challenges for change in co-operation?	The interviews of Finnish actors
2. How is the content of a project constructed and negotiated in different phases of the project?	Meetings and interviews from one project
3. How power is exercised in the project negotiations between partners?	One meeting from three projects
4. How does the rhetoric of partnership collide with trusteeship in the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian organisations?	Meetings, interviews and documents from one project

1.8 The structure of the report

In the first two chapters I provide more detail on the discourses of learning and NGOs in development. In Chapter 2 I review the literature on learning in development co-operation and consider the potential contributions of the theory of expansive learning for examining learning in co-operation. In Chapter 3 I summarise the recent literature on the NGOs in development in general and in the cases of Finland and Tanzania in particular. It depicts the change processes that are relevant to the contemporary NGO-development co-operation and sets the framework in which the particular co-operation processes take place.

The following four chapters each form an individual contribution to the analysis of NGO-development co-operation between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. Each chapter answers a particular research question by providing a detailed analy-

sis of a particular set of data. In Chapter 4 I analyse the learning challenges in co-operation from the point of view of Finnish actors and identifies relevant trajectories of change in the contemporary co-operation. In Chapter 5 I discuss the inclusions, exclusions and tensions in a single process of object construction along a trajectory of one project by depicting particularities in different phases of the project. In Chapter 6 I go into the construction of power relations with detailed analysis of interaction situations. In Chapter 8 I analyse the emergence of the idea of trusteeship along one project trajectory.

In the last two chapters I draw together the results of each empirical chapter. In Chapter 8 I discuss the outcomes of the separate analysis in the light of developmental contradictions and learning challenges in co-operation. In the final chapter 9 I reflect upon the research process.

2 Learning in development co-operation

In this chapter I first review the literature considering learning in development co-operation. I identify three different approaches from which the learning in development co-operation has been discussed: institutional learning, project learning and organisational learning. Second, I review the debate considering the challenges of including individuals and the development system within the framework of learning in development co-operation. Third, I introduce activity theoretical approach and the theory of expansive learning as a new approach for analysing learning in NGO-development co-operation.

In development, learning can be conceived both as a goal of the development intervention and as something that takes place in the course of development projects. Learning as a goal of development is seen, for example, in the training and education components in most of the development projects and programmes aimed at learning in the Southern locus of development co-operation (Roper and Pettit 2002, 261). Learning and education are seen as important preconditions for societal development. In the framework of NGO development in South learning can be conceptualised from at least two perspectives: social change and effectiveness. Learning as a goal of development intervention that aim at social change is based on concepts such as “conscientization” (Freire 1972, 25). Conscientization refers to learning in which the marginalised and oppressed groups learn to observe and criticize their oppressive environments and take action in order to change it. The NGOs and civil society organisations can be perceived as promoters of such learning.

The numerous capacity building programmes and projects with various training components aim to enhance learning in Southern institutions and organisations. They concentrate on improving accounting systems, leadership and ability to define organisational missions, vision and strategies. In these programmes learning is understood merely in terms of effectiveness the goal of which is more effective and smooth organisational functioning.

However, in this research, the learning as an *end* of development intervention is not a focus. Instead, I shall concentrate on learning *in* the co-operation between different actors engaged in development project in one way or another.

2.1 Different approaches to learning in development co-operation

Institutional learning in development

At first glance, learning in development is quite vaguely conceptualised from the point of view of the institution of development. Van Brabant (2001, 183) has defined the institutional learning as learning that “takes place in interaction between actors and agencies in development”. Along with the concepts such as participation, partnership and ownership, learning has become one of the central rhetorical terms in development (Johnson and Wilson 2000, 1984). According to this rhetoric learning should be an integral part of all development practice. For example, the evaluations on development programmes and projects are done in order to enhance learning (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2000). The “lessons learned” is one of the main titles in every evaluation and monitoring report on any project or programme. Learning entails of identifying and disseminating of successes, failures and “best practices” between projects and organisations (Biggs and Smith 2000). “Development” is rhetorically characterized as a learning system, but there are fewer accounts on by what kind of processes learning actually takes place within the system (Sharma and al. 2004, 218). In the widespread “learning speech” it has not been made very clear who is supposed to learn, how the learning is supposed to take place and what is supposed to be done with the knowledge learned (Gordon and Wilson, *ibid.* 1894).

In this approach, the agent of learning is the whole development institution that is supposed to learn by gathering and disseminating information on project successes and failures (van Brabant 2001, 183–184). The institutional learning is based on an idea that learning is facilitated by gathering new information and knowledge that will change the objectives and the models of working of development institution in order to more efficiently perform its tasks. The loose speech about learning reminds what Argyris and Schön (1996, 3) call the most basic definition of learning in which an organisation or institution learn “when it acquires information”. The accounts on institutional learning, however, remain weak in theorising the actual processes through which institutional learning takes place and disseminated information is transformed into changed practices. Moreover, as Smillie (1995, 158) has pointed out that the fact that “lessons taught are not always lessons learned” and it is rather the inability to learn than learning that characterize the institution of development.

When left non-conceptualised, learning easily becomes one of the buzzwords circulating in the system: everybody should learn, the co-operation should be a process of mutual learning and the learning in general is a good and desirable thing. However, as Biggs and Smith (2000, 1745) point out there seems to be an explicated paradox of learning in development literature which they divide into normative and critical literature. On the one hand there are a great number of handbooks and guides for enhancing learning based on the positive belief of possibility of learning. On the other hand, there are plenty of critical accounts stating that no learning whatsoever is taking place in development. The two extremes of “learning advocates” and “learning sceptics” identified in the field of organisational learning in Northern societies (Argyris and Schön *ibid.* xx) are thus found also among development practitioners and researchers.

In this research, neither of these viewpoints is adopted to begin with. I apply an analytical starting point in which learning and non-learning are phenomena that should be looked for in the actual practices of co-operation.

Project as a learning process – approach

In the 1980s, as a critique of blueprint-type development planning in which the development projects should be implemented as they are planned, a novel approach called “learning process approach” was introduced (Korten 1980; Rondinelli 1993; Upphoff 1996; Upphoff et al. 1998). The learning process approach stressed the importance of flexibility and the ability to adjust the projects in the course of implementation. According to this point of view, plans should be modified according to new observations and reflection. The need for continuous change is based on the observation that reality is such a complex process that it cannot be captured by means of mechanical planning²³. The entire intervention process should be viewed as a policy experiment (Rondinelli 1993) – not a ready-made package, and a learning process that could lead to better policies and plans in future.

One example of the implementation of the project as learning process is a method called “project documentation approach” (Davies 1998; Mosse 1998). This approach refers to a practice in which researchers and practitioners work in close collaboration. The researchers are continuously “documenting” the project and diverse stakeholders in a project are systematically provided with spaces for

²³ For example Upphoff (1996) compares the challenges of social science to understand complexity in development with the shift from mechanics to quantum theories in physics. He stresses, for example, the need for taking distance from simple conceptualisations of causality in development projects.

reflective dialogue on the project activities on the basis of the feedback provided by the researchers. The project documentation approach points to the fact that learning and reflection need their own spaces and tools. Usually, people engaged in time-bound project activities are too busy doing and do not have time to take a step back and reflect. If something is not working there is no time to consider the reasons for it, but the practitioners are urged to try another solutions without reasonably reflection (Pasteur and Scott-Villiers 2004, 194). The project documentation approach offers a model in which researchers and practitioners together create the space for reflection and learning.

One of the main learning approaches in the practice of project planning and implementation is the participatory learning approach (Chambers 1996). For example, this approach challenged the traditional conception of expertise in development. The participatory learning approach points to the need of the Northern experts to learn from the local knowledge rather than teach the locals based on their own technical expertise. The participatory learning approach conceptualised learning as a joint process between different actors. There are plenty of different participatory learning toolkits to enhance this philosophy of “handing over the stick” to the local people (Chambers *ibid.*; Mikkelsen 1995) and to enable dialogue between the technical experts and local people in order to promote learning. The Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) has been promoted in a number of workshops and the experiences of different projects employing participatory learning approach have been disseminated among practitioners in a specific newsletter (Kenton and Ashley 2004). The strength of PLA has been the development of actual practical tools that could enhance more collaborative communication among different participants in development programmes.

Understanding the development co-operation project as a learning process stresses the importance of trial and error. The mechanism of learning is that by identifying mistakes made in the course of a development co-operation project learning can occur by adapting and changing practices to correct those errors. However, in development there seems to be many kinds of errors and mistakes, some leading to learning and change, some remaining repeated. For example, Chambers (1996, 15) distinguishes between embraced errors and embedded errors. Embraced errors are those that lead to learning and change, better projects and technical solutions. Embedded errors, errors that seem to persist despite whatever explicit learning efforts are harder to tackle than the embraced errors within the learning process approach.

The pertinence of the embedded errors in project work, despite the reflection and new approaches sets challenges for deeper and wider understanding of learning, or non-learning, in development co-operation (Biggs and Smith 2003).

Organisational learning in NGOs – approach

In the literature considering organisational learning in NGO-development co-operation there has been increasing demands for both the Northern and Southern NGOs to become “learning organisations” (Roper and Pettit 2002, 258; Senge 1990). Learning organisation is defined as an organisation that is able to reflect its own performance and adapt its strategies according to the feedback it receives from its environment (Chambers 1996, 224; Fowler 2000, 184). The idea of being a “learning organisation” has been connected to the ideas of improving sustainability and performance of the organisations engaged in development (Fowler 1997; Edwards and Hulme 1995). For example, Northern development NGOs have to perform their development efforts in a way that enhances their reputation and ensure further funding from their home environments (e.g. Fowler 2000, 184). For the Southern NGOs, becoming a learning organisation has been an aim in the number of capacity building efforts and projects for organisational development under the larger goal of “strengthening the civil society”.

Within the general literature of organisational learning considering the organisations in Northern hemisphere Argyris and Schön (1976; 1996)²⁴ have introduced a theory of two levels of learning in organisations. The distinction of levels of learning is based on the idea that any organisation has two kinds of theories of action²⁵: espoused theory and theory-in-use (Argyris and Schön 1996, 13). Espoused theory refers to the explicated theory that justifies the given patterns of organisational action. Theory-in-use refers to the theory that is not explicit but can be constructed on the basis of what organisation actually does. Therefore, most important product of organisational learning would be a change in the theory-in-use, not in the explicit strategies or policies.

A level of single-loop learning refers to learning in which an organisation improves its performance based on the feedback from the environment within the framework of its existing goals and objectives. Single-loop learning aims at correcting the mistakes that hinder the effective accomplishment of the organisational goals but does not include a component of reflecting these very goals and the values that are seen as constituting the basis for action (Argyris and Schön *ibid.*, 20). The second level, the double-loop learning is learning in which an organisation reflects, questions and changes its very goals and the values on which the goals are

²⁴ Argyris and Schön (1996) based their account on organisational learning on the concept of “inquiry” as suggested by John Dewey (1938). Organisational learning should be based on organisational inquiry that emerges out of problematic situations and experimenting in order to solve the situation.

²⁵ Theory of action refers to the “system of beliefs that underly action” (Argyris and Schön, *ibid.*).

based (ibid. 21). Double-loop learning is not a simple correction of mistakes in a given framework, but might lead to a change in the framework itself. In development organisations the single-loop learning means, for example, searching solutions and correcting action within the framework of existing rules and procedures, whereas the double-loop learning would mean questioning and understanding the reasons behind the existing rules (Pasteur and Scott-Villiers 2004, 189).

The central concept in double-loop organisational learning is “reflective practice” and the actors in development could be seen as reflective practitioners rather than experts (Schön 1991, 300).²⁶ As Eyben (2006, 3) put it, reflective practice in development refers to the “ability to be aware of the dynamics of our social and political environments, reflecting on how these shape our own behaviour and the impact that this has on other people”. The organisational learning approach is strong in giving tools for reflecting the current practice. However, even if, for example, Argyris and Schön (ibid., 4) are committed to a normative idea of learning as improvement the process of moving from reflection to changed practices remains vague.

Individuals and development system in learning in co-operation

In the exploration of learning in co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs the approaches to learning presented have potential, but also pose some challenges for theorising about learning in development co-operation. The first challenge deals with the anticipated agent of learning. The institutional point of view conceptualises the agent of learning as the development institution and the main mechanism of learning as information gathering and dissemination.

The accounts of a project as a learning process emphasise the project as an agent of learning. It is a project that adapts and changes through information gathering and reflection. As observed by Biggs and Smith (2003) the project as a learning process approach tends not to account for the fact that the “project cycle” consists of interactions and actions between human beings. There is a need to consider learning as something that might take place in these interactions rather than by an “adaptive project”.

For the theories of organisational learning, the agent of learning is an organisation that learns on the basis of the feedback from its environment through reflection. In developing an approach to explore learning in NGO-development

²⁶ Schön (1991) discusses a need to understand professional practice in terms of reflection-in-action rather than technical rationality of profession. According to him (ibid., 39-40) technical rationality emphasises problem solving whilst the problems setting should be more in focus. He argues that problem setting should achieve more attention since problems are not “out there” but they are constructed, for example, on the basis of experienced problematic situations.

co-operation in the case of Finnish organisations in Morogoro the organisational learning approaches seemed to be difficult to apply. In the cases I have analysed the presupposition of an organisation as a main agent of learning is challenged since the organisations seem to be quite weak and unorganised. The organisations at hand, both in Finland and in Tanzania, were in transformation into organisations from groups of individual actors, at least vis-à-vis development activities.²⁷

The approaches of institutional learning, learning in projects and organisational learning all see agents of learning as something other than an individual. However, in different tones all these approaches subscribe to a view that individual learning is connected to institutional or organisational learning, even if the connections between these two are not straightforward. At the same time, individuals might learn, but organisations and institutions might not learn, or vice versa (e.g. Van Brabant 1997). For example Edwards and Sen (2000) have criticised the concentration on the learning and change at the institutional level and have put forward a view in which the importance of “personal and inner transformation and change” of the individuals should be seen as a basis for institutional change. Whilst Edward’s and Sen’s (ibid.) account on individual inner transformation subscribes to processes similar to religious effects in an individual, Ebrahim (2003) points out to the cognitive capacities of individuals in NGOs. The cognitive capacities of individual both enable and constrain the organisational learning.

In addition to the challenge of linking individual, organisational and institutional learning the specific system of development co-operation poses challenges for understanding learning in concrete development activities. Ebrahim (2003) has used the Foucauldian concept of discourse and the concept of field as suggested by Bourdieu in order to depict the wider context of development that affects learning in Southern NGOs. According to him, the international discourse of development, or the field of development, sets some governing factors to learning. These governing factors both enable and constrain learning, but nevertheless affect what is learned. The agendas of the international discourse and Northern NGOs funding the southern NGOs partly define what kinds of things are considered important for learning. The power relations between the co-operating NGOs might lead to bias in learning (Ebrahim *ibid.*, 112). The Southern NGOs might learn more skills that are beneficial to the funding system – such as proposal writing, reporting and LFA – than skills important for their work in their immediate environments with their beneficiaries. Additionally, Briggs (2005) has argued that

²⁷ In addition one could consider the suitability of the concept of “organisation” in the theories of organisational learning to depict what is at stake in NGOs and development. As Power et. al (2002, 273–374) have pointed out, the concept of “organisation” often refers to for-profit sector in North.

in the development encounters it is more likely the rural peasants to learn planning knowledge specific to a development system than the development experts to learn local knowledge as proposed by the participatory learning approach.

The system of development also affects the way the concept of environment is understood in the accounts of organisational learning. In development co-operation the organisations have to deal with a number of diverse environments the feedback from which is different and even contradictory (Lister 2003). For example, the environments of a Southern NGO might include its immediate local, societal and legal environments, its constituency, members, beneficiaries, Northern partners and the international development system that all give diverse feedback to the organisation. Thus, the challenge for organisational learning would not be to adjust its action on the basis of feedback from its environment but to learn how to deal with the multiple feedbacks from different environments.

A number of authors had pointed out that one of the most important learning challenges in development co-operation is a realisation, reflection and dealing with the systemic power relations in co-operation (Biggs and Smith 2000, 1754; Ebrahim 2003). As Fowler (2000, 185) states, any account of learning within development co-operation that does not question the paternalism and power relations can lead to improvement in a technical sense, but does not tackle with the most important problems inherent in the system. In the same vein, Eyben (2006, 14) argues that understanding power in aid relations is a prerequisite of any learning. However, the open reflection of power relations and interdependence in practice of co-operation processes is not very common (*ibid.*). The systemic power relations are taken for granted or conceived as an unpleasant issue to tackle with. However, there are increasing efforts to promote the reflection. For example, Johnson and Wilson (2000, 1894) propose a “mediating discussions” facilitated by researchers between all the stakeholders in a project as a beneficial way to take the power relations on the table and subject to open reflection.

The review of the literature on the learning in development co-operation showed that there are few accounts on learning *in actual co-operation*, in the interaction of individuals and organisations, both North and South doing development and implementing projects together (Carlsson and Wohlgemuth 2000). The emerging challenge, in my view, is to understand how individual learning, organisational learning and learning in co-operation is intertwined together in actual situations of doing development, but in connection to the wider system of development (Ebrahim 2003). In what follows I suggest that a theory of expansive learning is an approach that can provide with novel understanding of learning in NGO-development co-operation.

2.2 Expansive learning in NGO-development co-operation

The theory of expansive learning developed by Yrjö Engeström²⁸ (1987) is a learning theory which supplies concepts for researching learning in co-operation and provides a link between individual learning and learning as change in a wider context. The theory of expansive learning is based on a special tradition of cultural-historical activity theory that is closely related to the socio-cultural account of learning in psychology in which the interaction between the learning of individuals and culture is in focus (Chaiklin et al. 1999; Cole 1998). The theory of expansive learning has contributed to the psychological accounts of learning by introducing the concept of activity – instead of traditional notions of culture (Cole 1998)²⁹ – as the main context of learning. Simultaneously, the activity systems or the networks of activity systems, instead of individuals, have been considered the main agent of learning in analysis (Engeström 2001).

The theory of expansive learning draws upon multiple theoretical sources including the idea of systemic learning provided by Bateson in his classical essay “*The Logical Categories of Learning and Communication*” (1987, [1964]) in which he searches for classification of learning at hierarchical levels. Bateson distinguishes three levels of learning (1987, 287–305). Learning I is learning where the organism learns to select from the choices given to it. At this level the mistake that is corrected is a wrong choice from the pre-given alternatives. Learning II implies change in the learning process itself. The mistake to be corrected is not a wrong choice but the process by which the choice is made. This kind of learning leads to changes in the set of alternative from which the choice is made. Learning III is more radical learning that leads to change in the system of sets of alternatives from which the choice is made. Learning III³⁰ is rare since it requires questioning and challenging at times unconscious premises upon which the action is based.

Learning at all levels can take place simultaneously, and the learning of organisms moves from one level to another. The transition from one level to another takes place as a reaction to contradictions at the lower level (Bateson *ibid.* 303).

²⁸ The theory of expansive learning has been mainly used in a number of studies of co-operation and learning in Finnish and other northern contexts and especially in researching learning and change in work activities (e.g., Engeström 1996; 2001) Virkkunen; Haavisto 2002; Toiviainen 2003; Hyysalo 2004; Puonti 2004; Seppänen 2004; Hasu 2000).

²⁹ One possible point of view to understand the learning in NGO co-operation would have been the theories of cross-cultural learning in which culture refers more to the different ways of behaving, different norms, values and beliefs. However, I found it difficult to define what the cultures that would be at stake. Finnish and Tanzanian? European and African? Local Finnish and *chagga* or *waluguru* culture? In terms of culture, I come close what Seppälä (2000, 31) calls “aid culture” that entails its own system of thinking.

³⁰ Bateson (*ibid.*) gives an example of questioning the Western assumption of a coherent self as one example of learning III.

These contradictions lead to questioning and realising a need for change. Contradictions are based on the feedback from the environment that might be diverse. At a more modest level, learning is selecting a more appropriate choice; at the most radical level learning is the re-conceptualisation of the environment, the organism itself and the very relation between these two.

The literature of learning in development co-operation showed that the agent of learning in development might be understood as the whole institution, organisations as well as individuals. Further, the Batesonian definition of learning suggests that the learning takes place at three levels. Hypothetically one can ponder about what kind of learning might occur by different agents and at different levels of learning as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Conceptualisations of an agent of learning in relationship to levels of learning in NGO-development co-operation.

Level Agent of learning	Learning I	Learning II	Learning III
Individual	Improving the skills of project planning and implementation, including language skills.	Searching for different approaches in project work	Looking for alternatives for project framework
An NGO	Trying to find more effective approaches to achieve the existing goals	Questioning the approach and goals of the present development work	Questioning the engagement in development co-operation
A project	Finding best ways to realize the well defined objectives	Redefine the objectives based on change in the environment	Reconsidering the overall premises of a project and questioning the project framework
Institution of development co-operation	Listing mistakes and successes in project framework in order to develop better projects	Questioning the project framework and searching for alternative ways of working	Questioning the practise of development co-operation and searching for novel approaches

However, in the concrete co-operation situations all the above-mentioned types of learning can occur simultaneously, but in different phases and paces. Then, how could the learning in development co-operation that is realised in concrete projects, planned and implemented by individuals associated with certain organisation be conceptualised?

In the theory of expansive learning Bateson's systemic understanding of learning is innovatively paired with a Marxist account of human activity. In the theory of expansive learning the concepts of learning and change are interconnected – expansive learning refers to systemic change. Engeström (2001, 139) proposes that if expansive learning is understood as further development of Bateson's Learning III the subject of learning should be conceptualised not as an individual but a collective activity system and, further, networks of activity systems. The activity system (Engeström 1987) is a concept that considers local practises as systems that consist of elements of subject, object, tools, division of labour, rules and community. The concept of an activity system provides a connection between the learning of individual actors, organisations and societal activities.

Activity systems are distinguished by their objects (Leont'ev 1978): the material and discursive “thing” the subjects and the community are working upon in order to achieve and produce an outcome. According to the idea of activity system the relation between subject and object is mediated by cultural means, such as tools and signs and by the social division of labour and rules. Thus, according to Engeström (ibid.), instead of the individual, organisation, project or institution previously discussed the basic unit of analysis of learning in co-operation should be two interacting activity systems oriented towards a potentially shared object (see Figure 3).

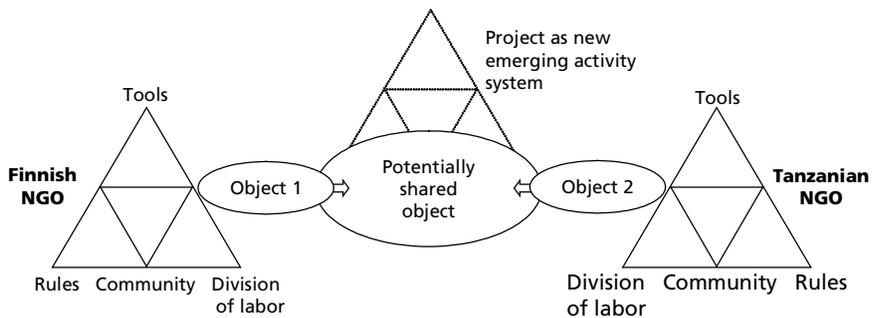


Figure 3. Two interacting activity systems as basic unit of analysis in researching learning in co-operation. (Modified on the basis of Engeström 1996, 133.)

I have taken the model of two interacting local activity systems as a starting point for my analysis of learning in co-operation of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. Furthermore, I selected some elements of the activity theoretical approach to be used in the analysis.

The object as an analytical tool – What is actually done and achieved in co-operation?

The concept of object guides attention to what actually takes place in co-operation. As Engeström has stressed, activities do not exist or become organized without a certain object to work upon – for example the health care organisations do not exist for their own sake but because of illnesses and other health problems people have (Engeström 1999a). However, an object of activity is not well-determined or given, but is under continuous negotiation and construction. It is defined as an ongoing “process of construction that both determines the horizon for possible goals and actions as well as is itself modified and constructed by the same actions” (Engeström 1999b). For example, the definition of illness has changed over time both through the development of medical diagnosis strategies and by the changing social and discursive definitions of “illness”.

In co-operation between several activity systems the object moves from quite unreflected raw material to more meaningful object of an activity system, and further towards a potentially shared and jointly constructed object between multiple activities systems (Engeström 2001). In this moving horizon of a potentially shared object, learning takes place. Construction of a shared object means transformation and change in old conceptualisations, division of labour and instrumentalities. In development co-operation the negotiated nature of the potentially shared object becomes even more relevant. For agencies working in development the basic object, the “raw material” is an abstract idea such as “development” or “poverty reduction” but in every programme and project the particular and practical object has to be negotiated. The object is a process concept. Engeström (1999b, 65) writes that the object is:

(...) to be understood as a project under construction, moving from potential raw material to a meaningful shape and to a result or an outcome. In this sense, the object determines the horizon of possible goals and actions. But it is truly a horizon: as soon as an intermediate goal is reached, the object escapes and must be reconstructed by means of new intermediate goals and actions.

As the object of activities is under continuous negotiation, it is also never harmonious or “closed” At times, object can be more open, and at times more closed. This idea is close to the concept of “closure” (see Latour 1987) in science studies which refers to the moment when certain things become taken for granted and start to be scientific facts. In an analogy, in development co-operation one could explore the moments of “closures” in the project. At what point it becomes a taken-for-granted fact that the form of co-operation is a “project”? Or when the definition of the contents of any project become “agreed” and not subject to further negotiations?

The concept of an object as a continuous process of negotiation leads to the idea of studying development intervention as an object trajectory. Intervention is understood not only as series of negotiations and different arenas, but also a trajectory of the evolving contents of the projects. Thus, one of my analytical points of view towards learning in co-operation is the exploration of the negotiation and transformation of object of co-operation.

Contradictions and tensions in learning

If the organisational learning theories stress the importance of reflection and change of values in organisations, the central idea in the theory of expansive learning is that tensions and contradictions in activity are a source of change and learning (Engeström 1987; 2001). The inner contradictions in activity might be manifested in a situation in which some individuals begin to question current practice or some problems and “impossible tasks” seem to be repeated. A difficulty of bringing about change, at least the change anticipated, has been continuously acknowledged in development co-operation. The practise of development seems to be full of crises, impasses, contradictions and continuous problems: whatever the efforts are, there is little development; short term goals can be achieved, but there is little long-time impact; the efforts for partnership-type relationship continuously collapse into donor–recipient or patron-client relationships. All these problems, of course, have their special manifestation in different empirical contexts, but might be understood as reflecting common features in larger activity of development.

Contradictions in a certain activity can be conceptualised as “historically accumulating structural tensions” (Engeström 2001, 137) that potentially lead to a crisis of activity (Engeström 1987; 2001). For example, Miettinen (1993) has shown that in school activity there is a continuous contradiction between a learning as reproduction of school texts and learning as ability to solve problems in “real life”. A number of efforts for changing the activities at school have faced this contradiction, and attempted new forms of working have partly collapsed into the old forms of teaching and learning texts. A somewhat analogous interpretation could be made out of the contemporary practice of development: there seems to be a pertinent contradiction between a solving practical development problems and producing coherent project documents coherent with the latest development fads.

Due to the contradictory nature of human activities the crucial question for learning and transformation of activities is whether the new elements answer the challenges posed by inner contradictions of the activity at hand (Engeström 1987). If there is a contradiction, for example, between the new tools provided and the object of activity, this contradiction might be solved by transformation of the ob-

ject, and the whole activity system, putting the new tools to work for the “old” objects or fading out the new inputs and transformation.

The inherent contradictions are a driving force for change, but they never cease to exist; only their mode can change. Contradiction is a theoretical notion of the basic developmental logic of an activity system. Historically formed contradictions are seen as partly determining the possible direction of change and learning, the space for “what can be done” (Engeström 2005). In practice, contradictions are manifested as tensions, ruptures and disturbances in co-operation practices (Engeström 2001; Toiviainen 2003, 38). Therefore, in order to analyse learning and change in co-operation one should focus on the tensions at surface level of action that provide an avenue to understand the more profound contradictions.

I understand the concept of contradiction as an exploratory theoretical concept in analysing co-operation similar to Olivier de Sardan’s (2005, 188–189) proposition of the methodological use of the notion of conflict in analysing development co-operation projects. In this research, I shall especially make use of the notion of tension as a manifestation of contradiction. I use the term tension to refer to any opposing points of view or directions with regard to any subject matter that can be identified within the documents, accounts in interaction and in interviews. Tension gains its empirical content in the analysis of the material.

Mediation – Tools and signs in use

A central concept in activity theory is mediation (Vygotsky 1978). Mediation in this approach means that the construction of an object requires mediational means and artefacts that include tools and signs in that endeavour (Engeström 1987). In co-operation, searching for a shared object would require at least partly shared tools and signs. Additionally, learning and transformation are connected to a search for new tools to use; thus learning and transformation can be conceptualised as retooling. When the object of activity is changed, or, expanded, it presupposes creation of new kinds of tools and instrumentalities (Engeström, Puonti and Seppänen 2003).

The idea of close connection between the changing object and means is relevant to development practise in many ways. First, the centrality of tools reminds us about the importance of material conditions of co-operation. The tension between rhetoric and practise is often characterised by wishful thinking about how things should be in an ideal situation, without adequately taking into account the existing material, economic and other resources. However, any change of practises requires tools and without them the change remains at an ideal level. Second, in relation to NGO-development co-operation itself, there seems to be a tension between the changing object of partnership and advocacy and the tools developed

for project work. Long-term co-operation in joint advocacy in a situation in which most of the funding is based on short-term projects might prove difficult.

Tools, similar to objects, carry contradictory potentials. In activity theoretical studies tools have been examined in the framework of production – the main focus of analysing tools has been their use in order to produce outcomes, to answer to practical needs. Within technology studies Hasu (2001) explored on-line an implementation process of a new tool in health care. In organisational studies, Puonti (2004) showed how the co-operation of different officials in economic crime investigation required also development of new tools to enable co-operation, and Engeström, Engeström and Vähäaho (1999; also Kerosuo 2001) have been engaged in long-term effort of developing new tools to improve the co-operation between primary and special health care.

Tools and instruments might be considered to have an impact, not only on improving production and co-operation, but also on social relationships. Introduction of new tools challenges also the existing division of labour and consequently, can become tools for a power struggle. For example, Hyysalo and Lehenkari (2002) demonstrate how the diabetes database aimed to improve collaboration between professionals in managing the disease turned into an instrument in a power struggle between different professionals. In a similar vein, the researchers in development studies have shown how the tools aimed at enhancing participation are turned into vehicles of power (Cooke and Kothari 2001). Thus, it can be assumed, that the idea of tools, material artefacts and signs used in communication both enable communication and co-operation and are used as tools in power struggles between actors.

Connecting individuals and context – Activity, actions and operation

According to activity theory any activity is constituted of collective activity, actions and routinised operations (Leont'ev 1978). Action refers to the conscious and goal-oriented practices of individuals and organisations. However, an activity theoretical point of view suggests that goal-directed and conscious actions are not enough for understanding human practice. The motives (Leont'ev 1978) behind action can be found in collective activities and their objects or motives. Operations, for their part, refer to the often routinised acts and use of tools by which the actions are accomplished. As Engeström (2001, 136) argues, activity systems realise and reproduce themselves through generating actions. There are no activity systems without goal-directed actions, but goal-directed actions must be understood in the context of collective activity systems. Activities are realised through actions that are composed of operations. Learning is continuous movement between operations, conscious action and collective activity.

Learning can be analysed through examination of conscious action in the framework of activity systems. In development studies, Ferguson (1991) argues for the Foucauldian concept of discourse as an interpretational framework for understanding what is happening behind the actors' back. Long (2001) has argued for interface analysis in the context of the field of development subscribing to Giddens's (1979) idea of structuration. Additionally, Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan (1998; 2005) has suggested the notion of developmentalist configuration to understand the framework in which the individuals' actions are take place. Compared the concepts of discourse, field and configuration the concept of activity system as used in research usually refers to more local level constellations the elements of which can be defined and explored. However, in addition to these particular activity systems the activity can also refer to the general, societal activity such as school going or health care.

In regard to learning the different analytical levels indicate that by exploration of actors' action, what do they do and say in specific encounters or interaction situations, offers an avenue to the problematic of wider activity. In this research I aim at depicting developmental contradictions and learning challenges in the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian non-governmental organisations. In the chapters to follow I analyse the learning challenges through looking into the different trajectories of development relevant to the co-operation, though analysing the tensions in the object of co-operation in a concrete project, exploring the means of constructing power relations in concrete interactions situations in project encounters, analysing the emergence of trusteeship in a project.

3 Challenges of non-governmental organisations and development co-operation in Finland and Tanzania

In order to explore the learning challenges in particular NGO projects it is important to identify the challenges of change related to the activities of NGOs in development in general. In this chapter I will review the current discussions considering the NGO-development co-operation.

Since the 1980s the international development discourse has stressed the importance of “strengthening Southern civil societies” as a means for development. The emergence of the civil society in development policies has partly been due to the disappointment in the developmental states and in their ability to promote improvements. The neo-liberal agendas of the development agencies in the 1980s and 1990s stressed diminishing the state’s role and promoted free markets and political liberalisation. As a result, in many countries in South and especially in Africa the civil society was to take an increasing role in service provision. Furthermore, with the collapse of the East European socialist states, the idea of active civil society as a route both to a free market economy and liberal democracy was taken as an example for the Southern countries. Strengthening of civil society was touted as a route to democracy and “good governance”. The idea of civil society was simultaneously made use of by the critics of neoliberalism. In the critical framework it was conceived of as a political space where people’s voices could be heard and that could be used as a place for resistance and criticism. Thus, the civil society was a concept that served the purposes of both liberal and critical traditions. (Fisher 1998; Howell and Pearce 2001; Lewis 2005; Pearce 2000; van Rooy 1998).

The civil society, NGOs and development have also been subjects of a growing body of academic research. NGOs and development have been a topic in a number of special editions of journals and a growing number of edited volumes. Among the first, in 1987 *World Development* (vol 15) published over 200-paged supplement discussing the topic. Later, for example in 2000, the journals of *Third*

World Quarterly and *Development in Practice* have published a special issue on NGOs roles in development. There are also numerous edited volumes of conference papers on the subject.³¹ In Finnish academia, there have been some studies on the management of NGOs in Nepal and Bangladesh (Hossain 2001), the environmental organisations in urban context in Cairo and Delhi (Myllylä 2001), the projects for disabled in Central Asia (Katsui 2005) and the comparison of role of NGOs in health sector in Finland and in Kenya (Wamai 2003) (see also Hossain et Myllylä 1998).

The discussion has been many-sided and has concentrated on critical examination of the NGO boom on the one hand, and on the potentials of the civil society and NGO development co-operation as an alternative in development efforts, on the other. Moreover, there have been a growing number of debates around the notion of partnership as a novel form of co-operation and NGOs as potential implementers of such a relationship (Ashman 2001; Fowler 1998; 2000; Lewis 1999).

Many authors (e.g., Howell 2000; Malhotra 2000; Townsend et al. 2004) considered the multiple roles of civil society and NGOs in development. They have been engaged with such questions as whether the civil society can or should be imported to South by Northern NGOs, what kinds of civil society Northern support is actually building into Southern societies through selecting special kinds of NGOs for recipients of their support, and, what kinds of novel roles beyond the paradigm of aid the civil society and NGOs should take.³²

One debate has concerned the role of NGOs in development and their role vis-à-vis both Northern and Southern states (Hulme and Edwards 1997). The NGOs in North are struggling between being some kind of watchdogs of states based on civic initiatives or partner of states in fulfilling the official development policies. In a number of countries, especially in Nordic countries the majority of funding for the development activities comes from the state budget and is allocated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. For that reason, many NGOs do not perform critical role but seem to complement the state development policy. Fowler (2000, 641) conceives such phenomenon as a process of NGOs trading their legitimacy that should emerge out of the constituency of organisations rather than the govern-

³¹ For example there have been four conferences on the themes related to development and NGOs at the University of Manchester resulting into four volumes of edited books (Edwards and Hulme 1992; 1995; Hulme and Edwards 1997; Lewis and Wallace 2000). The titles of the seminars depict the movement of the discussion on NGOs in development from promise to critic and doubt. The first seminar in 1992 was titled "Scaling-up NGO Impacts: Learning from experience" whilst the most previous one in 2005 had a title: "Reclaiming Development? Assessing the Contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations to Development Alternatives".

³² The most recent discussions consider the concept and practice of global civil society (Clark 2003; Kaldor 2003; Keane 2003). I will not go into that discussion in this dissertation.

ment agendas. In relation to Southern societies Fisher (1998, 40–44) distinguishes five different approaches that a state can have towards NGOs. These include being fearful of NGOs, to ignore NGOs, the co-optation of NGOs by the state, to take (especially financial) advantage of NGOs and partnership characterised by co-operation and mutual learning. The relationships between state and NGOs in Southern countries vary according, for example, to the nature of regime in power and its interests for controlling NGOs. The Finnish NGOs taking part in this study all received funding from the state budget for their development activities. The Tanzanian NGOs, in their part, were quite neutral towards the government. Their agendas considered more the welfare of certain groups than advocating towards the government, as has been the case with some larger Tanzanian NGOs such as Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) (Mbilinyi 1996).

In this chapter I review the literature on civil society and NGOs in order to depict the general challenges of change relevant to the co-operation of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs.

3.1 Development co-operation of NGOs: From projects in service provision to joint political advocacy

NGOs are by no means very recent actors in the development scheme. They have been active in development for decades (Robinson 1995). For example, many missionary organisations have been engaged in development activities since the 19th century. NGOs such as the Red Cross have played a major role in emergency and relief work. NGOs have operated schools and hospitals, provided water services and taken care of orphans and the disabled. The solidarity movement in the 1960s and 1970s supported the engagement of NGOs in development activities. The 1980s saw increasing professionalisation in a number Northern NGOs. Accordingly, their programmes became larger and the use of integrated approaches emerged (Ebrahim 2003). International NGOs such as Oxfam which was originally established to deliver help to occupied Greece during the Second World War have become development organisations that have offices and staff in a number of developing countries (Jennings 2002). In addition to service provision income generation has become an important goal for NGO development efforts. The micro-credit schemes for women's and other groups inspired by the Grameen-bank initiative have spread all over the world and have become an important tool for NGO development efforts.

The establishment of NGOs in the South has introduced an additional goal for NGO development co-operation. If the Northern NGOs traditionally have concentrated on service provision and income generation at community, village and township levels, they recently have increasingly started to work with Southern

NGOs. New NGOs in the South have become intermediaries between the Northern NGOs and the so-called beneficiaries. One of the strengths attributed to them is precisely their ability to work as mediators between the marginalised Southern groups and Northern NGOs and donors (Carroll 1992; Blauert and Zadek 1998). In order to perform the role of mediator effectively, the Southern NGOs need some capacities both for working with the communities and with their Northern partners. Thus, the goals of institutional strengthening and capacity building of Southern NGOs have emerged in the agenda of both Northern and Southern NGOs (e.g., Hakkarainen et al. 2003; James 1998;). Capacity-building programmes have included components such as technical support, training in organisational management and leadership and organisational development. In some cases the Northern NGOs have also provided direct funding to the Southern NGOs (INTRAC 1998).

Since the beginning of the 1990s (Clark 1991; Korten 1990) there has been increasing argumentation in support of NGOs to shift from “doing to influencing”. The move from service delivery and emergency relief towards a more influencing and advocacy role was reflected in David Korten’s (1990, 114–132) much cited account on generations of NGO strategies in development. He identified four such generations of concentration: 1) relief and welfare; 2) community development; 3) sustainable system development; and 4) people’s movements. The arguments for changing role have included the observation that the NGOs should concentrate on the root causes of poverty and not just react to the effects. For example, instead of providing services the NGOs should advocate that the state provide services to its citizens (Malhotra 2000). Moreover, the arguments for more political work have emphasised NGOs’ role in promoting democracy in their societies. In addition to being promoters of liberal democracy (e.g., through voter education) the NGOs have been undertaken strong role as advocates for participatory and deliberative democracy (Carroll 1992; Ottaway and Carothers 2000). The debate has stressed the need for NGOs to shift from development project implementation towards processes of joint advocacy (Smillie 1995).

However, as van Rooy (1998, 197) has pointed out there seems to be a gap between the hope of such a shift from development project work to advocacy and the actual practice. Moreover, there are tensions related to the actual work of NGOs in the South. She (*ibid.*) states that currently there are at least two tensions. First, there is a tension between what the proponent of NGOs want to see (=civil society struggling for democratisations and global justice) and what we do see (=organisations, that are used for mostly economic gain for small groups of people). Second, according to her, there is a tension between the changing goals of the NGO development co-operation and the existing means that are based on the project approach that are not suitable for establishing flexible advocacy networks.

The debate about the shifting roles of NGOs in development has recently been active also in Finland (Hakkarainen and Onali 2005). In the Finnish context the NGOs are very dependent on government funding for their development co-operation activities. The funding procedures largely define the modes of co-operation. For example, currently the funding available for development activities of Finnish NGOs is mainly for 1–3 years projects.

3.2 NGO co-operation: From a donor-recipient relationship to partnership

One of the most important challenges for change for the NGOs in development has been the anticipated shift in North-South relationship from a so-called donor-recipient relationship characterised by paternalism and patronage towards a partnership-type relationships (Lewis 1998a). As Pearce (2000) points out the relationship between Northern and Southern organisations has been one of the main topics in the recent discussion concerning NGOs and development. Partnership as an idea in co-operation of NGOs has its roots in the discourse of solidarity movements of 1960s and 1970s (Fowler 1998) in which the equal relationship between similar groups North and South was stressed. The potential to exercise “real” or “genuine” partnership has been an especially important issue in argumentation for the comparative advantages of NGOs vis-à-vis the state as an actor in development (Fowler 2000).

However, the partnership approach was raised in the general development system in the 1990s. For example, through its policy paper, “Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation” (1996) the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has influenced the language of a large number of other policy papers and strategies stressing the changing nature of development co-operation towards local ownership and partnership. The main point in the definition of partnership in the document was that in partnership “development co-operation does not try to do things for developing countries and their people but with them” (ibid., 139). Moreover, partnership was stated to require clearer definitions of the roles of the partners as well as the abandonment of old paternalistic approaches vis-à-vis the developing countries. Later, especially after the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, the partnership approach achieved wider and more specific meaning of building up novel institutional partnerships between the private, public and third sector in order to achieve sustainable development, and, further, to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals (MGD). The very last goal in the MDGs is to build “global partnerships” for development.

When discussing partnership as a potential relationship between two organisations, NGOs North and South, there seems to be quite widespread consensus on the contents of such a relationship. The partnership includes equality, mutuality, reciprocity, respect and trust (Fowler 2000; Mancuso Brehm 2004, 21; Smillie 1995, 182). In partnership, or more precisely *authentic partnership* or *genuine partnership* two or a number of parties collaborate to meet each other's needs (Fowler 1998, 144; Hatley *ibid.*, 6–7; Hauck and Land 2000;) and share a joint commitment to long-term interaction (Fowler 2000, 3) and jointly agreed purposes and values. This long-term, committed relationship based on shared values and purposes is realised in full transparency and reciprocal accountability under the conditions of understanding each other's political, economic, cultural and institutional contexts (Malena 2000, 15).

Two main arguments for creating a partnership relationship have been given. First, a normative or solidarity-based argument for partnership considers such a relationship as a valuable end in itself. Second, a functional or pragmatic argument stresses the role of partnership as a means to achieve better development outcomes and a more effective way to manage development projects (Mancuso Brehm 2004, 18; Brinkerhoff 2002, 17; Fowler 1998). When it comes to NGOs a large number of which have their ideological background in the solidarity movements, the partnership as a goal is an important starting point. Moreover, some of the NGOs might be critical of demands for the effectiveness that they consider as rooted in managerial thinking.

Achieving partnership implies open negotiations and joint decision making. A shift from a donor-recipient relationship to partnership means also movement from vertical relationship between Northern and Southern NGOs towards more horizontal social relationship (Brinkerhoff 2002, 15). However, the move towards horizontal relationship is often hindered by the flows of money from North to South. This creates a problematic situation since if considered in terms of financial accountability theories, it is self-evident that the partner who provides the money also can – and must, control the use of it. From the point of view of cooperation, the control should be displaced by trust and flexibility (Ashman 2001, 77). The project-bound budgets set limits on flexibility as well as the longevity of the relationship (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2004, 263).

Other dilemmas in partnership include the relationship between the intended partnership in external North-South relationships and the internal organisation of the partner organisations. At times the pursuit of partnership, participation and empowerment in external relations is in conflict with the internal hierarchy and rigid systems of the organisations themselves, both North and South. (Ashman 2001; Edwards and Hulme 1995, 227). The unofficial ties promoted by these organisations enable flexibility and non-hierarchic relations but also enable hidden

exercise of power through unofficial social networks. Additionally, the NGOs in both the North and South sometimes seem to suffer from so called “founder member syndrome” (Hakkarainen and al.2003) which means that the members who have initiated the idea of the organisation perceive the organisation as “theirs” and find very hard to relinquish their positions in a democratic election.

Due to the geographical distance the development co-operation project includes limited face-to-face contacts between the representatives of the partner organisations. Typically the Northern NGO is present through an expatriate project co-ordinator or through frequent field visits. In any case, the communication tends to be between a few individuals (Mancuso Brehm 2004, 159). This creates the dilemma whether one can consider these organisational partnerships in such situations or are they more properly called individual partnerships. The tendency to individualise the organisational partnership creates both opportunities and threats. Trusting individual relationships facilitate partnership, while the individual relationships can lead to discontinuities – when the people change the policies and strategies in co-operation might change as well (e.g., Hakkarainen et al. 2003).

The idea of partnership cannot be discussed without including the notion of power. Partnership refers to the intended shift in North-South relationship in order to change the traditional asymmetrical power relationship. However, as has been stated by a number of authors (e.g., Fowler 2000; Hatley and Malhotra 1997; James 2001, 141; Lister 2000; Smillie 1995, 194) the use of the word partnership changes neither the relationship nor the power relations. In contrast, the rhetorical use of partnership might work as a tool to obscure and wipe away the actual power relationship. After all, partnership was already one of the terms to describe the colonial relationship (Gould and Ojanen 2003; Hudock 2000, 17; Mohiddin 1998). The colonial governance took itself as a “partner” in civilising the colonised areas and, consequently, demanded the colonised people to take responsibility for their own development, under the patient supervision and guidance of their colonisers (e.g. Lugard 1965).

The shift from an asymmetric donor-recipient relationship towards more symmetric partnership is full of dilemmas. In addition to the required changes in the practices of co-operation in terms of decision-making and management, the dilemmas in NGO-development partnership are related to the more systemic contradictions. First, the idea of equal partnership contradicts the very idea of development aid which is itself “a manifestation of inequality” (Robb 2004, 21) on a global scale. Second, there is a contradiction between the idea of partnership and the motivational and ideological starting points of co-operation between NGOs from Northern and Southern hemisphere (Tvedt 1998, 225). The underlying notions of altruism, solidarity and charity themselves imply that the donor-recipient

relationship and not a reciprocal partnership between equals. Shifting into partnership would mean a very profound change in these notions towards real pluralism and open negotiation of conflicting interests. Third, the motivational background also facilitated the creation of “otherness” (Tvedt, *ibid.*; Eriksson Baaz 2002; 2005). Acted on an altruistic motivation the agency of others is very easily denied since “they are in need” and a successful partnership would imply “them” to be first more like “us”. There is an ongoing contradiction between the idea of partnership and the perceptions of the autonomy and ability of Southern partners to be engaged in such a relationship.

3.3 Finnish NGOs in development: From voluntary associations to professional development NGOs

Much of the research literature on development co-operation of NGOs discusses so-called non-governmental development organisation (NGDOs). As such, reference is often made to large British or US-based NGOs that are professionalised in “development” issues and have a long experience in running projects and programmes in the South. However, on a global scale, the NGOs engaged in different development efforts are a very heterogeneous group of organisations (Tvedt 1998). They are both large and small, engaged in a large palette of issues and come from very different ideological backgrounds varying from conservative religious organisations running anti-contraceptive programmes to family-planning organisations promoting the use of condoms; from radical left-wing organisations supporting struggle against global capitalism and the establishment of areas of local economies to organisations supporting a neo-liberal agenda.

In addition to the actual heterogeneity of the actors in the “development NGOs” field there is also a difference in the terminologies used in literature dealing with the non-governmental organisations (Lewis 1999, 2–13). First, when speaking of countries in the Northern hemisphere the literature refers to a “Third Sector”³³ consisting of voluntary action, altruism and non-profit sector. Second, the literature on NGOs in Southern countries is more concentrated on the issues of development rather than locally emerging altruism or voluntarism.

³³ One of the main international research projects on Third Sector was a comparative research project carried out by Johns Hopkins University (Salomon and Anheier 1998) which produced comparative knowledge from 12 countries in the first and 27 countries in the second round. Finland was one of the countries studied in the project during the second round (Helander 1998, 11).

In the Finnish context it is clear that the NGOs engaged in development co-operation are not always similar to those referred to in international literature³⁴. Therefore, a quick look at the Finnish associations and organisations that belong to the Finnish Third Sector,³⁵ and are engaged in so-called development co-operation is needed. Diverse kinds of voluntarism have been integral to Finnish societal life for decades. In traditional agrarian life in Finland helping each other in voluntary manner was common (Yeung 2004, 76). In the late 19th century there were two traditions that were important in the emergence of more organised forms of voluntary activities. First, there was Christian charity among middle and upper class women. This voluntary action concentrated on social work. This kind of vertical charity diminished after the professionalisation of social work in early the 20th century. Second, the emergence of civil movements organised around nationalism and language question in the 1880s and 1890s provided basis for a different type of voluntary and collective action in the rise of Finnish independence and in defence of the Finnish language. Later emergence of co-operative, women's and youth movement emerged. (Nylund 2000, 30; Yeung 2004, 77–78).

During the period of two wars with the Soviet Union in 1939–1945 there was a lot of voluntary humanitarian action both at the front line and in the areas that were not directly affected by military activities. After the wars Finland entered a period of rapid industrialisation, urbanisation and construction of a welfare state that gradually assumed the role of service provider in health, education and social work leaving little need for charity groups. In the 1970s the economic hardships brought by regression on and the alienation that came with urbanisation, a new boom in voluntary activities arose. (Yeung 2004, 82–83). A similar phenomenon took place during the 1990s with rapidly growing unemployment rates. The ideas of self-help groups and voluntary activities became relevant again (Nylund 2000, 100; Yeung 2004, 84).

³⁴ One example of the specificity of the Finnish context is that when an evaluator from the British NGO-training center INTRAC started to evaluate the Finnish umbrella organisation KEPA, he was surprised to find the close relationship between the NGOs and the governmental sector in Finland. For example, the funding of KEPA comes almost 100% from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

³⁵ Helander (1998, 37–52) distinguishes different concepts that can be used to describe the grey sector between the public and private sectors. These depend on the viewpoint, whether we use economic (non-profit), sociological (social movements) or other frameworks for understanding. The concept of non-governmental organisation comes from the British and US use and emphasises the differences from public sector (Helander *ibid.*) and is not used as such in Finnish society. This observation is important since when speaking about development co-operation the Finnish word *kansalaisjärjestö* translates usually into "NGO", more recently also into Civil Society Organisation (CSO). CSO is nearer the meaning of the Finnish term.

There is little academic research on the Finnish associations from the perspective of development co-operation³⁶. The research on the Finnish social movements has concentrated on both “traditional” and “new” social movements (Ilmonen and Siisiäinen 1998)³⁷ within Finnish society and the research on voluntarism has covered the areas of health care, social work and unemployment in Finland (e.g., Nylund 2000; Yeung 2004 in church context) or in comparative manner (e.g., Wamai 2004). Recently, there has been a growing interest in researching the movements critical to economic globalization (Lindholm 2005).

The roots of Finnish NGO-development co-operation can be found in Missionary work. In the late 19th century Finnish missionaries worked in Africa especially in the areas in what is now Namibia. Through their experiences Finnish citizens learned about African countries in their daily contacts with the Lutheran church. The role of missionary and religious organisations is still very important (Pratap and Wallgren 2000, 32; Salonen and Rekola 2005, 7). The missionary organisations played an important role in lobbying the Finnish Ministry to fund development co-operation projects of Finnish non-governmental organisations in 1974.³⁸ In addition to the missionary and altruistic ideologies the emerging solidarity-based Third World movement in 1960s and 1970s was influential in starting the Finnish NGO development co-operation (Pratap and Wallgren 2000; Salonen and Rekola 2005, 9). The political anti-imperialism struggle and the peace and solidarity movements were important factors in raising the consciousness of the Third World problematics in 1960s and 1970s and supporting the development activities of citizen’s organisations.³⁹

Since 1974 the number of Finnish NGOs engaged in development activities and the funds allocated to their projects have increased enormously. Especially during the 1980s the Ministry encouraged NGOs to apply for funding for development activities. In 1983 the Ministry supported 59 projects and in 2003 support was given to 450 projects implemented by 151 organisations (Salonen and Rekola 2005, 8). The founding of the Service Center for Development Co-operation, KEPA, in 1985 facilitated and encouraged the Finnish NGOs to engage in development co-operation.

³⁶ Tvedt (1998, 94–127) gives a profound analysis of the Norwegian sub-system of international NGO development co-operation. This system is similar to the Finnish one in some aspects, especially in the close relationship between NGOs and the state especially in terms of funding.

³⁷ The traditional movements refer to movements such as the labour movement; new social movements include movements such as the environmental movement.

³⁸ In 1974 there were 10 projects supported.

³⁹ The percentage movement, for example, proposed that people should give one per cent of their salary to any NGO working in development work.

Supporting of civil society – by funding the Finnish NGO development co-operation projects has been one of the focuses of Finnish development policy in the 1990s. In the decision of principle in 1996 described the goals of Finnish NGO development co-operation as twofold: first, to “build up a civil society within the development co-operation countries, and second, strengthen the sense of global solidarity among the Finnish people”. The most recent Development Policy form year 2004 stresses two aspects in Finnish NGO development co-operation. First, it emphasises the partnership between the Finnish Ministry and Finnish NGOs and their commitment to shared goals considering the goals and quality of development co-operation. Second, the policy states clearly that “the central goal for the NGO development co-operation should always be the strengthening of the civil society in developing countries”. There is a slight shift in the policy towards the emphasis on strengthening civil society in the South instead of providing Finnish citizens contacts with people in developing countries.⁴⁰

Whilst the amount of funding has also increased, the demands of the Ministry for the quality of the projects have been changed. Ministry has demanded the NGOs to improve planning procedures in order to be able to identify the local processes in developing countries. The application forms and proposals were modified in late the 1990s to reflect the logical framework approach used in professional development co-operation. In 2005, they were modified again in order to make the application forms simpler to use.

Additionally, the NGOs are encouraged to carry out more evaluations and share their experiences. In an international assessment of Finnish NGO evaluations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 1997, 41) it was noted that in the existing evaluations the cultural aspect of co-operation was emphasised instead of the impact on, for example, poverty reduction or other development issues. Recent evaluations of the Finnish NGO activities in Kenya and Tanzania (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2002; 2004b) have pointed to the weaknesses of Finnish NGO activities in regard to sustainability and especially in failure to engage the local partners in planning. It was also pointed out that the Finnish NGOs at times seemed to lack the capacity to manage the co-operation and they co-operated with individuals instead of organisations. Especially the Tanzanian report (*ibid.*, 2004b) stressed the lack of impact of Finnish NGO activities to the “strengthening of Tanzanian civil society” despite achievement in short-term project effects.

⁴⁰ Also the “Guidelines for project work for the Finnish NGOs” (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2000, 7) depicts one of the specific goals of NGO-development co-operation to provide Finnish people “personal experience in development co-operation and developing countries.

The Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs allocated funds for development co-operation for 68 different heterogeneous organisations in 2004. Those organisations engaged in development co-operation are very heterogeneous group. From the Ministry's point of view they were divided into three subcategories: the so-called partnership organisations, foundations and other organisations. The partnership organisations consisted of nine quite well-established large organisations⁴¹ that have been given annually a certain amount of funding to be used quite flexibly in their activities. Three foundations received a certain amount of money to be distributed to CSOs in South based on their own application process. Other organisations are permitted to apply for project funding for 1–3 years.

The emerging division between the “small” and “large” NGOs within the Finnish development scheme is one of the dimensions that reflect the heterogeneous group of Finnish associations engaged in development activities. Finland has been the called the promised land of associations. For example, in 2005 there were some 123 000 registered associations in Finland. However, only a very small part of them is engaged in development activities. The umbrella organisation of Finnish associations engaged in development co-operation, the Service Center for Development Co-operation, KEPA, had some 240 member organisations in 2004.⁴² They vary in their ideological backgrounds, scope of activities, size, location and level of professionalisation.

Table 4. Categorization of KEPA's member organisations by size and location (modified from Rovaniemi and Maijala 2005, 9).

Category	Number of organisations
Large (over 25 000 members)	25
Average (500–25 000 members)	53
Small (under 500 members)	162
Located in capital area	151
Located in other parts of Finland	89

⁴¹ Partnership organisations include: FinnChurchAid, FIDA International, Free Church Co-operation, Red Cross Finland, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Trade Union Solidarity Centre in Finland, International Solidarity Foundation, Finnish World Vision and Plan Finland. Five of the nine largest development organisations are affiliated to religious communities and background.

⁴² In recent survey (Rovaniemi 2005, 9) the member organisations were divided into 14 subcategories depending on their focus: partnership, disability, missionary and other religious, fair trade, immigrant, development policy, friendship, relief, health, schools, student and civic organisations, children's and youth organisations, trade unions, godchild and adoption, and, other organisations.

This research concerns, in regard to development co-operation, mostly voluntary organisations that have traditionally given direct support to communities or individual persons in Morogoro. The increasing emphasis on quality in both the co-operation and administrative procedures in terms of planning and reporting as a prerequisite for funding has created a tendency to professionalise Finnish NGO development activities. In a number of discussions this tendency has been seen as a threat to small voluntary organisations that engage in development cooperation. A recent study (Rovaniemi et al. 2005) showed that there is a strong feeling among the small voluntary and friendship organisations that their development efforts are not valued and will not be funded in the future. Still, there is a number of small voluntary organisations that have development co-operation activities and struggle with the new requirements. To properly understand the problems of these organisations one should ask why these organisations want to continue their activities despite these challenges.

The Finnish NGO-development scene is in a paradoxical situation. There is a growing demand for professional action for “strengthening the civil society in South” while the majority of the organisations engaged in development are small voluntary organisations that lack the professional skills but have strong commitment to their work. Thus, the Finnish organisations studied in this research are exactly those small voluntary organisations that no doubt are in the margins of the international discourse on “development NGOs”. Still, following Tvedt’s (1998) definition of the international development system these organisations are within the system by its definition as a channel of funding. Even the smallest voluntary organisations are “development NGOs” in the sense that they receive funding from the Ministry’s budget of NGO-development co-operation. Definitely, they also use many of the recent buzzwords in applying money and trying to get in and stay within the system.

3.4 The Tanzanian NGOs: An emerging form of organisations

Whilst for their part the small Finnish NGOs on their part are eager to enter in the international system in order to get funding for their development activities so are most of their Tanzanian counterparts. The sudden emergence and mushrooming of organisations called “NGOs” in the 1990s pointed out by Tvedt (1998) as one of the implications of the international system took place also in Tanzania (Mbilinyi 1995, 351). In 1993 there were some 224 registered NGOs in Tanzania (Kiondo 1993) in 1994 the number was reaching 813 (The United Republic of Tanzania 1995) and in 2000 the number of registered NGOs already exceeded three thousand (the United Republic of Tanzania 2000). More recent estimates state that the number of NGOs in Tanzania is approximately 8000 (Mercer 2002).

During my fieldwork in Tanzania the political and legal framework for NGOs in the country was under construction. In 1999 the draft of an NGO policy (Vice President's Office 2001) was discussed in a number of consultative meetings with representatives of organisations. Until the passing of the new law the NGOs have been registered under three different kinds of Acts – the Societies Ordinance, National Sports Act and Companies Ordinance all dating from colonial times.

Against the historical background it can be claimed that new kinds of organisations – NGOs – emerged in the 1990s. This was partly due to political liberalisation of Tanzania in mid-1995, partly due to the fact that the international donor community started to support the NGO sector. The emergence of the NGOs and other CSOs has resulted into a new NGO policy and new Act on NGOs. In the Act an NGO is defined as follows:

A voluntary grouping of individuals or organizations which is autonomous, non-partisan and non-profit sharing and is organized at the local, national or international level for the purpose of enhancing or promoting economic, environmental, social or cultural development or protecting of the environment, lobbying or advocating for such issues.

The definition of NGO excludes trade unions, religious or community-based organisations.

The contemporary history of Tanzania in regard to voluntary organisations can be divided in three different periods (Duhu 2005; Iheme 2005; Kiondo 1993). Kiondo (1993) names these periods as: a) the colonial pre-independence, b) independence and statism and c) multiparty governance. During British colonial rule most of the organised associations were branches of British charities. There were some urban ethnic associations that aimed at facilitating the immigration from rural areas (Kiondo 1993, 164). Religious organisations were common and they were very much engaged in service provision especially in education. As Munishi (1995, 142) states, during pre-independence over 70% of the children went to private schools run by mostly religious based organisations. During the colonial time the forms of informal organising were what Swantz (1992) calls indigenous organisation referring to the informal structures and groups based for example on age, kinship and ethnicity.⁴³ Additionally, women organised informal rotating *upato* credit groups (Tripp 1994, 163).

⁴³ Also in contemporary social life the principles of kinship and ethnicity-based organising can be observed. Also in the “new” NGOs the founder members are often members of the same family or similar ethnic group.

Just before independence there was a short period during which voluntary organising was quite active, mainly due to the independence struggle that forced the colonial rules to allow more space for people's activities. There were a number of parent associations and youth leagues founded as well as cooperative movement emerged (Kiondo 1993, 165). However, after independence the country started to exercise an African form of socialism and the state was to become the one and only actor in society. During the era of statism (Kiondo 1995, 110) most of the voluntary organisations were co-opted and patronised by the state and the ruling party. For example the women's organisations and youth organisations were co-opted under the so-called mass organisations that were part of the state structure. Accordingly, most of the schools and hospitals run by organisations were nationalised since the state was to deliver the services to the citizens (Munishi 1995, 150).⁴⁴

However, partly due to the oil crisis the state in Tanzania faced a serious economic crisis in the 1970s and was not able to provide needed services. This crisis gradually affected increasing voluntary efforts. Especially District Development Trusts were established in order to provide secondary education that was largely lacking. These trust funds were often under the leadership of local politicians and businessmen who provided some resources themselves and also collected some kind of revenue from the people living in the area.

During the 1980s the economic and political atmosphere in Tanzania started to change. Tanzania had become a heavily aid-dependent country and had received much support for its self-reliance policy and African form of socialism. However, the nature of the conditionality of development aid to Tanzania – and other LDCs as well – changed with the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). The structural adjustment programmes contributed to voluntary organising in at least two ways. First, the programme's imperative for privatisation gave more room for the non-governmental service delivery efforts (Munishi, *ibid.*). Second, the structural adjustment resulted in massive retrenchment of civil servants in an effort to make the public sector more effective. This exercise left a huge number of educated

⁴⁴ Ishumi (1995, 153–165) describes the historical background of the provision of secondary education in Tanzania and roles of the NGOs in it. He describes the period of 1967–80 as the period of changing state-society relations, and the 1980s as a period of emerging community organisations. Following the Arusha declaration in 1967 the schools and training organisations would have been taken to government ownership. The actual nationalisation of education was carried out in 1971 including trust-funded schools and mission schools (Ishumi 1995, 156). During that period only a few secondary schools were initiated by the Tanzania Parents' Association (TAPA), a ruling party affiliated organisation. The frustration to state-provided school services and the economic difficulties of the Tanzanian state contributed to emergence of community organisations in provision of school services at the district level (Ishumi 157–158). In 1990 there were 348 NGO secondary schools in Tanzania compared to 135 state secondary schools.

people to search for employment. NGOs were one of the main potential employment opportunities (Igoe 2003, 871).

However, during the late 1980s and 1990s there were at least three diverse processes that contributed to the expansion of formal organisations in the non-state sector. The economic imperative for liberalisation and privatisations expressed in SAPs gave more room for voluntary initiatives independent from the state and the political change from a one-party state towards a multiparty democracy provided more political space. Simultaneously, the shift in donors' policy towards channeling increasing funds to the non-governmental organisations in developing countries contributed to the emergence of new kinds of NGOs.

The current associational field in Tanzania is quite heterogeneous and, of course, retains some features from the pre-independence colonial forms, socialism and gradual liberalisation. Most of the organisations are occupied with service provision or economic improvement of the lives of their members. How does the current situation of the non-governmental organisations in Tanzania correspond to the aim of strengthening civil society then? Kiondo stated in 1995 (171) that the Tanzanian NGOs do not have much to do with what is usually understood as civil society. For example, Kelsall (2004, 8) writes: "when I arrived in 1996 in Tanzania as an aspiring researcher intending to study civil society in rural Tanzania, I was faced with an immediate problem: there hardly seemed to be any".

Kiondo (1993, 169) categorised the Tanzanian NGOs into environmental, professional, quasi-governmental, religious, social service, women and youth and international organisations. Further he (ibid. 173–174) distinguishes Tanzanian government-organised NGOs, foreign NGOs, local NGOs, foreign funded NGOs, peoples' organisations and elite-based organisations. The category of government organised NGOs include also the quasi-governmental mass organisations such as the Youth movement (*Umoja wa Vijana Tanzania*) and Women's movement (*Umoja wa Wanawake Tanzania*). A more recent phenomenon within the Tanzanian NGOs is the engagement in more political issues instead of service provision or economic activities. Igoe (2003) explores the pastoralist land-right movement that engaged in the formulation of a land act as an example of this kind of new role. Moreover, the achievements of Tanzanian women's organisations in lobbying for including a gender aspect in budgeting and inheritance laws have been pointed out (Lange, Wallevik and Kiondo 2000).

Igoe (2003) argues that most of the NGOs engaged in more political work are receive donor funding and that their political focus is much influenced by donors. The Tanzanian NGOs have recently also attributed a consultative role in forming state's poverty reduction strategies. This role has been encouraged, or actually imposed, by the World Bank in the framework of debt relief programmes. In order to be included in the debt relief initiative a country was supposed to produce

a poverty reduction strategy in the forming of which the “civil society” was to be consulted. The analysis of this consultation process (Gould and Ojanen 2005) has shown that the actual space for participation of NGOs in the process was limited – the issues advocated by the NGOs, such as promoting domestic industry and employment – were not included in the policy paper and the actual consultation was quite limited and took place in ad hoc workshops.

Even if there were a number of national factors, such as the introduction of a multi-party system, contributing to the emerging institutional field there were signs of the close connections between the emerging NGO field and the international aid system. Gibbon (2001, 840–41) identifies two ways in which the international system has penetrated Tanzanian society. First, the international donor policies emphasise decentralisation, public-private community development and a private-led economy. These concepts provided with new ways, or public narratives, by which the Tanzanian elite could describe their action. Second, the increasing funding from the donor community directly to NGOs enables more independence from the state.

As Tanzania is a highly donor-dependent state, the donor decisions on where to channel support supposedly influence the national institutional scheme. In the early years of independence Tanzania with its self-reliance policy was kind of a “model country” for many international donors and the funding channelled through the state was high (Kiondo 1993, 166). Also some foreign NGOs, such as Oxfam, supported the state’s villagisations⁴⁵ policy and its implementation (Jennings 2002) since its ideology of self-reliance and co-operative ownership of land fitted the radical ideology of the NGO. Gradually, donors started to show increasing interest for supporting voluntary sector over the state channels that had proved to be inefficient, bureaucratic and corrupted (Kiondo, *ibid.*). The shift in donor interest particularly in Tanzania resonates with the general donor policies that started to be implemented in every corner of the developing world.

Since the mid-1990s the support to the Tanzanian NGOs from the Northern NGOs has increased and there has been a great number of different projects and programmes that have been implemented together with Tanzanian “local NGOs” and a series of capacity-building efforts⁴⁶ to strengthen the organisations themselves. The co-operation with the foreign NGOs has affected the ways the organisations are structured and managed. For example the project model with

⁴⁵ Villagisation policy was part of Tanzania’s policy of *ujamaa*, kind of African socialism. In villagisation people were encouraged to move into *ujamaa*-villages based on shared ownership in which the state was to provide the services such as education and health care. From 1970s the villagisation became forced and included at time violent undertakings by state.

⁴⁶ For example in 2001 the British Council launched a large “civil society support programme” to which the Tanzanian NGOs could apply for funding. The local office of the World Bank as well as a number of Embassies offer small-grant projects to local NGOs.

its specific administrative procedures must have been learned by those organisations receiving funding. This has led to difficulties in organisations where the traditional forms of organising and decision making have been substituted by the administrative forms demanded by the Northern “partners” (Igoe 2003).

In addition to the project model, increasing contact with foreign NGOs has transmitted the diverse slogans and ideas they consider important. Kelsall (2001, 140) observed the emergence of a certain kind of “workshopcracy” among the Tanzanian NGOs as a result of increasing attention given to them by their Northern counterparts. According to him the representatives of Tanzanian NGOs circulate in the fancy hotels in Dar es Salaam and Arusha discussing the buzzwords such as participation and empowerment showing little effort in putting these actually in practice.

While Kelsall’s (ibid.) somehow cynical argument represents only one side of the coin, it is evident that the contradictions inherent in the support of Southern civil society through the means of NGO development co-operation (Howell 2000, 11–19) have emerged also in Tanzania. The multilateral donors and Southern NGOs tend to work with NGOs that are fluent in the “dev-speak” and practices, able to communicate in English, run by educated people that have gained a reputation among social networks of donors and are usually situated in urban areas within easy reach. Furthermore, according to Howell (ibid.), the donors usually fund NGOs that remind themselves of their own ideological commitment and organisational forms – that is, *modern* organisations.

The literature review showed that the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs is likely to be situated in the crossroads of multiple challenges of change. Based on the literature review I identified four such relevant challenges of change: the change in the content of the NGO development co-operation from projects in service provision towards joint political advocacy; change in the relationship between NGOs from donor-recipient relationship to partnership; challenges of change for the Finnish NGOs to move from voluntary organisations towards professional organisations; the challenges of change posed by the emergence of new kinds of organisations, NGOs, in Tanzania. In the following chapter I shall analyse the interviews of the Finnish actors in order to identify the challenges of change that are relevant for the co-operation from the point of view of the actors themselves.

4 Change and tension in co-operation according to actors in Finnish NGOs

4.1 Trajectories of development and change

In this chapter I discuss the learning challenges in co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs based on the accounts on Finnish actors and from the points of view of the Finnish organisations. The chapter revisits the idea of expansive learning as “learning something that does not exist” (Engeström 2001, 134). Though learning implies creating something new, the questions about the nature and content of the learning remain. What new? New in comparison to what? New to whom? As I argued in the introduction, learning and change in NGO development co-operation can be conceptualised as a crossing point of different trajectories of change. In this chapter I read the interviews of the Finnish actors in Morogoro in order to capture their understanding of relevant intertwining trajectories of change that take place in the co-operation and their specific content according to the perception of the Finnish NGO participants. The point of view selected for analysis is that of the Finnish actors, both the NGOs and individual actors. The task of this chapter is to describe the learning challenges of the co-operation such as they occur to the Finnish actors.

Moreover, I shall open up the notion of “Finnish NGOs in development co-operation” in Morogoro by depicting some of the developmental trajectories that has led these organisations to engage in development. With the tendency for rhetorical homogenisation (Tvedt 1998) of the group of “Northern NGOs in development” this chapter provides an input into the actual heterogeneity of such organisations. After conducting first interviews the assumption of “Finnish NGOs engaged in development co-operation” I started with was problematised. For example, the points of view of individuals were not in the main interest in my initial research questions. The individual interviews of the Finnish actors were first conducted in order to gain historical background about the project activities of the

Finnish organisations as well as answers to one of the initial research questions: *How are the purpose and current forms of NGO development co-operation conceptualised by the different participants?* (Kontinen 2000, 19).

However, after a few interviews of the Finnish actors it became apparent that this starting point held two basic flaws. First, when asked about the history of the organisations' development co-operation it was very typical of interviewees to answer merely from the point of view of their individual and personal experiences. This observation challenged the conceptualisation of an organisation as a main actor in development co-operation and rather emphasised the importance of individual actors. Second, my question contained a false assumption about the existence of such an activity as "NGO-development co-operation" as an actors' concept. The actors attached their action mostly to "having our projects" or "travelling to Tanzania" rather than taking part in development co-operation that seemed to be far too abstract a term to them. Some even explicitly wanted to distance themselves from "development co-operation" as not a term proper to depict their action. Moreover, on some occasions the activities undertaken in Tanzania were seen as continuation of the organisation's activities in Finland rather than specific development co-operation. For example, one of the actors depicted:

8. SH10: (...) *It is nice that our organisations can somehow support and forward the idea of "working together". I think we did not consider it as development co-operation or that we would be taking part in development co-operation. Rather, we were doing the basic work of our organisation.*

The analysis in this chapter is based on 25 interviews of Finnish actors from nine different organisations active in Morogoro (see interview guide in app.1). The interviews were transcribed and resulted in a total of 481 pages of transcriptions. The interview data was arranged by coding it by content with the principle of open coding based on the principles of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1991) using both expressions used by the interviewees and ordinary categories such as "history of Finnish organisation". Special attention was put on the words used by the interviewee – for example, the code "partnership" covers only the utterances in which the interviewee explicitly mentioned partnership. The term "partnership" was explicitly asked since most of the interviews were conducted at the time of the joint seminar in Morogoro where the "partnership" was one of the central themes. In the coding the Atlas/ti –computer programme was used as a tool. Each code refers to a quotation in the data. One quotation was selected to be a speech turn. Since each turn, sometimes quite long ones, might include different thematic contents, a single quotation can be coded by several codes. Additionally, only the speech turns of the interviewees were coded, not those of the interviewer.

This resulted in a total of 102 thematic codes that were covered in interviews. A few parts of the data, such as discussion of weather or stories not connected to the issue were left un-coded. The 102 content-based themes were further grouped into larger themes according to the overall interest on trajectories of change of the analysis. The themes and the codes included in each trajectory are shown in Appendix 1. From these themes some were selected in further analysis. Some, such as the co-operation between the Finnish NGOs were left out of this particular analysis.

The change processes found in interview accounts under scrutiny in this chapter were:

- a) *Development of the activities of Finnish NGO*
- b) *Personal biography of the Finnish actors*
- c) *Emergence of NGOs in Tanzania*
- d) *Changes in the styles of co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian actors*

In this chapter, based on the overall research interest towards change and tensions I have chosen to look into the dynamic processes that can be found in the descriptions uttered in the interviews. Special attention was based to the markers such as “we used to, but now”, or “in the future we should” in order to identify the trajectories. To analyse the tensions, phrases such as “I think this, but...” or “it is either this way, or that way” were focused on.

The analysis of interviews works as a framework for the analysis of concrete projects in the following chapters. Based on the identification of the relevant challenges as described by the Finnish actors, the projects studies can be more easily situated in the overall problematic of the Finnish NGO- co-operation in Morogoro at the time of my fieldwork. In the analysis not all the multiple trajectories and varieties can be captured. The main aim is to characterise the general trends in this particular co-operation in Morogoro. In the chapter, I shall give quite a number of illustrative examples from the interviews of the actors to show examples of how the actors themselves spoke about their activities. In the quotations from the actor the first number refers to the speech turn in the interview and the second number starting with SH refers to the code of the interviewee.

4.2 Finnish activities in Morogoro: From personal trips to development projects

Finnish NGOs have been active in Tanzania for decades. The roots of the Finnish NGO activities can be seen in the work of the missionary organisations in late 19th century. In recent decades Tanzania has continued to be one of the main working areas of Finnish NGOs. The regions in which Finnish NGOs in general work are diverse. However, the case of the Morogoro Region is special. Since the late 1980s there have been plenty of small Finnish NGO projects in the area. Morogoro is a Region in central and Western Tanzania. It consists of five districts⁴⁷ with approximately 1 600 000 inhabitants. The centre of the Region is Morogoro, a town of some 200 000 situated on the side of Uluguru-mountains.

The concentration of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro is due to a specific history that dates back to the middle 1980s. At that time there was a Finnish development worker working in an educational institute in a village near the town of Morogoro. His wife, Raija Salonen was mentioned in a number of interviews as the main initiator of the development activities of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro. Having familiarised herself with the people in the village and their problems she started to actively search for possible connections in Finland in order to assist the people. An important event was a Finnish-Tanzanian workshop arranged in Finland in 1989 at which some of the people from Morogoro were invited to meet people in Finland, to get to know each other and to initiate possible ways of assistance. The networking continued and a number of project ideas were initiated. In 1989 there was also a volunteer work camp arranged in a village Homboza near Morogoro that functioned as a main source of inspiration to many of the Finnish participants to continue the assistance. In 1990 the Finnish organisations active in Morogoro region established an umbrella organisation, Uhusiano in Finland. Uhusiano has since arranged an annual “Morogoro-seminar” in Finland. The NGOs that had projects in Morogoro lobbied strongly for placing a liaison officer of the national umbrella organisation for Finnish NGOs, the Service Center of Development Cooperation (KEPA) in Morogoro. The liaison officer started in 1998. Additionally, a Tanzanian programme co-ordinator was employed in the KEPA office.

Co-operation began through an intertwining of individual contacts and was enabled by new funding for NGO development co-operation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. One interviewee described the early days as follows:

10. SH9A: (...) Our first visit was made with our own money, a visit to get us familiarised with the place. The idea started during the workshop [in Finland],

⁴⁷ These districts are Morogoro Urban, Morogoro Rural, Kilosa, Kilombero and Ulanga.

through those persons that participated, I really wanted to come to see what it is like in Tanzania. We visited a number of clinics and hospitals, and then we took the idea to the Association which then applied for money from the Ministry. The decision came the following spring. Then another organisation said that could take care of the construction of the clinic, and they came there, but it was our project already then.

The above quotation shows the inter-connectness of the different Finnish projects in Morogoro. Many of the projects were located in the same area, especially the village of Homboza⁴⁸, for example. To give an example of the multiple trajectories by which the Finnish organisations have become involved in development work in Morogoro, I shall depict more in detail the trajectories of engagement of five Finnish organisations. These organisations are among the first Finnish organisations that started a development co-operation project in Morogoro in the late 1980s. Analysing the paths of engaging in co-operation provides background and contextualisation for the specific cases examined in more detail in this study. These descriptions are built upon the interviews and the documentation available.

Iisalmi Youth Aid: From workshops to Finnish unemployed to establishing adult education centre in Morogoro

Iisalmi Youth Aid Association was one of the largest Finnish actors in Morogoro in the 1990s. It had its origin in the youth work in the town of Iisalmi. The association has been engaged in supporting youth with social problems, such as unemployment or misbehaviour, and tries to offer opportunities for meaningful work to do to these youngsters. This is done by setting up workshops (e.g. metal, masonry and sewing) where the young people can come to make their own things as well as to repair used machines for resale. One of the aims of the association has also been to promote international solidarity. In 1987 the association was engaged in the “jubilee train” that circulated in Finland collecting used agricultural equipment, sawing machines and bicycles to be renovated and sent to developing countries. One container of this equipment was also sent to Morogoro, where an active person from the association went to check out where the equipments were sent. During this trip he accidentally met the Finnish development workers mentioned before and became familiarised with the problem of lack of post-primary education in Morogoro.

⁴⁸ Homboza is a beautiful remote village on the side of the Uluguru mountains. It is the home village of one of the Catholic priests who was an important connection to the Finnish actors. When the Finnish actors were looking for a suitable village in which to build a clinic, the priest suggested his home village which then was selected.

Gradually, the idea of establishing the Tushikamane Adult Education Center emerged. The Roman Catholic Diocese offered a plot for use and funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was received. The equipment for a metal and masonry workshop was received as donations from Finnish vocational schools. Additionally other materials and volunteer professionals to conduct the construction were sent from Finland.⁴⁹ At the same time some of the Tanzanian youngsters were sent to Finland for vocational training with the idea of them becoming trainers in the Tushikamane vocational training center. The scope of the training enlarged depending on the expertise areas of the Finnish people who became involved in the project and the ideas that emerged in Tanzania; for example, computer training was added. After the Salonens, who first worked as the project coordinators, returned to Finland, the building that had functioned as their home was turned into a guest house to serve the visitors from Finland. Additionally, a youth house was built in which some spare-time activities for the youth were arranged.

In the development co-operation of Iisalmi certain trends in the objects of co-operation can be observed. First, the object was to provide vocational training for a certain group of young people. This was done both by sending them to Finland to study and by establishing the Tushikamane training center. For Tushikamane, buildings were constructed and tools and equipment were sent from Finland, also brief training was given by Finnish trainers. The training included sewing, masonry and car repair and was further expanded to computer training. Secondly, renovating the used equipment in Finland and taking part in the construction and training work in Tanzania was supposed to offer short-time employment to Finnish people realising the objective of decreasing unemployment.

Once the building in Morogoro was ready and the training course running, the main problem with the center was to ensure the economic sustainability after the support from Finland would be ended. The local ways of generating income include selling services to customers in above-mentioned areas and charging training fees. Additionally, a hall is rented out for celebrations such as weddings and the rooms in guest house are rented.⁵⁰ Tushikamane training center was handed over to the Roman Catholic Church in 1999, but Iisalmi continued to support some of the activities for some time. Tushikamane suffers from economic difficulties and there is no guarantee of the continuation of the training or other functions.

⁴⁹ This is evident in the electrical system of Tushikamane. All the plugs in the center are of the Finnish and North European standard in contrast to the British standard commonly used in Tanzania. This makes it impossible to use electric appliances such as an iron or a toaster bought in Tanzania without having a plug adapter.

⁵⁰ The main customers of the Tushikamane guest house are the representatives of the Finnish NGOs who are coming for their short times visits to Morogoro.

In addition to supporting the Tushikamane centre the Iisalmi Youth Aid has also been engaged in a number of other projects in Morogoro, including, for example support for an environmental organisation.

Äetsä Development Association: Collaboration with Homboza village and multiple projects

The Äetsä Development Association has its roots in the Äetsä (a small town) adult education center and its student association which were engaged in international solidarity both by learning about the developing world and by collecting different materials to be sent in ANC⁵¹ refugee camps. One such camp was situated in Morogoro. One of the leading Finnish speakers for international solidarity, Helena Kekkonen⁵² visited Äetsä and showed some films about the village of Mbezi, near Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. After seeing the film the student association started to collect material to support the Mbezi-village. A few individuals also visited Mbezi and the lack of post-primary education especially for girls was identified. After discussions with the educational officials in the area building of a post-primary school started in 1992. This was enabled by funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. After building the post-primary school subjects such as masonry, sewing and home economics were taught. In Finland, additionally, a “development shop” and flea-market was established in Finland in order to raise funds locally for the project. After engaging more and more in project work the Development Association was separated from the student association which did not consider development co-operation to be the main activity of the organisation.

Simultaneously, in 1990 a few individuals from Äetsä had been participating in a trip to Tanzania arranged by the wife of the Finnish development worker indicated above. They had visited the village of Homboza near Morogoro and the Mgolole-convent. This trip was inspired by the Finnish-Tanzanian workshop in Finland 1989,⁵³ where two Catholic priests were also present. They took the Finnish visitors to a remote home village of the other and based on that experience plans to support the village began. The first means of support was to build a clinic, since it was difficult to reach any health care facilities from the remote village. The building was started with the help a Finnish volunteer work-camp and was continued by villagers. Some Finnish individual doctors practiced for a few months

⁵¹ The African National Congress (ANC) was engaged in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. During the 1970s and 1980s many of its proponents went on refuge.

⁵² Helena Kekkonen is a famous figure in the Finnish peace movement.

⁵³ This workshop was arranged in Viittakivi International Folk High School in 1989 in order to bring together ordinary Finnish and Tanzanian citizens in order to work out possibilities for co-operation.

in Homboza. Later, the health officials of Morogoro appointed staff for the clinic and it has been open continuously.

As stated above the activities of Äetsä have mainly been divided in two geographical areas, Mbezi in Dar es Salaam and Homboza village in the mountains of Morogoro. In Mbezi the main aim has been to support the post-primary education of the villagers by establishing post-primary school where sewing, masonry and home economics have been taught. Finnish volunteers have been involved in teaching during their brief time trips to Tanzania based on their own vocational background. Lately the content of supporting the school have changed from education more to employment, workshops in order to give practical training for the students and sell the products to customers. This is partly aimed at economic sustainability of the schools and partly to offer employment to the former students.

In Homboza⁵⁴ the supporting the village has been done through a number of projects. These include establishing the clinic, the Finnish doctors' short-term practice in the village, building wells and road, and lately supporting girls' health by establishing peer education groups in the schools with co-operation of local experts of community theatre.

The Äetsä Development Organisation that was established in the beginning of development co-operation the Äetsä Development Association has been the main actor in Finland although inside the organisation there have been divisions of individual actors according to different projects. Additionally, some individual actors have left the organisation due to internal conflicts. In Tanzania, the main actors in Mbezi were first the local villagers, later merely the education officials and the school itself. In Homboza first the work was done mainly with some individuals, then with the health and education officials as well as the village leadership.

Viittakivi alumni organisation: Volunteer work camps for multicultural understanding

Viittakivi Folk High School is a training center the roots of which are in the international Settlement-movement that holds a long tradition in adult and civic education as well as international relations. The center has hosted many students from Africa during its history starting from the 1950s. One employer of Viittakivi had participated in a work camp in a village in Salla in 1959 to reconstruct post-war Finnish Lapland⁵⁵ and considered it a good way to help. At the end of the 1980s Mama Salonen participated in a yoga course in Viittakivi and had discus-

⁵⁴ Also other small Finnish NGOs have been active in Homboza.

⁵⁵ The reconstruction was needed since the German troops positioned in Northern Finland during the end of the World War II quite systematically burned houses and other infrastructure while leaving Finland.

sions with the person who had the idea about work camps and an idea of establishing connections between Finnish organisations and Tanzanian people was born. A workshop was arranged in Viittakivi where people, mainly acquaintances of family and officials from Morogoro town as well as priest from the Catholic Church from Tanzania were invited. Arranging work-camps in Tanzania was one of the ideas born in the workshop. The first work-camp was arranged in Hombosa in 1989, where some students of Viittakivi and other interested people helped in starting to build a clinic. These activities were made possible by the project funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The Viittakivi Alumni organisation is an old organisation engaging in typical activities of alumni organisation, and was involved in work-camps because it was an NGO and eligible to apply for NGO development co-operation funding that started in 1990. Since then a work-camp has been arranged in every year until 1999, except in 1998. The principle has been that funds from the Ministry are used to the building material and local masonry. The Finnish work-campers pay they own travel expenses. The Finnish Federation of Settlements started similar work-camp activities, although it concentrated on building of primary schools. The practical responsibility of arranging the work-camps was on the shoulders of one individual person who had initiated the idea until the late 1990s when a group of former work-campers established a Tanzania-group inside the Alumni Organisation to organise the work-camps.

The work-camps have had three explicit objectives from the Finnish point of view. First, to improve the health facilities in villages by constructing clinics and houses for the medical staff; second, showing the example of co-operation to the villagers; and third educating Finnish youth⁵⁶ in international encounters. Viittakivi Alumni organisation arranged its last work camp in 1999 after which the projects were evaluated, but not continued.

In terms of actors, there was a change in Finland from one individual towards more collective group-based co-ordination. In Tanzania, the main actors have been the district health and education officials and the individual villages through their leaders. In 1999 there was an attempt to involve a Tanzanian NGO in the co-operation, but it did not result in long-term co-operation.

⁵⁶ I have discussed the different objects and division of labour of work-camps in more detail in Kontinen (2003 c). Analysis showed surprisingly that for the participants one important object was getting a “good group experience among Finnish work-campers”. The group dynamics and leadership attracted a lot of attention both during the implementation of the work camp and in the evaluation meetings.

Association for Developing Countries in Vaasa: From study circles to the establishment of a multisectoral NGO in Morogoro

The establishment of the development co-operation activities in a Vaasa was a result of a number of processes. First, interest in developing countries was shown in Vaasa civic education center which arranged a lecture series on development issues in the late 1980s. Simultaneously events called “Mahdollisuuksien Tori” (Marketplace for Possibilities) where different kinds of Finnish NGOs were gathered were stated to be arranged. Secondly, the Tanzanian ambassador to Sweden and Finland visited Vaasa and suggested that Vaasa establish friendship-town relationships with Morogoro, his home town. Vaasa and Morogoro signed the agreement on friendship relations in 1994. Thirdly, a doctor from Vaasa had relatives in Tanzania and had visited also Morogoro and showed some shocking pictures from Morogoro Region hospital in Vaasa. Inspired by the film the health workers arranged a collection and containers of used equipment from Vaasa such as wheelchairs and sheets were sent to Morogoro.

These three processes resulted in establishing an Association for Developing Countries in Vaasa. The town of Vaasa allocated the taking care of the friendship relations to the Association and many of the town employees were active in the association. One important function of the association was to apply for money for the co-operation from the funds for the NGO-development co-operation. In the beginning the focus was on the health sector, then the education sector and a bit later a library sector was established. Each sector runs its own projects, the content of which depends on the interest of the Finnish people involved.

Each sub-group of the Vaasa development association has its own objectives. The health sector has concentrated mainly on supporting the Morogoro Regional Hospital first by sending material and equipment, and lately more by supporting continuing education of the staff. Later the work has also included AIDS-prevention and support for dentists.

The education sector has worked with a number of primary schools, renovating, building and supporting by buying school desks. The projects have also included short-term exchange of teachers and pupils between Morogoro and Tanzania. A separate project was established by Åbo Academi, Vaasa that runs a Master of Education programme in the Morogoro teachers training center.

Recently two processes have been taken place in the Vaasa Development Association co-operation. First, in 2001 the Ministry for Foreign Affairs opened a new funding window for the development co-operation of municipalities, and Vaasa was selected as one of the pilot municipalities. This has made the relationships between the municipalities more “official”. This development has also slowed down the other process, which was established in order to ensure the continuity of the

projects, namely founding an NGO to Tanzania by putting together all the parties that have had co-operation with the Vaasa Development Association.

Friends of Development: Supporting orphans

Friends of Development was mainly started by one woman's attempt to help certain individual orphan children in Morogoro. First money to cover school fees and, for example, used clothes was sent directly to Tanzania. Additionally a flea-market was established in order to raise money for the children in Tanzania. Later, a non-governmental organisation to run these activities was established and the NGO applied for development co-operation funding. When project funding was received, the number of supported children increased to over one hundred. An NGO to administer the support was founded in Tanzania based on the initiative of the Finish NGO.

The object of the work has been enabling individual poor children to go to school, starting with a few individuals and ending up with 200 students. The support is given by paying school fees, buying schools books and uniforms for the selected children. Since the need for support for education does not stop when the project stops, new ways of getting income, such as cultivating maize for the Tanzanian NGO has been planned and established.

In terms of actors the main individual actor in Finland has remained same although more members have been joining in and for example work voluntarily in the flea-market. In Tanzania, the main actors were first the family Salonen who administered the personal support sent to Tanzania. Later some other individual were engaged and later based on these individuals the Tanzanian NGO was established.

Table 5. Examples of the Finnish NGOs involved in development co-operation in Morogoro.

	Iisalmi Youth Association	Äetsä Development Association	Viittakivi Alumni Organisation	Association for Developing Countries in Vaasa	Friends of Development
Activities in Finland	Supporting unemployed youth	Study circle, running a development shop	Co-ordination between the former students of the college	Study circle, fundraising.	Running a flea market.
Entry point to development co-operation	Jubilee train, material collection	Study circles, collection of materials	Arranging a Finnish-Tanzanian workshop in Viittakivi International College	Collecting and sending used equipments to Morogoro hospital	Financial support for individual orphans
First project funded by ministry	Adult education center	Post-primary school in Mbezi	Work camp to construct a clinic to Homboza village	Support to regional hospital: Support to individual schools	Supporting orphans' school attendance
First partners in Tanzania	Roman Catholic Diocese	Mbezi village, Homboza village, convent, individuals	Village leaders, District education officials.	District officials, individual schools, regional hospital.	Individual orphans
Trajectory	From solidarity and domestic employment to building an adult education center in Morogoro	From solidarity and civic education to constructing a clinic and post-primary school	From learning by doing in Finland to arranging volunteer work camps in Tanzania	From friendship town relations and civic education to supporting hospitals, schools and library	From personal helping to founding an NGO for supporting school going

From the above examples of the activities of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro a few conclusions can be drawn. First, it is evident that the emergence of the development co-operation activities in Morogoro was much of an effort of certain individual people based on personal contacts. Mama Salonen, a committed individual has played an important role in initiating different projects and connecting diverse people from Finland and Tanzania. An important network event was the Finnish-Tanzanian workshop in Viittakivi in 1989 that resulted in many ideas as well as later individual trips of Finnish people to Tanzania. In Tanzania, the Morogoro town with its surrounding mountains has been the starting point of many activities. More specifically first the convent of Mbolole with its orphans, the Homboza village and later the Tushikamane vocational training centre have been important

nodal points for the Finnish activities in Morogoro. For example, the guest house of the Tushikamane training centre constructed in the project of Iisalmi Youth Aid has been an important place for accommodation for the Finnish actors during their trips to Morogoro.

Second, the individual efforts gradually developed into more organisational activity due to the potential access to the NGO-development funding provided by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In some cases the development co-operation emerged as an expansion of the activities of the Finnish organisation in Finland. The Iisalmi Youth Association and Viittakivi Alumni Organisation present such cases. In Äetsä and Vaasa, the interest in global solidarity demonstrated in the forms of study circles in civic education institutes expanded to the establishment of particular development associations to run the projects. What is typical for all the examples is that the first seeds for development co-operation activities were manifested by collecting money and materials for certain purposes in Tanzania exercised by some committed individuals. These “unofficial” activities became more organised by applying development co-operation funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. These funds have also brought the projects model into the co-operation because the various diverse activities had to be presented in the form of maximum 3-year projects.

The individual contacts as basis for the projects have created complicated networks of different “projects” and diverse Finnish “NGOs” active in the same geographical places in Tanzania. Apparent in the interviews was that many of the projects were attached to certain individuals, not to the organisations.⁵⁷ In some Finnish organisations there had also been internal conflicts and some individuals had left the NGOs and established new ones or engaged in other NGOs but continued similar activities in Morogoro under a project with another Finnish NGO. The individual Finnish people have had a strong influence into the content of the project, the professional background and personal interests of the individuals taking part into the trips to Tanzania has modified the contents of the projects. For example some additions to the content have been made based on the professional background of people participating in the trips to Tanzania. As one of the interviewees depict the reasons for expanding the project activities:

148. H25: (...) *This co-operation has gone in different directions because when we have had an individual with special expertise travelling with us in our trips. For example, if we have a librarian, then it goes into a library, if it happens to be a dentist, then our work expands into dental care...*

⁵⁷ This observation was common also among the Tanzanian partners who usually spoke of different projects in terms of so-and-so’s project referring to the Finnish individual who usually travelled to Tanzania once a year in the framework of the particular project.

Despite the diversity of project areas and the focuses a more general change in the contents of the projects can be observed. In the beginning of co-operation most of the projects consisted of collecting used equipment and material in Finland and sending it to Tanzania. There was also a lot of building of houses and short-term training provided by the Finnish individuals. Now the material collection has almost vanished and there has been more support for local training and capacity building. Another addition is giving more emphasis on the economic sustainability of the activities, especially the training institutions that are supposed to be self-sufficient.

4.3 Personal engagement in development co-operation

Trajectories of engagement of individual actors

The Finnish people interviewed mostly took voluntarily part in the development co-operation.⁵⁸ Therefore, the engagement was of some special meaning to them, other than getting salary, to them. If receiving the first project funding from the Ministry marked an entry in a development co-operation for an organisation, for individual actors travelling to Tanzania for the first time was a significant event in their personal biographies. Four of the interviewees had been in Africa before taking part in the projects in Morogoro, but for the rest of the interviewees the trips related to the project activities were their first visits to Africa. Some of the interviewees had returned to Morogoro once or twice a year for eleven years and many perceived the trips to Morogoro as very important and they saved money for their annual visits and spent a considerable number of their holidays from their paid work in Tanzania.

How did the individuals engaged with development co-operation projects at a first place? Based on the interviews six different routes towards engagement in development co-operation could be identified. First, some actors had first been involved in the activities of the organisations in Finland and gradually learned about the activities of development co-operation of the NGO and became interested in taking part in these activities.

Second, some of the actors had got the idea of becoming involved with development co-operation while travelling as a tourist in Africa and perceiving the

⁵⁸ Two of the interviewees indicated that taking part in development co-operation was part of their paid job. The others – teachers, doctors, IT-professionals, students, nurses-engaged in development activities in their spare time. Five of the interviewees were pensioners. As for age, three of the interviewees were under the age of 40 and the rest were over.

difficult situation of the people there. After returning home they either joined already existing NGOs or founded their own NGO in order to start development co-operation. Gradually, they ended up in an NGO with a project in Morogoro in which they were actively involved.

Third, some people had a long-time interest in development co-operation and at some stage they had taken the short-term assignments in certain projects where their professional expertise (other than *development* expertise) was of use and gradually became more integrated in the Finnish organisation.

Fourth, another way to become involved in development was to meet and discuss with other people who were already engaged in such works. After hearing the stories of others about visits to Morogoro they also interested in engaging in development co-operation and actively searched for a way to do that.

Fifth, two of the interviewees reported that they initially took part in work camps since they felt they had too many problems in their lives in Finland and wanted to have a “break”. After the first experiences in Tanzania they had gradually taken part in more activities. Previous participation in an international work camp elsewhere in Africa motivated one of the interviewees to take part in project activities in Morogoro.

Sixth, two of the younger interviewees had conducted the apprentice period related to their studies in Tanzania and after that searched for an NGO that would be active in Morogoro to be engaged in and to continue contacts with Morogoro.

Accounts on tensions in engagement: Tourism, personal development and aid

For some interviewees, travelling and spending time in Morogoro became an important entry point for engaging in development projects. In the interviews they mentioned a tension between tourism and “project work”. It was emphasised that it was important to go to Tanzania to help and to do something (a project) and not just to travel as tourists. Travelling for project trips was seen also as morally more acceptable. In the following, one actor describes how she entered development co-operation:

2. SH20: (...) *The Association had been founded. We received some money from the Ministry, and it was thought that somebody from the school –sector should go there [to Morogoro] to become familiar with the situation. The nurse in our school was involved in the health sector and suddenly, in the teachers’ room she proposed that I will go to Africa. I answered, yes, of course, if somebody else is paying. After that we started to discuss what it was all about. I think I was ready to go, because already for years I had thought that it would be nice to get to know Africa in some way other than as a tourist. I immediately thought that it would be great, so that I could right away have contact with local people.*

The importance of travelling created some tensions within the Finnish organisations. Since each project included a limited funding for “follow-up” visits, it sometimes became an issue who would go on these trips. When it came to travelling to Tanzania people were very interested in being engaged in development co-operation, but they were less interested in the administrative tasks and sitting in the meetings in Finland. In some organisations there was a tension between the more-educated and less-educated members of the organisation. There were complaints that only those who had Master’s degree and could speak English were sent on the project trips and opportunities for “ordinary” people to travel were scarce.

The importance of the chances to travel to Tanzania in order to do something leads us to question the reasons for people’s engagement in the development co-operation. Why are they, in the first place, voluntarily engaged in projects in Tanzania? In the accounts of the reasons for their engagement the participants referred to a tension between the more altruistic motivations of helping others and doing good and more individualistic reasons, such as having a chance to travel and gain new experiences for own self-development (see Table 6 for different explicated reasons).

These variations in reasons (a single person could explicate both of them) created certain tensions explicated in the interview accounts. The actors struggled with the tensions between the individual reasons related to self-development and helping Tanzanians in their development.

Table 6. Reasons given for engagement in development co-operation

Explicated reason	No of mentions	Example
1. Helping and doing good Being of help Solidarity Altruism Clearing conscience	10	83.SH17: (...) it is this willingness to help...people keep asking why you bother to do this work since you have been through so much and you have everything so well, so I say that this is exactly why I want to do that. I am so well off that I can eat my Christmas dinner, how could I do that if I have not given a decent food to somebody here in Tanzania?
2. One’s individual development Enlargement of personal world view Adventures Self-realisation Becoming international Sociality Ability to use one’s skills	11	62.SH18: ...I was really happy when I had a chance to come here for the first time. For years, I had seen other people visiting here. This is related especially to the visits to Tanzania, my own world view changed a lot, during that first trip and after that during every trip.

A tension between altruism and some kind of individual satisfaction reflected the idea that in addition to the reasons rooted in altruism and helping, people are engaged in development co-operation also to get inner satisfaction through feelings of belonging to groups and feeling themselves important. One interviewee describes the importance of belonging to the group of “development volunteers” in a following way:

91. SH2: (...) *it is that you meet people and get to know them. I think there is no such thing as altruism; it is something that feels good here inside. Whatever it is, some kind of Jesus-points that we learned already in elementary school; it is the satisfaction that somebody might say that you are a clever boy, aren't you.*

The quest to satisfy one's individual needs was also reflected in an explicated tension between engaging in development co-operation for clearing conscience vis-à-vis global inequality and for satisfying one's need to be somehow special in the Finnish context because very few of the Finnish people have a chance to travel to Tanzania once a year.

In relation to their biographical trajectories, some of the actors stressed the importance of having new experiences through engaging in development co-operation especially in life situations such as divorce or the moment when the children have left home. In such situations the engagement in development projects and travelling to Tanzania provided them with something new to do. One of the interviewees explicates this position as follows:

67. SH19: (...) *and then this kind of elder and more established person, comes because he or she wants to have some new experiences. Maybe they come also because they want to help, but I think most of us come for selfish reasons. And I think that is quite healthy, I don't understand that people are trying to save the world.*

Through the tensions the interviewees struggled with the question of what the reasons for engagement of individuals should be and what they actually are. The motivations related to individual development and learning were at the same time considered very important but also somehow a bit morally unsatisfying.

Accounts of individual learning: Growing as a human being and learning about local problems

The accounts of individuals' learning reflected similar tension between learning as individual development and learning as related to the activity of development co-operation or the local conditions. Most accounts of what the actors had learned in

participating in development projects considered different personal features (see Table 7 for a list) and general humanity. Moreover, some mentioned that they had learned skills for development co-operation such as project management and some practical skills related to Tanzanian life.

Table 7. Explicated learning in development co-operation

What has been learned	No of mentions	Examples
Personal features	18	General personal development as a human being (4), increase in tolerance towards difference (4), being able to question the taken for granted assumptions in own life (1). pleasure of being of use or of help (5), humility (1), patience (1), ability to listen to others (1), possibility of "charging batteries" (1)
Practical skills	9	Handicraft skills (2), Tanzanian music (1), Tanzanian stories (1), community theatre (1), tools for tolerance education in Finland (1) administrative skills such as project management and bookkeeping (3)
Ability to acknowledge differences	7	Different ways of thinking and new cultures (4), new values and world view (2). acknowledging the inequality of the world (1)
Social relationships	6	Pleasure of belonging to a group of Finnish development co-operation workers (2), communicating with different people (1).
General humanity	5	General humanity (1), life in general (1), smallness of human being (1), importance of reflection (1).

For most of the interviewees the engagement in development co-operation represented something new. Accordingly, there were accounts of various kinds of learning. First of all, many of the interviewees engaged in development co-operation at a certain transitional phase in their life – for example when young and searching for their identity, or when middle-aged when the children had grown up and left home. The accounts of the trajectories included some "transitional" phases or steps that indicated the "newness" in various aspects. The step of travelling to Tanzania for the first time was important for many interviewees. It was described, for example, as "overcoming the fear" and "shock". Overcoming the fear of going to Africa and realizing how to survive there was an important learning experience in personal biography. As one of the interviewees tells about her decision to be engaged in development activities:

61. SH19: (...) *Of course [entering in development co-operation] is related to personal issues. I was quite young, I thought I wouldn't dare to travel to Africa and I hid my fear with many kinds of excuses. And then one of my friends travelled somewhere in Africa and I thought that, hell, why couldn't I go, too.*

The engagement in project work and trips to Tanzania had given the actors opportunities for learning. Development co-operation had encouraged personal development and learning new practical skills, such as skills in handicraft, in Tanzania. Additionally, the actors had gained abilities to acknowledge difference and communicate with people from different cultures.

As for the practical skills, the ability to speak Kiswahili was considered as one of the most important learning challenges for better co-operation. However, few of the actors had learned the language beyond the most common greetings. One of the interviewees tells about the importance of language skills in a following way:

68. SH18: (...) *My own work has become easier once my language skills developed. In the beginning we had Tanzanian interpreter that knew some Finnish and it took a while before we understood that it wasn't working and there were a lot of misunderstandings. Language is important. This goes along with the professional skills; you have to have skills on the issues you come to teach here, but that is not enough. You have to have some kind of larger understanding, you should be able to ask yourself if you are in the right state, and you should know how to stop, and not just automatically finish the thing you once started.*

The lack of language skills hindered co-operation since neither the Finnish nor the Tanzanian partners spoke English fluently in every case. In the some projects the Tanzanians who had been studying in Finland during the Tushikamane project were used as Finnish-Kiswahili interpreters. The lack of a common language of communication created misunderstandings and frustration in co-operation. For example, the need to improve communication was shown in the village of Homboza where the villagers wanted to have a Finnish language course in order to be able to communicate more easily with their partners.

For personal development, one of the most radical issues that the individuals had to learn was to question their own lifestyle in Finland or the whole Western lifestyle in general. One distinctive type of learning was that of learning to criticise and question the Finnish, or Western life style based on massive consumption of goods. As one of the interviewees put it:

6. SH15: *It is hard to identify what I have learned, because it is a process; at least I have learned a kind of tolerance. I have learned that usually there is an explanation for everything that seems strange. I have learned different ways of thinking. And of course, the most difficult part is to return to Finland and encounter all the vanity in the life there.*

The Finnish actors usually paid only short visits to Tanzania, staying for a couple of weeks at maximum. Even if interacting quite intensively with the local people during the trips, the picture of the “Tanzanian” way of life compared to that in Finland was somehow built on an image of “life being harder but happier than at home”. In the accounts the Tanzanian way of life was depicted as joyful, social and worry-free even if they had to struggle for day-to-day survival. As one of the interviewees described the difference between Finnish and Tanzanian way:

46. SH13: (...) *There is a kind of taking care of each other, sociability, there is time for each others and trust that everything comes in its own time. We get stressed so easily. We think about the past and present, and our great worries. Of course, we have a different climate, we have to have a house. But people need so little to survive, we should be more able to live here and now, so that we wouldn't be in such a hurry... that's something I have learned here.*

Individual development and learning through engagement in development cooperation was considered very important. Learning was attributed to the travel in Tanzania and the experience in African culture. The developmental trajectory of getting to know the Tanzanian environment was shared by all the participants.

4.4 Getting access to potential new partners: NGOs as new actors in the Tanzanian society

The Finnish NGOs in Morogoro used in 1980s and 1990s worked usually directly with the villages the local officials, individual hospitals, schools or the Catholic Church. In the late 1990s there were many aspects that contributed to the change in the co-operating bodies for Finnish NGOs in Tanzania. First, there was increasing emergence of NGOs and other civil society organisation following the gradual political liberalisation and the shift in international donor policies towards channelling funding to the NGOs. Second, a similar international policy affected the funding policies of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland that started to emphasise the importance of the local partners, preferably civil society organisations for the Finnish NGOs to be eligible for NGO funding. As one of the Finnish actors reported: *There have been demands from the Ministry that we should improve civil society and found NGOs* (SH20, 39).

In some occasions, this demand led to some quite ambiguous processes. Since the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian actors already existed, some of the actors wanted to legitimise the existing action by founding an NGO based on the already existing individual partners. Partly as a result of contacts with Finnish NGOs some Tanzanian NGOs were established. Examples of these are a development organisation in the village of Hombosa, one small NGO in Morogoro and one larger NGO that incorporated different, mostly governmental actors in Morogoro. In the two latter cases the main reason for establishing the NGO was to enable the continuation of the projects activities supported by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Additionally, establishing an NGO to continue the co-operation was seen as a possibility for the Tanzanian people to gain access to donor funds from countries other than Finland.

For example, Vaasa Development Association promoted an idea to establish a multisectoral development NGO in Morogoro as their partner including all the previous separate partners such as representatives from the library, regional hospital and schools. The NGO has been founded but its function is unclear. The later inclusion of the Vaasa town to the pilot development co-operation of municipalities led to a situation where the NGO was not anymore “needed” to get the project funding from the Ministry, but the schools, library and health care can be supported through the Morogoro municipality with funding for municipalities.

However, the emergence of new organisational partners set new challenges for co-operation. The Finnish actors were very positive about the emerging NGOs and the “people taking their development into their own hands”, but there was some scepticism vis-à-vis the new organisations. The ambiguities about how to think about these potential new partners were explicated in the accounts of the Finnish actors on their new partners.

These accounted tensions concentrated on the question of whether the new emerging NGOs would be NGOs arising out of ideological commitment, will to work for the best of grassroots level with inner democratic structures and shared mission, or, would they be emerging as tools for personal profit, in order to “be an organisation” without any shared organisational mission rather than serving the community. This tension clearly had a normative aspect whilst the latter aspects were considered as “bad” and undesirable and the former described situations as they should be in the point of view of the Finnish actors. As one NGO participant put it:

40. SH8: (...) *we have seen these situations, for example when the activities of and NGO are finished, the money left is shared among the board members. Or there are organisations, in which somebody wants to be elected a chairman for a lifetime. These things happen all the time.*

Additionally some accounts considered the differences between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs often reflecting upon the long history of voluntary action in Finland and how the Tanzanian NGOs had “not yet reached that level”. However, the normative aspect of this tension is often uttered in ways in which the Finnish expressed that first, at least for the administrative purposes, it would be good if the Tanzanian organisations would be more like the Finnish ones, and second, that by the co-operation and training the Finnish organisations could be able to facilitate Tanzanian NGOs to become more like their Finnish partners. Special emphasis should be placed on the notions of inner democracy and voluntarism. This view was challenged in two statements that reflected that actually some of the Tanzanian NGOs might be already more advanced than the Finnish NGOs producing, for example, four year action plans and well-written project proposals that “we never have in Finland” (SH14, 46).

4.5 Change in practice of co-operation: Towards partnership

A change toward different practices of co-operation was identified in most of the interviews even if some of the interviewees did not see any challenges for change in the co-operation practices. The two main trends in co-operation were the move from efforts of Finnish individuals towards more well-organised co-operation and a change from a “we know better” attitude resulting in bringing Finnish project ideas to Tanzania towards more shared planning of projects.

The actors described the challenges for change in the co-operation in terms of “getting rid of the big brother syndrome”, stop “bringing Finland to Tanzania” and not to “think on behalf of others”. These accounts show that the present situation in project planning was experienced problematic by some of the Finnish actors. One of the NGO participants ponders about the change in co-operation in following way:

4. SH13: (...) *I think that partnership would be, that we would be doing more with them. I think that is the direction we are going.. Before we used to just come here [to Tanzania] and bring a project that we thought that they would need here.*

The change in the contents of co-operation was also reflected in a few statements. It was acknowledged that the activities in the projects were gradually changing from sending used materials from Finland to Tanzania towards arranging training courses and conducting capacity building projects. The “new kind of partnership” was considered to entail more cultural exchange and projects with more interactional than development focus. One of the interviewees described the importance of interaction in her definition of development in a following way:

42. SH3: (...) *You have to think about into what directions the development is going, forward or backwards. I think that the “co-operation” is more important than the “development”. I think that development has to be seen as a mutual spiritual development. What takes place there, in Tanzania, is that you yourself develop as a human being and perhaps everybody who meet each others there, can have the same experience.*

Thus, the Finnish actors explicated some directions in the change of co-operation. First was related to the changing practices of co-operation that were moving towards more shared planning between the partners. The other trend explicated the move from implementation of projects to more open cultural interaction as an indicator of new partnership.

Tension in relationship: Finnish models or joint project?

One of the tensions in the present co-operation was between importing Finnish models to Tanzania and concentrating on finding out Tanzanian models of practices. From the beginning the co-operation of Finnish voluntary organisations in Morogoro was very much based on the personal relationships. Accordingly the models in co-operation depended on the professional background, personal characteristics and preferences of certain individuals. The attitude expressed towards importing the Finnish models to Tanzania was twofold. First, the Finnish models in health care, education and organisational management were considered as good and desirable models for Tanzanians, while there was a critique towards the “old practice” of importing Finnish models to Tanzania. The critique of importing Finnish models was connected to the notion of the importance of using local ideas as a basis for the projects to make work sustainable and ensure ownership of the projects.

46. SH14: (...) *the idea I have had during the last year, an idea that I have to say aloud in every meeting is that we have to remind ourselves that only those projects in which the need comes from the partner and not from us have any chances to be successful. This should be the number one principle and only after that should we start to think about what we could do, but the proposal should come from there. We should not feed them ideas. I don't know, at times I feel that this is more our “thing” than theirs.*

Bringing Finnish models was mainly discussed generally, although some concrete examples were given. For example, in teaching home economics the Finnish models had created difficulties since the idea of the importance of eating fresh veg-

etables did not fit the environment which lacked clean water. In another case, the electric washing machines brought from Finland did not work since there was not enough water pressure and the water was sandy. On some occasions, the plans to teach bread-baking to Tanzanians turned into the Finnish people learning Tanzanian way for baking bread with coal.

The change in planning practices was seen as most important need in order to improve co-operation. Traditionally, the planning in the projects had been in the hands of the Finnish volunteers who had planned the projects on the basis of their observations of the problems in Tanzania. The ideas were discussed in Tanzania with local village leaders, local government officials and local individuals at the stage in which the idea already existed. Joint planning between Finnish NGOs and the local people was done during the relatively short yearly visits of Finnish volunteers in formal meetings. This practice had led to a situation in which the project planning often meant an encounter between a Finnish project idea (based on the personal expertise of the individual behind the project) and an endless “wish-list” from Tanzanian site including different material inputs required. As one of the actors tell about the beginning of the negotiations with the partners:

13. SH20: (...) *Of course, when we started our first projects, we got these wish lists from everywhere. I felt it was meant to Santa Claus. Refridgerator, Hiace - car, copy machine and everything you can imagine. On a page or two, they listed everything they wanted or needed.*

During the time of the interviews there was an emerging interest in changing the planning practices and making them more conscious. This interest was motivated by two ideas: first, there were observations that the projects did not work if they were based on the Finnish ideas; second, the emergence of Tanzanian NGOs changed the planning practices on the Tanzanian side – the organisations started to have their own priorities and produced project plans and proposals for the basis of potential co-operation. Additionally, some NGOs started using some of the planning techniques, such as LFA instead of sitting in the meetings. However, at the time of my fieldwork meetings were the main form of joint planning and discussion between the Finnish and Tanzanian participants.

Co-operation and development – Project, money and partnership

The co-operation between Finnish NGOs in Morogoro was based on individual contacts and was not explicitly considered as “development co-operation” by the actors. However, some features characteristic to the wider system of NGO development co-operation were evident also in the Finnish co-operation and led to

certain challenges for change. For example, one of the reasons for striving for the partnership in relationship was the emergence of the very concept in the international development discussion.

The organisations conducted their development co-operation with funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. In order to get the funding the co-operation needed to be in the form of projects. The initial co-operation was more flexible and continuous and the actors found it difficult to translate their practices into projects. It seemed a bureaucratic and artificial exercise. In the same vein, the search for local NGO partner was partly initiated by the changing funding conditions of the Finnish Ministry – the interviewees expressed a fear that they would not receive any future funding without having a local partner organisation. The project logic and the “learning” tools used in the planning characterised to the system were criticised by the actors. As one of the interviewees put it:

60. SH7: (...) *I think that they are like two realities. This gobbledegook is used. I have written some applications and it is like starting a machine ... trat, trat, trat... all those terms [laughing]. But maybe that is the way it should be. We have such unsatisfactory means for describing this kind of reality, no matter how many seminars are conducted and indicators developed, we can't escape the fact that they are always interpretations. Of course, they keep us busy, we learn LFA and teach also our partners how the logic goes. This is caused by this, it could be the other way around, but it would be another project ... [laughing] ... according to this project this is the cause.*

Another thing that was seen to hinder the new kind of partnership was money. The interviewees accounted on money-related tensions in their role in co-operation. For example, the funding position created a tension whether Finns should conceive of their roles as partners or inspectors. Many of the Finnish actors considered the “donor” position brought by channelling of funds as something that they would rather avoid and instead concentrate on the human relationships. As one of the interviewees suggested: “there should be some disgusting economists that would take care of the business of money”. Some interviewees considered the choices between two extreme positions in co-operation: putting emphasis on interaction between people or giving direct funding without engagement of Finnish people. One of the actors describes his position towards the possibilities of direct funding:

101. SH5: (...) *Is this development aid, or what is this? In Finland also development develops and in Tanzania development develop. I have seen that doing and being with people personally is the only right way. Driving with a land rover and*

giving a pile of money one achieves nothing but buildings and that's it. But there should be continuation, there should be inspiration given to people. They should be told that when you have a good school, you will get income from this and that and you'll get food to eat.

In general the Finnish actors were quite negative about direct funding to Tanzanian NGOs and other partners and enable the Tanzanian NGOs to make the decisions on the use of money. There were few examples in which the decision of the exact distribution of the funds was left to Tanzanian partner. The general negative attitude towards direct funding was based on the past experience of misuse of funds and theft of equipment on the Tanzanian side, and, on another on fear that in direct funding the interactional aspect of the co-operation would be lost. Money included in co-operation was seen as hindering the creation of relationships, since the available money created a competition and bargaining situation. Some of the interviewees felt that their Tanzanian partner interacted with them for the sake of potential access to funding rather than for the sake of interaction.

Additionally, a kind of moral judgement can be observed also in relation to money in co-operation. The cultural exchange, interaction and learning from each other were considered as more desirable and "good" than dealing with transfer of material and financial resources.

Traces of colonialism in co-operation

In addition to the challenges related to the transfer of money characteristic to development activities, the historical heritage of colonialism to the social relationship between Finns and Tanzanians was taken up in some of the interviews. As a historical fact, Finland has not had any colonies, but nevertheless as a well-off Northern country has been part of the general colonisation project. Moreover, the Finnish actors conceived of the colonial legacy in their relationship with Tanzanian partners not in terms of being a Finn, but merely in terms of being a *mzungu*⁵⁹ in the eyes of their Tanzanian partners.

18, 58. SH14: (...) *I can see some kind of colonial mentality, unfortunately, from both sides. Especially I feel it from the Tanzanians, they think that "Now here comes a white man, a donor", and, to put it a bit provocative way," whom we*

⁵⁹ *Mzungu* in Kiswahili refers to white person in general and it is very commonly used also in reference to Northern partners in NGO co-operation. As Eriksoon Baaz (2005, 69–70) has argued, in the use of Tanzanian NGOs the word *mzungu* bears different meaning. In some cases *mzungu* is seen as superior problems solver and able to do everything, in other occasions *mzungus* are seen as more undesirable part of the development co-operation.

have to bow down to, so that we could benefit somehow from him, and that we would not want to be put at a disadvantage” (...) And on the other hand, we still have a kind of colonial master attitude. That annoys me a lot. It disturbs me even more when I realise that I also think that way. How is it possible that I still have not learned to avoid it?

For the Finnish people the institutional framework of development co-operation might give a feeling of being “an expert of every field” and especially during the first visits to Tanzania “knowing how every problem should be solved”, as uttered by some of the interviewees. The colonial attitude was seen as conceptualising the Tanzanian as “poor and ignorant” that creates feelings of “care” and power to do whatever is seen to be the best for those “poor fellows who cannot take the initiative themselves”. In relation to Tanzanians it was reflected that there seemed to be difficulties in getting rid of the attitude of obeying orders and relying on the *mzungus* in the framework of the projects. The change in these attitudes and the practice was seen as an important challenge of change, but also difficult to achieve.

4.6 Conclusion: Multiple trajectories and tensions

The analysis of interview accounts of Finnish actors aimed at revealing the challenges of change and learning along different developmental trajectories reflected by Finnish actors. Four main developmental trajectories of change relevant to actors were identified: 1) a trajectory of Finnish voluntary organisations that engaged in development co-operation; 2) the individual development and learning of Finnish actors who took part in development co-operation; 3) the emergence of new kind of partners, NGOs, to work with in Tanzania, and 4) the change in practices of co-operation towards partnership.

Each of these trajectories poses a different kind of learning challenge. In every trajectory there are different kinds of “new” lessons to be learned and created. Starting a development co-operation project was quite a huge step for the small, Finnish voluntary organisations. Working in a societal and cultural environment different from the Finnish context and entering into the institutional system of development co-operation with its specific rhetoric and management systems has posed a significant learning challenge for the organisations involved. Still the management models typical to development co-operation were perceived as bureaucratic and time-consuming hindrances for the real co-operation when understood to be mainly as interaction between people and giving help.

The importance of the possibilities to travel and interact with other cultures offered by the development co-operation was emphasised. In every project the

developmental trajectory of individual actors played an important role. The individuals gradually learned about Tanzanian culture and the experience of being in Africa provided seeds for change in their personal world views and changes in attitudes of Finnish actors and behaviour in Finland.

The emergence of new organisational partners created an additional challenge for change. The traditional way of working with local officials and through personal networks was challenged by the NGOs that had their own agendas and created a need for more profound negotiation about the contents of the projects. The trajectory of changing the ways of planning and implementing projects was one of the more critical ones during the time of the interviews. The old way of planning the projects mostly by a Finnish individual based on his or her professional expertise in certain areas was challenged by the need for more joint and open planning with the Tanzanian partners.

Even if the trajectories of change and challenges for learning were reflected by the actors the interviews also manifested some tensions that seemed to be quite pertinent and experienced as possible hindrance to change. The background of Finnish organisations in the traditions of civic education and general solidarity movement collided with the specific new environment and the difficulty of identifying the practical problems that could be solved by the co-operation was likely to result into the old way of import of Finnish models to Tanzania. Additionally the way of building the co-operation in forms of projects as required by the official funding system created tension between the more informal, continuous and personal way of working and the official “project work”.

At the individual level, the actors struggled with the tension whether the co-operation emerged from and continued on the basis of selfish interests of travelling, getting new experiences and self-realization or from more altruistic interests of helping and solving problems in Tanzania. The tension in relation to the new partners in Tanzania was between perceiving these organisations as reliable partners committed to societal development and considering them not reliable and mostly individual and opportunistic efforts to get access to Finnish donor money.

In this chapter I analysed the different challenges of change and tensions as perceived by the Finnish actors. In the following chapters I shall analyse how these challenges and tension are shown in the actual practices of co-operation projects realised in co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs in Morogoro.

5 Inclusions, exclusions and tensions in the evolving object of a project

5.1 Researching an evolving object in different phases of the project

Evolving object in different phases of the project

In this chapter the analysis proceeds from looking at the accounts of the Finnish actors to the actual object-construction in an NGO development co-operation project aiming at improving the standard of living of retired professionals. As shown in the previous chapter two “new” dimensions in the Finnish development co-operation in Morogoro were identified as a) the emerging new partners – the Tanzanian NGOs – and, b) the new ways of co-operation and joint planning between Finnish and Tanzanian actors. The project under investigation in this chapter is one of the first Finnish projects in Morogoro in which a local NGO was a partner. Moreover, the project included also explicit emphasis on joint planning between the representatives of the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs.

This chapter investigates the object of development co-operation in the framework of a particular project. The construction and change of the “*horizon of possible goals and actions*” (Engeström 1999c, 65) is examined in the interaction of partners in different phases of the project. The object of the co-operation is something that brings together different objects of various actors holding different histories. The object of co-operation is under continuous construction, but in the process of the project there are moments of more dynamic negotiations as well as moments of stabilisation. In such moments of stabilisation the negotiated object emerges usually in an artefactual or material form – for example a plan, an agreement, an arranged training and finally some changes in the lives of the intended beneficiaries. These materialisations of the object present at times the assumed agreement and consensus between the partners. However, these moments of stabilisation and consensus, recognition of an emerging shared object might be quite temporal (Engeström, Engeström, and Vähäaho 1999). During the process of co-

operation the negotiation never ends, the stabilised object, usually in the form of an achieved agreement, is opened up again and dynamically transformed. There are continuously diverse points of view toward the object and every new actor involved in the project brings new perceptions into the object construction.

The analysis focused on the longitudinal, temporal evolving of the object of co-operation during three years. The detailed analysis is defined in the phases of planning and implementation. The main focus of the analysis is on the aspect of “*what*” in the negotiations; what is planned? what is implemented? Furthermore, how does this *what* change along the part of project trajectory that is under investigation? To explore the dynamic of change in the object I have paid special attention to the emerging tension in the evolving object. A tension is defined as diverse, usually opposing points of views on the aspect of “*what*” emerging in the negotiations and practice

Additionally, I have explored what kinds of topics were included in or excluded from the project. The construction of a shared object of co-operation was defined as a movement from initial ideas towards more concrete shared view. This kind of achieving an agreement might also mean including new elements in the constructed object. Accordingly, in negotiations some suggestions are left out. Therefore in addition to tensions I note inclusions and exclusions in negotiating a shared object.

Any development co-operation tends to be described in terms of a project cycle that contains the phases of initial idea building, planning, implementing and evaluation (Tvedt 1998). According to managerial thinking these phases follow each other – after the planning phase the plan is implemented, after the implementation the activities implemented are evaluated. This chapter shows that in practice these phases intertwine and might not be as rationally coherent as proposed by the ideal model. However, I have organised my analysis on the basis of different phases. The “*planning phase*”, “*implementation phase*” and “*evaluation*” are defined following the actors’ definition. Planning is what the actors themselves called planning; evaluation is what was called evaluation.

Improving the standard of living of retired professionals

In Tanzania the pension paid by the government is small or nonexistent. The usual practice of rewarding retirement from government service is a one-time payment of a certain amount of terminal benefits and moving costs back to former employee’s home village. After that, earning a living is a matter of farming food crops and engaging in small businesses. Until 1999 the age of retirement was 50 years, however in 2000 it was increased to 55. At that age, the retired professionals usually still have school-age children and thus school-fees to pay for and other

members of the extended family to take care of. Assuming that the retiring official has not already during his career as a civil servant established a profitable business, the economic situation of the household will probably weaken drastically after retirement. This problematic situation was one of the starting points in the project analysed.

The Finnish NGO (hereafter FIGO) is a well-established, large and wealthy organisation occupied with the welfare of the aged in Finland. On the other hand, the Tanzanian NGO (hereafter TAGO) is a small organisation established in Morogoro in 1998 by a small group of retired professionals in order to discuss the difficulties in their life. This first joint project of these organisations aims at improving the standard of living of retired professionals in Morogoro.

The initial idea building both in Tanzania and in Finland had been separately taking place for years, but it was in 1998 that the NGOs came into contact with each other. In 1999 joint planning meetings were arranged, in 2000 two training courses were arranged and after the training, an evaluation was conducted. (see Figure 4). Evaluation in this case did not mean the standard view of external evaluation made after the project has ended, but the evaluation was supposed to begin straight after the first training courses were over and was to be conducted by the members of the TAGO themselves.

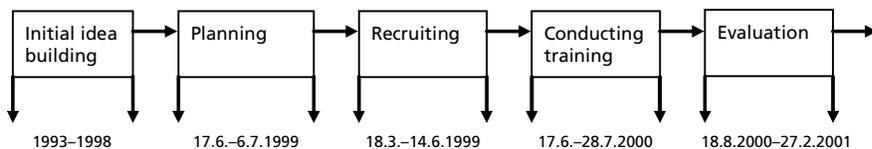


Figure 4. Project of retraining retired professional as a time-line

I observed the project in 1999–2001 both in Finland and in Tanzania. The main emphasis in my data is the meetings between the Finnish and Tanzanian partners and the interviews made with both the Finnish and Tanzanian participants in planning, co-ordination and evaluation groups, representatives of the training institutions that conducted the training and some of the training participants (the data is presented in Table 8). In this chapter I concentrate on the analysis of the planning and implementation phase.

Table 8. The Data on the "Retraining retired professionals" project

Phase of the project	Interviews	Meetings	Other data
Initial idea-building 1993–1998	2 (2F)	–	Documents and correspondence
Planning 1999 June–July	8 (2F) (6T)	6 (6T)	Documents and correspondence
Implementing 2000 March–July	11 (3F) (8T)	30 (30T)	Participants' course diary Field notes
Evaluating 2000–2001 August–February	12 (12T)	4 (1F) (3T)	Documents and correspondence

All the interview material has been transcribed. All the meetings were not fully transcribed. They were first listened to and content-logs of the meetings were produced. I fully transcribed six meetings from the planning phase. The meetings from the implementation phase were partly transcribed based on the relevance of the discussions. Since the themes of the discussions were rich and plenty selection had to be made, I proceeded in the following way. The meetings in the planning phase were fully analysed in detail and different aspects of the object of co-operation were identified on the basis of the analysis. The meetings and other data during the implementation phases were then reviewed on the basis of the results of the analysis of the planning phase. The re-mergence and forms of the tensions identified in planning were explored from the data from the implementation phase. I shall give some excerpts of both negotiation and documentation data to illustrate my analysis of the object construction process. In what follows I shall proceed into the analysis of selected phases of the project – initial idea building, planning and implementing. The depiction of each phase I will concentrate on the tensions, inclusions and exclusions of the object. All the names used in the text are pseudonyms.

5.2 Idea building: Initial ideas in Finland and in Tanzania

The initial ideas for what was to become a joint project emerged separately in Finland and Tanzania. The personal experience of Matt, the future project co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO, on Tanzania dates back to the early years of the 1990s. Having had long career in civic education and social work he visited Tanzania in 1993 on a study tour. During that trip he came up with an idea of initiating a project which would support elderly people in Tanzania and at the same time support the Tanzanian Folk Development Colleges. After the trip he had made a proposal to a large Finnish NGO for starting such a project but it was not approved at that

time. Years later, in 1998, the idea aroused again when he heard about a suitable partner organisation in Tanzania. He contacted an old acquaintance who held a position in FIGO's board and together they worked out a proposal which was approved in FIGO and development co-operation funding for planning was applied for from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This proposal defined the content of the proposed project as a 4–6 week training project:

The project would include two training courses held two consecutive summers in Morogoro Region. Each course would give practical training to forty-five retired professionals in some basic skills related to gardening, animal husbandry, and handicrafts. These are skills that they could use to get started in the production of goods and services for direct selling, or for their own subsistence needs.

(Project proposal from Matt to FIGO, October 1998).

The Finnish NGO has a long tradition and established position in the Finnish welfare sector, especially in the welfare of the aged. In 1999 it celebrated its 50th anniversary. Simultaneously, 1999 was the international Year of the Aged. When receiving the project proposal and discussing it the organisation decided that it would be good to “try something new to celebrate” and agreed to start the pilot project in Morogoro. This represented a new activity for FIGO since the organisation had not been involved in development co-operation before. This “newness” was also manifested in the lack of any institutionalised forms for administrating such projects. The actual responsibility for the project was in the hands of the coordinator and his acquaintance.

Independently of the ideas occurring in Finland there were some ideas initiated in a small Tanzanian NGO. TAGO is a small non-governmental organisation which was founded in 1998 by some individual retired professionals. The founding members were persons who had recently retired from government service holding academic education. Among the founding members there were for example a former planning officer, a former university lecturer and a former veterinarian. They had started some small businesses after retirement. They had also gradually met while playing darts in a certain bar in the centre of Morogoro town. In these meetings the problems of economic hardship and loneliness of retired people in Morogoro had been brought up leading gradually to activities of counselling of other retired professionals and gradually into founding an NGO.

In the process of the registration with the Registrar there were not enough individual retired professionals interested in being founder members to fill the member requirements (that was mainly because the registration involved costs) and some of the family members of the individual were invited as well. The organisation produced a constitution and a five year action plan which describe the anticipated

actions to address the problems of retired people. After the registration and action plans the NGO started to look for a donor in order to get some funding for the activities of the organisation. A local college supported the counselling sessions by providing a classroom for conducting counselling. The organisation was also allotted a piece of land by local authorities in order to start joint farming. Additionally, the organisation contacted the local office of Finnish Service Center for Development Co-operation, KEPA, in order to make contact with Finnish NGOs.

TAGO took part in a Logical Framework Workshop in 1998 arranged by a Finnish Umbrella organisation Uhusiano in Morogoro. The KEPA liaison office helped with the arrangements and also selected some NGO-project from Morogoro to be used as examples in the training. TAGO was selected as one of these examples and a few people from the TAGO executive committee participated in training. During the training TAGO representative produced a problem tree (see Figure 5) and a solution tree.

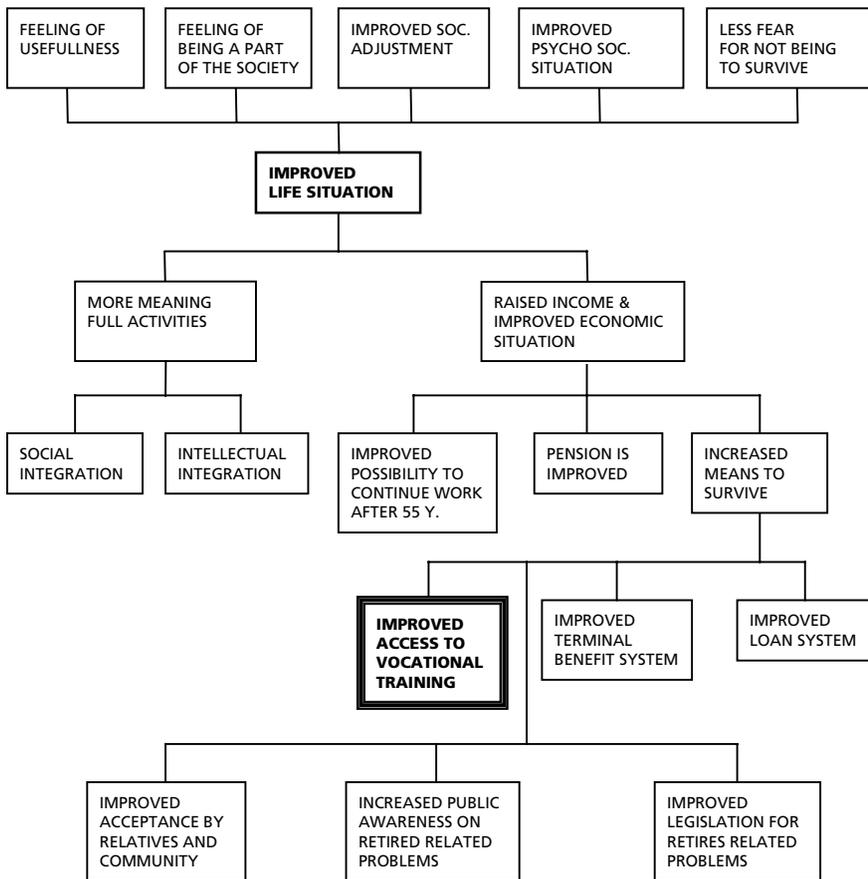


Figure 5. The problem tree produced by TAGO in training seminar in 1998 given to FIGO

The project proposal of TAGO was delivered to the liaison officer of the Finnish Service for Development Co-Operation (KEPA) in order to be sent to Finland and to search for potential donors for the actions. The proposal was given to a Finnish activist in Uhusiano who knew the future co-ordinator and had heard about the initial plans for training elderly people. The proposal included a problem tree that was produced by the TAGO in a workshop in 1998. The problem tree mentioned the problem of lack of training as one of the sub-problems in the life of retired professionals. This problem was then considered as matching with the idea of training project initiated by the future co-ordinator who then, through KEPA, contacted TAGO and expressed the desire to start co-operation with it. For KEPA then, this project presented a case of a “new kind of co-operation” and an example of the role of KEPA in finding NGO-partners.

I am glad that our efforts to find a partner for TAGO are bearing some fruits that we could share with all of Tanzania and Africa”

(KEPA liaison officer in his speech at the launch of the plan 6.7.1999).

Thus, when entering the so-called joint planning phase with arranged planning sessions much planning work had already been done both in Finland and in Tanzania. Actually, in a message dated 13th March 1999 from TAGO to FIGO, the first direct contact between the partners was made, just two and half months before the planning sessions. Before that the communication had been mediated by a KEPA liaison officer and a programme officer. In the sense of the content of the project, as the above description shows there were two basic manifestations of the object when the searching for an object of co-operation between these organisations was about to begin (see Table 9).

Table 9. The object in the initial idea building phase

Dimension of object	FIGO's initial plan	TAGO's constitution
Possible contents of the project	Two training courses in practical skills of gardening, animal husbandry, one-man business and handicrafts	Promoting interaction, offering counselling, conduct research, workshops and training, income generating projects, establishing a credit fund, to mobilise funds and provide consultancy
Beneficiary group	45 retired professionals	The members of the organisation
Problems in the life of beneficiaries	Pension inadequate, income has to be searched from the informal market where new skills are needed	For example redeployment, social self-adjustment, health problems and social and intellectual isolation

The plan produced in Finland included more specific ideas about the content of the potential joint project being a retraining project for 45 retired professionals whose main problem was an inadequate income. The more open object of TAGO entailed diverse kinds of activities for the benefit of the members of the organisations who suffered from different problems. An interesting difference here is the definition of the category of “retired professional”. For TAGO, the definition is related to the membership in organisations:

“The retired professionals group in the context of this constitution includes professionals about to retire, retirees and older folks fulfilling the conditions for membership admission as hereinafter indicated” (Constitution of TAGO, 3).

Moreover there are two different categories of members of interest: those of *founder members* who have paid their fees before registration of the organisation and are members for life and *incoming members* who are supposed to be retired and deliver a formal application to join the organisation after having paid their registration and subscription fees (Constitution of TAGO 1998, 4). These distinctions became important in the discussions at a later phase.

To conclude, at the moment when the joint planning sessions between FIGO and TAGO began it seems that there already existed a project of “retraining retired professionals” for FIGO in which TAGO was a suitable *local partner*. For TAGO however, there was a more open agenda of discussing the support for TAGO’s diverse activities, legitimised by the log frame analysis, to which FIGO was seen as a potential *donor for the organisation*. As stated in the letter to TAGO in March 1999, two and half months before the planning meetings:

After the KEPA-sponsored seminar, last year in Morogoro, TAGO prepared its log-frame plan, a copy of which was sent to you via Mrs Gille in November 1998. During our planning sessions, and in light of the said TAGO plan, we expect to have an opportunity to indicate more priority areas” (Letter from TAGO to Matt, March 13, 1999).

This more open orientation was evident even though the correspondence from FIGO very clearly indicated that they would like to plan a training project to be implemented with TAGO.

5.3 Planning phase: Defining the contents and beneficiaries of the project

The joint planning meetings between FIGO and TAGO were arranged in June-July 1999. In order to make this planning possible the co-ordinator from FIGO

travelled to Tanzania and was accompanied a week later by a representative of FIGO – the same acquaintance he had contacted earlier in order to “sell” the project idea to FIGO. The planning period started with a small half-day seminar to which some of the members of TAGO had been invited. The seminar was guided by the Finnish co-ordinator who facilitated a lot of group works conducted following 14 questions formulated by the Finnish co-ordinator. The questions asked by the co-ordinator addressed the following issues: what kinds of goods and services do they need in the life of retired professionals; what kinds of products and services do they produce themselves at the moment, and what kinds of skills might be achieved by short term-training in order to improve the income?. The last question asked was:

What is your wildest dream about how you might improve your economic situation after retirement. What kind of short-term training could be the first step in fulfilling that dream?

(Workshop questionnaire, 17th June 1999).

The questions resulted in lists of answers provided by the eight groups of retired professionals participating in the exercise. These results of the one-day seminar were meant to function as a basis for the planning that was performed by a planning group which consisted of two representatives of FIGO, two members of the executive committee of TAGO, two ordinary members of TAGO and one member of UNGO, the umbrella organisation of local non-governmental organisations. UNGO was invited to be a partner in the project by FIGO.

Other new actors being in touch with the projects were the different Tanzanian officials on the Ministry and Regional level who the Finnish co-ordinator visited in order to tell about the project. These officials were not however very tightly enrolled in the projects. At the end of the planning process also the potential training institutions were involved. They were visited and asked to tender for providing the training facilities the following year. In the following, I shall go into deeper analysis of the planning meetings.

Planning in action: Dynamics of object-construction

Under investigation here are the seven planning meetings where the representatives FIGO and TAGO for the first time discussed the project. The meetings were recorded and transcribed.⁶⁰ First an analysis of the contents of the meeting was

⁶⁰ The recording of the meeting 28th June failed and the recording in the meeting of 30th June was interrupted. I was not able to participate in the meetings since I was observing another project in a village.

made in order to determine what kinds of topics were covered in the meetings. The analysis was based on the detailed content analysis of each speech turn. These specific contents were then categorised in more general topics – such as opening (including contents such as greetings, weather, and absence of some members). The results of this analysis are shown in Table 10. The topical analysis gives an overall picture of the topics discussed during the planning process. It can be observed that the planning started by discussing the contents of training, followed by identification of potential training institutions and the selection criteria for the participants and ended up with commenting on the draft of a project agreement and evaluating the planning process itself.

Table 10. Thematic contents in the planning meetings

P1 18.6.1999	P2 23.6.1999	P3 24.6.1999	28.6.1999	P4 30.6.1999	P5 1.7.1999	P6 6.7.1999
1. Planning time-table	1. Opening	1. Opening	Data missing	1. Opening	1. Eric's budget	1. Opening
2. Public presentation of the plan	2. Presenting FIGO's activities	2. Selection criteria for course participants		2. Accepting the plan in organisations	2. Reading draft agreement	2. Agreement and evaluation
3. Planning budget	3. Planning process	3. Allowance for participants in training		3. Contents of the training course	3. Allowances for planning group	3. Closing
4. <i>Task of the day</i>	4. <i>Task of the day</i>	4. Micro-credit component		4. Number of participants	4. Draft agreement	
5. Contents of training	5. Writing the answers and miscellaneous	5. Miscellaneous		<i>Recording interrupted</i>	5. Giving presents and closing	
6. Number of participants	6. Training institutions	6. Ways of announcing the training for public		<i>Representative of TAGO Eric presents a budget</i>		
7. Selection criteria for participants	7. Training interest of retired professionals	7. Finishing and goodbyes		<i>proposal that creates a dispute</i>		
8. Contents of training	8. Training practicalities					
9. Time-table and goodbyes	9. Micro-credit component					
	10. Finishing and goodbyes					

Second, a more detailed content analysis of the content of the speech in the meetings was made simply by asking in practical terms *what is talked about*. The more detailed analysis resulted in 209 different practical contents touched upon. Based on the analysis of the contents covered in the negotiations four aspects of negotiated object of co-operation between these two organisations were found. The object of co-operation, “the horizon of possible goals and actions” (Engeström 1999b, 65) in this project was discussed in diverse aspects. The shared object in most explicit terms included the negotiation about the content of the potential training. A bit fuzzier definition of the potentially-shared object opened the object of co-operation in the sense of “what kind of project it is we are going to do here?”. In addition to the notion of object defining to the contents of the project, the object might be understood as the group of beneficiaries the life of whom the project aims to have impact on and without whom whatever project would be impossible (cf. patient). And even more, there should be some “development” problems in the lives of these beneficiaries, the problems the solving of which the impact of the project would accomplish. Thus, the negotiations and the definitions of object of co-operation comprised at least four dimensions:

1. Content of training course
2. Content of the entire co-operation project between the organisations
3. Potential participants of the training course
4. The life of retired professionals

In what follows, the evolution of the content of each of these aspects as emerged in the planning negotiations is depicted. In each of these aspects the inherent dynamics, that is the tensions, inclusions and exclusions during the micro-cycle of planning negotiations are analysed.⁶¹

Content of the training course: Adding organisational skills

The planning meetings started by defining the possible contents of training. During the first meeting on 18th June 1999 the participants individually listed their preferences for the contents and the contents of the lists were tabulated. In the second meeting on 23rd June the main task was to select the training institutions where the training would be conducted. In this meeting, the contents of training were again discussed in the sense of training interests of the participants which in

⁶¹ In the given quotation the number P1-P6 refer to the transcribed meetings and the number following is the number of speech turn quoted. For example the indication P1, 313, Christina refers to the meeting of 24th June, speech turn 313 uttered by Christina. All the names used are pseudonyms.

turn would affect the selection of the training institutions. The contents of training were again discussed in the fifth meeting on 30th June where Matt presents summary of previous discussions. In the last two meetings the contents of the training were not touched upon again except that they were mentioned in reading the draft agreement in the meeting of 1st July.

In the meeting of June the definition of the possible contents of the training was explicated in the task put forward by the co-ordinator:

P1, 270. MATT: *Okay, first as individuals I want you to do this task and as soon as you are ready, then we make the round. I want you to make a list of all the different kinds of training, that you think could possibly be included in a four-week training course for retired professionals (...) that could be useful for some retired professionals to help them to improve their difficult economic situation.*

This task of individual listing resulted first in 45 listed items that were later reduced to 20 items by listing individually four priority subjects. These lists included the following subjects proposed:

Table 11. Suggestions for the contents of the training , 18.6.1999

Elias P1, 323	Frank P1, 321	Eric P1, 319	Sebastian P1, 317	Christina P1, 313
<i>Social welfare affairs and counselling</i> Management and leadership Agricultural livestock Handicraft	Small business Dairy cattle Beekeeping Food processing	<i>Occupational counselling</i> Computer skills Small business management skills Vocational skills on crop farming Animal husbandry	Computer programmes. Small business management Food production Mechanics	<i>Occupational counselling skills</i> Project planning and management Financial management Dairy cattle and poultry keeping

The contents of these lists in turn were tabulated by frequency resulting in the list of a) improved farming practices, b) small business and occupational counselling, c) computer together with project planning and mechanics and d) mechanics, handicraft and leadership (Matt P1, 519, 521,525). Interestingly, the lists that answered the question posed included in addition to the skills on farming, animal husbandry and small-scale business that might be directly applicable to the life of whoever retired professional also the subjects of computer skills (owning a computer is not at all common among the retired professionals), occupational counselling and project planning and management. The emergence of these subjects in the lists implied merely, not the point of view and needs of the “retired profession-

als” in general, but the view of the organisation in particular. In this meeting, these lists were left to further consideration.

In the meeting of 23rd June the explicit task was that of proposing possible training institutions in which the training could possibly be conducted. The content of the training was discussed in relation to these institutions – the participants were asked to reflect on which subjects could be taught in which institutions. The explicit task of the meeting was presented as follows:

“You choose the two centres you think would be best for the subjects, that you think should be in this yet, we haven’t made the final decision on these subjects yet, and then think which four subjects that could be important for our retired professionals could best be taught and learned at that centre”. (Matt, P2, 130).

The questions were again answered in written lists by the participants the content of which is shown in following table:

Table 12. Suggestions for the contents of training, meeting of 23.6.1999

Elias P2, 214,217,219	Frank P2, 225	Eric P2, 207	Sebastian P2, 211, 213, 214	Christina P2, 203, 205
Computer. Agriculture Small scale business Handicraft	Livestock Agriculture.	<i>Occupational counselling</i> Computer skills. Project planning, monitoring and evaluation Business manage- ment skills Dairy farming Food production Handicraft Piggery and poultry	Computer studies Animal husbandry Horticulture Maize production Poultry keeping Small business Masonry Motor vehicle mechanics	Project management Computer skills Farming Dairy cattle Poultry Horticulture Marketing skills

In this meeting the occupational counselling was mentioned only in one list where as computer skills were now mentioned in three and project management in two lists. The contents were not much discussed in this meeting because after reading out the lists the discussion turned to the possible credit facility and the meeting ended after that discussion.

For the meeting of 30th June Matt had prepared a summary about the discussion on the contents of the training so far. In his list there were: poultry raising, milk production, special gardening practices, one-man business practices, computers and handicraft. Further he states:

P4, 73. MATT: (...) *George and I were thinking about possible, what the final contents of a course could be, in a one form or another, something about these things, ok, and we put these under the list of subjects which are somehow ways of training individual retired professionals. Ok. Then we have an additional training area, which we want to put into next year's training programme, and we call it organisational training, and we want to put an input, a small input into next year's course, to help each of your organisations become a better organisation.*

According to Matt (P4, 73), the organisational training should include *effective group work, communication by email and fax and computer skills*. The training in computer skills was also related to a promise that maybe FIGO could deliver used computers to TAGO. Additionally Matt proposed (P4, 81, 83) that training on fundraising could be included in the course as well as training in *biogas* production, because they have met somebody whose NGO was involved with it. George also (P4, 88) proposes that *goat cheese* production could be included, but this proposal is turned down since eating cheese is not common in Tanzanian culture. Eric (P4, 105) in his turn asks what happened to counselling proposed in the previous lists. Matt explains that there would not be a need to give training in counselling to all the participants, since: *"I think that your organisation needs two or three professional counsellors to provide an organisational service to your members, but I can't imagine that forty- five participants would need training in counselling"* (Matt P4, 110). No final decision on the contents of the training was made either in this meeting. The discussion continued with the presentation of tentative budget by Eric resulting in a conflict and the end of the meeting.⁶²

In the meeting of 1st July Matt (P5, 56) tells about the letter he has delivered to the potential training institutions to get the tenders on implementing the training and gives a draft of an agreement to be read by the participants. In the draft agreement the contents of the training were listed in following way:

The course will include instruction in the following areas:

- 1) Small scale farming/gardening for home use and sale
 - poultry raising
 - milk and meat production
 - special gardening practices
 - biogas production

⁶² The data from this meeting is incomplete since the presentation of the budget resulted in a dispute and the recording, made by one of the Finnish representatives was interrupted. Unfortunately during this meeting was observing events in another project in the village of Kambala I was later told about the dispute by the co-ordinator of FIGO.

- 2) Handicrafts and carpentry
- 3) One-man business practices and skills
- 4) Skills needed in NGO activities
 - group work within an NGO
 - computer skills for use in NGO work
 - training in developing fund raising

(Project agreement draft, 1st July 1999)

What is interesting in the description of the content of the project is that the idea of adding the biogas production, not mentioned in the lists of the Tanzanian participants, but proposed by the Finnish representative in the previous meeting, was now explicitly in the description of the contents of the training. The extending of content of training towards also the organisational training, the seeds of which were seen in the lists of Tanzanian participants in the first meetings, is evident, but the content of the training has been transformed from the project management suggested by the Tanzanian participants into group work skills and money rising. Training in computer skills was put under the heading of organisational activities.

During the planning process, in the sense of defining the content of training there were not many disputes, nor opposing points of view uttered, and thus no particularly strong tension can be identified in the object. What happened during the process was merely an extension of the object of the co-operation in the sense of content of training from training of useful skills for retired professionals to cover also training of skills for acting in NGOs. Additionally, the content of counselling skills that were related to the previous activities of TAGO was left out.

The questions of allowance: Financial benefits of participating in training

Related to the content of training course a parallel new topic of discussion was raised: the potential allowances to be paid to the participants. As mentioned above the contents of the training did not create a lot of disputes. Interestingly, there was more debate on the practical arrangements of the training, especially the question whether the training participants should be paid allowances during the training. The issue was first brought up in the meeting of 24th June and it was justified for different reasons: that it was a Tanzanian habit (P3, Sebastian, 370), because the salaries are so little the officials are used to getting part of their income in the form of allowances (P3, Sebastian, 384), the situation being even worse for the retired professionals whose income came in bit and pieces.

P3, 384. SEBASTIAN: *If they leave their family alone and they themselves go somewhere to acquire a skill, new knowledge. But people don't look at the way you are looking at, that they gain in the long run; but they think of the immediate situation*

On the other hand it was stressed that the idea of paying for participating in the training would be strange for the Finnish people, who would rather think that the participants should be paying for the training they receive (P3, Matt, 383). The question of allowance was also discussed in the meeting of 1st July while reading the draft of the project agreement. In the agreement it was stated that the participants would be paid an allowance of 10 000 Tsh for the period of six weeks. The amount was perceived to be too little for an allowance and it was decided to call it incidental expenses (P5, Matt 243). This small addition to the training exemplifies another extension in the object of co-operation in the sense of training. The issue of charging a training fee was not mentioned in the initial proposal by Matt in 1998, but it was brought into discussion. However, instead of deciding to charge participants a training fee, the planning team reached a consensus on paying a small amount of incidental money for the participants to continue the allowance-tradition of national government and foreign NGOs. As a result, the project agreements states:

FIGO's economic responsibility will cover: (...) to pay each participant a 10 000 Tsh allowance in two instalments during the six-week period to cover incidental course expenses (project agreement draft 1st July 1999).

The debate about the allowance exemplified a tension between the kind of short-term financial benefit and skills improvement as objects of co-operation.

Content of the project: Training or micro-credit?

The planning task as defined by the Finnish co-ordinator in the beginning of the planning process was to plan *a training project*. Despite this definition of the task the content of the project was challenged in the planning meetings. Most importantly, the TAGO representatives suggested adding a micro-credit component in the project. This idea was first briefly presented in the meeting of 23rd June. The main argument for adding the credit facility was that the credit would allow the skills learned in the training to be put into practice (Sebastian P2, 330) since for starting something new initial capital (Christina P2, 440) is needed and the it is difficult to get a loan from a bank (Christina P2, 442). A justification for including the credit facility in this particular project was given by stating that the credit

facility “*was in the problem tree*” (P2, Sebastian 441) that was delivered to FIGO for the basis of shared planning discussions.

The topic of potential credit facility was brought again into discussion in the following meeting of 24th June. A move from the topic of allowance into the topic of micro-credit was made by Sebastian in a turn in which he depicted the dilemma of perception of training as valuable as such versus the immediate financial benefits that the allowance would give to the participants. The micro-credit would be an additional way of satisfying the needs for economic inputs:

P3, 403. SEBASTIAN: *Me and you, we understand the importance of training, but there are situations whereby you really look very closely at the immediate benefits you are supposed to gain. Okay? For example, if you say, I give you a course to acquire a particular skill, at your age, I will look into a different arrangement, for example to establish a credit system, credit facility for example that if you acquire a particular skill, you can now come and apply for a particular credit facility to use that particular skill in this project, identified to be suitable for your skill, this is a current move.*

This initiative developed into a long discussion in which the arguments for adding the micro-credit component were again related to the quest for initial capital needed for starting something new (Eric P3, 425; Frank P3, 426; Sebastian P3, 432). This argument resulted in a long example of practical calculation of the costs of starting a small-scaled poultry business (P3, 444-493). Additional arguments included the references to other NGOs that are provide credit facilities in Morogoro, although retired professionals are not within their target groups (Sebastian P3, 403; Christina P3, 513). The idea of adding the credit facility in the project was also backed with the idea that there would not be participants in the course without the credit facility (Sebastian P3, 414) and that the project would be doomed to failure without the credit facility (Sebastian P3, 432).

P3, 423, ERIC: *This project should be retired professionals’ problem solving, and if it is not then it is a waste of resources. You are getting skills; those skills should be put into practice so that you can help solve the problem you have. Now suppose you are trained for four to five weeks, you come back, you are still poor. You have skills of course, it is something, but the real problem is that you can’t apply those skills unless you have the initial capital to initiate a project.*

Arguments against adding the credit facility included the repeated statement that the working tool of the project “*is training without a credit facility*” (Matt P3, 407; 409; 416; 437; 514). There was also an argument that not all the subjects taught

in the training course would require large investments (P3, Matt 407) and that the applicants themselves should consider this before applying for the course (Matt, P3, 554; 556). The idea of a credit facility was also considered strange, since “*in Finland you would not assume that the people who gave you the course would give also the money to get started*” (Matt P3, 570). The arguments against adding the credit facility included also the statements that FIGO is not a bank, that the Finnish representatives were not given authority to go beyond the training framework and that the credit facility was beyond the expertise of FIGOs representatives who had their background in adult education (George P3, 535; Matt P3, 429; Matt P3, 532; 554). The connection with the problem tree provided was acknowledged but it was stated that “*this was not the thing that was selected from the problem tree*” (Matt P3, 585).

Towards the end of the discussion two propositions to solve the problem were made. One proposition suggested to putting the credit facility within the given budget by proposing that the number of participants in training should be reduced and the remained money would be used for the small credits (Christina P3, 501, 523). This proposition did not lead in more elaboration like the second proposition of trying to find another NGO in Finland that would be interested in adding the micro-credit component to the project (Sebastian P3, 551; Christina P3, 574) that led to agreement that the Finns would ask around in Finland about possible partners.

However, after the meeting of the 24th of June the issue of adding a credit facility was not discussed during the planning sessions. In that sense, in the level of the content of the whole project there was no expansion in the direction of the main tension explicated. Instead, a surprising inclusion happened into another direction. In the meeting of June 30th the representatives of the Finnish NGO introduced the idea of bringing some used computers from Finland:

P4, 81, MATT: *Ok, can I continue now. We think that there are some realistic possibilities that FIGO would be able to bring down two sets of computers, from one of the big industries from Finland that are replacing computers and putting away computer systems that are only two years old. There would be one for each organisational office, for the UNGO office and one for the TAGO office, to improve your organisation's work and members.*

Thus during the planning negotiations the main tension included in the object of co-operation in the aspect of the content of the whole co-operation project was that between training project vs. training and micro-credit. This tension led to the exclusion of the micro-credit facility. Additionally, there was an inclusion in the object adding the element of material capacity building – merely delivering used computers in the project. However, this element was however left out of the project agreement and was an informal activity outside the project.

Defining the beneficiaries: The selection criteria for training course participants

The object of co-operation in the sense of the potential participants of the training course was mainly discussed in relation to the selection criteria set for the participants. The selection criteria were discussed in the first meeting on June 18th and in the third meeting on June 24th. In the meeting of June 18th the discussion about the “target group” was opened by Eric (P1, 362, 364) who asked whether the target group should extend to the members of the organisation. Matt (P1, 371) stated that this is not the only criteria to be defined; there was also the *maximum age limit* to be decided and whether only retired or also people about to retire would be accepted. This led to the definition of different categories of possible beneficiaries: a) members who were registered and attended TAGO’s counselling sessions; b) members who were registered but had not attended TAGO activities; c) retired professionals in other NGOs, and d) other officials about to retire (Sebastian P1, 374;376). In the meeting of June 24th the theme about selection criteria and thus defining the beneficiary group was set as an explicit task for the planning group to consider first individually and then discussed in the planning group:

P3, 252, MATT: *And the question is this: If you alone were choosing the criteria for selecting the participants for the pilot course next year which criteria would you select?*

From the total of 20 criteria explicated in the five individual lists of the members of the planning team eight set the membership or the interest in membership in TAGO as an important selection criterion. Additionally two statements included the membership in other NGOs as selection criteria. Other criteria included residency in Morogoro (2), being retired (1), primary education (1), good health (1), having a ready project idea (1) and aged between 55–70 (1). These lists led to a discussion about the criteria and especially the importance of membership in TAGO or interest in membership in TAGO as selection criterion (turns 333–369).

Matt (P3, 333) questioned the membership criteria strongly advocated by Sebastian (P3, 310) and asked whether retired professionals not yet members in TAGO would be interested in joining the NGO if given an opportunity to participate in the training course.

P3, 336. ERIC: (...) *My understanding is that this project is going to be handled by TAGO ... and ... of course in collaboration with UNGO and FIGO and so forth, and **one** of the benefits we are offering to our members is the training opportunities, and it will be very unfair to leave out our active members for those people who have not even applied to join, we are talking about joining. People may decide to leave the NGO, because we are not taking care of their problems.*

The discussion about fairness of giving the priority to the members already joined TAGO continues. The main argument was that because contributing to the building up of an NGO is such a hard job it logic should be “*the first in, first served*” (Christina P3, 352). This principle was also related to the conceptualisation of NGOs in Tanzania. It is said that many people are reluctant to join NGOs before they can see any benefits from the membership, so it would be unfair to let people come and “*harvest the fruit the seed of which somebody else has put into soil*” (Christina P3, 354). This already seemed to be happening since many people had been asking for membership in TAGO after hearing that there was co-operation with a Finnish NGO: “*the influx that after hearing about FIGO being around, that they are here in Morogoro, the publicity of TAGO has increased (...) substantially, people are coming in numbers in our office, asking to join TAGO*” (Eric, P3, 365, 368). The discussion ends with stating that the priority should be given to the members but if there are not enough member applicants the possibility of participating will be offered also to other retired professionals. After that the discussion continued on the question of possible allowances to be paid to the participants.

What was important in this discussion of the selection criteria for the participants was that what proved to be of importance was not the definition of “*retired professional*” in terms of age or years preceding retirement or former employment, but the position of the potential applicants in relation to TAGO and to NGO membership. In the draft of the project agreement discussed at the meeting of July the 1st 1999 these two definitions were merged in the definition of the target group as follows:

*The target groups that will be invited to participate in the course are the **retired or soon to be retired professionals** living in and around Morogoro **who are interested in working with NGOs** to find ways of improving their own and each other's difficult economic situations.*

(Project agreement draft 1.7. 1999)

Founder members as beneficiaries: Using the executive members as trainers

There was another, not so explicit view of defining the beneficiary group. In some meetings attempts to include especially the executive members of the TAGO as special beneficiaries of the project, not in terms of being recipients of training, but as paid trainers in the training course. For example in the planning meeting June 18th, in the middle of the discussion of allowances the Tanzanians in began to discuss in Kiswahili:

P1, 236. CHRISTINA: *Bwana, kwanza tunaongea itatosha. Atasema ni wadudu ya porini, eeh, halafu tutakuwa kufaidi training, tutakuwa kufundishwa [Hey, first it is enough, he will think we are some small animals from the desert, and second, we will benefit from the training; we will be trained]*

P1, 237. ERIC: *Kufundisha [training]*

P1, 238. CHRISTINA: *Kufundiswa .. kufundisha na kufundiswa, kwa mfano masomo Eric anafundisha, mimi nitafundiswa, kama somo nitafundisha mimi, wewe utafundiswa, si ndiyo. [Be trained...train and be trained. For example in the lesson Eric will be training I will be trained, and in the lesson I will train, you will be trained. Isn't it so?]*

P1, 239. SEBASTIAN: *Kufundishana [Training each other].*

This point of view was briefly brought into the joint discussion in the meeting of June 23rd where a paper presented by Eric states: “Trainers should come from the Morogoro Retired Professionals group where possible”. This demand does not however result in a discussion and the selection of trainers is left to the training institutions.

The life of retired professionals: Solving problems?

The object in the sense of the problems and life of the retired professionals was mentioned a number of times, but it did not emerge as an object of joint discussion or negotiation. It seemed to be a taken-for-granted and was not explicitly challenged or discussed in further detail. Anyhow, under the different topics some accounts of the life of retirees problems emerged. In relation to the content of training it was mentioned a couple of times (P1, 46; P1, 302; P1, 400; P1, 407; P3, 497) that most of the retired professionals were engaged in the agriculture after retirement.

P1, 203. CHRISTINA: *I have an observation that whatever type of professionalism we have here in Tanzania, after retirement we go straight to farming, I mean most of the retired people go **straight to farming, which really comes first**, you might have a small shop in town, but the farming comes first, because it is the only backbone of activity in the town.*

Secondly, the lack of income and money in general was mentioned many times as an important feature of the life of retired professionals, especially in relation to the discussion of adding a micro-credit component (e.g., P2, 328; P3, 33). The income of the retired professionals was said to be collected from occasional petty businesses (P3, 386). Consequently, the problems of getting a loan from a bank due to lack of collaterals was discussed (P3, 506; P3, 547).

Thirdly, the life of the retired professionals was characterised by being a head of the family and thus being involved in the problems of their children and other relatives (P2, 316; P2, 348). In addition it was mentioned that the remaining life span is short, so retired professionals are seeking for short time solutions (P2, 340).

However, these few references made to the problems in life were scattered and a debated on or redefinition of the problems in the life of intended beneficiaries did no take place. It seems that once the problems were put on the problem tree in 1998, they should not be opened to discussion any more.

Outcome of the planning phase: Emergence of a shared object?

The planning meetings described above formed the so-called planning phase of the project. These planning sessions were the first encounters between the Finnish and Tanzanian organisation during the project trajectory. As such the planning meetings represented a transition from the initial, separate idea building into producing a joint plan on co-operation. What was of interest here was the detailed analysis of the negotiation of the object of co-operation between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs and especially the tensions, extensions and exclusions in the object moving from the initial ideas into materialised agreement on co-operation through a series of face-to-face encounters and negotiations.

Based on the detailed analysis of the data from the planning negotiation I found the following results. In the negotiations the object of co-operation between the Finnish and Tanzanian organisations was discussed at least in the aspects of a) content of training course; b) content of the project; c) beneficiaries of the project and d) the problems in the lives of the people the project was planned to be benefiting.

The planning negotiation resulted in a draft project agreement. After the dynamics of the planning negotiations one can ask whether a shared object of co-operation emerged between the organisations. This can be explored by comparing the initial ideas of both partners before the planning negotiation with the outcome explicated in the draft agreement (see Table 13).

Table 13. Transformation of the object of co-operation from initial idea building to the end of the planning

Aspect of the project	Initial proposal by Matt to FIGO in 1998	Proposals by TAGO in 1998	Project agreement resulting from planning negotiations in 1999
Content of training	Practical skills of gardening, animal husbandry, one-man business and handicrafts	–	Gardening, farming; handicrafts and carpentry; one man business skills; skills needed in NGOs
Content of the project	Two training courses	Promoting interaction, offering counselling, conduct research, workshops and training, income generating projects, establishing a credit fund, to mobilise funds and provide consultancy	Pilot project of training retired professionals in some basic skills
Beneficiaries of the projects	45 retired professionals.	The members of the organisation.	30–40 retired or soon to be retired professionals living in Morogoro, interested in working in NGOs
Life of the retired professionals	Pension inadequate, income has to be sought from the informal market where new skills are needed	For example redeployment, social self-adjustment, health problems and social and intellectual isolation	

Despite the number of planning negotiations there were no major transformations of the object of co-operation when compared with the initial project proposal written in Finland by Matt. On the other hand, comparing the more open proposal of TAGO and the co-operation agreement in terms of the object of co-operation we can observe that the wide horizon of possibilities was reduced into a concrete plan of implementing a training project. In comparison with Matt's initial plan the main content of the project remained the same, but there was an extension in the object to include the capacity building and organisational training in the project. As the agreement states:

The objective of this project is to plan, carry out, and evaluate a six-week pilot course that would give practical training to 30-40 retired, or soon-to be-retired, professionals. The aim of the training would be to enable the participants to start production of goods or services for their own subsistence needs, or for direct selling, in order to improve their difficult economic situation. A second objective is to provide some training that would develop skills in the participants that would enable them to work more effectively as members within an NGO organization

(Project agreement draft 1999).

The planning meetings resulted in a draft project agreement based on which a project plan and a funding application for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs were later produced by the Finnish actors. The application was delivered in September 1999 and then nothing happened in terms of the project. After six months when the approval of the project was received, the implementation began in March 2000. The project agreement, as a result of a series of planning negotiations, represented another materialisation of the object of co-operation. As depicted the object entailed some concrete inherent tensions although a kind of consensus, some degree of “sharedness” was achieved in the negotiations. However, the tensions continued to be manifested in the following phases of the project in different forms with different levels of importance.

5.4 Implementing: Re-emergence of the tensions in the object of co-operation

The implementation of the pilot project included two sub-phases. First, there was a recruiting phase in which the participants for the training course were selected. This selection was done by a recruiting team the members of which were two representatives of TAGO and two representatives of UNGO. No Finnish representatives, other than me, took part in the actions of the recruiting team. All four members were representatives of the executive committees of the respective Tanzanian organisations. The recruiting phase included eight meetings in which the selection criteria were discussed, the advertisements and the application forms for the course were produced and the applications were processed. As a result of advertising a total of 122 applications were received and 60 participants for the first courses were selected.

Second, the first pilot courses in June-July 2000 were conducted, first three weeks at a local Folk Development College and following three weeks at a local Livestock Training Institute. In each organisation there were different participants. At the first training institution subjects such as horticulture, building fuel-saving stoves, small-scale business, biogas production and handicraft were taught. At the

second institution the training contained farming, poultry, dairy cattle, small-scale business and computer skills. During the training period there were also representatives from Finland in Tanzania: the co-ordinator from the previous year, a new co-ordinator that was supposed to take over after the first three weeks, and additionally a representative from the FIGO board paid a short visit. The main actors in this phase were the staff of the Tanzanian training institutions that who took a leading role in running the training quite independently of both the Finnish NGO and the Tanzanian NGOs. Since the focus of this research is the co-operation between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs, the main interest in the implementation phase is the interaction between the Finnish and Tanzanian actors.

During the six weeks' training administration and management of the project took place at least in three levels. First, there was the standard administration of the local training institutions – the teachers and the principal – in which the actual contents of the training were planned and conducted in the given framework. Second, the training institutions and the course participants organised a system of communication where the participants selected a chairman and a secretary among themselves on a weekly basis to communicate with the training institution about any problems arising. Thirdly, the Finnish NGO established a *coordination team* in which there were two representatives from TAGO, two representatives from UNGO and two Finnish co-ordinators.

The coordination team was said to be the link between the participants, the Tanzanian NGOs and the Finnish NGOs. The coordination team had two weekly meetings to discuss various themes such as ways of conducting a course evaluation in the last days of the course and follow-up evaluation that was supposed to take place several times after the course. Parallel to this, there was also the local administration of the Tanzanian NGOs with their executive committees. In regard to the tensions to be described below, the roles of these administrative structures were unclear and sometimes even in conflict. This was apparent for example in the mandate of the coordination team in solving diverse problems – when problems occurred between the Finnish NGO and the Tanzanian NGOs, additional meetings with the leadership of the Tanzanian NGOs were held since the members of the co-ordination team did not have any decision-making or negotiation power within the organisations they represented.

In these meetings where both the Finnish and Tanzanian participants were present some of the tensions present in the planning phase re-emerged in modified forms. The re-emergence was shown by contesting items that seemingly had been agreed during the planning phase. In what follows I shall discuss the main tensions that emerged as conflicts or disputes during the implementation phase resulting in the opening of the agreement – challenging the “sharedness” of the object.

Age question: The presence of the young people in the training course

One of the tensions that occurred in the planning phase was about NGO-membership as a selection criterion for course participants. This tension re-emerged in the implementation phase in a bit different form and created a conflict between the representatives of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. The Finnish representatives arrived in Tanzania just before the beginning of the first training course in June 2000. In their first encounter with the course participants they wondered why some of the course participants seemed younger than they expected retired people to be. The Finnish representatives examined the age of the course participants and found 14 people under the age of 50 among them. This observation resulted in an open letter from the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO to the Tanzanian organisation. The open letter stated:

We wish to respond to the fact that the TAGO/UNGO recruiting team selected 14 persons under the age of 50 to the pilot course period in Bigwa FCD. This selection is contrary to the definition of the target group made by the planning team last summer. According to that definition the target group of retired professionals could include persons 4–5 years prior to their retirement age of 55 (...). It is absolutely necessary that this project gets back on the chosen track of serving the needs of retired professionals. (...) Surely, you our partner organisations can see the need and value of keeping the focus and aims of this project clear – in practice, as well as in written agreements.

(Open letter from FIGO to TAGO leadership 28 June 2000).

The letter and the question of age of the participants was discussed in co-ordination team meetings and in a special meeting arranged for the Finnish representatives and the leadership of TAGO and UNGO on 28 June 2000. In that meeting the Finnish co-ordinator read aloud the open letter quoted above for the first time to the Tanzanian partners. The discussion continued in a meeting July 3rd when some reasons for recruiting younger persons were identified as well as some solutions found. The solution was that the members of the previous recruiting team should identify those younger than 50 years among the participants in the second three weeks' course and replace these people with older participants.

This dispute raised at least two questions. First, the question of what age was agreed on in the planning phase, and second, how the recruiting process resulted in the selection of younger people. During the planning phase the selection criteria of age was discussed to some extent (in meetings P1, P3) merely in the sense of setting an upper age-limit, but no explicit decision about the age limits was made. As shown before, the actual co-operation agreement did not state anything about

the age – it was assumed to be implicit in the definition of “*retired or soon to be retired professionals*”.

The selection of the participants was conducted in the meeting of recruiting team on 6 May 2000. This exhausting meeting lasted for 5 hours and 50 minutes and resulted in the selection of 60 participants. The selection was made based on the 122 application forms in which the following questions were asked: name and address; TAGO or UNGO membership status, or “others” (in case of others it was asked to indicate more specifically); choice of six courses from nine available. Before the selection meeting one of the members of the recruiting team had prepared an analysis of the applicants: gender (70 men, 52 women), venue, membership (TAGO 37, UNGO 56, other 29).

The selection process began first by sorting the applications based on the status of applicants as members of TAGO, members of member organisations of UNGO and others, which were non-members of NGOs. This was done in order to get the quota of 15-10-5 of these different participant categories, as already agreed in the planning phase. This sorting proved to be problematic, since some of the applicants that stated that they were members of TAGO, were not familiar to the executive members and in their opinion not members of the organisation. The sorting started again by evaluation every individual application from alleged TAGO members. The status of applicants was discussed. Some of the applicants were long-time members, some had applied for membership, but had not paid their membership contributions and, some were unknown. These “unfamiliar” applicants were categorised as “others”.

After selecting the course participants from the members of TAGO, the recruiting team selected participants from the category “UNGO members”. First, the applications were arranged by NGO and then one applicant from every 16 NGO that were presented was chosen. During this selection it was problematic whether the NGO the applicant had identified as an NGO she/he is a member of, was a member organisation of UNGO, or whether is an NGO at all.

During the recruiting meeting the membership in organisations as a criterion for selecting the participants was much more important than the age or retirement status. In the discussion it was noticed that the age of the applicant was not indicated in the application form, but nothing could be done to that fact at that phase. In the discussion the age was mentioned in some instances when some young applicants, previously known to the recruiting team members, were discussed, for example:

John: *How old is she?*

Eric: *Old enough*

John: *Old enough to be a retired professional?*

Eric: *No, but old enough (D2, 121.30).*

Most explicitly the discussion about age vs. membership was held in relation to the application of a young woman, who was a founder member of TAGO and a daughter of one of the members of the recruiting team (D2, 25.57-28). Although it was discussed that selecting such young people might seem strange, the application was approved since “*there are various criteria...and in these automatic cases we look by their merits*” (Sebastian D2, 28). In addition to membership some other minor arguments were given for the selection of some participants. For example, if one of the members of the recruiting team had asked someone to apply, so he or she should be accepted. Additionally one of the applicants was the wife of an important government officer and it was thought that if she were be selected the officer might help the organisation in the future. In another instance the participant selection was also connected to another Finnish project conducted in the area simultaneously. There was a three day seminar arranged for NGOs (which I will analyse in one of the further chapters), and when someone was selected to be a participant in that seminar, he or she should not again be selected for the training for retired professionals (John, D2, 92–93).

These emergent instances of new selection criteria illustrate well the dynamics of multiple negotiations and loyalties the NGO was involved in while implementing its first project. The membership and commitment of the founder members should be acknowledged by offering a place in training, the persons both in important positions in the local hierarchy and in close friendship with the selectors should be included in order to remain in good relationship with them. In the recruiting process the selection criteria of “being a retired professional” turned into multiple criteria of NGO membership, duration of the membership, former contributions to the NGOs and the importance of maintaining the relationship with the applicants. This resulted in a situation, where among the selected there were relatively young persons who had a history of NGO membership.

The problem of recruiting young persons led to a conflict between the Finnish and Tanzanian project partners and reflected the re-emergence of the tension about the target group that had already emerged in the planning phase the main target group had been conceived as *members of the organisations vs. whoever retired professionals*, with the former criteria of more importance. Moreover, the fact that among the applicants there were various kinds of people shows the wide interest and desire of people to get involved in such activities that was rarely available. The willingness to participate was partly inspired by a desire to take part in any NGO activities where foreign donors were involved in search for potential short-time financial benefits, such as participations allowances and per diems. This was shown, for example, in the fact that a couple of younger participants did not continue the course after learning the small amount of allowances in the first day.

Allowance question: Finding a local solution

One of the open conflicts at the planning phase concerned the potential daily allowances paid to the course participants. The allowance question was again discussed at the beginning of the training course when raised by the course participants themselves. The main conflict between the course participants and the Finnish co-ordinators was about the amount of daily allowance paid to the participants. This conflict occurred during the second day of the training 20 June 1999. The participants had not been informed about the exact amount of allowance in advance and they were not satisfied with the small amount of “incidental money” promised to them from the project budget and there were various requests to increase the amount of daily allowance. There was much argumentation about whether the participants should be allowed to choose whether to sleep and eat in the training institution or to receive the money used for these facilities in cash and sleep at home. However, as the participants’ diary states:

Adding anything to the budget would not be possible. Mr Matt [the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO] suggested that the matter may be possible if it involves only internal/local arrangements. After prolonged discussions the matter was resolved and was agreed that the course should continue as arranged”

(Course participants’ diary 20.6. 2000)

The discussion about the allowance, however, did not end there. After realising that the Finnish co-ordinators would not be willing to discuss the matter further the participants started to negotiate directly with the leaders of the training institutions. The weekly leadership of the participants and the leaders of the training institution made a local agreement that morning and afternoon tea was not served and the money saved from that was then given to the participants as an extra allowance. This of course created some changes in the institutions’ budgets, but calmed the atmosphere in the course. As a principal of a training institution narrates:

Interviewee: (...) *there were a lot of inconveniences because of the allowance issue. Somehow the people were flowing to my home, asking for a refund of money. They were disturbing, every now and then small committees of people coming to my home. Then we came here together. Then they agreed they didn’t want the two teas therefore we had to take some of the sugar because everything was already bough. We took it back to the shop and then we had to find money to refund them, that’s what we did.*

Interviewer: *So there was someone from the TAGO in the discussion?*

Interviewee: *It was a committee of the participants who came to my House.*

Interviewer: *How much did you decide to give them?*

Interviewee: *We discussed, they were refunded 700 shillings, and it is even written. Because the money is subject to auditing. That's why I was complaining it is very difficult to handle the accounts, if you plan and then you make changes.*

(Interview with a principal 18.8.2000)

The same arrangement was made in the other training institution in which the project continued. The agreement on allowances was made without informing the representatives of the Finnish NGO. The local solution opened up the assumed agreement about paying the participants only a very small amount of pocket money for incidental costs. Additionally, at the beginning quite harsh discussions between the course participants and the Finnish representatives about the small amount of the allowances manifested a re-emergence of the tension that had already emerged in the planning phase: the training with *daily allowance* vs. *training with a training fee* although the actors on the negotiation in the Tanzanian side were no longer the members of the planning team, but rather course participants.

Micro-credit question: Participants' demands

During the planning phase there was tension between the project as a training project only and the project as a training project with a micro-credit facility. Although in the planning meetings the option of adding a micro-credit facility was strongly rejected, the propositions of adding the micro-credit to the project were presented at times during the training courses. Most explicitly that occurred in the closing ceremony of the training where a representative of the participants stated in his speech:

We all feel that this training is a very useful tool for retired professionals. We have benefited from the skill we acquired from different fields which we believe will be practiced at the end of the course. (...). However, the snag here is that we retired professionals lack the necessary capital to start projects and use the skills that we have acquired effectively. In our opinion, we suggest a programme whereby retired professionals after such a training would be accessible to a CREDIT SCHEME to enable him to sustainable life or living condition"

(Speech of the representative of a Tanzanian NGO in the closing ceremony of a training course for retired professionals, implemented in partnership with a Finnish NGO, Morogoro 17.7.2000. Capitals in original.)

However, even if proposed to be discussed, the issue of adding micro-credit to the project was not opened again for discussion by the Finnish partners. Therefore, no open dispute or conflict occurred in relation to this question, but rather a rupture in the interaction because the initiatives to start the discussion did not lead to negotiation. In comparison to the allowance question, there were no local solutions found to this tension. The tension in this dimension of the object of co-operation remained unresolved and the suggestion met once again kind of silent exclusion.

Planning for future co-operation

The suggestion of adding a micro-credit scheme was one of the propositions that indicated the will to open up the discussion about the content of the project in future, and more widely about the content of future partnership between the two organisations, FIGO and TAGO. The future co-operation between the organisations emerged as a new topic of discussions in the meeting of the Finnish representatives and the leaders of the Tanzanian NGOs on June 28th June when a Tanzanian participant suggested adding a question about the kind of co-operation there should be after the training course to the agenda of the meeting. In this particular meeting the future was not discussed. It was briefly touched upon three weeks later, in third meeting between the Finnish representatives and the leaders of the Tanzanian NGOs on July 29.

In this short discussion two conceptions of what was meant by “future co-operation” emerged. First, for the Finnish representatives the future co-operation between FIGO and TAGO meant implementing a similar training course the following year. As the representative of the Finnish NGO summarised in the meeting:

GEORGE: I may say only my opinion because I have not spoken about this with others and of course after a very brief experience of this course. First we need, and we must analyse all feedback before we can say in Finland whether we stop or continue and second we must ask again for money from our foreign ministry in September. In my mind co-operation with you has been very nice and good and I hope that it will continue. One important point in my mind is if there is need for two courses next year. What do you think about that?

After assuring the representative that there would be enough participants also the following year, one of the Tanzanian participants comments on the needs considering the future co-operation.

41. LIISA: *Any other visions about the future*
42. SEBASTIAN: *We have one programme. We want to attract as many retired professionals as possible, and we want to do so with the method of going there and inviting them to come somewhere, to sit somewhere and take their experience. We call these counselling sessions. It is to get to know what is going on with them, actually what they are doing, so that they can be aware of our organisation. And as we said we want to draw participants from Dar es Salaam, from Dodoma, from Tanzania, not necessarily from here, of course they are so many who are from here. So I think we have this programme to encourage, it is the first entry point to the organisation, later on this goes to substantive programs, so as far as that is concerned we are struggling to have just some assistance, because when we meet we want to have at least soft drinks, writing materials*
43. LIISA: *hmm, any other comments of questions or inspiring visions ... if there is none, then I say that we go so far here [continues with other issues].*

From this short excerpt from the discussion we can observe that again the “future” meant two different things for the participants in the meeting. On one hand it referred to the question of whether to conduct another similar training course next year, on the other hand to the question of whether the continuation of cooperation between FIGO and TAGO – and financial support - would include extension of the activities of TAGO and, simultaneously, continuing the counselling sessions activities TAGO had had before starting the training project. However, the support for different kinds of activities was not discussed.

The short discussion about the further co-operation more openly revealed the tension that was already implicit at the planning phase. This tension had to do with the different conceptions of the partnership and co-operation between the organisations. There was the view on partnership as restricted to the specific training project and piloting it in order for TAGO to continue later on its own with similar activities, and there was another viewpoint of continuing partnership and funding relationship in which the training course was just one entry-point for expanding activities. These different perceptions can be understood as showing the differences between the ideas of restricted project as typical to development co-operation and more open view of co-operation typical of “ordinary life”.

5.5 Conclusion: Tension, inclusions and exclusions in the evolving object of co-operation

The main questions reviewed in this chapter considered the negotiation of the object of co-operation between a Finnish and a Tanzanian organisation. The object of co-operation referred to a partially-shared object of different actors and it was examined through following the interaction between the organisation representatives and the actions they performed separately in Finland and in Tanzania.

At the phase of initial idea building no object of co-operation between these particular organisations existed since the future partners had never seen each other before. However, there were some ideas that were similar enough and enabled the first negotiations. For the actors, the *planning phase* started when the representatives of the organisations gathered for joint planning meetings. In the meetings the separate conceptualisations of the object were negotiated and the quite general tension in the initial perceptions turned into more specific ones in face-to-face interaction between representatives of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. Three main dimensions of emerging tension in the object of co-operation were identified: the contents of the forthcoming training course, the content of the project between the organisations at a more general level and the intended beneficiaries of the co-operation. (see Table 14 for summary).

At the *implementation* phase the actual conduction of the training was in the hands of the training institutions that defined the actual contents of the lessons independently. This realisation of the training itself was not within the scope of this analysis which concentrates instead on the co-operation between the NGOs. The interaction between the Finnish NGO and Tanzanian NGO was structured for two kinds of meetings: first, the meetings of a co-ordination team consisting of a Finnish co-ordinator, two representatives from TAGO and two representatives from UNGO.

Additionally, meetings between the leadership of Tanzanian organisations and the Finnish co-ordinators were arranged to discuss the problems that emerged. Such issues included the re-emergence of some of the tensions identified in the planning phase. During the first days of training the allowance question was taken up by the participants and was solved by adding some allowance from the local training institutions. A more significant issue was the re-emergence of the tension related to the intended beneficiaries. There were some quite young participants selected on the criteria of NGO membership that did not fit the idea of “retired professionals”. It was agreed that the under-50 participants in the second training period would be replaced by older ones.

In a similar vein, also the tension between the project as a training project vs. project as a training and micro-credit emerged again in a number of initiatives

from the course participants to start negotiation about including a credit facility in the project. However, this tension remained quite latent one since the negotiation about this subject did not take place.

Since the actual implementation was in the hands of the local training institutions, the focus of the interaction and co-operation of the representatives of the Finnish and Tanzanian organisation changed. The interaction focused more on solving problems and, especially, planning further evaluation. Along with the discussion about the purpose of the evaluation an additional tension considering the co-operation between the Finnish and Tanzanian organisation emerged. There was a tension whether the co-operation would continue by re-implementing the project the following year or whether the co-operation would include other forms in future. The initiatives for making an extension in the interaction to consider other forms of future co-operation did not however lead to negotiation. Considering evaluation, within the implementation phase it was agreed that the evaluation would concentrate on the questions whether the course participants have had a chance to use the skills they learned and that the evaluation would be done three times for every participant.

Table 14. Summary of the tensions, inclusions and exclusions emerged in object of co-operation

Phase	Tensions	Inclusions	Exclusions
Initial idea building	Implementing a training project vs. supporting the Tanzanian organisation		
Planning	<p>a) Training course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – no tension in the contents – training course with training fee vs. training course with allowance <p>b) Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a training project vs. a training and a micro-credit <p>c) Beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – members of the NGOs vs. whoever retired professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – biogas – organisational training – small incidental money – delivering used computers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – counselling skills – goat cheese production – micro-credit – executive members of the organisation
Implementing	<p>a) Training course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – allowance vs. no allowance <p>b) Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – training vs. micro-credit – re-implementing a project vs. enlargement of co-operation <p>c) Beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – young members of NGOs vs. retired professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – additional allowance paid by training institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – micro-credit – the enlargement of the scope of co-operation – persons under 50

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the evolving object of co-operation between a Finnish and Tanzanian NGO. The dynamics of the negotiations were explored with an idea of potential transformation of initial separate objects of diverse actors into a shared one. In terms of the content of the co-operation one could rather witness non-transformation of the initial idea of the Finnish actors. The initial idea of the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO expressed in 1998 that there would be “two training courses in practical skills of gardening, animal husbandry, one-man business skills and handicrafts for 45 retired professionals” did not perform

dramatic changes even if there was a new partner found and a much negotiation. The number of trainees rose from 45 to 60, and some organisational training aspects were added to training curriculum, but otherwise the idea in proposal did not change much based on the negotiations held in two years time. The achievement of an agreement and the actual arrangement of training courses show that some kind of common understanding was reached between the organisations. However, the “sharedness” of the object can be questioned.

Development and development co-operation involves initiating and supporting change. In this particular co-operation process, a two-year project was implemented in co-operation with a Finnish and Tanzanian organisation. First two training courses, under analysis here, were implemented in 2000, the second two in 2001. After that the co-operation between the organisations ended. In autumn 2004, three years after the ending of the co-operation, I met an executive member of the Tanzanian organisation and asked about the news of the organisation. He reported, that the training courses ended when the support from the Finnish NGO ended, and that they were doing “*some counselling sessions for the retired professionals*” – the same activity the organisation performed in 1998, before meeting their Finnish partners. Thus, the impact of the co-operation on the Tanzanian organisations was not very significant. However, the training conducted was certainly to some extent of use to the individuals participating in the training. Unfortunately, the assessments and experiences of the individual participants are side out of the scope of the analysis of co-operation in this chapter.

The arrangement of joint planning sessions between the Finnish and Tanzanian organisation represented a “new way” of co-operation for the Finnish co-operation in Morogoro. This new way was partly an attempt to overcome the perceived problem of implementing Finnish ideas in the projects. However, as shown in the analysis, the process of joint planning proved to be more of legitimating the initial Finnish idea than negotiating a shared view that is the “old” way of co-operation. Moreover, especially the debate on the beneficiaries revealed the situation in which a presence of a foreign donor made the small organisation attractive to new participants. The ability to participate in the course was competed and as was show, the executive members could influence quite much the selection.

These observations in the actual process of project negotiation led me to question the power relations that emerge in the negotiation and affect the “construction of partially shared object”. I became particularly interested in the actual means by which the power is exercised in actual interaction situation. The challenge to identify the power in negotiations is taken up in the following chapter.

6 Power relations in negotiations between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs

In the previous chapter the evolving object of co-operation in the project of Retraining Retired Professionals between FIGO and TAGO was analysed and the tensions manifested in its different phases were depicted. The apparent “non-transformation” of the object and unsolved tensions that occurred in the different phases of the project raised questions about the “sharedness” of the object of co-operation. Additionally, the instances of exclusions in negotiations turned my analytical interest towards the power relations and strategies in the negotiations. If the learning challenge in co-operation is to reach at least a partially shared object, it is of relevance to explore the aspects that hinder achieving such a goal. Power relations and strategies are one important, even if so far quite ignored, analytical angle to look into the processes of object construction. If the previous chapter depicted the *What* of co-operation, in this chapter I shall focus more on the question of *How* – but in relation to *what*.

The chapter both narrows and expands the focus of analysis. First, the analytical viewpoint is narrowed from a longitudinal study of co-operation process into a level of specific interaction situations. I shall make a detailed analysis of the interactions in three different meetings in which the representatives of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs discussed their co-operation. Second, I shall expand the analysis from a framework of one single project into three different projects in order to search for common patterns in negotiations between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs in Morogoro. I have selected three meetings along three different project trajectories to investigate the construction of power relations at micro-level negotiations. All the meetings took place at the beginning of the co-operation and their role in constituting the initial relationship between the organisations is important.

6.1 Power and development intervention

Power, change and learning

The focus on power relationships has been connected to the discussion of change and learning in development co-operation. There have been arguments that suggest that contemporary discourses of participation and partnership are merely ways of hiding the actual power relations rather than concepts that depict any real radical change in North-South relationship within the aid system (Fowler 2000; Taylor 2001, 122). Therefore, for any learning and change to take place in development co-operation making power relations visible and subject to reflection is essential (Groves and Hinton 2004, 10). In my endeavour to map the learning challenges in NGO development co-operation through identification of the tensions in contemporary practice the analysis of the construction of the power relationship is needed. I assume that through identification of the actual acts by which the power relationships are produced and reproduced one can find spaces for reflection and learning.

For individual actors, the aid system enables specific power positions. One might not be very powerful in other contexts and other spaces (Cornwall 2004, 80; Kothari 2001, 35), but possesses quite a lot of power within the aid context. For example an ordinary university student, a nurse or a primary school teacher who occupies quite powerless position in regard her/his environment in Finland might find her/himself in a position of leadership deciding the direction of a project that affects the lives of a number of people in Tanzania and having decision-making power over quite large sums of money.

In a similar vein, a quite powerless person in her ordinary life environment and NGO in Tanzania might find ways of gaining more symbolic and economic power in her/his everyday environment by networking with foreign NGOs and donors (Olivier de Sardan 2005, 186). It can be argued that the development co-operation, in addition of being a system of practice in which “development” is undertaken, it is also a field of specific networks of power and a “battlefield of knowledge” (Long and Long 1992) full of struggle.

The effects of the specific system of distribution of financial resources and knowledge (Tvedt 1998) enable the individual power positions in which individuals exercise power in ways that are neither intentional nor very conscious. At the individual level, the challenge of learning is to identify the power effects in one’s behaviour and consciously reflect upon whether there should be any necessary changes. However, changing individual behaviour is not an easy task within the context of the development system, even if a particular individual consciously desires to change. The systemic effects are often invisible and, as has been argued,

some kind of asymmetry is a starting point for any development co-operation (Groves and Hinton 2004). Power relationships might easily be reproduced by the tools, language and management systems used in development co-operation projects. The challenge for enhancing change and learning in development is in making the invisible visible and in so doing to offer tools for reflection (Chambers and Pettit 2004). This is what I intend to do in this chapter – to make visible the multiple power relationships in negotiations and to analyse their construction through actual acts of the participants in negotiations.

Analysing power relations in development co-operation

Diverse points of view have been used in analysing power within the practice of development interventions. For example, Nelson and Wright (1995, 8-9) distinguish three different metaphors through which power has been understood in studying participation in development. First, the metaphor of *power to* refers to the capacity of actors. This metaphor is used often as depiction of self-development of individuals or groups and does not imply that the increase of one's power would lead to a decrease in somebody else's power. Second, they distinguish a metaphor of *power over* which refers to power as exercised by one actor over another. This kind of power implies that if power of one actor increases, the power of another consequently decreases. Social power over others can be exercised in open conflict and decision-making situations, but also can be hidden. Third, the metaphor of *decentred power* is increasingly used. The decentred metaphor refers to more subjectless forms of power in which the power is not exercised by any actor over another but emerges in the discursive and practical apparatus through a variety of techniques and forms of governmentality over all the actors considered.

For the analysis of the power relationship in co-operation between the Northern and Southern actors, the two latter metaphors are of importance. The *decentred power* refers to the idea of power as a discourse effect. Inspired by Michel Foucault's idea of discursive production of what is "true" and what is "false" at a certain point of history, development discourse defines what is "good" and "bad" development at a certain time, and how that "good" development should be practiced (Grillo 1997, 12). Discourse, or rather, discourses of development are at work in the apparatus of development that produces its "objects" (developing countries) for example through international statistics and development policies (Escobar 1995). In terms of development intervention the effects of discourse might be seen in its tendencies to depict political problems as technical ones (Ferguson 1994). In case of the NGOs, the discourse effects can be seen in the ways the changing development discourse affects the practice of the local NGOs. For example, large Indian organisations change their activities from answering to "ba-

sic needs” to “empowering women” according to the standards of international development discourse (Ebrahim 2003).

Within the discourse of social power, three different dimensions of power have been proposed (Clegg 1989, 90; Lukes 1974; 2005). These dimensions include: first, power as overt decision making and winning in open conflict situations (Dahl 1957), second, power as non-decision making and covert conflicts (Bachrach and Baratz 1962), and third, power as shaping the others’ very needs and interests. If the decentralised view on power sees power more as something that takes place behind actors’ backs, the account on social power starts from the basic idea that there are actors who possess agency and interests. Power refers to actors’ capability to affect other actors.⁶³ In a classical definition of social power Dahl (1957, 202–3) defines power in the following way “*A has power over B to the extent to which he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do*”. This basic definition was applied by Lister (2000) in her analysis of the power relationship between NGOs from the USA and Central America. However, she found the framework insufficient since it could not go beyond observable behaviour and decision making. What is essential in analysing aid relationship, she argued (ibid. 230, 234–235), is the processes by which the Northern NGO is shaping the very needs and interests of a Southern NGO. In analysing the aid relationship between multilateral development organisations and Indonesia Crawford (2003) found two priority agendas considering a large Governance programme: that of multi-donors emphasising decentralization and that of civil society organisations stressing the questions of free media and problems of military control. He shows how the latter agenda was excluded from the discussion and funding agenda of the programme and argues that the power in this case was exercised by the control of the agenda by donors without entering into overt conflict or negotiation.

Both the idea of decentralised power as discourse effect and hegemonic rationality and different frameworks of the “power over” concept might easily collapse

⁶³ Rossi (2004) argues for new kind of combinations of discursive point of view with the point of view of agency towards power. She has analysed practices in a large rural development project in a West- African country funded by one of the large aid agencies. She shows how different categories of actors hold different positions towards the “discourse”. She observed a process in which the changes in international development discourse stressing ownership and participation created great pressures for changes in the approach of the project. The leadership of the Northern Aid agency wanted to start a “new approach” stressing “ownership” and “participation” in the programme in order to fulfil the rationalities of new discourse. At the same time, the local leadership and the villager in West-Africa were more satisfied with the “old” approaches that included, for example, delivery of infrastructure and possibilities for employment on a “food-for-work” basis. Consequently, she (ibid.) argues that in a hierarchical context such as development aid, those with less bargaining power can strategically use the discourses for their own purposes – to speak in a “new way” about the “old way of practice”.

into understanding power as exercised by one pre-determined set of actors over another, or by a monolithic hegemonic discourse over others, from one space into another space, in the case of development from powerful North to the powerless South. However, as Crush (1995, 8) argues power in development is more diffused and fragmented. When one looks more closely at the practice there are no such monolithic actors such as Southerners or Northerners, donors and recipients, experts and villagers and the “indigenous” insiders and outsiders, but these groups are themselves characterised by different positions, power struggles and diverse points of views that make the effort of analysing power relations more complex than just pointing out the obvious (Long 2001; Olivier de Sardan 2005; Biggs 2005; Crewe and Harrison 1998). Additionally, the obvious dependency of donor/recipient relationship might turn out to be more that of interdependency in which the material and symbolic, money and reports, information and reputation are exchanged in mutual relationships of interdependency between Southern and Northern NGOs (Ebrahim 2003, 52; Hudock 1999; see also Baldwin 1989).

The starting point for analysing power in my research is a methodological commitment to the multivocality (Grillo 1997, 27) of power the construction of which is subject to empirical investigation. As Villarreal (1992) suggests there are no predefined categories of oppressed and dominators that would “possess” power to start with in the analysis. Rather, power is understood as relational and emergent in different strategies and tactics used negotiation that bring together different interpretations, interests and motivations of the actors participating in negotiations (Long 2002; Olivier de Sardan 2005; Reed 2002).

However, there is continuous interaction between the constraining and enabling structures and actions in a particular situation (Long 2001; see also Giddens 1979). Even if power is understood as emergent in interaction there are supposed to be features extending a particular situation that affect the kinds of power relationships constructed. One of these evident structural issues in the development is the system of resource flow that creates a recipient/donor relationship. This relationship takes different concrete forms in diverse interaction situations; it is modified and challenged but positions the actors in a certain way (Eriksson-Baaz 2005, 75) to start with.

Politicising the object: Power within the activity theoretical framework

The idea of relational power, multivocality of power and power relations as emergent in interaction and action is in accordance with the activity theoretical understanding of human activity and co-operation. As stated earlier, co-operation is understood as a continuous negotiation of a “potentially shared object” (Engeström 2001, 132). The object of co-operation refers to the process that determines the

“horizon of possible goals and actions” (Engeström 1999b, 65). In the analysis of the processes of object construction more attention has been paid to moments of temporal achievement of the shared object (Engeström, Engeström and Vähäaho 1999) than to the instances of exclusion and marginalisation, or to the acts by which other actors influence not only acts in order to achieve something, but also the “possible acts of others” (Foucault 1982). However, as I showed in the previous chapter the processes of object construction in development co-operation entail much struggle and the exclusion of certain aspects of the object from the agenda of negotiation of the shared object.

Consequently, the concept of power has not been much developed within the activity theoretical framework, although it has been brought up in certain instances. First, power is mentioned as a feature of historically formed division of labour (Engeström 1993, 67; 2001, 132). The negotiation of a shared object and formation of potential new activity entails also the construction of social division of labour. The construction of power positions is a part of the hierarchical division of labour. Some actors are situated in the position of leaders and managers and some as “shop-floor” workers within the division of labour in the activity system.

Second, power is discussed in relation to the contradictions in activity. Engeström (1999c, 178) explicates a need to “distinguish contradictions from the general assertion of asymmetric power relations” even if he understands that “power and domination are at work in contradictions”. According to Engeström (2005a, 13) the definition of desired development is not so much about the struggle between different interpretations of diverse actors and their interests and meanings, but about the systemic contradictions that define the possible directions of development and “what can be done” instead of “what should be done” (ibid. 13) at the level of activity. However, as the contradictions only map the grey zone of proximal development, I assume that there is space for struggle between different actors even on the point of “what can be done” exactly within this grey zone.

Third, given that the principle of mediation is important in activity theory, power has been seen as being materialised in instruments, the tools and signs, used in activities (Engeström 2005a). The ability to use power is about having access to tools and signs and using them in constructing the object. In the context of development the use of rhetorical language, the “signs” of development is one of the important ways in using power. In development co-operation, funding is also an important instrument in getting things done – and the issue of what can be done is very much depending on what amount of resources is available. The chain of potential access to funding should be though considered as an important feature of power embedded in instrumentalities.

In activity theory power is more of a feature of a system than of an (individual) actor. Within an activity theoretical framework, at the level of activity it would not

be logical to say that power is the extent to which A can make B to do something that B would not otherwise do, since both A and B act in a systemic framework of some activity that both enables and constrains the actions and desires of A and B. Within the systemic relation between A and B, B alone definitely would not be doing what he/she is doing together with A, but the “maker” is not the actor A, but the system. However, when examining the object construction at the level of action one can presumably observe instances of domination and direct use of power in decision making.

One can consider how the different conceptualisations of power distinguished in researching development could be connected with an activity theoretical understanding of co-operation (see also Kontinen 2004). First, the metaphor of power over, the capability of actors to act could be understood as the capability of working upon an object of activity in order to produce an outcome. In activity theoretical framework the subject refers merely to a collective subject that constitutes the “actor” in the context of the activity system, or the multiple actors in co-operation. In order to analyse the power as ability the methodological interest should be on the issues of what is produced, done and achieved. Second, the different dimensions of the metaphor of *power over* refer more to the social power in connection to what is done and, thus, to the aspects of both object and division of labour in activity. Power in division of labour can be understood for example through exploring the actual acts of decision making, handling of conflicts and agenda setting. Moreover, the instances of exclusion and the expressions of complaint can be studied. An important question considers the so-called shared object and the processes of achieving it – how shared is it? Third, the metaphor of *decentralised power* that is not exercised by any agency over another can be compatible with the idea of contradictions in activity as a force that set limits to the direction of possible new objects and divisions of labour. Moreover, historically formed power relations can be materialised in diverse instrumentalities the use of which should be analysed in detail.

The methodological implications of activity theoretical understanding of power would be that power can be understood and examined in different ways in processes of object construction. Considering the process of object construction also as a political provides new analytical angles – for example the tools are not only used for constructing an object but also to maintain power in the struggle over others. The aspects of production and decision making can be observed from the behaviour, the utterances and acts, of the people in negotiations. The exclusions and grievances require additionally interviews and the comparison of negotiations with different kinds of documents. The analysis of systemic contradictions would presuppose more evaluative and theoretically-based judgements of observable action in the light of historical contradictions. In this individual chapter I shall focus

on observable utterances, actions, decision making and different tactics used in negotiation of shared object and division of labour in the meetings between Finnish and Tanzanian individuals.

6.2 Analysing power in meetings

Power in interaction in meetings

The analysis of power relations in negotiations in development co-operation in this chapter is made on the basis of three discursive events that represent development encounters (Long 2001) between Finnish and Tanzanian actors during three different project trajectories. For connecting the general principles of studying power and the actual analysis of interaction in encounters I use some ideas from sociolinguistics and from the tradition of critical discourse analysis (Grimshaw 1990; Wodak 1996; Meyer and Wodak 2002; see also Long 1989).⁶⁴ The speech and action in meetings is understood as a discourse which is a form of social practice. A meeting is defined as a discursive event that is in dialectical relationship with institutions and structures (Fairclough and Wodak 1997).

Meetings are a particular form of interaction; they are part of more formal interaction and pose some conventional rules and procedures (Schwartzmann 2006). Usually, there is an agenda for a meeting. The agenda can be explicit, for example a written document or it can be more implicit in the expectations of the participants and constructed in situ. If there is someone occupying the position of a chairperson in the meeting, she/he usually has the power to define the agenda of meeting. The chairmanship in a certain organisation usually is based on a pre-defined position and is not under negotiation in actual meetings. However, in a situation where two different organisations meet, and in which the chairpersons of both organisations are present, it is interesting to observe how the chairmanship is negotiated. For analysing power at the level of interaction I first shall look at the formation of chairmanship and actual agenda setting in the meetings (Wodak 1996, 66). My first question is: how was the agenda set and who defined the issues to be discussed?

Usually people enter into meetings and discussions in order to reach an agreement and make decisions about certain issues and things. In a meeting based on

⁶⁴ The former tradition has moved from analysing conversations without connecting them into a wider context towards considering the emergence of more sociological issues in actual events of language use. The latter has explicitly searched ways to analysing issues such as ideology and power in practical speech situations.

voluntary participation reaching an agreement implies some kind of consensus between participants and at least agreement upon the importance and relevance of meetings (Long 2001). The diverse participants have different expectations of what kind of decision will be made in the meetings, and often some kind of consensus about issues is reached. However, the power relations may affect how authentic the reached consensus is (Wodak, *ibid.*, 65). The unauthentic consensus refers to situations in which at the level of observable and apparent speech and behaviour there is an agreement reached, but the agreement might have been reached by domination, not negotiation. My second question in analysing the construction of power relations is: what kinds of decisions were made and how were the decisions made in the meetings?

Reaching an agreement – or realising that an agreement cannot be reached – may include disputes and conflicts between the participants. The conflict at the level of interaction can be studied by focusing on conflict talk (Grimshaw 1990, 283–293). Conflict talk can lead to resolution of conflict, but there can be also a situation of non-resolution. The outcomes of conflicts have impact on both the content of the conflict (what is finally done; how something is defined) and the social relationship of the participants taking part in the conflict (for example confirm or challenge the power relations between participants. (*Ibid.*, 303–305). Exploring the ways in which the conflicts and discrepancies are handled in actual interaction situations opens a window for exploring power relations (Wodak 1996, 78). My third question is: what kind of discrepancies are there and how are they handled in the meetings?

The activity theoretical notion of mediation could be looked into from the point of view of power relations. I argue that tools and signs in negotiation are used both for enabling communication in order to construct a common object (as tools towards power to) and as tools in power games in defining one's social position in relation to another (power over). In practice, I propose, these two aspects are intertwined. Tools that are used in planning meetings are not very visible – compared for example to the tools a farmer employs to harvest maize, or the tools a doctor uses in order to make a diagnosis. I have focused my attention on the visible, material tools that were used in the meetings and especially on occasion in which they were used strategically, in order to influence the action of others or legitimate one's own action *vis-à-vis* other viewpoints. In the meetings the most basic use of signs refers to spoken language. Attempts to speak a language that all the participants understand is the basic prerequisite for communication to take place. In regard to power relations and strategies, it is interesting to observe the situations in which the actors exclude others from communication by shifting language. My fourth question is: how are documents and language used in a strategic way in the meetings?

At the theoretical level arriving at a shared object in co-operation would mean also the emergence of a novel collective subject. In regard to power relations it is interesting to observe what kind of subjectivities are constructed in the interaction situations. At the surface level of actual interaction the speakers refer to different actors by using pronouns such as *we*, *you* and *them*. These uses are of importance when thinking about exclusion and inclusion, and thus, power. Who is referred to with “we” or “your” and how does the use of “we” and “you” change in the course of the interaction? My fifth question is: what kinds of divisions are constructed in the interaction?

Finally, I shall focus on the construction of the “obvious”. In the context of development co-operation the systemic power is understood to be manifested in the donor/recipient relationship related to the fact of resource transfer from North to South. In the actual interaction situations the issue of money is discussed in a number of ways. My sixth question is: how is the money discussed and handled in the meetings?

Selected meetings

I shall look into the details of meetings between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs in order to analyse the construction of power relations in micro-level interaction. I have selected three different meetings for further analysis. Although a detailed analysis has been made for three meetings only, based on the observations of the remaining meeting it seems that they have features that were common to many other meetings between the Finnish and Tanzanian organisations in which I participated. All three meetings selected were critical events (Long 2001) in the co-operation in consideration of starting and improving the co-operation between the respective organisations.

Meeting I was a meeting in the trajectory of the project of “retraining retired professionals”. As shown in the previous chapter, the tension between the project as a training project vs. the project as a micro-credit project was crucial. The selected meeting was the fourth planning meeting in a series of six meetings. In the selected meeting a somewhat open conflict about the content of the project took place. After this meeting the issue of including micro-credit was no longer brought up during the planning sessions. Thus, a kind of consensus was reached about the issue in the selected meeting and it is of interest to observe how it was reached. The meeting was arranged outside the Tushikamane training centre in which the Finnish representatives were accommodated. There were two executive members of TAGO1, two ordinary members of TAGO1, an executive member of FIGO1, a project co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO and an executive member of UNGO (the umbrella organisation on NGOs in Morogoro) present

at the meeting. The last participant mentioned was a woman; all the others were men.

Meeting II was a meeting in a project to support women's entrepreneurship. This meeting was the first of two meetings that the representatives of the Finnish and Tanzanian NGO had during the stay of the Finns in Morogoro in June 2000. The meeting was a critical event since it was supposed to mark the beginning of an implementation of a joint project which had been planned for at least two years. Accordingly, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs had allocated some funding for the project in February 2000, but the Finnish organisation had not yet informed the Tanzanian NGO about the availability of funds. The meeting took place in a situation where the representatives of the Finnish NGO still wanted to investigate if the plans of the organisation were "real" and planned such a way that they would like to support the organisation. Additionally, they had heard rumours about some internal problems within the organisation and wanted to see what the situation was within the organisation. The meeting took place in the office of the Tanzanian organisation. In the meeting there were three members of FIGO2 (two men and a woman) and the chairperson of TAGO2, a Tanzanian co-ordinator of FIGO2 who was also an executive member of TAGO2 (a woman). Additionally, there were five other women members of the organisation present in the meeting area. At the beginning of the meeting they cooked lunch in front of the office. In the middle of the meeting they entered the room and sat in the back of the room listening to what was said.

Meeting III was a meeting in a trajectory of arranging a training seminar for NGOs. This project will be analysed more thoroughly in the next chapter. The selected meeting on 3.3.2000 was the second meeting between the representatives of the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs considering the seminar arrangement. In the previous meeting some tasks, such as enquiring about the prices of seminar venues, had been given by the representative of the Finnish NGO to the Tanzanian representatives. The meeting at hand is relevant since it was the last meeting between the representatives of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs before the preparation of the seminar started separately in Finland and in Tanzania. Additionally, the meeting discussed the division of labour in the seminar preparation – that later proved to be problematic – between the Finnish and Tanzanian representatives. The meeting was arranged in a meeting room next to the office of TAGO3. There were the chairperson of FIGO3 (woman), the project co-ordinator of KEPA (man) and three executive members of TAGO3 (one woman, two men) present in the meeting.

Table 15. Meetings selected for analysis

Project	Meeting and venue	Participants	Critical issue	No of speech turns
I Retraining retired professionals	24.6.1999 Outside the place where the Finnish were accommodated	Co-ordinator of FIGO1, representative of FIGO1, two executive members of TAGO1, two ordinary members of TAGO1, one executive member of UNGO, researcher	Finally excluding the micro-credit component	715
II Supporting women's entrepreneurship	13.6. 2000 In TAGO2's office	Three representatives of FIGO2, two executive members of TAGO2, 1–5 ordinary members of TAGO2 (not present all the time), researcher	Failure to make decision about the joint project	415
III Arranging a joint seminar	3.3. 2000 In TAGO3's office	One representative of FIGO3, one representative of KEPA Tz, three executive members of TAGO3, researcher	Setting the division of labour in arranging a seminar	398

I was present in all the meetings. Additionally, all the meetings were audio-taped and transcribed in detail resulting into some 64 pages of single-spaced text. The analysis of different means of constructing power relations was based on multiple readings of the data (Strauss and Corbin 1990). First, a thematic analysis based on the content of discussion was made. In that analysis the topics of negotiation were distinguished in order to gain an understanding of the topics of discussion. A similar topic might occur several times in a meeting since the actual interaction does not very often proceed from theme to theme. Second, the analysis looked at several factors in the construction of the course of interaction in the meeting (see appendix 3) based on the idea of analysing power relations explained above. In this attempt meetings were analysed speech turn by speech turn (total of 1528). Speech turn refers to the piece of speech one speaker spoke at a time and might vary in length. In one speech turn, often more than one code was used. For example, a speaker might use Finnish and make a division within one turn. I first analysed every meeting separately and then looked for common features by comparing the results.

6.3 Power relations constructed in the meetings

The chairmanship and agenda setting

Arrangements in regard to chairmanship and agenda setting were different in every meeting. Meeting I considering the project for retired professionals was part of a series of planning meetings the structure of which was initially planned by the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO. The co-ordinator acted as chairman in every meeting by defining the agenda of the day in the beginning of the meeting. The agenda was not distributed among the other participants prior to the meetings. Moreover, the agenda was not a typical meeting agenda but more like a task-setting for training or brainstorming event. The form of fulfilling diverse tasks in the meetings was always similar: first every individual was supposed to write her/his own answers on a piece of paper, the answers were read loud and then there was a joint discussion.

The meeting began with discussion about video-taping and distributing some copies. After that the co-ordinator set the agenda in a typical manner by saying “*I can tell you a little bit what our working agenda will be...*” (P1, 67). However, the discussion proceeds into other issues and it was at turns 246–254 when the task was finally set and after which the participants started to act accordingly:

251. MATT: (...) *I want to ask you first, as individuals this question, and after you have thoroughly written your own answers, then you share them together in the group, like we have been doing, and then we have a discussion based on that, and we'll make a groups' conclusion. And the question is this: If you alone were choosing the criteria for selecting the participants for the pilot course next year, which criteria you would select?*

In this meeting the task was to consider the selection criteria for the participants in a training course to be arranged the following year. The answers were read in turn and discussed until in turn 268 the chairman of TAGO1 brought the issue of the participation allowance into discussion. In turn 401 he shifted from the issue of participation allowance to micro-finance by comparing the importance of education to the importance of financial benefits:

401. SEBASTIAN: *I said, the nature of the benefits which are forwarded to the participants will determine their rate of participation, how many people will participate in that particular seminar or a course, the nature of the benefits. Me and you understand the importance of training, but there are situations whereby you really look very closely at the immediate benefits they are supposed to form*

a particular decision. Okay? For example, if you say, I will give you a course to acquire a particular skill, at your age. I will look into a different arrangement, for example, to establish a credit system, credit facility for example that if you acquire a particular skill, you can now come and apply for a particular credit facility to use that particular skill in this project, identified to be suitable for your skill, this is a current move(...).

The discussion about the micro-credit component has not been on the initial agenda of the meeting set by the Finnish co-ordinator and for a couple of times he tries to put end to that topic. However, a long discussions (turns 401-594) about the topic follows entailing a lot of argumentation and dispute (the handling of which will be depicted later). After the heated discussion about micro-credit component the co-ordinator of FIGO set another task of considering the ways of announcing the course and after that a Finnish representative gave a short proposal of how the course should be structured leading to no discussion. The task was accomplished quickly and the meeting ended.

The agenda Meeting II, considering the potential joint project for supporting women's entrepreneurship was constructed in a much more implicit way. There was no written agenda for the meeting. There were some expectations both from the Finnish representatives and of the Tanzanian NGO for starting a joint project that had been gradually planned for two years. When the Finnish representatives arrived at the office of the Tanzanian NGO they found some of the members of the NGO preparing food outside the office. The chairperson of TAGO2 arrived later with a 3-page action plan that she had been getting printed. Prior to meeting the Finnish representatives had asked to see the papers of the NGO before entering into the discussion of a joint project. The importance of this meeting as a "critical event" is based on the discrepancy between the expectations of the meeting as a starting point of the project and the actual non-decision about starting the co-operation in the meeting.

None of the people present was explicitly a chairperson in the meeting. The female representative of the Finnish NGO, who was most fluent in English among the Finnish participants, somehow took the lead and mostly controlled what topics were put into discussion. The agenda of the meeting was constructed in a way in which the Finnish representatives read the documents provided by the Tanzanian NGO, commented on the documents and asking some further question. The contents of the meeting mostly consider the different documents of TAGO2 such as the action plan, constitution, budget and financial reports. Peculiar to this meeting compared to others was the discussion that was quite unstructured and flowed from one topic to another; also there was much Finn-Finn interaction in Finnish during the course of the meeting.

One of the points of joint discussion on the agenda was the discussion about a need to buy a plot of land and construct a new building for the Tanzanian NGO or rather to rent rooms in other locations to enable the food processing. The viewpoint of the Tanzanian NGO was to use the potential money from the Finnish NGO to buy a plot and to construct a house with equipment for the NGOs whilst the Finnish NGO was quite reluctant to build new infrastructure prior to the beginning of activities. The representatives of the FIGO2 proposed that TAGO2 rent some rooms from the Tushikamane centre for their activities instead of planning to buy and construct new facilities. After the meeting the participants went together to see the premises in Tushikamane and consequently the TAGO2 rented rooms from Tushikamane for their activities

Since the agenda of the meeting was very open and constructed *in situ*, it is difficult to see whether there were any surprising additions or deviations from the agenda. However, when looking at the agenda it is interesting to observe what was not in the agenda. In the interviews made before the meetings the participants expressed the wish that the joint co-operation could begin after the meeting. Additionally, the Finnish representatives had stated that they would like to know about the inner problems in TAGO. However, neither the possible funding (the funding that had been *de facto* allocated) to the project nor the problems with the inner governance systems in TAGO and the Finn's concerns about the problems were explicitly brought into the agenda. One of result of the meeting was that the documents provided by TAGO were not yet in proper condition. The representatives agreed on a second meeting the following week to which the chairperson of the organisation was supposed to bring the improved documents.

Meeting III considered the joint arrangement of a training seminar and TAGO3 acted as a "host" of the meeting. The meeting was arranged in the office of the NGO and the chairman and the executive secretary had prepared a written agenda for the meeting. The chairperson of the Finnish NGO was late for the meeting and even when she arrived she spent some time in another office and kept the representatives of TAGO3 waiting. The agenda (see Figure 6) was copied for all participants and was also read a loud at the beginning of the meeting after the chairman of TAGO3 said: "*We have prepared the agenda. I ask the executive secretary to read it to us*" (P3, 23). In further discussion the executive secretary of TAGO3 took a more active position and acted as chairman and moved the meeting forward.

<p>AGENDA FOR MEETING BETWEEN TAGO3, FIGO3 and KEPA 3.3.2000</p> <p>1. Agreement on cooperation between TAGO3 and FIGO3</p> <p>2. Morogoro seminar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1) Organising committee2) Division of tasks and responsibility between the organising parties3) The costs involved4) The selection of Tanzanian participants5) The seminar venue and the evening party <p>3. AOB</p>

Figure 6. Meeting agenda 3.3.2000 as prepared by TAGO3

The written agenda had not been distributed to the participants in advance and it seemed that the representative of FIGO3 was not very prepared to answer all the questions on the agenda. Most importantly, the issue of signing an agreement between the organisations had to be skipped because the chairperson of FIGO3 had forgotten the draft agreement in Dar es Salaam. After skipping the first item, the discussion proceeded step by step according to the agenda until the end of the meeting. At the end the Finnish chairperson took up an additional topic while beginning to tell about a planned capacity-building project that somehow might consider TAGO3. Additionally, the representatives of TAGO3 asked outside the initial agenda whether there would be a possibility of additional funding for TAGO3's activities other than the seminar.

Table 16. Summary of the agenda setting and chairmanships in the meetings

Meeting	Chairman	Form of the agenda	Additions to and deviations from the initial agenda
I Retired professionals	Co-ordinator of FIGO1	Tasks planned by the co-ordinator and delivered to the participants in the meetings	Initiating discussion about allowances and micro-credit by the Tanzanian participants
II Supporting women's entrepreneurship	No-one	No agenda explicitly planned in advance, constructed in quite informal discussion at the meeting	
III Arranging a joint seminar	Chairman of TAGO3	An agenda prepared and copied by TAGO, delivered and read loud to everyone	Finnish representative telling about another project considering TAGO3 at the end of the meeting, TAGO3 asking funding for other activities

Decision making

A common feature of all three meetings analysed was that there were very few decisions made concerning the co-operation. In every meeting it seemed that issues were left unresolved. Therefore, it became quite problematic to analyse decision making *in situ*. Therefore I looked also for the instances in which people referred to any decisions made in the past or decisions that were supposed to be made in future in order to explore the ideas of what kind of decisions are made and who is supposed to make the decision.

In Meeting I, according to the agenda or the task set by the co-ordinator of the FIGO1, the selection criteria for the participants of the training course were supposed to be decided. However, a final decision in regard to that matter was not taken, since the discussion revolved around allowances and micro-credit instead. Thus, the clearest decision made in the meeting was a decision not to involve a micro-credit component in the project. Further, the debate on adding a micro-credit component expanded into a discussion of whether to continue the project planning at all. At the end of the debate a decision was made that planning of the project was worth continuing.

The decision making about the micro-credit issue revealed important features. The co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO constructed in his speech a situation in

which the agreement on training as the main content of the project would have been made jointly. For example, in turn he states that “*we have our working tool now a training course without a big budget, without a credit union connected with it et cetera (...)*” (P1, 407) as an assumed fact. The common feature in partnership in development was clearly shown in this decision making situation: the decisions about the “large lines” of the project had already been made in Finland and the planning group had given limited room for decision making. The decision making space of the planning group, as defined by the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO (P1, 20), was expected to cover the contents of the course, the selection criteria of the participants and the training venue. A clear division between the decision making spaces of the representatives of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs was made:

371. MATT: *We are responsible for deciding the scope of the pilot project for forty-five is the maximum and four weeks is the length, and we want to test it. We make those decisions, but who you want to have as target groups do you want to have it open to all the retired professionals (...) these are things that you should make decisions about.*

The challenges for opening up this space of decision making and expanding the discussion into the very idea of the project itself were constructed more as unsuitable behaviour than as an initiative for negotiation. In such instances the reference was made to the assumed consensus in the beginning of the planning process:

437. MATT: *We have had in the beginning, now I am not sure if we have it, that there is some kind of training that could be offered within the framework of four weeks training, that's how we started in the beginning, and now you are saying that but without this and without that it won't work.*

In Meeting II, the only decision that was explicitly made was about arranging another meeting the following week in Dar es Salaam to which the chairperson of the TAGO2 was supposed to bring some more documents. The need to make a decision on whether to start the joint project or not was kind of in the air. The representatives of the Finnish NGOs, however, stated that the decisions will be made later in Finland, depending on the feedback they brought from their visit:

253. PETER: *Before we can make any decisions in Finland, we need these action plans for each year.*

If in Meeting I the space of decision making power of different actors considering the content of project was quite clearly defined and in the interaction the limits

of that space were constructed quite explicitly, and, in Meeting II the decision making power was attributed more implicitly to “Finland”, in the Meeting III there were seemingly explicit attempts to attribute decision-making power to the preparatory committee in Tanzania. In relation to issues of selecting facilitators for the training in bookkeeping in the seminar and to the amount of allowances to be paid to the participants the Finnish representative stated a number of times “..but it is your task to decide” (P3, 158; 211; 102; 150).

In some instances participants commented on the decision making space was commented and tried to define it. For example, in the proposal of selecting the Tanzanian NGOs who would be invited to training, the chairman of TAGO3 asked “if you give us a chance, we can choose one or two [NGOs]” (P3, 142). The decision making considering that issue is explicitly given to the committee although the Finnish representative says that she “would like to add one group” (P3, 154), and an NGO from Dar es Salaam she proposed was added to the list. However, as in the previous meetings the main decision of arranging a joint training seminar was presented as an assumed fact, as well as the contents of the training seminar. The idea that “we have two days workshop on project planning, logical framework (...) and bookkeeping” (P3, 102) was presented as a fact that had been jointly agreed before. Accordingly, the decision on the division of labour between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGO was already decided, in such a way that the Finnish NGO would take care of the contents and “the practical arrangements will be done here in Morogoro” (P3, 100). In this case the decision making power considered also part of the funding of the project. There was a certain amount of money allocated to TAGO3 and already transferred to TAGO3’s bank account, the use of which could be decided by TAGO3.

The only final decision made in the Meeting III was the decision about the number of members in the preparatory committee which was decided to be five (P3, 88).

Table 17. Summary of the decision making in the meetings

Meeting	Main decision made in the meeting	Decisions that were presented as already made	Main decision makers constructed in discourse
I Retired professionals	To exclude the micro-credit and continue the planning without it	The content of the project as a training course	Explicitly the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO, the NGO in Finland, the participants of the planning group in restricted issues considering the contents, participants and venues of the training course
II Supporting women's entrepreneurship	Meeting the following week in Dar es Salaam		Implicitly the "NGO in Finland"
III Arranging a joint seminar	The number of members in preparatory committee in Morogoro	The duration and contents of a training seminar The content of co-operation as a training seminar	Finnish NGO, the Tanzanian committee in restricted areas of preparing the seminar

Handling of discrepancies

As explained earlier in Meeting I there was an open conflict and dispute about the possibilities of adding a micro-credit component to the project. The course of the conflict was such that the Tanzanian participants initiated the debate by introducing the topic and gave a number of arguments for adding micro-credit, in mostly different forms of the basic argument that the retired professionals could not make use of the skills learned without any initial financial input. The co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO several times made statements indicating that there was no such component in the project and did not get involved into the discussion about the amount of initial capital needed in putting skills to practice despite the persuasive arguments of the Tanzanian participants. On the contrary, the discrepancy was transformed into a question whether the planning of the project should be finished all together if the training project would be enough. After that a constructive solution was proposed by one of the Tanzanian participants when she proposed that there should be another Finnish NGO found to take care of the

micro-credit aspect. The conclusion that this particular project was not going to be extended was the end of the dispute.

585. MATT: (...) *Limit our focus to this offering a certain kind of training. We are going to feel, you are going to feel in your skins and in your bodies, that it is not going to really help, and because it's not going to touch this problem, that problem, and that's what we are, that's what we are suffering at this moment, I mean the knowledge that, this little thing that we are thinking about doing is not really going to solve these other problems, and we need other NGOs, other projects for them, and that's clear*

586. SEBASTIAN: *it's clear*

587. MATT: *hmm, that's the division*

At the end of the meeting the dispute was commented on by the meeting participants. In the comments the dispute was reconstructed as a dispute between finishing and continuing the planning and the outcome of the dispute was seen as legitimating the limited training focus. On the other hand, the Tanzanian participant commented that the dispute is just a part of being transparent and as such a good thing. The comments are surrounded with laughter which ends the conflict situation.

613. MATT: *Okay... that's good, because then we can... I think this has been very important discussion today really [Sebastian laughing]... awfully important, because it was important for me to make clear for myself that it was not useless to continue this limited training objectives, to continue planning, because if it was useless it was important to know now, you know, so that we wouldn't waste resources in time by pushing on*

614. ERIC: *The other thing is that you said straight away from the beginning that we should just feel free, so we are just trying to be transparent, and give you whatever we think.*

In Meetings II and III there were no explicit discrepancies or disputes in regard to co-operation.

Strategic use of documents and language

In every meeting there were different documents in diverse use. Documents were used both in the actual discussion and referred to by participants. Reference was made to documents exchanged in the past, or documents that would be drafted and used later.

In Meeting I different documents were used *in situ* in 19 speech turns (out of total 715). These documents included a draft of the invitation letter for people to join the final presentation of the plan, copies of a Chinese poem delivered by the Finnish co-ordinator, copies of the speech that the Finnish co-ordinator had given in the previous meeting and copies of a paper covering the issues that TAGO1 had brought up the previous day. From the point of view of power relation and strategic use of documents the three latter are of interest.

The co-coordinator of the Finnish NGO started the meeting by handing out copies of his comments from the previous meetings (P1, 1-3, 47, 54, 47). After that the Tanzanian participants delivered copies of their previous statement (P1, 62-65). A close look at the contents of the documents (see Table 18) reveals that in addition to communicating participants' view to others, the copies entailed meta-strategies in order to influence the other's point of view. The documents distributed commented on both the anticipated content of the project and the planning process itself.

Table 18. Excerpts from the documents exchanged in the FIGO-TAGO meeting of 24.6. 1999

	Paper presented by Matt (FIGO)	Paper presented by Eric (TAGO)
Planning process	<p>"You have to choose between two roads, two viewpoints, when you make these planning decisions. One of these ways is the road of self-centered, immediate-family centered interest (...)</p> <p>The other way is the road of community-center interest. Taking this way you would see yourself together with other retired professionals as forming one broad, extended Morogoro family".</p> <p>"You need moral courage to say no to the temptation of primary personal and immediate family gains".</p>	<p>"Project planning should be a bottom-up exercise and not a top-down imposed set of ideas".</p> <p>"The project should be a problem-solving intervention otherwise it is a waste of resources".</p> <p>"Skills acquired through the training project should be immediately put into practice to improve the life situation of retired professionals".</p>
Contents of the project and planning	<p>"now we are coming to the crucial decisions in this project: to choose the subject content of the first pilot course, to determine the criteria for choosing participants, to choose trainers and teachers and to select the training centre in which to hold the course".</p>	<p>"The Finnish support should address retired professionals priority needs and burning problems including a) having income generating projects/retraining; b) having a revolving credit fund; c) having a retired professionals interaction centre, and d) having a tractor to part solve the food shortage problem".</p>

First, the two documents clearly represent the two different interests at stake in the planning – the interest of the FIGO1 to implement a training project and the preference of the TAGO1 for projects with more income-generation aspects. Second, the documents tell something about the strategies that were used when advocating these interests and in attempts to “enrol the others into it” (Long 2001). The strategies used included that of condemning the other’s point of view of the content of the project as well as representing the ways the other party had acted in the planning process as somehow wrong.

The document supplied by TAGO1 demonstrates that the training project aimed at in the planning phase is not the one that was most immediately needed. In contrast, this would be income-generation schemes, an interaction center and a tractor (all of which would be inaccessible without outside money would be impossible). Moreover, it makes the accusation that of the planning is a “top-down” exercise which in development co-operation is currently quite an unacceptable way of planning. In the same vein, the document supplied by the FIGO interprets attempts to extend the content of projects as manifesting “self-centeredness”, once again a phenomenon quite an “unacceptable” way in NGO-development co-operation. These explicit moral judgements in the documents function as strategies for advocating separate points of view in trying to influence, not only the content of the project, but also the conception of the “other” as being an acceptable partner.

Similarly, before setting the task for the day, the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO read the famous Chinese poem about the importance of education.⁶⁵ The poem gave an additional legitimation to the training approach selected for the project by emphasising the priority of education in overall development. Additionally, the problem tree produced by TAGO1 the previous year was mentioned in two instances. First, it was mentioned in the talk the TAGO1 chairman in his presentation which was video-taped. He brought up the idea of problem tree being one of the initial means of communication between these two organisations. Second, the problem tree was referred to by the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO in the middle of the debate about adding the micro-credit scheme in order to justify the selection of training and leaving other problems depicted in the tree to be solved by others.

⁶⁵ The poem was read as: “If you are thinking one year ahead, so seed. If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree. If you are thinking one hundred years ahead, educate the people. By sowing seed once, you harvest once. By planting a tree, you will harvest tenfold. By educating people, you will harvest one hundred fold.”

Table 19. Reference made to problem tree in the meeting 24.6.1999.

Chairman of TAGO1	Co-ordinator of Finnish NGO
<p>33. (...) we have had a lot of struggle to make connections abroad and within the country to look for partnership for similar NGOs who can be willing and able to work together in certain ideas of common interests. After considerable efforts we have managed to get in contact with FIGO1. We have had some considerable correspondence (...) one of the correspondences which interested us was based on our <i>problem tree</i>, based on the logical framework analysis on our problems as retired professionals, then we came up with an interesting aspect of related to training, training our professionals, to give them specific skills which could help them to solve some of their economic problems (...) within the problem tree the idea came from Matt (co-ordinator of FIGO), who said, now I think training is important and so far we are now embarking on this idea, planning it well, so that we can eventually succeed to take it on board.</p>	<p>585. (...) when we brought with us the <i>problem tree</i>, we saw awfully clearly, it was looking at a bad dream, looking into that problem tree of yours, we saw awfully clearly the twenty or twenty five different really serious problems on that tree, one of which was that retired people can't get credit anywhere, they can't get. And what I said to you the first day that one of the difficulties what we are going to have is that, that when we only confine our focus to this. Limit our focus to this offering certain kind of training, we are going to feel, you are going to feel in your skins and in your bodies, that it is not going to really help, and because it's not going to touch this problem, that problem, and that's what we are, that's what we are suffering at this moment, I mean the knowledge that, this little thing that we are thinking about doing is not really going to solve these other problems, and we need other NGOs, other projects for them, and that's clear.</p>

The comment shows how the documents produced through tools of LFA both facilitated communication between the Finnish and Tanzanian organisations and enabled districted decision making and functioned as a tool to legitimate the point of view of the Finnish partners.

In Meeting II the documents played an important but somewhat different role in discussion. Rather than being a means for constructing an object or to influence other actors the documents themselves became the main topic of the meeting. Most of the interaction in the meeting was structured in a way that the Finnish representatives read the draft plan of the organisation and commented on it both in Finnish to each other and in English to the representatives of TAGO2. The documents under scrutiny were the draft plan of the organisation, the tentative budget, registration certificate and the constitution. In a few instances the interaction proceeded so that first the Finnish representatives asked for documents after which the Tanzanian chairperson answered by explaining the content of the potential document orally, as in a case of budget in the following excerpt:

48. PETER: *Have you a project plan in figures, numbers?*

49. MARY: *In terms of what, in terms of funds or what or priority?*

50. PETER: *Plan of the organisation, future plan, how much it will cost to take through all these plans [looks at the paper]*

51. REBECCA: *A plan for how to use the money?*

52. MARY: *Aha, okay, for example, for these activities, like, construction of plot, I mean, the rooms, two rooms, three rooms, to go started, about two rooms or three rooms. It will cost us almost five million. Two rooms for food processing, and two rooms for tailoring and handicraft. It takes about five million, and it's mentioned, two million and five hundred thousand for two rooms, so total of four rooms it is about five million, that will be at least near the conditions for process procedures for TBS certification, if you get at least two, three rooms, then for future plan, we can expand, but initially, it will be about two rooms, I think it is okay.*

In the meeting the lack of proper documents was constructed as a main hindrance for beginning the co-operation. Therefore in many (40) speech turns the documents that would be prepared in the future were discussed. The new constitution of TAGO2 under amendment, more proper and detailed activity plan and a subsequent budget were discussed. Power relations in using documents were more connected to the demand for “better documents” but no clear definition of what these documents should look like was given. Additionally, the fate of the plans and budgets that were delivered from TAGO2 to FIGO2 during previous years was left unclear. Moreover, the importance of the documents was justified by the need of the FIGO2 to report to its funder: “because we have to give our reports to foreign minister” (P2, 348).

In Meeting III documents other than the agenda paper discussed above played a minor role. No other documents were distributed or required. The draft of the agreement between the organisations was mentioned in the beginning of the meeting, but since it had been left in Dar es Salaam it was not discussed further. The only instance in which a document that entailed power relation was mentioned was in the end of meeting when the Tanzanian participants asked possibilities for support for their other activities. In her answer the chairperson of FIGO3 made reference to the funding application for the Ministry:

394. RICK: *maybe one thing, we in TAGO3 are trying to organize open public talks every month, and maybe this think will take of very soon, now there is, it involves a lot of arrangements, preparations and so on, but we have, we have asked KEPA to assists us somehow. Maybe in future we could also ask you to support this and do this together*

395. JOHANNA: *Hh...yes, if you now start and tell what happens in the future, then it's easier to put in our applications, because we have to write very concrete applications.*

A prerequisite for any negotiation about co-operation is that the participants speak a language that both can understand. In the negotiation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs the language is English. Usually, English is not a mother tongue of any of the actors involved in negotiations. None of the Finnish actors participating in the meetings analysed spoke Kiswahili beyond a few ordinary greetings. The representatives of Tanzanian NGOs were educated individuals who had received some of their education in English. They had no major difficulties to communicate in English. In contrast, most of the Finnish actors taking part in development co-operation in Morogoro did not speak English very well and at times had great difficulties in communicating in English.

Thus, the negotiation about the projects took part in English. Moreover, in such situations the participants could also be quite sure that the partners did not understand their mother tongue. This enabled discussions that were not meant for “others’ ears” in between the meetings. In such instances of exclusive communication some strategic aspects could be identified and the examination of these aspects is important in looking into the practical means of construction of power relations.

In Meeting I there were instances within the debate on adding the micro-credit issues in which the Tanzanian participants shifted their language into Kiswahili. For example, one such instance was a part of argumentation for the importance of initial capital in starting up poultry in which the Tanzanian participants showed lengthy calculations about the expenses related. As the following excerpt shows, the discussion shifts into a kind of meta-discourse about the strategy of convincing the Finnish about the importance of initial capital but not to exaggerate the amount of money to lose the argument:

475. CHRISTINA: *At least five hundred thousand*
 476. SEBASTIAN: *Or more*
 477. ELIAS: *Kama unapanda* [if you build up the shelter]
 478. CHRISTINA: *Sasa tukiomba hela nyingi* [now if we ask much money/in hesitating tone]
 479. SEBASTIAN: *Say five hundred thousand*
 480. CHRISTINA: *Weka minimum, bwana* [say the minimum, man]
 481. SEBASTIAN: *Five hundred thousand; that is the bare minimum.*

In Meeting II there was no strategic negotiation in Kiswahili. Kiswahili was used on one occasion in which the executive member of TAGO3 explained the course of the discussion to the members of TAGO3 who did not understand English. In Meeting II there were a number of instances in which language was shifted into Finnish. Some of these occasions seemed to be simple translation because two

of the Finnish representatives did not speak English well. However, in some instances a certain meta-negotiation was done about the strategies. For example, the following excerpt tells about the negotiation whether to buy a plot for construction or rent rooms. The Finnish representatives do not want to enter the discussion by inquiring about the possible prices of plots since they do not want to show interests in the buying option:

165. REBECCA: *Ostaminen mun mielestä, voisko toi olla viis tonni, ei mul oo oikeen hajuu, tonttien hinnat, heil on tarjottu, kaupunki on tarjonnut heille tonttia hintaan neljäkuusviistuhatta, eiks se oo joku viis tonni sitten* [to buy, I think, could this be five thousands (Finn marks, reads the paper), I don't know about the prices of plots, the municipality has offered a plot with 465 000 (Tanzanian shillings), is it something like five thousand (Finn marks)]

166. PETER: *Hmm*

167. REBECCA: *mut ei siin* [but there's no]

168. PETER: *Mut ei siin oo vesi ja sähkö* [there is no water or electricity included]

169. REBECCA: *Mut ei meidän kannata olla edes kiinnostunu, koska sit se kuvittelee, et me* [But we should not show interest in this, because then she thinks that we..]

170. PETER: *Imasee sen koko homman ja sit se, tämä räjähtää* [it will then take whole thing and this will blow off ...]

171. JOHN: *Niin* [yes]

172. REBECCA: *Käsiin* ... [... into our hands]

173. MARY: *in this were long term objectives, but for short term, we plan to have an office, this is not an office of the organisation, this is (...).*

In Meeting III there was no possibility for the Finnish representatives to negotiate in Finnish since there was only one of them present. As for the Kiswahili, there were a number of occasions where the Tanzanian participants whispered in Kiswahili among themselves and then encouraged the executive secretary of TAGO3 to inquire about the issue from the Finnish representative. Most of these occasions were related to the invitations of guests of honour in the seminar. The members of TAGO3 were reluctant to invite those guests since the invitation would have involved some costs such as allowances and accommodation. However, it was impossible to hear the actual content of most of the discussion in Kiswahili because of very quiet whispering. The following excerpt is an illustrative example of such negotiation.

168. CHARLES: *Vice President, there is a minister, and of course we want him to be there, but okay...he*

169. RICK: *Sasa sijui kama tunayo na ongeza wageni [whispering][I don't know if we have (money) to add guests]*

170. ELIZABETH: *Sio organizing committee, ita...[not the organising committee, it will be...]*

171. CHARLES: *We are thinking of inviting this man, because he talks so much about the environmental conservations .. because NGOs have been very much involved in planning it (...)*

172. JOHANNA: *Okay.*

In this excerpt there is a discussion about the potential guests to be invited. The representative of KEPA ponders whether a minister in charge of the NGOs should be invited. The representative of TAGO3 is quite hesitant about this idea and reminds about the costs involved in inviting a high standard guest. The other representative of TAGO starts a sentence in which she thinks it will not be the committee's responsibility to take care of the costs involved, but the responsibility of the Finnish partners. However, this is not very clear, and the discussion is not continued in this instance.

Table 20. Strategic use of documents and language

Meeting	Strategic use of documents	Exclusive use of language
I Retired professionals	Documents used in order to influence others point of views and legitimating own position	Tanzanians negotiating their strategy in Kiswahili
II Supporting women's entrepreneurship	Documents used as the locus of interaction and as the critical issue in starting the co-operation	Finnish negotiating about how much information to reveal in Finnish
III Arranging a joint seminar		Tanzanians negotiating about the invitation of guests of honour in Kiswahili

Making divisions in speech

In order to explore the potential emergence of "we" as a new collective subject in co-operation the use of divisions in speech was explored. First, in regard to the overall problematic of emerging of collective subject in co-operation the discursive division between the Finnish and Tanzanian actors was made. Second, divi-

sions between Finland and Tanzania, or the Finnish and Tanzanian ways of doing some things were made. Third, in regard to power relations inside the group of Finnish actors some divisions between different actors were defined. Fourth, accordingly, some divisions were made between different Tanzanian actors.

a) Finnish actors – Tanzanian actors

In Meeting I there were some usages of “we” in reference to the entire planning group including both Finnish and Tanzanian actors. Especially, when the planning group discussed sending an invitation letter for the public presentation of the plan it was supposed to be signed by “we”, on behalf of the planning group (P1, 125, 155). However, in the discussion on the topic of adding the micro-credit facility the pronoun “we” began to refer to the Finnish actors and the Tanzanian actors in planning group separately. For example in the question of the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO about whether the planning was worth continuing he asks: “*are you saying that the course we are offering within this framework that we have*” (P1, 416) shows how the conflict breaks down the idea of “we” as a planning group and separates between you [Tanzanian] who comment on the idea we [Finnish] have offered. In a similar vein, a little bit later the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO comments on taking up the issue of credit facility:

532.MATT: “*You are calling the waiter back and saying that, no this first meal that I ordered I don’t want this, and I don’t know whether the cooks in our kitchen can repair this . I mean we really saw a realistic possibility for planning the content of a training course*”.

A similar division constructing the “we” vs. “you” scheme could be identified in the comment by a Tanzanian participant on the dispute: “We are not trying to be hard nuts” (P1, 553). Here the representative of the Tanzanian organisation refers to “we” as the Tanzanians who are constructed as “hard nuts” vis-à-vis the Finnish representatives.

If in Meeting I there were some fragile initiatives in order to speak with “we” about all the participants, in Meeting II the reference was continuously made to “we” as Finnish and “we” as Tanzanians separately. For example the representative of the Finnish organisations states: “*If we are coming to you we must have the papers* (P2, 240)”. A similar division is made by the Tanzanian participant for example when asking the opinion of the Finnish actors about the potential priority activities of the organisation:

327. MARY: (...) *Last year we proposed three areas, one was the construction of a production centre, the other one was a revolving fund and the third one was train-*

*ing. I don't know. If we only take one, which one, which one should we start with, or are there no demarcations? If the funds will be released let's say this year or next year, which activity on those area we agreed or proposed, not yet agreed but we proposed last year. Which one will start? Do **you** want it to be for production or for training or for the revolving fund?*

These two examples above illuminate the division made between the Finnish and Tanzanian actors in the meetings. At the discursive level the meeting was about discussing “we” as a Finnish organisation potentially giving funds to “you”, the Tanzanian organisation and, consequently, giving the decision-making power into the hands of “you”, the Finnish organisation in regard to activities of “us”, the Tanzanian organisation.

Somewhat in contrast in Meeting III there were a number of attempts by the Finnish representative to allocate the decision power to the Tanzanian committee. However, in showing at discursive level of being able to “give” decision making power into the hands of the Tanzanians the basic division between those who have the a priori decision making power and those who are allocated it within certain limits was constructed. The division between the Finnish and Tanzanian actors was done in two aspects -first in regard to the practical arrangement a division of the seminar participants of who “we” as a Finnish organisation take care the Tanzanian participants the arrangement of whom is a task of “you”, the Tanzanian committee. Second, a division was made in relation to the planning and implementing of the project. The content of the seminar was to be arranged by the Finnish side, the practical arrangements by the Tanzanian committee.

b) *Finland – Tanzania*

In addition – making a division between Tanzanian and Finnish actors at the level of interaction, divisions between the Finnish and Tanzanian ways of doing things were made.

In the meeting I the clearest division between Finnish and Tanzanian way was made in the discussion about the possible participation allowance for the course participants. In the interaction paying the allowance was defended by saying it was a Tanzanian custom. In response to the idea the co-ordinator of the Finnish organisation stated that in Finland nobody would expect to be paid when attending training.

In Meeting II the most important division between the Tanzanian and Finnish ways was made in relation to the administration systems of organisations. However, this division was not made explicitly in the interaction between the Finnish and Tanzanian partners, but was mostly constructed within the interaction in Finnish. The main idea that emerged in the discussion was that the documents, such as ac-

tivity plans, budgets and reports in Tanzanian organisation could be according to the Finnish standards and regulations before the co-operation would be started.

372. PETER: (...) *But the documentation has to be according to our bureaucracy, and these papers unfortunately are not* [originally in Finnish].

In Meeting III the division between Finnish and Tanzanian ways of doing things was evident in two aspects. First, within the discussions about the programme of the training seminar and the participation of the guests of honour a division between the Finnish habit of short introductions and low hierarchy between the government officials and the Tanzanian custom of showing respect to the government officials by a certain kind of applause and a chain of introductions based on a certain etiquette was compared. However, if in Meetings I and II the Finnish way was explicitly valued as “better” in this discussion neither way emerged as preferable. Second, a division between the Tanzanian and Finnish way was seen in regard to the allowances paid to the members of the preparatory committee. In regard to this issue the decision-making power was left to the committee in Tanzania, but the Finnish way of voluntary preparation without an allowance was pointed out.

c) *Finnish – Finnish*

In every meeting the Finnish organisation was represented by one to three members, the status of whom in the organisation varied. Thus, at the level of interaction there were instances in which the representatives were positioned vis-à-vis other Finnish actors.

In Meeting I the co-ordinator of the Finnish organisation made a distinction between himself and the other representative and the organisation in Finland. Especially with the discussion about the potential micro-credit he depicted himself as quite powerless in relation to the Finnish organisation.

427. MATT: *I think that is necessary to make clear is that ... Rob and I don't, haven't been given the authority to go beyond this framework that we have brought to you and so, our question is ... can we do something within this framework, that is useful without expanding it, or should we just think that this idea cannot get ahead, because we cannot make these additions? So we just, in very good agreement say, we have come along the wrong road, we stop here because there is no way to go ahead?*

In the same vein in meeting II the Finnish representatives were constructed as messengers who carry messages back to the Finnish organisation in Finland where the actual decisions about the co-operation would be made. In addition to the

division between the actual representatives and the organisation in Finland also a division between the Finnish organisation and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was made. The need of the Finnish NGO to report to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was pointed out as one reason for requiring information.

A similar division between the Finnish organisation and the Ministry as a funder was made in Meeting III when the representative of the Finnish NGO made a reference to the need for good and exhaustive applications the Finnish NGO should deliver to the Ministry in order to receive funding.

d) Tanzanian – Tanzanian

Those who represented the Tanzanian organisations were mostly members of the executive committee of respective organisations. In the first meeting there were also two so-called ordinary members of TAGO1. The participation of ordinary members was initiated by the co-ordinator of the Finnish organisation who had instructed in his letter prior to planning meetings that there should be two executive members and two “rank-and-file” members of the organisation taking part in planning. In the meeting important divisions were made between the executive members of the organisation who were constructed as responsible of taking care of their members’ problems. Second, there was a division made between the members of the organisations and the “other” retired professionals in relation to the discussion who would be right beneficiary of the project. The priority of the members of the organisations was stressed.

In Meeting II the main division that occurred was between the chairperson of the organisation and the other members. The chairperson was the main representative of the Tanzanian organisation along with one of the executive members in the meeting. However, there were also five ordinary members of the organisation present. At the beginning of the meeting they were outside the meeting room cooking lunch. After entering the room, they sat silently in the back of the room and did not actively take part in the discussions. At one point (turn 312) a member of the executive committee of the Tanzanian organisation turned to the other members and started to explain to the women that the Finnish representatives were asking for the financial reports of the organisation. The members wondered what kind of report this would mean and the chairperson allowed the members to ask questions of the Finnish participants. However, the members did not take the initiative but rather expressed their support for the chairperson. Additionally, the Finnish participants, who did not understand the discussion in Kiswahili, did not take the initiative to listen to the ordinary members.

321. MARY: *Kama unaweza kuongeza swali, uliza tu Kiswahili Tiina yupo atawaeleza ... [if you could add a question, ask in Kiswahili, Tiina is here, she can interpret them]*

322. MEMBER: *Tuko pamoja [we agree with you]*

323. CHAIRPERSON: *tuko pamoja ... [we agree]*

324. REBECCA: *mä vielä katon vähän tätä... [takes a paper] [I just look for a while]*

In Meeting III the main divisions of importance were made in regard to the discussion of the potential participants in the training seminar. First, as shown in the following excerpt, the executive committee takes over the power to make decision on which organisations are going to be invited to the training event and have already prepared a list of such organisations. Second, in the list a division between the Tanzanian organisations is made on the basis of their existing relationship with Finnish organisations, or their expressed will to find a Finnish partner by submitting a project proposal.

136. JOHANNA: *Or let's talk about the Tanzanian guests and Tanzanian participants, and the Finnish guests and Finnish participants.*

137. RICK: *As for the participants of the Tanzanian side, we have prepared a small list for the agenda of the meeting, maybe we can have a look there*

138. DAVID: *Yes...number four*

139. RICK: *Now, may I say two things here. We came to this list, first of all we have used the criteria that those NGOs that are already in cooperation with several NGOS in Finland we thought they should participate. The other criteria we used was that the NGOs which have brought in there proposals for their projects//*

140. //JOHANNA: *yes very good//*

Table 21. Summary of divisions made in the meetings

Meeting	Finnish-Tanzanian	Finland-Tanzania	Finnish-Finnish	Tanzanian-Tanzanian
I Retired professionals	"We" as a planning group vs. "we" and "you" as Finnish and Tanzanian participants	Finnish way of not paying allowance to participants in training vs. Tanzanian habit of paying allowance	Representatives in the meetings vs. the "NGO" in Finland	Leaders of TAGO1 vs. members Members of TAGO1 vs. other retired professionals
II Supporting women's entrepreneurship	"We/you" as Finnish and potential funders vs. "We/you" as Tanzanians as recipients and implementers	The documents required in Finnish organisation vs. the documents in Tanzanian organisation	Representatives in the meetings vs. the "NGO" in Finland The Finnish NGO vs. the Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Chairperson of TAGO2 vs. the ordinary members
III Arranging a joint seminar	"We/you" as Finnish taking care of the content of the training vs. "we/you" as Tanzanians taking care of the practical arrangements	Introductions of guests of honor Voluntary work vs. allowances for preparation in NGOs	Representatives in the meetings vs. the "NGO" in Finland The Finnish NGO vs. the Ministry for Foreign Affairs	NGOs already having co-operation with Finnish NGOs vs. any NGO in Morogoro

Looking into the obvious – Constructing donor/recipient relations

In exploring the construction of donor/recipient relationship in encounters in regard to actual handling of and discussing about money. I looked into how money was handled and discussed in the meetings focusing explicitly on occasion where donor/recipient relations were evident.

For background information, the status of funds in all of the three projects was different at the time of the meetings. The project for retraining of retired professionals had received some funding from the Finnish Ministry for the planning of the project. The planning meetings aimed at producing the final plan on which

the project proposal for the Ministry would be based in order to get the actual project funding. The budget for planning was not open to all of the participants and it was administered by the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO. In the project to support women's entrepreneurship a planning budget had been used the previous year. The application for the Ministry had been made on the basis of discussion and the Ministry had allocated project funding for the project. At the time of the meeting only the representatives of the Finnish NGO knew about the positive response to the application and they did not reveal the information to Tanzanian partner in the meeting. In the project of arranging the training seminar for NGOs the Finnish NGOs had already delivered some funds to the bank account of the Tanzanian organisation as part of their capacity building efforts. In the meeting it was discussed whether this fund should be used and for which costs related to arranging the seminar.

In Meeting I money was discussed in relation to practical tasks such as copying and posting the invitation letters, in regard to the question of paying allowances to course participants and in many ways within the debate about the micro-credit facility. In ways shown in previous subchapters, the reconstruction of the donor/recipient relationship can be seen in all of these aspects. However, on the occasion of actually dealing with money in order to get the invitation letters written on the computer and copied the donor/recipient relationship was put into actual practice. After agreeing that the executive secretary of TAGO1 would do the clerical work considering the issue, there was a discussion to solve how the costs would be covered.

181. MATT: *Ok, so you are going to get it typed up with a computer. Will you take care of getting envelopes and stamps also?*

182. ERIC: *I can do that, but my problem is, I don't have enough cash.*

183. MATT: *To do that*

184. ERIC: *Yes, otherwise*

185. SEBASTIAN: *You can give him an advance*

186. MATT: *OK*

187. SEBASTIAN: *An advance and then he will account for it*

188. MATT: *OK*

189. ERIC: *Because I was thinking it is very cumbersome for you to do all these small jobs*

190. MATT: *Jah, I'll give you that. How much should I give you?*

191. SEBASTIAN: *I'd say fifteen*

192. ERIC: *Fifteen, ten thousand*

193. MATT: *For these, I give you ten thousand because I think that's ... yeah, I'll give you either one and you can make the accounting then afterwards.*

Such a discussion was quite typical example of a discussion in which the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO was constructed as the “owner” of the project money from whom the other partners in the project asked for money for any expense related to the project. The above discussion reflects also two different standards of accounting for used money. In the Finnish context it is quite common that people first use their personal money and then invoice the project or employer afterwards whilst an ordinary Tanzanian rarely has some “extra” money to be invested and invoiced afterwards.

In Meeting II money was discussed in relation to the topics of buying a plot for construction, commenting on the other issues in the provisional budget, the practices of bookkeeping in TAGO and the membership fee of the TAGO2. Typical to this meeting was that the talk about money related to project was abstract since no figures in the potential project budget were discussed. In the meeting there was some kind of implicit bargaining. The representatives of the Tanzanian NGO were trying to figure out how much the tentative budget of the project could be to adjust their planning accordingly. The representatives of the Finnish NGOs were searching for the “authentic” budget of the NGO before figuring out how much they would like to contribute to that. As in Meeting I, the construction of the donor/recipient relation in the meeting II had to do with the need to account for the money used. In the previous meeting this issue was discussed while some chores related to project had to be done; in meeting II the need for accounts and accounting were used in regard the whole project. In addition, the concept of accountability was extended to cover not only the potential fund for the project but also all of the organisational accounts of the Tanzanian NGO:

240. PETER: *If we are coming to you we must have the papers, because if we give money we must get receipts and bookkeeping for this whole system once a year.*

In Meeting III there were a lot of discussions about concrete sums related to the practical arrangements of the training seminar. The rent of the lecture rooms and price of accommodation for the participants was discussed and calculated on the basis of the basic information the Tanzanian participants had gathered from different training facilities. The discussion became more abstract when it came to the salary and allowances paid to the training facilitators and invited guests. Implicitly, there was a negotiation about who was going to pay them without discussing with the exact sums. Additionally, money was discussed in regard to the allowances and costs of the preparatory committee itself. In this regard the decision making was left to the Tanzanian NGO.

71. ELIZABETH: *I think she is saying, that the organizing committee will be paid transport while they are doing, while they are organizing the seminar*

72. DAVID: *OK*

73. RICK: *Transport, stationery maybe*

74. JOHANNA: *Sorry?*

75. RICK: *Stationary, the working material*

76. JOHANNA: *Yes, yes of course, these administrative costs, yes, from the money we have given to you*

77. ELIZABETH: *So if I understand correctly the money which you send may be used for buying stationery for the seminar as well*

78. JOHANNA: *Yes.*

In the above excerpt the covering the running costs of the preparatory committee were discussed. The donor/recipient relation is constructed in two ways. In the statement of “the money we have given to you” the image of the Finnish NGO as a donor and the Tanzanian as a recipient is reconstructed. In a similar vein, the questions posed by the Tanzanian representatives about the acceptable ways of using the money already sent to them reflects the idea of Finns being the donors that have a right to decide how money is used.

6.4 Conclusion: Construction of power relations in development encounters

Means of power in interaction

After a detailed description of the interaction situations I shall return to the initial research question this chapter intended to answer: how was power exercised in the negotiations between partners?

The agenda-setting and definition of the topics was one aspect in which power was exercised (Wodak 1996). The ways to control the agenda, to include and exclude some topics was one of the means of exercising power. The apparent non-decision making left room for ambiguous perceptions of who was eligible to decide, when the decisions would be made and on what grounds. Moreover, the transformation of certain topics into others functioned as one means of power. One example of this is the transformation of the question of including the micro-credit component in the project into the question of should the planning of the project be stopped all together.

In a similar vein, analysis of the interaction revealed that power was exercised both by decision making and non-decision making. Wodak (1996) observed that one of the typical ways of exercising power is to present decisions that are already

made elsewhere as motions in negotiation. In analogy to this observation I argue, that power was exercised in meetings by presenting the decisions considering the contents and scopes of the projects made in Finland as if they had already been thoroughly negotiated and agreed upon together with partners. The idea of having consensus about the contents of the project proved not to be very authentic.

Power was also exercised in definitions of the spaces for decision-making power. Even if in all the cases the Tanzanian partners were discursively constructed as important decision makers considering certain issues, the final decision of “on what to decide” remained in the hands of the Finnish representatives. In actual interaction this was kind of an appropriation of decision making power was done by both Finnish and Tanzanian representatives. However, considering the multivocality of power, an analogous phenomenon emerged between the executive members of the Tanzanian organisations and their membership. The executive members occupied the decision making space allowed by their Finnish counterparts speaking, acting and deciding on behalf of the members.

One of the means of exercising power in the meetings was the usage of documents. The use of documents for argumentation for one’s own point of view was an illustration of quite an open use of documents in struggle. In more hidden ways, it can be argued that the exercise of speaking of documents – and the “right kind of documents” – rather than the existing practical activities of the organisation functioned as exercise of power. In the similar vein some of the instances of speaking a language that the other partner did not understand in order to negotiate about the strategy was one of the means by which power relations were constructed in encounters.

The exploration of the divisions made in speech revealed the multiplicity of power relations. The fact that there was a continuous division between “you” and “we” between Finnish and Tanzanian representatives could itself be understood as an emergence of power relations. However, connected to the observation that the division included often the idea of the “Finnish way” different from, and somehow better, than the “Tanzanian way” brings in the aspect of power relations. Additionally, the explicated divisions between the Finnish representatives and the decisions makers back in Finland and the division between executive members, ordinary members and non-members of Tanzanian organisations beared a hierarchical aspect.

Multivocality of power

After depicting the practical means of exercising power in interaction I shall return to the three metaphors of power introduced in the beginning of the chapter. The metaphor of *power to* was not the central focus of my analysis. Moreover, based on

the analysis of a few meetings it is impossible to say what did the interaction and co-operation enabled afterwards. However, the meetings were negotiations about the “power to” – power to arrange events, working spaces and training in order to improve some aspects in the life of the members of the NGOs. Looking from that perspective, it was quite surprising how little the problems in the life and practice of the intended beneficiaries, the retired professionals, the ordinary members of the women’s NGO or the non-governmental organisations in Morogoro were discussed in the negotiations. The questions of “what are the problems? what could we do to solve them?” emerged in a few initiatives but did not become an object of real negotiation. The overall image was that the problems were “already known” and there was no need to discuss them further.

If the metaphor of *power to* was not very relevant to this specific analysis, there were some implications the metaphor of *power over* was shown in various instances. For example the strategic use of documents and the instances of meta-negotiations about the strategies showed that in the meetings at least gradually two interests groups, that of “Finnish” and “Tanzanian” were constructed. Instead of negotiating a shared object these groups at times concentrated on the issue of strategically influencing each others’ view and enrolling the other to their point of view (Long 2001; Long and Villarreal 1993). However it was evident is that the notion of “interest” group received a peculiar meaning since also the Finnish representatives’ interest was represented as the “interest of the Tanzanian members”, not their own individual or organisational interest.

If the idea of *power over* would presuppose quite well-defined groups and their interests in struggle, the metaphor of *decentralised power* directs our attention to more hidden forms of power acting behind actors’ backs. I argue that in the meetings analysed the development discourse providing assumptions affected in the interaction situation. For example, the social relationships constructed in making divisions in the speech in all cases constructed the Finnish representatives as a “knowledgeable donor” and the Tanzanian representatives a “more ignorant and recipient”. Similarly, the divisions made between the Tanzanian and Finnish ways seemed to entail also the idea of the Finnish way being better and desirable. I argue that these were implications of more systemic power relations since there was no one agency – for example the “donor” side – that would have constructed this position alone but it was merely co-constructed and, moreover, taken as a pre-existing starting point.

The metaphor of *power over* refers also to the intentions of different interest groups to influence each other. I argue, that much of the exercise of power revealed in the analysis was unintentional and more as an effect of the situation and institutional framework. For example, the instances of speaking Kiswahili or Finnish might not have been intentionally aimed at hiding the content of discus-

sion from other, but the result of poor language skills or thinking that it was not necessary to translate everything. Also, the importance of documents considering both the organisational functioning as well as the project work can be seen as an integral to the institutional framework.

7 Trusteeship in management of a project to arrange a training seminar

“I feel generally that the Finnish people have a feeling to assist people who are in need, at least in the site of development. I don’t think they want us to be rich, but they want us to be healthy, they want us to be educated and to have a conducive civilization which will be accepted by all these people (...) I use the word sympathiser. There are some people who look at us and they feel that we need some kind of assistance, but do we know ourselves what we really need? I think the Finnish people have really changed, they don’t come as they used to come in 1990 or 1992. Then they came already knowing our needs, and they tried to do something. Then they came the following year, and found that nothing had happened.”

(Interview with a Tanzanian actor 27.7.2000, 62, 64)

The previous chapter dealt with constructing power relations in the actual negotiations in the co-operation between Northern and Southern – in this case Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. I showed, for example, how the donor-recipient relationships typical for the development aid context were reproduced in the interaction between the representatives of the NGOs. In this chapter I shall continue the analysis of the relationship typical of development aid by adding another historical viewpoint to the analysis. I shall discuss the idea of trusteeship (Cowen and Shenton 1996) in the North-South development relationship within the context of a particular project in which a Finnish and a Tanzanian umbrella organisation jointly arranged a training seminar for NGOs in Morogoro.

The analysis of trusteeship adds a specific viewpoint to the historical context of development co-operation and discusses the legacy of colonialism in contemporary development practice (Mercer et. al 2003, 423). Trusteeship connects the exercise of power over others to legitimacy and even a moral obligation of doing so – in the name of improvement of others. The activity theoretical approach proposed that one of the places for contradictions in local activities is the division

of labour between the actors in the processes of object construction. Division of labour entails also the historically formed power relations. As Ebrahim (2003, 52) pointed out, the power relationship between Northern and Southern NGOs are not only constructed by funding but also the different demands and perceptions of the relationship posed by different actors. Exploring trusteeship in relationship provides with a way to analyse historically formed relationship and division of labour that stress more the enduring understanding of the nature of relationship.

As was shown in the previous chapters, the Finnish NGOs considered a new kind of relationship, partnership, as one of the main learning challenges for their co-operation in Morogoro. However, one of the tensions identified in their speech was that of the heritage of colonialism which they perceived both in their own behaviour and in the behaviour of their Tanzanian partners. The ideas of “being ahead” and “knowing better” held by the Finns as well as the handing of authority to the Finns by Tanzanians were reflected as hindrances to real negotiations and co-operation. The explicated idea of development co-operation as enabling Finns “as experts in any area” is reminiscent of the contradiction between the “omniscient self and the backwards, passive and unreliable partner” identified by Eriksson Baaz (2005, 109) in her study of the self images of Swedish and Danish development workers in Tanzania. However, as Eriksson Baaz (*ibid.* 73) points out, we should not concentrate too much on the characteristics of the individual actors that seem to be “paternalistic”, but consider the emergence of contextual and historical elements in the discourse and practice of development workers. The contradiction between the idea of Northern and Southern actors as equal partners (rhetoric) and the perception of Northern actors as more capable “trustees” for the development of their Southern partners (practice) can be considered both in relation to the legacy of colonialism and the birth of the Western idea of modern development itself.

7.1 Connecting development, colonialism and co-operation

Relevance of colonialism and postcolonialism

At first glance one could consider the connection between the history of colonialism and the development co-operation of small Finnish NGOs in Tanzania tenuous and analytically irrelevant. After all, Finland was not part of the European empire, but was rather one of the quite backward and marginal areas struggling for its own existence and independence in the early 20th century. However, at least indirectly, Finland has been part of the overall process of emerging industrialisation, capitalism and modernisation connected to the economic benefits brought by exploitation during colonialism. Today, Finland is part of the global hemi-

sphere called “West” or “North”. Additionally, since the late 19th century the fore-runners of the Finnish NGOs in development, Finnish missionaries, have been a part of the “civilisation” mission typical of colonialism.

On the other hand, Tanzania, or Tanganyika during the colonial period, has a history of being under colonial rule, first governed by Germans since 1844 and then, after the First World War, by the British. The traces of colonial period can be seen in infrastructure, education system and administration structure of contemporary Tanzania even if after independence in 1961 the country developed a peculiar African socialism. For example, the German colonial rulers built roads and railways that are still in use. Later, the British introduced their education system and had a strong impact on the structure of education as well as the curriculum taught at schools. With regard to NGOs, the legislation dating back to the colonial era has provided the legal framework for associations.

The point in this chapter, however, is not to go into the details of the colonial era in Tanzania, but to explore the continuity of ideas of colonialism in today’s development practice. The chapter is not about Finland as a former coloniser and Tanzania as a colonised area, but about the Finns and Tanzanian as actors within the institution of development that itself has connections to colonialism. First, the legacy of colonialism and imperialism has had wide impact on the formation of the contemporary relations between the First and Third World nations enabling the economic, political, cultural and at times military intervention of the former into affairs of the latter (Loomba 1998) – the latter nations themselves being often results of colonial rule.

Second, at a more practical level for example Cooke (2003) has shown the connection between the principles of colonial administration and today’s development management which stresses the concept of participation. He argues that participation in project management owes to the principle of indirect rule exercised by the British colonial administration. Indirect rule refers to the co-optation of the chiefs to the colonial administration system aiming at participation of “natives” in administration (Lugard 1965). The fact that participation in development co-operation projects often remains limited (Cooke and Kothari 2001) and sometimes becomes even merely a managerial trick rather than a real space for engagement reflects the idea of indirect rule. It is the coloniser or the development agency that has the power to enable participation and simultaneously sets the limits to participation and empowerment. In a project it is typical that the local people, or NGOs, are called to participate in a process already established by someone else and the limits of participation are set by the “facilitators” (Vincent 2004, 113; Mosse 2005). In such instances participation is more a process of legitimisation of outsiders’ project ideas than an actual process of empowerment.

Development has, of course, changed considerably from the ideas of direct rule and economic exploitation of the colonial times. The relationships between North and South have become more complicated and new actors have emerged on the global scene. However, as Koponen (1994; 1997) has argued in the Tanzanian case, colonialism dealt not only with exploitation but also development of the colonial areas. The contradiction between direct exploitation and promoting development in the subject areas was evident. For example, Lord Lugard (1965, 18) describes the dual mandate of the British mandatory power in Africa as both to develop and use the wealth of tropical regions for the benefit of mankind (exploitation) and to promote the moral and educational progress of the natives (obligation). The economic principles of exploitation were mixed with humanist ideas, and moral obligation, of civilising and educating the people in colonial areas. The importance of education in changing the Africans to be more like Europeans is one entry point through which one can consider the continuation of colonial ideology in development. The development practice of NGOs, for example, is full of training and capacity-building projects through which the Southern NGOs are made more like their Northern partners.

Generally, a historical era, colonialism is over and post-colonialism has taken its place. For example, the agency of development in Africa has been seen in the post-colonial states, referring to the states that have gained independence from their colonial masters. However, in addition to a historical period the term post-colonialism, and further postcolonialism without the hyphen, refers to the body of literature engaged with revealing the legacy of colonialism especially in the ideology and representation of the West about the rest (Loomba 1998; Young 2001)⁶⁶. The shift of focus from the material and economic relations towards exploring the concept of identity building as a relation between Self and Other has been central to post-colonial thought, inspired by cultural and literature studies. Post-colonial literature has made not much reference to discourses and practices of development co-operation (see Cooke 2003). However, the problematic of Otherness and Othering is quite relevant to development practice in which the economic asymmetries and more representational identities meet in practice. For example, the contradiction of colonialism, that it both needs to civilise its other and still keep

⁶⁶ Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1998, 186–192) discuss the difference between post-colonialism and postcolonialism. Generally, the term post-colonial refers the historical era after the colonial era and the postcolonial to the body of theories engaging with the continuity of colonial ideas in contemporary times. For example, post-colonial states is commonly used in reference to the states that have gained independence from colonial governance, the postcolonial discourse to certain discursive theories of constructions of Otherness (Bhabha 1994; Young 2001). However, they state that the terms *post-colonial* and *postcolonial* studies have become to mean more or less the same: analysis of European territorial conquest and different legacies of colonial era.

them in otherness (Loomba 1998, 173) is easy to see in the number of capacity building projects in which by means of training and education they are made more like Us in order to enable them to be suitable partners for co-operation. On the other hand, there are ways of resistance and mimicry (see Bhabha 1994) in which the Southern actors play a game of “being the same but not quite”. For example, the NGOs on the surface level want to be like the “real NGOs” in the North but leave some hidden places for resistance for doing things in another way.

Eriksson Baaz (2002; 2005) made a pioneer effort to connect development literature with postcolonial literature in her research on the identities of the Swedish and Danish development workers in Tanzania. She showed the emergence of paternalism – typical to colonialism – in the identities of development workers in the “age of partnership”. Her interview data convincingly shows the pertinent tensions between the rhetoric of partnership and the actual practice in development. Much of her data is similar to the speech of the Finnish interviewees in this study even though the interviewees in my study were not professional or expatriate development workers. However, in her analysis Eriksson Baaz concentrated on the identities constructed by the Northern aid workers. In my analysis, following the methodological principle of exploring practice the starting point is an actual process of co-operation in which the legacy of colonial ideas is sought. The analysis of this chapter is not about identity construction but about the emergence of traces of colonial legacy in development as a practice of trusteeship.

Development and trusteeship

In the analysis one particular analytical concept that captures the problematic of the relationship peculiar to development and the legacy of colonialism is used. The concept of trusteeship captures the moral obligations of paternalism but is a concept that is more directly connected to the very idea of development. Michael Cowen and Robert Shenton (1995; 1996) propose that the notion of trusteeship ties the contemporary development discourse and practice both to colonialism and to the very emergence of the modern idea of development. Development co-operation builds upon the idea of development as practice, as “doing development”. This meaning adds to the ideas of development as a desired state and development as a process (of achieving that desired state) (Cowen and Shenton 1996; Koponen 1997; 2004; Thomas 2000) that in the practice seem to be merged together.

However, what is characteristic of the development practice is the idea that development can be designed and planned and it can be directed towards a goal and achieved. In the same vein the idea of “people taking their development in their own hands” is commonly advocated in development discourse stressing

empowerment. This idea again reflects the idea that someone – be it the state, development agency or the people - can “do” development and change the direction of unwanted development through a well-informed intervention. This basic idea of the possibility of intentional development is at the heart of Cowen and Shenton’s (ibid.) argument tracing the emergence of the idea of development, not to the post-World War II reconstruction as is commonly understood within development discourse, but back to the late 19th century Europe and the birth of the positive social science. They (ibid.) argue that we should understand intentional development as an idea that was discovered as a way to ameliorate the unpleasant consequences of immanent development – especially the problem of unemployment brought by industrialisation and urbanisation, the unwanted results of capitalism. In today’s development discourse, unemployment has been replaced by poverty or impoverishment, but the faith in possibilities of intentional development and development interventions has remained.

The idea of trusteeship connects the process of development and intentional development. The original idea of August Comte, as interpreted by Cowen and Shenton (1996, 25) proposed that those who have the capacity should be entrusted with the ability to choose how the society’s resources should be used. They should exercise *trusteeship* over those less capable of managing their development. If Comte proposed a system of bankers to take over trusteeship, the British version of the idea emphasised the role of state officials (ibid., 271) in being the agency of trusteeship since they would not be a self-interest group. The idea of trusteeship continued in the British colonial relationships with India and African colonies in which the state was to be involved in production, trade and administration to ensure the fulfilment of the dual mandate. It became the “trustee power” (Lugard 1965, 275) that was both to take care of its mandate areas, but also to explain to the African his duties of sharing the burdens of Empire in addition to “sharing the benefits”.

Since colonial times, the assumed agent, and trustee, of development has shifted from states to multiple agencies. The NGOs and social movements are one set of actors that have claimed trusteeship of development of others (Cowen and Shenton 1995, 43) by advocating alternative development. However, the basic idea of trusteeship as “the intent which is expressed, by one source of agency, to develop the capacities of another” (Cowen and Shenton 1996, x) seems to pertain even if the conceptualisation of the agency is shifting, and if taking different forms (Nustad 2001, 484).

However, the idea of trusteeship is connected to any kind of process of modern development. One can argue that, for example, the interventionist agenda of organisational studies in activity theoretical framework (see Engeström 1987; Engeström, Engeström and Vähäaho 1999; Virkkunen 2004) is based on the idea that the immanent development of activity systems striven by inner contradic-

tions can be, by virtue of developmental intervention by researchers, taken over by the actors and mastered to a certain extent. However, it is in the context of development co-operation that the questions of legitimation of capabilities and the exercise of trusteeship arise. It seems that sometimes only by the fact of being born and educated in the North is one capable and legitimate to act as a trustee, even if the word itself is not in use, of development in the South and, to have the development of others as a “hobby” with good intentions.

In development literature, the pertinent ideas of eurocentrism, paternalism and trusteeship have been seen as hindrances to authentic or real, development and partnership (Cowen and Shenton 1996, 476; Eriksson Baaz 2005, 176) and subject to critical analysis. In a similar vein with the argument for the analysis of power relations, the learning and change in the relationship presupposes the examination of how trusteeship is emerging at the level of action. In this chapter I shall investigate the ways that the idea of trusteeship emerged in the process of arranging a training seminar for NGOs in Morogoro. I attempt to show, the kinds of practical manifestations that the general the idea of trusteeship gained in this particular project. By so doing, I aim to examine how a development co-operation project that was explicitly stated as a “beginning of a new partnership” at times collides with the practice of trusteeship.

7.2 Trusteeship in action? Views of a project to arrange a seminar in partnership of Finnish and Tanzanian umbrella NGOs

Arranging a seminar together: A beginning of a new partnership?

In the project under investigation in this chapter at least three of the developmental trajectories in the development co-operation of Finnish NGOs are of main importance. First, in this project the idea of beginning a new kind of co-operation, partnership, was made explicit and certain attempts to achieve partnership were made. Second, in this project there was a local partner organisation, an umbrella organisation of the NGOs in Morogoro involved in arranging a training seminar. Third, the training seminar arranged in Morogoro, aimed to improve the “NGO-development co-operation” in general by providing training for both Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs.

The project under analysis in this chapter was the first joint effort between the Finnish umbrella organisation Järjestö and its “partner organisation” in Tanzania, Shirika. The project aimed to arrange a three-day joint seminar in Tanzania in June 2000. Järjestö has a tradition of arranging an annual seminar for its member organisations in Finland. In 2000 it was decided to arrange the seminar in Tanzania and it took place on 8–10 June 2000. At the seminar there were various plenary

presentations discussing the NGOs in Tanzania and the development co-operation of Finnish NGOs. There were also two afternoons of parallel workshops in account keeping, NGO-management, LFA-method and PRA-method. Some 50 participants from Tanzania and 17 participants from Finland participated in the seminar. NGO-management and LFA were facilitated by Finnish people whilst Tanzanian experts were used in PRA and accounting.

In this chapter I shall concentrate, not on the seminar itself, but on the process of preparing the seminar that was a manifestation of a new kind of joint effort between the Finnish and Tanzanian organisations. For example, a previous training seminar on LFA funded by the Järjestö in 1998 was practically arranged by one single person from the office of KEPA according to the instructions of the Finnish organisations. This time, a preparatory committee for the arrangements in Tanzania was formed and it was supposed to work in co-operation with a similar group in Finland. Thus, in activity theoretical terms, this chapter deals with the emergent division of labour during a co-operation project and partly with the divergent conceptualisations on the object of co-operation.

The argument of this chapter is based on the participatory observation of the preparation process in Tanzania and the seminar from February 2000 to June 2000. The recorded data consisted of 23 tape-recorded meetings in Tanzania and in Finland discussing the seminar. The meetings were not transcribed, but a content-log was produced and some relevant pieces of meeting talk were fully transcribed. Additionally, the main actors were interviewed and the email-correspondence between Finnish actors and the preparatory committee in Tanzania was collected. In the analysis I tried to point out the potential events of emergence of trusteeship. No detailed analysis of interaction situations was made for this chapter. Rather, the analysis was done on the basis of participatory observation of the preparation and implementation process.

The actual seminar, at least on a surface level, seemed to be a kind of celebration of leaving the “old” ways of co-operation behind and starting a new era. A number of speakers discussed the emergence of a new partnership between the Finnish and Tanzanian actors. As the chairperson of Järjestö stated in her opening speech of the seminar on 12.6. 2000:

We have gradually come from development aid to development co-operation. Now we are starting the partnership between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. We Finnish NGOs do not want to be donors; we want to be partners.

In this speech the chairperson connects the partnership of Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs to the wider history of development reproducing the rhetoric of development policies as well as bringing up the idea of partnership being merely a desire of

the Northern actors. At the practical level the joint arrangement of the very seminar was considered as a beginning of this new partnership between Järjestö and Shirika. However, the perceptions and experiences of partnership in the process of arranging the seminar varied. The Finnish partners seemed rather satisfied with the efforts in the process. In contrast, all the members of the preparatory committee in Tanzania expressed some reservations about the partnership as well. In the following, I depict some of these perceptions uttered in the interviews (n=4) of the preparatory committee members.

In the comments of the members of the organising committee (see Table 22 for numbered excerpts), partnership was perceived to be problematic in relation to the process of arranging the seminar itself. The seminar was understood as mainly fulfilling the objectives of Järjestö, whereas the role of Shirika was mostly to give practical assistance (excerpt 1) in realising the plans made in Finland. The documents and the statements of the representatives expressed that Shirika was playing the main role (ex. 2). The task of Shirika was mainly to take care of the practical arrangements and the material resources that were provided by Järjestö. The paradox of being called an authentic partner while simultaneously, in practice, depending on the Northern partner organisation was reflected in the interviews (ex. 2).

The organising committee arranged the venue for the seminar, the accommodation and some other practical matters according to advice from the Finnish partners, but they did not have a much to say about the content of the training provided in the seminar, nor the speakers to be invited to the seminar. The problematic expressed by the members of the organising committee reveals the basic tension within the division of labour in the process and the tension between the rhetoric and practice in this particular project. Even though the project was said to be joint, it turned out that most of the substantial planning work was done in Finland. The experiences of the preparatory committee in Tanzania showed that there was quite a lot participation by Tanzanian NGO in a project but the participation space seemed to be defined by others, supposed to “know better” what should be done in order to improve the NGOs and co-operation.

At a more general level, speaking about the partnership of these two particular organisations, the lack of shared planning and negotiation about the content and modes of the partnership, lack of a certain kind of metareflection, was identified as problematic for the partnership (ex. 5). After four months of joint effort of arranging the seminar together, one of the committee members still suggested shared negotiations about the contents of the partnership (ex. 3). In the process it was felt that the “partnership” was something assumed and merely rhetoric rather than having any real meaning. When discussing the actual relationship between Shirika and Järjestö metaphors like *marriage between an old man and a young girl*,

bridge building and relationship between a *mother and a small baby* were used. These metaphors indicated that even if there was an effort of equal partnership the perceptions were that of one partner being more experienced and capable than the other.

The differences and the roles of the organisations were also connected to their locations in the North or developed world, and in the South, or the developing world (ex. 4). The perception of the Finnish role as developers and the role of the Tanzanians as those to be developed was somehow taken for granted. Even in some more sarcastic comments (ex. 2) the division of such roles were not challenged or criticised. The interviews showed that the idea of trusteeship is not only an attitude of Northern people but also to certain extent an assumed situation by Southern partners who, in some cases, perceive it also as the duty and even the moral obligation of the North to intervene. This intervention, though, could be done well or not so well. In order to intervene well and improve the situation, Finnish partners were required to have a good knowledge of the problems in Tanzania.

Table 22. Accounts of problematic features in partnership in the interviews of the members of the Tanzanian preparatory committee

Problematic features in partnership	Excerpt
1) SHIRIKA's role as an assistant to JÄRJESTÖ	(1) "[Our task was] to organise whatever was to be done here [in Tanzania], but the planning was from Finland, because they had the stake and they had the money (...) SHIRIKA was to deliver". (interview 1)
2) SHIRIKA's paradoxical role	(2) "If you read the papers, SHIRIKA's role was to be in the leading role, but ... in some of them you find that SHIRIKA has given the role of becoming at least a sister organisation which has the capacity to invite the other, the other part. It was given a big role, but of course at the same time, the same persons have to give the capacity of being able to do so". (interview 4)
3) Lack of shared planning	(3) "The best way is to sit together and to discuss what we actually want and after that then we'll say, OK, we have now the partnership, but mentioning it like this ... we expect, maybe what we expect from partnership is not what they expect from partnership, and now there is a breakdown in communicating this information". (Interview 3)
4) Partners seen as situated in the First and Third worlds	(4) "Therefore the partnership, JÄRJESTÖ wants partnership with SHIRIKA and SHIRIKA accepts, we want partnership with JÄRJESTÖ, because they are in the First world, and we are only in the Third world, we can combine efforts that we can at least work together, or work in a partnership". (Interview 1)
5) Unclear content of partnership	(5) "Of course SHIRIKA is enthusiastic. You know it's like, gee, we have a Finnish partner, but it should be asked if and why we actually want this partnership. What do we gain? Do we receive anything else, but more work to do ... [laughing]". (interview 2)
6) The role of Finns as developers	(6) "So when these Finnish people come here, they come with the task of developing something. So even if they aren't self-centered persons as such, they come here with the point that they have to develop something. Then they look around for half an hour and start to propose how things could be done better. It is their duty, because that is why they have come here in the first place". (interview 2)
7) Lacking knowledge of Finns about the Tanzanian problems	(7) "They [JÄRJESTÖ] don't actually know what we are suffering from. They don't even know why we are not like them. I am sure they don't see why we are not doing as good as themselves and where our setbacks are, so they would like also to come and see, what is wrong with us". (interview 3)

These few excerpts from the interviews made with the Tanzanian preparatory committee after the seminar show that problem of the new partnership in practice. Partnership was on everyone's lips, but the actual content of it seemed to remain unclear and questionable. In the process of arranging the seminar, the term "partnership" was introduced by the representatives of Järjestö, and gradually also the members of Shirika started to use the term, even if the future content of the co-operation of these two organisations remained unclear. It seemed that despite

the rhetoric and good will for partnership the relationship turned out to be something else. Interestingly, the perceptions of the Tanzanian committee members reflect the general paradoxes of development partnerships. There were complaints that rules and limits of participation were set by the Finnish side and at the same time the idea that the Finnish side was “naturally” responsible, and the trustee, was reproduced.

In the following, I will proceed from the perceptions of the Tanzanian committee members to the actual events and analyse some of the aspects of the cooperation in the project by searching for trusteeship in action. I will examine the aspects of objects and division of labour, as they emerged at certain stages of the project, in general, and in the handling of a problem of overspending after the seminar, in particular.

Initiating and introducing the idea of arranging a seminar: How and by whom?

The idea of arranging a seminar in Morogoro had occurred to the Finnish NGO activists for the first time in 1997. In Finland, the preparations for the seminar, for example sending of the fund applications to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, started in 1999. During that year, the leadership of Shirika in Tanzania changed after quite a difficult situation created by an internal conflict in the previous leadership. The new executive committee of Järjestö’s partner organisation, Shirika was informed about the plans regarding the seminar in February 2000 during the visit of a representative of Järjestö. At the beginning of the meeting of 23 February 2000, Järjestö’s-representative stated:

Now we have the ten year anniversary of our existence, and we thought we could have a seminar here in Tanzania, so that more Tanzanian people could participate. It should include a component of training also, not only celebrating.

After that, the representative continued to introduce the member organisations of Järjestö. A few minutes later the chairman of the meeting [a Tanzanian] returned to the issue of seminar, asking for more clarification about the planned seminar. In response to that question, an explanation was given by the Finnish representative:

We have planned... There is a need to improve the quality of the projects. There are two factors: one is how to plan a project and the other is how to do bookkeeping (...) and from the Finnish point of view, there are people that are eager to start something together with Tanzanians. The Tanzanian partners could also come from the organisations that are interested, that match the ideas that fit the ideas of Finnish people. Because the role of the Finns is not to send money, but to work together.

It was in that meeting that the members of Shirika's current leadership first heard about the seminar and the representative of Järjestö laid the agenda of the project in this very condensed statement after which the discussion continued on practical arrangements. In this statement, it becomes evident that the project was already well-planned in Finland. First, there has been a problem identified: the bad quality of projects that need to be improved. Moreover, the solution for that problem has also been defined as training in project planning and bookkeeping. Second, there is a picture given that in Finland there are organisations searching for Tanzanian partners for which the seminar would offer a good opportunity.

In terms of the object, this short meeting of the "partners" defined the object as arranging a seminar in Tanzania in order to celebrate Järjestö's anniversary, to train the Tanzanians, to improve the quality of other co-operation projects and to enable Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs to meet each other. In terms of the division of labour, it seems that the task of defining the content of partnership as arranging the seminar, and further the content of the seminar, as training in bookkeeping and project planning, was in the hands of the Finnish partner. It can be argued that the idea of trusteeship emerged in the very first stage of the project in the formulation the initial idea. In presenting ready-made project idea the Finnish representative shows that the Finnish organisation has been capable of identifying the problems and the solutions for improvement of co-operation. On the other hand, the idea of joint learning tries to open up the notion of trusteeship – the problems in co-operation lie not only with Tanzanian partners, but also with the Finnish side which could make use of the training. This idea can be interpreted as an attempt to reconstruct the old ways of co-operation.

Preparation of the seminar: Joint effort or obeying orders?

A preparatory committee within Shirika in Tanzania was established and a series of preparatory meetings were held. The preparatory committee consisted of a Tanzanian representative from KEPA which is an umbrella organisation of all the Finnish NGOs in the field of the development co-operation and three representatives from Shirika's executive committee. In addition, a young Finnish volunteer was appointed as a representative of Järjestö in the organising committee and she was also acted as secretary for the committee. The seminar itself was funded partly by the project funding allocated to Järjestö from the NGO-support budget of the Department for International Development Co-operation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and partly by a grant given to Shirika by the Finnish Embassy in Tanzania from its local support funds.

The preparatory committee made the practical arrangements for the seminar such as booking the seminar venue and accommodation for the participants. The

committee also invited the Tanzanian participants from diverse NGOs and guests of honour. At the end of the process, they also searched for Tanzanian facilitators for certain subjects, such as PRA.

During the preparation, the committee was in continuous e-mail contact with its Finnish partner organisation. This was supposed to be a good way to negotiate during the process and enhance partnership. However, it proved to be problematic and actually reproduced the hierarchy. The computer service at the KEPA office was used for the purpose of email interaction, since the office of Shirika was located next to KEPA's and KEPA was one of the supporters of Shirika. The computer that had network access was located in the office of the Finnish liaison officer. The Tanzanian members had neither access to that computer nor the skills to use email. All the correspondence went through the hands of the young Finnish volunteer who was a representative of Järjestö in the preparatory committee. Many emails concerning the preparation were addressed personally, and in very friendly manner, to the young Finnish volunteer. At the beginning most of the messages from Finland were in Finnish. The volunteer, committed to the ideas of open communication, proposed that the language of the correspondence should be shifted to English. She also made an effort to copy all the messages from Finland to all of the members of the committee, but ended up translating and interpreting the meanings in communication in both directions. In her mediating role as a representative of Järjestö and a member of the Tanzanian preparatory committee, her situation was confusing both to her personally and the Tanzanian members of the committee who perceived her as a kind of gate-keeper in communication and did not know if she always communicated the opinion of the committee. As one of the Tanzanian members of the committee tells:

I thought she didn't actually know her role at the beginning. That's why the confusion was big and she was not confident that she was representing Järjestö. Every time she thinks of something that she doesn't know, then she asks. And when she asks, those people think that this is an opinion from the organising committee, maybe we should assist them this way. One thing, my observation is that she didn't exactly know her role. That's why she was not confident, that is why every time she thinks of something then she writes an email to them.... And another thing, maybe, during the communication, I think those people from the other end, maybe they are not really ready to reveal everything they knew about what exactly our role should be.

(Interview with a committee member 14.8.2000, 24)

Despite the efforts, much time was allocated for discussing the messages coming from Finland, and their possible meanings in the meetings of preparatory committee. Since the degree of independence of the committee was not clear, most

of the messages – whether ideas, suggestions or demands – were interpreted as orders that should be obeyed, as such. For example, here is the suggestion by the Finnish partners about the content of the seminar:

Our suggestion for the main themes during the workshop days are: 1) participatory methods in project work, 2) NGO and project management. The first theme will consist of two parts: a) the use of LFA in project planning, and b) other participatory methods. The other themes could include a) bookkeeping, b) Tanzanian NGO policy and Finnish guidelines for NGO co-operation, and c) project management. (...) Finnish facilitators will take care of LFA and one Finnish facilitator will be available for project management. All other facilitators should be Tanzanians.

(email message from Järjestö to Shirika 27.4. 2000)

This email was interpreted as a “an ultimatum” by the committee, even though it raised some complaints about the possibilities of the committee to define the content of the seminar. In the process of arranging the seminar, the division of labour became an ever more important issue. The definitions of what should be done and by whom remained unclear and created a lot of confusion and lost work hours, since the content of the messages from Finland was varied and the committee members could not “obey all the orders” – or suggestions interpreted as orders. As one of them reported after the seminar, the committee felt that they could not proceed with their job due to the ambiguous messages from Finland:

I was disappointed [with email communication] particularly when it came to, you know, we discuss one thing now, and the next time we have to change it, because the other message has come. But maybe the most confusing issue was that when we sit together as an organising committee in Morogoro, and then while we still don't know exactly what to say as a conclusion of our meeting, another message comes in and says, no this is not like this, this should be like this. OK, you change your line of thinking towards that directive and then the next time comes another thing.

(Interview with a committee member 14.8.2000; 20)

I argue that in the process of preparation, the idea of trusteeship continuously emerged in the co-operation. In the division of labour, Finns were conceptualised as more “capable” of defining the substance of the seminar, while the Tanzanian partners were asked to do the practical arrangements, such as renting the venue and arranging for the accommodations. The fact that the email interaction was addressed to the only Finnish person in the committee reflected the tradition of basing the co-operation on personal relationships as typical of the “old” co-operation, and, preferring a Finnish person over a Tanzanian in communication. In the

same vein, varying suggestions and initiatives coming from Finland were tried to be obeyed by the committee without direct questioning, since they came from the “more knowledgeable partner in the North” even if doing same things over again caused a lot of lost voluntary working hours in Tanzania.

Divergent views on the purpose of the event: Why arrange a seminar?

In the following, I will return to the issue of the object of the co-operation as it emerged in the actual implementation of the seminar. I will discuss briefly the divergent views towards the aim of the seminar – or object of that particular instance of co-operation in activity theoretical terms.

As stated above, the idea of arranging the seminar was initiated by Järjestö. At the very beginning of the project, the initial aim of the seminar was stated to be the celebration of organisations tenth anniversary and, additionally, according to a Järjestö’s representative, to train the Tanzanian NGOs in project planning and accounting:

To be able to give more responsibility to the Tanzanian NGOs. If the money comes from Finland, we must use our systems and ways of accounting and also the project planning (...). So we would go through the project ideas of the Tanzanian NGOs by using the LFA-method.

(Interview with Järjestö’s representative 10.1.2000)

The idea of collecting project proposals from the NGOs in Morogoro to be used in the LFA training workshops as a basis for joint planning exercises by Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs was communicated to Shirika during the preparation process. The Tanzanian NGOs merely interpreted this request for project proposals as a way to get a partner – or a donor – from Finland for their projects. Project proposals were sent to Finland and distributed to Järjestö’s member organisations, who regarded most of them as irrelevant to their interests and there were no enthusiastic “potential” donors in the seminar. However, on the basis of these expectations Shirika and its member organisations understood the seminar as an important networking event, the most important contents of which would be the discussions with Finnish NGOs in order to establish funding relationships.

In the process of planning the seminar and during the actual seminar, different participants held at least two points of view that differed in a major way with regard to the seminar: the seminar as (1) *a training event*, the most important aim of which was *to teach the Tanzanian participants the tools of development co-operation*, and (2) *a networking event the most important aim of which was to find new partnerships and projects between organisations*, and additionally, to *find a Finnish donor* for the activities of the Tanzanian NGOs.

These different points of view had an effect on the expectations and orientations of the participants towards the seminar and the actual behaviour during the seminar. The initial plan was to accommodate both the Finns and Tanzanians in the same venue, but at the time of the seminar it turned out that most of the Finnish participants stayed at the Tushikamane training center. This hindered spontaneous interaction during the evenings. Accordingly, there were some disappointments during the actual seminar. Especially those representatives of Tanzanian organisations with expectations for networking were not satisfied with the seminar, as mentioned by one of the committee members:

People did not interact easily. Why I'm saying that is that the members of the [Tanzanian] NGOs said that they had stayed here for three days [in the seminar] and they don't even know of a possible partner of their NGO (...) even in the seating arrangements, people were sitting separately.

(Interview 14.8.2000)

In the seminar it was obvious, that the concept of the training event was realised at the cost of networking. Accordingly, the whole viewpoint of training Tanzanians, by their Finnish partners, to use the project tools used in the development co-operation could be interpreted as an act of trusteeship. The training reconstructed the idea, that the capacity of the Tanzanian partners should be improved first in order to improve the development co-operation, or partnership.

In the following, I will make a more detailed analysis at the problem level and depict the process of solving one practical problem in co-operation, namely the exceeding the budget. This analysis permits consideration of one of the most problematic features in the development partnership – money.

Exceeding the budget: Shirika's failure or a problem of the division of labour?

The problem of exceeding the budget was noticed by Järjestö's chairman shortly after the seminar in Morogoro. Although the situation was noticed, there was no joint "emergency meeting" arranged between Järjestö and Shirika representatives on the spot. The Finns flew back home to Finland and their Tanzanian partners were busy with other matters – actually, another Finnish project. It seemed that the problem of overspending the budget was seen by the Finnish partners as caused by their Tanzanian counterparts and therefore also the search for the solution was left to the Southern partners. A more detailed analysis shows that it was very difficult to hold anyone responsible for the overspending. I argue, than rather than being caused by incompetence of the actors in handling the money, the problem emerged as a result of the unclear division of labour in the process of arranging the seminar.

In Tanzania, the problem of exceeding the allocated funds was first discussed by the preparatory committee on 14 June 2000 and finally discussed together with the preparatory committee and the KEPA liaison officer on 13 July 2000. In Finland, the issue was discussed in the board meeting of Järjestö, on 19 July. The first two-hour meeting of the preparatory committee on 14 June in Tanzania of the preparatory committee was dedicated to detailing the actual expenditure on the seminar. In that meeting, the problem of overspending came as a surprise to the members of the committee.

Another one-and-a-half-hour meeting on 13 July in Tanzania was used to solve the problem of overspending the budget. The Finnish liaison officer, who also led the discussion, chaired the meeting and actually played a very important role in allocating extra money from KEPA budget to solve the problem. In Finland, about 20 minutes of the two-hour meeting of 19 July was used to discuss the seminar. In regard to overspending the budget, the letter written in Tanzania on the basis of the Tanzanian meeting was read. In Figure 7 I depict the events that were part of the process of problem-solving in co-operation.

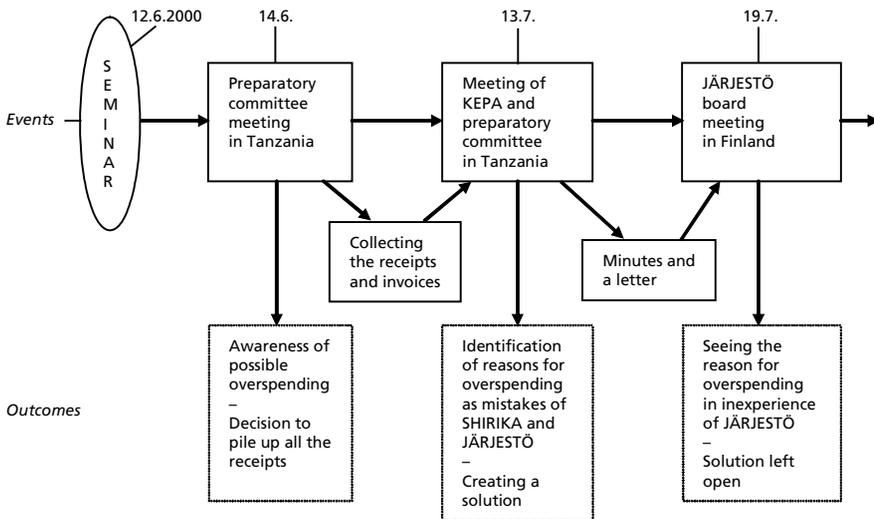


Figure 7. Handling the problem of the exceeding the budget

In the following, I will give a more detailed description of these events in order to understand the dynamics of problem solving.

Awareness of the problem

When the preparatory committee first met after the seminar, on 14 June, the whole grant from the Embassy of Finland was still available, and the members of the committee thought that there would actually be a surplus. The overdrafts came as a surprise because the Embassy grant was not included in the committee's original seminar budget. That was mainly due to the fact that the information about the grant had reached the committee only two days before the seminar and it had not been counted on before that. Moreover, the money from the grant had not reached Morogoro at the time of the seminar since the Ambassador who was supposed to arrive with the check had forgotten to take it with her. Therefore, the knowledge that there were extra money available, but not in hand as cash led to a feeling that there was money available to some extra expenditure. As one of the Tanzanian members of the committee described the confusion during the seminar:

We had this money from the Embassy, we had the figures, but we didn't have the cash. There was a check here, the balozi [Ambassador] didn't come with the check. She forgot it there, so we got money from somewhere and this money were just spent without proper accounting. I mean there was no system. We were just spending without checking, so that's why I say, that's why it came as a surprise.

(Interview 27.7.2000, 92)

In the first meeting it was also a surprise that, for the first time, it was considered that all the expenditures for the seminar should be included in the same budget. Until that meeting, the committee had continuously separated the Finnish and Tanzanian expenditures, as advised by their partner organisation, Järjestö from the very beginning of the project as well as continuously during the process.

In the beginning of the meeting of 14 June, the separation of the budgets was taken for granted, but later it was questioned several times (see Table 23 for numbered excerpts). Excerpt 1 depicts the first time that the issue of the separated budget came at issue in the meeting. Later, it was noticed that the separation of the budget no longer worked anymore, and the seminar expenditure should be treated as a whole (ex. 2). After agreeing on the single budget, another problem arose. The committee noticed that they did not have the knowledge about all the fund allocations for the seminar. Shirika had received a few allocations from Järjestö during the preparation and as well as a grant from the Embassy. In addition, there had been some money sent by Järjestö to KEPA for the use of the Finnish participants while in Tanzania, the amounts of which the committee had no information about. In the meeting, the committee tried to count the total of money allocated to the whole seminar, but it proved to be impossible. The money had been sent in separate drafts and with confusing accompanying messages (ex. 3). The fact that

the committee was not fully aware of the funds allocated for the seminar, but at the same time was held accountable for the money, created some frustration (ex. 4) among the committee members. Finally it was decided that to move ahead and to make things clearer, all the seminar expenditures, the receipts and the remaining invoices should be put together to see what was the actual expenditure. As the representative of the Finnish NGO suggested at the end of the meeting 14 June, the participants should:

ask all the relevant authorities to clarify how much money was received and to see how much money remains after that.

After the meeting, the embassy grant was used to settling the bills. Even then there remained some unsettled claims. In order to finally solve the problem, there were various attempts to arrange another meeting with the committee and the liaison officer of KEPA. Everyone seemed to be busy, and the meeting was not arranged until 13 July 2000.

Identification of the reasons for overspending

In the meeting of 13 July, all the funds allocated for the seminar were calculated together for the first time. And, for the first time, this was possible because of the presence of the KEPA liaison officer. During the preparation, all the money transactions were made through a bank account on which KEPA liaison officer signed. Thus, the KEPA liaison officer was the only person having direct access to the funds although even he did not know the whole budget for the seminar. During the preparation process, there were two authorised persons from the committee who could apply for funds to the liaison officer on the basis of the committee decisions. The money was taken need by need and no-one followed the budget in detail. As a member of the committee pointed out in the interview and commented the arrangement concerning fund use:

I don't want to call it misunderstanding, but mistrust maybe. We didn't actually ... We were actually not responsible for the money we were given, while in the actual fact we didn't handle the money, per se. We handled the documents and the transactions.

(Interview 14.8.2000)

In the meeting of 13 July, some reasons for the overspending were identified. The gravest problem seemed to be that, during the seminar, no individual person was actually responsible for the whole expenditure and a number of people were making decisions on spending the same money. There was Järjestö's chairperson who

used the money allocated to the seminar; there was Shirika's chairman using the money; there was the Finnish secretary of the committee using the same money for unexpected running costs in the seminar. These costs included, for example, copying the presentations held in the seminar to all the seminar participants suggested by the chairperson of Järjestö. Such amount of copying was not foreseen in the initial budget. Moreover, during the seminar the chairperson of Järjestö made a decision to increase the allowance of one facilitator on the basis of the good job done. However, this allowance exceeded the sum that was allocated to facilitation allowances in the initial budget. An additional surprising cost was due to purchase of photographs taken in the seminar. As common in Tanzania, a few professional photographers were invited to document the seminar by the chairperson of Shirika. This resulted in a number of photographs that the organisation was obliged to buy even if not planned in the original budget. One of unplanned expenditures came from a surprisingly high invoice for the transportation of the Finnish participants. The KEPA office in Morogoro responsible for arranging the transportation by a number of cars and it claimed a sum that was not foreseen in the budget, especially since the preparatory committee had not budgeted for the Finnish expenses.

One of the most important reasons for this problem was the inadequate knowledge of the whole budget (ex. 5). The over expenditure came as a surprise to the committee, since it had worked with the framework of their own budget that was supposed to cover the costs of the venue, the Tanzanian participants and the Tanzanian facilitators, but not the Finnish participants. This point was made clear at the very beginning of the project in the meeting with Järjestö and Shirika on 3 March 2000, where the Järjestö representative stated in relation to the budget: *"you take care of the Tanzanian participants"* and that view was reproduced in a number of messages sent from Järjestö to Shirika during the preparatory process. At the same time the last-minute information about the funds coming from the Embassy supposedly created a feeling among everyone that there was some extra money to be used, and there would be no budget problems.

As a solution to the problem of overspending, the KEPA liaison officer suggested, that KEPA take care of the remaining bills as capacity-building support to Shirika (ex. 6). This solution absolved the individual members of the committee of personal responsibility for the overspending, as indicated in the very first meeting between Järjestö and Shirika in February. However, the decision was not very productive from the point of view of the Tanzanian organisation since the money used to pay the bills was taken from so-called "capacity building" support of KEPA to Shirika that could have been used in other ways. After the meeting, a letter indicating the decision of KEPA to support Shirika and the minutes of the meeting were sent to Finland, to Järjestö to be discussed in their future meeting. The bills were settled and the members of the committee continued to be occupied with other tasks.

Table 23. Excerpts from the post-seminar meetings of the preparatory committee in Tanzania after the seminar

Meeting date	Theme		Excerpt
(1) 14 June	Noting that the Finnish and Tanzanian budgets were kept separate during the preparatory process	Charles: Stella: Charles: Frederick:	<i>For that matter then, anything that appears Finnish, Finnish transport, Finnish accommodation, then it should not appear in our budget, because we were not budgeting it. It should be now here, because now we are making this seminar budget It means a lot of confusion, we never discussed these in our preparatory committee meetings Otherwise we should know how much was allocated to Finnish costs</i>
(2) 14 June	Realising that all seminar expenditure should be in a same budget	Stella:	<i>Anyway now we are paying. We are paying for this kind of things like transporting Finnish guests from Dar es Salaam to Morogoro. They should be here. They can't be now separated, Finnish meals and Tanzanian meals...</i>
(3) 14 June	Noting that the committee has no information on amounts allocated to Finns	Stella:	<i>Again these [amounts] are different. Again it might be that in their [Järjestö's] minutes it is said differently. Maybe they write us that this money is for this and this is for this.</i>
(4) 14 June	Frustration of being accountable for funds they have no information about.	Frederick: John: Frederick:	<i>So what are we supposed to do? Do we account for the money we have not spent? (...) and there was money that was sent to cover the Finnish participants. 30 000 Finnmark. There is the document now that we are paying for the Finns. So how are we accounting? So where is that money?</i>
(5) 13 July	The KEPA liaison officer draws together the difficulties in information exchange about the allocations for the seminar budget	Liaison officer:	<i>We have recorded now here, what have been the difficulties of the budget. You didn't know if you would get the money. You got it in the last days of seminar, so when the seminar was over, you didn't know the exact amounts coming for the seminar. They came in separate drafts. You didn't know for sure that there was a different budget from Finland. For example up to now I don't know if the chairperson of JÄRJESTÖ was given cash money for herself to be used for the purpose of the seminar.</i>
(6) 13 July	The KEPA liaison officer offers a solution to settle the bills	Liaison officer:	<i>SHIRIKA requests this money from KEPA, and then on top of that SHIRIKA writes to JÄRJESTÖ to be refunded funds, because you are responsible for some of the payments there, because in the end, what was the idea originally, was that SHIRIKA remains with something. Now actually SHIRIKA has been milked with this seminar.</i>

Discussing the problem of overspending in Finland

The Järjestö board had a meeting on 19 July 2000. The feedback from the seminar was also discussed. The participants expressed their satisfaction with the content of the seminar and it seemed that everyone participated had enjoyed the seminar. The problem of overspending was touched upon only briefly in that meeting. Additionally, the problem of overspending was discussed mainly in light of the mistakes made by the Tanzanians that had led to the overspending problem. The problem was regarded as unpleasant but also as good place for learning for the Tanzanians. As one of the board members commented on the project in regard to the Tanzanian partner organisation:

If we look at it from Shirika's perspective, it was surely one of the aims in this project, that Shirika would take the main responsibility and could learn how to manage these kinds of things (...) So I think that they have learned something in this process, after all, we have been doing some capacity building for them.

This excerpt shows how the conceptualisations about the process in Tanzania and Finland differed after the project was over. The Finnish partners perceived that the process was a good way of capacity building for the Tanzanian partner, a process by which Tanzanians could learn to organise seminars. On the other hand, the Tanzanians perceptions reflected, not growth in their capacity, but a loss of their volunteer time and at the end, also capacity building funds, for the sake of a seminar initiated by their Finnish partners and which did not clearly yield them any future funders.

In the meeting there were three initiatives to start the reflection about the reasons of the overspending in light of the process of preparation and on the basis of the minutes sent from Shirika's meeting in Tanzania, but they did not lead to further discussion about the relationships or the modes of co-operation between these two organisations during the preparation of the seminar. In the same vein, Järjestö refused to take any financial responsibility for the overspending and decided to request that KEPA cover the gap in the budget. The discussion about the seminar in the meeting was concluded as follows:

Liza: *OK, we'll see how KEPA will cooperate, in what spirit ... but summa summarum, the overexpenditure was quite small in comparison with the whole budget.*

Mark: *There was no major mistake; just some little things.*

Liza: *Some issues of principle ...I suppose that for sure those people would gradually learn, that in an NGO you just can't throw money around*

Mary: *Yes, and we, too, should learn*

Liza: *Yes, we too*

Mary: *I mean we should learn things like transparency*

Liza: *Yes ... but without the [Finnish] volunteer this [arranging the seminar] would not have been possible. [The meeting continued with other issues.]*

In this short discussion again, the sources of the problems were again attached only to the incompetence of the Tanzanians who had not “yet” learned that you cannot throw money away. The initiative of Liza to start a reflection about the possibilities of learning on the Finnish side also does not lead to further reflection of detailed identification of the reasons for overspending – other than quite abstract thinking that the Tanzanians were used money recklessly (presumably referring to such expenses as buying the photographs etc.).

The handling of the problem is revealing interesting features. In Tanzania, where the bills were actually in Shirika’s hands, the problem had to be discussed and solved somehow. A detailed analysis of different expenditures and the causes for overspending was made. KEPA offered to cover the overspending since Shirika, as an organisation, did not have any funds and it was regarded as inappropriate to make the committee members to pay the gap from their own pocket, since all the expenditure was used for the seminar. In contrast, in Finland there was made neither analysis nor reflection of the causes of the overspending except to associate it with Shirika’s failure. This was echoed also in the concluding statement in the meeting considering future co-operation between Järjestö and Shirika:

“If we start a new project with Shirika, the project that Shirika itself has proposed. What if we should support Shirika itself for a couple of years first, and see how this co-operation is goes (...) Before giving any economic responsibility to Shirika we have to be sure that we have explained to them carefully the systems of accountability in these projects, before we can trust, or give any responsibility.

The aim of my analysis of the problems of overspending was not to find the exact causes, not to speak about searching for who was “guilty” for the overspending. Rather, the interest was in investigation of how different actors reacted to the problem and what kinds of explanations were given by the actors themselves. The conclusions drawn from the process by the Finnish actors is similar to what Eriksson Baaz’s (2005) found in regard with the identity construction. In the project analysed the Finnish actors were constructed such strong identities as being capable and knowing how to conduct training for the “backward” Tanzanian NGOs and exercise good partnership that it was not even considered that tasks and the division of labour could have been handled otherwise in the project.

7.3 Conclusion

During the project of arranging the seminar in Morogoro the concept of partnership proved to be a kind of riddle. It was used more as a rhetorical term than a description of an actual practice of co-operation. We could achieve some understanding about the ambiguity by approaching the data from the point of view of trusteeship colliding with trusteeship, a concept which places the individual actions in a certain co-operation project within a broader historical framework. I argue that the idea of acting as trustees of the development of others as well as handing over the trusteeship over one's development were by no means conscious choices or attitudes. Rather, the emergence of the trusteeship in the relationship between Finnish and Tanzanian organisations was enabled by the institutional framework of development which contains both the fact of funding relationship and a profound idea of intentional development.

I argue that in the process of arranging the seminar, trusteeship was constructed by both Northern and Southern actors in their practices. I have pointed out, that the idea of trusteeship emerged at least in four aspects of the process: 1) The way in which the project was initiated; 2) in the gap between rhetoric and practice in the co-operation between Shirika and Järjestö in the process of the seminar preparation; 3) in the diverging interpretations of the aims of the seminar during the actual implementation of the plan and, finally, 4) in the search for solution to the problem of overspending.

The project idea was initiated and the contents of the seminar were planned in Finland. The underlying idea of the training in the seminar was to teach the Tanzanians the tools, that the Finnish NGOs and, more generally, the whole development co-operation system, uses in project planning and implementation. The Shirika's preparatory committee Tanzania merely acted as an executor of, what they understood to be orders coming from Finland about the arrangement of the seminar. In the seminar itself, the training aspect was rather strong and repeated the pattern of the Finnish participants training the Tanzanians, while the networking and free communication between the Finns and Tanzanians remained on a modest level. Overspending the budget was understood by the Finnish party more as a failure of the Tanzanian counterparts, resulting from their inexperience. The sources of the problem of overspending as in the preparation process were not reflected upon.

With a closer look into the process, the project seemed quite paradoxical. While the aim of the project, as defined by the Finnish actors, was to teach the Tanzanian partners proper way of project planning and accounting, the project itself was quite a clear example of non-participatory planning and poor budgeting and accounting practices.

In terms of learning challenges the analysis showed how the institutional and historical context can be a hindrance for learning in co-operation. If learning and change requires reflection of practices it is not likely to occur if one party of co-operation is institutionally posited as a trustee of another and these positions are taken for granted by the all actual actors.

8 Conclusion: Learning challenges in NGO development co-operation

In order to draw conclusions considering the learning challenges to the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs in Morogoro, I shall first answer to the research questions on the basis of the results of the empirical analyses. Each research question was explored in a separate chapter by using a specific set of data. After answering the questions I proceed to discuss the empirical findings by using the concepts of developmental contradiction and learning challenges in development co-operation. Third, I will compare the learning challenges identified in these particular projects with the findings of other studies on NGO partnerships. Fourth, I will consider the contributions to and challenges for further research, first for the framework of activity theory and expansive learning, and second, to the ethnographies for development. Finally, I shortly discuss the potential implications of my findings to the practice of the NGOs in development.

8.1 Summary of the empirical results

How do the Finnish NGO participants conceive the challenges for change in co-operation?

The Finnish NGO participants conceived different challenges for change that were grouped in the following trajectories of change: Finnish NGOs, individual actors in Finnish organisations, emerging new partners in Tanzania, and, the co-operation practices between the organisations.

Engagement in development projects was conceived to pose two kinds of challenges for change for the Finnish organisations. First, the Finnish models and organisational agendas that some of the Finnish NGOs used to bring in Tanzania were at times conceived as not working in Tanzania and were questioned by some of the participants. Second, engaging in development projects funded by

the Ministry for Foreign Affairs introduced the learning challenge of becoming familiar with the application and reporting systems required by the Ministry. Moreover, the challenges for change related to development co-operation included learning about tools such as LFA as well as the specific vocabulary used in development.

In the interviews it was at times hard for the actors to make distinction between the organisational and individual trajectories since they were at times very much intertwined. For the individual actors the challenges for change were related both to being and getting along in Tanzania during project visits as well as engaging in writing proposals and reports for the Ministry. In the actors' accounts the personal trajectory of engaging in development projects and gaining experiences through travelling was regarded very meaningful. For individual actors, the experiences provided by the project work in Tanzania posed practical challenges, such as the need to improve language skills. Moreover, becoming familiar with the Tanzanian way of life had led to challenges of change vis-à-vis the lifestyle in Finland. Based on their experiences in Tanzania, the actors questioned the Finnish, Northern lifestyle. In relation to personal trajectory of engagement the actors explicated a tension in the reasons for engagement. The actors struggled with a tension between the development co-operation projects as being a means to achieve new personal experiences and as a means to help Tanzanians and exercise solidarity.

The emerging new NGOs in Tanzania as potential partners in development co-operation were conceived as an important challenge. The shift from implementing projects with Tanzanian individuals, government officials and villages to co-operation with local NGOs meant new challenges for negotiation that now included also the organisational agendas of the Tanzanian NGOs. The main tension the Finnish actors perceived considering their potential new organisational partners was between the perceptions of Tanzanian NGOs as a collective endeavour for societal development or individual efforts of executives and a means of gaining access to donor funds.

The challenges for change concerning the co-operation as conceived by the Finnish actors had to do with both the contents of the projects and the ways of co-operating between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs. The contents of the project had already changed from sending used equipment from Finland to Morogoro to implementing joint projects and "capacity building" in Tanzanian organisations. The challenges for co-operation conceived by actors were to shift from implementing Finnish ideas to more shared planning between the partners. A conceived tension between the anticipated attempts to achieve more a partnership-type relationship and the experienced inequality created by the funding relationship and colonial legacy manifested in the behaviour of both Finnish and Tanzanian partners.

How was the content of a project constructed and negotiated in different phases of the project?

The detailed analysis of a project for retraining retired professionals focused on the negotiations of a project especially in the phases of planning and implementation. The analysis showed how two different initial ideas of a project to improve the standard of living of retired professionals met in the planning negotiations. The idea of a training project initiated by the co-ordinator of the Finnish NGO and a more open agenda of conducting counselling sessions, building an interaction centre, establishing a micro-credit scheme and cultivating land for shared crop production of the Tanzanian NGO formed a basis for the planning negotiations. The outcome of the joint planning was almost identical with the initial idea of the Finnish partner. The project that was agreed upon and implemented in co-operation between the organisations was that of a training course for retired professionals as proposed by the Finnish NGO participants even before the first contact with the specific Tanzanian NGO.

The analysis of negotiation revealed various tensions. Whilst discussing the content of the project there was a continuous tension between the idea of the project as a training project and the project as a training programme with micro-credit facility. Concerning the content of the training, the main tension emerged in relation to, not the actual contents, but the question of potential participation allowances paid to the trainees. The negotiations revealed also a tension between the beneficiaries of the project conceived as the members of the Tanzanian NGO or other retired professional. During the implementation phase, an additional tension occurred concerning the future co-operation between organisations, which the Finnish NGO conceived of as implementing a similar training course in the following year, while the Tanzanian NGO perceived more enduring co-operation with additional forms of co-operation in the future.

The analysis of inclusions and exclusions of different suggestions about items to be included to the project revealed that during the negotiations, suggestions by the Finnish participants were more easily included in the content of the project whilst the suggestions by the Tanzanian partners were often excluded. The analysis showed that even if there were numerous meetings between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGO participants during the planning and implementation of the project, multiple tensions emerged in the negotiations, and, there were no radical transformations of the content of co-operation vis-à-vis the initial idea of the Finnish partner.

How was power exercised in the project negotiations between partners?

The analysis of three project negotiations showed that there were many kinds of power relations involved in the meetings. Power relations became visible between the Tanzanian and Finnish NGO, between the Finnish participants in negotiations and the Finnish NGOs, between the Finnish NGO and the Finnish Foreign Ministry, as well as between the executive members and ordinary members of the Tanzanian NGO. Power was exercised in different ways by setting the agenda, decision making, using documents and different languages as strategic tools and by making different divisions in the speech that were attached to constructing power relations between “you” and “we”.

In the agenda-setting there were diverse kinds of open exercise of power. In one meeting the initial agenda setting was in the hands of the Finnish co-ordinator; in the second meeting there was no open but merely hidden agenda of both partners, and in the third meeting it was the executive members of the Tanzanian NGOs who prepared the agenda. In the meeting where the agenda was set by the Finnish participants there were attempts by the Tanzanian participants to add new issues to the initial agenda. In the second meeting that did not have explicit agenda, it was merely the Finnish participants that built the agenda during the negotiation. In the third meeting with a written agenda provided by the Tanzanian participants, the meeting followed the Tanzanian agenda with no deviations. The analyses showed that in terms of agenda setting in project meeting the power positions varied from meeting to meeting.

Even if in the meetings there were instances of decision making and non-decision making, power was exercised more in terms of non-decision rather than making decisions in meetings. One typical way to exercise power through non-decision making was to present issues as if they had already been agreed upon previously between the participants in the meetings. Moreover, it was also common to attribute the power to made decisions to someone else - “the NGO in Finland” or the “Finnish Ministry”. This made the exercise of power in terms of decision making quite ambiguous and covert.

The use of documents both to explicate one’s points of view to and to characterise another other view as suspicious was a way to exercise power and put an agenda forward. Some of the points of using the language that other participants in the meetings could not understand revealed metanegotiations about struggles of how to put forward own agendas in order to “win” the negotiation.

Divisions made in speech in project negotiations were a means of exercising power on some occasions. A continuous division made between “you” and “we” as Finnish and Tanzanian representatives itself is not necessarily an indicator of power relations. However, a closer look into the occasions on which the “we” as a

project planning group was redivided into “we” and “you” showed that this division was also used as means of power. This division was shown in the meeting in the project of retired professionals, for example when defining the decision making space and discussing money, showed that division were also used as means of power. Moreover, division made in speech was often connected to the idea of “Finnish way” “different from, and somehow better, than the “Tanzanian way”. Additionally, the explicated divisions between the Finnish representatives and the decisions makers back in Finland, and, the division between executive members, ordinary members and non-members of Tanzanian organisations showed that in the actual interaction situations there were power relations constructed not only between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs but also within each group.

The project negotiations were therefore not only negotiating “what should be done” in the projects but they were themselves also sites for power struggles. These struggles resulted in merely advancing one’s point of view and struggling against the other rather than facilitating the negotiation of shared agendas and ideas for projects.

How did the rhetoric of partnership collide with trusteeship in the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian organisations?

An analysis of the preparation and implementing of a capacity-building seminar showed how the Finnish NGOs had taken the rhetoric of partnership as the starting point of the project. A novel partnership approach was to be implemented in this particular project. The attempts towards more partnership -type of co-operation included an idea of shared training for participants from both the Finnish and Tanzanian organisations and establishing a preparatory committee in Tanzania to take responsibility for the seminar arrangements.

The analysis of some events along the project trajectory showed that the rhetoric of partnership at times collided with exercising trusteeship. The initial idea of the need for capacity building entailed an idea that the Tanzanian NGOs were perceived to be in need of capacity building in order to be competent partners for their Finnish counterparts. In seminar preparation partnership collided with trusteeship in a tension between negotiation and obeying orders in the communication between the two NGOs. In taking a number of suggestions as orders to be obeyed trusteeship was mainly attributed by the Tanzanian actors to the Finnish actors. The diverging interpretations of the aims of the seminar before and during the actual implementation of the seminar showed trusteeship in which the Finnish partner were conceived of being trainers and not so much in need of training while the Tanzanians considered the entire event more an opportunity to find a potential Finnish donor for their activities than to learn tools for development co-operation and organisa-

tional management. Last, the idea of trusteeship was shown in the negotiations and solution to the problem of overspending of the budget that was realized after the seminar. The problem was attributed to the inexperience of the Tanzanian partners rather than the unclear division of labour in regard to the eligibility of using project funds. The collision of the rhetoric of partnership with the practice of trusteeship constructed by both partners showed the embeddedness of a particular development co-operation project in the history of development, and further, colonialism.

8.2 Developmental contradictions and learning challenges in the NGO-development co-operation of the Finnish NGOs in Morogoro

In this section I discuss the findings of the results of the empirical analysis in the framework of the activity theory and expansive learning. Engeström (1999a, 36) proposes that activity theory subscribes to “radical localism” indicating that findings of any research are always activity specific. Therefore, I will discuss the learning challenges first in relation to the specific co-operation processes at hand, and second, consider the implications of the findings for the NGO-development co-operation in general.

This research moved in the first phase of the cycle of expansive learning: analysing the present practice in order to identify the developmental contradictions. This required close engagement with the actual practice of co-operation. Moreover, as according the theory of expansive learning, the contradictions in present activity are the main source of learning and change in activities, the findings are interpreted in terms of contradictions. The contradictions, in their part, are “historically accumulated structural tensions” (Engeström 2001) the identification of which would ideally lead to the second and third phases of the learning cycle: search for new solutions and formation of new object and motive as well as new tools for the activity. Therefore, the identification of developmental contradictions is a basis for conceptualising the learning challenges in the specific activities under scrutiny. In so doing, the aim is to map the “zone of proximal development” of this particular co-operation. In the zone of proximal development the learning challenges are partially resolved by local innovations and solutions, for example by creating new tools for co-operation

In this study, learning in development co-operation project was conceptualised as change towards potentially emerging new joint activity between the co-operating organisations (Engeström 1996; 2001). In the formation of joint activity that can be conceptualised an indicator of expansive learning an emergence of a novel shared object as well as joint tools is central. Therefore, in formulating the developmental contradictions and learning challenges are discussed especially in terms of object and tools.

As shown in the analysis, in the development co-operation there are multiple developmental trajectories that have different tensions and developmental contradictions. For example, the challenges for each individual to get familiar with the project planning procedures and habits in Tanzania are different from the challenges of the NGO development co-operation to shift from service provision to political advocacy. In the formulation of the learning challenges I shall focus on the developmental contradictions and learning challenges *in the co-operation practices* between the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs and, thus, not on the challenges of individuals, organisations or particular projects.

According to the theory of expansive learning (Engeström 2001) the negotiation of a joint object in co-operation requires reconceptualisation of the separate, historically formulated objects of co-operating partners and reformulation of a new, joint or shared object of co-operation. The findings from the analysis of the object construction in the project of retired professionals and arranging the capacity building seminar showed that events of such emergence of novel joint object were rare if not non-existent. Rather, the tension between the initial separate objects became evident in different phases. Therefore, the first developmental contradiction identified is between the implementing of the ready-made Finnish ideas and taking the activities of Tanzanian NGOs as starting point in negotiation. The perception of the Finnish NGO as a potential donor for the Tanzanian organisations in proceeding with their own current ideas collided with the ready-made ideas of the “projects” presented by the Finnish NGOs. The Finnish ideas, for their part, were much connected to the professional background of the persons included in co-operation and the activities of the NGOs in Finland.

The negotiation about a shared object took place in a kind of predefined framework that was at times challenged, but nevertheless no radical transformations of the object took place either in the project of retraining retired professionals or in the project of conducting a capacity building seminar. In the projects there were kinds of joint objects produced: training courses and a seminar were implemented and they were certainly of use to some of the participants. However, the process of negotiation itself was merely of legitimating the initial Finnish project ideas than searching for a shared conception to start with in negotiations. On the other hand, the meeting analysed in the trajectory of supporting women’s entrepreneurship revealed a different kind of difficulty in finding a shared idea: the Finnish participants expected the idea come from the Tanzanian NGOs, but in the negotiation rejected the ideas considering buying a plot or building a house. In that case the Finnish idea of “real activities” remained more hidden, but affected the negotiations of a shared idea. The contradiction between implementing Finnish ideas and negotiating shared ideas was identified also in the interviews of some of the Finnish practitioners. However, the practical attempts to overcome this tension such as

the shared planning meetings and establishing the preparatory committee seemed somehow to collapse into the old forms of implementing the Finnish ideas.

The learning challenge concerning the first contradiction would be finding new patterns of planning and implementation that would more effectively facilitate the move from legitimating of Finnish project ideas to negotiate shared ideas. Real learning in object construction would entail the idea that the outcome of joint negotiations would not be the initial idea of either of the collaborating partners, but some kind of novel outcome resulting from the negotiation. Therefore, the learning challenge is not to shift the negotiation into implementing the Tanzanian ideas only but to search for a shared idea. The challenge for co-operation is to move from legitimating the ready-made Finnish ideas to construction of partially shared objects in which the initial objects of both organisations are taken under negotiation and reformulation.

Second, the co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs in Morogoro entailed a contradiction between objects of “gaining experiences and cultural interaction” gaining weight among the Finnish actors and “access to outside funding” emphasised by the Tanzanian actors. These objects affected the engagement in co-operation and the negotiations considering the actual projects and contents of co-operation. The importance of cultural exchange and interaction was clearly emphasised in the interviews of the Finnish actors. The interaction and cultural exchange did not play such a big role for the Tanzanian participants. This was first because of the projects did not entail as much travelling from Tanzania to Finland as vice versa and, second, because of the initial perception of Finnish NGO as potential donors for the NGO activities. For example, in the implementation of the capacity building seminar this was seen in the disappointment of the Tanzanian NGOs at being unable to make contacts with potential donors whilst the Finnish participants were more engaged in “experiencing” Morogoro and not very actively searching for new partners.

Moreover, the separateness of the objects to start with created a situation in which the object of co-operation as a contribution to improving life of any group of people occasionally vanished from the negotiations. Development co-operation as a societal activity entails the idea of contributing to “development”, any improvement in people’s lives. In the project negotiations analysed there was little negotiation about what was development, or improvement, in general and how it could best be achieved in the framework of concrete projects. This was related to the lack of joint negotiation and redefining the problems of the intended beneficiaries during planning and implementation. In the project of retraining retired professionals, the representatives of the Finnish NGOs chose one box, a “lack of training”, in the problem tree drawn by the Tanzanian NGO before any negotiation presented the main problem for the projects despite the attempts to open it to negotiation. In the

negotiations there were some attempts to define a means of development but they remained quite separate: development through education and development through economic inputs which were not taken under negotiation. In the project of capacity building for the NGOs the problems of Tanzanian NGOs were defined vis-à-vis the development institution rather than by investigating the needs of the organisations. The training needs for LFA, PRA, accounting and organisational management were seen as gaps in the functioning of the Tanzanian NGOs that hindered their effective project work with their Northern counterparts rather than needs that emerged as a result of any investigation of the organisations.

The second learning challenge for the co-operation is, in my mind, to partly overcome and transcend the separate objects of gaining experience to Finnish NGOs and access to donor money for their activities for Tanzanian NGOs in negotiating the concrete projects and activities in order to bring about some kind of improvements in the conditions of life and activities of people or organisations. Some of the Finnish NGO participants considered the money as the unpleasant part of the co-operation that would rather be get rid off. For the Finnish actors, the financial benefits from the co-operation did not play an important role. On the contrary, many of the actors were ready to pay for some trips related to project activities themselves. The emphasis on funding in the letters, proposals and accounts in negotiation explicated by the Tanzanian partners were sometimes considered irritating. However, most of the activities such as moving from one place to another, arranging training and buying raw material for food processing require money. Therefore, the development co-operation projects had to deal with the tension between funding and other aspects of co-operation. Moreover, in the projects analysed the funding and budgeting were aspects that diversified the co-operation partners. In the project the funding and budget were conceived mostly as being the responsibility of the Finnish actors. The Tanzanian partners received funding in small instalments and had no information about the complete budgets for the projects. In co-operation, however, the challenge is to conceive neither of the partners alone responsible for funds. Rather, the learning challenge for co-operation was the reconceptualising and using funding as an instrument for working on joint objects in terms of concrete objects for improvement. The improvement, or development, on its part should be jointly defined. To questions to be address include such as: improvement of whom? By what kinds of means? In what kind of context? This does not mean that practitioners should be engaged in endless theoretical debate over the concepts of development but rather to build locally a shared view of agreed goals and mechanisms.

The third developmental contradiction is related to the potential emergence of shared tools in co-operation. At some instances this meant a lack of even the basic tools for co-operation as any shared language for interaction. However, as

common to development, the potential shared tools might include the tools developed especially for development project such as LFA. In the actual practice, there was a contradiction between promoting these “official” tools provided by development co-operation system, such as LFA and PRA, and actually not using them but the tools and procedures taken from the prior activities of both partners in actual co-operation. The latter included methods such as group-work methods of social work in the planning sessions for the project of retired professionals, informal discussion exercised by the Finnish participants and in the meetings analysed in the chapter considering power relations and official meeting procedures as put forward by the Tanzanian partners. In regard to the project tools provided by the development system, for example, the LFA was not used as a tool in actual co-operation in either of the projects analysed. In the project of retraining retired professionals the outcome of a separate LFA training exercise done by the Tanzanian NGO was used for choosing a project area that would fit the Finnish idea. In the capacity building seminar, LFA was one of the subjects to be promoted for Tanzanian NGOs in order to improve their projects but was not used in the initiating and planning the project itself. When LFA was used rather as a topic in a training seminar, it remained detached from the actual project work even if there were attempts to use “real” project between Finnish and a Tanzanian organisation as an example in a training of LFA.

The tools used in the actual project planning situations of the project of retraining retired professionals included a group-work methods used in social work in which the facilitator had defined the questions to be addressed and then all the participants were first to produce their individual answers that were then read loudly to other participants and discussed. In the planning and preparation of the capacity building seminar a form of quite official meetings were used. These were taken from the prior activities of the Tanzanian executives in the government and NGO sector. The meetings included written agendas, meetings were led by a chairman and each point was discussed in turn – including the topic of AOB (any other business) at the end of every agenda. In the actual meetings in the projects the conceptualisations of procedures collided and, as happened in the meeting in the project of supporting women entrepreneurship, resulted in meetings the structure of which was quite ambiguous moving between an informal chatting and “official” meeting.

One learning challenge for the co-operation was to locally develop tools for enabling the shared definitions of the contents and means of the projects. Using new tools for co-operation does not necessary refer to the use of the ready-made LFAs or PRAs, but to locally develop new ones. In most practical level it means learning a language, such as English or Kiswahili for the Finnish participants, that would enable any communication, or to use more visual means of communication.

Fourth, as all of the empirical analysis showed in one way or in another, there was contradiction between the asymmetrical relations between the partners as a

basis for negotiation and the declared goal and rhetoric of equal partnership in negotiating joint projects. This contradiction is somehow inherent in all the developmental contradictions and learning challenges I identified above. The potential of constructing a shared object turning into legitimation of Finnish ideas, the motivations of helping of the Finnish participants, the emergence of power struggle and trusteeship in the co-operation all indicated an unequal starting points of the partners vis-à-vis the co-operation.

The privileged position of the Finnish NGOs was manifested in two ways. Most importantly, the Finnish NGOs had better access to development funding and they were eligible to control the potential use of resources in joint projects. Secondly, the Finnish NGOs seemed to pose a pre-ordained position as more capable, knowledgeable and, also, at times capable of defining what was best for others. In the context of a development project, an adult educator from Finland becomes entitled to teach retired university lecturers in Tanzania about learning; a Finnish medical doctor is entitled to be an expert on organizational development, and a Finnish fireman capable of making decisions about improvement of women's lives. In both projects of retraining retired professionals and NGO capacity-building the "bottom-up" approach was challenged at times by the Tanzanian actors, but these challenges remained ineffective individual efforts. In the projects the unequal starting points of the projects were not taken into joint open reflection. Moreover, even if at times the Tanzanian actors were conceived more capable in skills such as speaking English, proposal writing and being knowledgeable of things such as micro-credit that was unfamiliar to Finnish NGOs they were nevertheless positioned as less capable in the negotiations. In a similar vein, some of the Finnish participants in the capacity building seminar were, at the end, positioned rather trainers than trainees even if the original aim of the seminar was to train all the participants in the co-operation.

The learning challenge for the co-operation is the more open identification, reflection and challenging of the power positions by both Northern and Southern practitioners. In practice this could be done, for example, by actual sharing of the rights and responsibility of using the funds and by recognizing and making use of the expertise found within Tanzanian partners. Such attempts were done in both of the projects analysed. For example, in the retraining of retired professionals the training itself was arranged by the local training institutes and in the capacity building some subjects, such as PRA and accounting were facilitated by Tanzanian experts. The attempts of sharing the funds in implementation of the capacity building seminar was nevertheless a step towards deconstructing the power relations brought with the funding position.

The developmental contradictions elaborated in the particular co-operation of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro are summarised in the following table 24.

Table 24. Summary of the developmental contradictions in and learning challenges for the Finnish NGO co-operation in Tanzania

Developmental contradiction	Learning challenge
Implementing of the ready-made Finnish project idea vs. Taking the current activities of Tanzanian NGOs as starting point	Moving from legitimation of Finnish project ideas to negotiate a joint view about improvement on the basis of initial ideas of both partners
Gaining experiences and cultural interaction vs. outside funding	To transcend the separate objects and to find a shared understanding of the aim and mechanism of development in the framework of concrete projects
Promoting the official tools of development co-operation in training vs. use of tools and procedures taken from the prior activities of both partners in actual practice	Developing locally new tools for working in the joint project
Asymmetric relations between the partners vs. rhetoric of equal partnership	To identify and reflect the power positions of the partners and its effect to other learning challenges

8.3 The learning challenges and the system of NGO-development co-operation

The learning challenges elaborated for the particular co-operation of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro confirm a number of previous arguments considering partnerships of NGOs in other contexts (Ebrahim 2003; Hudock 1999; Lister 2000; Mancuso Brehm 2004; Mawdsley et. al. 2002; Wallace 1997). Although the Finnish NGOs and Tanzanian NGOs were not professional NGOs which with most of the previous studies have dealt, a number of similarities in the findings can be identified.

The learning challenge of moving from the legitimation of Finnish ideas supports the similar findings in other studies. For example, Wallace (1997) has claimed that what is typical to NGO development co-operation is not transformation of ideas on the basis of feedback from Southern partners but the complete lack of changes made notwithstanding feedback received. Accordingly, some studies on participation in development co-operation (see chapters in Cooke and Kothari 2001) have shown how the idea of enhancing participation of the local people in design and implementation of projects easily turns into act of legitimating the initial

ideas of the Northern partners. In the projects studied there was negotiation between the partners and some kind of participation but the participation tended to take place within a predefined framework. Gaventa (2004, 35) has called such participation “invited participation”. Invited participation refers to instances where participation is initiated and invited by one partner, and consequently, the space for participation is defined by the inviter. In the projects studied such invitations and definitions of spaces clearly took place. In contrast, there were no instances of more radical form of “claimed participation” (ibid.) leading to actual change in the social power constellations. Such lack of radical resistance and claims has been pointed out previously. For example, Mawdsley, Townsend, Porter and Oakley (2002) observed that one reason for implementing the Northern agenda in co-operation is that the Southern NGOs often do not “speak to power” and they should be more critical. Moreover, my findings showed that even in the case including open resistance and conflict such as the case of retraining retired professionals it might not lead to changes in the initial Northern agenda.

The learning challenge of transcending separate objects and to find a partially joint object emerged in peculiar way because of the importance of individual experience for Finnish actors. Previous studies (Ebrahim 2003; Howell 2000) have pointed out the effect of the organisational agendas of the Northern NGOs often echoing the international development discourse. In contrast, in my study the Finnish NGOs were voluntary organisations and “amateurs” in regards to development projects and the motivations of individuals emerged important along the more societal ideas of “promoting development”, or, solving development problems in Tanzania. As such, the co-operation from the Finnish side was based more on altruistic motivations of individual helping than a quest for effective and sustainable “technical problem solving” (Brinkerhoff 2002). Whilst the individual experience of the Finnish actors tended to form the main object and motive for the co-operation, the *actual* needs of the Tanzanian counterparts gained less attention in the initial agendas of the Finnish organisations. For example, the choice of the training approach to address the problems of retired professionals was made on the basis of professional experience of the initiator of the project, not on a need analysis other than a problem tree produced in a training seminar. Moreover, the agenda for the capacity building seminar was set by the managerial needs of development system and the needs for developing the quality of the Finnish projects in the area rather than the needs emerging from the Tanzanian organisations. The contents of the training offered to NGOs in Morogoro such as LFA, PRA and accounting are among the most typical training contents for capacity building in development NGOs and might be experienced quite external to the daily problems the organisations are dealing with. As Gould (2005) has suggested in the context of bilateral aid, such “capacity building” can be conceived as act of

governmentality and an effect to turn different organisations in “real NGOs” and being able to use the right tools and rhetoric rather than develop as organisations towards varying directions.

In the condition of merely implementing the Finnish agendas, the object of “getting the most out of it” by Tanzanian actors gained more weight. As the findings from the project of retired professionals and capacity building seminar indicate, the emergent object for the Tanzanian NGOs was getting funding for their existing and planned activities, and not to be the “project partners” or implementers of the Finnish ideas. On a basis of critical accounts (Chabal and Daloz 1999) such processes could be perceived as “aid instrumentalisation” by local people that should not take place in what is called “civil society”. However, on the basis of the findings of my study I would take a distance to such negative statements. In contrast, as Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan (2005) argues such processes of maximising aid are natural social phenomena in situations where extra resources are provided. The activity theoretical interpretation should propose that the potential resources meet existing need-state in the activities in Tanzanian NGOs in providing a way to solve some problems, and thus, new tools for working on an object. However, this object is not necessarily the one explicated in the ideas of the Finnish project initiators and project plans. For example, the bargaining for allowance and micro-credit that irritated the Finnish partners becomes understandable in the light of the real life conditions of some the training participants: a former secondary school teacher living on selling *mchicha* (a green vegetable), a former engineer whose family suffered from lack of sugar and oil during the two weeks he participated in training, or, a former nurse who struggles to find cash to pay her daughter’s school fee.

Whilst Olivier de Sardan (ibid. 147) mentions the potential career motivations and financial benefits of the aid workers that also affect the contents of the project, the findings of this research strongly brings forth, neither the financial benefits nor career motivations, but the importance of self-development of the Northern partners. The trajectories of engagement identified suggest that quite hazard meetings of certain individuals with a certain professional background strongly affect the contents of the projects. The projects get their energy from committed individuals who, on their part, are energised by the yearly travelling to Tanzania. This describes a situation where there is a “need state” of Finnish individuals for whom the participation to projects provides a way to travel, and second, the merely “imagined” need state of the people whose problems the project claims to address. The findings on the analysis of trusteeship propose that the historical tradition in the relationship within development often hinders the step of transcending from the separate objects into joint one: if one party is *a priori* constructed as more knowledgeable expert and able to define the problems of other, opening up

equal negotiation becomes difficult. In such situation, the conceptualisations of the needs of the others remain partly imagined.

A learning challenge of developing joint tools for co-operation has been central, for example, in discussing the concept of participation and the quest for participatory planning and implementation of projects (Chambers 1997). Even if the discussion of participation has recently proceeded – or returned – from participation in projects (Cooke and Kothari 2001) to discuss participation as political engagement of people in the decisions considering their lives (Hickey and Mohan 2004; 2005), the development practice is full of handbooks and advices on how to do “participatory development”. In addition, the bureaucracy of development often presupposes the use of Logical Framework Approach. The findings of this study showed how the LFA had entered the practice of the voluntary organisations to some extent since it was a subject in training events. However, the use of LFA in joint negotiation did not take place and they remained mainly external tools. The activity theoretical interpretation suggests that the collaborating activities bring their own tools into the co-operation. If the expansive learning would take place, novel joint tools would be created. The tools provided by the development system were not traditionally used by any of the partnering organisations in their own work. The organisation for retired professionals had undertaken consulting sessions with their members, whilst the tools provided by the co-ordinator of the Finnish organisation were based on his experience in social work. The work of the umbrella organisation in Finland has based on regular meetings of quite informal kind, whilst their Tanzanian counterpart applied quite formal procedures echoing their former experience in state bureaucracy.

Moreover, the funding can be considered as a specific category of tools. The question whether project funding is a shared tool for partners contributes to the recent discussion on accountability and multiple accountabilities in NGO-development co-operation (Edwards and Hulme 1995; Ashman 2001; Mawdsley et. al. 2005; Townsend et al. 2004). When the funding usually comes from Northern NGOs, it is rarely conceived as a “shared tool” to be used together. Rather than co-operation the funding brings control. As Ashman (2001) showed, in the NGO partnerships the logic of financial accountability is in contradiction with the intended logic of co-operation. Whilst the contents of the development project might be defined together, the financial roles support the donor-recipient relations. Ashman (ibid.) proposes collaborative accountability which would position both the partners as accountable for the money used. In this study, especially the analysis of arranging the capacity building seminar showed how the confusion considering accountability of different partners led to problematic situation. The attempts of collaborative accountability collapsed into separate accountabilities and at the end, to the old conception of accountability of Southern NGO to Northern NGOs. This conceptualisation led to

considering the failures in accountability problems solely as failures of Southern actors. Therefore, it seems that there are huge challenges for exercising collaborative accountability even if conceptually it would be a way forward.

The learning challenge connected to the asymmetric power position is related to the other challenges and most difficult to handle. The asymmetric relationship in development has been in the focus of the discussion concerning partnership (e.g. Lister 2000; Fowler 2000; Malhotra 2000) and learning within aid system (Eyben 2006; Groves and Hinton 2004). In order to handle the power relations, many accounts on learning have proposed the open *reflection* of these relations as a way to potential change (Eyben, *ibid.*). My findings showed that at least in these particular cases some initiatives, such as questioning the up-bottom approach discussed in the analysis of power relations, to start this kind of reflection were made, but mostly such reflection was lacking. Moreover, the theory of expansive learning would suggest that reflection does not suffice for change and learning, but the reflection should lead to creation of new tools and changes in the actual practices. The detailed analysis of the construction of power relations in the chapter seven provides with some ideas what could be considered in such reflection in these particular projects. Paying attention to such thing as how decision are made – or not made, how conflicts are handled and what kind of language used in actual situations can help to pinpoint the actions that could be changed.

However, it can be argued that the change in power relations would demand more radical changes than reflection and local change of action. For example, in my analysis of the object construction the Southern partners spoke to the “power” up to a conflict situation, but still there was no radical change in the agenda nor relations. Looking from the point of view of the power of development discourse Rossi (2004) has suggested that even if the discourse has power effect over every actor in development, the Northern and Southern actors nevertheless hold different positions *vis-à-vis* the discourse. I recently studied (Kontinen 2006) a Finnish-Indian project in which, in contrast to the projects studied in this study, the very explicit aim was to democratise the hitherto unequal North-South relationship. In the project, it however became apparent that power relationship, for example in different aspects of bureaucracy, endured to some extent notwithstanding the explicit aims of changing it. However, the Indian organisation that took part in the co-operation and was committed to Gandhian ideology, exercised different kind of resistance to the bureaucratic needs of the development system. For example, when asked to fill the plans similar to LFAs, the leaders of the organisations simply stated that they were not available for such exercises. In another Finnish-Indian project (Rovaniemi 2006) the Indian NGO did not conceive the funding relationship as unequal since the time and expertise provided by the Indian organisations was perceived equal to the financial input from their partners.

Nevertheless, the unequal power relation is often attributed to the funding relation that creates dependency (Malhotra 2000, 662; Fowler 2000, 642; Townsend and Townsend 2004, 280). Although it has been shown (Hudock 1999; Fowler 1997; Ebrahim 2003) that North-South NGO relationships entail an aspect of interdependency – the Northern NGO is dependent on its partner in regard to reports indicating success – the interdependency and reciprocity is not equal. For the Northern partner, for example, it is much easier to change the partner in case of disappointment. Moreover, the funding relationship is related to the problem of accountability. The one-way funding creates what Edwards and Hulme (1995, 12) call distorted accountability referring to the process by which the Southern NGOs become much more accountable to their donors than to their constituencies. Solutions such as moving from one way accountability to shared responsibility (Edwards and Hulme 1995, 226), to shared governance (Mancuso Brehm 2004, 21), and to collaborative accountability have been proposed to deal with the accountability problem.

However, more radical tunes suggest the decreasing or even abandoning the funding. For example, Malhotra (2000) states that in order to exercise more equal relationship, and *genuine* partnership one should move from the so-called resource transfer paradigm to global movement building and alliances among like-minded groups. This suggestion echoes Fowler's (2000, 642) longing for the "good old days" of *authentic* partnership based on political and moral solidarity. Though, the radical proposals for changing the prevailing power relations call for radical transformation – or even abandonment – of so-called aid system and shift from global and local service delivery to global political work and enhancing civic innovations (Fowler, *ibid.*; Malhotra, *ibid.*). Townsend and colleagues (2004; 2005) propose that such transformation should provide avenues to escape the current managerial culture that stresses the financial accountability and the measurable outcomes over the processes, and the reporting over the action. Accordingly, Hickey and Mohan (2004) argue that the objective of the much-discussed *participation* should entail radical transformation of development practice and the power relations within it. As long as the participation remains that of invited participation within the project frameworks, no radical change is likely to take place. In the same vein, Nelson and Wright (1995, 1) argue that real participation leads to the shift in power. However, as long as the political economy of the world is asymmetric in a number of aspects, the possibilities of such change in power, especially within development system, are difficult to identify.

In addition to funding, the asymmetric power relations are often attributed to the mismatch in capacities (Mancuso Brehm 2004, 155) of the partners. Whilst this is evidently the case in many co-operation processes, my findings partly challenge this explanation. In the co-operation projects studied the Tanzanian part-

ners had higher education, were more fluent in English and at times, more familiar with the development discourse than their counterparts. For example, the micro-credit scheme proposed by the Tanzanian NGO in the project was already at that time a common concept in international development and used by a number of NGOs in Morogoro. However, such concept of micro-credit was unfamiliar to the Finnish partners. The analysis of the capacity building seminar showed that the planning or accounting skills of the Finnish partners were not necessarily at more advanced level than of their Tanzanian partners. These observations challenges, in these particular cases, the proposal of filling the capacity gap between the partners as means for changing power relations. Even if it is evident that capacity gaps create social exclusion in many situations (Hickey and Mohan 2004), it seems that the explanation for the power relations in these particular cases should be searched from other sources. Consequently, the interesting finding in this study is that in partnership in which almost similar capacities or at times with capacity mismatch in favour to Southern partner, the Northern partners are still positioned “as if” they would have more capacities.

In order to gain more equal relationships between Northern and Southern NGOs solidarity (Edwards and Sen 2000; Fowler 1998) has been proposed. In my mind, the proposal of solidarity leaves open two questions. The first question considers the “management” of solidarity. Although solidarity distances itself from the managerial procedures in aid system and advocates for relationship between “people” the question of “management” still remains. How this kind of people to people solidarity would be realised in actual practice? The co-operation in Morogoro prior to the cases studied had been based especially on informal and friendship relations, in some cases, having roots in solidarity movement. In the cases studied first steps of making use of the “managerial procedures” of the aid system were taken. However, as the interviews of the Finnish long-time activists revealed, the feeling of asymmetry had emerged already during the times of individual, person to person contacts. These findings challenge the proposal that individual contacts, visits and the continuation of the relationship should automatically lead to partnership (Mawdsley, Townsend and Porter 2005). In other studies, such focus on relationship between individuals rather than organisations has been considered problematic (Mancuso Brehm 2004). Such individual and informal relations can decrease transparency and leave much room for exercise of hidden power by certain individuals. Such instances took place, for example, in my analysis of arranging the capacity building seminar, where the chairperson of the Finnish NGO individually, mostly on the basis of friendship, increased the grants paid to one of the Tanzanian facilitators.

The second question that arises is of whose agenda, again, is the abandonment of funding relationship? For example, Harris-Curtis (2004, 134) showed how the

Tanzanian counterparts did not conceive the funding relationship as problematic as their Northern partners did. Receiving help, *msaada*, from different networks is a common phenomenon in Tanzania and help is also expected from the external organisations (Green 2000). In the similar vein, my analysis implicates that the Tanzanian partners were willing to enter into funding relationship and at time considered the speech about partnership a bit ambiguous. Moreover, the idea of forming global alliances seemed quite distance for the organisations concerned. The organisations were mainly interested in the well being of their members and local issues rather than global problems. This is in accordance with Shivji's (2004) observation that most of the Tanzanian NGOs are engaged with domestic agendas and not so much interested in global solidarity. In their quest to solve local development problems and search funding for their activities the NGOs are very likely to be co-opted by the outside development agendas. The NGOs which Townsend, Porter and Mawsley (2004, 873) call "alternative NGOs" questioning the existing agendas are seemingly not the majority of organisations.

In his quest for moving from donor-recipient relations to equality, and from charity to co-operation Edwards (1999, 203–218) seeks the seeds for change in the Northern side of the co-operation. His proposal is that the individual change of development professionals is the key to co-operation. Even if he argues for a move from abstract to concrete his proposal (ibid. 219) that "we should love each other in our professional as well as in our personal relationship" or "at least we should like each others more" in my mind remains quite abstract. For example, for sure the individuals participating in my study liked each others, but still their conceptualisations on what were they actually doing differed. However, Edwards' proposal (ibid. 20; 188) that a path to real co-operation would be a dialogue in which the solutions are "negotiated not imposed" is easy to agree with. Unfortunately, shift from asymmetric communication to dialogue formulates the main challenge.

The difficulty of dialogue brings me back to Tvedt's (1998; 2001; 2006) notion of international NGO-system. At the time of my fieldwork, I encountered no Finnish or Tanzanian actor who would have questioned the prevailing resource transfer paradigm and searched for innovative alternatives such as policy advocacy. Therefore, I consider the cases I studied as quite typical NGOs that were both knocking on the door and already inside the NGO development system. Within the systemic framework, the power relationships are evident since it has been especially these inequalities that historically enabled the emergence of the system (Tvedt 1998, 75). Combining this idea with the dialectical logic of activity theory I thus claim that it is actually the core contradiction in *relationship* and not so much in the objects or tools that both keeps the activity of development co-operation going but also creates continuous dilemmas and additional contradictions.

The developmental contradictions identified in the particular projects can be interpreted as manifestations of the pertinent contradictions in the international system.

Tvedt (1998, 80) proposes that the international NGO-system develops on the basis of management of the inner conflict considering the political and moral dilemmas within the system. Even if the system is somehow closed as a funding channel and it tends to be presented as homogenous the “NGOs in development” are actually a heterogeneous group of organisations that continuously deal with dilemmas considering different values or different preferences for working models (e.g. projects vs. advocacy). My study looked at the margins of the system since both the Finnish and Tanzanian NGOs were quite newcomers in the system and moving from being informal groups into “formally established NGOs”, partly in order to enter the system (Tvedt, *ibid.* 77). The systemic indicators of formulating the work as “project” with different phases, the superficial use of the tools such as LFA provided with the system, and the emerging use of “partnership” rhetoric all confirmed the idea of international system.

Tvedt (1998, 84) claims that the formulation of the projects based only on the will of the “local people” is both theoretically and practically impossible. This claim confirms the activity theoretical idea that in co-operation always the historically formulated object of participating activities affects the search for joint object. According to this argument, neither partner is devoid of need or motivation for participation in the joint activities. Often, as shown also in the analysis of the interviews of the Finnish NGOs, the Northern actors are motivated by both individual and altruistic motivations. However, according to Tvedt (1998, 225) altruism and helping that have to do with some kind of gift money transferred in the projects reconstructs the unequal relationship.

8.4 Contributions to the activity theory and theory of expansive learning

Methodologically, my research was an attempt to apply the theory of expansive learning in analysing the learning challenges in NGO development co-operation. The main principles provided by the framework were the concept of object, the idea of dialectical logic behind learning and the engagement with detailed analysis of actions in order to interpret the activities. The theory of expansive learning conceptualises learning in co-operation or collaboration as negotiating joint object that would transcend the “old” objects (Engeström 2001). Learning is thus identified from qualitative changes and transformations in what is “being done” and, consequently in the instruments and division of labour. In my analysis, I was not able to pinpoint to moments of such radical qualitative transformations.

The projects of retraining retired professionals and the capacity building seminar were implemented almost as they were planned by the Finnish partners before the joint negotiations, and the project of supporting women's organisation did not even take off on the basis of negotiations. Therefore, the issue emerged more of understanding non-learning than learning and the mechanisms that hinder the possibilities of radical transformations. Non-learning is often related to the characteristic of the aid system itself (Eyben 2006). Thus, my study will contribute to activity theory with three future challenges: the relationship between the concepts of activity system and the international system, the need to elaborate the analytical concept of power into theory of expansive learning, and discussing the place of values in processes of object construction.

The theory of expansive learning understands the contradictions in activity as main source for learning and change (Engeström 1987; 2001). These contradictions are understood either inner contradictions in activities or contradictions provided by external changes such as introducing new tools or rules, for example a new legislation. In my analysis, I found the principle of radical localism (Engeström 1999a) at times problematic. Both the literature and the empirical experience led me to search for additional conceptualisation for the "externality" that provides rules and tools for the particular activities of organisations and individuals. The concept of "field of development" used by Long (2001), the "development configuration" proposed by Olivier de Sardan (2005) and the "discourse of development" used by a number of authors (Ferguson 1994; Rossi 2001; Ebrahim 2003) offered such possibilities. In this study, however, I situated the particular co-operation processes in the international NGO-system as defined by Tvedt (1998; 2001; 2006). Tvedt's concept of a system differs from the concept of activity system. The international NGO-system is not formed around a certain "object" other than very abstract "development" as is an activity system by definition, but consists of a number of activities formulated around a number of heterogeneous actual objects. However, the resource flows and certain symbols promote what Tvedt (1998, 44) calls increasing institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) among the diverse organisations calling themselves "NGOs" around the world. An interesting avenue for further research would be, first, the theoretical engagement with the commonalities and differences between the concepts of activity, organisational field and institution, and second, to continue to explore in detail by which mechanism the institutions and local activities are co-evolving and changing (Miettinen and Virkkunen 2005).

As Tvedt (*ibid.*) proposes, one of the systemic features in the international system is the asymmetric power relations between the Northern and Southern actors. This asymmetry, and further, the concept of power have traditionally been central to discussion about development (Eyben 2006; Groves and Hinton 2004). The

need for analysing power and other asymmetric relationships such as trusteeship became evident during my analysis, and, as my findings showed, the power relations played an important role in the processes of objects construction. However, power relations and their implications for the processes of object construction have not been the focus of analysis in the studies of expansive learning. The activity theoretical approach tends to put more emphasis on horizontal dimensions of co-operation and learning between co-operating activity systems. The notion of multivoicedness (Engeström 2001) implies that there are divergent and historically developed voices and different perceptions about the potential object. Notwithstanding the Marxist origins of the activity theoretical approach the question of a historically formulated *relationship* between these voices, and further activities has not been much discussed. Engeström (1993, 67; 2001, 132) states on a number of occasions that positions are part of the division of labour but does not further elaborate their effect in the negotiation of a shared object. In his comment on Flyvbjerg's (2001) quest to put the analysis of power mechanisms into the focus of research of any practice, Engeström (2005a, 12) turns the question of governmentality into a question of instrumentality⁶⁷ and production. In this effort, the central notion of social power, the "power over" seems to be interpreted merely as power over the object and not power over the other actors (Lukes 2005) or their possible acts (Foucault 1982). Based on my findings, I propose further development of the analysis of the political dimensions in object construction processes and conceptual development of power within the approach. By this I mean analysis of the kinds of strategies by which the game of negotiation is played to identify what is excluded or marginalised. The analysis of power does not necessary mean taking any normative stand vis-à-vis different participants (Engeström *ibid.*) in negotiation, but a methodological commitment to explore and understand whose object is becoming the "joint" one and by which strategies it takes place.

The third area of theoretical elaboration for the activity theoretical approach and expansive learning is the understanding of values. As shown in this study, the discussion on values is central in the literature considering the activities in NGOs. The normative basis for action is evident in the discussion promoting solidarity, empowerment and participation in development co-operation. The debate between the technical approach for effectiveness and solidarity-based view towards partnership illuminates the centrality of values (Brinkerhoff 2002). Moreover, in my study especially the analysis of the interviews of the Finnish actors revealed

⁶⁷ The concept of instrumentality in Engeström's use is connected with the idea of mediation: any activity is instrumental since it contains the elements of mediating artefacts. This conceptualisation differs from the concept of instrumental action presented by Weber instrumental rationality suggested by Habermas. The difference between the different "instrumentalities" presents one interesting further area of research.

the importance of “what is valuable” over “what works” or what kind of practical problems are solved. The further question then arises: if the NGO co-operation is based on values, on *whose* values and on what basis they are considered best and right values?

Some organisational learning theories (Argyris and Schön 1996) suggest that any organisational change requires first a change in organisations values and then, practices. In contrast, within the theory of expansive learning and activity theoretical framework, Engeström (2005b) has proposed a redefinition – and one could even say reduction – of the concept of value into the concept of use value. That means that “value” is not an ideal construction but a value that meets with any need in the process of production, and actual activity. Others (e.g. Nussbaum 1991) would suggest that values cannot be reduced only to realised activities. The findings of my research showed how the Finnish persons seemed to act more on moral premises of importance of helping without engaging profoundly with the actual use values of the projects for their counterparts. On the other hand, one could argue that the Tanzanian counterparts considered morally appropriate that the Finnish organisations should give as much help as possible taken their better-off position in global political economy. Different conceptualisations of “what is good” affect the negotiation of shared object. As Long (2001) has suggested, the encounters in development interventions entail struggles over different values.

In further development of activity theory that suggests that the objects of collective activity are the true motivation, the concept of value would require further engagement. The debates on the concept of values open up a huge theoretical challenge for activity theory that was not looked into in this research. On the other hand, the activity theoretical position in its part challenges, for example, the normative proposals of “what should be done” and asks immediately what is done? What can be done? By what kind of tools? In what kind of processes of working upon certain objects? Without being able to answer these questions also the NGO-development is in danger to become a road “paved with good intentions” (Porter, Allen and Thompson 1991) but with little practical meaning.

8.5 Contributions for the ethnographies of development

Whilst my study is based on the tradition of educational sciences and activity-theoretical studies, it provided a novel approach for researching learning in NGO-development co-operation. Although the approach had some shortcomings discussed above it also provided new insights. Methodologically, the principle of engaging in micro-level analysis of interaction situations provided novel knowledge on, for example, by what kind of actual acts the power relations might be constructed in interaction. The ethnographic studies located in the anthro-

polological tradition on NGOs in development have made use of the methods of extensive participatory observation that pay attention to relations and networks (Crewe and Harrison 1998; Hilhorst 2003; Riles 2001). Moreover, some other studies have employed the methods of interviewing (Lister 2000) and arranging workshops and group discussions (Mawdsley et al. 2002; Mancuso Brehm 2004). My approach was not exactly participatory observation although it included participating in the activities both in Finland and in Tanzania. In contrast, the main focus was on the collecting and analysing the authentic interaction situations. The strength of this approach was to be able to catch the micro-features of interaction in addition to the processes. However, this strength could also be seen as a weakness. For example, in analysing the project of retraining retired professionals, analysing the process as a narrative of evolving tensions up to the evaluation might have provided more illustrative analysis than the engagement with the details.

Second, the methodological principle of following the projects – and thus “objects” – in different locations both in Finland and in Tanzania contributed to the emerging field of development ethnography (Mosse and Lewis 2005) making use of methods such as multi-sited ethnography (Burawoy et. al. 2001). My focusing on the multiple encounters contributed to Crewe and Harrison’s (1998, 177) agenda of breaking the standard dichotomies in development such as developers/recipients, local/non-local, expert/non-expert. Even if their study considered the projects of large and professional NGOs, the findings of my study support the idea of merging of different roles and positions such as “locals and developers” in actual practice. For example, the leaders of the Tanzanian NGOs represented the “locals” in the negotiation with their Finnish counterparts but were also considered “developers” vis-à-vis the members of their organisations. Moreover, some of the Finnish actors mainly interested in cultural exchange and, thus, being subject to personal development were positioned as “developers” when engaged in project activities.

Crewe and Harrison’s (ibid., 192) proposal of understanding the development as a ritual in which the projects consists of certain stages, where reports have similar headings and workshops similar components open more cultural understanding of “development”. As also Seppänen (2003) has proposed, development could be understood as a specific culture. The concept of rituals and cultural understanding could give an additional angle for exploring learning in development co-operation. For example, Lave and Wenger (1991) have proposed a concept of learning as a process of legitimate peripheral participation. Following this reasoning, the learning in development would mean learning to be “developers” by participating in the rituals, learning how to do a “workshop on LFA”, learn to write proposals containing the right titles, and to use the appropriate symbols in which,

for example, petty business becomes “income-generating activity”, women become representatives of “gender balance” and ordinary meetings are called “participatory planning sessions”, to mention some of the examples in my data.

The cultural point of view towards the development practice complements the systemic view provided with Tvedt (1998) who defines, for example, the project cycle not as a ritual but as an ideal type of development practice that contains the systemic features and contradictions. The concepts of system and contradiction relate the particular projects with the general international system and, further, with the global asymmetry. The findings of my study indicate that the contradictions identified typical to aid relations seem to be relevant to even the smallest organisations practicing “development” projects. The contradiction between rhetoric and practice, as put forward by, for example, Mosse (2005) was shown in the ways the actors spoke about “participatory planning” in the project of retraining retired professionals, or about “partnership” in the arrangement of the capacity building seminar, and how the co-operation was actually practiced.

Accordingly, the projects analysed all struggled with the idea of implementing a blueprint or conceiving a project as a social process subject to changes and learning (Mosse et. al. 1998). The blueprint approach was most evident in the case of retraining retired professionals in which the blueprint made in advance in Finland was implemented almost as such. During the implementation, the aim of “keeping the project in a right track” became at times more important than the possibilities for learning. Interestingly, the project that was not taking off, the support for women’s organisations held the most open agenda in negotiation. As shown in the analysis of power relations, there was no ready-made agenda by the Finnish NGO but an expectation of getting such from the Tanzanian NGO. However, as the analysis of the meeting revealed the Tanzanian NGO expected to have some proposal of “blueprint” from their Finnish partner. The observation that the blueprint approach was both practiced but also expected to certain extent implicates the effect of the development system in the particular projects.

The contradiction between partnership and power emerged significant one, as already indicated in the discussion above. Northern partners had more influence on the agenda of the projects. Additionally, the findings of my study confirmed the contradiction between the partnership and trusteeship in development (Cowen and Shenton 1996; Mercer et al. 2003, 423). The idea of trusteeship emerged in co-operation in a number of ways. There was simultaneously an emerging intent of the Finnish partners to “develop” the Tanzanians and having a position of knowing what is needed for this development: training would be the best way to improve the standard of living of retired professionals and capacity building in project work is what is needed to develop the Tanzanian NGOs and their co-operation. On the other hand, as trusteeship is partly based on consent of those

being under trustees, there were also indicators of active appropriation of such “knowledgeable” position to the Finnish actors by their Tanzanian counterparts. These included, for example, the statements such as because the Tanzanian NGOs are situated in the Third World their Finnish counterparts should know what is “wrong with them” as indicated in an interview quoted in the chapter considering trusteeship, and to seek for best solutions on their behalf.

The findings of the study also touched the emergence of the contradiction between the instrumental logic of consequences and moral logic of appropriateness (Mosse 2005, 23). The findings of the study showed how the distinction between these logics in practice is ambitious. Whilst some of the Finnish actors explicated in interviews that the commitment to helping is conceived as appropriate, some others paid attention to the equality as a morally appropriate goal. In a similar vein, some accounts by the Tanzanian actors stressed the actual, “technical” problem solving and fund provision as appropriate role for development projects. These differences depict the varying motivations for development and NGO work. Townsend and Townsend (2004, 276) have paid attention to such different motivations and discussed how the different motivations and perceptions of “good” can lead to different consequences. For example, they (*ibid.*) point out that the motivations beyond the NGO activity in South is often self-employment that by some actors, for example in the workshop arranged in New Delhi was conceived as appropriate, by some actors it was seen as negative penetration of business orientation into civil society. In the light of my findings, all the Tanzanian organisations participating in the study were at the moment of research working on a voluntary basis. However, as shown, for example, in the attempts to include the executive members of the organisations for retired professionals to work as facilitators in the planned training included the motivation for employment in the project.

Substantially, the material collected for my study would provide possibilities for further engagement with some themes other than learning. For example, instead of focusing on collaboration *per se* the further choices would include the focus on merely on the Finnish side or in the Tanzanian context.

One of the interesting questions is related to the motivation of the Finnish actors. Although my analysis of the interviews touched upon the issue of motivation more focused study would be needed. The research on Finnish volunteer motivations in Finnish self-help groups and voluntary organisations has pointed out a number of mixed motivations that people have for such voluntary activities, both individualistic and altruistic (Nylund 2000, 113–135; Yeung 2004). In the context of the Finnish solidarity movement a collection of autobiographical narratives (Hakkarainen, Toikka and Wahlgren 2003) depicts some of the motives, such as guilt for engaging in solidarity work. The narratives reveal that per-

sonal experiences play a significant role in the emergence of global solidarity⁶⁸ and further engagement in development co-operation and other activities related to Third World. Additional further research task would be to connect the research on voluntary work to development research and investigate the motives of voluntary participants in development co-operation in comparison with other general voluntary motives. Is there something special that makes people volunteer in development co-operation? How would these specific motives show in the practices of the actors?

Second issue for further engagement would be the exploration of the Tanzanian NGOs and especially the role of the leaders in Tanzanian NGOs as both brokers and gatekeepers in development. The term “broker” refers to persons who act as mediators between the so-called local people and the development institution (Olivier de Sardan 2005, 173; Bierschenk, Chaveau and Olivier de Sardan 2000). The brokerage includes search for funding partners and connecting them with the members of the organisations and wider beneficiary group. In my study, the leaders of the NGOs were positioned in the role of brokers. For example, the leaders of the Tanzanian NGO in the project for retraining retired professionals struggled with the position between the needs and demands expressed by the membership and the offerings made by the partner. Moreover, the conceptualisation of the capacity building seminar as a network event in order to find donors by the participants from the Tanzanian NGOs rather than as a possibility to learn new things illustrates the exercise of the role of brokers. In addition to brokers, at least the leaders of the umbrella organisations can also function as gatekeepers (Townsend and Townsend 2004, 281) in defining who will get the benefits provided by the projects, for example, in deciding which NGOs will be invited to the seminar or who is eligible to participate in the training. Moreover, as the findings of my study shows, the Finnish actors had similar roles, for example, in deciding who would be invited to the capacity building seminar.

8.6 Recommendations for practice

The engagement in analysing learning challenges leads to the question whether it would be possible to give any specific recommendations for the practice of NGO-development co-operation. The quest for giving recommendations is related to the wider debate on the role of the research vis-à-vis the development practice. As I discussed in the introduction, for example the ethnographers have debated on their role of being researchers *for* or *of* development (Gardner and Lewis 1996).

⁶⁸ Many writers in the book indicate a specific experience in childhood that has affected them for the rest of their lives – such as seeing pictures of starving children in Africa.

In the studies of expansive learning, the researchers have often taken the role of externals interventionists and explicitly contributed to the change of practices (Engeström et. al. 1999; Virkkunen 2004). Whilst educational research is often interested in contributing to actual change, in the realm of social science Olivier de Sardan (2005, 201–204) proposes four different models for the relationship between research and development actors: isolation, submission of researchers to practice, action research and contractual solution in which some kind of joint definition of zone of interaction is made. For such a contractual solution he (ibid. 204–212) gives three options. The researchers could train development agents, especially in doing anthropological study; help in adapting to sidetracking in projects as a natural phenomenon and not a “failure” or anybody’s fault; and to act as experts doing enquiries.

I suggest that the option of training development practitioner to put their action in wider framework of “development system”, or, the activities of particular NGO in a framework of wider debates on supporting civil society would facilitate in understanding the problems and conceived “failures” of development. As Eyben (2006, 1–17) proposes, a relationship-based view on learning is needed. Relationship-based learning means that instead of focusing on individual or organisational learning, the focus on relationship should be central in consideration the quality of development. Such learning should include the reflection of power relations that according to Eyben (ibid.), limit the possibilities of development co-operation to promote change and learning. Fowler (1997) proposes two different strategies by which organisational analysis of NGOs can be undertaken: by comparing the current situation to the “ideal one” and the identification of possible gaps between them, and the comparison of the current situation with the missions, visions and strategies of the organisations. The approach undertaken in this research that focused primarily on the co-operation processes and object construction provides an additional source for organisational learning and reflection. The analysis starts neither on the basis of the ideal situation nor the explicated strategies of the organisations but on the detailed analysis of what is done and what kind of zone of proximal development for organisational co-operation could be depicted on the basis of the tensions and contradictions manifested in current practice. The organisational learning is, thus, neither that of “gap-filling” nor the assessment of success/failure vis-à-vis the predefined goals but as a modification of new directions, new objects and new tools to master the current tensions.

Therefore, it is difficult to give any general recommendations for practice of NGO development co-operation. The NGO field is, and continues to be heterogeneous, constituted of different actors with different values, agendas and ways of working. The shift from the management procedures towards more open co-operation (Townsend and Townsend 2004) might be a learning challenge in some

processes, whilst a need to agree on some kind of management procedures instead of random individual decision making is a challenge for others. Therefore, my main suggestion for the practice is the analytical approach of identifying the process-specific learning challenges and joint reflection of the potential ways of overcoming them.

Practical examples of challenging the power relations such as parity in travelling equally both from North to South, the impetus that every decision should be made together with the partners and that the expertise in South should be given its true appreciation are some of the ways successfully implemented in other processes (Kontinen 2006) can be used as examples and contributions to discussion. However, they are not ready-made solutions or normative statements of how things should be.

9 Reflections on the research process

9.1 Choices made and validity

As is typical of any research employing a qualitative approach, the research problems of the study have been modified during the course of the study. Before starting my main fieldwork in 2000 I had defined research questions both based on the theory and the short preliminary study on implementing one small project (Kontinen 1999). In my research plan (Kontinen 2000, 19) I presented my main research problems as follows:

- A. How are the purpose and current forms of NGO development co-operation conceptualised by different participants?
- B. What is the nature of collaboration in different critical points of the NGO development co-operation project?
- C. What developmental tensions and new possibilities for learning occur in the activities of the small NGOs in the present cases?

Although these were the basic problems that guided my fieldwork, the research problems were transformed and specified along the research trajectory based on the fieldwork, analysis and literature. First, the question of purpose and forms of NGO development co-operation was challenged by the observations that most of the actors themselves did not conceptualise themselves as taking part in development co-operation. Second, based on the preliminary analysis of the data the general question of the nature of collaboration turned into more specific question of constructing power relations. Third, the more positive view of the developmental tensions and possibilities for learning was transformed more towards direction of non-learning and pertinent tensions in the institution of development co-operation.

Any research entails a chain of different choices. The selection of the topic of the dissertation emerged from the growing interest in NGOs within development

discourse. The choice of the activity theoretical approach and expansive learning as the theoretical framework of the study was motivated by interest in trying the approach in a novel research site as well as my position as a post-graduate student within the centre that has overall institutional commitment to the activity theoretical approach. At times I questioned the relevance of the choice since the approach seemed to be more relevant to the analysis of local work practices in the Northern hemisphere than the co-operation of NGOs in development. For example, the apparent emphasis on the possibilities of development and learning sometimes seemed naive vis-à-vis more critical literature in development studies and at times I considered taking the theories of power, and not learning, as the overall framework of my study. Finally, in the end I found the idea of tensions and contradictions as sources of learning quite relevant to development co-operation and continued within the framework.

The selection of the concrete projects to study merely based on more on my personal knowledge of the Morogoro than profound consideration on what would be the most illuminating projects to study. The voluntary organisations in Morogoro represent one kind of NGOs in development. At times I considered adding different Finnish organisations and different projects to my study. However, the intensive following of other projects in other geographical locations would have required at least one additional year of fieldwork and that was not possible in terms of resources and time. Fortunately, during these years of preparing the dissertation I had a chance to participate in a number of smaller studies on NGO development co-operation in other contexts that enabled me to enlarge my own understanding about the problematic of NGO development co-operation.

The methodological choices of depicting processes and examining details of the interaction situations followed the general line of the activity theoretical studies of learning. In the end I think that the strongest contribution of the study is the analysis of different aspects of co-operation as they emerged in the interaction. Additionally, following the processes for a certain amount of time and in different geographical locations helped me to get a deeper picture of the actual practice compared with, for example, conducting a large number of interviews in a shorter time. An apparent shortcoming of the data is my inability to include the so-called beneficiaries and the influence of the projects in their lives. Continuing the data gathering would have enriched the voices heard in the study. Some of the beneficiaries were interviewed during the evaluation phase of the project of retired professionals and their voices were heard also in the implementation of the training course. However, taken my initial decision to concentrate on the construction of the co-operation between NGOs, I did not focus on their points of view in this particular study.

Assessing validity of the qualitative analysis means deciding whether the analysis reports on the empirical phenomenon it claims to study. One way to increase such validity is to explicate the process of data gathering, analysing and reporting (Emerson 2001, 300). The analysis and reporting of qualitative data includes always a number of selections. Only a small amount of available material is taken under more detailed analysis and even in the detailed analysis only a few interesting aspects can be covered. In different empirical chapters I applied different strategies of analysis. Each chapter includes a description of the analysis process. Of course, the analysis entailed a series of individual judgements about what seems to be relevant and personal interpretations of the actual acts and it is unlikely that another researcher would end up with exactly the same interpretations. However, based on my judgement I am confident of the ability of the study to document some of the relevant aspects of the Finnish NGO-development co-operation in Morogoro.

One way to increase the validity of the analysis is to discuss the initial findings with the research participants. This can be called member-validation (Emerson *ibid.*, 294). During the research, I have presented some of my observations already in the capacity building seminar in 2000 analysed in this study and in various other seminars in Finland. Additionally, I arranged feedback meetings in Tanzania concerning the project of retraining retired professionals and the project of seminar preparation for the research participants. The feedback from the members has been twofold. Especially the Tanzanian partners have explicated that my analyses were quite relevant and helped them in understanding what “development co-operation” means. On the other hand, some actors have been critical of my concentration on problems and contradictions. For them, my analysis showed too negative a picture about the co-operation. It is true that the overall idea of focusing on tensions and contradictions may look like delving into the negative sides of the co-operation only. My aim was by no means to vilify the co-operation but to view it in a larger framework of development co-operation. This does not mean that the actors themselves should do the same in their everyday co-operation. As Eyben (2006) observes, even of development professionals do not often reflect on the effects of the institutional contexts of their development activities.

Research on the particular projects cannot be generalised as such since each project and situation is unique. The study is based more on the idea of analysing particular projects and particular situation of Finnish NGO development co-operation in Morogoro. However, the comparison of other research literature on other development co-operation projects shows that many of the issues relevant to these particular projects apply to other situations also. Commenting on the validity and generalizability of the activity theoretical studies on change Engeström (1995, 36) states that the key findings of studies should be new “intellectual tools

for reflective mastery of practice”. Therefore, the results will be valid if the new tools and viable, and generalisable if they can be used in multiple similar activity systems (ibid.). The developmental contradictions and learning challenges identified, in my mind, formulate such tools for the reflection of development activities of other Finnish NGOs that so-far, despite some exceptions (Hakkarainen and Ådahl 2006) have been quite reluctant to consider the issue of power in their partnerships. The empirical evidence for such validity is, of course, yet to come.

Moreover, according to the principles of analytical or theoretical generalisation (Mitchell 2000), the developmental contradictions identified in the work of Finnish NGOs in Morogoro are likely to be found in other projects. The literature review of previous studies on NGO partnership showed that the problematic considering partnership in the particular projects was not unique to the Finnish NGOs although the practical forms they took might have been. However, it is a task of the empirical work to inquire in what practical forms they might emerge or whether there are other kinds of developmental contradictions that emerge in other projects.

9.2 Reflections on fieldwork and the role of the researcher

Having no background training in anthropology at the beginning of my fieldwork in Tanzania I was certainly a novice in conducting fieldwork in developing countries. Having had ethnographic experience only from the study on the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Kontinen 2000), many things, practical and behavioural were new to me while conducting fieldwork in Tanzania. In practical terms, my three-year studies of Kiswahili at the University of Helsinki and the previous time spent in Morogoro and the surrounding country-side as some kind of tourist proved to be important during my stay in Tanzania.

The postgraduate training in fieldwork was condensed in two pieces of advices: “follow the object” and “remember to tape-record everything”. Following the object proved to be a difficult exercise and resulted in a number of questions such as where the object was constructed in first place. How far in the network should I go? Practically, this meant concentrating on the meetings where the project was discussed and to some extent participating in the general activities of the organisations. In all cases however, the Tanzanian organisations did not have many activities other than the projects under investigation. The principle of following the object caused much ambiguity and frustration. When there were no meetings or activities related to project going on, I had the feeling that the time for the fieldwork was running out and I was just waiting for the “object to be constructed”. On the other hand, in many instances there were numerous events taking place simultaneously in each project causing the feeling that I should have been in at least three places at the same time.

As for the selection of and entering into the Tanzanian organisations, my choice was, of course, biased since I wanted to work with the organisations that had projects with Finnish NGOs. As indicated, the selection of the organisations was mostly made on the basis what projects were available to study at that time. Enter in the Tanzanian organisations took place when the Finnish NGO informed its partners about the research. In the beginning this, of course, caused confusion about the nature of my inquiries and suspicions about whether I was working as a monitoring agent, an evaluator or somehow otherwise contracted by the Finnish NGO. Making clear my position as an “outside” academic researcher with no direct connections with the Finnish organisations required a lot of time spent together and diverse kinds of “trials of trust”. In some instances I felt that I was tested on whether the information given to me would be passed over to the Finnish participants and after it became clear – implicitly and sometimes also explicitly stated – that I would not be spreading information around, the rapport with the actors in the NGOs improved.

During the analysis I felt that I had not shown enough interest in some data and information available. Having my interests on “researching the co-operation” I did not study systematically the NGOs themselves either in Finland or in Tanzania. However, taken that in these four project cases the organisations delved into in detail would have been eight all together, the task of systematic analysis would have been an impossible a task given the time-frame of the fieldwork. Additionally, while staying in Morogoro and getting to know the people, many of the other NGOs situated in Morogoro proposed that they would like to be “heard” and invited me to visit their organisations. During these visits I also conducted some interviews about the histories and activities of the organisations. This data helped me to understand the logics of the emerging new NGOs in Morogoro, but was not systematic enough to allow to draw any comprehensive conclusions.

The fieldwork was also influenced by my diverse positions as a quite young student, a woman, a wife, a Finn and a mother. All these positions gave me some opportunities as well as constraints in conducting the fieldwork. As a young student and a woman I had an ambiguous hierarchical position for example in relationship to the older, educated men with whom I co-operated in the organisation of retired professionals who were themselves in a quite powerful hierarchical position in their daily lives. The fact that I was a young woman meant that I was neither a threat nor an authority to them, but supposedly required an extra effort to not be taken for granted. In the phases of living in Tanzania, the fact that I lived in a modest house with my husband and two young children, in “poorer” conditions compared with the local middle-class also helped the actors in seeing me gradually as a part of the local dwellers, although temporary, of course. Without a doubt, because my son attended a local pre-school and spoke fluent Kiswahili I was conceptualised as an acceptable mother in a community where motherhood

is one of the important traits of a woman. While discussing with both educated and non-educated women, motherhood, child bearing and going through labour provided a common topic to talk about and facilitated the sharing of experiences. On the other hand, being a mother set constraints to intensity of the participation in the events in the field. Having to spend time with my children I had continuous role pressures of attending the lengthy events and meetings until the end or returning home at least to say good night to my children. My attempt to spend time with my children in the evenings also affected the quality of the field notes and the reflective research diaries, since after being in the meetings and other events during the day and spending some hours with children and the home work I was usually so exhausted that I had to go to sleep instead of starting writing.

Surprisingly enough, the fact of being a Finn facilitated building trustful relationship with the Tanzanian actors. At least two factors seemed to support that. Firstly, many times there were accounts that “you Finns act very differently from, for example, the British people and really listen to people”. This has, of course, to do with the colonial past of Tanzania and those who had been in contacts with different foreigners hold various stereotypes between the nationalities whilst for most of the people all white persons came from “*Ulaya*” – the mysterious white man’s continent.⁶⁹ Secondly, as is self-evident, the ability to speak the local language facilitated building up relationships. Although my Kiswahili was not rich and fluent, the fact that the pronunciation of Kiswahili is similar to that of Finnish seemed to give a picture of more fluency than those who spoke English as their mother tongue.

Researching co-operation between Finnish and Tanzanian actors set specific challenges to the role of the researcher. On many occasions both the Finnish and Tanzanian actors suggested that I work as a mediator or deliver messages between the organisations. Additionally, on different occasions I acted as a travel guide, interpreter and driver for both the Finnish and Tanzanian actors. I discuss two occasions to illustrate the debates concerning my position.

During the recruiting phase of the project for retraining retired professionals there was a situation in which the promised funds from the Finnish organisations had not arrived to Tanzania. This hindered the recruiting process since there were no funds to advertise the training course. At one point I decided to give money the needed TSH 10 000:- from my personal money for which I was reimbursed after the funds arrived. Additionally, I realised that the representatives of the Finnish NGO did not answer the emails sent by the Tanzanian NGO. On such an occasion I inquired about the reasons for the delay and got a quick answer. In such occasion I as a researcher intervened in the co-operation between the organisations.

⁶⁹ *Ulaya* literally means Europe but in everyday speech it can refer to any countries from which the white men come from.

202. SARI: Ai jaa tämmöstä nyt
203. TIINA: Hmm, I was not listening so carefully at the beginning.
204. SARI: she is not here as an interpreter (...) she is doing her own research so we should actually let her do that in peace
205. PETER: Yeye analipwa kufanya research anatakiwa kufanya kazi nzuri
206. SARI: Puhu mitä puhut, mutta puhu niin että minäkin ymmärrän
207. TIINA: Eeh, ninalipiwa kufanya kazi ya research sio kazi ya interpretation
208. PETER: Sio kazi ya interpretator
209. TIINA: Eeh, ninalipiwa kwa chuo kikuu kufanya research
210. PETER: Lakini sisi unatumia kama sample, sisi tunakuwa sample zako [laughing]
211. SARI: I am very sorry that I don't speak any Kiswahili but I am using another language all the time to be able to communicate with you, so I would appreciate if I could now ask you to..
212. PETER: okay, okay, thank you ...

In the excerpt the Tanzanian meeting participants were discussing in Kiswahili among them the anticipated benefits of the participants gained from the training course. In turn 199 Robert addressed me and suddenly asked me to interpret their discussion in Finnish. The Finnish representative found the situation a bit irritating since she was not able to understand the discussion. She pointed out that I was not an interpreter but a researcher. The Tanzanian participants continued by saying that if I was paid for doing research I should do a good job, hinting that I might as well act as an interpreter since I was making use of them in my research. However, the Finnish representative made it clear that she would prefer a language that everybody could understand. The meeting then continued in English with other subjects.

The excerpt depicts well some of the instances in which the research participants reflected on the benefit for them of being participants in my research. Similar incidents took place a number of times in regard to the allowance question and the micro-credit when I was asked to explain and forward the Tanzanian view point to the Finnish actors. In such instances I clearly indicated that my role was not to be an advocate of any point of view and that, as was clear, I did not have much power to influence the Finnish actors even if I had wanted to.

9.2 Challenges of multidisciplinary study and multiple audiences

I started working on my dissertation as undergraduate student in Adult Education (I got my Masters of Arts in 2000) and became a student in the Graduate School of Adult Education and Developmental Work Research. The graduate school is based on the activity theoretical research paradigm that is applied to different fields of study. The research areas of the other graduate students were situated in Finland and in other Western countries. As a graduate student I had also a background in Development Studies. Moving back and forth between the educational sciences where the first connotation of the word “development” is the process of child development and social sciences where “development” refers to processes that take place in societal or world system in longer periods of history was not always easy.

During the years of working on my dissertation I often encountered a problem of translations characteristic to multidisciplinary studies. For example, the traditions of activity theory and developmental research and development studies were both interested in development and intervention, but in a bit different manners (Kontinen 2004). It was the rule rather than exception that my colleagues at the Center for Activity Theory named my other field the “developmental studies”. In *developmental* research (see Virkkunen 2004) intervention is central to the research methodology itself – making developmental interventions into work organisations is an important way to gain knowledge – and an effort worth undertaking. On the other hand, development interventions have been the traditional object of critique in development studies; they are the work of practitioners. Inspired by the emerging tradition of development ethnography I chose to take the development projects as research objects without a clear interventionist role.

The activity theoretical tradition stresses the intertwining of practice and research. Research is expected to be a contribution to the development of practical activities. Development studies emphasise policy relevance of research and require practical recommendations. In this study, I pointed out some tensions and developmental contradictions that can be used as tools for reflecting and improving co-operation between NGOs in different settings. However, I have also indicated the permanence of the contradictions and the difficulties of overcoming them in local practices.

While starting also as a novice in the field of studying NGOs and development I encountered an additional challenge of actually establishing the field and tradition the research is situated in. Rather, it seemed that in the beginning in 1999 there were no established field whilst in the 2000s the number of books and articles published on the issue of NGOs, civil society and development were emerging out in accelerating pace. At the end of the project, the NGO partnership and power, that once seemed to be quite a novel research subject, seems to be quite

worn-out issue. Today, the findings of the research are hardly new or surprising to any researcher dealing with NGO-development co-operation. However, I wish it can contribute to the understanding the gaps between rhetoric of learning and partnership and the social reality one encounters in co-operation processes. Any actor in development subscribes to the common advice stated in any guidelines for co-operation such as that the Southern NGOs and beneficiaries should participate in the project planning from the beginning; that the process of the project negotiations should be a more equal and participatory one; and that the ownership should be in the hands of the Southern partners. The most difficult question to consider is if that is what *should be done* why it is so difficult to put in practice? Or, further, if this is what should be done or are there other ways to find out what should and can *be done* in the interaction of contradictory objects, interests and historical paths in practical development encounters?

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Appendix 1

Interview guide for the Finnish NGO-participants (originally in Finnish)

1. How did you become involved in the NGO co-operation in Morogoro?
2. I'd like you to tell shortly about the NGO you are engaged in and its activities
 - a. When and how it was founded?
 - b. What are its basic activities?
 - c. What kind of development activities the organisation has had?
3. What was the first project of the organisation in Morogoro?
 - a. How and to whom did the idea occur?
 - b. Who was the first partner? How the partner was found?
 - c. How the project was planned?
 - d. How did the implementation take place?
 - e. What is your opinion about the results and impacts of the project?
4. What kind of projects have you had after the first one?
5. How much of your time have you spent on the co-operation in projects?
 - a. What motivates you to use your time to development activities?
6. What have been the biggest problems in the co-operation so-far?
7. How do you see the future of the co-operation in Morogoro?
 - a. Any opinion
 - b. What kind of projects?
 - c. How the co-operation will be organisation, planning and follow-up will be arranged?
8. Are there new persons coming to take part in the co-operation?
9. In your opinion is there any difference between NGO development co-operation and other development co-operation?
10. In this NGO-seminar we are talking a lot about partnership. What does it mean in your opinion?

Appendix 2

The themes in the interviews of the Finnish actors (N=25)

Theme	Codes included in the interviews (ordered by frequency, number of quotations attached to each theme in parenthesis)		
A. Personal biography and motivation	1. Involvement in project work (57) 2. Gain from development co-operation (54) 3. Entering development co-operation (54) 4. Visits to Tanzania (50) 5. Background of interviewee (26) 6. Entering the Finnish organization (23)	7. Motivation for engaging in development co-operation (22) 8. Finnish life style (17) 9. Work contents of the interviewee (16) 10. Time spent on development co-operation (11) 11. Involvement in development co-operation in general (8) 12. Relationships (7)	13. Belonging to a group (6) 14. Training(5) 15. Title of the interviewee (4) 16. Racism (4) 17. Language skills (4) 18. Personal health (1) 19. Listening to others(1) 20. Mutual growth (1)
B. Cooperation between Finnish actors	1. Co-operation between Finnish NGOs (28) 2. Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (50)	3. Interaction between Finns in Tanzania (9) 4. Finnish NGOs (12) 5. Uhusiano (22)	
C. Finnish organisation (FIGOs)	1. FIGO's projects' history (155) 2. FIGO's project future (88) 3. FIGO's activities in Finland (50) 4. Groups within FIGO (36) 5. New members in FIGO (35)	6. FIGO's projects present (30) 7. FIGO in general (30) 8. FIGO's fundraising (23) 9. Planning within FIGO (18) 10. FIGO's budgets (12) 11. FIGO's board (11)	12. Applications (8) 13. Bookkeeping (8) 14. Evaluations (5) 15. Meaning of development co-operation to FIGO's home town
D. Co-operation between Finns and Tanzanians	1. Contents of the projects (138) 2. Communication (114) 3. Morogoro (113) 4. Contacts (103) 5. Visits to Tanzania (78) 6. Problems in co-operation (61) 7. Joint planning (54) 8. Partnership (38) 9. KEPA (34) 10. Money (33) 11. Finnish models (28) 12. Cultural exchange (28)	13. Funding (22) 14. Tushikamane (22) 15. Training in Finland (19) 16. Salonen (19) 17. Beneficiaries (18) 18. Visits to Finland (15) 19. Behaviour in Tanzania (14) 20. Morogoro seminar (14) 21. Finnish coordinator in Tanzania (13) 22. Thefts (12) 23. Colonial attitude (9) 24. Control in co-operation (8)	25. Finnish students (7) 26. Responsibilities (6) 27. Mistakes (6) 28. Training certificates in Tanzania (4) 29. Working together (3) 30. Critique from Tanzanians (3) 31. UNGO (3) 32. Cooperation (2) 33. Cooperation with foreign NGOs (2)
E. Tanzania	1. Tanzanian partner NGOs. (79) 2. Tanzanian NGOs (34) 3. Tanzanian project proposals (13) 4. Tanzanian coordinator (11) 5. Tanzanian hospitals (11) 6. Tanzanian libraries (7)	7. Tanzanian officials (7) 8. Office of Tanzanian NGO (6) 9. Tanzanian history (2) 10. Corruption (2) 11. Tanzanian schools (2) 12. Tanzanian sociality (2)	13. Tanzanian school children (1) 14. Poverty (1) 15. Tanzanian PRSP (1) 16. Hot weather (1) 17. Plastic bags in Tanzania (1)
F. Development	1. Development co-operation in general (27) 2. Documents (11) 3. LFA (9) 4. Voluntarism (7) 5. Future of NGO-development co-operation (5)	6. Development (5) 7. NGO development co-operation (5) 8. Change in the development co-operation (4)	9. Project model(3) 10. PRA (2) 11. Indicators (1) 12. Jargon (1)

Note: One quotation (speech turn) might be included in several themes.

Appendix 3

The codes used in the analysis of meetings for analysis of power relations

ACf	References to Organisations (Tz) activities in future
ACp	References to Organisations (Tz) activities in past and present
AG	Turns in which a new item is brought to the agenda or agenda is set
BoD	Beginning of dispute
CD	Closing of the dispute
CO	Reference to conflict is made
CoD	Commenting dispute
DErf	Reference to decision to be made in the future
DErp	Reference to a decision made in the past
DEu	Decision made in situ
DIf	Division between Finnish actors – implied or explicated
DIfT	Division between Finnish and Tanzanian actors – implied or explicated
DIt	Division between the Tanzanian actors – implied or explicated
DOf	Reference made to a future document
DOp	Reference made to a document made previously
DOu	Making use of documents in situ
DS	Development system (reporting – “project” – applications)
FI	Finnish speaker (in general)
FIC	Speaker is Finnish chairperson (of Finnish organisation)
FIM	Speaker is a “ordinary” member of Finnish organisation
FIMR	Speaker is a representative of the Finnish organisation
GEf	Female speaker
Gem	Male speaker
IN	Situation in which information is hidden
Ke	Speaker is a representative of KEPA
LA	Laughter
LAf	Finnish language used
LA _s	Kiswahili language used
MOR	Reference is made to money, not explicitly discussed
MO _s	Money discussed
PR	Reference to the problems of the beneficiaries
QuF	Question asked by a Finn
QuT	Question asked by a Tanzanian
RE	Researcher speaking

Res role	Comments on researcher's role
SI	Silence (long pauses / whispering)
TI	Timetable
TzC	Speaker is a chairperson of the Tanzanian organisation
TzE	Speaker is an executive member of the Tanzanian organisation
TzM	Speaker is an "ordinary member" of the Tanzanian NGO
TZM1	Speaker is an "ordinary member" of the Tanzanian NGO
TZM2	Speaker is an "ordinary member" of the Tanzanian NGO
TZM3	Speaker is an "ordinary member" of the Tanzanian NGO
TzS	Speaker is a secretary of Tanzanian organisation.