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## **Agenda-setting of the truth behind the pineapple production in Costa Rica:**

A Minor Field Study of the communication strategies of a rural opposition movement

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Bachelor's thesis  
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## To whom it may concern

The holder of this document and the attached individual letter of introduction or certificate from the university/university college,

### *Johanna Niva*

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is about to undertake a "Minor Field Study" administered by the Swedish Council for Higher Education and financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

For many years, Sida has financed scholarships for Swedish university students. These scholarships aim to raise the level of knowledge and interest of Swedish students in Swedish international cooperation and to give them the opportunity to learn about other countries, thus promoting international understanding and global knowledge.

The student will use the scholarship to carry out an in-depth field study as part of his/her Swedish university programme. The study's lay-out and academic plan have been approved by representatives at the university and institution in Sweden. The scholarships are intended to cover a period of study abroad lasting approximately 8 weeks.

One of the objectives of the visit is to provide the institution in the host-country with information about the study's findings (in the form of a report by the student). Another objective is to promote contact between students in Sweden and other countries. It is hoped that the Minor Field Study Programme will be of benefit to both of our countries. The Swedish Council for Higher Education and Sida would therefore appreciate any assistance that can be offered to the student in pursuit of his/her mission, including any necessary permits.

Please note that the Minor Field Study Programme is not a research commission.

Lars Nordahl  
Head of unit, Department for International Cooperation  
The Swedish Council for Higher Education



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Higher Education



## **Abstract**

This thesis is a result of a Minor field study, which was carried out in Costa Rica during two months between March 25<sup>th</sup> and May 27<sup>th</sup> in 2014. The field study was financed by a scholarship from SIDA (The Swedish international development cooperation Agency). The purpose of the study was to investigate how the significantly rapid growing ICT-development in Costa Rica between 2010-2015 has changed the ways in which an opposition movement from rural communities in the country communicates. The empirical material has been collected through eleven semi-structured interviews with respondents from the opposition movement and participatory observations.

The social context in which the opposition movement operates is in the social reality of living in a community next to a pineapple plantation where daily use of chemical pesticides on the plantations has contaminated the drinking water as a result of the spraying. These pesticides contain chemical substances, which can cause cancer and other serious diseases and health problems. The affected communities have not been able to drink the tap water for more than 10 years and receive water from a tanker truck twice a week. The water contamination has caused serious health-problems among the population who have a daily contact with the tap water and among plantation workers who are exposed to chemicals on a daily basis. This major social and environmental problem that many rural communities in Costa Rica next to pineapple-plantations are facing, has resulted in a growing opposition movement.

In the process of mobilization for a social movement, communication is essential. Communication through different communication channels and media are important tools for social mobilization, however communication itself is the key for the existence of a social movement (Strömbäck, 2009). Hence, studying the communication processes of a social movement is an important aspect to investigate.

Investigating the communication-process and strategies of the opposition movement in the rural communities of Costa Rica in particular is very interesting in the context of the country being the current most fast growing country considering ICT-developments (ITU, 2015).

The result of this study concludes that the opposition movement have not been able to take

advantage of ICT to a wide extent in the communication-process due to a persisting digital divide in the rural communities. Lack of access to ICT and poor Internet connection are central aspects, which prevents the movement from taking advantage of the full potential of ICT. Hence, the ways in which the movement communicates has not changed significantly regardless of the major ICT-developments in the country during the last five years.

However, what the ICT-development have brought is an increased awareness among the movement of the need for (and the importance of) a united organization and the discovery that digital media and social media in particular can facilitate networking in ways that they want to learn to take advantage of. Further social media can serve as an important alternative media to the national mass where the issue is not given space and an increased corporation with large and influential NGO's can contribute to the international agenda setting which is crucial for the movement since reaching out to a wider public can generate pressure on the Costa Rican government and the pineapple industry to force changes.

**Keywords:** Social movement, online mobilization, strategic communication, ICT, C4D, ICT4D, Pineapple industry, Costa Rica, environmental issues, Agenda Setting.

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Helsingborg, Sweden 2016-06-02

Johanna Niva





## Prólogo

*El bus paró en la pequeña calle en el centro de la plantación de pina. El grupo de 15 estudiantess se bajaron del bus junto con la profesora de la Universidad y la guía de la comunidad. Era un día muy caliente con el sol muy fuerte. No había sombra en ningún lado lo que el ojo podía alcanzar sólo una cantidad infinita de piña plantados en hileras perfectas a lo largo de la plantación.*

”Le iba a preguntar, la Asociación Internacional de Derechos Ambiental (AIDA) no les ha ofrecido ayuda para poder presentar el contención administrativa?” *Un estudiante le preguntó a la guía.*

”No, la verdad no. Nosotros, como le digo, las luchas que se han hecho ha sido a nivel comunitario con la ayuda de FRENASAPP y CEDARENA. Nada mas.” *La guía contestó.*

*La profesora empezó a explicarle a los estudiantes sobre la problemática que las comunidades nacionales han tenido por la producción de pina en el país:*

”Existe una asociación internacional de derecho ambiental la AIDA que normalmente pues brinda apoyo a este tipo de luchas. Es lo que le estoy consultando a nuestra guía, porque ellos tienen la necesidad de seguir un proceso contención administrativo. Este tipo de procesos lo que hace es investigar el proceso administrativo que sigue el estado para permitir este tipo de actividades económicas.

Por ejemplo, la lucha contra la minería ha sido abierto, en su momento se presento un recurso amparo el cual la sala cuarta no estimó con valor, y no había nada mas que hacer. Lo que procedida era dar la lucha contra el mismo estado que es un caso recurrente, verdad. Lo que vemos es que nosotros desde el sector social luchamos contra el estado costaricense porque no toman las medidas, no exige que se cumpla con la legislación nacional existente sobre este tema.

Entonces otra vez volvemos al sector de desarrollismo, tenemos una seria presión por la globalización y estados que cada vez en lugar de fortalecerse se debilitan, entonces nuestro estado costaricense tiene instituciones que no son capaz de vigilar por el

bien estar del pueblo ni siquiera por ese artículo constitucional que establece que todos tenemos derecho a un ambiente sano para vivir y ecológicamente equilibrado.

Entonces, en este caso, el contencioso administrativo es una solución porque lo que hace el contencioso es analizar porque la AYA, porque el MINAED, porque el Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería (MAG), porque la Secretaría Técnica Ambiental (SETENA) no han hecho nada. Vean cuántas poblaciones tienen un acuífero contaminado, abiertamente se ha divulgado incluso en medios internacionales, y seguimos con el mismo problema a nivel nacional. La cámara de productores de pino (CANAPEP) dicen que si la demanda sigue, ellos van a seguir produciendo pino. Pero a qué precio, verdad?

Un trabajador por hectárea es realmente un actor esclavitud, vean las condiciones, ¿ven ustedes alguna pila de sanitarios? Con agua potable para los trabajadores? En cuántas hectáreas ¿cuál podemos ver alrededor y no hay una sola pila de sanitarios que es lo mínimo que necesita una persona, un humano, para trabajar.

Entonces el contencioso administrativo tal vez podría servir para presionar un poco más a un estado que no está funcionando. La debilidad de nuestras instituciones del estado genera inseguridad para la ciudadanía costarricense, entonces es una cadena de hechos que hay que analizar de manera lineal, cuando uno ve estas cosas siente una inquietud, una frustración, porque se quieren solucionar las cosas pero cuántos abogados están dispuestos a trabajar de manera voluntaria para dar la lucha con las comunidades, cuántos realmente? Cuántos profesionales sacan uno o dos años de su vida para dedicarse a la lucha por la ecología y por las comunidades locales? Eso también tiene que ponerse en valor, es nuestra responsabilidad, como profesionales, comprometernos con este tipo de luchas también!" (Transcripción de la conversación de la observación.)

## Prologue

*The bus stopped on the small road in the middle of the pineapple plantation. The group of 15 university students got off the bus together with the professor and the local community guide. It was a very hot day and the sun was burning. There was no shadow anywhere as far as the eye could reach, only an infinite amount of pineapple planted in perfect lines along the plantation.*

"I wanted to ask.. the Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense (AIDA) has not offered help to present an administrative containment?" *One of the students asked the woman.*

"Not really, no. The struggles that we have made have been handled on a community level with the help of FRENASAPP and CEDARENA. Nothing more." *The woman replied.*

*The teacher began to explain to students about the existing problems in the national communities affected by the pineapple production in the country:*

"There is an Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense (AIDA) that normally supports struggles like this. This is what I am telling our guide, because they have the need to follow an administrative containment. This type of containment investigates the process followed by the state in order to allow these economical activities.

For example, the fight against mining has been open and an appeal has been presented which was estimated with no value from the state. What proceeded was to fight against the state which is a recurring case. What we see is that from the social sector, we fight against the Costa Rican state because they do not take measures and does not require compliance with existing national legislation in this aspect.

If we turn to the development sector we have a serious pressure by globalization and states that every time rather than strengthened is weakened, and the Costa Rican state has institutions that are not able to monitor the well-being of the people not even for the constitutional article which states that everyone has the right to live in a healthy and ecologically balanced environment.

So in this case, the administrative containment could be a solution because what the containment does is to analyze the reasons for why the AYA (Costa Rican Institute

of Aqueducts), the MINAED (Ministry of Environment and Energy), the Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle raising (MAG) and the Environmental Technical Secretariat (SETENA) have not done anything. Look at how many communities have a contaminated drinking water, which has openly even been reported in the international media, and we continue with the same problem at a national level. The camera of pineapple producers (CANAPEP) are saying that if the demands continues, they will continue to produce pineapple. But at what price, right?

Working in these plantations is slavery, look at the conditions! Do you see a sanitary cell? Drinking water for workers? In this infinite plantation which we can see around us, there is no sanitary cell which is the minimum that a person, a human, needs to work!

The administrative containment could maybe serve to put a bit more pressure to a state that is not working. The weakness of the institutions of our state creates insecurity for the Costa Rican citizenship, so it is a chain of events that has to be analyzed in a linear way. When one see these things, one feels concerned and really frustrated, because one want things to work out, but how many lawyers are willing to work voluntarily to give the fight with the communities? How many professionals devote one or two years of their life to the struggle for ecology and local communities? This is something important and should be higher valued, it is our responsibility as professionals to engage with this kind of struggles too!" (Transcription of conversation from observation, 2014).

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# 1. Introduction

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In Costa Rica, environmental issues due to cultivation of various types of export products such as bananas and pineapple has been a problem for many years (Miller, 2008). He states that Costa Rica in the past has been referred to as a “Banana republic” due to the disproportionate influence of banana producing corporations on the social, economic and political system in the country. Miller (2008) concludes that a growing movement has organized in opposition to explosive pineapple production and argues that the country is becoming more of a “pineapple republic”. The movement argues that cultivation of pineapple causes serious harm to the natural environment, wildlife, human health and social welfare through the use of chemical pesticides (Miller, 2008).

Lawrence (2010) states that the spraying with chemical pesticides is a serious health and environmental issue for the workers on the plantations and for the population who live in the communities close by. In addition to this, it causes an enormous pollution of the surrounding nature. The workers on the plantations are on daily basis exposed to toxic chemical pesticides through the spraying of the pineapples (Consumers International, 2010). These pesticides contain chemical substances that can cause cancer and other serious diseases and health problems which workers on the plantations and the populations of the communities in the surrounding area are forced to suffer the consequences of.

Contamination of the nature is a further consequence of the chemicals that affects wildlife and lakes nearby. The ground water, which supplies most of the communities in the area with water, is contaminated in various places as a result of the heavy spraying. The communities are not able to drink the tap water, and receive drinking water from a tanker truck that passes twice a week (Consumers International, 2010). Eight years ago when the first indications of contaminated drinking water came up, the tanker truck was a short-term-solution that the government came up with. Today the tanker-truck is still providing various communities in the Costa Rican countryside with drinking water at a high economical cost for the country as a consequence (Niva, 2014).

The opposition movement that is organizing against the expansion of pineapple cultivation in the country has arisen mostly from these poor, rural communities affected by the pollution and the negative impacts of the cultivation. The movement consists of different socio-environmental non-governmental organizations that are trying to fight back against one of the countries most economically influential industries (Miller, 2008).

Research examining the consequences and negative impact of the pineapple industry on the affected communities in Costa Rica is not unusual. However, little is known of the strategies and practices used by the opposition movement in Costa Rica to organize in their struggle. There is no clear research examining the ways in which the movement attempts to use strategic communication in the struggle. Further little is known about the use of Internet and the involving of Information and communication technologies (ICT) in the struggle. There is a gap in the research examining the ways in which the Costa Rican opposition movement communicates and how they involve ICT in the communication-process. This is an important aspect to explore especially considering that Costa Rica has experienced the most fast-growing ICT-development in the world during the last 5 years from 2010-2015 according to the IDI-index from the ITU (2015).

This is an important aspect to investigate in order to understand how an opposition movement consisting of populations from poor, rural communities in this specific social context can use and take advantage of strategic communication and how they involve ICT and Internet in the process to fight back against one of the most economically influential industries in the country.

## **1.2 Aim of the study**

The aim of this research is to investigate, explain and understand how the rapidly growing ICT-development in Costa Rica between 2010-2015 has changed the ways in which the opposition movement communicates and how the movement potentially have benefited from it. This is relevant and important to the research field of strategic communication since it is a new area and it increases the knowledge within the field of how a social movement in Costa Rica is using strategic communication in this specific context.



I aim to contribute to the research field through investigating the attempt to use strategic communication of an opposition movement consisting of population from rural communities and NGO's in a country like Costa Rica, which is very different from our social context.

It is further relevant to my bachelor degree in Strategic communication and digital media considering the specific focus of how the ICT-developments in the Costa Rica has effected the ways in which the strategic communication is applied and hence how ICT and digital media is involved in the communication-process.

The research contributes to the following fields: Strategic communication, Environmental communication, social movements, Communication for development and political communication.

In order to find out in what ways the ICT development has influenced the ways in which the movement uses strategic communication, I seek to find out which communication strategies that occur and in what ways they are applied. I further seek to identify which communication-channels that are used and in particular look at the use of ICT and social media in the communication-process. By looking at the use of ICT in the communication process, I seek to find out how the movement has potentially benefited from the fast ICT-development in the country during the last 5 years.

### **1.3 Research questions:**

1. How has the rapidly growing ICT-development in Costa Rica during the last 5 years (from 2010-2015) changed the ways in which the opposition movement communicates?
2. How has the opposition movement potentially benefited from the rapidly growing ICT-development?

## 2. Method

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### 2.1 Research process

This thesis is a result of a Minor field study, which was carried out in Costa Rica during two months between March 25<sup>th</sup> and May 27<sup>th</sup> in 2014. The field study was financed by a scholarship from SIDA (The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), channelled through School of Social Work at Lund University, which made this study possible. The process of this study can be divided into several different parts: initial planning, literature review, the application-process for the scholarship, a preparing 2-day course with SIDA prior to the field study, field work, additional literature search, compilation of empirical findings, analysing the empirical findings and the writing of this report. The total length of the process was approximately one year, including two months of actual fieldwork in Costa Rica.

It has been a long and at times difficult process where it has been important for me as a researcher to remind myself of the important purpose of this study and that the writing of this report is important not only in order to contribute to the research within the field, but more important, in order to contribute to the international agenda-setting of the major environmental and social problems which the respondents of the this study are struggling with and forced to live with in the social reality of a rural, poor community next to a pineapple plantation in Costa Rica.

The work and effort that I have put into carrying out this study and the writing of this report has been very extensive and has meant a lot to me and have been of great personal importance, in ways which are difficult to express in an academic report. During the fieldwork I developed a deep understanding for the difficulties of the social reality that the respondents are living in. I wish to make the readers of this essay to be able to read this report from the perspective of the respondents, why gaining a deeper understanding for the field and the background is critical. I will therefore, provide a deeper explanation for the surroundings in which the field study took place.

Further, for this reason I have chosen an ethnological approach to this field study. Ethnological studies are characterized by that the researcher get access to a specific group of

people such as rural communities, often in a foreign country, and travel there to spend time with the group during a longer time (sometimes during years) to study the culture and the social patterns (Bryman, 2008). This field study has an ethnological approach and could be seen as a micro-ethnography focusing on a specific aspect of a social reality of a rural community, due to the limited time spent on the field (Bryman, 2008). The empirical material has been collected through eleven semi-structured interviews with respondents from the opposition movement and participatory observations of the field.

Through adapting an ethnological approach, central in this report is generating knowledge and to create a deeper understanding for the social reality studied where the main focus in the analysis has been on describing and analyzing the empirical findings, rather than generating generalizing conclusions or confirming theories (Merriam, 1994).

## **2.2 Entrance to the research field**

Bryman (2008) and Aspers (2007) argue that one of the most difficult parts of conducting ethnological studies in line with what Merriam (1997) explains for case studies is to get access to a social context that is relevant for the research questions. Bryman (2008) points out that the level of openness of the context chosen for the study is an important factor affecting severity for accessing the field.

The subject for this study caught my attention as I saw a news report on Swedish Television where the study of the Costa Rican pineapple-industry conducted by Swedwatch in November 2013 was presented. This was particularly interesting to me since I have been to Costa Rica several times and lived in the country over a year and a half, and had never noticed or heard of the environmental- and social problems that the pineapple-industry is causing in the country. I had further been a frequent consumer of pineapple both while living in the country and afterwards.

As I started to research the subject, I found similar studies such as the documentary from Consumer International (2010) and several videos on You-tube showing protests and demonstrations where the people from the affected communities were telling stories of contaminated drinking water and pollution and serious health problems.

I found the website of an environmental NGO called Fundación Bandera Ecológica which had been involved in manifesting against the pollution in the country, and contacted Jorge who became my contact person and who gave me the first entrance to the

field (Aspers, 2007). Jorge received me during the first week of the field study in San Jose, Costa Rica at the organization's office where he introduced me to the problematic and provided me relevant with contact-information to potential respondents for my interviews.

Shortly after this I got in contact with the Swedish professor in communication Jan Axelsson at Earth University, which is located close to the affected communities. Jan helped me with transportation, accommodation and the use of facilities at the University during the fieldwork. He provided me with further valuable contacts and hence gave me a deeper entrance to the field. His guidance, support and knowledge have been essential to carry out this field study.

In order to give the readers of this report an idea of the surroundings of the rural communities in which the fieldwork took place, I will share a particularly detailed description from the field notes from a guided tour at a pineapple-plantation in the rural community Milano in Costa Rica. This tour is described further in the analysis and has previously been described in the prologue:

“The bus is riding up the bumpy road. It is 8.30 in the morning but the sun is already burning hot. Everywhere around us there are pineapple-plantations as far as the eye can see. The woman organizing the tour is sitting in the front of the bus next to the driver, calmly looking out over the plantations. She is the president of the aqueducts in Milano and a representative from an environmental NGO manifesting against the negative impacts of the pineapple-industry that has affected Milano. The group of students is curiously looking out the windows of the bus talking, taking notes and taking pictures. I am the only one with a video camera. The buss stops and the woman in the front of the bus turn to the group of students with a serious look. She starts talking:

‘This whole area used to be forest before the pineapple plantation existed and started expanding...’

She tells us what the pineapple-plantation has done to the area, that the ground water is contaminated and that they are not able to drink the tap water. They receive water twice a week from the tanker truck, where they are allowed to fill limited amounts of water per family in the community. She explains:

‘We are sometimes forced to use the tap water for washing our cloths or taking a shower, if we have very little clean drinking water left. Sometimes the truck shows up three days late, you can never know for sure so I don't want to waste the clean water on things like washing cloths or taking a shower. I want to make sure that my children are to be able to drink clean water every day.’

She tells us that even if the cultivation of pineapple in the country would cease completely, it would take 125 years for the earth to recover from the chemicals in order to be able to cultivate anything else than pineapple. We stay for a long while in the middle of the pineapple-fields listening to the woman's story. After a while she

explains that we are going to pass the area where the plantation workers prepare the pesticides. We get up on the bus again and start the bumpy ride. After about 10 minutes we get to an area behind fence on both sides of the road. A couple of men in uniform starts waving at us, but the woman explains that this is a public road running straight through the plantation. It is the road that used to transport the pineapple to the capital San Jose. She points at several large barrels with a skull on the right side and explains that those are the chemicals. On the left side, a large vehicle is parked and she explains that this is the vehicle used for spraying on the fields. The workers are preparing to use it. Another vehicle already out on the field. She points and says: "Look at the workers, they are not wearing protection just like I told you..."

The workers are dressed in jeans, jumpers, caps and gloves. Most of them have covered their faces as a protection against the burning sun. The woman continues:

"I have never seen them using protection, unless they are informed in advance of that a visitor or an inspector is coming. This is how a work-day at the pineapple plantation looks like."

We have passed the area in just a few minutes, but these few minutes are long enough for the group of students to get an idea of the social reality in which the pineapple-workers and the communities are living. The of group of students is silent. We keep on driving along the bumpy road a side of the pineapple plantation for a while longer, until we get out to the main road." (Field notes from observation, 2014).

## **2.3 Scientific approach**

I will adapt a scientific approach mostly based on the thoughts of the social constructionism approach, however with an active comparative approach based in the opposite perspective with the attempt to achieve a comprehensive picture of the reality studied (Åkerström, 2014).

The social constructionism is an ontological position where researchers argue that people construct their own social reality through interaction rather than trying to describe an objective reality. Within social constructionism the theories are assumed to be "glasses" through which the researcher can gain understanding for aspects of the socially constructed reality and does not aim to provide a comprehensive picture of an objective reality. The focus is on understanding how others perceive "their" reality. The most common research methods within the social constructionism approach are qualitative methods including case studies, participant observation, interviews and document and discourse analysis (Falkheimer & Heide, 2011). However, Åkerström (2014) highlights that a researcher can benefit from adapting a comparative approach between these to two seemingly conflicting approaches of how the knowledge can be reached used in relation to each other. The

weakness of using only one perspective is compensated by the strength in using a second perspective. This suggests that it is possible to gain knowledge of reality through studying social behavior, attitudes and perceptions, and thus argue that reality is “socially constructed” but at the same time being aware that something also can exist independently of our social (and often culturally and common constructed) performances. Should we just trust to the truth which social constructionism highlights (which is part of the truth), it means that we are missing out on other opportunities to develop our knowledge (Åkerström, 2014).

I use a qualitative case study with semi-structured interviews and frequent participatory observations during the fieldwork as a research method. The case study has an inductive, ethnological and descriptive approach with the aim to explain and the attempt to understand the social reality in which the Costa Rican opposition movement is living and struggling with.

The results of descriptive case studies are characterized by a "thick" description of the interaction between several variables identified during the study, from the participant's perspective, mirrored by their social values and cultural norms and hence a rich empirical material. This is presented using quotes, practical examples and descriptions from the field. The case study is heuristic and aims to improve the understanding of the aspect that is investigated. The case study has an inductive approach with the focus on generating knowledge and theories, rather than to confirm a hypothesis or theories defined previous to the study (Merriam, 1994).

I have chosen an ethnological, descriptive approach to this field study since I find it to be the most logical and suitable research method in order to answer my research questions. I suggest that I use a combination between the two perspectives described above through, on one hand, using deep qualitative interviews with participants in order to understand how they perceive the reality they are living in, and on the other hand, I have observed actual things and aspects of this reality such as water contamination and pollution which are not socially constructed and can be seen as part of an “existing reality”.

## **2.4 Research method**

The research methods used in this field study are qualitative semi-structured interviews and participant observations.

### ***2.4.1 Interviews***

The Semi-structured interviews are categorized by that the researcher use a list of specific themes of relevance to the research questions as a base for the interviews, however, at the same time leaving room for participants to address other aspects that may be of importance for the study (Bryman, 2008). The interviews was recorded with a cellphone and videocamera and later transcribed and used as the basis for the analysis where quotes and practical examples has been frequently used in order to increase the transparency of the research process (Bryman, 2008). The respondents from the interviews will not be mentioned by name in this report, however, the organizations within which they operate will, which all the participants have given their approval of. All of the participants expressed that they have no problem with their names being exposed in this report. As one respondent expressed it *“I am not ashamed to stand up for my rights and I am not afraid to make my voice heard. This is exactly what we need to do.”* (Interview, 2014). However, despite this, I have chosen to not mention the respondents by name for ethical reasons and to protect their privacy (Bryman, 2008). (Please see interview guide in Appendix 10.)

### ***2.4.2 Selection of participants for the interviews***

The selection of participants was done according to a non-probability sampling method where the probability for each participant to participate was not completely random and cannot be calculated. Furthermore, the selection was target-oriented where I intended to find members of the opposition movement in Costa Rica. The selection was characterized by three different selection conditions: comprehensive selection, network selection and selection based on personal knowledge. Comprehensive selection since I chose members of the opposition movement as a target group to interview independent of demographic factors such as age, gender, background, etc. which opened to the possibility to interview any member of the target group. Selection based on personal knowledge since I got access to the

field and received a list of potential participants of relevance for my research, through the organization Fundación Bandera Ecológica and Professor Jan Axelsson at EARTH university. Network selection arose during the fieldwork as I started to contact participants from the list that I received found further participants through their recommendations (Bryman, 2008).

### ***2.4.3 The participants***

The participants consist of members of the opposition movement in Costa Rica. Eight of the participants in this study were women and three were men. Seven of the eleven respondents were between 45-75 years and nine of eleven did not have higher education than high school. The respondents come from rural and poor communities. The interviews have been taking part in the respondent's households where they seem to have been comfortable (Bryman, 2008). Even though they are different individuals and different ages, I experienced that they all have one thing in common namely that they are enthusiasts with a strong will to fight for their human rights and have faith in succeeding. Even though they are living under simple conditions, they have showed great hospitality and generosity through receiving me in their homes with open arms and a willingness to answer my questions. The communities where they live and hence their homes are located next to and in some cases in the middle of, a pineapple plantation. A quote from an interview with one of the female respondents describes:

"I have no wish to be anonymous. People have to know of the struggles and the work of rural women and the difficulties that we live with here every day. This is an area very far from the urban parts of the country, but yet an important zone to the government since this is where the transportation of goods to the capital San Jose is passing. But we are very abandoned by the government. For example, look at the roads, you saw the road as you came here, they are in a very bad condition. And the transnational pineapple-companies are affecting this community in brutal ways. As you can see, we are surrounded by pineapple-plantations. The government is not taking responsibility for the bad roads. We have no competent medical clinic and contaminated drinking water. So we are very, very abandoned out here". (Interview, 2014).

### ***2.4.4 Observations***

I have conducted frequent participant observations through out the fieldwork. The participant observation provides the opportunity for the researcher to personally experience



the situation studied and in combination with interviews, it enables a holistic interpretation of the situation (Merriam, 1994). The observations were recorded with a videocamera and I took field notes during the whole study.

However, I want to underline that participant observations have been conducted constantly during the whole field study as I as a researcher spend time in the rural communities and integrate with the respondents taking frequent field notes which is necessary for a holistic interpretation of the situation, but the observations should be seen as a complimentary method to the interviews which has been the main research method. Constant documentation in form of pictures, videos and field notes has been conducted during the fieldwork and I made two more significant participant observations; the guided pineapple tour which is described in part 2.2 *Entrance to the research field* and further discussed in the analysis and during the first meeting of the new national forum which will be described further in the analysis. These two observations were carefully documented with a video camera and additional notes have been taken.

I suggest that the frequent observation of the field during the fieldwork has been an integrated part of the fieldwork necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the field and the context in order to answer my research questions, however the main research method have been interviews and the observations can therefore be seen as a complimentary method to the interviews (Eksell & Magnusson, 2014). A benefit from combining observations with interviews is that the researcher can get a wider and more varied empirical material. The observations give the opportunity to the researcher to investigate what the people do, and what they describe that they do (Eksell & Magnusson, 2014).

## **2.5 Analytical method**

The empirical material collected during the interviews was analyzed during the field study in paralleled with several interviews conducted. This way I was able to adjust themes and questions for coming interviews during the investigation, based on the results of previous interviews. After eleven interviews I began to see patterns in the collected empirical material (Merriam, 1994). During the analysis of the empirical material from the interviews, I created categories, which represented similar patterns and phenomena in the data. These categories were used to describe and explain the situation studied and compared to and analyzed along with the theoretical framework (Merriam, 1994).

## 2.6 Reliability and Validity

Since all parts of the research process are free of choice, it is important for the researcher to motivate the choice of method for the study and clarify the ways of thinking through the whole research process in the report. Transparency in the research process, i.e. the ways in which the researcher highlight and presents the ways of thinking in the report, is important in order for the results to be credible and for the academic report to contribute to the research within the field and further to be of relevance for society as a whole from a political, economical or social perspective (Åkerström, 2014).

Bryman (2008) defines four aspects from which the qualitative study's reliability can be measured: credibility, transferability, dependability and the ability to demonstrate and confirm. Transparency in the research process and careful documentation through out the study is important to increase the reliability of the study. This is achieved in this study through frequent field notes and documentatopn in order to not forget important impressions from the field, and further through carefully performed transcriptions of the 11 interviews that was recorded with both videocamera and cellphone. Pictures from the field and videos from the observations strengthen the empirical material, which increases the reliability and credibility of this study. Efforts have been made to increase the credibility of this study further through providing a detailed description of the surroundings in which the study has taken place. Using a combination between observations and interviews providing a wider empirical material can be seen as increasing the validity of this study. Further the extensive work that the researcher has performed during this field study has generated a rich empirical material and a large amount of information enough to write several reports of different aspects of the social reality of the opposition movement. However, I had to prioritize and choose empirical material that is relevant for my research questions, and this can be seen as further increasing the credibility of the study. The transferability of this study to other similar cases needs further investigation since this study does not aim to generalize the result, but rather to gain a deeper understanding for this specific case. Further, I am aware of that I as a researcher might have been affected by my personal interest in the specific subject for this study. However, by being aware of this I have tried to distance myself from the research process and tried to act as objective as possible to increase the reliability. Further

the report has been reviewed by a supervisor during the writing process, which can also increase the reliability by having input from another researchers opinion (Bryman, 2008).

## **2.7 Ethical Considerations**

Since this report is investigating a situation of difficult social and environmental-issues it is particularly important for the researcher to be aware of and consider ethical guidelines through out the whole research process. I have been following the Ethical Guidelines for International Comparative Social Science Research in the framework of MOST which is an *“international programme established by UNESCO in early 1994 to promote policy-relevant social science research and to ensure the wide dissemination of the results of such work to a wide range of end-users including key decision-makers, different communities and social groups and representatives of civil society”* which is relevant for this report (UNESCO, 1994).

Since the fieldwork was carried out in a foreign country the researcher should be familiar with and respect the host culture. I have been living in Costa Rica where I carried out the study so I know the culture of the country well. The interviews were carried out in Spanish, which contributed to a deeper entrance to the field and a closer relationship to the social reality investigated. I have been open with my role as a researcher through out the whole process and have informed the participants of the purpose, methods, procedures and sponsors of the research and in what ways the research material will be used in the writing of this report. Participants have been provided with a copy of the video-recordings of the interviews and offered access to transcriptions and research results.

Efforts have been made to avoid unnecessary intrusion into the lives of the participants by letting them decide the time and location for the interviews with the purpose of showing the participant that I respect their dignity, privacy and interests. Efforts have been made to show respondents gratitude for participating and that the welfare of the communities is a high priority to this research.

I have considered the potential consequences of this study for participants and for the wider society since this report is dealing with social- and environmental- as well as political- and economical issues in Costa Rica. However, the participants of this report have been informed of the purpose of the study prior to participating and more important have

clearly expressed that they are used to sharing their opinions in public. They are involved in the struggle of the opposition movement and are hence aware of such potential consequences. Further they have expressed that there is no need for anonymity in the report as I have previously mentioned, but I have despite this, chosen to keep all informants anonymous to protect their privacy.

## **2.8 Literature Search**

The theory that I have used for this report consists of articles and books from both international and Swedish researchers. I have used the library services of Lund's University: LubSearch and LOVISA. I have further used the platform Sage Knowledge (<http://sk.sagepub.com>) and the library service at the main Library of Helsingborg (<https://bibliotekfh.se/web/arena/Helsingborg>) and was provided with relevant articles and books from my supervisor in field Jan Axelsson (professor in oral communication at Earth University, Costa Rica). For my literature search I have used a variety of keywords such as: social movements, political agenda setting, ICT, digital divide, strategic communication, online mobilization, collective action, social networks, Costa Rica, NGO, environmental issues, pollution, pineapple industry.

### 3. Earlier research

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The situation in the Costa Rican communities affected by the pineapple production which was described in the introduction was brought up in the documentary film "Pineapple: luxury fruit at what price?" produced by the organization Consumers International (CI) in collaboration with the British magazine "The Guardian" with the main reporter Felicity Lawrence in 2010. The film received great attention in Swedish media. In March 2013 the organization Swedwatch performed a field study in Costa Rica about the pineapple industry and the report shows similar results as the documentary film from 2010 (Swedwatch, 2013). The report received great attention in Swedish media at the release in November 2013. This suggests that the conditions for the employees on pineapple plantations have not changed much since 2010, despite considerable attention in media. Consumers International made a follow up of the case in 2010, which shows that no significant changes have occurred.

This is an important reason to why this report is relevant and contributing to the research within the field through investigating the reasons for why the situation remains the same despite media attention in international media and the use of strategic communication within the opposition movement.

I have only found one article prior to this study, investigating the communication in particular of the opposition movement in Costa Rica. The article "*Socio-Environmental impacts of multinational agriculture companies: The costarican case.*" examines and analyzes the information campaign regarding the negative outcomes of pineapple farming produced by the opposition movement in Costa Rica. The author concludes that through the use of several information-channels the movement has been able to increase the participation of the communities in the country and to raise awareness among the general public of the conflicts. He argues that this increased participation and raised awareness has generated pressure on relevant government institutions and the pineapple sector to respond to movement demands (Miller, 2008). At the same time, later research and documentaries such as the investigations from Swedwatch in 2013 and Consumers International in 2010, indicates that the negative impacts from the pineapple-sector on rural communities in the country and conditions for workers has not altered much ever since. Therefore, more

research within the field is needed.

The article *"New forms of environmental governance? A case study of Costa Rican environmental NGOs"* Tahkokallio & Nygren (2008) analyses the ways in which Costa Rican environmental NGOs (ENGOS) engage in politics, by focusing on their perceptions of their roles in environmental governance and in representation of civil society. The authors concludes *"The results of this study suggest that the ENGOS' ways of engaging in politics differ little from traditional forms of governance, while their conceptions of engaging in politics without being political are novel. While most ENGOS had no clear conception of the stake holders whom they were supposed to be representing, the notion of representativeness is complex and should be revisited."* (Tahkokallio & Nygren 2008). This article is within the same field, but has no clear focus on the strategic communication processes of the NGO's and in the pineapple-conflict in particular.

Further, research examining the role of social media for social movements and mobilization such as during the Arabic spring in 2011 and Spanish 15M (which is further explained in the theoretical framework) is not unusual, but little is known of the role of social media in struggles of social movements from poor and rural communities, and in particular in the social context of the opposition movement in Costa Rica and there is a clear gap in the research on the subject.

Studies examining the negative impact of banana-production is common and have been a highly debated subject in media. The movie *"Bananas!"* which was released in 2009 by the filmmaker Fredrik Gertten follows a legal case between Dole and plantation workers in Nicaragua where Dole have been using banned pesticides known of the company to cause sterility. The movie received major media attention and caused a wave of protests against the banana-industry world wide. The producers describes on the official website [www.bananasthemovie.com](http://www.bananasthemovie.com): *"At first the banana workers won the case, but in the appeals process Dole managed to turn it over/.../Our film premiered in 2009, this text was published in June 2014. For the banana workers this doesn't mean anything. Most of the workers who suffered from the use of DBCP in the plantations are now all gone. Very sad story, indeed."* (*"What happened next in the Dole Case?"*, 2014.). This movie serves as an example of how vulnerable the affected communities and plantation workers are and in relation to the large, influential transnational companies within the food industry.

Bananalink writes on the website [www.bananalink.org](http://www.bananalink.org): *“Most exported pineapples are grown by banana producing companies, often on former banana plantations, employing the same workers and using the same transport and distribution networks. Large-scale pineapple production is at least as environmentally damaging as banana production and sadly the social and economic difficulties faced by workers are much the same.”* As the pineapple industry is expanding worldwide seen by producers as a profitable alternative to banana-production, the debate of the pineapple-industry is growing with it into a similar debate like to the one created around the banana-industry and cases like “bananas!” (“Why Pineapples Matter”, n.d.) Therefore, it is an existing problem in today’s society and more research contributing to the debate is needed.

## 4. Theoretical framework

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*Analyzing the role of strategic communication and the use of ITC and social media in the struggle of the opposition movement in Costa Rica requires my theoretical framework to overlap the scientific fields of strategic communication, political communication and ICT for development (ICT4D). I will look at the role of new digital media in society and how social media changes the way we communicate and interact, how it changes the conditions for public participation and democracy and how it affects the power of traditional media. I further seek to understand the role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in developing countries such as Costa Rica and how rural communities and social movements can use and take advantage ICT and the internet in their communication processes.*

### 4.1 Communication for Development and Social Change

In order to understand the role of communication and explain the communication strategies used by the opposition movement in Costa Rica, their struggle can be understood from the perspective of communication for development.

#### 4.1.1 Social Mobilization

Social mobilization is the process of bringing together the relevant actors (institutions, groups, networks and organizations) on a particular issue and to mobilize them to work together to achieve a specific development goal. In the process, communication is fundamental in order to identify needs, raise awareness and take advantage of all the material and human resources available to increase and strengthen self-reliance and sustainability of achievements. In order to bring together actors at a policy level advocacy is used of and at a grassroots level community members are encouraged and motivated to participate (Servaes, 2008.) Community participation is critical for the level of success of social movements. The condition for successful sustainable development is that the community members are actively involved and participating in the development process. The attitudes, group dynamics and social relationships between community members and



other actors involved in the process are of high importance for the level of success. Local media is often used in participatory communication with the aim of empowering the community members to make their own decisions through local newspapers, radio and interactive video (Servaes, 2008.)

#### **4.1.2 *Grassroots Advocacy***

”When it comes to successful political lobbying, particularly for passing or preventing legislation, grassroots advocacy can be one of the most influential tools that organizations and associations have.” (Bourdreaux, 2014).

In traditional advocacy (lobbying) the goal is to affect legislators to make a decision for or against a specific issue by bringing arguments directly to them. Grassroots advocacy, on the other hand, turn to the general public with the aim of influencing the public opinion in a specific direction, which can contribute to gain influence on legislators (Bourdreaux, 2014). Groups of citizens play an important role in advocacy because together they constitute the "public opinion". Legislators are highly influenced by their perception of the public opinion, which however, does not necessary match the actual public opinion (Palm, 2006).

Grassroots advocacy is an effective way to get legislators to pay attention because it allows a big number of people to take action. Mass forms of communication e.g. demonstrations, phone calls, mass emails and letter writing are considered effective ways of creating influence on legislators (Bourdreaux, 2014). Grassroots advocacy aims to set the issue on the agenda in order to influence the public opinion, thus the ability to control public opinion in a certain direction on a particular issue, requires a successful agenda-setting (Palm, 2006).

However, grassroots advocacy in combination with grassroots advocacy or lobbying increases the chances for the legislators to pay attention. Grassroots advocacy includes high credible leaders of the grassroots community to communicate and establish a dialog directly with the legislators (Bourdreaux, 2014).

Servaes (2008) emphasizes that media plays a strong role in advocacy, however the effectiveness of their role, “*depends on the freedom the media enjoys and the influence they carry with the national political system and the public.*”

### ***4.1.3 Multimedia approaches in communication for development***

Radio is considered the most effective mass medium in rural development projects because of the large availability, cheap production and ability to reach a big amount of people with information. Television is not as widespread in rural areas; however, it is a powerful and persuasive medium when used. Television and video are effective mediums in illustrating new ideas and techniques to create a deeper understanding than word-of-mouth. Further, it allows an important event to move from one location to another, in order to serve as an example for another community.

(Servaes, 2008.)

## **4.2 Digital media and society – the impact of ICT and Internet**

Ever since the 1970s when the digital technologies started to quickly develop these technologies have forced changes in society by changing conditions for political, social, cultural and economical aspects (Anthique, 2013). The technical progress has been called “the digital revolution” and has been compared to the Industrial Revolution through its impacts on society. Anthique (2013) argues that new technologies have changed society radically allowing people to access information in a much wider range than before and web 2.0 (founded by O’Reilly) transformed the Internet from a one-way communication platform to a place for interaction and open dialog between users (Anthique, 2013). Desai & Potter (2008) states that Information and communication technologies (ICT) have blurred the boundaries between time and distance, countries and cultures and it has increased globalization worldwide (Desai & Potter, 2008). Through increased use of mobiles, computers and Internet people in developing countries can access information from more developed societies, which can encourage public engagement and democracy (Desai & Potter, 2008). However, Desai & Potter (2008) argues, that the lack of access to technologies in the poorest countries prevents them from taking advantage of ICT in comparison to higher-income countries. This creates a *digital divide* between countries and a bigger gap between developing countries and developed countries. ICT can be used successfully to reduce the gap between countries to improve the social, cultural, economic and political development of people, with a goal of engendering social change. Servaes (2013) states that ICT have the possibility to provide a country with the “*necessary information and externalities that can lead to and improve the well-being of people and communities mostly in developing countries*” (Servaes, 2013, p. 62).

### ***4.2.1 Digital divide***

According to the ITU (2015) the digital divide can be described as differences between or within countries in terms of accessibility and quality of ICT and Internet and connectivity. The most noticeable is perhaps the digital divide that persists between developing and developed countries, but differences are also found within countries mostly between rural and urban areas. In many developing countries, the populations in rural areas are to less extend connected to the Internet and using ICT than in the urban areas and many rural communities lacks broadband capacity. Digital divides have further been identified between men and women, social groups such as people with disabilities, high-income and low-income population in terms of ICT affordability, and the level of education especially related to the knowledge required for internet use. The quality of ICT devices and the speed of connectivity is improving and growing fast in developed countries. ICT devices such as smartphones and tablets are facilitating connectivity by allowing users to connect from anywhere where there is Internet access, and is therefore replacing traditional computers and basic mobile phones for many users. An important contributor to the rapid growth of and demand for connectivity in society are social media networks and the desire to stay connected among users. As a tool to measure the ICT development in the world the IDI (The ITC development Index) was developed. A quote from *The Measuring Society Report 2015* explains the index:

“**The ICT Development Index (IDI)** is a composite index that combines 11 indicators into one benchmark measure that can be used to monitor and compare developments in information and communication technology (ICT) between countries and over time.

The main objectives of the IDI are to measure:

- the *level and evolution over time* of ICT developments within countries and the experience of those countries relative to others;
- the progress in ICT development *in both developed and developing countries*;
- the *digital divide*, i.e. differences between countries in terms of their levels of ICT development; and
- the *development potential* of ICTs and the extent to which countries can make use of them to enhance growth and development in the context of available capabilities and skills.”  
(ITU, 2015, p.39)

### ***4.2.2 The age dimension in the use of technology***

Prensky (2001) among others argued that the gap between generations in the use of technology could be understood through the terms “digital natives and digital immigrants” where the level of knowledge and competence in the digital environment are heavily depending on age. Digital natives represents the part of population born after 1980s who have digital skills which the digital immigrants (born before the 1980s) will never have or will have difficulties in learning. Åkerström and Young (2016, p. 1) instead speak of “*digital naturals, individuals who are comfortable in an online environment...*” framing that natural life cycles and social patterns are more important factors for the use of technology than the chronology of adoption. They suggest that the use of technology and Internet is more a result of an individual’s life-situation including economical- and social conditions rather than merely linked to age (Åkerstam & Young, 2016).

### ***4.2.3 Definition of social media***

The definition of Social media that I adapt in this report is a digital platform for user-generated-content and interaction between users allowing them to create and respond to content, share and exchange information such as news, articles, pictures, videos, music etc. Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter (micro-blog), blogs and virtual worlds such as Second Life are examples of frequently used social network-sites. (Ström, 2010).

## **4.3 Political Agenda-setting in traditional and social media**

### ***4.3.1 Agenda-setting Theory in traditional media***

”Explains the relationships between the emphasis that the mass media place on issues and the importance that media audience attribute to those issues././media priorities become public priorities” (Weiss, 2009, p. 32).

Agenda-setting refers to bringing up an issue on the agenda in order to create debate. There are three types of agendas: the expert agenda, the media agenda and the public agenda. The expert agenda refers to that the issue is debated among researchers and experts within the field. The media agenda is when mass media address the issue and the public agenda is when the issue is debated among the public (Palm, 2006).

Mccombs (1972) argues that objects that media choose to report about (objects on the media agenda) sets the public agenda. In other words, what media presents to the public is what the public will notice, think about and talk about. Mccombs (1972) argues that the journalists point of view regarding a news object or an issue, will mirror the way they write about it and set certain attributes to the story that will affect the public's perception of the issue while reading the newspaper or watching television. This means that media, except for telling people *what to think about* (through transmission of object salience), also will tell people *how to think about it* (through transmission of attribute salience). Mccombs (1972) states that a possible consequence of this might be that media, in some occasions, also tells us *what to think* of an object.

Further Mccombs (1972) argues the mass medias influence on the public agenda is confirmed by various researches. However, what is more important to understand is who in particular sets the media's agenda. Mccombs (1972) identifies following key elements in setting the media's agenda: major sources who provide the information for news stories, organizations, interest groups, public relations, political campaigns and journalisms norm and traditions. A consequence in a society where mass media sets the public agenda is that those things media excludes or choose not to write about, practically does not exist.

However, Weiss (2009) points out the importance of considering the extent to which the media influence their audience. Individuals who disagree with a news story or does not find the media source credible, are less likely to be affected. Still, the fact remains that findings of various research since the 1960s give empirical support for the theory that media has a strong influence on the public agenda (Weiss, 2009). Although media has a strong influence on it's audience, personal influence between members of the audience has a stronger impact. In particular, regarding the ability to achieve a behavior change among the public (Langley and van der Broek, 2010).

#### ***4.3.2 Social media reducing the power of traditional media***

Traditional media has a major influence on people, as it is mostly the primary source of information regarding what is happening outside one's daily lives (Strömbäck, 2009). A large part of the knowledge we possess about people, different phenomenas and technology, we have no personal experiences of but have learned about through the mass media (Strömbäck, 2012). Media's view of reality is many times the only view one has of reality.

Therefore one is many times forced to rely on the view of reality that media provides. In traditional media the journalists and media companies share power and influence of the news content and mutually influence one another. Further, journalism is influenced by politics and democracy in the country, which also reflects the reality that is portrayed in the media. Journalism is about informing the public, examining issues and contribute to the debate (Strömbäck, 2009). However, social media, in turn, increases the opportunity for ordinary people to become "journalists" which reduces the power of traditional media. So called "Hobby-journalists" can portray different a side of a story than traditional media or report directly from the scene of an accident, before the television, newspaper and reporters get there (Eriksson, 2009). In consequence, social media flattens out the power system in society and divide the power between citizens and authorities, politicians and journalists. On social media authorities do not have higher status than anyone else, what is more important and higher valued is engagement and the ability to stand up for one's opinion. In the end, it is "the digital majority" that decide what is important and interesting on the social network (Hastings & Ossiansson, 2010).

Åkerström (2016), in line with Hastings and Ossiansson (2010) reasoning found in a study that opinions that are not allowed in traditional media could be expressed on websites. However, she concluded:

"Different websites create their own versions of reality. The new media landscape might now be described as a world of alternative realities, where 'truth' is differently cultivated depending on your preferred online community. All together this makes it hard to build collectivity in many senses. It makes it hard to build a society that can take collective action." (Åkerström, 2016, p. 129)

However, the debate and agenda-setting of *established media through online platforms* can be an important contributing factor to put pressure on politicians (Åkerström, 2016).

#### ***4.3.3 Network-strategies and collective action***

A network-strategy refers to a series of activities that have in common that they are based more on personal influence than on mass media. Typically the strategy contains face-to-face or ear-to-ear communication, however, the number of networks online, in particular professional network, is increasing (Palm, 2006). In line with Langley and van der Broek (2010) as mentioned above, Palm (2006) argues that network-strategies tend to be successful when the goal is to achieve a behavioral change among the public. By changing people's

intentions from one having the will to change a behavior, but lacks the strength to do it, to develop self-confidence and create a belief in oneself to have the ability to change one's behavior. This can be achieved through the interaction between members of the network and outside the network. This helps spreading the message within the network and eventually to other networks. Palm (2006) describes that the advantages of a network-strategy is that it can create a democratic legitimacy if achieving to involve broad groups of citizens in a way that a mass media campaign can never come close to. Further network-strategies are characterized by a high degree of flexibility and can easily be adapted to the situation. If successful in achieving a behavior-change among the public, the chances are higher that the new behavior persists compared to behavioral changes created through mass media campaigns. The social interactions between the members of the network reduce the risk of falling back in past behavior-patterns, compared to behavior-changes influenced by mass media. However, the disadvantage of a network-strategy is the fact that it might take a long time to achieve the goals (Palm, 2006). Further, in occasions where the goal is not to affect or create a behavior change among the public, but to affect political processes and legislators, lobbying and advocacy are effective strategies.

In today's digital society, political communication and social mobilization through Internet and online social networks is a frequently debated aspect within the research field.

#### ***4.3.4 Political Agenda-setting and mobilization through social media***

Enthusiasts of the digital revolution and the use of Internet promote the opportunities of influence in political communication for the citizens which social media has brought. Desai and Potter (2008) argue that new digital media promotes democracy by facilitating public communication and participation in political debates through social media and political blogs. Social networks allow people from all over the world to interact, resulting in altered conditions taking into account political, economical and social as well as cultural aspects (Desai & Potter, 2008). It has brought societal issues closer into people's everyday life, which increases public engagement (Athique, 2013). Vicherat-Mattar (2014) argues that traditional one-way communication tools such as tv, radio and newspapers are not as

effective for social mobilization as the two-way communication-technologies and social media. Social media has the power to organize people through facilitating networking and the ability to bring together small organizations and minority groups together that normally wouldn't have had the possibility to take collective action on a common issue (Vicherat-Mattar, 2014). Uimonen (2011) among others argue that social media has played a key role to success for bottom-up movements opposing top-down political and economic structures for social movements like Spanish 15M and the Arab spring in 2011.

#### ***4.3.5 The Spanish 15 M and the Arabic spring***

Vicherat-Mattar (2014) describes how the Spanish 15M movement emerged from the frustration with global economics in 2011 and gave rise to a wave of enormous protests in Spain and Europe. The movement arose from ordinary citizens mobilizing and organizing through social media for social action, it started with a small demonstration in a city in Spain and spread across the country and engaged people nationwide but also internationally. Ordinary citizen frustrated about how the politicians had been handling the socioeconomic and financial crisis since 2008 began to make their voice heard through social media. They were upset about how the government prioritized the interests of banks and corporations over the needs of the citizens, the privatization of public services, continuous unemployment and corruption. The movement developed to a legitimate and powerful source of opinion-leaders challenging the political community of Spain by becoming involved in decision-making processes. As the slogan of the movement sounds: "Toma la calle" (Take the streets) the goal is to bring politics back to the streets and represent the voice of the people (Vicherat-Mattar, 2014). *"The Spanish 15M is an expression of public indignation, but mostly the illustration of how active citizens and their use of social media, digital networks and public space, can contest traditional politics to demand real-time and real space-democracy."* (Vicherat-Mattar, 2014. p.1194).

However, the view of social media as revolutionary for democracy has met criticism and the power of social media has been questioned. Kriollo (2012) describes that the revolution in Egypt in 2011 which led to the resignation of president Mubarak has been referred to as "The twitter revolution" and "Facebook revolution" in Western Media. Twitter and Facebook were used among the activists to mobilize the protests against the regime's brutality and corruption. Social media became an important communication channel and



credible news source, instead of the corrupt messages propagated in the traditional media. However, critics argue that social media did not start the revolution and a Facebook-group did not depose the president. The revolution is the result of years of oppression of the Egyptian population from the regime and during the Arabic spring in 2011 about 80 % of the Egyptian population did not have access to the Internet and had only 130 000 users on Twitter of a population of 83 million people. Hence social media was used as a medium to distribute information and for mobilization, but the real difference for the revolution came when the regime closed down all communication channels including internet and cell phones, which forced people out on the streets. After the close down, more supporters of the president started to show up on Twitter and Facebook trying to take advantage of social media in order to gain support for the president.

(Kriollo, 2012).

The criticism against social media as revolutionary is that social media can be successfully used as a tool for mobilization for social movements and a complimentary media channels for political agenda-setting to corrupt traditional media, but social media itself is not the reason for success.

#### ***4.3.6 Criticism against over belief in technology and Internet***

The critics of the digital revolution address strong beliefs in that technological developments itself will improve society and that Internet flatters out the power system and class-distinctions in society as a problem. Åkerström (2016) argues that the characteristics often attributed to social media such as the ability to return power to citizen and to encourage collective action, in fact appears illusory due to the wide spectrum of 'subjective realities' and closed views flourishing online which must be taken into account. Further there is an on-going debate regarding the level of freedom the users enjoy on social networks when these are becoming more market orientated with personified ads and Google searches based on registered activity (Rydell, 2012). This has an impact on privacy when user's personal information, thoughts and opinions are to a wider extend are revealed to external observers. *"The very act of logging on to a social network involves a renegotiation of notions of privacy. Any activity conducted in the digital space involves leaving tracks and traces that are discoverable, searchable and subject to analysis, or remediation, and this is intrinsically linked to identity construction."* (Åkerström & Young, 2016, p. 6).

#### ***4.3.7 The impact of social media on environmental movements***

One example of the societal issues that social media has brought closer into our daily life is the environmental issue. When it comes to the impact of social media on environmental issues in particular, Burton, Greenhow and Robelia (2011) state that social networks are important tools for environmental movements since it can motivate pro-environmental behavior through increased knowledge of environmental issues and of what one can do to limit the negative impact of one's actions.

However, Langley and van der Broek (2010) found in the empirical study of the emerging effect of social media on collective environmentally sustainable behavior, that online initiatives, which expect users to make big and significant changes in their behavior, are having difficulties in recruiting participants and convince them to change the way they live. Langley and van der Broek (2010) argue that people are held back from participating in movements on social media and changing their behavior due to a lack of belief in that one person's actions can really make a difference (fatalism) or due to lack of time and other priorities in one's daily life (busyness). The result of the study shows that movements presenting evidence of goals and achievements to potential participants and sharing personal experiences with these will increase the scale of participation (Langley & van der Broek, 2010). Sharing personal experiences between participants and reducing the effort required to act for example by posting a petition encouraging users to sign, increase the scale of the behavior change. "Social media applications seem to make it easy to take action and therefore stimulate behavioral change." (Langley & van der broek, 2010, p. 6).

However, Myers (2012) concludes that social media on it's own won't save the planet and the fight against global warming won't be won simply through a social media campaign where users can debate the subject and vote for sustainability projects. Myers (2012) argues that it is important to have in mind that social media is not the solution to societal issues, however, it might encourage a more sustainable future by increasing pro-environmental values and help motivate a greener lifestyle among users to minimize negative impact on the environment.

## 4.4 Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

“At its best, CSR is defined as the responsibility of a company for the totality of its impact, with a need to embed society’s values into the core operations as well as into its treatment of its social and physical environment. Responsibility is accepted as encompassing a spectrum – from the running of a profitable business to the health and safety of staff and the impact on the societies in which the company operates.” (Geoffrey Chandler, 2001).

Corporate social responsibility refers to transparent business practises where companies are responsible for their environmental, economical and social impact on society as a whole including consumers and investors, employees, suppliers, communities and regulators. Further CSR can be defined as “*a company’s commitment to be accountable to its stakeholders.*” (Bivins, 2008, p. 1). CSR is an important aspect of a company’s strategic communication and should be manifested in actions rather than words and policies. Critics address the problem with companies using CSR only for PR purpose, without actually implementing it in practice in business processes and thus with ignorance for the social welfare. Relating to environmental issues a PR-strategy called “*Greenwashing*” have been frequently used which are organizations claiming to be environmental friendly in their production or performance of services, but in fact are not. This is an act of pretending which is problematic since it allows organizations to benefit from a green and environmental friendly reputation while in fact continuing to do the opposite (Bivins, 2008, p. 2). However Bivins (2008, p.3) concludes that: “*Ethically responsible public relations professionals will reject the notion of making claims that are either completely false or even somewhat misleading./.../It is the moral obligation of public relations professionals to recognize reality and to reflect it accurately in everything they do.*”

### 4.4.1 Consumer Activism and CSR

In today’s ”consumer society” consumers are to a wider extend aware of their rights and pay close attention to the selection of products. ”Conscientious consumption” is a form of political-personal expression where consumers choose a product that in some way contributes to positive social change (Cheney, Gill & Kendall 2007, p. 242). Conscientious consumption however requires in addition to knowledge of consumer rights, knowledge of consumer responsibilities. The consumer rights (founded by Consumer Bill of Rights and Consumers international) are *The right to: choose, safety, be informed, be heard, satisfaction*

of basic needs, redress, consumer education and healthy environment. Consumer protection Branch (2005) has defined following consumer responsibilities as *responsibility to*: beware, be aware, think independently, speak out and complain, be an ethical consumer, respect the environment (Cheney, Gill & Kendall 2007, p. 244). Kendall among others (2007) defines several common strategies for consumer activism: phone calls, letter writing or e-mailing and petitioning, creating alternative venues for consumption (such as eBay for eg), participating in boycotts and buycotts, developing local and bio-regional alliances, staging demonstrations such as protests and marches, embracing critical pop culture and media; performing violence/violent action and aligning with established social movements. Further social media is today a frequently used channel among activist as described in previous earlier. Cheney, Gill and Kendall (2007, p. 247) declares:

”Nascent and established social movements often address issues with which conscientious consumers sympathize. In addition, aligning consumer action with social movement organizations has the potential to offer alternative consumer identities, represent a broad and concerted voice in the interest of pro-social change, and change the course of movement activity.”

The researchers address the difference between an active conscientious consumer and an activist as blurry, perhaps it can be defined by the ways in which an individual choose to react; through buying a product that represent their values or by participating in a violent action. Either way, they play ”*an important role in keeping companies and governments accountable and socially responsible.*” (Cheney, Gill and Kendall, 2007, p. 252).

## 5. The Costa Rican Context

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*In this chapter I will give a short background explanation to the Costa Rican political system and the current media system and how these two factors reflect one another. I start by giving an overview of the Costa Rican political system and short about its history, and continuously I explain the situation of the current media system in the country and its actors. Further I explain the country's accessibility to Internet and ICT. (Please see Appendix 12 for a deeper explanation of the Costa Rican context.)*

### 5.1 The political system in Costa Rica

Costa Rica is Latin America's oldest democracy with its democratic traditions since the beginning of 1889. The country's democracy has its roots in the time while the country was conquest by Columbus and the Spanish settlers. Today, Costa Rica has developed a political system characterized by compromise and an open dialog of competing ideas, unlike other countries in Latin America (Rockwell, 2003, p.110).

Currently in the elections of 2014, the left leaning PAC won the elections with 77,77 percent of the votes compared to PLN with 22,23 per cent of the votes (Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones, TSE, 2014). Hence the victory of PAC and the new president Luis Guillermo Solís is the first third-party candidate in four decades to win the elections in Costa Rica (Dyer, 2014).

### 5.2 The media system in Costa Rica.

The media system in Costa Rica reflects the nations democratic governance and is characterized by the openness for debate and support for democracy. Compared to neighboring countries, Costa Rica has the most advanced and developed media system in Central America (Rockwell, 2003). The country established the law of press freedom in 1835 and in 1889 one of the first Costa Rican newspaper *La Prensa Libre* was founded. The newspaper has from the start until today tried to keep independency from political parties and reflects a centrist to moderate-right view. Despite the fact that Costa Rican media in

some occasions tend to be supportive of certain political views or parties, however, it is considerably more professional objective than media systems in other neighboring countries. (Rockwell, 2003, p. 113).

Three media groups can be identified that seems to play a key role in the Costa Rican media system, based on their control of the country's advertising. These three groups share the same conservative, right-oriented political views, thus it appears as the Costa Rican media system is dominated by conservative ideologies. However, the conservative media does not appear to have an undermining impact on the country's democracy (Rockwell, 2003). So far, the centration of media power in the hands of the conservative has mirrored the development of the nations social and political systems. However, after the elections in 2014 when the left-leaned PAC party won, a shift in the political ideology in the country takes place. What this means for the media system in Costa Rica and it's conservative rulers remains to be seen.

What is even more striking is the fact that Costa Rican media, despite a growing number of media channels during the last decades, devotes a remarkably small amount of time and space to public debate; printed media 3,9 percent, Radio 1,7 percent and Television 1 percent weekly (García, 2008, p. 111). Further more this is an important aspect since public debate widens the open dialogue in the country and promotes democracy.

### **5.3 The Internet and new technologies in Costa Rica**

In 2005, 30 % of the Costa Rican households owned a computer and only 15 percent had access to Internet at home. A common way to access the Internet among the population was through Internet cafés or at work offices (Garcia, 2008, p. 114). Ten years later in 2015, a total of 48,4% of the costa rican households own a computer and 60,2 % have access to the internet at home. 95% of the households own a cellphone and only 42 % of the households own a regular phone, this gives a breakdown of 55% of the households own a cellphone and have no regular phone and 39,8% of the households has both a cellphone and a regular phone and only 2,6 % has a regular phone but no cellphone. 97% has a color tv and 68% of the households owns a radio.

There is a significant difference between the level of access to internet and ITC between the rural and the urban area in the country. 55% of the urban households own a computer

and 65% have internet at home, compared to 31 % households with a computer and 46% with internet at home in the rural area. However the cellphone is almost as widespread in the rural area (93,9%) as in the urban area (96.2%) and less households in the rural area owns a regular phone (28%) than in the urban area (47,7%). 98% of the urban and 93% of the rural households owns a TV and 71% of the urban and 59% of the rural households own a radio. The total number of households in Costa Rica in 2015 was 1 436 120 and the total population was 4 814 144 citizens.

(INEC, 2015).

In June 2015 88% of countrys population were conected to the internet (4 236 443 people) and had 2 800 000 facebook users in november 2015 a penetration rate of 58% of the countrys population on facebook. (Internet usage and population growth, 2016)

### ***5.3.1 The IDI and Costa Rica***

According to the IDI overall rankings and ratings, 2015 and 2010 (ITU 2015, p. 46) per country Korea had the highest ranking in 2015 and Costa Rica is ranked as number 57 in 2015 compared to number 80 in 2010. The country is the most fast-developing country in the world in terms of IDI ranking rising from number 80 to number 57 in 5 years. As the liberalization of the telecommunication on the market took place in 2011, new companies entered the mobile market in Costa Rica launching new offers, which attracted a large part of the population who had previously not had a mobile subscription. As a result the mobile-cellular and mobile-broadband penetration has increased significantly between 2010 and 2015, so have the number of households with internet-access increasing with 30 % and the number of internet-users in the country with 128%. “...*mobile broadband is not only bringing new people online, but also making the Internet available at home for people who had previously accessed it elsewhere.*”

(ITU, 2015. P. 46).

## 6. Results and Analysis

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*In this chapter I will present the results and analysis. I will analyze the empirical findings along the theoretical framework in order to answer my research questions. I will start by analyzing the use of ICT among the respondents in the rural communities. The ICT-development in Costa Rica during the last 5 years have not just brought an increased use of ICT-devices to the country but also an increased number of internet-users and improved Internet access. Therefore, I will also look at the use of Internet and social media in the struggle among the respondents. Analyzing these aspects is important in order to answer my research questions and understand and explain how the ICT-development in the country has influenced the ways in which the movement communicates and how they potentially have benefited from it.*

### 6.1 The digital divide in the rural communities of Costa Rica

According to the ITU (2015) report on the ICT-development worldwide, Costa Rica has been the most fast-developing country in the world considering The ICT Development Index during the last five years. This means that the country has not only experienced a high level ICT developments in a short time compared to other countries, but further that the country has a high level of development-potential of ITC-devices and a high ability to make use of these devices to enhance growth and development, considering the available capabilities and skills. This suggests that there is a high level of knowledge of ICT and ability to take advantage of ICT-devices within the country. Nearly half of the Costa Rican households have a computer at home and around 60 percent have Internet access at home. The increased penetration of cellphones and mobile broadband among the population has contributed to the high level of connectivity to the Internet and access to and knowledge of ITC-devices in the country. Considering these overall statistics compared to other countries in Latin America and other parts of the world, Costa Rica really has gone through a digital revolution during the last five years.

However, looking at the ICT-development within the country and differences among the population, there is a clear gap between the rural and the urban population



considering the level of access to ICTs and the Internet (except for the cellphone which has a similar penetration with a difference of approximately 2 % more in the urban areas). This suggests that there is a digital divide between the rural and the urban communities in terms of access to ICT and Internet.

Empirical findings from conducted interviews during this field-study address several different aspects of the digital divide between the rural and urban communities. In terms of ICT-access all 11 respondents own a cellphone; 7 has a smartphone and 4 has a regular mobile phone. Only 2 out of 11 have access to a computer and Internet in the household. Empirical findings confirm that the cellphone is the most frequently used ICT-device (ear-to-ear) for internal communication within the opposition movement along with face-to-face communication. The majority of the participants have a smartphone, however, the devices are mostly used as a regular mobile phone through phone-calls or sending text messages.

### ***6.1.1 The lack of Internet access***

Despite the increasing number of mobile-cellular subscriptions of smartphones with internet-access through the phone on the market since 2011, which the ITU-report describes, empirical findings address that the poor signal in the rural communities makes it difficult to connect. Further, empirical findings points out that Internet-café's or other ways of accessing Internet in the rural areas are not very common. The 11 respondents of this study all live in rural communities where there is no Internet Café. Hence, the poor and limited access to Internet in the rural areas is an obstacle for the use of internet-based applications as a tool for communication, which in turn, prevents them from taking advantage of the full potential of the smartphone as an ICT-device. However, three of eleven participants use the internet-based social applications WhatsApp and Viber to communicate with other members of the movement occasionally despite the poor Internet access.

Empirical findings suggests that the lack of Internet access in the communities is one of the contributing factors to why the ICT-devices (other than the mobile phone) are used to a lower extent in the rural areas.

### ***6.1.2 The affordability***

The affordability is another aspect that was addressed in the empirical findings. Eight of the participants in this study are women and three are men. Five of the female respondents are not working and dedicate their time to taking care of the household, while the man is working. The respondents explain that a large part of the most active members of the opposition movement are women, and as many of them are not working but are taking care of the household or are retired, they have more time to engage in demonstrations and other actions compared to some of the active men. Further the empirical findings show that paradoxically many of the men married to women engaged within the opposition movement are working on the pineapple plantations, and as a result the pineapple-plantation is the only source of income for the family. All respondents have talked about the horrible working conditions for employees at the plantations with long working days and low salaries. This is another aspect that the opposition movement is fighting to change. Empirical findings of this study point out that for several of the affected communities the pineapple-plantations are an important source for employment in the area and as a result, the population are to a wide extent depending on the plantation for income. Hence, low income to the households in the rural areas could be a contributing factor to the digital divide in terms of affordability to ICT-devices such as computers and broadband-connection.

### ***6.1.3 The level of education***

ITU (2015) suggests that the level of education in particular related to the knowledge required for Internet use is another aspect for the digital divide. 9 of 11 respondents in this study did not have higher education than high school. 8 of 11 participants (7 of the ones with no higher education than high school) express that they feel a lack of knowledge for the use of ICT and some of them are having difficulties in learning how to handle the smartphone. The level of education might be a contributing factor to this. However, a more common expressed reason for the limited use of technologies seems to have an age-dimension.

### ***6.1.3 The age-dimension***

7 of the 11 respondents are between 45-75 years and have expressed how they can manage to use a cellphone, however using a computer and sometimes even a smartphone, is a challenge. As a quote from one of the interviewees describes:

“We are getting old and the new technology is a challenge for us to manage, which is why we need people from the younger generation to join us. The majority of the people are not good with technology and can manage, the most, a cellphone...” (Interview, 2014)

Respondents of this study point out that many of the active members of the opposition movement are elder and they express a need for involving the younger generation within the struggle in order to be able to take advantage of the new technology due to their own the lack of knowledge. However, according to Åkerström (2016) theory of the digital natives, the age-dimension in the use of technology is more depending of an individual’s life-situation including economical- and social conditions rather than merely linked to age. In this case, the social and economical conditions of the respondents are poor and limited in a rural community where the majority lacks a higher education and have addressed their age as a problem. Thus in order for the elder of the opposition movement to be able to take advantage of the technology, education seems crucial.

One of the 2 younger respondents between 30-40 years old highlights the benefits of using ICT-devices as the increased opportunities to distribute information that the new technology brings and what it means for the struggle:

“Nowadays there exists more types of communication elements than newspapers for example with this smartphone, I can send an email or post a picture on the Facebook directly”. (Interview, 2014)

However, this requires the use of social media and Internet in the first place, which majority of the respondents do not use. I will look closer at the use of social media and Internet in the struggle in coming chapters of this analysis. In this chapter I have looked at the use of ICT among the respondents. In the next chapter, I will look at the context of the ways in which the movement communicates and organizes and the use of ICT in the process. In order to understand the context in which they operate, I will start by giving a deeper explanation for the communication strategies of the movement described in the empirical findings.

## 6.2 ICT in the struggle

### 6.2.1 *A clear message and goals of the struggle*

Empirical findings have identified eight goals in the struggle that the opposition movement strive to achieve:

- Protection of natural and water resources from further pollution
- Stop the expansion of the pineapple cultivation in the country
- Achieve a moratorium at a national level in Costa Rica for the pineapple production, until studies have been conducted to identify in detail to which extent the pineapple plantations have caused harm to the country.
- To get the Pineapple-companies to respect the Costa Rican law
- Prohibition of the use of chemical pesticides on farms
- Organic cultivation of pineapple on existing farms

One participant explains the aim of the struggle as following:

"We have no wish to stop the pineapple cultivation or to close down the plantations. We want the pineapple producers to respect Costa Rican laws and the environment so that people can live and produce in a healthy and balanced environment. In this process we have faced many struggles since not all companies take responsibility for the environmental part. There are Companies that respect the environment a little bit more, and there are others who are only interested in making money and they are not interested in the environmental, health or social aspects. That is the problem." (Interview, 2014)

Another participant express a point of view aligning with the previous statement:

"We have never asked for the plantations to close down. We are asking them to produce pineapple in a responsible way, to take care of the areas and the ground water. To take care of the nature." (Interview, 2014)

### 6.2.2 *Grassroots advocacy*

The ways in which the movement communicates and organize based on the empirical findings from the interviews can be compared with what Bourdeaux (2014) describes as grassroots advocacy. Bourdeaux (2014) concludes that grassroots advocacy is one of the

most influential tools for movements when it comes to successful political advocacy for passing or preventing legislation. Looking at the the goals of the movement stated above, the goals are all somehow related to respecting the existing law or passing new legislation in order for the companies to change their use of chemicals on farms. The respondents have expressed that they do not trust in the Costa Rican government and are feel like they are fighting “a monster” which is the powerful and political influential pineapple industry. They also express that they feel like they do not have much influence on the politics since they are a rural community and feel left outside and forgotten. Even though the movement have a few strong opinion leaders engaged with the country’s politics fighting the problem on a political level through traditional lobbying and a direct dialog with the legislators most of the dialog is direct communication with citizens through demonstrations and sharing of flyers and information. A possible reason for why the movement is turning to the citizens of Costa Rica is to create awareness and influence the public opinion in order to gain influence on decision makers in line with Bourdeaux (2014) reasoning. Bourdeaux (2014) state that the public opinion plays an important role in advocacy since legislators are highly influenced by their perception of the public opinion. He further describe mass forms of communication such as demonstrations, phone-calls, mass emails and letter writing as effective ways to gain influence on decision makers since it allows large groups of citizens to take action showing the decision makers the position of the public opinion.

Applying this on the actions of the Costa Rican opposition movement, they seem to be in the state of trying to bring the issue up on the agenda in order to increase the public opinion. The movement organizes demonstrations and share flyers to citizens with information to create awareness. They have also made bigger actions such as closing one of the main roads in the country and prevent the traffic from running on the road through organizing a demonstration with the goal of preventing the pineapple-transport-trucks from passing. During action like this they share information to drivers with information in order to raise awareness among citizens and to create space in massmedia. These actions are planned on internal meetings organized frequently in the different communities where the goal is to involve as many members as possible.

Bourdeaux (2014) argues that grassroots advocacy sometimes can be an even more effective way to get the decision-makers to pay attention than traditional lobbying. For this reason, it is likely that the opposition movement are turning to the public opinion because they are more likely to succeed through grassroots advocacy compared to lobbying

because of the weak political influence that the movement are experiencing. Palm (2006) argues in line with Bordeaux (2014) that mass forms of communication are considered an effective way of creating influence, however, in combination with grass tops advocacy, increases the chance that policymakers pay attention. Empirical findings suggest that this is what the movement is trying to achieve.

Servaes (2008) concludes that mass media plays a strong role in advocacy depending on the freedom of press in the country and the level of influence they carry with the political system and the public. Hence, another interesting and important aspect to look at is the role of Costa Rican mass media in the movements grassroots advocacy. Costa Rica is as mentioned in previous chapters Latin Americas oldest democracy and the media system is characterized by freedom of press and democracy (Rockwell, 2003, p.109). The opposition movement have described trying to create space and debate in media regarding the pineapple issue through actions like closing the road to create headlines in media. However, Costa rican media seems to not pay attention to this environmental and social problem in the country. But they do pay attention to the actions of the movement such as demonstrations and reports of the consequences that the demonstration is causing for example. Hence, empirical findings points out that the movement feel that the nations massmedia are portraying them in a negative way, which contribute to a negative public opinion of the movement.

### ***6.2.3 Portrayed in a negative way in Costa Rican massmedia***

The opposition movement questions the objectivity and accountability of the nation's mass media. Further the empirical findings suggests that mass media does not devote time or space for public debate or news content concerning the negative impact of the pineapple industry in the rural communities of the country.

One participant suggests that the media in some occasion's reports regarding the pineapple issue but presenting a different side of the story and in few occasions explains the essential problems in the communities. The participant explains the phenomena as following:

“The press fully say what suits them or what they pay are paid to say, not what we really struggle for. That is not said. Practically in very few occasions the media is talking about pollution and the damage that the

pineapple plantations are causing. The newspapers and media present for example ‘people could not get to work this morning because Milano was closing the road for a demonstration’ or ‘the country is losing this amount of money on export products that could not be transported during the closing of the road for 4 or 5 hours’. But the background and the reason for why we are closing the road to make this demonstration, is not presented, only the consequences of the closing. Those are the things that are not presented in the media and that only the people living in the communities know of. But how are we going to communicate it in media, if they will not give us space?” (Interview, 2014)

The empirical findings further suggests that the opposition movement’s common perception is that they are being portrayed in a negative way in Costa Rican mass media. Comparing this to Bordeaux and Palms theories of grassroots advocacy where a wide public opinion on a particular issue can contribute to gaining influence on decision makers, a negative image of the movement presented in media might create a reverse effect where a growing negative public opinion might affect decision-makers in a way that will not benefit the movement. Empirical findings suggest that gaining support from decision-makers is critical for the level of success of the movement.

#### ***6.2.4 Costa Rican mass media and agenda-setting of the pineapple issue***

”Explains the relationships between the emphasis that the mass media place on issues and the importance that media audience attribute to those issues././the news media priorities become public priorities” (Weiss, 2009, p. 32).

Palm (2006) is on the same line and claims that to be able to drive the public opinion in a specific direction requires a successful agenda-setting. Applying the agenda-setting theory on the struggle of the Costa Rican opposition movement, indicates that they have successfully brought the issue up on the expert-agenda where researchers and experts from the university discuss the issue. I will further explain the role of the Universities in the struggle in the coming chapter. Though the issue have reached the media agenda in terms of the university media, it seem to not however, have reached the agenda of mass media. The empirical findings points at that the opposition movement is currently in the stage of intending to bring the issue up on the agenda of national mass media to gain wider support from the public opinion in order to generate pressure on politicians. Mcombs (1972) argues that objects that which media choose to report about, objects on the media agenda, also sets

the public agenda. In other words, what media presents to the public is what the public will notice, think about and talk about. Further he argues that media, by setting the agenda, tells people *what to think about* and *how to think about it* depending on how it is portrayed to the audience. This means, as McCombs (1972) argues, that media somehow also tells people *how to think of* an issue. Comparing this to the movements strategies of grassroots advocacy, what the movement aims to achieve seems to be to tell people *how to think* of the pineapple issue and generate support through making them see the problematic it is causing. McCombs (1972) further argues that organizations, political campaigns and information sources for the news stories among others are influential in the setting of the media-agenda. A consequence, he argues, in a society where mass media sets the public agenda, is that those things that media excludes or choose not to write about, practically does not exist. Empirical findings suggest that this is one of the consequences that the Costa Rican opposition movement appears to suffer from, since the issue is not given space in national mass media. However the issue get space for debate in the university's media which means it still exists on one media agenda.

Weiss (2009) points out the importance of considering to which extent the media influence their audience. Individuals who disagree with a news story or does not find the media source credible, are less likely to be affected. Having this in mind, it is possible that, even if the issue were successfully brought up on the mass media agenda at a national level in Costa Rica, it wouldn't necessarily affect the public opinion.

However, McCombs (1972) argues, decades of research supports the findings of the agenda-setting theory that media do have a strong influence on the public agenda. In the Costarican case, in line with Palm (2006), politics and influential companies and organizations could be seen as a high factor of impact of setting the media-agenda and the transnational pineapple producers, as the empirical findings point out, have high economical influence on the country and thus a lot of power. The high level of influence of the pineapple industry in the countries could be a potential reason for media to exclude new-stories regarding the negative impact of the pineapple cultivation.

In that case, this might also influence the way in which media report about the issue and the way the opposition movement is portrayed. A potential consequence might be a "manipulated" image of the pineapple cultivation and it's impact on the country and of the opposition movement in a different way from the social reality in the affected communities,



which, in turn, will have an impact on the general public's perception of the issue in particular.

As a result the public opinion on the issue might not grow at all or grow in the opposite direction from the opposition movement's perspective, which in turn would not generate support or pressure on decision-makers. As Palm (2006) argues the decision-makers often pay close attention to the public opinion, this could lead to less support from decision-makers if the public opinion is weak or does not exist on a specific issue. However, the opposition movement has support from the University media, which somehow contributes to the media agenda regarding the concern and hence plays a meaningful role for the communication of the movement.

### ***6.2.5 The national universities supporting with ICT and media-channels***

"We have no governmental support for anything but we have support from the universities "(Interview, 2014)

Empirical findings show that the opposition movement has support from the two universities: La UCR (Universidad de Costa Rica) and La UNA (Universidad Nacional). The communication channels of the University have been an alternative media where the opposition movement has been given space to talk about the problematic that the pineapple industry have caused to the country, when the national mass media have excluded the issue. The media that the universities provide are:

- Television: Canal 15 de la UCR (Channel 15 produced by the Universidad de Costa Rica)
- Radio Universidad (Radio University)
- The newspapers: El Semanario and El Pais
- Era Verde Youtube-account. (Tv-program sending three days a week produced by the UCR on channel 15).

One participant highlights the importance of support from the universities:

"The Quiscos Ambientales (university program) from the University of Costa Rica have been a medium for communication very important to the movement. The UCR is a big institution and handle a lot of information. They produce flyers for us to distribute on a community level to raise awareness regarding the problems that

the pineapple plantations was causing for the future. The universities are independent and they have people who can see the problems that exists in the government and dare to create a debate.” (Interview, 2014)

Empirical findings shows that the universities have organized press conferences on a national level regarding the pineapple problematic. Further, the universities provide the opposition movement with flyers to distribute during demonstrations. In addition to this, students have carried out tests of the water in affected communities and found chemicals in the drinking water, written articles regarding the problematic and produced documentaries to help raise awareness of the situation.

The community of Milano invented a guided tour for university students as another strategy that that takes university students to a pineapple plantation next to an affected community to educate and raise awareness regarding the problematic. One participant involved in the organizing of the tour describes it as following:

“To create awareness regarding the situation we invented ‘the pineapple tour’. It is a tour for university students where we bring groups of students to the pineapple plantations to show them and explain to them why the water is contaminated where we currently have the water resource for the community./.../We have been doing this in order to raise funds for FRENASAPP to be able to communicate, maintain a website, organize movements, create flyers, create videos and to distribute information, that is the idea of the fund-raising.” (Interview, 2014)

Desai & Porter 2008 argues that the lack of access to technologies in rural communities can prevent them from taking advantage of ICT and as the ITU (2015) explains the lack of Internet connectivity and ICT contributes to the digital divide. The digital divide have been identified in the rural communities of Costa Rica among the respondents of this study as argued earlier in this analysis where the lack of access to ICT, Internet and knowledge of ICT is a key factor. The support from universities brings an increased access to ICT and material to distribute the information including several additional media-channels in which the movement is allowed to communicate. Support from universities can also provide the specific knowledge about ICT which is addressed as missing in most of the rural communities. The support from universities can be seen as a way of reducing the gap between the urban area and the rural area and a way of bridging the digital divide in Costa Rica and hence facilitating the struggle. Even though the Internet is used to a small extent among the respondents of the movement due to lack of Internet access in the communities, it

is an important aspect to analyze in order to answer my research questions. Internet and social networks are important tools for social movements as it brings societal issues closer into people's daily life which increases public engagement (Desai & Potter, 2008). In the following chapter I will look at the use of social media and Internet in the struggle.

### **6.3 The use of social media in the struggle**

#### ***6.3.1 Social media contributing to the agenda-setting***

Despite the lack of Internet in the communities, Internet is partly used as a tool for distributing information regarding the pineapple situation in the struggle. One strategy is to take pictures of the pineapple plantations within the communities, and post them on social network-sites and websites at a later point while having access to the Internet elsewhere. One organization within the opposition movement called FRENASAPP is using a website called 'Detras de la pina' (Behind the pineapple) and a Facebook account with the same name to publish information, pictures and videos about the struggle such as material from demonstrations and pineapple plantations. The Facebook-page has 526 likes (April 26<sup>th</sup> 2016). They are active and update the Facebook page each and every day with articles and information but receive very few likes and comments, between 2-6 likes per post. The Youtube-channel Era Verde (the tv-show with the same name produced by the UCR dedicating space to social-environmental problems in the country) has 1269 subscribers (April 26<sup>th</sup> 2016). Informing videos about the pineapple-situation in the country have been posted on the Youtube-channel, but it is one of many other subjects on the same channel. The few number of likes and followers on these social media platforms indicates that the information spread on social media networks is not reaching a wide range of users. Further, the fact that the members of the movement are not very active on social media is another potential reason for the low engagement on social network-sites since there are few activists among the movement sharing the posts and spreading the word. The use of the social media platforms of the movement looks more like a newspaper or an information channel used as a one-way communication tool due to the lack of interaction between users. The revolutionary difference between one-way and two-way communication tools is the possibility of

interaction between users and this is why social media network sites are more effective for social mobilization (Vicherat-Mattar, 2014). Without the interaction, social media is just another one-way-communication channel and a post is nothing but a piece of information in cyberspace if it does not receive attention from users. Hence, a key factor for the successful use of social media among bottom-up movements such as the Spanish 15M tends to be the commitment and engagement on social media among the members of the movement. They use social network sites as a tool to organize and unite the movement, where the digital platform facilitates the networking (Umionen, 2012). However a successful use of social media requires frequent access to ICT and Internet, and this is where the digital divide in the rural communities prevents them from taking advantage of Social media in ways which other social movements have done. Further critics of the use of social media for mobilization argue that if only a small part of a social movement have access to these digital platforms, thus only a limited part of the movement can be seen as making use of social media in the process. If mobilization to a wider extent takes part through direct communication, social media should not be credited as a successful tool for the movement.

However, looking at the way in which the opposition movement uses social media, it could be seen as a complimentary media channel to inform and to provide an image of the social reality in the communities, which is not presented in the mass media (Åkerström, 2016). Eriksson (2009) suggests that social media increases the opportunity for ordinary people to become "journalists" which reduces the power of traditional media. In line with this Hastings and Ossiansson (2010) argue that Social media flattens out the power system in society and divide the power between citizens and authorities, politicians and journalists. The opposition movement is intending to take advantage of the opportunity that social media offers for ordinary people to report about the environmental situation to reach out to the public in a wider extent, as not given space in the national mass media.

As Strömbäck (2009) states, mass media is mostly the primary source of information about what is happening outside people's daily life and media's view of reality many times become the only picture of reality that people rely on. However, through the use of social media, the social movement can provide an alternative picture of the reality of the pineapple industry, that is not presented in mass media and thus potentially have the possibility to reach a wider public in order to grow the public opinion. But again, this requires that users take part of the information shared on social media in order for it to have an impact on the public opinion.

Looking at the development process of the use of social media in the struggle over time from 2010-2015 the Facebook-page of FRENASAPP was started up in 2008 and has since then received 500 followers. Looking at the numbers of 529 followers in 8 years and comparing to the fast ICT-development in the country during the last five years, this seems surprisingly little. But considering the persisting digital divide in the rural communities, 529 followers is still an achievement for a rural movement and a number of users who have taken part of the information shared on social media who might not previously had known of the problematic. In addition to this the issue have been brought up on the YouTube-channel Era Verde controlled by the University with 1269 subscribers and the problematic seem to be frequently debated in the teaching of the university, which also might increase the chances of spreading the message on social media among students and contribute to the debate. Hence, the use of social media seem to have in some way contributed to reaching a wider public, even though to a small extend. It has possibly generated support from different places in the country, outside the rural communities, by allowing the information to travel from the rural communities where users from anywhere can access it, through connection to the Internet using an ICT-device.

### ***6.3.2 Using a network strategy to take collective action***

Empirical findings emphasize the importance of a united community in struggles of social movements. Participants explains how the movement started by organizing at a community level against the problematic caused by pineapple farms and while they noticed that other communities had the same problems, they started to organize at a level of the province. After realizing that the situation is a problem not only on a provincial level, but also at a national level where the problem appears in communities wide spread over the country, a national network arose. Participants explain that the network facilitates the organization and generate support from different communities when there are demonstrations or other actions in one part of the country. A quote from the empirical material emphasizes the importance of the community to unite and work together in the process:

“How do we succeed? When the people of the community come together, unite, and manifest!” (Interview, 2014).

Further, the level of engagement and commitment of the community-members is a key factor for success. A quote explains this further:

"The community is very active which is very important./../ we need to take action and get out there to defend the water, together." (Interview, 2014).

The Costa Rican opposition movement consists of and depends on active community participation. Despite this, members are concerned by the lack of commitment from a wider extent of community-members:

"We need a lot of people with ability to move and take action! What we need is to take action! Unity is strength! If we are not together we will achieve nothing./../ We need more people capable of moving masses and taking action!" (Interview, 2014).

This can be compared to Palm (2006) theory of network strategies, which refers to a series of activities that have in common that they are based more on personal influence than on mass media. Communication is based on face-to-face or ear-to-ear communication. Network strategies are typically used (and tend to be successful) when the purpose is to achieve some kind of behavioral change among the public. Palm (2006) argues this is achieved through social interaction between the members of the network.

In this case, the behavioral change which the opposition movement aims to achieve could be to get people to manifest against the use of chemicals and to increase the public opinion to gain influence. The advantage of network strategies is that it can create a democratic legitimacy if achieving to create a wide public opinion in a way that media campaigns does not likely come close to (Palm 2006). In this case, the opposition movement do not have the opportunity to use a massmedia campaign, but they can use the media of the university and social media to a small extend to reach the public. Palm (2006) argues that a disadvantage of a networking strategy is that it might take a long time to achieve the goals. I would like to describe the way in which the opposition movement operates as a combination between a networking strategy and media campaign through the use of social media and university media.

One has to be aware of that Social media is not the solution to environmental problems in Costa Rica, but it has shown the ability to bring together small organizations and minority groups that normally wouldn't have had the possibility to come together and to

facilitate networking (Umionen, 2012). And despite the low use of social media among the movement, empirical findings points at that the movement have become aware of the opportunities for networking that ICT and social media can bring. The next chapter will explain this further.

### ***6.3.3 ICT and social media facilitating networking***

Another issue that the empirical material addressed is the organization of the different groups, communities, NGO's and environmental organizations participating within the opposition movement, to work all together. Several participants explains that despite that a network at a national level exists, where communities and organizations from different parts of the country supports each other in different activities and come together for demonstrations, each community still mainly focus on solving their own problems on a local level. This becomes a problem for the strength of the opposition movement which has an impact on the struggle on a national level. One interviewee explains:

“We all have a situation relating to the environmental or the social aspect but in the end, we are all fighting very individualized so the idea is to form an organization, which brings together the different organizations to strengthen them through coming together./.../What weakens us is the lack of organization where we all are connected and united. That is what has weakened us.” (Interview, 2014).

To address this issue and to improve the cooperation on a national level, the movement was at the time when this study was conducted reorganizing to create a national Forum (El Foro Ambiental Del Caribe Norte).

I participated in the first meeting of the forum as an observator. The Forum aim to bring together all participants in the opposition movement to take collective action towards common goals on a national level. Within the Forum the participants are organizing in different subcommittees for water, monoculture, education, legal advice, development, fund-raising and communication. The goal is to develop an internal medium for communication for instance a newsletter for all the members within the Forum to be released once a month, where all the subcommittees will generate the content and write about what they are recently working with.

This is an initiative that aims to strengthen the power of the opposition movement through increased cooperation between all organizations involved in the initiative. Further the aim is to develop a digital strategy to involve social media in a

strategic way to take advantage of the Internet in wider extent. This suggests an increased awareness of the importance of a united community for the level of success and how social media and ICT can facilitate this. The aim to develop a digital strategy in the struggle suggests that the movement want to learn to take advantage of the advantages that social media and ICT can bring, and they are actively working towards bridging the digital divide.

I believe that awareness of the digital divide and the tools needed to reduce the gap, is the first step in the process of reducing the digital divide. The movement is reorganizing to develop and to achieve success in the struggle for the social welfare and clean drinking water in the communities. For an organic pineapple cultivation and to protect the natural resources from further pollution and to be able to leave a clean legacy for the future generations to come after this. As two participant said:

"What is the plan for the future? To go on, moving forward! Trying to achieve that Costa Rican law is respected and especially trying to, well, at all costs, to protect the natural resources, especially water, which is what we will leave for the next generation." (Interview, 2014).

"We are the ones living here and we are responsible of fighting for and defending what we have. The thing is, there are people here that don't *know* what they have. We want to take care of the natural resources and live in harmony with the nature." (Interview, 2014).

#### ***6.3.4 Social media raising awareness on an international level?***

Two participants explain that the use of Internet and social network-sites has contributed to reaching out to a public on an international level. International students from universities all over the world have come to visit the movement and to write about the problems. And journalists have come to make documentaries. The respondent explains:

"Tourists have come here just to see the situation with contamination and to experience this social reality. It is interesting to see backpackers arrive and say "I want to experience this and see what it is that they are doing." It must be through the social networks that they have got aware of this situation. Some people come especially to do a tour to the pineapple plantations to see the environmental situation. These are people with a high environmental awareness and they want to know and distribute the message and to see how they can help. Many have come only to say "How can I help?" (Interview, 2014).

The second respondent explains:



“I think that on an international level, we have achieved to raise awareness of the situation among consumers and international media, which helps a lot. This start to generate pressure, nobody likes the fact that they start to say bad things about your country. And the big companies are afraid that people will stop buying pineapple. There is no stronger pressure than the consumers saying ‘well, if they are doing so much harm with this, I will not buy it anymore.’” (Interview, 2014).

The respondents address the importance of a raised awareness among consumers as an important aspect to success. If the demand on pineapple from Costa Rica worldwide decreases, the pineapple production in the country would decrease aswell. The respondent express:

“In the end, the consumers choose what kind of product they want and how they want it and with a bit of social and environmental awareness, they might choose a more environmental-friendly product, which can generate a big change.” (Interview, 2014).

Another participant expressed:

“And we know that, as a country, it might not be good for this information to come out, but at the same time, the consumers are from other countries. They are from Europe and United States and they need to know that the pineapple that they are eating has a cost, not only economical but social and environmental that it generates in these countries.” (Interview, 2014).

The respondents further compares the pineapple production to the banana production in previous years:

“At first, the banana production caused us a lot of trouble, but as a result of several international campaigns, the banana companies changed the practices and changed a lot of the things that seemed so difficult to changed. So who says the same thing cannot happen with the pineapple? It can!” (Interview, 2014).

It is difficult to conclude that the use of social media in particular have led to an increased awareness on an international level, but it most likely contributing factor.

### ***6.3.5 International agenda-setting through strategic communication***

From the perspective of strategic communication, the movement has a wide spread organizational structure which is hard to define and several external communication strategies, however is in the process of centralizing the activity through developing a common communication strategy. At this point, one can argue that the movement has three large target groups: Decision-makers and politicians, The Costa Rican citizens and consumers of pineapple in general. The problem is that these target groups include a huge amount of people and there is no clear communication strategy defining how to reach them or through which specific media-channel. Of course, it is important to consider, that this is a social movement struggling with a problematic social and environmental situation in communities suffering from the digital divide and dealing with corruption in mass media, and not a structured profitable company with the ability to invest money in developing an effective communication strategy or advertising for branding.

However, despite this, the movement could take great advantage of the use of strategic communication planning in the struggle. As Cheney, Gill and Kendall (2007) argue, conscious consumers play an important role in holding companies and governments responsible for the social and environmental impacts of their actions. In this case, in line with what the respondents explained above, a raised awareness among consumer of pineapple could generate pressure on both the responsible pineapple companies and on the Costa Rican government. Since the largest scales of the consumers are international, a raised awareness requires a successful international agenda setting. Large and influential NGO's and other actors can contribute to the agenda setting in foreign media (Palm, 2006).

However, despite the intents to draw attention to the situation among influential organisations like Consumers International (CI) in collaboration with the British magazine "The Guardian" in 2010 and Swedish organization Swedwatch in 2013 as described earlier which both received considerable media attention, no significant changes seem to have occurred since then. This suggests that it requires more organizations to manifest in order to achieve a stronger agenda-setting. Further, information and knowledge alone is not a guarantee for consumers to act or to achieve behavior changes among the public (Palm, 2006). Important to have in mind is that not all consumers can be considered "conscious consumers" and might not be aware of or pay attention to their responsibilities to be an

‘ethical consumer’. These are great obstacles for the opposition movement in the process of international agenda-setting.

However, Cheney, Gill and Kendall (2007) argue that, “*aligning consumer action with social movement organizations has the potential to offer alternative consumer identities, represent a broad and concerted voice in the interest of pro-social change, and change the course of movement activity.*” For example a boycott of pineapple from Costa Rica among consumers could have a major impact on the pineapple-industry in the country hence for the affected communities. Cheney, Gill and Kendall (2007) further defines common strategies for consumer activism as phone calls, letter writing or e-mailing and petitioning, creating alternative venues for consumption (such as eBay for eg), developing local and bio-regional alliances, staging demonstrations such as protests and marches, embracing critical pop culture and media; performing violence/violent action. This can be compared to the strategies used by the opposition movement. In the Costa Rican case, an increased cooperation with several influential international NGO’s can empower the movement and teach them how to communicate more strategically with consumers and can contribute to the international agenda-setting which is crucial to create a change, especially considering the situation of being a rural movement dealing with corruption in national mass media.

In this process, social media can serve as a useful tool in distributing information, work as an alternative media-channel and encourage a more sustainable future. Costa Rica and other countries in Central America has in earlier years experienced a similar problematic with the banana-industry as described in previous chapters, which is a source of inspiration for the opposition movement bringing hope and faith in that it is possible to create a change.

International media had a major impact on forcing changes in the banana industry through documentaries like “bananas” in 2009, which received great media attention and put the difficult conditions for employees on banana-farms in Nicaragua on the international agenda causing major protests around the world. This is an important example of what a successful agenda-setting can achieve which the opposition movement could learn from and take advantage of. One cannot change the past, but one can affect the future by learning from the past. This way, the opposition movement have the possibility to reach a more sustainable future for the rural communities of Costa Rica.

## 7. Conclusions and discussion

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In the beginning of this report, I specified two research questions that I intended to answer through this analysis with the aim of understanding how the ICT-development in Costa Rica has changed the ways in which the opposition movement communicates and how they have benefitted from it. The focus of this ethnographical research has been to gain a deeper understanding of the respondent's perception of their social reality and focus has been placed on the highlighting the empirical material and to shed light on it in the context of the theoretical framework, rather than to present a generalizing result and confirm a hypothesis defined previous to the study.

The first research question of this study was:

*How has the rapidly growing ICT-development in Costa Rica during the last 5 years (from 2010-2015) changed the ways in which the opposition movement communicates?*

The conclusions of this study shows that the ways in which the opposition movement communicates has not changed to the extend as one might have expected, considering the radical ICT-development the country has experienced during the last 5 years, due to the persisting digital divide in the rural communities. The result of this study identifies that there is a digital divide in the communities based on age, level of education, level of income and the limited Internet-access. A majority of the members of the opposition movement are elder and have a low level of education resulting in the lack of knowledge of how to use the new technologies and especially the Internet. The smartphone is a widespread ICT-device in the rural communities but few households have a computer. Many of the participants in this study own a smartphone but are mostly using it as a regular mobile phone to make phone calls and send text messages. As a result, the ways in which the movement communicates are still characterized by traditional word-of-mouth communication involving face-to-face and ear-to-ear communication despite the radical technological development in the country.

However, the ICT development has led to an increased awareness among the movement of the need for (and the importance of) a united organization and the discovery that digital media and social media in particular can facilitate networking in ways that they want to learn to take advantage of. The new initiative to create a forum to unite the national network of different organizations still fighting very individualized for better corporation and a clear focus on a common goal where the development of a digital strategy to involve social media in the process is a central element, points at an increased awareness of the advantages of which ICT can bring. Through education and increased knowledge of ICT the digital divide can be reduced.

The second research question that I aimed to answer was:

*How has as the opposition movement potentially benefited from the rapidly growing ICT-development?*

The digital divide in the rural communities have prevented the movement from taking advantage of ICT in comparison to modern communities in developed countries. However, ICT and social media seem to have helped the movement to reach a wider audience than before and thus facilitated and benefitted the struggle through creating more opportunities to disseminate information. It has provided an alternative media-channel to the county's mass media where they are not allowed to raise their voice. Reaching a wider audience is an important aspect for the level of success in achieving the goals. A wide united public opinion on an issue has the potential to influence decision-makers and effect change, which is critical to the level of success for the movement. In order to achieve this, a strong international agenda-setting is crucial to raise awareness among the consumers which can contribute to generating pressure on the pineapple industry and on the Costa Rican government.

By raising the topic in this thesis, I want to contribute to the international agenda-setting by creating awareness among the readers of this thesis and thus be a part of the process to create a change for the rural communities of Costa Rica suffering from these major social and environmental problems caused by the pineapple-plantations.

## 7.1 Future research

The aspects of agenda setting and communication strategies examined in this report, are two of many interesting and important aspects within this issue and a continued research of this specific case to investigate what impacts the reorganization of the opposition movement will have on the struggle, how an increased agenda setting of the issue will affect the pineapple industry and which possible changes it might force in the country in the future is necessary.

Further, another important and interesting aspect to investigate within the field could be to look at the issue from the perspective of the Costa Rican massmedia, interviewing national journalists in order to explore the relationship between Costa Rican massmedia, pressfreedom and the pineapple industry relating to the indications of corruption in massmedia which the empirical findings of this study address.

Research examining the issue from the perspective of international consumers and how they perceive the issue is another interesting aspect relating to the consumer-power and CSR.

Further another aspect which has not been brought up in this report, but which was addressed during the interviews is to shed light on the strategies which the pineapple-industry has used trying to silence the movement and its members. Respondents of this study all have their own personal stories of experiences relating to threats indicating that there is a price for opposing one of the most economically influencing industries in the country that is not afraid to make use of unconventional and corrupt strategies to put a stop to those who may come in the way of their profit.

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## 9. List of Appendices

### Appendix 1. IDI overall rankings and ratings, 2015 and 2010

Table 2.2: IDI overall rankings and ratings, 2015 and 2010

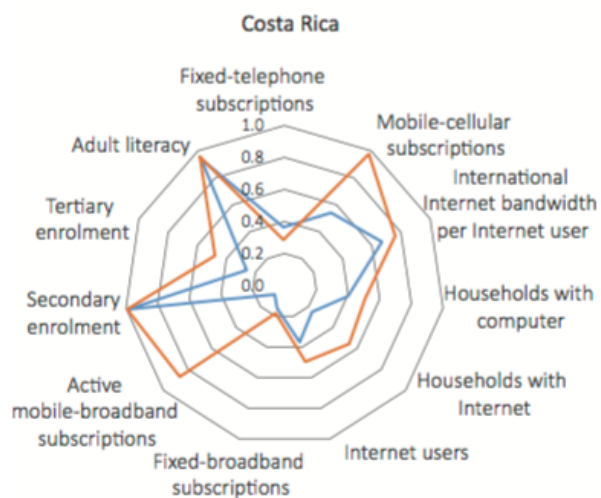
Economy	Rank 2015	IDI 2015	Rank 2010	IDI 2010	Economy	Rank 2015	IDI 2015	Rank 2010	IDI 2010
Korea (Rep.)	1	8.93	1	8.64	Suriname	85	4.99	100	3.39
Denmark	2	8.88	4	8.18	St. Lucia	86	4.98	70	4.39
Iceland	3	8.86	3	8.19	Seychelles	87	4.96	81	3.98
United Kingdom	4	8.75	10	7.62	South Africa	88	4.90	88	3.65
Sweden	5	8.67	2	8.43	Panama	89	4.87	79	4.07
Luxembourg	6	8.59	8	7.82	Ecuador	90	4.81	90	3.65
Switzerland	7	8.56	12	7.60	Iran (I.R.)	91	4.79	99	3.48
Netherlands	8	8.53	7	7.82	Jordan	92	4.75	84	3.82
Hong Kong, China	9	8.52	13	7.41	Tunisia	93	4.73	93	3.62
Norway	10	8.49	5	8.16	Albania	94	4.73	89	3.65
Japan	11	8.47	9	7.73	Mexico	95	4.68	86	3.70
Finland	12	8.36	6	7.96	Cape Verde	96	4.62	107	3.14
Australia	13	8.29	15	7.32	Kyrgyzstan	97	4.62	112	3.02
Germany	14	8.22	17	7.28	Philippines	98	4.57	105	3.16
United States	15	8.19	16	7.30	Morocco	99	4.47	96	3.55
New Zealand	16	8.14	19	7.17	Egypt	100	4.40	98	3.48
France	17	8.12	18	7.22	Fiji	101	4.33	102	3.28
Monaco	18	8.10	22	7.01	Viet Nam	102	4.28	94	3.61
Singapore	19	8.08	11	7.62	Dominican Rep.	103	4.26	101	3.38
Estonia	20	8.05	25	6.70	Peru	104	4.26	91	3.64
Belgium	21	7.88	24	6.76	Jamaica	105	4.23	95	3.60
Ireland	22	7.82	20	7.04	El Salvador	106	4.20	110	3.10
Canada	23	7.76	21	7.03	Bolivia	107	4.08	113	3.00
Macao, China	24	7.73	14	7.38	Indonesia	108	3.94	109	3.11
Austria	25	7.67	23	6.90	Ghana	109	3.90	130	1.98
Spain	26	7.66	30	6.53	Tonga	110	3.82	111	3.08
Bahrain	27	7.63	48	5.42	Botswana	111	3.82	117	2.86
Andorra	28	7.60	29	6.60	Paraguay	112	3.79	108	3.11
Barbados	29	7.57	38	6.04	Algeria	113	3.71	114	2.99
Malta	30	7.52	28	6.67	Guyana	114	3.65	103	3.24
Qatar	31	7.44	37	6.10	Sri Lanka	115	3.64	115	2.97
United Arab Emirates	32	7.32	49	5.38	Belize	116	3.56	104	3.17
Slovenia	33	7.23	27	6.69	Syria	117	3.48	106	3.14
Czech Republic	34	7.21	33	6.30	Namibia	118	3.41	120	2.63
Israel	35	7.19	26	6.69	Bhutan	119	3.35	128	2.02
Belarus	36	7.18	50	5.30	Honduras	120	3.33	116	2.94
Latvia	37	7.16	34	6.22	Guatemala	121	3.26	118	2.86
Italy	38	7.12	31	6.38	Samoa	122	3.11	121	2.43
Greece	39	7.09	35	6.20	Nicaragua	123	3.04	123	2.40
Lithuania	40	7.08	39	6.02	Kenya	124	3.02	126	2.09
Saudi Arabia	41	7.05	56	4.96	Vanuatu	125	2.93	124	2.19
Croatia	42	7.00	42	5.82	Sudan	126	2.93	127	2.05
Portugal	43	6.93	36	6.15	Zimbabwe	127	2.90	132	1.97
Poland	44	6.91	32	6.38	Lesotho	128	2.81	141	1.74
Russian Federation	45	6.91	46	5.57	Cuba	129	2.79	119	2.66
Kuwait	46	6.83	45	5.64	Cambodia	130	2.74	131	1.98
Slovakia	47	6.82	40	5.96	India	131	2.69	125	2.14
Hungary	48	6.82	41	5.92	Senegal	132	2.68	137	1.80
Uruguay	49	6.70	52	5.19	Gabon	133	2.68	122	2.41
Bulgaria	50	6.52	47	5.45	Nigeria	134	2.61	133	1.96
Serbia	51	6.45	51	5.29	Gambia	135	2.60	129	1.99
Argentina	52	6.40	54	5.02	Nepal	136	2.59	140	1.75
Cyprus	53	6.37	44	5.75	Côte d'Ivoire	137	2.51	142	1.74
Oman	54	6.33	68	4.41	Lao P.D.R.	138	2.45	135	1.92
Chile	55	6.31	59	4.90	Solomon Islands	139	2.42	139	1.78
Lebanon	56	6.29	77	4.18	Angola	140	2.32	144	1.68
Costa Rica	57	6.20	80	4.07	Congo (Rep.)	141	2.27	136	1.83
Kazakhstan	58	6.20	62	4.81	Myanmar	142	2.27	150	1.58
Romania	59	6.11	55	4.99	Pakistan	143	2.24	138	1.79
TFYR Macedonia	60	6.07	57	4.96	Bangladesh	144	2.22	148	1.61
Brazil	61	6.03	73	4.29	Mali	145	2.22	155	1.46
Antigua & Barbuda	62	5.93	58	4.91	Equatorial Guinea	146	2.21	134	1.96
St. Kitts and Nevis	63	5.92	43	5.80	Cameroon	147	2.19	149	1.60
Malaysia	64	5.90	61	4.85	Djibouti	148	2.19	143	1.69
Montenegro	65	5.90	60	4.89	Uganda	149	2.14	151	1.57
Moldova	66	5.81	74	4.28	Mauritania	150	2.07	146	1.63
Azerbaijan	67	5.79	76	4.21	Benin	151	2.05	147	1.63
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	68	5.69	63	4.69	Togo	152	2.04	145	1.64
Turkey	69	5.58	67	4.56	Zambia	153	2.04	152	1.55
Trinidad & Tobago	70	5.57	65	4.58	Rwanda	154	2.04	154	1.47
Brunei Darussalam	71	5.53	53	5.05	Liberia	155	1.86	161	1.24
Venezuela	72	5.48	71	4.36	Afghanistan	156	1.83	156	1.37
Mauritius	73	5.41	72	4.31	Tanzania	157	1.82	153	1.54
Thailand	74	5.36	92	3.62	Mozambique	158	1.82	160	1.28
Colombia	75	5.32	83	3.91	Burkina Faso	159	1.77	164	1.13
Armenia	76	5.32	78	4.10	Congo (Dem. Rep.)	160	1.65	162	1.23
Bosnia and Herzegovina	77	5.28	75	4.28	South Sudan	161	1.63	-	-
Georgia	78	5.25	85	3.76	Guinea-Bissau	162	1.61	158	1.33
Ukraine	79	5.23	69	4.41	Malawi	163	1.61	159	1.33
Dominica	80	5.12	66	4.56	Madagascar	164	1.51	157	1.34
Maldives	81	5.08	82	3.92	Ethiopia	165	1.45	165	1.07
China	82	5.05	87	3.69	Eritrea	166	1.22	163	1.14
Grenada	83	5.05	64	4.67	Chad	167	1.17	166	0.88
Mongolia	84	5.00	97	3.52					

*Appendix 2. Table of ICT access in Costa Rica*

Cuadro 1 Costa Rica: Cantidad y porcentaje de viviendas que poseen diferentes TIC Por zona Según tenencia de TIC Julio 2015						
Tenencia de TIC	Total		Zona			
			Urbana		Rural	
	Viviendas	%	Viviendas	%	Viviendas	%
<b>Total de viviendas en Costa Rica</b>	<b>1 436 120</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>1 039 232</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>396 888</b>	<b>100,0</b>
Con electricidad	1 425 050	99,2	1 035 588	99,6	389 462	98,1
Con teléfono residencial	608 829	42,4	495 980	47,7	112 849	28,4
Con teléfono celular	1 372 177	95,5	999 367	96,2	372 810	93,9
Con teléfono residencial y sin teléfono celular	37 408	2,6	26 951	2,6	10 457	2,6
Con teléfono celular y sin teléfono residencial	800 756	55,8	530 338	51,0	270 418	68,1
Con teléfono residencial y con teléfono celular	571 421	39,8	469 029	45,1	102 392	25,8
Con fax	39 003	2,7	36 581	3,5	2 422	0,6
Con computadora	695 414	48,4	571 889	55,0	123 525	31,1
Con tableta	360 157	25,1	311 471	30,0	48 686	12,3
Con servicio de internet en la vivienda	864 274	60,2	681 893	65,6	182 381	46,0
Con televisor a color	1 394 675	97,1	1 021 775	98,3	372 900	94,0
Con televisión pagada	927 429	64,6	729 217	70,2	198 212	49,9
Con radio	981 102	68,3	744 259	71,6	236 843	59,7

Fuente: INEC, Encuesta Nacional de Hogares, 2015.

### Appendix 3. ICT access in Costa Rica



Source: ITU



*Appendix 4. Internet usage and population growth in Costa Rica*

**Internet Usage and Population Growth:**

YEAR	Users	Population	% Pen.	Usage Source
2000	250,000	3,693,800	6.8 %	ITU
2003	800,000	4,267,000	18.7 %	ITU
2005	1,000,000	4,301,172	23.2 %	ITU
2008	1,500,000	4,195,914	35.7 %	ITU
2012	2,000,000	4,636,348	43.1 %	ITU
2014	4,028,302	4,755,234	84.7 %	IWS

Source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/am/cr.htm>

*Appendix 5. Internet and Facebook users in Costa Rica*

CR - 4,814,144 population (2015) - Country Size: 51,090 sq km

Capital City: San Jose - population 291,135 (2012)

**4,236,443 Internet users as of June/15, 88.0% penetration, per SUTEL.**

**2,800,000 Facebook users on Nov 15/15, 58.2% penetration rat**

Source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/am/cr.htm>

## Appendix 6. Printscreen of FRENASAPP Facebook page

April 26th 2016 (526 likes)

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of the Frente Nacional de Sectores Afectados por la Producción Piñera (FRENASAPP). The page header includes the Facebook logo, the page name, and navigation options like 'Startsida' and '20+'. The cover photo features a pineapple with a skull and the text 'Frente Nacional de Sectores Afectados por la Producción Piñera (FRENASAPP)'. The profile picture is a radiation symbol with a pineapple slice in the center. The page has 526 likes and a bio in Spanish: 'El FRENASAPP es un espacio abierto de coordinación, que busca articular esfuerzos de las comunidades afectadas por la producción de piña.' A post from April 23, 2016, at 17:49, contains an audio player and text about monoculture expansion in Chile. The left sidebar shows search, like count, and navigation tabs like 'Tidslinje', 'Om', 'Foton', 'Gillar', and 'Videoklipp'.

## Appendix 7. Printscreen of Era Verde YouTube account

April 26th 2016. 1269 subscribers.

The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for 'eraverdeur'. The browser address bar displays 'youtube.com'. The channel banner features the 'era verde' logo and a green landscape background. Text on the banner includes 'Lunes 8 pm. Martes, 12 md. y domingo, 6:30pm.' and 'canal 15 en CableVisión · 5 en Tigo · 62 en Cabletica'. Below the banner, the channel name 'eraverdeur' is displayed with a '1 269' subscriber count. Navigation tabs include 'Hem', 'Videoklipp', 'Spellistor', 'Kanaler', 'Diskussion', and 'Om'. The channel description states: 'Es un espacio único en la televisión de Costa Rica, dedicado exclusivamente a temas socio-ambientales impulsando a la acción, a promover la participación social en la propuesta de iniciativas que ayuden a resolver los problemas del medio ambiente.' A 'Populära kanaler' sidebar lists several channels with 'Prenumerera' buttons: Therese Lindgren, Jocke & Jonna, Thomas Sekelius, Linn Ahlborg, Misslisibell, and Felicia Bergström. Social media links for Facebook and Google+ are also visible.

*Appendix 8. Map of Central America and Costa Rica*



*Appendix 9. Map of area of the field study in Costa Rica*



## *Appendix 10. Interview guide*

Name, Age, Gender.

Theme: Communication strategies

- How do you work to reach out with your message in the struggle?
- What is the message?
- What are the goals of the struggle?
- Which is the aim of the struggle?
- Future visions?
- Are you using a specific communication strategy?
- Is there an official, documented existing communication strategy?
- What communication-channels are used?
- Traditional media (Newspapers, TV, Radio) – how?

Theme: ICT, Internet and social media in the struggle

- Do you use ICT in your daily life? How? Why?
- Do you use Internet in your daily life? How? Why?
- Do you use social media in your daily life? How? Why?
- How is ICT involved in the struggle?
- How is internet involved in the struggle?
- How is social media involved in the struggle?

Theme: Agenda-setting

- Who is the target group? (The national population, decisionmakers, organizations or international population?)
- What is the purpose of the communication? (Distribution of information, a raised awareness, pressure on decisionmakers?)
- What strategies are used to affect decisionmakers?

Theme: Changes in the ways of communication:

- What have you accomplished in the struggle?
- Has the ways of communication changed? In what ways?

## Other

- Consequences for members of the struggle? (Threats?)
- Corruption in Costa Rica? (The state, The pineapple companies, Media? Strategies?)
- Obstacles in the struggle?



*Appendix 11. List of organizations*

AIDA – Asociación Internacional de Derechos Ambiental

APRENAC – Asociación pro Defensa de los Recursos Naturales del Caribe

AYA- Instituto Costarricense de Acueductos y Alcantarillados

CANAPEP – La camera de productores de pina

CEDARENA – Centro de Derecho Ambiental y de los Recursos Naturales

FBE – Fundación Bandera Ecológica

FRENASAPP – El frente nacional de sectores afectadas por la producción pinera

MAG – Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería

MINAE – Ministerio de ambiente y energía

Red de Mujeres Rurales de Costa Rica

SETENA - Secretaria Técnica Ambiental

## ***Appendix 12. The Costa Rican Context***

*In this chapter I will give a background explanation to the Costa Rican political system and the current media system and how these two factors reflect one another. I start by giving an overview of the Costa Rican political system and short about its history, and continuously I explain the situation of the current media system in the country and its actors. Further I explain the country's accessibility to Internet and ICT and provide a short description of the opposition movement and the context within which it operates. Finally, I will give a short explanation to the United Nations guiding principles for business and human rights and how this relates to the pineapple industry in Costa Rica.*

### **The political system in Costa Rica**

Costa Rica is Latin America's oldest democracy with its democratic traditions since the beginning of 1889. However, the country's democracy has its roots in the time while the country was conquest by Columbus and the Spanish settlers. At that time, the conquistadors thought Costa Rica was rich on gold and mineral resources, and the country was named "the rich coast". However, after the Spanish settlers discovered the country has poor mineral resources and were further unable to rely on the country's the small indigenous population to farm their lands, many of them chose other neighboring countries to colonize (Rockwell, 2003, p. 109). Hence sparser population, landholders of large agriculture areas came to work with small landholders forced to evolve an understanding for their social and political views. This reduced the class differences within the country for centuries to come and was the beginning of the Costa Rican democracy. A contributing factor to the open dialog between classes and fair diversion of land was the explosive growth of the coffee industry in the nineteenth century. It allowed both the countries elite and middle class to benefit from it and contributed to democratic governances in the country (Rockwell, 2003, p.110). Today, Costa Rica has developed a political system characterized by compromise and an open dialog of competing ideas, unlike other countries in Latin America (Rockwell, 2003, p. 110). After the worldwide depression in the 1940s and the Second World War, the class differences in Costa Rica started to reinforce and a growing communist opposition organized against the nations upper class and agriculture elite. President Rafael Angel Calderón Guardia, the leader of the National Republican Party, represented the nation's agriculture elite when first elected (Rockwell, 2003, p.111). However, he created a social

security system in order to increase the social welfare for the nations lower class and lost support among the elite as moving towards social reforms and allied with the communists and the Catholic Church. Consequently, the Costa Rican civil war broke out in 1948 with an anticommunist-movement opposing Calderón. In 1952 José Figueres Ferrer, representing the social-democratic party National Liberation Party (Partido de Liberacion Nacional, PLN), won the elections and established anticommunist governance in the country. After the civil war a multiparty system developed in Costa Rica where PLN dominated the Costa Rican polity for almost four decades (Booth, 2007, p. 1). PLN reshaped the Calderon's social welfare program to include the lower class in the nation's wealth hence diminished and redistributed the power of the elite. "Figueres and the PLN are credited with not only restoring democracy in Costa Rica but deepening it beyond the type of superficial, fledgling democracy run strictly by elite forces now common throughout Central America" (Rockwell, 2003, p.113). However in the 1980s, the party's ideology shifted towards the ideological center and adopted a neoliberal, free-market orientation. (Booth, 2007, p. 10). Following, the strong Christian Democratic center-right orientated party the Social Christian Unity Party (Partido Unidad Social Cristiana, PUSC) lead by the son of Calderón, Rafael Angel Calderón Fourier, arose and won the elections in 1990. PUSC challenged the dominance of PLN in polity during the following decade (Booth, 2007, p. 10). However in 2002 both PLN and PUSC lost significant part of it's voters to the revolutionary left leaning Citizen Action Party (PAC) that arose in 2000 (PAC, 2014). In 2006 the PUSC virtually collapsed due to a corruption scandal, which PAC benefited from picking up 43 per cent of PUSC voters compared to PLN that picked up only 33 per cent. However, PLN recaptured the precedency with Oscar Araias in the lead. Currently in the elections of 2014, the left leaning PAC won the elections with 77,77 percent of the votes compared to PLN with 22,23 per cent of the votes (Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones, TSE, 2014). Hence the victory of PAC and the new president Luis Guillermo Solís is the first third-party candidate in four decades to win the elections in Costa Rica (Dyer, 2014).

### **The media system in Costa Rica.**

The political history of Costa Rica is has influenced the development of the media system in the country hence, the understanding of the political background is an important aspect to rely on in the analysis of the current media system.

The media system in Costa Rica reflects the nations democratic governance and is characterized by the openness for debate and support for democracy. Compared to neighboring countries, Costa Rica has the most advanced and developed media system in Central America (Rockwell, 2003, p. 109). The country established the law of press freedom in 1835 and in 1889 one of the first Costa Rican newspaper La Prensa Libre was founded, today ran by Andrés Borrásé Sanou. The newspaper has from the start until today tried to keep independency from political parties and reflects a centrist to moderate-right view. In 1946 the newspaper La Nacion reflecting conservative, anticommunist views, was founded by the Jimenez de la Guardia Family to opposite the social reforms of Calderón. Despite the fact that Costa Rican media in some occasions tend to be supportive of certain political views or parties, however, it is considerably more professional objective than media systems in other neighboring countries. La Nación, still considered a conservative newspaper, have been called the best newspaper in Costa Rica and further in Central America (Rockwell, 2003 p. 113). Thus, La Nación, receives around 70-80 percent of all print media advertising in the country. The two biggest competitors of La nacion is the newspaper Diario Extra, published by William Gómez (who further owns Radio America and the UHF television operation named Extra TV on channel 42) and La republica owned by the Canadian company Hollinger which supports the policies of the political party PLN. The fact that the country is open to diversity of ownership of media, by letting international owners into the market, contributes to the nations democratic system (Rockwell, 2003 p. 116)

In the 1920s Radio became a popular medium in Costa Rica (García, 2008, p. 101). Radio is still the most widespread medium in Costa Rica and 98 percent of the population listen to the Radio every day and. However, television has a market penetration of 90 percent that makes it the biggest electronic medium (Rockwell, 2003, p.117). The television was established in Costa Rica in the 1950s. At the time, Liberacion Nacional (PLN) was pushing for the television industry to become a public service, however, critics insisted it should be monopolistic and a part of the private sector. In 1959, the Supreme Court declared the television industry as a part of the private sector (García, 2008, p.101). The main difference between the two is that privately founded media depends on advertising for revenues and the public service-media is financed by the state and public taxes (García, 2008, p.105). The most popular television network is Teletica Canal 7 receives a majority of the Costa Rican audience on a daily basis and is owned by the Picado Cozza family, part of the nations

conservative elite since decades. (Rockwell, 2003, p. 117). Teletica's main competitor is The Repretel Group controlling channel 4, 6 and 9 owned by the Mexican Angel Gonzales. "The Repretel group makes Gonzalez's market influence equal to that of La Nacion's publishing group and exceeds that of Teletica and the powerful Picado Cozza family. González personifies the forces of globalization since he controls at least twenty-two stations in Latin America" (Rockwell, 2003, p. 118). Thus, the influence of the foreign González on the country's media system has concerned national media owners whom have emphasized the danger of a monopoly controlled by a foreign corporation. However, on the other hand, it has created competition to Teletica canal 7 and forced them to improve its television in order to keep the audience. (Rockwell, 2003, p. 119). To sum up, three media groups can be identified that seems to play a key role in the Costa Rican media system, based on their control of the country's advertising. The major influence of the nations advertising is controlled to La Nacion publishing group (owned by the Jimenez family) with 34 percent of the market. Gonzalez's Repretel receives has a hold of 30 percent and The Picado Cozza television 18 percent. Further more, these three groups share the same conservative, right-oriented political views, thus it appears as the Costa Rican media system is dominated by conservative ideologies. However, the conservative media does not appear to have an undermining impact on the country's democracy. (Rockwell, 2003, p. 123). So far, the centration of media power in the hands of the conservative has mirrored the development of the nations social and political systems. However, after the elections in 2014 when the left-leaned PAC party won, a shift in the political ideology in the country takes place. What this means for the media system in Costa Rica and its conservative rulers remains to be seen.

What is even more striking is the fact that Costa Rican media, despite a growing number of media channels during the last decades, devotes a remarkably small amount of time and space to public debate; printed media 3,9 percent, Radio 1,7 percent and Television 1 percent weekly (García, 2008, p. 111). Further more this is an important aspect since public debate widens the open dialogue in the country and promotes democracy.

In general the high-income Costa Rican population seem to have low confidence in media, in turn, the low-income population shows higher confidence, according to a survey conducted by the UNDP in 1999. Further, the fact that the high-income population might have a higher educational level probably has an impact on the level of confidence in media. (García, 2008, p. 111)

### **The Costa Rican opposition movement**

The opposition movement that is organizing against the expansion of pineapple cultivation in the country has arisen mostly from poor rural communities affected by the pollution and the negative impacts of the cultivation. The movement consists of non-profit environmental non-governmental organizations that operate together fighting for the social welfare and clean drinking water against the powerful and economically influential pineapple industry in Costa Rica. The political ideology of the movement appear to be left-leaning and members emphasizes the support from representatives from the Costa Rican political parties PAC and Frente Amplio, reflecting a left-leaning ideology and expresses concern for environmental issues. Members of the movement have expressed faith in the future of the struggle and the ability to create a change, with the potential support from the new government after the current elections in 2014, where PAC won. (Niva, 2014).

### **United Nations guiding principles for business and human rights**

United Nations declare that the responsibility to ensure the respect of human rights can be divided between States and business enterprises operating within the country. States need to establish and enforce laws and policies that force companies to respect human rights requiring these companies to regularly demonstrate how they are working to ensure that no human rights violations take place within their business. Business enterprises are obligated to have knowledge of the risks for violations of human rights that their business may be responsible for or contribute to. (Ruggie, 2011). Prior to companies operating in the pineapple industry in Costa Rica, this means that they are obliged have knowledge of and are responsible for the employers safety in terms of what chemicals they are exposed to and the implications this might have on their health. Further, they are obligated to take responsibility for the pollution of the Costa Rican nature and the consequences such as contaminated drinking water. When human rights violations are revealed, companies are obliged to establish new, or strengthen existing, policies to meet the problem. The access to clean drinking water is a human right and employee exposure to chemical pesticides is a violation of human rights. Thus, the companies are obligated to establish policies to ensure that the problematic are reduced. (Swedwatch, 2013).