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Recovery Networks

- governance of non-governmental organizations in post-earthquake Nepal

A Minor Field Study

by

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Abstract

This thesis sets out to further expand on the knowledge on governance of NGOs in disaster recovery and reconstruction by looking at the coordination between and governance of national and international NGOs after the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal. The study is based on interviews and field-observations from Kathmandu and Rasuwa district and applies governance networks and governability theory to explain the findings.

The study shows how the centralization of approvals and monitoring have become a way for the government to control the large number of organizations, as the capacities to do so locally may vary. However, the same centralization has led to delays in project implementation and to some difficulties for the NGOs to adapt projects to local conditions. Furthermore, the study shows that the overlapping responsibilities between the two main agencies causes confusion among NGOs and sometimes further delays.

The findings suggest that while the accountability measures seem to increase effectiveness in terms of reaching set goals, there seems to be a contradictory relationship between accountability and efficiency at the same time. In other words: slower implementation may be the price we have to pay for a better goal fulfilment. Further research on the matter is suggested.

Keywords: governance, governance networks, governability, disaster recovery, NGOs, Nepal

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Foreword

Coming in as a foreign researcher to a country you only read about is never easy. Even harder is making judgements about their way of managing things. During the fieldwork I have gotten to know so many driven and deeply caring individuals. They have shared their success-stories as well as their mistakes, and they have invited me to understand the complex situations a recovery and reconstruction-process entails. So many stories of good deeds and intentions that does not fit within the scope of this thesis. I can only hope that my conclusions will somewhat reward their trust in me.

In the end, my job is to understand the structures behind action. What is working and what is not working, and especially: why? We humans learn from our mistakes, and it is only natural that a lot of the conclusions I draw are based on many of the insights from where things are more difficult. Doing it differently would be to misuse the faith the Nepali people have put in me, as new insights are what matters in the end.

The stories that are not told in this thesis are the stories of the resilience of the community-people. Their strength, not only to carry on, but proudly showing me, an outsider, their way of life. Neither are there much room for the good deeds, wise thoughts nor the care for Nepal that the informants – be it INGO, NGO or government representatives – have displayed. There are enough things to learn from Nepal for a dozen theses and probably quite a few books. My only regret is that I only have time for one.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

As the world is becoming more complex, the structures of policy-making and implementation are changing. European and American scholars have for a long time studied the emergence of networks and their effect on public policy, believing that a more complex society, and the emergence of strong non-state actors is hollowing out the state (e.g. Rhodes, 1997). However, while most network scholars are focused on – and using examples from – contemporary western society, there is less research from nations in the global south. This is a problem, because the circumstances are very different. Governments in developing nations are generally less stable and their capacities to rule are weakened or shaped by authoritarianism (Kooiman, 2005). They also have to conform to bilateral aid agencies as well as international and domestic Non-Governmental Organizations (I/NGOs) to a greater extent than their northern counterparts. I/NGOs come in with new ideas of how to organize society and with the monetary backing of foreign aid such actors become increasingly hard to ignore.

After a natural disaster there is an increased dependency on I/NGOs and bilateral organizations. Another distinguishing feature of a post-disaster setting is that it differs in many ways from other contemporary policy and implementation processes, due to lives lost, destroyed infrastructure and demand for rapid results. While there is a lot written on the initial response, there is arguably need for more studies on the recovery and reconstruction (e.g. Tuhkanen et al, 2017).

In Nepal, these circumstances are very real. The country is vulnerable to landslides, floods and earthquakes, and it has become one of the world's most disaster-prone countries (Pandey, 2017). More recently, in April and May 2015, two major earthquakes struck the country. Deaths were estimated to almost 9000 (Landry et al, 2016), and damages were estimated to a worth of US$7 billion (Pandey, 2017). Nepal is now three years into the effort of building up the country again, and the government has presented an outspoken aim to use the build back better approach (NPC, 2015a, 2015c; NRA, 2016a). With thousands of NGOs and over 200 INGOs taking part in recovery and reconstruction, it is safe to say that successful recovery must therefore incorporate successful operations by the

civil organizations. The I/NGOs role in the recovery and reconstruction has been recognized by the Nepali government and according to the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and Post Disaster Recovery Framework (PDRF) I/NGOs are important partners in implementing some of the recovery strategies (NRA, 2015c; NRA, 2016a).

Nevertheless, the recovery in Nepal has initially been described as ineffective and, by many affected stakeholders as confusing (Daly et al, 2017; Lam et al, 2017; Pandey, 2017). Pandey (2017) links Nepal's natural hazard vulnerability to the governance of the involved actors and calls for more research on the challenges of governance of these actors. This thesis is an attempt to answer to that call.

The importance of understanding the role of I/NGOs in the recovery and reconstruction process, and the results of state governance of these organizations is going to increase in importance over the next decades. With climate change as a major contributor to an increased disaster risk (Schipper et al, 2016) it seems that similar scenarios will become more frequent. Also, the decentralized approach and the use of civil society organizations does not seem to be going out of fashion anytime soon. Instead, it is rather encouraged in the world wide accepted Sendai framework (UNISDR, 2015). This thesis aims to contribute to both these areas by looking closer at the recovery and reconstruction process in Nepal.

1.2 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of the thesis is to contribute to the knowledge of disaster recovery and reconstruction in general, and the use of I/NGOs in particular. The post-disaster setting involves a diverse and complex political and social environment, where hundreds of different, autonomous organizations are working to rebuild. From this context, it is imperative to understand how these organizations respond to this complex environment. The organizations do not, however, operate in a political or legal vacuum. There are more or less subtle ways for the government to ensure control of the process and guide I/NGO actions. Therefore, it is equally important to understand the governance measures imposed by the state, and their effects on I/NGO behaviour. This thesis focuses on the network governance measures taken in the recovery and reconstruction after the earthquakes in Nepal in 2015, and how they affect the work of the I/NGOs active in the country. To address this problem the thesis aims to answer:

- ***How do the I/NGOs interact and coordinate amongst each other?***
- ***How does the government govern the I/NGOs?***
- ***How are the I/NGOs affected by the governance measures?***

Altogether, these three research questions cover three important aspects of modern disaster governance and development coordination: The first question allow for a deeper understanding of how the I/NGOs work and interact. The second aims to outline how the government responds to I/NGO presence, and finally, the last question aims to tie the two previous research questions together to understand how the state governance measures effect their capacity to deliver results.

1.3 Limitations

The study is a qualitative case-study intended to explore the governance of and between actors, and their perceptions of the recovery process on a deeper level. It is focused on the interactions between and governance of INGOs and NGOs operating within the country in the recovery and reconstruction process after the 2015 earthquake. Within this scope, bilateral agencies – that is: the agencies affiliated with a foreign government – as well as UN-bodies, are left out since they generally play a slightly different role and have more influence.

The study is focused on organizations and actors who are or have been active in Rasuwa district. Even if some of the NGOs have been working in other districts, it is reasonable to claim that the validity of the study is strongest in Rasuwa. It is also important to remember that Nepal is a diverse country with different languages and ethnicities, and that the experiences and interpretations among the villagers in Rasuwa do not necessarily reflect other parts of the country.

Despite the limitations, it is my firm belief, that there are things to learn from the experiences of the involved actors and that the result may lead to new insights on NGO-governance and disaster recovery and reconstruction. The validity claims are elaborated further below in the internal respectively external validity sections.

1.4 Clarifications of terms

Before further reading, there are a few clarifications that must be made. The difference between concepts of search and rescue, recovery, reconstruction and development are not always clear. This is the case not only for the layman, but I have noticed that different professionals use these concepts differently. There is also no clear distinction in time for when one focus changed to another. Rather, the different measures are overlapping, or even taken simultaneously. For the sake of clarity for the reader, some distinctions have to be made in this thesis. 'Search and rescue' are the efforts in the very beginning, such as medical assistance, food and water and direct life-saving ventures. 'Early recovery' are temporary efforts directed at helping people survive for the time being. Such efforts could be building of temporary shelters, distribution of seeds or cooking utensils. Recovery means all efforts to help people rebuild their lives. It could be building-support, livelihood-programs or construction of water infrastructure for example. Reconstruction refers to construction-related efforts only.

In Nepal, there is a clear difference between NGOs and international NGOs (INGOs). They have different rights and different rules to abide. For the further reading, there is a distinction made between the two of them. INGOs are international organizations who have signed a general agreement with the Nepali government to work within the country. NGOs are national organizations, registered with the government and allowed to operate for as long as they wish. They are therefore treated as different kinds of institutions in this paper. When both the INGOs as well as the NGOs are addressed interchangeably the abbreviation I/NGO is used.

Other related terms in this thesis are village and community, where village refers to the specific village and community is a more general expression referring to villages in a more general way or to villages clustered together by administrative boundaries.

Furthermore, most I/NGOs use 'hardware' or 'software' to address either construction programs, or programs that are more of community strengthening, for example trainings, mental support or establishing market linkages.

1.5 Disposition

Following the introductory chapter, the theories that guide the analysis and discussion are presented and explained. Then follows the methodological chapter that discuss the details of data collection as well as explaining the choice of methods. This is followed by an analysis based on the theory and a discussion-chapter where the results are discussed in relation to existing theories and where the most important findings are summarized in a conclusion.

2. Theory

The theoretical framework that guides this thesis is based on theories of governance networks and governability. First the previous research on disaster governance and the case of Nepal is discussed to provide a background on the choice of theoretical approach. Then, the emergence of network theory is discussed as well as the general features of networks. Following that is the discussion of the up- and downsides of networks and how those relate to the study at hand and, finally, there is a section that is briefly discussing the governability approach and presents a framework for the analysis.

2.1 Previous research

Disaster governance has received more attention over the last two decades as disaster risk have moved up on the global agenda through the Hyogo (UNISDR, 2005), and later Sendai agreements (UNISDR, 2015). Recent disasters like the hurricane Katrina in 2005 or the earthquakes in India, 2001, Haiti, 2010 and Nepal, 2015 have further highlighted the importance of a functioning coordination and governance structure for disaster response and recovery. The role of NGOs is generally seen as important, as it offers a way to bring money into countries where the institutional stability is low and corruption is high (Zanotti, 2010).

A recent case that has actualized the need for proper governance of actors in recovery is the Haiti earthquake in 2010 (Zanotti, 2010; Pierre-Louis, 2011). According to Pierre-Louis (2011) ineffective coordination led to a turf war among the NGOs in Haiti. Zanotti (2010) is fierce in her critique and argues that the extensive channelling of funds through NGOs is hampering the development of sustainable institutions in the country. Furthermore, she argues that organizations in reconstruction needs to be locally accountable and needs-driven.

The findings from Haiti actualizes a more general study on NGO accountability, in which Murtaza (2012) concludes that the NGOs are more accountable to their donors than they are to the communities they help.

Vasavada (2013) has examined the strategy employed to govern NGOs after the 2001 Gurajat earthquake in India and states that using separate administrative bodies for coordination is the most common mechanism used to govern disaster management networks. However, she concludes, that in Gurajat, the coordinating body is also a part of the network it coordinates, a so-called lead-organization (Provan & Kenis, 2008). Vasavada deems the recovery process in Gurajat to be effective and claim that the lead-organization structure "makes sense" (2013:379).

There are a few articles written on the response and recovery in the Nepali case. Lam et al (2016) are worried about what they call a slow progress and warn that bureaucracy, the government's aspiration for total control and the short time-span for NGO interventions will eventually have a negative effect on recovery. Daly et al (2017:421) supports the claim that the governmental wish for control is hampering flexibility, and that the centralization of responsibility is making it hard for local initiatives to thrive. Pandey (2017) points at several problems with transparency and governance of both I/NGOs and institutions, and stresses that both intellectuals and communities in Nepal question where money earmarked for communities goes. There is therefore a need for more research on governance, transparency and accountability of both institutions and I/NGOs that are working in the field (ibid).

As this brief overview have shown, the interest of the NGO-role in disaster recovery and reconstruction is increasing. There is, however, still a need for more theory-building on the subject (Tierny & Oliver-Smith, 2012). As there are few studies applying a governance network-perspective, this track is reasonable to follow up, considering the aim of the thesis.

2.2 The emergence of networks

Over the last few decades, scientists have noticed a shift in societal steering mechanisms and in how policy is created and implemented. It is a shift from what is usually described as a more hierarchical, or traditional, way of steering, to a more decentralized process, including a multiplicity of different actors (e.g. Rhodes, 1997; Sörensen & Torfing, 2007, Larsson, 2017). This shift is commonly referred to as a shift *from government to governance*. *Government*, in this setting refers to the traditional way of exercising societal control, with a central government making policies and enforcing them through state

institutions in a rather top-down process. *Governance* emphasizes that these processes rarely are executed through top-down steering anymore, but rather through interactions of actors on multiple levels in society (Rhodes, 1997).

One explanation to this shift, Rhodes (1997) argues, is that reforms like New Public Management has transformed the role of institutions in society. Rather than operating with direct control, indirect measures are preferred, which has led to agencies and institutions becoming increasingly dependent on a wide range of different actors to deliver services and execute policies. This has resulted in a "hollowing out of the state" (ibid:53). Yet others see the shift as a natural result of a long gone lassiez-faire approach to market and society in general, or as a response to an increasing incapacity of solving complex societal problems through the traditional methods (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007). Whether the former or the latter is more accurate, most scientists within the field agree on the increasing complexity of contemporary public policy (e.g. Rhodes, 1997; Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Kenis & Oerlemans, 2008; Klijn & Koppenjan; 2012, 2016; Christopolous, 2017). The recognition of this shift has led to a multiplicity of explanations to what governance is and what it entails, such as good governance, multi-level governance or new public management (Klijn, 2008). Governance is a phenomenon, which in turn calls for new governing methods from society leaders, and therefore it is imperative that scientists follow up with new and different perspective on policy and implementation (e.g. Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Larsson, 2015).

It is within this context that theories on governance networks have emerged as a popular approach. With influences not only from political and policy sciences but also from organizational studies, governance networks are a way to address the influences and impacts of this emerging complexity from a bottom-up perspective (Sandström & Carlsson, 2008). It differentiates itself from the Weberian view on bureaucracy and institutions, because of its emphasis on several different centres of power and their coordination rather than on one. It also differs from traditional organization theory which is mainly focused on studying organizations as closed systems. Instead, governance networks emphasizes the interactions between organizations and institutions, and their effect on society. Within this approach interaction between public, private, semi-public and non-profit organizations are considered to be key in the formation and implementation of public policy (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007). The development field is not different in this sense, and the agencies

responsible for the recovery are handling a range of different projects driven and carried out by networks of different organizations.

2.3 The anatomy of networks

Networks can be found in all levels of society (Torfing, 2012) and they may differ significantly in size, number of actors and in how they structure interactions. To further complicate the imagery, actors within the networks may also differ in power, influence, resources available or legitimacy (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007). The diverse background of the field is reflected in the range of different approaches used to further expand the knowledge in the area. Studies on governance networks are cross-disciplinary and may engage researchers from fields such as environmental studies, sociology, political science, organizational studies or public administration. The terminology may differ slightly and spans from policy networks to social networks or inter-organizational networks, depending on approach and focus (e.g. Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Kenis & Oerlemans, 2008; Sandström & Carlsson, 2008; Bodin & Crona, 2009). The term *governance networks* should in this thesis to be understood as an overarching description of the phenomenon of networks. This definition differs from e.g. Blanco et al (2011) who argue that governance networks are a separate category of networks and have different features than policy networks. For the purpose of this thesis, however, this distinction is deemed superfluous. In reality, such distinctions are not always clear, and since the literature in most cases uses these categories interchangeably (ibid.), such a distinction would only cause unnecessary confusion. For example, the occurrence of networks may interfere with policy, even though the networks may not have that aim in the first place. A general distinction of the governance networks phenomenon is in this thesis proposed as: *a set of independent actors that are recurrently cooperating or negotiating (or both!) to affect public policy, solve policy problems, deliver public services, to govern common resources or to implement existing policies.*

The literature on governance networks present several similar but slightly different definitions. Sörensen and Torfing define governance networks as: "1. a relatively stable horizontal articulation of interdependent, but operationally autonomous actors; 2. who interact through negotiations; 3. which takes place within a regulative, normative, cognitive, and imaginary framework; 4. that is self-regulating within limits set by external

agencies; and 5. which contributes to the production of public purpose" (2007:9). Klijn and Koppenjan have chosen a more general description: "more or less stable patterns of social relations between mutually dependent actors, which cluster around a policy problem, a policy programme, and/or a set of resources and which emerge, are sustained, and are changed through a series of interactions" (2016:21).

From the descriptions above, it can be derived that governance networks is a multi-faceted concept with several dimensions. The definitions are being contested and elaborated continually, approaches vary and, as will be discussed further, the difference in composition between two networks may vary greatly, but as Klijn and Koppenjan (2012:591) argue, some features – core concepts – are reoccurring. Networks form, or are formed, around a public purpose, be it policy problems, resources or policy programs. They consist of autonomous actors that are dependent on each other's resources. Furthermore, the relationship between the actors is depicted as horizontal, which must be understood in contrast to the hierarchical, Weberian relationship. There are reoccurring interactions between the actors, which makes the network an entity, however, the nature and intensity of the interactions may vary. The networks are to some extent self-regulating but operating within boundaries that are set by external actors. This section is dedicated to elaborating and discussing these features in further detail.

Governance networks may have different purposes. They may form, or be formed, for several reasons, and there is no general rule for whether the *formation of a network* is a result of a deliberative bottom-up process or initiated by an agency or institution (Provan & Kenis, 2008; Larsson, 2017). Instead it is reasonable to argue that the circumstances around network formation are rather context dependent. Rhodes (1997) argues that networks emerge as a result of state fragmentation, and an increasingly complex society in which actors are dependent on others to achieve their goal. The emergence of a network therefore becomes a result of continuous interactions that over time institutionalizes to a pattern, or a facilitation of procedures to solve the problems or carry out the tasks necessary to reach that goal. However, networks could also be formed by policymakers as a way of building consensus and working around complex policy problems (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007;) or as a way of managing common-pool resources (e.g. Geist & Howlett, 2014; Sandström & Lundmark, 2016).

Networks are constellations of autonomous actors. That is: it is expected that when actors engage in network activities, it is to pursue their own goals in some sense. Participation gives the actors access to something they need but do not have. Most authors therefore agree that *interdependency* is a precondition for network formation (e.g. Rhodes, 1997; Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012; Larsson, 2015). While there may be many explanations for why an actor chose to participate in a network, there must at least be something to win from cooperating with others. Without the belief that another actor has the resources that are needed to achieve a certain goal, or solve a problem, there is no reason to cooperate in the first place (Hertting, 2007). Resources in this context could mean anything from material to financial resources to influence, legitimacy or authority (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007), and the access to different resources, and therefore their needs, may differ between actors. There is, in other words, not an explicit need for a balance in the dependency between actors. However, Hertting (2007) has shown that asymmetries nevertheless may be a source of severe problems for the cooperation within a network. Another important aspect is that what matters is that the interdependency is perceived to be there, not that it necessarily is real. 'Believe' is the key-word here, as the belief that they have something to gain from working together is enough (ibid.). The realization that there are gains from working together does not mean that the actors need to have the same values or share the same goals in the matter. Instead, their interdependency transcends both goals and beliefs, and may bring them together to a negotiated cooperation, even though they may have completely different world views (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012).

The relationship between the actors within the network, usually depicted as *horizontal* is a matter of some discussion within the field (e.g. Rhodes, 1997; Sörensen & Torfing, 2007, Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012, Larsson, 2015). Davies (2011:55pp) criticizes the use of 'hierarchy' as an opposite to the relations that are prominent within networks. To describe networks as horizontal entities, he argues, risks looking past the power structures that are inherent within their very structure. In Davies' view, networks present an opportunity to study new forms of power play, when interdependencies and asymmetric access to resources force new alliances and collaborations. The view of networks as arenas for new ways of power reproduction is supported by, among others, Larsson (2015:38), who argue that the matter of certain traits such as horizontal relations rather is a question for an empirical study of specific network than a general trait. On the other hand, Torfing (2012:3p) argues that "horizontal relations" is a matter of the actors' autonomy. Within the

network, there may be different access to resources as well as different power relations, however, none of the participating actors has the overarching power to resolve issues or enforce decisions. Whether there are power asymmetries or not, the participating actors build their cooperation on negotiations. In other words: governance networks are to a greater extent *self-regulated* than traditional modes of governing. Self-regulation may look different depending on the internal structures of the network (Provan & Kenis, 2008). The more horizontal the relations, the more reliant they are on the commitment of all actors to be successful in reaching their common goal. The members regulate internal relations as well as respond to external factors by negotiating among each other. Less symmetrical power relations however, may lead to more reliance on one or more central actors (ibid.).

Another important feature of governance networks is *institutionalization* (e.g. Rhodes, 1997; Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Geddes, 2008; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012; Larsson, 2017). In other words, there must be some kind of continuous interaction, which is facilitated by a common perception of how this should be done within the specific network. This common perception could be norms and imageries of what constitutes an appropriate conduct, but over time more formalized rules could develop (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012). Imperial et al (2016) even declares networks to have "life-cycles" and that the institutionalisation merely is one phase of others within the network life cycle. Within networks, rules are constantly contested and re-negotiated by the involved actors, and whether they lead to good or bad results, and for whom may vary over time (ibid.).

Finding methods for exercising control over networks – *network governance* – is an important part of governance networks studies. The general idea is that due to the autonomous and self-regulating nature of networks, some level of external control needs to be imposed, mainly to maintain and increase effectiveness, legitimacy and accountability. The extent of control the 'governor' should have over networks is debated. Suggestions of methods to prevent inefficiency, increase accountability and settle differences between actors are all on the table (e.g. Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Triantafillou, 2007; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012; 2016; Larsson, 2015). However, the obvious question in this matter is: 'If one regulates a self-regulating entity, does it remain self-regulating?' That question has many answers. One is: by inventing new tools of governance. Theorists have suggested the development of tools that allow for general control, while at the same time keeping manoeuvring space for the involved actors (e.g. Klijn & Edelenbos; 2007). The idea is to set some outer boundaries and set rules that help the network govern themselves, as well

as guide the setting of the agenda and the common goals (ibid.). By doing so, the main precondition for network effectiveness: the flexibility and self-regulation is preserved, at the same time as the governor is allowed control. Sörensen and Torfing (2007) are using the term meta-governance for such practices. A second answer is: Fully self-regulating networks are not desirable. In theory, the thought of self-regulating, equally interdependent entities that incorporates the grassroots to a more effective *and* legitimate process is appealing (Börzel & Panke, 2007) but hardly one that reflects the reality (Larsson, 2015). The complexity that is often the case in reality demands, not only governance of networks, but different approaches to how to govern them. Following the argument of Provan & Kenis (2008), self-regulation is only desirable when it comes to networks with a small number of actors. When the number of actors is considered to be moderate, a more centralized governance model is suggested as a more effective for over-all effectiveness.

2.4 Desirable Networks – or problematic?

Theories on governance networks provide an alternative way of addressing complex, multifaceted policy-problems. The approach is often presented as a possible remedy to what many scholars see as the illnesses of new public management and of a neo-liberal transition gone too far (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012). As such, governance networks could be seen as a middle ground between the planned and accountable action of the state and the free and effective operations of the market. Indeed, there is a tendency among governance network scholars, not only to acknowledge, but to *promote* horizontal networks over hierarchies (Larsson, 2015). There are, however, also issues linked to the new forms of governance that have to be addressed simultaneously. The arguments promoting networks are divided into empirical and normative aspects by Larsson (2015).

The empirical aspect is focused mainly on network performance and their effects on public policy. Scholars with this focus tend to value effectiveness and arguments are based on desirable outcomes. Governance networks are often seen as a more effective way to address complex problems with conflicting interests, and therefore they are considered superior due to the results they produce. The underlying assumption among the promoters of networks is that that society has become too complex to manage with hierarchical strategies (e.g. Rhodes, 1997; Torfing, 2012). Instead, self-regulating networks offer flexibility and

possibilities to adjust to local conditions and to create consensus-based outcomes through negotiations from involved actors (Sörensen & Torfing, 2007). However, critique has been raised that the main argument used in the debate is rather the lack of effective hierarchical governance than proof of networks being the remedy that they are argued to be (Börzel & Panke, 2007). The empirical support for this claim is therefore somewhat ambiguous. On an additional note, discussing effectiveness is hard without pinpointing exactly what effectiveness means (Kenis and Provan, 2009) and according to *who* something is effective. Börzel and Panke (2007:157), provide two aspects of effective governance: First is reaching set goals and problem-solving capacity (effectiveness), and second, is the minimization of delays and costs (efficiency).

A normative focus is mainly concerned with uniting the effectiveness of self-regulated networks with accountability (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2014). The self-regulating separates them from the contemporary accountability of the democratic state as the implication of non-elected stakeholders influencing decisions is simply incompatible with the liberal democratic standards of popular control (Dryzek, 2007). A challenge for normative theorists has therefore been to provide alternative ways to strengthen accountability to make them viable in democracies (Börzel & Panke, 2007). There are two main arguments put forward in defence of the networks viability for democracy. The first is that governance networks instead enhance democracy through increased citizen participation. The argument is that governance networks unite stakeholders around a specific policy problem, which in turn forces them to interact with each other. From this point of view, networks entail a natural learning process, where people 'become' democratically enlightened, and better at safeguarding their own rights. The second argument is that it is more desirable that those who are concerned by the problem should be involved in, or represented by, the network (Esmark, 2007). Accountability therefore becomes more of a horizontal matter, and the stakeholders are the accountability holders, not the elected state. The relationship is however not necessarily a trade-off one. Börzel and Panke (2007) argue that strengthening accountability also could lead to increased effectiveness, however not the other way around.

As the discussion above has shown there are both advantages and issues connected to networks. The general issues in the literature revolve mainly around two themes. Generally, *effectiveness* has received greater interest from American scholars while *accountability* has been the main focus in Europe (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2014). I would, however, join with

scholars arguing that these are not separate issues. Rather, increasing effectiveness and at the same time securing an accountable process is arguably the core problem of the field. It is also the focus of network governance. Over the last decade, more focus has been aimed at exploring mechanisms for governance of networks, which is generally promoted as a solution for balancing these, often conflicting, values (e.g. Sörensen & Torfing, 2007; Triantafillou, 2007; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2012; 2016; Larsson, 2015).

2.5 Governability and a theoretical approach

Governability theory is focused on the increased complexity of social-political systems and is developed as an approach to address how these systems are, or should be, governed in an ever-changing environment (Kooiman, 2003). The term *governability* is described as "the capacity to solve urgent societal problems" (van Kersbergen & van Waarden, 2004:156) Its relation to networks is discussed thoroughly by Sörensen and Torfing (2007) among others and has much in common with rational choice institutionalism. It is based on the assumption that the increasing autonomy of different actors in society makes them more difficult to govern for formal authorities (ibid.). Governance is therefore dependent on crosscutting governance networks which make sure that there is coordination between the autonomous actors. Institutions, or institutionalization, is therefore key to facilitate reoccurring interactions which are building and sustaining trust as well as reducing transaction costs for coordination (ibid.).

Kooiman (2003) sees an increasing complexity and multidimensionality in society. Therefore, studies on governance have to be multidimensional. Kooiman et al (2005) and Kooiman et al (2008) have presented a theoretical framework for deeper inquiries of the governability of a social-political system, where interactions are at focus. According to this framework the governance can be divided into three orders: first-order, second-order and meta-governance.

"*First-order governance* takes place wherever people, and their organisations, interact in order to solve societal problems and create new opportunities" (Kooiman et al. 2005:19; Kooiman et al. 2008:7). The first layer is where the problems and opportunities of the system are identified and addressed by the operative actors. In the context of the recovery and reconstruction such problems and opportunities are connected to solving the everyday

difficulties the communities are facing trying to build back their lives. It is also within this space the INGOs and NGOs are operating.

Second-order governance are the institutional arrangements. That could be either rules and regulations as well as organizations, agencies or beliefs. The second-order is what sets the boundaries within which the first-order actors are operating (Kooiman et al 2008). In the case of recovery and reconstruction this layer constitutes the laws and regulations as well as ministries or local authorities that are coordinating and controlling the network of INGOs and NGOs.

Finally, *meta-governance* are the over-arching ideas, principles, rules and norms that are influencing and steering the decisions taken at the second and first levels. Kooiman (2003) addresses this as the place where normative issues are being handled. Such ideas could be sustainability, effectiveness and over-arching goals of the process (Kooiman et al, 2008). It should be noted that this view on meta-governance is a little more narrow than the view of for example Klijn & Edelenbos (2007) as they involve some of the practices Kooiman et al (2008) sort under second order governance. In the recovery and reconstruction process the build back better-principle constitutes such a principle.

3. Methodology

The methodology represents the overarching research strategy on the basis of underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions. This thesis is built on a social constructivist approach. That is: the assumption that the world cannot be separated from the mind that interprets it (e.g. Jackson, 2010). However, it is necessary to point out that while constructivism is the basis, this thesis does not aspire to take an ontological standpoint on this matter. Rather, it is reasonable to believe that whether there is a world separate from the mind or not, the organizations and the persons this study covers would nevertheless react to the circumstances surrounding them and act according to their own values and beliefs. The structures and mechanisms studied are de facto results of human decision. It is therefore not necessary to involve the reader in a deeper philosophical discussion other than noting the logic behind the choice of methodology. This chapter discusses the research design, its validity and limits, as well as describes the methods used for data collection and the ethical considerations.

3.1 Research design

The thesis is an inductive case study (e.g. Yin, 2003; Gerring, 2007; Creswell, 2013) of networks working with reconstruction projects in Nepal. More specifically, the case for this study is *the collaboration between and the governance of INGOs and NGOs in the recovery and reconstruction-process after the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal.* The study follows the practices of what Ritchie & Lewis (2003) calls *contextual*. However, it should be noted that other authors may use *exploratory,* or *descriptive* for the same practices (e.g. Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Yin; 2003; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The choice of method is chosen due to the complex and significantly contextual nature of the research problem (Yin, 2003:xi). The coordination of actors in the recovery process is certainly complex, and in the case of Nepal, there are several political and cultural aspects that influences the interactions, choice of mechanisms for control as well as the relations to the local people. For this reason, multiple sources of information have been needed to triangulate the results (ibid.). The study mainly based on semi-structured in-depth interviews, however also incorporates document studies and field observations. The logic behind these choices are elaborated further below.

Following the outlines of Yin (2003), preliminary theoretical concepts were sketched before the study. The reasons for this are twofold. First, to ensure that the results from the study will further contribute to a given field and, second; to provide guidance in choosing interviewees, sampling sites and relevant data (Yin, 2003:3-5). In this case, the study has been outlined through the scope of governance networks theory, which through the views and experiences of the interviewees, as well as the field observations has been narrowed down to focus on more specific issues of governance and organization of NGOs. Nevertheless, the study has been inducive in its nature.

3.2 Data collection and internal validity

A case study draws on multiple sources of data, such as documents, observations or interviews (Creswell, 2013). For this study, the main source of data is gathered through semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2009). Additional data has been added through document studies and observations in the field (Gerring, 2007).

With the research questions somewhat open-ended, it is reasonable to use semi-structured interviews. Bryman (2009) considers semi-structured interviews preferable when the researcher is interested in the perspectives of the informant. As the interest lies in the effects of governance, the views of those affected by it are key. As is the possibility to ask policymakers about some of the difficulties found in the process. In total 16 informants from 15 INGOs and NGOs were interviewed, as well as 9 additional key informants[1] from institutions or agencies relevant for the governance of I/NGOs in the recovery and reconstruction. The interviews with I/NGO representatives were generally between 50 and 75 minutes long and followed the same interview-guide. In some cases, a follow-up interview was deemed necessary after transcription. Such interviews were more guided by specific questions and generally ranged from 3-10 minutes. The additional key informants were asked questions in relation to their position, and no general guide has been used for these interviews. Rather, the interviews were adapted to the informant's position. Most key informants were interviewed in a later stage of the fieldwork-process. This allowed for questions regarding issues or questions that were raised by the INGOs and NGOs.

[1] These are referred to as INGO 1, NGO 1 or Informant 1, etc. in the analysis. A list of all interviewees is presented in Appendix 1.

It has been important to strive for an environment where the informant feels comfortable, and that she or he gets to talk as much as possible without interruption. This was to decrease the likelihood that the questions could influence the results. At the same time semi-structured interviews allows the researcher to control the situation enough to lead the topic to revolve around the research problem (ibid.). An interview guide has been formulated for this purpose[2], however, it has been updated as new insights have been brought into light. Most interviews have used the guide for general direction, with regard to the aim of letting the informants speak as much as possible without interruption. Generally, the informants have spoken English. In four cases, the use of an interpreter was necessary. In all cases the same interpreter was used: A Nepali who speaks fluent English, has an academic degree, and who worked with a reconstruction NGO. As the recovery and reconstruction-process is complex and involves a lot of technical terms and knowledge, I consider this choice to be wiser than a professional interpreter. The interviews have been recorded and transcribed (if the informant has not wished not to be recorded) to ease the analysis and search for patterns in the material.

Apart from the interviews, important policy document from the Nepali government and other organizations have been subject to analysis, in order to further nuance the understanding of the recovery process. According to Bryman (2009), the main issues regarding official documents are their credibility and their representativeness. Credibility regards the extent to which the material is free from bias, errors and distortions. Representativeness regards how typical the information that is extracted is for the case at hand (ibid: 357-362). The documents studied are mainly reports or legal documents, and in some cases information from an agency's official website. The credibility and representativeness should not be considered much of an issue regarding the legal documents, as they represent national law and legislation. However, in the reports some embellishments are to be expected. Presentations of results and achievements have therefore been met with some healthy scepticism. This problem has also been mitigated by the use of multiple sources and methods in the research process. Additionally, Prior (2011) gives a friendly reminder that it is not only the content that has been of interest but also the circumstances under which they were created: the context. When analysing documents, this reminder has proven to be a useful guideline for a holistic understanding of the content.

[2] Available in Appendix 2

Finally, field observations have been conducted. While the field observations arguably started from day one in Nepal, I have chosen to use this term for a specific part of the field work. During a seven day-period, I visited different villages in the Rasuwa district to see the implementation of reconstruction and recovery myself, and to ask the villagers about their views on NGO-work. It was mainly a way to double-check the claims made by the NGOs about procedures and results. Also, it is important for me as researcher to understand the reality of the policies and processes that I am researching. DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) stress that observations are not only good for collecting qualitative data, but also a method that could enhance the quality of interpretation (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). In total 13 villages were visited, and in twelve of the villages I spoke with at least one person that supposedly knew about which organizations had been present in the village and how they worked. It could be community-leaders, teachers or leaders for water-management-groups. Their answers could mostly be double-checked by board-signs or plaques on new buildings, on water schemes or other strategic places in the villages. In two of the villages the leaders claimed that they did not have any NGO-assistance, despite evidence of the contrary. Their statements have been left out of the analysis. In one of the villages two NGOs that were to implement a water-infrastructure project arrived the same day as I, and I got to participate in the meeting with local leaders and decision-makers as well as the implementation workshop. In some of the villages I visited, people spoke a local dialect of Tamang[3]. My interpreter had great local knowledge, however his English was insufficient for longer interviews with technical terms. For the purpose of translating discussions regarding complementary information, and double-checking the organizations stories, as well as providing me with context to what I saw in the villages, his English was good enough. The interviews were not recorded but written down as parts of the field notes. The approach I took during the field observations could be described as *participant observations* (Gold, 1958, cited in O'Reilly, 2009, p 153). My role as a researcher was not concealed[4]. The field observations in the villages has provided insights of the realities in the villages which strengthens the analysis. It has also filled the function of controlling the information given by the NGOs in regard to their work.

[3] The combination of Tamang, Nepali and English-speaker was hard to find. It took me six weeks just to find someone who spoke some English at all.
[4] As if my pink-ish skin tone did not do a good enough job of telling people I was not a regular visitor.

3.3 Sampling and methodological choices

In line with Becker the thesis aims for *relevant occurrences* (1998:76). Since the study resolves around the NGO and INGOs in Nepal, it is reasonable to choose respondents from such organizations. That is: professionals working for NGOs and INGOs with different experiences from the reconstruction process. The informants are Financial Officers, Country Directors, Project Leaders and Field Officers. It has also been important that the relevant informants have been willing to participate. The sampling was partly strategic, partly out of convenience, or as Creswell (2013:100) prefers to call it: *purposeful*. Since there are hundreds of NGOs and INGOs active in the recovery and reconstruction process, a spatial boundary was used to narrow down the search for informants. Therefore, the district of Rasuwa was chosen as spatial boundary. The reason for this is twofold: First, the district was close to the epicentre of the earthquake, and one of the hardest hit by the disaster. Second, the district is relatively small and several NGOs and INGOs are operating on a relatively small area, which makes the over-all situation easier to overlook. Lists from National Reconstruction Authority, Social Welfare Council and the district authorities has been used to select NGOs and INGOs. A selection of organizations with different partners and approaches was chosen and contacted for interviews. Key informants from the district, UNDP, NRA and SWC has also been chosen for interviews from the criteria *centrality* (Bryman, 2009).

Secondary, snowballing is not only an effective, but a preferable, method to find important actors that are involved in the process and that may have been overlooked otherwise (Bryman, 2009). By asking informants who they work with or which other actors that are active in the area, the risk of overlooking important actors was reduced. Snowballing is however a more time-consuming method and has been used as a complement.

The villages for the field observations have been chosen mainly out of purpose (Creswell, 2013:100) which in this case means that villages supported by different constellations of NGOs and INGOs has been visited in order to better understand the different impacts of different programs at the local level.

In the case of Nepal there are good reasons for choosing professionals from several NGOs rather than focusing on one, or two organizations. First, despite the somewhat homogenous

character of NGOs, there are differences in approaches to both recovery work and collaboration, mindset and working modality. To capture these differences between the actors, a larger number of organizations is preferable. Second, and more importantly, the situation for NGOs and INGOs in Nepal is a sensitive one. It is therefore important to guarantee the anonymity of all involved actors. With an approach where a deeper analysis of selected networks would be carried out, actors would most likely be more selective with the information they would choose to share. The approach is chosen accordingly with the assumption that it will provide a higher *internal* validity (Gerring, 2007). Third, and most importantly, the possible negative impacts of the study would also be beyond the researchers control after publishing the result, since the relation between INGOs, NGOs and the local people are crucial for the networks to prevail. A single network focus would make it possible for the actors to identify each other, which could in worst case jeopardize the relations between them.

3.4 External Validity

When it comes to qualitative research the generalizability of the material is important to discuss. It is certainly a debated matter, and according to Ritchie and Lewis (2003) this disagreement has led to a lack of consensus about when and under what circumstances qualitative research can be deemed generalizable.

A single case study is generally deemed to have a higher internal validity than external. That is: the explanatory power of the chosen method is more in focus than is its representativeness for a larger population (Gerring, 2007). That being stated, it would certainly be a mistake to deem a case study completely un-generalizable. As has been mentioned, theory is the bridging piece that puts a case study into a context (Yin, 2003). Or to use the words of Ritchie and Lewis: "[Q]ualitative research studies can contribute to social theories where they have something to tell us about the underlying social processes and structures that form part of the context of, and the explanation for, individual behaviours or beliefs" (2003:267). Tsang (2013) calls this *theoretical generalization*. In his eyes, case studies are a good way to generate theoretical frameworks or refine existing ones. Furthermore, it offers better possibilities of investigating causalities and contexts, than does quantitative research (ibid.). In that sense, theoretical generalization presents an

external validity based on the cases capability to generate new or correspond with existing theory.

The case at hand does not claim to be representative for all NGOs in Nepal, or in all other developing countries for that matter. However, it presents an opportunity to study the operations and interactions of several different, yet typical, stakeholders involved in the recovery process in a country with an inexperienced government and difficult geography. It is therefore reasonable to argue that the case holds the possibility of looking beyond the mechanisms presented in theory, to offer explanations of how the context may affect those mechanisms. In that sense, the results generated may hold validity for similar cases even in the future or offer variations to the theory which may prove useful outside of the specific context at hand.

3.5 Analytical process

There are different ways of approaching qualitative data in an analysis, and the process is not a straightforward one. Both Spencer et al (2003) as well as LeCompte (2000) stress the importance of being systematic in the analysis of extensive data to avoid bias as much as possible. For this thesis, an analytical process that Gibbs (2007:44) refers to as *concept-driven coding* is used. Themes and concepts to guide the analysis are taken from literature, pre-defined topics and from the researchers own ideas of what is going on. There is, however, a point in being open to new ideas and having a back-and-forth approach between the analysis and the material, as new findings and categories are likely to emerge during the analytical phase (ibid).

The analysis in this thesis has followed three main stages and is based on interview transcripts, documents and fieldnotes (and a set of colour markers). First, the material has been divided and analysed through the three stages (orders) of governance presented in the theoretical framework. Second, the material has been clustered into categories, or themes, guided by Kooimans (2003) suggestion to focus on interactions, and the research questions. Third, the themes have been used for deeper inquiry of the informants' views on the underlying mechanisms, which helps in answering the third research question. Representative excerpts from the material is presented to support the claims in the analysis, and to provide nuance where there are conflicting opinions.

3.6 Reflexivity

The constructivist approach of the study does not exclude the researcher from the equation. Reflecting of how the presence of a researcher may have an effect on the situation that is studied (e.g. Hastrup, 1992) as well as how the everyday judgements of a researcher may impact the deliberate construction of knowledge (e.g Escobar, 2012; Bourdieu, 2010), is important before conducting any field study, as well as during the study itself. It is equally important to understand that ultimately, the final interpretation of the information belongs to the researcher. The influence over the knowledge creation starts with the questions chosen, to how they are asked and to whom, all the way to the choices of what to include and what not include in the final analysis and finally, how the answers are interpreted. While the aspiration is to let theory guide these processes, it is important to recognize that the views and beliefs of the scientist can never be truly separated from this process. Transparency of how the research was conducted and constant reflexivity from the researcher's side in order to minimize one's impact is therefore imperative in the process.

Apart from the aspiration to be as transparent as possible in how the research has been conducted and how the results have emerged, I as a researcher, have asked myself throughout the analysis: "are these the results I see, or the results I *want* to see?". By doing this, arbitrary conclusions are, if not avoided, minimized in the analytical process.

3.7 Ethical considerations

As Creswell (2013) highlights, making ethical considerations is a duty for the social scientist. In line with the Code of Ethics by the International Sociology Association (ISA) the thesis recognizes that integrity, openness and respect for other perspectives are fundamental values when conducting social science research. However, another important consideration is how to minimize possible negative impact the report may have on the participants. The foundations will therefore be subordinate to the protection of the participants of the study, as "anonymity and privacy of the research subjects should be respected rigorously" (ISA Code of Ethics:2.2). An assessment of how much to anonymize

the data has been done to each single case, to balance openness and scientific benefit with protection of the participants.

It has been important to make sure that the participants are aware of the limited impact the thesis report will have on their current situation, and that their participation is voluntary. To keep the integrity of the results, no payments or other benefits has been given for their participation. To ensure that the participants are aware of the preconditions verbal consent has been used (Bryman, 2009).

4. Analysis

On 26th of April and 12th of May 2015, two of the most devastating earthquakes Nepal has ever seen struck the country. 31 of a total 75 districts were affected, with 14 deemed as 'worst hit'. Most of the settlements in the impacted districts are mainly rural villages. With almost 9000 deaths and over 22 000 injuries and more than half a million buildings destroyed, not to mention the infrastructural damages, the country was not capable of dealing with the destruction on its own (NRA, 2016a). Thirty four countries and an unknown number of NGOs came to assist and an additional US$4.1 billion in total was pledged to a Reconstruction Fund (Daly et al, 2016). Despite these efforts, reconstruction has been accused for being slow (Daly et al, 2017; Lam et al, 2017; Pandey, 2017).

The analysis will further explore the I/NGO networks and the management of them. It follows the structure of Kooimans (2008) framework:1) the system-to-be-governed; 2) first order governance; 3) second order governance and; 4) meta-governence. The analysis is focused on I/NGO interaction within each governance order. This chapter will primarily answer the first two research questions on how I/NGOs interact and how the state is managing them.

4.1 The system-to-be-governed

4.1.1 Nepal

Nepal is a diverse and culturally rich country with different castes, ethnicities and with a wide range of political interests represented throughout its districts (Lam et al, 2017). Its location is to be considered strategically important, squeezed in between the world's largest communist state; China, and one of Asia's fastest growing economies: India. Also the United States has admitted to the importance of a sovereign and thriving Nepal as a trading partner (Teplitz, 2018). Nepal is also one of the poorest countries in the world (e.g. Sudmeier et al, 2013), and one of the most disaster prone (e.g. Pandey, 2017). Together these factors have led to an influx of bilateral support and, after the end of monarchy, a boom of NGOs with different objectives and goals. Today there are over 250 INGOs and almost 40 000 NGOs active in Nepal (SWC, 2018a, 2018b).

Nepal is a young democracy, and its recent history is characterized by political strife. In 2006, a few years after the mysterious assassination of the royal family, the Maoist political movement united with the more moderate parties and enforced a constitutional change from monarchy to democracy (International IDEA, 2015). However, uniting over a constitution would prove to be hard and it would take a disaster to unite the country (Informant 1). Today's constitution was agreed upon in September 2015, months after the earthquake, and would be followed by a blockade of supplies from India for several months (Plesch, 2015, Lam et al, 2017). It would be December 2015, before the government could focus on reconstruction and established the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) as the main coordinating body with responsibility for the recovery and reconstruction as well as the pledged money (GoN, 2015).

In May 2017 the first elections at the local level were held and facilitated the constitutional changes that were drafted in September 2015 (Lam et al 2017). The previous system with villages clustered together in Village Development Committees (VDCs) and with a lot of power concentrated on the regional district level, was replaced by a system where power was delegated to the newly formed municipalities (an administrative body often slightly larger than the previous VDCs). The districts are still there, but with significantly less power. Mid-reconstruction, the administrative system of Nepal is changing.

There is an optimism about the possibilities of this new system and hopes it will bring change to some of the problems Nepal is struggling with today. Corruption is *endemic* (Freedomhouse.org, 2018) and nepotism is common (e.g. INGO 5). This creates a working environment where many donors prefer to work with I/NGOs (Informant 8) and where many INGOs are wary of state action, as many of them have come across, or heard of attempts by officials to steer their activities to benefit their personal interests.

4.1.2 Rasuwa district

Rasuwa district is a smaller district located in northern Nepal. The southern parts are mainly hills and farmland, while the northern part is stretching over the mountainous Himalayas and is largely within the borders of Langtang National Park. One main road, badly damaged, winds through the district and connects larger towns with the rest of the country. To reach the villages there are smaller roads, and in some areas only paths. It is a district where geography certainly is a factor (Fieldnotes, 25-31/5).

It is clear from the field observations that I/NGOs are making a difference in the communities. Projects that are being carried out in the communities span from 'hardware'-projects such as construction of houses, schools, waters schemes or greenhouses – to 'software' which could be technical assistance, agriculture development, economic empowerment or mental health-programs. There are differences in delivery in the villages depending on what constellation of INGOs and NGOs that are active in the area. Villages with building assistance have gotten further with their reconstruction than villages without. Within a range of a few kilometres there are villages with water taps in almost every house where others have too few to sufficiently cover the whole village, depending on the help they received with building water schemes. There may also be different organizations working on different programs in the same village. For example, one constellation of different INGOs and NGOs may be building a school in a village where another NGO is responsible for water schemes and where there is just a government engineer to help with the private housing (Fieldnotes, 25-31/5).

Finally, significant evidence of I/NGO impact is that none of the informants wanted to criticize any of the work done by the I/NGOs but rather stressed how thankful they were (Fieldnotes, 25-31/5).

4.2 First order governance

With the context outlined, it is reasonable to continue the analysis with first order governance. This is where problems emerge and where they are addressed by network actors. The first-order section is important for two reasons: First, it outlines the interactions of the NGOs and second, it provides the reader with an overview of how reconstruction-work is carried out in Nepal. The study has identified three main categories of I/NGO-interactions on this level. First, the I/NGOs are tied to one or more communities where they are implementing their programs. Successful interactions with the community leaders, local groups and the community people are therefore of grave importance for the I/NGO capacity to implement projects. Second, in line with government guidelines INGOs (or foreign donors) have to implement through a Nepali partner-organization. Therefore, common organizational structures are partnerships between an INGO and one or more NGOs, or an NGO operating with backing from foreign donors only. Third, different I/NGOs and

partnership-structures coordinate amongst each other to avoid duplications and to share technologies and practices. These three categories are examined in detail below.

4.2.1 Community interactions and implementation

Ultimately, the situations in the communities are the starting points for the I/NGO activities in the recovery and reconstruction. This is where the problems-to-be-solved that Kooiman (2003) is refer to arise.

There are many ways to identify problems in the communities. For the I/NGOs working in Nepal there are those who have a pre-tailored solution for a specific problem and search for communities with matching needs (INGO 3, NGO 1), and others who are more open in their approach and leave at least some room for other community-specific needs. Initial interactions with the communities therefore begins with an assessment of the situation. While the input is gathered in collaboration with the communities, the choice of project is still primarily left up to the responsible I/NGOs:

> "You know there is a difference between actual need and felt needs. So a lot of people have felt needs: 'oh we need this! We need that! Let's just say we need everything!' But then you take that into consideration. Make notes of that. Then it is important to draw a vulnerability assessment, to truly understand what is the needs of the community. And to triangulate that with government information." (INGO 4)

Budget limitations are the most important constraint for what can and cannot be done. Sometimes the budget does not even allow for the project to give all potential beneficiaries in the villages the same kind of support. In these cases the I/NGOs have the communities help them find the most vulnerable who will get the assistance (e.g. NGO 3, 6). This is often done through pre-determined criteria, which are discussed with community leaders, and sometimes the whole village. The criteria are later used to assess the people who are in most need of support (Fieldwork, 27/5). This also helps to avoid mischief in the community.

When the assessment is done, and the project has been approved for implementation (a process that is discussed more extensively below, 4.3.2) most NGOs deploy an implementation team in the community. If the NGO is working with an INGO there are often one or more experts from that organization too. The main reason for this is to build trust in the community and ensure their participation.

> "Our team has been like a part of the community and has been interacting with them. We won their trust, and then we have built together. It's not like we have gone in and built, but we do it with the community" (NGO 5).

Most I/NGOs agree that having the community people take part in the recovery and reconstruction programs the organizations want to carry out – or 'community buy-in' as one informant puts it (INGO 4) – is the most important factor for success. Partly because of practical reasons. Most projects are bound by a time-frame, and many NGOs have felt that community people do not always understand this aspect NGO 2, 7, 9). Partly because of the apparent reason put forward by a program manager:

> "It is [the community] who make a project a success! Because we are working for 2400 households. We are only 35 human resource. So if they would not have helped us, hand to hand with us, it would not have been very successful." (NGO 3)

There is also the matter of community resilience. Having the community participate ensures a learning process. Almost all informants from both INGOs and NGOs have stressed the fact that they are only in it for a shorter period and if the community do not have the will or capacity to maintain the work that has been done, it will all have been for nothing (e.g. INGO 1; NGO 1, 3, 4, 5). Many NGOs help the communities to form user groups, or develop the capacity of existing ones, for this purpose (NGO 3, 5, 6), but there is also a worry that the communities could become dependent on donor-support (e.g. NGO 3, 8, 9). A related issue is the superior technical knowledge from I/NGOs, which makes it hard for communities to come up with their own ideas or suggestions. This is yet another circumstance that put the communities in a situation of dependency towards the I/NGOs.

> "Because when constructed bringing water schemes, we managed user community, where we strengthened their capacity… at this very time they are not yet at our level, so that they can come up with their ideas. Because the technical part has been missing there." (NGO 4)

To make sure that the communities are happy with the interventions, some of the I/NGOs report that they have a public audit when the projects are over, where the people in the communities can give their opinions on the project, together with local politicians (e.g. NGO, 4, 5). A few of the informants report that they also have a system for handling complaints in the villages (e.g. INGO 2). Otherwise, most organizations trust that their presence in the village will ensure that problems will be addressed, and that the community will tell them when things are not working well. Most informants stress that they are first

and foremost accountable to the communities. However, part from the abovementioned examples there are no formal ways for the communities to hold the I/NGOs accountable for their work.

Important to note is that while the accountability is not as formal to the communities, as it is to the donors and governmental agencies, the people in most communities stated that they felt listened to when they turned to the NGOs and had no complaints on the actions of most NGOs (Fieldnotes 28-31/5). However, they also reported on failure or malpractice, for example, one NGO who only gave aid to those they liked (Fieldnotes, 26/5), one NGO who did not provide enough money for a water-project to be finished (Fieldnotes, 30/5) and one where the NGO had "gathered the community, taken a picture and then left" (Fieldnotes, 31/5).

4.2.2 Partnerships and donor relations

There is a significant difference between INGOs and NGOs in Nepal. INGOs are international organizations with local offices in Nepal. These are by law forbidden to implement projects on their own (NRA 2016b) and have to find one or more local partners to work through. This could be either Nepali NGOs or Nepali companies, with which they form a partnership (e.g. INGO 1, 3). NGOs on the other hand may work with either foreign donors or INGOs. It is not uncommon that they have a donor for one project, while they serve as an implementing partner to an INGO in another (e.g. NGO 3, 7, 8).

The partner selection is normally done through a rigorous process. A typical process is described by a financial officer in one of the INGOs:

> "It starts with the selection of the NGOs. First, we will publish EoI[5] in the newspaper, and on the base on that NGO will apply. NGO, which district we want to implement and what kind of work we are going to do, and those who are mentioned in the announcement, they will apply. And once they will apply… on the base of that document we have requested, we do the assessment. On the base of assessment, we select an NGO." (interview, INGO 5).

Good reputation and connections are important factors when NGOs get selected to partner with an INGO. Many informants describe this as a very competitive process, which favours more established organizations (e.g. INGO 5, 7; NGO 3, 8). Good governance (INGO 6),

[5] Expression of interest

the capacity to reach out the community, and to learn the practices and working modality of the NGO are among the valued criteria. This may favour NGOs that have good connections in the project area (NGO 8).

A significant trait for the INGO-NGO partnership model are the division of responsibilities, where the INGOs are mainly responsible for the overall functioning program as well central level coordination while NGOs work with the local level coordination and direct implementation (e.g. INGO 1, 2, 5; NGO 3, 4, 8). Usually, the INGO is also the technical expertise in the relationship. They may have engineers or supervisors, as well as experience from recovery and reconstruction programs in other countries. To make this cooperation easier, capacity development and learning play a significant role in the partnership between INGOs and NGOs. Technological exchange as well as best practices and experiences from other countries are crucial for both the development of NGOs as well as increased effectiveness (INGO 5). The most important trait the NGOs have is the capacity to reach out to- and engage, community people in the process. As the communities' involvement is seen as an important contributor to resilience, not many INGOs have expressed disapproval of this government policy.

> "I see it as a very good thing, because you are building capacity of the local actors, who will be taking the work forward after you leave as an INGO, if you have to leave. […] NGOs all over the world should work through national partners. They know the community best. They understand the culture best. They are best equipped to take any work forward. And do it in a manner that is truly community centric." (INGO 4).

Despite this positivity, it is important to address the power disparity/discrepancy that emerges when one organization in an INGO-NGO partnership or NGO/donor relationship controls the funds.. Without funds, there are no projects, and without projects there are no NGOs. This is why, if an NGO is out of time, whether they feel that they have done what they came for or not, they are forced to leave (NGO 3, 6, 7). An NGO-representative describes the relationship to a foreign donor:

> "[T]hey have money. And also we employ lots of staff, and we cannot leave the, because we have invested in the a lot. We trained them. And they also have expectation. And when the project should have this much time frame, and they are mentally prepared for that, and how can we let off the time frame." (NGO 6)

There are examples where donors have forced their partner to leave a community or dropped partners where they found malpractice or were not happy with their results (INGO 3, 6; NGO 6). Different constellations of I/NGOs handle this discrepancy differently. Some emphasize it more, while others try to erase it by implementing more horizontal structures for implementation (e.g. INGO 1, 7; NGO 3; 6; 8). Horizontal or not, INGOs stress that they still need to monitor their partner organization (e.g. INGO 1, 5, 6, 7), especially at the beginning of a partnership (INGO 5). It is usually stressed by INGOs as they have the main responsibility for their projects but is mentioned by NGOs with supervising roles as well (e.g. NGO 6). Without monitoring there is a risk for arbitrary implementation or malpractice to take over. It does, however increase implementation costs significantly. This dilemma is highlighted by a former program director:

> "[Our partner-organization] closed its project, not having about 50 000 swiss franc additional funding. Because they are always strict we have a balanced budget. […] And some of the organization they are monitoring, and evaluation budget is 150 000 US dollar. Or swiss franc. Only to monitor one package. One event. There is an imbalance in the donor support to organizations." (INGO 7).

For NGOs, or INGOs to their back donors, this means that they are being held accountable for what they do, not only by the communities, but also by the funding partners in their projects. The situation of multiple accountabilities is addressed by a program manager:

> "We have apex body called SWC, where we report them. We have district line agencies, where we report them. We have funding agencies where we report them. We are talking only about the community, but our accountability is sandwiched between funding agencies back donors visavi community people. But we must not forget that the money that has come from… It is the people of [European country] that are tax-payers. So we are accountable for them also." (NGO 3)

4.2.3 Local-level coordination

Finally, I/NGOs interact with each other outside of the partnership structure to avoid duplications, exchange technologies or to find synergies. There may be several different constellations of I/NGOs working in the same area without being in a partnership (Fieldnotes, 25-31/5). Coordination and distribution of responsibilities among the actors ultimately are up to the districts, or municipalities, and is generally good (discussed below 4.3.4). However, duplications does happen and in these cases it is up to the NGOs to agree

on a solution (e.g. NGO 7, 8). An NGO-leader gave an example on building toilets for schools:

> "If organization A actually built enough toilets for 500 students, then organization B coming and building toilets would be an issue. Would be like actual duplication that was not needed. But if organization A built toilets that was not enough for the students and organization B build toilets… then that can't be considered duplication." (NGO 8)

There may also be situations where two constellations of I/NGOs have similar projects, or interlacing projects in the same area and are coordinating their efforts for synergy-effects (INGO 2, 6). This sort of coordination is often unplanned and happens "naturally" (INGO 6).

One of the most important sources for coordination between I/NGOs are the monthly cluster-meetings held in the district. Through them all organizations involved in a specific activity are invited to discuss and exchange problems and ideas together. However, these meetings are optional, and there is not always time to attend (INGO 4).

4.3 Second order governance

Second order governance concerns what Kooiman et al (2008) calls the institutional arrangements that are used to control the governance process. In this case, the agencies, organizations and rules that are used to coordinate and govern the networks of I/NGOs active in the recovery and reconstruction process, and how and when these institutions are interacting with the I/NGOs. As stated in the introductory chapter, there are more or less subtle ways in which the government guide and coordinate NGO and INGO action. The fieldwork has identified two main institutional functions with which the I/NGOs are interacting when carrying out their daily work: First, there are the laws, regulations and frameworks, and second, the management. Laws, regulations and frameworks sets the limits and possibilities for INGO and NGO-action with regulations whereas management is where agencies, municipalities and other bodies are working to maximize outcomes. Additionally, the fieldwork has identified three main mechanisms that these organizations are using: approvals, monitoring and control and finally, coordination. The processes are intertwined and sometimes hard to separate, since the recovery and reconstruction have been running for a three-year period and constantly developing. The structure of this section

follows the structure of institutional levels: 1) Laws regulations and frameworks; 2) Approvals; 3) Monitoring and control; 4) Coordination.

4.3.1 Laws, regulations and frameworks

There are several guidelines and regulations that affect I/NGO-operations in the country, depending on the modality of the organization. To go through them all would be a subject for a separate thesis. However, the main ones, those who have been mentioned the most by the I/NGOs are discussed here.

One of the main laws is the *Social Welfare Act* (GoN, 1992) which was adopted in 1992 and constitutes that all INGOs who wish to operate within the country needs to apply for permission with the Social Welfare Council. In reality, this means that all international organizations have to make a general agreement with the Social Welfare Council before establishing their operations and then also have each project approved by the same agency. This can be seen as standard procedure when it comes to INGOs in Nepal.

However, after the earthquake, the *NRA Act* (Informant 2; GoN 2015) established the NRA as the governing and coordinating body over the earthquake-affected districts. This means in practice that they took over the responsibility for reconstruction in the earthquake-affected districts. Reconstruction in this case is defined as "works relating to economic, social and physical development, new construction and reconstruction of the damage caused by the earthquake, in a sustainable, resilient and planned manner" (GoN, 2015:2d).

A document that has meant a lot in terms of guiding the reconstruction and the actions of the actors involved, is the Post-Disaster Recovery Framework (PDRF). It was developed by the NRA under the guidance of UNDP (Informant 1) and released in May 2016 – A year after the disaster. The framework defines five overarching strategic objectives for the recovery process: 1) Restore and improve disaster resilient housing, government buildings and cultural heritage in rural areas and cities; 2) Strengthen the capacity of people and communities to reduce their risk and vulnerability and to enhance social cohesion; 3) Restore and improve access to services, and improve environmental resilience; 4) Develop and restore economic opportunities and livelihoods and re-establish productive sectors; 5) Strengthen capacity and effectiveness of the people's needs and to effectively recover from future disasters (NRA, 2016a:6-10). The framework not only provides agencies and local authorities with guidelines, but also provides a direction for the NGOs and INGOs involved.

Additional NGO-guidelines were developed by the NRA to further regulate the operations and influence of the INGOs and NGOs (NRA, 2016a; 2016b). The guidelines facilitates the NRA as monitoring, approving and coordinating institution over the INGOs and NGOs. Among the paragraphs in the guidelines the following principles are established: the work of the INGOs and NGOs should be guided by the objectives of the NRA; the NRA decides where the NGOs are allowed to operate; the NRA approves project proposals, INGOs must carry out their projects in partnership with at least one NGO (NRA, 2016b).

Furthermore, the guidelines states in which areas INGOs and NGOs who wishes to participate are allowed to operate. Those areas are: (a) Works with private housing, water infrastructure and/or sanitation in the rural areas (b) Works with housing and water- or other infrastructure in urban areas as well as heritage conservation; (c) Development of human capacities, including livelihoods, skills or economic, and/or social restoration; (d) Construction or retrofitting of public and governmental infrastructures; (e) Cross-cutting areas such as supply chain management, material distribution, disaster risk management, research and other similar activities; (f) Other working areas prescribed by the Authority (NRA, 2016b:4-5). It is up to NRA to approve applications from the NGOs.

Finally, the NGOs are affected by building codes, and the reconstruction-plan for private housing, which is built on each affected household's own participation. Households where the house was completely destroyed were granted a sum of NRs200 000 – a sum that later would be increased to NRs300 000[6] – from the government to rebuild. NGOs who work with rebuilding private houses are not allowed to assist with more money than that (and of course, it is *either* the government *or* I/NGOs that pay, not both). The NRA has also published catalogues with pre-made, earthquake-resistant house designs. To be eligible for the government monetary reconstruction support the beneficiaries must follow these designs. This list of designs must also be followed I/NGOs working with private housing construction or support. In the beginning, list of approved houses was short, but it has been updated over the years to include about 30 designs in different building materials (NGO 1).

[6] 100 000 Nepali Rupees are about US$1000. The Nepali term for this sum is "lakh" which is the term preferred and used by most of the interviewees

4.3.2 Approval/rejection-mechanism

As is stated in the Social Welfare Act (1992), all INGOs who wish to operate within the country must sign a general agreement with the Social Welfare Council (SWC). After that it is up to the council to approve or reject projects that the INGOs wish to undertake.

This practice has been the subject to some changes after the earthquake. First all application-policies were loosened during the initial months of emergency, to allow a fast response during search and rescue, but were re-activated again when the next phase kicked in. This flexibility has received acclaim by both INGOs and NGOs (INGO 5 & NGO, 7). Later on, with the establishment of the NRA Act, through which the NRA was formed, the new authority took over the responsibilities in the earthquake-effected areas and a more top-down approach was established again. According to the establishing constitution the NRA is supposed to assess damages, set priorities, coordinate actors, ensure quality, develop norms and policies as well as carry out construction work (GoN, 2015:3-5). For the I/NGOs, this meant that after having an implementation plan with the district development committee, the approvals have to be approved by the central function in NRA (e.g. INGO 1, 2, 5). The NRA CEO explains:

> "If they are going through the earthquake-affected districts… whatever activities are being undertaken in the name of the victims, this should go through NRA. By Law. By NRA Act. The SWC Act prevails in normal conditions. Ordinary situations. The NRA is a subset law particularly focused on these 32 earthquake-affected districts. Whatever program one intends to bring to the earthquake victims should come under the umbrella of the NRA. Not SWC" (Informant 2).

However, most I/NGOs bring up the approvals as a major reason for delays in the projects. Lack of resources, such as technology, knowledge and understaffing in relation to the task are other problems that have been associated with the central level approvals by the NGOs (INGO 3 & 7; NGO 6). NRA have many diverse and different tasks (Informant 2) and, as is stressed by the UNDP, they are in a position of learning at the same time (Informant 1). Another issue is that the approval process has been subject to a lot of bureaucracy. Getting approvals is, or has been, a lengthy and demanding task for the organizations involved.

> "[W]e cannot just go and pick up a village and start up our activities. There are a lot of processes. Administrative processes of taking approval. First at the district level, we have to take approval, and then at the central level. There is SWC which looks after all the projects in Nepal, and we have to go through it. And it goes through various ministries in

> which the project is involved. So one thing is, it takes time as well. A lot of those have administrative processes as well." (INGO 5)

As the informant from INGO 5 points out, the approvals are surrounded by a complex bureaucracy. Despite intentions of a one-door policy it does not seem to be the reality for the I/NGOs. A lot of these issues seem to stem from a confusion of what constitutes reconstruction and what recovery is, and whether the NRA is responsible only for issues concerning buildings, or for all work that is being done in the earthquake affected areas. One of the NGOs who worked in Rasuwa stated that they had been working with the NRA in matters regarding construction a few years ago, but that they since then only had been doing regular development work (NGO 7).

> "If you want to do training related to reconstruction, for example masonry training or something like that, maybe it's related to the NRA. But goat herding and vegetable farming and all these things, they are not related to the NRA. So it's a regular project for the SWC" (NGO 7).

In this case, the NRA is bypassed in the application-process, and the NGO run their approvals through the SWC. This view, that the NRA and SWC are responsible for different projects in the same districts is shared by other I/NGOs as well as SWC officials (Informant 5). This unclarity has led to both confusion and frustration among I/NGOs, as well as to prolonged application times and delays. For many of the non-governmental actors, the establishment of the NRA resulted in additional administrative processes, when it came to applications. The changing conditions and conflicting information has made it hard for many organizations to keep up, which has led to more delays:

> "For us, in the beginning we were told that you need to get approval from just NRA. And they said… several NRA-meetings they said: you do not have to go through SWC. For a long time. Then we took just approval from NRA and then we started working there. And then suddenly SWC tells us that: 'You need to take approval from us'. So, we got approval to do the project from NRA, but the finance part has to go through SWC. So, we had to go… it's like conflict between those two government agencies" (NGO 5).

The amount of time NGOs were required to wait for project approval ranged between 2 weeks to 9 months, with some still waiting. There seems to be a correlation between the longest approval processes and the institutional vacuum that emerged when the government focused on constitutional issues, and during the Madeshi blockade (4.1.1). Evidently, the

approval process has become faster at least in some cases. This is because of several reasons. One is that the NRA has become faster and more effective in its handling of approvals (e.g. NGO 6). Another is that I/NGOs have started to better understand application process, what documents to include and what the NRA demands as well as the SWC (INGO 4). One of the NGOs stressed this point: that if you just learn how to do it correctly in the beginning, communicate well with government bodies and are transparent, there approvals are not a major problem (NGO 3).

Another issue linked with the approvals is that some I/NGOs and the government have different understandings regarding what sort of interventions that are important, and how they should be prioritized. When it comes to approvals, it seems to be easier to explain and get approval for hardware projects than it is for software projects (INGO 5 & 6; NGO 4). It would seem that the government is giving priority to projects that are somehow connected to construction, an imagery that is reinforced when talking to the CEO of the NRA, who mainly shared 'hard' numbers on the progress. When visiting Rasuwa district, the field-team from the NRA was also mainly focused on construction issues. The approval process has then become a way to express and direct priorities. A NGO-representative describe the situation of negotiating projects further and states that when NRA mainly focus on hardware, going through the SWC may be an option for software. However, some hardware focus is still needed:

> "It is better you run your project saying that you construct vegetable collection centres that will also facilitate in running small business houses… If you go that way, that is the hardware that will be constructed at any place. Those type of project would get approval faster. And their interest and their knowledge is not about the software part. Like advocacy, coordination, strengthening mechanism. They may not allow your project" (NGO 4).

Another example of difficulties for the I/NGOs to initiate software projects is highlighted by a NGO that states that they still have not gotten approval for monetary support to the most vulnerable people in a village, despite months of waiting (NGO 6). Another interconnected effect that the centralization of approval and the top-down steering embodies is that the local needs are not always met. There are times where this approval process instead has led to problems for local level implementation. With a lot of the I/NGOs stationed mainly in Kathmandu as well as the decision-making body – the NRA – the

projects become supply-driven rather than demand-driven, and it becomes harder to find more localized solutions to some issues (Informant 8).

Adaptation to local circumstances is also becoming harder. One example is support for private housing. Some of the I/NGOs argue that the housing designs do not always match the local needs. However, getting approval for an alternative design is difficult (e.g. INGO 4; NGO 1). Another connected issue is the remoteness of many villages which makes building material and transportation much more expensive. Despite this, there is a fixed sum which I/NGOs are permitted to use for building support:

> "[T]here is a limit for how much you can support to every house, which is supposed to have come down from a higher level […] Some people are extremely vulnerable, some people are kind of vulnerable… but they both get 3 lack from the government. Or the government grants 3 lakh. It does not make any sense. They can build their house without much problem. The extremely vulnerable cannot do anything. You can build a toilet with 3 lakh in some of the communities, because it costs so much with transportation of materials." (INGO 4)

This statement is also supported by the field observations in remote villages. While the grant-funded houses were bigger than toilets, there were problems for large families to afford houses big enough to fit their needs (Fieldnotes 29-30/5).

4.3.3 Monitoring and control

Monitoring and control mechanisms are common in the reconstruction and recovery-process. Apart from the approval process, which partly is a monitoring function, there are separate recurring practices for monitoring and control.

At the central level both SWC and NRA-staff are concerned with the increasing number of I/NGOs, mainly for two reasons: First, government officials as well as I/NGOs have stories about or experienced several cases of misconduct from different organizations, and while most stress that these organizations are not in a majority, it is enough to warrant close monitoring. There are accusations or stories about organizations who are spreading religious or political messages along with the interventions, embezzling money or charging overprices as well as stories of misconduct against the communities (e.g. Informant 2 & 8, INGO 4, 5 & 7, NGO 3, 5, 7). Second, Nepal's geographical situation, located between two major economic and political powers, is both an advantage and a curse. Due to its strategic value, Nepal is the subject of diverse geopolitical interests. Therefore, it is important for

the government to remain cautious with all kinds of international influence (Informant 2). It is also hard to know which organizations are in Nepal to help, and which are more concerned with promoting faith or making money. It is naturally easier to trust them if they have been in country for a long time, but the earthquake meant that a lot of new actors emerged. In the eyes of the government, as many as 50% of the NGOs could be engaged in malpractices (ibid.).

Government officials admit that monitoring the I/NGOs and their activities is not an easy task. The NRA has several responsibilities other than the monitoring of I/NGOs and they have problems upholding the monitoring activities to the standard they would like. There is also a suspicion that many of the I/NGOs are avoiding the local authorities, which creates problems for the local authorities as well as the central ones.

> "They are supposed to monitor but might not be able to monitor as they are required. Because of lack of the manpower. And there are so many works around. So we prioritize the tasks. Some are urgent tasks. […] While doing these things, because of lack of manpower and capacity, we might not be able to reach down to the village level to monitor who is doing what. For that, rather we wish that the local NGOs and INGOs should work in tandem with the local government. At the local level there are local governments. Once they go to the local government, then the local government take good care of it. But usually they avoid it, and then the local government come to us: 'oh, you are not regulating these NGOs'. They are not all doing good things" (Informant 2).

Another suspicion that is mentioned is that some I/NGOs are not honest with their reports and that numbers could be faked. It is hard for government officials to control this and the suspicion has led to calls for regulations demanding more transparency. However, no such law has yet been signed (Informants 2 & 8).

The organizations working with recovery and reconstruction have to submit regular reports on their progress to the NRA. However, while the NRA is the main responsible agency, nothing stops other ministries from asking for reports as well. Most organizations also state that they have to submit the same or similar reports to SWC, or other governmental bodies. There are six-month and yearly reports and the NRA can also ask for monthly reports. This is something that the I/NGOs sometimes have a hard time keeping up with (e.g. Informant 2; INGO 4 & 6).

> "You have to report to different government agencies in different formats. It is another tedious job. NRA central has its own format, NRA district has its own format… MoFald[7] has its own format. HRRP has its own format" (NGO 5).

The local and district level are mainly concerned with monitoring the implementation on the ground, while the central level, are more concerned with monitoring the whereabouts of the I/NGOs and that they are using their resources to follow the commitments in the budgets and documents they submitted during the application-process (e.g. Informant 2).

> "[S]ometimes this unrealistic expectations from some of the government bodies, the technical bodies. The water, or shelter or gender bodies. Authorities that get updates. Sometimes there is tis unrealistic expectations on us to constantly submit reports all the time. It is not realistic. It is very difficult to do that. We can submit these templates in the data formats, but to write out the full report on every activity on weekly or monthly basis sometimes, that is unrealistic" (INGO 4).

While these reports are a lot of work sometimes, the I/ NGOs are not addressing them in terms of a major problem, but rather a field where some changes would make their own work easier.

The monitoring of the private house construction is more specific, as there are several codes to follow to build correctly. This makes the monitoring of implementation more tangible than for a livelihoods- or an economic empowerment project. The beneficiaries needs approval by NRA-engineers in three steps to get the governmental grant for reconstruction. The NRs300 000 that is given to the households is be handed out in three tranches: NRs50 000 when the household commits to rebuild, NRs150 000 upon completion of the foundation up to the plinth level, and the final NRs100 000 upon completion of the roof (Informant 5). To guarantee that the new houses is following the build back better-commitment every milestone in the building-process then needs to be approved by an NRA-engineer before the money is released and the beneficiary can begin the next step. In this sense, the grants have become a way for the government to ensure compliance with the build back better-policy and the building codes issued by the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction (Informant 2).

While this specific monitoring policy is aimed at the house-owners in the communities, it affects the I/NGOs work as well since they also have to conform to this process. I/NGOs

[7] Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration

who are providing the money themselves must also wait for approval before giving out money. For organizations that are helping with technical support or building material they are still dependent on NRA-engineers to come and approve their constructions.

> "And in absence of NRA engineer, the people were suffering. So development partners had the engineers, and this technology was already verified by the partner NGO but unless the government engineer would approve it there is no grant. That's why we had this problem" (INGO 3).

As with the approval process the monitoring have become better over time. Training, better resources and decentralized offices with more competent personnel have improved the monitoring consistency and speed.

> "Gradually, things would improve. […] Now at least, this thing has been… because of the course of time, and because different engineers, and newly graduated were assigned as engineers. And because of that reason, this sort of problem would occur. Now, some of the engineers are sent to training, that sort of things. […] So the problem is being solved, but not totally" (INGO 3).

As have been described above there are indications that both the approval-processes and the monitoring-processes have become faster over time.

4.3.4 Coordination and prioritization

The coordination is mainly done at district level (and after the election at the municipal level). The main coordinator at the district level before the election was the district development committee. After the election, this role has been taken up by the new district body, the district coordination committee. However, since the new constitution has decentralized more power to the rural municipalities, this body does not have the same decision-making power as its predecessor. Another important actor is the Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform (HRRP), which in NGO created by the international aid organizations and the government, for the sole purpose of coordinating the reconstruction. This strategy has so far been successful as most I/NGOs are positive when they are talking about the coordination measures. Especially in Rasuwa district it seems to have been quite good (NGO 5). A typical response is given by a program manager for an INGO based in Kathmandu:

> "So if you compare the case of Haiti, where there was no control mechanisms. Many NGOs, INGOS… very new INGOs came once the earthquake happened in Haiti and the

> coordination mechanism was very bad. Progress was not good. But in the case of Nepal, based on the learning from Haiti and elsewhere… here the work is very structured… coordinated" (INGO 6)

One of the most important tools for coordination is the central list of beneficiaries. At the request of NRA, the Central Bureau of Statistics conducted over 400 000 household surveys to assess which of households that were in need of government assistance. A task that was finished in late March 2016 (NRA, 2016a). In the end a total of over 800 000 households would be surveyed (Bhujel, 2017). These surveys would form a baseline for who is in need, who is eligible for the distribution of grants and so on. The affected households were divided into yellow card holders and red card holders, where a yellow card indicated a damaged house and a red card a completely destroyed house. This list ensures that only those eligible for support will be given it. However, it has also created problems for people who had no formal right to the land their house stood on, as they technically did not own it. This problem is yet to be solved (INGO 4; NGO 5).

With this list as a baseline the coordination is then structured around a bottom-up process, where the I/NGO who want to work in an area has to get a pre-consensus agreement with the local authorities (INGO 4 & 5). This agreement gives the district the possibility to direct the I/NGO efforts to areas where they are needed the most. The districts or municipalities also have a better knowledge of the context and the specific circumstances in their area, so this system also makes it possible for them to give feedback or make wishes accordingly (INGO 5). This is described by a program manager in the following way:

> "In case of beneficiaries of EQ-affected families, we get the list directly from the NRA. Very easy. Based on that list we conform with that place… local government… now rural municipalities. We conform with them, and they allow… suppose we are going to implement some project… suppose shelter or something else. And we propose with the local authority, and they provide us pre-consensus. And then working for particular ward, they provide us that authority and they do not provide other NGO to work there. That's why there will not be any kind of duplication. That is why, on implementation level, duplication is avoided." (NGO 4)

The pre-consensus agreement is then taken to the central NRA, who either approves or rejects the project. A process that has been discussed above (4.4.2).

4.4 Meta-governance

Meta-governance are the overarching principles that guide governance actions. It could include concepts such as sustainability, but also intergovernmental agreements (Kooiman et al, 2008). The fieldwork has identified one main overarching framework that is guiding the actions of the government, as well as the INGOs and NGOs. The Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction and the principles of building back batter after a disaster was adopted by the Nepali government barely a month before the disaster.

The Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (UNISDR, 2015) was adopted by 187 states in March 2015 and Nepal was among them. It is an attempt to further strengthen what Maini et al (2017:150) call a: "shift in policy and practice" regarding the view on disasters. Rather than trying to manage disaster the world is increasingly becoming aware of the gains of taking preventive measures – or starting to focus on managing disaster risks, not disasters. Furthermore it links disaster risk reduction and the building of resilience to more cemented principles on the global arena, such as poverty eradication and sustainable development (UNISDR, 2015:p2). Four priorities for action are presented: Understanding disaster risk; Strengthening governance to manage disaster risk, Investing in risk reduction measures and; Enhancing preparedness for effective response and to 'Build Back Better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction (ibid:p20). It should be noted that according to UN standards, recovery and reconstruction cover both the restoring or improving of economic, cultural, social and physical assets as well as livelihoods and health, and the rebuilding of infrastructures and services (UNISDR, 2017:6).

Build back better originates from the analysis of the relief work after the 2004 tsunamis in the Indian Ocean (UNISDR, 2010) and the focus is on the strengthening of societies resilience towards natural- and man-made disasters. It is an approach to rebuild and recover, where the main focus is to learn from past events and to create better circumstances to develop along a more sustainable and resilient trajectory in the future by integrating disaster risk reduction-measures in the reconstruction and recovery process (UNISDR, 2017). Build back better represents an opportunity to use the knowledge that was gained during a disaster, and to incorporate these lessons learned when building back after, and when building anew. Furthermore, build back better promotes a holistic approach where not only structural reconstruction is targeted, but areas such as livelihoods and economy as well (UNISDR, 2017). The official meaning of the term is: "The use of the recovery,

rehabilitation and reconstruction phases after a disaster to increase the resilience of nations and communities through integrating disaster risk reduction measures into the restoration of physical infrastructure and societal systems, and into the revitalization of livelihoods, economies and the environment" (UNGA, 2016).

It is clear that the build back better strategy plays a prominent role in the recovery and reconstruction of Nepal. It is a reoccurring theme in the Post-Disaster Recovery Framework, which is the guiding document for the recovery and reconstruction process (NRA, 2016a). It is also brought up by the CEO of the National Reconstruction Authority as a method to strengthen buildings and infrastructure against further earthquakes as well as by the UNDP country director (Informant 2). However, there are slight differences in how build back better is addressed. When addressed by the NRA, it is mainly in terms of buildings and infrastructure (e.g. Informant 2 & 7; NRA, 2016a & 2016c) One prominent example is the Post-Disaster Recovery Framework which states that "The principle of Building Back Better should guide reconstruction, and people should be provided the necessary means and information to build safely, but according to their own preferences, while avoiding pre-fabricated housing solutions" (NRA, 2016a:5) The UN seem to give a more holistic view on what the principle entails: "The building back better principle also ensures that the spirit of resilience, which is fundamental to the SDGs, will be fully internalized in the recovery process" (UNDP, 2016:4).

Many of the INGOs stress the importance of a holistic approach, while the NGOs mostly differ in their explanations depending on their specialty. NGOs address build back better in a way that often aligns with their own focus in the process. Organizations that are focused mainly on the construction part tend to stress focus on build back better as an opportunity to build stronger and more resilient housing.

> "[P]eople have better home than what they had before the EQ. It should be completely owned by the people. People has that ownership and the… active part of the entire building process" (NGO 5).

> "If you see the history of school-building in Nepal, there was kind of poor building houses, or schools before, and I think now, the government is taking their consent to build stronger structure. There are good EQ-safety measures and that…" (NGO 2).

Other organizations stress that construction is one part, but that other factors are playing a role as well. These organizations are usually INGOs, or NGOs in close collaboration with INGOs.

> "[B]uild back better goes beyond just physical. It has to go down to the… I guess to the psychological emotional relational level. So you are building more holistic. You are also building a community as opposed to building homes". (INGO 4).

> "Before I describe build back better that would be the resilience in the community. So, to make it more resilient effort, and our practice is to provide them with water and sanitation… that is hardware and software[8] both. […] We are not doing something very different. We are just enhancing their skills by giving them improved technique, and we are facilitating them. And not only in terms of WASH, because we have noticed that NGOs come work, but then the sustainability, the resilience, is missing. So, what we did was: we have focused on resilience and sustainability of all the work that we have implemented on the ground". (NGO 3).

The differences between construction focused INGOs and NGOs and those with a more holistic idea of build back better as an overarching principle, shows the diversity of interpretations that are present in the process.

Within more construction-oriented NGOs there is also a focus on training and ownership. For them, building back better is not only to rebuild stronger houses, but that the knowledge of how to build it is passed down to the people, so that, if another disaster hits the country, the people will not be as dependant on the organizations, but more resilient themselves (e.g. INGO 3). Resilience is a reoccurring term, mainly among INGOs, whether they are more construction oriented or working in other areas. However, most NGOs also address resilience in the sense of making the communities stronger after the organizations have left.

[8] Hardware and software relates to hard and soft measures. Hard measure are constructions of different kinds, while software are programs aimed at enhancing and developing of people's capacities. Such programs could be agricultural training as well as mental health support.

5 Discussion and conclusions

The thesis set out to further extend the knowledge of I/NGO coordination in disaster recovery and reconstruction, and how they are affected by governance measures. Data was gathered during a 9-week fieldwork period in Kathmandu and Rasuwa district and has been analysed using governance networks theory and Kooimans (2008) governability framework. The results connection to each research-question are presented below and followed by a discussion on how this relates to contemporary theory on networks and network governance.

5.1 Connecting analysis to research-questions

1) How do the I/NGOs interact and coordinate amongst each other?

Understanding the interactions and coordination of I/NGOs is the first step in understanding disaster governance. The analysis has revealed that there are differences between NGOs and INGOs and that they commonly have different tasks in the recovery and reconstruction process. INGOs are commonly in for a shorter term, while NGOs are based in Nepal.

The cooperation between these organizations in Nepal is based on a belief that there are gains in working together as is suggested by, among others, Rhodes (1997) and Larsson (2015). The incentives to work in partnerships stem from a mutual dependency where one part has funds and technical expertise and the other has local knowledge and the legal right to implement projects within the country. They are also tied together through a community-bound project where they work with community people-, groups and/or leaders to implement projects.

Following the discussion of among others Torfing (2012) networks consist of independent actors that negotiate among each other. This relationship is described as horizontal, a view that has been criticized by, among others Davies (2011) and Larsson (2015) who argue that networks are only new ways of displaying different power relations. The results in this thesis supports this critique. Foreign donors, or INGOs who are controlling the funds are also in control of the network. There are examples of power displays where donors have

chosen to drop a partner or where INGOs have chosen to end partnerships with NGOs who are not living up to their standards. While there may be good reasons for such action, it goes right against Torfings (2012) claim that one actor cannot enforce decisions. Furthermore, this relationship is extended through the communities. I/NGOs stress that they are taking decisions together with the communities, and that their projects are based on community needs, and while the field observations in the villages supports this claim, there are also stories of malpractices such as money embezzlement or religious or political campaigning along with the aid. With the vulnerable situation the communities are in after the earthquake, and the knowledge gap between them and the construction or agricultural experts that are deployed by I/NGOs, it is difficult for them to hold such I/NGOs accountable. This problem has also been raised by Zanotti (2010) and Murtaza (2012), who have highlighted that lack of accountability towards communities could have negative effects in the end.

It is important to stress, that most NGOs, and most INGOs, stressed that the community needs are in centre. Also, most communities stated that they felt listened to. Arguably, the abovementioned structures are no problem when there are no malpractices. However, many respondents have reported knowledge of I/NGO-malpractices on different levels. The obvious problem for a network governor is, naturally, to know which I/NGOs that are trustworthy, and which are not.

2) How does the government govern the I/NGOs?

The use of I/NGOs is popular in disaster-settings. However, such a large influx of independent actors cannot go unmanaged, as has been proven by the Haitian case (e.g. Zanotti, 2010; Pierre-Luis, 2011). As theories on networks have shown, network governance is important to maintain and increase effectiveness, legitimacy and accountability. The second step of this analysis is therefore to examine how the government has chosen to govern the I/NGOs.

The government has given the main responsibility to one governmental agency: The National Reconstruction Authority, who is responsible for both carrying out reconstruction as well as governing the actors involved. This choice is well in line with Provan & Kenis (2008) claim that the more diverse and large the network, the more governance of it should be centralized. Self-regulation, or what Provan & Kenis (2008) call participant-governance is, in their view, only effective in smaller networks.

The government, represented by the NRA, has set up an overarching goal to build back better. That is: not only rebuild but making sure that the communities become more resilient to disasters in the future. Kooiman et al (2008) would label such a goal as meta-governance, as it is the norms through which implementation should be carried out.

There are two main institutional arrangements through which the government is ensuring compliance with the over-arching goals. The first is through laws, regulations and frameworks that establish the guidelines by which I/NGOs are permitted to work and specify how build back better should be interpreted for example by providing building codes or specifying priorities. Second, management is required to coordinate the actors and to ensure accountability and compliance with the laws and regulations.

In order to carry out a project, the I/NGOs must have it approved, first by local authorities and then by central authorities. By doing so, the NRA ensures that the projects are in line with what the government deems to be important. The fieldwork has demonstrated that although all projects are to be approved by a single body, the NRA, there are more agencies involved at the central level.

Monitoring and control is to make sure that the I/NGOs are doing what they are saying in the first place. Monitoring INGOs and NGOs has been coordinated by the SWC since its reinstatement in 1992, and without their approval, INGOs are not allowed to operate in the country. All construction is monitored by the NRA, and private housing has to be built in stages, where no further construction support to the beneficiaries can be given unless the previous stage is approved by an NRA-engineer.

The coordination is mainly done at the district level. Both district authorities and an NGO established especially for this purpose have worked to keep duplications at a minimum, and to coordinate efforts where they are needed most. The government also maintains a database over beneficiaries which is used to focus I/NGO efforts at the most vulnerable households and areas.

3) How are the I/NGOs affected by governance measures?

While most I/NGOs seem to have different views on how to build back better, they seem to agree on the importance of resilience in the communities. The long-term impact is taken into account while the I/NGOs are working in the villages. Projects, whether on construction or empowerment or anything else, are motivated by most organizations as a

way to strengthen resilience. The overarching goal, or the meta-governance, therefore seems to influence the I/NGOs actions and priorities. The resilience of projects is also increased by the rule that INGOs cannot operate without local partners. By doing so, the government has created a condition of interdependence between the INGOs and local NGOs. As has been concluded in the analysis, this has resulted in a transfer of knowledge between INGOs and the local NGOs.

The approval-mechanism has received mixed responses from the I/NGOs. On one hand, it ensures that the recovery and reconstruction-projects are well in line with the government's development plans. As such, the approvals could be viewed as a tool hold the I/NGOs accountable for their work. On the other hand, both INGOs and NGOs reported that these approvals are causing delays. Partly because of the NRA, and partly because of a complicated bureaucratic structure. Furthermore, the approval-mechanism is making it harder for I/NGOs to adapt their projects to local conditions, as such approvals may take even longer time, or be rejected. Examples of such projects are community-specific housing designs, special grants to poor families or the set amount of money allowed for private houses, no matter the differences in material costs.

The intense monitoring, mainly of INGOs carried out by central authorities is generally seen as a nuisance which causes a lot of extra work, but not a problem. The monitoring of private housing projects has, especially in the beginning, taken time. As every house needs to be signed off by an NRA-engineer three times, this is an obvious bottleneck. The situation has become better over time, as more engineers have been hired and the existing ones have gained experience and better training.

Most I/NGOs are positive about the coordination, at least in Rasuwa district. Using information gathered in the villages as well as the governments own beneficiary-list has provided them with a good base for making decisions and prioritizing when resources are limited. Duplications do not seem to be a major problem for any of the I/NGOs and the turf-war that Pierre-Luis (2011) has reported in Haiti, does not seem to have spread to Nepal.

5.2 Effective and accountable recovery

Network theory promotes self-regulated decentralized networks as an effective form of governance due to its flexibility, and ability to achieve locally adapted and consensual results (Börzel & Panke, 2007; Sörensen & Torfing, 2007). Theoretically, the use of NGOs could be key to increased effectiveness due to fast and locally adapted responses, where organizations identify the needs of the communities and execute according to build back better. The empirical results show that this is partly the case in Nepal.

Results from interviews and the field observations show that I/NGOs are good at reaching remote villages and identifying community-specific needs. Critique, however, has been aimed at the government as the I/NGOs feel that their capacity to deliver needs-specific programs is sometimes hampered by bureaucratic processes and centralized rules. These findings support the claims of Lam et al (2016) and Daly et al (2017) that the centralization causes problems for I/NGOs.

Just dismissing centralization as ineffective would be a mistake. First, Provan and Kenis (2008) have argued that centralization is effective in large networks. However, their focus is on problematizing coordination and they do not explore the gains of flexibility on the networks. In other words: the approach presented by Provan and Kenis (2008) does not consider the problems experienced by single network actors as an issue. To truly say anything about whether Provan and Kenis (2008) are right or not demands an over-all assessment of whether the recovery and reconstruction is effective or not. Such an assessment is not possible to make within the scope of this thesis. Second, as has been argued by among others Börzel and Panke (2007), effectiveness should be discussed in relation to accountability. As this study has shown, there are a large number of I/NGOs operating in the communities. Arguments have been presented regarding their internal relations, not as horizontal, but more as hierarchies where the communities are in a vulnerable position. Indeed, it is more difficult for communities to hold I/NGOs accountable for their work, as they are the receivers of aid. Furthermore, as has been highlighted by Murtaza (2012), and further confirmed by the fieldwork, the accountability-structures towards the donors are often more institutionalized than those to the communities. In this case both the centralization of approvals and the monitoring are to some extent mechanisms to establish a bureaucratic accountability towards state bodies. Approval is a way to ensure that money is spent on projects that align with the over-arching

goal even though there may be limited capacity or knowledge to assess the NGOs on the local level. Monitoring is key in any partnership to ensure compliance with what has been agreed upon. The centralization increases goal fulfilment, as it is more difficult to cheat, or to push through an agenda that does not align with build back better. However, this also turns the networks more into service delivery-entities than self-regulating actors. A form of organization that has proven to be both slower and more inflexible (e.g. Sörensen & Torfing, 2007).

The self-regulation element, as promoted by Klijn and Koppenjan (2012) or Sörensen and Torfing (2007), is arguably more effective in providing locally adapted programs and, as has been shown in the study, the I/NGOs are assessing needs before implementing programs. However, in post-disaster settings, there may not always be local institutions strong enough to ensure accountability and compliance with the over-arching goal, which in turn could lead to a decline in goal reaching capabilities, depending on the intentions of the participating I/NGOs. Following this line of thought the next question is ultimately whether there is a need for centralization or if there are ways to strengthen accountability locally.

As has been established by the discussion above, the centralized governance practices of the state increases the accountability towards the state and has proven to be effective in terms of strengthening the set goals of build back better. However, as has been pointed out by Börzel and Panke (2007) there is more to effectiveness than just reaching goals. In terms of efficiency, the governance has had negative effects as the demands from the government has forced I/NGOs to spend both time and resources on filing approvals and writing reports. It has also shown negative effects on the flexibility of I/NGOs as their actions have to be approved centrally. A logical conclusion is therefore that accountability may have positive effects on effectiveness, but that increased costs and delays – declines in efficiency – are to be expected.

5.3 Summarising conclusions

This thesis set out to contribute to the knowledge of disaster recovery and reconstruction, and the governance of I/NGOs by applying a governance network perspective on the recovery and reconstruction-process in Nepal. The following research-questions have

guided the inquiry: *1) How do the I/NGOs interact and coordinate amongst each other? 2) How does the government govern the I/NGOs? 3) How are the I/NGOs affected by the governance measures?* The results allow for both practical and theoretical conclusions to be drawn.

The study has shown that the Nepali governments response to govern the I/NGOs in recovery and reconstruction has been to centralize approval and monitoring mechanisms, while most of the coordination is carried out at the district level. Most I/NGOs deem the coordination to be working well. However, many of them experience delays or even rejections in the approval-processes, which sometimes decreases their capacity to implement community-adapted solutions. Two main explanations are offered: A complex and sometimes confusing bureaucracy and centralization of accountability-mechanisms.

An initial practical suggestion would be to further develop the one-door policy and have one agency that is responsible for I/NGO-governance, as the overlapping between SWC and NRA is causing confusion and further delays among I/NGOs.

Furthermore, the thesis has a suggestion for further theoretical development of network governance as the findings imply that while centralizing may be good for securing accountability and reaching set goals in a large and diverse network, it has a limiting effect on the efficiency and flexibility of the network actors.

Finally, the findings of this thesis also supports previous claims that the governments wish for centralized control is causing problems for the NGOs, but calls for a nuancing of the discussion, as the previous studies do not address this critique in relation to the possible gains increased network accountability may have for the over-all result. Further research on this subject is needed.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

With the results of this thesis in mind it would be reasonable to compare the over-all performance in Nepal with Haiti, with a special focus on accountability- and control functions imposed (or not) by the state.

Furthermore, a reasonable continuation would be to examine ways to strengthen local accountability. In Nepal, the local municipality elections were very recent, and more and more responsibilities are put in their hands as their capacity grows. Their development and emerging ability to govern the complex networks within their jurisdiction would be a natural continuation from the findings in this study.

Finally, as is outlined in the limitations, this thesis has not touched upon the subject of bilateral donors and the UN and how they influence policy on a more central level. Such a study would be important not only for the continuous disaster-preparedness in the region, but to similar situations all over the world.

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Appendix 1

The list of informants is somewhat censored. This is in order to protect the identity of both I/NGOs, their representatives and the key informants. Nepal is still a country where some of the things the informants say may put them in a bad spot, politically. In cases the where both the title and organization is given, the informants have agreed to have their names in the paper. The I/NGOs never had an option *not* to be anonymous. In the cases where an **&** separates the titles two informants have been present during parts of- or the whole interview.

Reference	**Organization description**	**Position or title**	**Interpreter /recorded**
INGO 1	International	Country representative	NO/YES
INGO 2	International	Regional Program Coordinator	NO/YES
INGO 3	International	Team Leader	NO/YES
INGO 4	International	Program Manager	NO/YES
INGO 5	International	Deputy Finance Manager & Adm. Head of Department	NO/YES
INGO 6	International	Head of Programme	NO/YES
INGO 7	International	Consultant and former programme manager	NO/YES
NGO 1	National	Technical Advisor & Technical Advisor	NO/YES
NGO 2	National	Executive Director	NO/YES
NGO 3	National	Program Manager	NO/YES
NGO 4	National	Humanitarian Coordinator & Program Manager	NO/YES
NGO 5	National	Program Manager	NO/YES
NGO 6	National	Chair Person	NO/YES
NGO 7	National	Deputy Director	NO/YES
NGO 8	National	Chair Person	YES/YES
NGO 9	National	WASH-Officer	NO/YES
Informant 1	UNDP	Country Director	NO/YES
Informant 2	National Re-construction Authority	Chief Executive Officer	NO/YES
Informant 3	Association of International NGOs	Coordinator of Task force on Disaster Management	NO/YES
Informant 4	JICA	Country Director	NO/YES
Informant 5	Social Welfare Council	Representative	NO/YES

Informant 6	Asked to be fully anonymous	Informant	YES/NO
Informant 7	National Reconstruction Authority	Representative	YES/YES
Informant 8	National Reconstruction Authority	Representative	YES/NO
Informant 9	HRRP	Representative	NO/YES

Appendix 2

Note down organization and interviewee in notebook. Give organization a code.

Thank you for taking time. Before we start the interview, I will begin with saying that this interview will be used for the sole purpose of research. I cannot guarantee that the results are ones you would like, but I will promise you to do my best. In the paper you will be presented as representative working for an NGO active in Rasuwa. If you wish to complete with information later, or make something clear, I will leave you my email address. Are these conditions all right for you?

The many questions reflect the issues the interviewer is looking for answers to. Preferably, very few of the questions will have to be asked, and the interviewee can talk freely from a more general question. The guide is there mainly for the interviewer to keep somewhat track of the process.

It is important to always ask "why" and, if possible, ask the respondent to give examples

General questions

- How do you work with Build Back Better?
- Tell me more about how your organization work with recovery (priorities?)

Effectiveness

- What are the main challenges you face, when working with projects?
- Can you mention a project that was particularly effective?
- What is effectiveness in a project?
- How will you assess whether it has been effective or not?

- Do you have any activities to increase effectiveness in your partnership
- What in a partnership produces effective results
- What produces less effective results?
- What is the main reason for delays?
- What is the main reason for serious changes or cuts in the projects?

Coordination – Government

- How do you perceive the government led coordination?
- Are there any duplications? Redundancies? Delays?
- Do you coordinate with the government/districts? (How? How often?)
- What is working well?
- If you could improve something in the ways the state work with recovery, what would that be?
- What are your strategies to meet these problems?

Coordination - partnerships

- Describe your partnership structure.
- How do you decide who to work together with?
    - Are there different partners in different projects?
    - What does the selection process looks like?
- What role does your organization have in these constellations?
    - Is the coordination more of a negotiation or conversation?
- What is working well in your partnership?
- How do you coordinate?
- Who do you coordinate with the most in your work?
    - Tools?

    - Meetings?

- What is important for good coordination among project partners?
- If you could improve something in the way you work together what would that be?
- How do you make sure that your partners do what they say they do?
- Have you ever had different opinions about how something should be done? (what happened?)
- Have you ever changed the way you work or perceive the recovery because of your partners?
- Have others ever changed their mind through coordination with you?
- Have there ever been differences in what the district says and in what the community wants? (What happens then?).
- How do you hold your partners accountable?

Coordination - Other

- Do you coordinate with the government/districts? (How? How often?)
- What is working well?
- If you could improve something in the ways the state work with recovery, what would that be?
- Do you coordinate with organizations you don't have a formal partnership with? (How? How often?)
- If yes: What is the purpose?
- If yes: Has this led to any changes in how you work with the recovery?
- What is important to ensure good coordination in the recovery process?

Accountability

- Do you believe you are responsible what you do?
- What is important for a good project exit?

- Who are you responsible to?
- Who reports to you?
- Who do you report to?
- Have you ever been forced to leave a project before you were done?
    - What happened?