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## Logic Salience

### Navigating in institutional landscape of funding volatility and ideological disputes in nonprofit hybrid organizing

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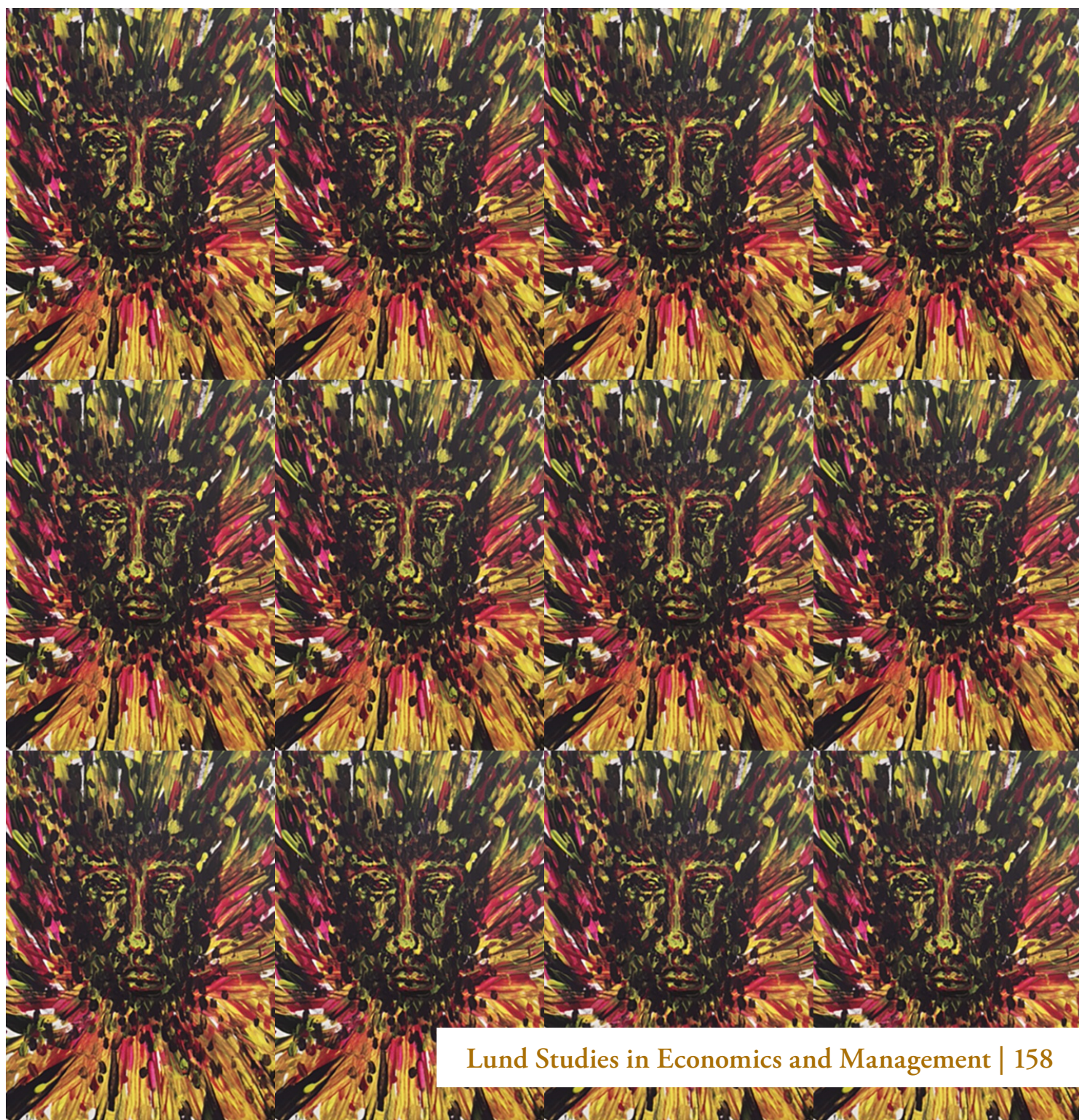
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# Logic Salience

Navigating in the institutional landscape of funding volatility  
and ideological disputes in nonprofit hybrid organizing

JAYNE JÖNSSON | DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION





Logic Saliency



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and ideological disputes in nonprofit hybrid organizing

Jayne Jönsson



**LUND**  
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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

by due permission of the Department of Business Administration,  
School of Economics and Management, Lund University, Sweden.

To be defended at Holger Crafoord Ekonomisentrum EC3:207,  
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*Faculty opponent*  
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<b>Title and subtitle</b> Logic Saliency: Navigating in the institutional landscape of funding volatility and ideological disputes in nonprofit hybrid organizing		
<b>Abstract</b> <p>The concept of institutional logics is key to those who investigate organizational change, especially those who seek to understand the tension and impact of combining the logics of market and mission. Such a combination of logics, being an espoused financial sustainability solution for the funding-scarce nonprofit sector, is an increasingly prominent phenomenon. While there are several studies on various ways in which logics co-exist in hybrid contexts, the role of actors in this institutional complexity has received lesser attention. The organizations of this study are nonprofits in Sweden and South Africa. Through qualitative methods, the role played by individual actors in negotiating multiple logics is examined. The findings suggest that nonprofit actors may express support for multiple logics, but they ultimately respond to them according to the logic that they identify themselves with the most, tied to the values and ideological preferences they hold.</p> <p>From these findings, a concept emerged. The concept of 'logic saliency' is proposed and developed abductively by exploring it as an analytical tool throughout the remainder of the case organizations, which are situated in paradoxical and adversarial settings. The successive refinement of the concept constitutes both input and output of the abductive research approach. Specifically, three categories of individual logic saliency are identified. These prompt various individual responses, which, in turn, condition organizational responses that have implications for nonprofit organizing and hybridity. In addition, three types of hybridity that give an indication of the viability of the market-mission hybrid form are also identified.</p> <p>Through logic saliency, this dissertation theoretically accounts for both the enabling and constraining properties of logics and at the same time elucidates and strengthens the role of individual agency in organizational responses and actions. It contributes to the fields of institutional logics, institutional work and hybridity through a framework that illustrates a cycle that starts from influences from the institutional field down to the organizational and individual levels, and back to the institutional field, which thus exemplifies the interconnectedness of the external and internal environments. Apart from a concept that can be useful in studying and understanding how and why actors respond to multiple logics in particular ways, the dissertation also provides an update on the current funding challenges to which nonprofit organizations are increasingly exposed. These challenges have significance not only for practitioners but also for funding institutions, policymakers, research and societies considering the nonprofit third sector's attributed role in addressing government and market failures.</p>		
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# Logic Salience

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Jayne Jönsson



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## *A Prologue*

“With age comes wisdom, but sometimes age comes alone.” That is why now that an opportunity presents itself, I want to venture on writerly text through writing abductively because although this attempt can be a mistake with stakes that are high, “nowadays most people die of a sort of creeping common sense, and discover when it is too late that the only things one never regrets are one’s mistakes.” And although “experience is merely the name men (sic) gave to their mistakes,” I implore the readers to not define academic writing too contrivedly as “to define is to limit” because “a cynic is a man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing.”

It is said that “society often forgives the criminal; it never forgives the dreamer,” and “the public have an insatiable curiosity to know everything, except what is worth knowing.” And I further implore you, “an idea that is not dangerous is unworthy of being called an idea at all.” “To live is the rarest thing in the world...” and while we are living, why not break from (academic) conventions wherever possible so that although “the basis of (my) optimism is sheer terror,” “consistency is the hallmark of the unimaginative” and at the end of the day spent on a comfortable lounge chair, “it is what you read when you don’t have to that determines what you will be when you can’t help it.”

Albeit a promising mistake, the attempt at abductive writing of this dissertation is my creative disobedience, because indeed as academics “there are many things that we would throw away if we were not afraid that others might pick them up.” “Disobedience, in the eyes of anyone who has read history, is man’s original virtue. It is through disobedience that progress has been made, through disobedience and through rebellion.” After all, “the aim of life is self-development. To realize one’s nature perfectly – that is what each of us is here for.”

-all quotations from Oscar Wilde (goodreads.com)



*To mom,  
and the loving memory  
of mama & papa  
and svärmor*



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Barsebäck, March 2022



## *Chapter 1*

# Introduction

It [tension between the social and economic goals] is always present in nonprofit organizations. It is about ... if you only focus on one of them, if you neglect the value-base...then the organization loses its character. On the other hand, if you only care about the human side, you risk losing the economic side, and it can entail reduced operations and inability to perform as we want to. So, there is always some kind of tension in our work, yes. (...) I think it's very clear what we want, both to be humane and work with quality and to grow. There may be disagreement; sometimes, some think that the growth is going too fast, and some think it's going too slow (...); yes, you can lose the quality, you start to let go of quality to make it fast.

- Chairman of the Board, Skyddsvärnet

This thesis explores the organizational challenges facing nonprofit organizations. Traditionally, these organizations are driven by a mission to do some social good and have depended on public or aid funding (Fowler 2000a). In recent decades, however, such funding has declined, and a new competitive funding environment has emerged. Nonprofits have been compelled to diversify into commercial activities to secure new sources of revenue in order to become self-sustaining (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004). Accordingly, they are increasingly torn between pursuing new business or market activities whilst at the same time staying true to their founding mission (Ebrahim, Battilana and Mair 2014). My point of departure here is that this dilemma fundamentally concerns a tension between two competing institutional logics (Mair and Schoen 2007; Cornforth 2014): those of the mission and the market, or the so-called hybrid model.

This tension is well illustrated by the above quote from one of my respondents which paints a picture of this development. It transports us into a place where

nonprofit actors have to contend with what they have to do in order to achieve what they are supposed to do. Moreover, it indicates how the world of nonprofit organizations is lodged between the exigencies of economic and social goals. It is a scenario where conflicting logics ensue as they try to achieve their social mission and at the same time deliver their services in an increasingly economic-driven and fast-paced environment. Along the way, they are ushered into tensions, disagreements, and uncertainties as to which approach best serves their purpose. This is because actors are exposed to and develop belief systems, usually according to an already existing and hence prominent institutional logic in their organization, that guide them in seeing and understanding the world and their 'reality' (Friedland and Alford 1991). An incoming new logic with its own belief systems thus poses challenges for actors (Pache and Santos 2013a). How organizational members view and respond to the concomitant challenges that the situation poses becomes interesting and of considerable significance, because while nonprofit organizations need alternative resources in order to survive, they also need to maintain their belief systems that characterize their respective organizations. Some relevant background information below on the first organization covered in this study illustrates the surrounding context that indicates the contested views on combining nonprofit and for-profit logics, which are also concurrently discussed.

Nonprofit Skyddsvärnet is exposed to market competition in selling its services (for example, accommodation and care for former offenders and substance users), more so after its government funding ceased in the 1990s. To be able to achieve financial stability and maintain market position, the organization resorted more recently to an aggressive expansion, which has inevitably entailed a need to deliver and manage its services professionally. This case, therefore, exemplifies the prevailing funding volatility and the concomitant increasing pressure for nonprofit organizations to adopt market-oriented activities (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004).

At Skyddsvärnet, there was a general acknowledgment amongst the respondents of the comparable importance of their mission and economic/market goals. This, at first glance, indicated that there was no evident tension or disagreement. However, and despite this acknowledgment, which I refer to here as 'the common talk,' and where the dual goals were metaphorically described by one of the respondents as "*yin and yang*," the path that the organization was taking indicated a stronger leaning toward the market goals. An increasingly professionalized management of

their activities has resulted in some degree of resistance within the organization, to which staff exit can be partly attributed. The expansion's speed and scale and the approach used have thus caused disparity and have affected the personnel situation and the ensuing hiring decisions. Consequently, staff members with a business (and partly public sector) background were increasingly hired.

The challenges encountered by the organization in enacting the common talk or in 'walking the talk' spurred questions and assumptions of what the situation was about. The iterative conversation between the initial theoretical and empirical insights from the case (Alvesson and Kärreman 2011; Gabriel 2018; Brunsson 1989) led me to consider that this could be a mystery that involves contradictory logics of individuals and groups of individuals. This excerpt provides a good illustration:

We who are not *economists*, we who *are humanists*, see the context and the strength lies in those small contexts. (Section Manager #1)

As my analysis of the empirical material progressed, it became apparent that there were different degrees of logic inclinations amongst the respondents, along what I would later call the market and mission logics spectrum. Accordingly, I began to pay attention to institutional theory, specifically to institutional logics and hybridity. I then problematized if the assumption (Alvesson and Sandberg 2011) that running a nonprofit as for-profit does not really pose contradictions (see Boschee 1998). As nonprofit organizations (NPOs) pursue a mission (Ebrahim et al. 2014) and have increasingly adopted the market's approaches and values to sustain themselves (Weisbrod 1998), they have come to be regarded as hybrids (Mair and Noboa 2003).

These organizations are increasingly exposed to multiple logics, argued as causing tensions and are often experienced by organizational members as a conflict (Pache and Santos 2013a) between the social mission and financial goals (Smith, Gonin and Besharov 2013). Institutional logics, defined as "socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules" (Thornton and Ocasio 1999:804), shape what constitute legitimate goals and the legitimate means by which they may be pursued (Friedland and Alford 1991; Scott 1994). Institutional logics are the "implicit constitutions of the worlds in which we live, which we call institutions when they become objectified with recognizable domains of reference" (Friedland 2017:15).

If we are to apply this understanding to the context of NPOs, we can say that their goals, namely social mission, are pursued based on their values and beliefs that underpin their legitimacy as their recognizable referential domain. Therefore, NPOs that combine the logics of mission and market indicate an attempt at hybrid organizing.

The tensions between institutional logics alluded to here are commonly understood in the literature as being associated with the notion of organizational hybridity. With this pressure to adopt market-oriented solutions in order to address funding challenges, the need to combine nonprofit and for-profit elements becomes pronounced. Here, I show that these choices entail competing institutional logics. Because of the challenges involved in balancing the interplay between these competing logics or values (Hailey and James 2004), further studies on how hybrid organizations can sustainably combine multiple forms are called for (Battilana and Lee 2014). As a response to this call, I start by looking at how organizational members view and respond to these challenges.

The discovery of incoherence between what is generally acknowledged (the common talk) and what, in contrast, is put into action at Skyddsvärnet and the further analysis of findings has led to the emergence of a proposed concept. In search for a contribution, I attempt to bridge the tension between structure and agency where agency is said to be undertheorized, not least in hybrid contexts (Skelcher and Smith 2015) within research on institutional logics and institutional work, by amplifying the role of actors on how meanings are produced and negotiated (Zilber 2013). People's active negotiation of meanings (or understanding) is both ongoing and retrospective in nature, which is a key role of human agency in institutional functioning (Everitt 2013). Individuals' understanding and interaction within local settings that they inhabit therefore become significant in this context (Hallett and Ventresca 2006). This dissertation is thus about how individual actors in the studied nonprofit organizations relate and respond to multiple, oftentimes, conflicting logics of mission and market and how this, in turn, prompts different responses that have implications for nonprofit hybrid organizing and organizational hybridity.

Combining nonprofit and for-profit elements (Battilana and Lee 2014; Besharov and Smith 2014) is increasingly seen as a promising solution to the world's growing and overwhelming societal challenges (Fowler 2000a), resulting in a growing recent interest in entrepreneurship within the nonprofit sector (see Germak and Singh

2009) or on becoming business-like (Sanders and McClellan 2014). However, this combination entails contestations, as indicated by the quote below. The argument in the quote suggests that there is much to be gained from running nonprofit organizations in similar ways to for-profit enterprises.

Too many nonprofit organizations are financially stagnant, raising and distributing funds the same way they have for decades. A nonprofit that is run for-profit sounds like a contradiction in terms. But it doesn't have to be. (Bill Shore from *Revolution of the Heart*, Boschee 1998)

This quote is essentially a call for hybridity, which is usually about the embrace of both profit and not-for-profit components (Dees and Anderson 2003) by formal organizations. Hybridity in the nonprofit sector mostly refers to the complex organizational forms that emerge as voluntary, charitable, and community organizations address differentiated tasks, legitimacy, or resource environments (Skelcher and Smith 2015). Hybrid organizations challenge the conceptualization of organizations as entities that reproduce a single coherent institutional template as a source of legitimacy and support from external institutional actors (DiMaggio and Powell 1983); therefore, hybrid organizations' existence and functioning pose interesting conceptual questions for institutional theory (Pache and Santos 2013a). As nonprofit organizations are exposed to multiple logics, their staff members and other stakeholders directly involved with the organizations are therefore compelled to deal with the peculiarities and demands tied to the logics. Hence, we may ask what organizational consequences may arise from participating in multiple fields or from combining multiple logics under one organizational roof (Jay 2013) that constitute the hybrid model?

## The hybrid model: multiple logics in tension

In the nonprofit sector, being business-like is regarded by many as a much-needed development that entails a more efficient resource management, increased accountability, and a more sustainable way of addressing social problems. Becoming more business-like is therefore usually framed as a normal path to take in nonprofit organizing (Sanders and McClellan 2014). This has resulted in an increase in research interest on what becoming business-like entails for NPOs (see,



for example, Maier, Meyer and Steinbereithner 2014; Lee 2014; Sanders and McClellan 2014; Sanders 2015).

However, to operate in a business environment or being entrepreneurial is not how nonprofit agencies are usually trained to function (Germak and Singh 2009). This indicates that employees within an organization dominated by internal process values have potentially strong non-economic interests, that is, a high degree of intrinsic motivation. Therefore, it might become challenging for them to focus on or to justify the authenticity of the organization's business purpose and goals, and they might experience a tension between creating a business venture and pursuing a social purpose (Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright 2007; Brammer and Millington 2008). In such a hybrid environment, organizational members are confronted with the likelihood of having to embrace multiple identities (Skelcher and Smith 2015) or competing logics that result in tension (Cornforth 2014). The empirical cases presented in this dissertation show such an environment, making identity or tension in identities (together with the effects on nonprofits' distinctive value base discussed later), although not the focal point, as a constant and common denominator as the organizations, through their members, respond to the multiple logics.

Some scholars (Pratt and Foreman 2000) point to the importance of leaders or leadership in how organizations regulate multiple identities, and to the challenges involved in managing under hybrid governance (Thomasson 2019). There is also an indication that how people, and organizations, are able to balance a range of competing pressures (Hailey and James 2004) or the challenges involved in managing hybrid organizations still needs research attention (Grossi, Reichard, Thomasson and Vakkuri 2017). This is particularly relevant in view of the challenges in, and yet importance of, pursuing both social and economic value creation in setting up self-sustained organizations (Mair and Schoen 2007). Hence, a crucial question for organizational scholars is how hybrid organizations can manage this tension, and how to combine multiple forms (Battilana and Lee 2014). The management of tension between competing logics – whether by leaders or followers, whether around identity or values associated with each of the logics, or some other manifestation of tension, can be framed as part of the organizational life as organizations, through their members, respond to the test of times.

This research context also offers a broader societal relevance in our common effort to identify effective and sustainable social solutions. There is a need for a more general knowledge about the process and model development that would, in turn, lead to better informed decisions and more effective social interventions (Nielsen and Samia 2008), considering the extent of societal challenges that societies are facing and the decreasing resources to address them. Moreover, Weerawardena, McDonald, and Sullivan-Mort (2010) suggest that attention should be given to the need to build a sustainable organization that can continue to deliver social value through the pursuit of its social mission. They further argue that the current debate on whether NPOs must strictly remain within the nonprofit domain, or for-profits to remain solely focused on profit-making strategies, should be strengthened.

The organizational or managerial responses in managing hybridity in previous research include selective coupling that allows hybrids to manage the incompatibility between logics (Pache and Santos 2013a), or decoupling/compromising – traditionally referred to the process through which organizations separate their normative or prescriptive structures from their operational structures (Bromley and Powell 2012; Meyer and Rowan 1977; see also Pache and Santos 2013a), or through a socialization method where new employees, free from attachments to either logic, are hired to easily strike a balance between the logics (Battilana and Dorado 2010). What these studies have in common is the management of contradiction or tension that is either existing or preempted. For Brunsson (1989), considering that organizations are exposed to an increasing number of inconsistent and conflicting norms and demands, hypocrisy—the practice of incorporating different organizational structures, processes, and ideologies, is a natural and effective way of achieving organizational legitimacy. In other words, hypocrisy can be a coping mechanism as organizations respond to conflicting logics.

Research within this literature does give us a hint that there are various organizational or managerial responses to multiple logics. However, where we seem to fall short is in the kind of management of hybridity that not only centers on coping mechanisms, but where tension, for instance, is not regarded adversely and not something that needs containment (Sanders 2012). This is especially the case in view of the current trend where the social and market spheres are increasingly becoming conjoined, making it difficult and probably undesirable for

some organizations to sacrifice one over the other. A similar idea where tensions or contradictions are suggested to be acknowledged as intrinsic within the nonprofit sector can be located in Sanders (2012), or that the co-existence of plural logics (as) being a more permanent phenomenon (Besharov and Smith 2014). This type of research is hence important if we are to inquire whether what is nominally a nonprofit but has for-profit elements is, in fact, contradictory.

For this type of inquiry to be possible, the part that organizational actors play becomes highly relevant. There is a more recent realization within research on institutional logics and institutional work of the need to bridge the tension between structure and agency, to amplify the role of actors, and on how meanings are produced and negotiated (Zilber 2013). By bringing people back into the conversation, meaning is shown not only as being carried through institutional logics but also that meaning arises through social interactions, as suggested by the term “inhabited institutions” (Hallett and Ventresca 2006). Hence, in order to help us understand more about the forms that the hybrid model may take and the contexts within which some forms thrive or otherwise (Alvord, Brown and Letts 2004), we need to first understand how individuals respond to multiple logics.

## Individual responses to multiple logics

Hybrids are typically characterized by institutional logics that are not always compatible (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta and Lounsbury 2011); moreover, as this incompatibility between the logics increases, the challenges faced by organizations also increase (Besharov and Smith 2012). Multiple institutional logics produce not only challenges to NPOs but also to their members. While institutional scholars have attempted to understand organizational responses to such challenges and conflicts (e.g. Sanders 2012; Ebrahim et al. 2014; Skelcher and Smith 2015), how organizational members experience these conflicts and enact individual responses has received lesser attention (Pache and Santos 2013b). There is also a need to obtain a clearer picture as to which elements of the logics these members enact and the factors that drive these behaviors (Pache and Santos 2013a).

Pache and Santos (2013b) explore how individuals respond to embeddedness in competing logics that emphasizes the role played by individuals in making sense of, interpreting, enacting, or resisting institutional prescriptions within

organizations. Although Pache and Santos recognize the constraining influence of institutional logics on individuals' action, they also embrace Binder's (2007:568) view that "real people, in real contexts, with consequential past experiences of their own, play with (logics), question them, combine them with institutional logics from other domains, take what they can use and make them fit their needs." Pache and Santos (2013b) particularly argue that latitude for individuals to exercise some degree of strategic choice is created through the availability of competing models of action (Dorado 2005; Pache and Santos 2010). Hence, and in line with the context of this study, where the case organizations are situated in pluralistic environments, I take the stance that all individual actors have agency, and they therefore engage in institutional work that contributes to the creation and evolution of logics that the organizations have through 'everyday talk' (Lok 2010).

These antagonistic demands, thus, challenge the taken for granted character of institutional arrangements; they make individuals more cognizant of alternative series of action and require them to make decisions as to what logic to obey, alter, ignore, or reject, in order to align with their identity and also the organizational legitimacy needs (Pache and Santos 2010:12). This means that individuals may respond differently to the same combination of logics (Pratt and Foreman 2000). Giddens (1984) argues that the enabling and constraining properties of logics are a key idea in institutional theory, which is similar to the position that Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012) have advanced by accentuating the role of individual agency in organizational responses and actions.

What we can construe from these debates is that although individuals are constrained by the logic that is dominant in a particular institutional context, as illustrated by the paradox of embedded agency (Holm 1995) or the paradox of embeddedness (Uzzi 1997), the focus on the role of agency puts much emphasis on individuals' ability to select items from a menu and less on the enduring and conditioning nature of contexts in which actors are situated (Mutch 2018). Clearly, these arguments tend to reduce agency to a choice, or for that matter to a non-choice, between logics. Insofar as there are several individual responses proposed and identified in contexts characterized by multiple logics, and that we are not always aware of the intentions behind our choices (Zilber 2013), confining agency into choice/non-choice becomes a simplification of a rather complex phenomenon.

In a hybrid context where the idea is to benefit from the best of two worlds, it is precisely due to the combination of constraining elements—attributable to the embeddedness paradox, and the enabling elements—attributable to the availability of choices for change agents, that we cannot readily reduce agency as a conscious either–or choice. There is therefore a lot left to be done in order for us to understand how and why actors respond to logics in particular ways, especially when defying one logic may adversely affect either the normative legitimacy or output legitimacy (Nevile 2010) of NPOs.

The complexity of hybrid organizing, which is defined by Battilana and Lee (2014:398) as “activities, structures, processes and meanings by which organizations make sense of and combine aspects of multiple organizational forms,” becomes apparent through the various individual responses that have so far been identified in the literature. These responses include decoupling (Pache and Santos 2010), compartmentalization, deletion, integration, and aggregation (Pratt and Foreman 2000), co-optation (Andersson and Liff 2018), and compartmentalization and hybridization (Gautier, Pache and Santos 2018). Of these, especially when individuals are aware of the logics at play, compartmentalization and hybridization are the two most likely responses (Pache and Santos 2013b). Compartmentalization refers to “individuals’ attempts at purposefully segmenting their compliance with competing logics, as a way to bring order and coherence to their lives despite inhabiting complex institutional worlds that exert on them competing demands” (Gautier et al. 2018:5). Individuals may demonstrate full adherence with a given logic (and reject a competing one) in a given context and choose to display compliance with the competing logic in other contexts, such as during their interaction with different people, in their professional and personal lives, or in different organizational contexts (ibid.).

In the nonprofit world where an organization has to manage the interplay between logics, for example, between a mission logic emphasizing service delivery and a market logic representing the need to generate income, compartmentalization is a common rationale (Skelcher and Smith 2015). Here, it is of importance to note the specific way in which this separation occurs together with the symbols and institutionalized practices that sustain organizational coherence (Smets, Greenwood and Lounsbury 2015), and which by implication hinder such compartmentalization, as in the case of combination. Combination refers to “an

individual's attempt at bringing together, in the same context or activity, some of the values, norms and practices prescribed by competing logics" (Gautier et al. 2018:6). Combining contradictory logics may translate into the development of hybrid practices (Rao, Monin and Durand 2003) or hybrid organizational arrangements (Dalpiaz, Rindova and Ravasi 2016) despite the potential challenges involved, brought about by incompatibilities between prescribed templates (Gautier et al. 2018).

Some studies account for the responses of individuals and the consequences of these responses, both for the individuals themselves and the organizations in which they operate (Gautier et al. 2018). For instance, Powell and Sandholtz (2012) show how individuals who are able to combine the science and business logics contributed in important ways to the success of their biotech start-ups by translating knowledge and networks across fields. Besharov's (2014) study shows a similar occurrence, where individuals who combine social and commercial logics served as the glue that held divergent members together, mitigated the tensions among them, and enabled identification around both values behind the logics to emerge. This means that implications for organizations are imminent, as and when we study and account for individual responses.

According to Pache and Santos (2013b), when individuals operate in environments dominated by a single logic, their responses will likely be determined by the ties they have developed with this logic. However, responses clearly become more difficult to anticipate when individuals operate in environments embedded in multiple and competing logics because complying with one logic may signify defying the other logic. How individuals enact their responses, such as strategic decisions, are thus influenced by their cognitive capacities (Gavetti 2005), and/or inertial and path-dependence properties (Argote, Beckman and Epple 1990; Szulanski 1996). This means that individuals may respond to institutional logics, depending on their interpretations that are often shaped by a single logic (Greenwood et al. 2011), through their education and work experience or their membership in a given society (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Thornton et al. 2012), or through their identification and degree of adherence to logics (Pache and Santos 2013b). Such identification and adherence to each of the competing logics, which is of greater relevance in this dissertation, in turn, is likely to drive how individuals may respond to competing templates for action.

## Research questions and aims

The encouragement of nonprofit organizations to become self-sustaining as opposed to being aid-dependent, in view of the decreasing resources available to address increasing societal challenges, is part of the changes that can be associated with the onset of the beyond-aid scenario (BAS) (Fowler 2000a). As nonprofits are urged to find alternatives to aid and government funding through market-oriented solutions, this dissertation addresses the need to continue the studies on how hybrid organizations in the nonprofit context can sustainably combine multiple forms (Battilana and Lee 2014). To do this, we need to understand how organizational members engage in or relate to competing demands embedded in logics where actors' role in understanding, interpreting, enacting, or resisting institutional prescriptions within organizations (Pache and Santos 2013b) can affect hybridity and other organizational outcomes.

The concept of hybridity in organization studies starts with the premise that organizations do not emerge independently of the external environment (Battilana and Lee 2014). Under environmental uncertainty, it is argued that an organization typically attempts change by mimicking the behavior of other legitimate organizations, as institutional theory suggests (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

I, therefore, firstly report in chapter 2 on the funding challenges and organizational responses to these challenges. This funding landscape is given a closer attention in chapter 5 in order for us to establish and understand the context the organizations of study and their members are in. In this landscape, external forces impose a considerable influence on how organizations, through their members, become salient or reluctant toward finding market solutions and in making them work, or in maintaining the status quo of being aid-dependent, despite its own set of challenges.

Answering the call to pursue studies on how hybrid organizations can sustainably combine multiple forms (Battilana and Lee 2014) and the challenges involved in balancing the interplay between a competing set of values or logics (Hailey and James 2004), I look into how organizational members view and respond to these challenges. Specifically, I attempt to answer the call to bridge the tension between structure and agency where the role of actors is amplified and how meanings are produced and negotiated (Zilber 2013). In this negotiation of meanings, the role

of people is brought back into the fold, where meaning arises through social interactions in their inhabited institutions (Hallett and Ventresca 2006).

In keeping with the abductive nature of this dissertation (discussed in the methods chapter), three research questions are posed, where answers successively build on each other. In turn, this enhances our understanding of how organizational members deal with the presence of multiple logics and what implications this has for organizations and hybridity.

### **1. How do individuals relate to multiple logics?**

This first research question will allow us to get initial insights on how organizational members view multiple institutional logics and why they respond to them the way they do, especially in a nonprofit context where organizations are exposed to funding volatility and market forces. From the preliminary insights that have emerged from the iterative conversation between the theoretical framework and the first empirical case (chapter 6), I propose a concept that I call *logic salience*. Thereafter, I develop this proposed concept by exploring it as an analytical tool throughout the remainder of the empirical cases where paradoxes and adversarial forces abound, as actors are exposed to competing logics. The second research question I thus pose is:

### **2. What do individual attachments to logics prompt in terms of responses?**

As organizations, particularly nonprofits that are premised on mission logic, become exposed to multiple logics, it becomes likely that it will prompt varied responses among actors. This second research question is addressed incrementally in two empirical chapters, situated in paradoxical (chapter 7) and adversarial (chapter 8) settings. Answering this question will provide us with an opportunity to identify the mechanisms that arise as the organizational members engage in and respond to multiple logics through their respective salience to a particular logic. The insights from this research question will pave the way for posing the third research question:

### **3. What are the organizational implications of such responses?**

Through this third and final research question, we will be able to gather insights on what embeddedness in institutional logics entails and demonstrate the implications of institutional work in a hybrid context through the organizational



members' logic salience, particularly in maintaining, creating, or changing the institutional order. Through the incremental development of the proposed and emerging concept of logic salience, I wish to generate conceptual and empirical contributions to production of knowledge (van Aken 2001).

After conceptualizing and developing logic salience in hybrid contexts, I will provide a summary of the factors, which shows the interconnectedness of the organizations' external and internal environments, that influence the sustainability of market alternatives or the persistence of aid-dependence. This summary then sets up for a more detailed account of the actions carried out by the organizations through and as influenced by their members' logic salience, and the outcomes of these actions. This is to advance our understanding of the challenges and opportunities involved as organizations strive for financial sustainability through managing the concomitant competing sets of values and logics from combining multiple forms.

The insights derived from empirically studying these research questions are to contribute to developing research on institutional logics, hybridity, and the viability of the hybrid form in and beyond the nonprofit context. It is also anticipated to provide guidance for the works and decisions of practitioners and policymakers and highlight its relevance to a broader society. The core aims of this dissertation are thus:

- 1) a theoretical quest to articulate how individuals working in nonprofit organizations engage with multiple logics and, in so doing, contribute to developing theory on hybrid organizations, thereby also shaping institutions in the organizational field, and
- 2) a pragmatic commitment to contribute with insights that can be useful for managing hybrid organizations or in hybrid organizing.

The above aims will be addressed from the perspective of individuals and groups of individuals in the nonprofit organizations that are part of this study. This thesis therefore involves organizations that are all nonprofits, and at the same time, some that also regard themselves as non-governmental organizations (namely those in the donor-partner relationships). It means that other organizations that are constituted as social enterprises, or private organizations that profile themselves as mission-driven, or organizations with a pronounced social mission but are run as

private enterprises are not part of this thesis. For the level of analysis and information on these organizations, and the findings, see the method chapter (4) and the empirical chapters (5–8), respectively.

Given the nonprofit sector's context – being premised on a social mission and not on economic goals, I would like to engage the readers with what perturbs me theoretically, as quoted earlier: is there really no contradiction in running nonprofits as for-profits? What prompts organizational members' responses, and why is it relevant for the organizations themselves and society in general? All things considered, it is as important to simultaneously reflect on the factors behind the inroad of business into the nonprofit sector. Is this really a novel innovation for addressing social needs, or could this merely be another product of neoliberalism, such as that of the entry of new public management into the public sector? If so, what do these issues entail and why should we care? These issues will generally be touched upon in various parts of this study but are addressed more closely in chapter 2.

## Research outline

This Introduction chapter sets the stage, where I present how I was able to identify, during the early stage of my fieldwork for this study, the question that inspired me to pursue finding some understanding of a theoretical question that perturbs me: that there is no contradiction in running a nonprofit as for-profit (see Boschee 1998). On the contrary, I would like to argue that there *can* be a contradiction and therefore, more research is needed to explore its nature and implications. Also, as discussed, individual responses to this phenomenon are of high relevance if we are to understand the sustainability of combining logics in various mission-premised organizations, consisting of individuals and groups of individuals who inevitably have to contend with the competing demands of these logics. This introductory literature review continues in chapters 2 and 3, together with the theoretical foundations of the study.

In chapter 2, I provide a background of earlier studies of nonprofits and the various influences from different sectors and concepts, which have ushered the

nonprofits into the marketized and professionally-managed world that they are in today. In chapter 3, I turn my focus to the study's theoretical framework, which involves institutional logics and hybridity, specifically on how to understand hybridity and the logics of market and mission, the role of agency in the institutional environment and finally, how actors respond to multiple logics.

The methodological considerations in chapter 4 explain the approaches and research design which I employed as well as the research process that I went through to be able to deliver the objectives I set out to achieve for this study. More importantly, from the negotiation of meanings around logics (alternatively referred to here as logics negotiation), which is central to the empirical studies, I present the emergence of logic salience as a concept in greater detail. I elaborate on how and why logic salience becomes an analytical tool to study the remainder of the empirical material.

Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 comprise the empirical body, and where the 'first-level analysis' or the preliminary analysis within each case takes place; this is explained further in the methods chapter. In chapter 5, I introduce the organizations that are part of this study, with a particular focus on the funding landscape that these organizations are exposed to and situated in, in order to establish the context. These organizations are Skyddsvärnet (Sweden), Afrikagrupperna (Sweden) with its partner organizations Wellness Foundation (South Africa) and Surplus People Project (South Africa), and Individuell Människohjälp (Sweden).

In Chapter 6, I present the first case organization Skyddsvärnet, where its government funding cessation prompted the organization to become increasingly market-oriented, which created tension and resistance within the organization. From looking at how the respondents negotiate meanings between multiple logics, the empirical insights from this case, which were later found to be of similar relevance to the remainder of the empirical cases, have led to logic salience as an emerging concept. Here, the first research question is addressed. With the discovered potential of logic salience to study how actors respond to multiple logics, I explore and develop the concept incrementally in two empirical stages.

In chapter 7, I explore logic salience as an analytical tool in paradoxical settings in order to understand how market logic plays out in organizations in a Swedish-South African development partnership, which is predominantly mission-premised and aid-dependent. This incremental concept development continues

in chapter 8, where logic salience is explored in adversarial settings, where Individuell Människohjälp and its fairtrade enterprise are increasingly exposed to tensions between market and mission logics that divide the respondents into separate camps. Logic salience thus becomes both an input and output of this concept's exploration and development. In these empirical chapters, I zoom-in on and analyze the responses of the organizational members to the hybridity attempts brought about by the marketization and professional management of NPOs as an answer to the current funding climate. The empirical findings from chapters 7 and 8 bring about logic salience and its properties, which provide insights on what logic salience prompts in terms of individual responses, in paradoxical and adversarial settings, and hence incrementally answer the second research question.

Based on these findings and the answers to the first two research questions, a synthesis of the cross-case analyses, and thus a 'second-level analysis' (explained further in the methods chapter), is then undertaken in chapter 9 with the purpose of bringing together all the empirical insights, namely the organizations' funding challenges and their responses to them, the interconnectedness of the internal and the external environments, the analytical currency of logic salience, as well as its categories. Chapter 9 also provides a discussion on how and why individuals respond to logics and what the concept of logic salience contributes in relation to the institutional logics approach and institutional work.

Continuing with the second-level analysis, chapter 10 discusses and concludes on the opportunities, challenges, and implications of market orientation in the nonprofit sector, particularly as an espoused sustainable alternative to aid funding with the concomitant outcomes for the organizations and hybridity in order to address the third and final research question. The chapter presents the types of hybridity and it also provides a discussion on whether there is a contradiction in running nonprofits as for-profits and by implication the possible viability or sustainability of market-oriented alternatives to aid-funding.

Finally, in chapter 11, I provide a succinct summary of how all the research questions are answered, followed by a synopsis of the dissertation's contributions, which, in sum, addresses the aims of this dissertation. A note on the abductive writing process, reflections, practical implications, limitations, and future research brings this thesis, *the book*, to its completion.



## *Chapter 2*

# The role of the nonprofit sector and its context

The institutional context of this dissertation is the increasing funding scarcity in the nonprofit, third sector.<sup>1</sup> This can be traced to decreasing access to resources, on the one hand, and increasing societal challenges, on the other hand. These factors have intensified competition between organizations. Although the problems and solutions associated with funding challenges can seem to us as a contemporary problem, traces of the proposition in running nonprofits as for-profits (Boschee 1998) can also be discerned in what has become known as the beyond-aid scenario (BAS), as earlier discussed. It has been argued that the urgent and practical reason why nonprofit organizations must consider life in a beyond-aid scenario or a future without aid results from the decreasing volume and redistribution of aid funding (Fowler 2000b).

It has also been argued that the unsatisfactory results of several decades of aid-funded programs partly explain the decreasing level of funds for disposal (Fowler 2000b). BAS is an idea lyrically endorsed by a number of scholars as a sustainable alternative funding scheme to non-governmental organizations' (NGOs) traditional aid-dependence (for relevant studies, see Janus, Klingebiel and Paulo 2014; Philips 2013). In this scenario, NGOs associated with international development face a future where they can no longer rely on a system of international concessional aid as a framework for their role, work, and continuity. Here, they have to embrace commercial activities to compensate for losses of revenue from government aid programs and other funding sources (Fowler

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<sup>1</sup> The third sector, where nonprofit organizations belong, is a conceptual alignment with our understanding of the first and second sectors, namely the public and the private sectors (Viterna, Clough and Clarke 2015), respectively. More on this later in the chapter.

2000b). This prompts reflections on alternative non-governmental development thinking, practice, and financing in the 21st century. These are not premised on aid as a redistributive system providing international economic and social subsidy (Fowler 2000a).

For a similar funding reason, nonprofit actors have begun to cast their interest on the social enterprise field (Germak and Singh 2009). This development is relevant and interesting, in the sense that existing nonprofit organizations that are typically premised on pursuing a social mission (Ebrahim, Battilana and Mair 2014) have started to employ market values and principles (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004), which is how the social enterprise (SE) model works. This interest is also attributable to the purported capacity potential of social enterprises to generate sustainable resources to support their organizational mission and ensure long-term survival, the greater program flexibility that earned income bestows, and the reduction of their overall dependence on donor support (Alter 2002; Boschee and McClurg 2003). Despite this purported potential, there is an apparent uncertainty as to whether this novel combination is applicable to existing NPOs.

A market is “not simply an allocative mechanism but also an institutionally specific cultural system for generating and measuring value” (Friedland and Alford 1991:234) and is “an area or arena in which commercial dealings are conducted,” where there is an exchange between products/services and money, with profitability as the main goal (en.oxforddictionaries.com). In other words, the market has become a central institutional system of exchange, where value is produced and measured for profitability purposes. On the other hand, mission is “a strongly felt aim, ambition, or calling,” enacted by people or organizations with the ‘common good’ as the main goal rather than economic gain (ibid.). I regard the beyond-aid scenario in this dissertation as a stage where nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations are no longer aid-dependent and rely instead on entrepreneurial, business, or market-oriented activities to generate income and are able to fund their operations intended for the common good.

There are those, however, whose views on the ‘SE model’ (Reilly 2016) are less enthusiastic (see, for example, Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Evans, Richmond and Shields 2005), making the nonprofit/for-profit phenomenon in the nonprofit sector contested and therefore all the more interesting and significant as an area of study. According to Eikenberry (2009), there is a growing strand of literature that is critical of the marketization of nonprofit and voluntary organizations (such

as Dart 2004; Edwards 2008; Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Foster and Bradach 2005; King 2006; Weisbrod 2004). Weisbrod (2004) argues that overly commercialized NPOs call into question the validity of their nonprofit status because the rationale behind tax breaks is that nonprofits render goods and services that are valuable for society, which no for-profit company would provide as they would be unprofitable.

Commercial activities and other revenue maximizing behaviors, therefore, are a distraction for nonprofits from providing unprofitable public goods. Research has shown that contrary to how they might first appear, social enterprises tend to be more complicated and less profitable (Eikenberry 2009). Foster and Bradach note that the possibility of achieving real financial returns is very low and conclude that:

Despite the hype, earned income accounts for only a small share of funding in most nonprofit domains, and few of the ventures that have been launched actually make money . . . commercial ventures can distract nonprofits' managers from their core social missions and, in some cases, even subvert those missions. (Foster and Bradach 2005:94)

The above thus suggests that a high degree of interdependence between an organization and its environment where it operates (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) is inevitable and contributes to how organizations respond to various influences. In the present study, what an organization does, in turn, influences the context for its members, particularly on how its organizational members relate and respond to multiple institutional logics. Inasmuch as the new funding proposition is appealing, considering the organizations' financial stagnation for decades, I am curious, as earlier raised, about whether there really is no contradiction here. What can we learn from how the organizational members studied here respond to such developments? How do they view and enact the means to achieve their ends (Waks 1999)<sup>2</sup> and why should we care? As a result of the criticism directed at the decades-long dependency of many NPOs on state aid, a new competitive funding environment has emerged, including what is believed as its strong potential in making these organizations self-sustaining.

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<sup>2</sup> Means are causal conditions employed to achieve intended ends – their value lies solely in their power to produce ends; they are things, good merely as means (instrumental values). Ends, on the other hand, possess value in themselves; they are things, good in themselves (intrinsic values) (Waks 1999:595, citing Dewey's philosophy).



Insofar as there is a lack of agreement on what name to ascribe to the sector that is outside of the public and private sectors, this is addressed first in this chapter. Such a discussion attempts to provide some clarity on the structural (sectoral) level of analysis inasmuch as the empirical data in this dissertation suggests that the respondents have to contend with tensions in the logics that are embedded in the different spheres of society. The literature review proceeds by walking us through the influences of neoliberalism, where the increasing fixation on applying market principles, which has crept into the public sector, has also found its way into the nonprofit sector. This is highly relevant due to the funding scarcity being experienced by nonprofit actors, which makes them exposed to a more commercial-oriented interaction with governmental agencies through contract-based collaborations and competition for tenders with for-profit actors, or performance- and accounting-based reporting of mission delivery for funding received.

Since neoliberalism is usually regarded as a global phenomenon, its influences on societal developments are accounted for here from a broader perspective, but also include accounts that are relevant in the European, Scandinavian, or Swedish contexts. These influences (global and external) will give us an understanding of how marketization affects organizations and their members (local and internal), showing the interconnectedness of societal and organizational change. The chapter then gives an account of the nonprofit sector's distinctive value base and role in the welfare state, where they are enjoined to acquire resources and competencies in a marketized world in order to break away from aid-dependence and hence achieve financial sustainability. The chapter ends with a brief summary.

## Chasing a name in elusive contexts

The terms third sector organizations (TSOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) are at times used interchangeably, and these organizations are also interchangeably referred to as belonging to the Third Sector or Nonprofit Sector, which despite their distinctiveness from each other at the same time point to their commonality. Notwithstanding widespread use, the definition of civil society remains unclear (Setianto 2007) or that “there is no sufficiently complex theory that is available today” (Cohen and Arato 1992:vii) that can address this ‘naming’

challenge. According to Setianto (2007), some argue that factors involve central differences that exist between civil society in the developed and developing countries (Scott 2003), or that civil society varies at the conceptual level, because it is historically bounded; hence, different societies have different concepts (Rosenblum and Post 2002), and therefore result in the vagueness of the terminology and the variations on what it means for various thinkers (Beem 1996). Still, others contend that civil society must be positioned carefully between the state and the market (Suwondo 2003), otherwise civil society may weaken the state and provide opportunities for the dominant class to control society. This is because if the dominant class takes control, the civil society will be regarded as nothing more than a space for advocating the principal cause of the dominant class – the *laissez-faire* approach to markets (Setianto 2007:4).

The concept of civil society has multiple meanings. Walzer (1990:1) broadly defines civil society as “the space of uncoerced human association and also the set of relational networks—formed for the sake of family, faith, interest and ideology—that fill this space.” Further, civil society is “a sphere of our communal life in which we answer together the most important questions: what is our purpose, what is the right way to act, and what is the common good. In short, it is the sphere of society that is concerned with moral formation and with ends, not simply administration or the maximizing of means” (Elshtain 1999:21). According to Anheier (2005), there are many different definitions of civil society and although there is much overlap between the core conceptual components, there is nonetheless little agreement on its precise meaning. This is an argument that is similar to Setianto’s (2007) on the unclear definition of civil society. Anheier further argues that the modern civil society is the sum of institutions, organizations, and individuals located between the family, the state, and the market, where people associate voluntarily to advance common interests, and the nonprofit sector provides the organizational infrastructure of the civil society (p. 9).

Civil society, however, as portrayed by Gramsci, is an arena separate from the state and market, in which ideological hegemony is contested, which implies an array of social organizations and community organizations that both challenge and uphold the existing order (Setianto 2007). Hence, this exacerbates the confusion around the boundaries and commonalities between the terminologies used to describe the organizations that belong to a sector beyond the public and market spheres.

Nonprofits, on the other hand, form a third set of institutions that are private, voluntary, and operate for the public benefit; and similar to what Setianto notes above, this third set describes organizations and activities between the institutional complexes of government, state, or public sector, and the for-profit or business sector (Anheier 2005:11).

The prominence of state-based solutions from 1945 to the mid-1970s (the era of the welfare state in the North and centralized planning in the South), and consequently the inroad of market-based solutions from the late 1970s to the 1990s (Reagan's economics era in the North, and the 'structural adjustments' in the South), have significantly shifted the framing of civil society. Due to the unfavorable effects of too much state intervention and the human consequences of an over-reliance on the market, a new approach that addressed the consequences of both state and market failures thus became coveted (Edwards 2014:11). This new approach that garnered strength in the 1990s and 2000s went by many names – including the 'third way' and 'compassionate conservatism,' but it is built on a central tenet for overcoming social and economic problems through a partnership between all three sectors of society working together – public, private, and civic. This partnership project aimed at achieving social progress, where civil society as associational life was central, became identified with building "societies that are civil" (ibid.).

Edwards (2014) argues that associational life, by itself, is unable to cement the foundations of the good society. Bringing them together would be possible through a deeper commitment to equal citizenship and democratic self-government through the consensus-making functions of the public sphere. Hence, the success of each of our three models of civil society is dependent on its interaction with each other (Edwards 2014), where the modern civil society is the sum of all parts between the spheres (Anheier 2005). The public sphere, thus, provides spaces through which civic action can be connected and scaled up (Edwards 2014).

Anheier (2004) argues that it is important for the *third sector* in Europe to be viewed in the context of more fundamental developments that are ongoing in European societies. The sector needs to be seen in conjunction with the changes in the state, the structure of the economy, and the composition of local communities, including the role played by churches and other faith-based organizations. Anheier also contends that some organizations will move closer or

completely to the market field, while others that are increasingly close to governments, such as NGOs in international development context, will, overtime, become more agency-like and resemble public bureaucracies. In addition, some will remain as traditional nonprofit organizations. In a relevant study that concerns the Scandinavian countries, the varied and yet clearly interrelated terminologies can be found (*italics added*):

But the fact that the public sector is so extensive makes it crucial to analyse the relationship between the state and the *third sector* in order to understand the specific character of the Scandinavian *third sector* (...); This introduction gives a broad overview of the common heritage of the Scandinavian countries before emphasizing the historical origins and development of the *voluntary* and *non-profit organisations*. (Klausen and Selle 1996:100)

The difficulty in defining and ascribing a particular name to the sector and its organizations can be further illustrated in the following excerpts from Wijkström (1997, pages 626 and 628, respectively; *italics added*):

In this article a number of measures of a Swedish *third, nonprofit* or *voluntary sector* will be presented.

As also identified by Lyons (1996), the most important alternative intellectual discourse to this legal/economic approach in the study of a *third sector* is the maze of literature on *civil society* found in the work of, for example, Keane (1988b) or Cohen and Arato (1992).

Outside of Scandinavia, and Sweden— which is the main geographical context of this dissertation, where the sector and its organizations may differ in context, a similar typology of variations can be seen in the scholarly work. For example, Billis (2010) argues that despite the blurring and apparent diminution of boundaries between the public, private, and third<sup>3</sup> sectors, the sector identity remains powerful and important. In the midst of the current turbulence of institutional change is a sector that is most ill-defined, with no generally agreed upon name, but it is usually known as the ‘nonprofit,’ ‘voluntary,’ ‘community,’ ‘nongovernmental,’ or what Billis and colleagues (2010:9) refer to as ‘the third

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<sup>3</sup> The literature review showed that although these organizations (and this sector) are distinct from the public and private (market) sectors, the plethora of organizational types makes it challenging to have one specific name that adequately characterize a(ny) particular case organization of study.

sector.’ At the same time, there have been efforts to delineate, for instance, nonprofits from civil society:

First, nonprofits are increasingly part of a new public management and a mixed economy of welfare; second, they are seen as central to “civil society-social capital” approaches, specifically the Neo-Tocquevillian emphasis on the nexus between social capital and participation in voluntary associations (...). Where the NPM argument focuses on the service role of nonprofits, the civil society argument emphasizes their social-integrative and participatory function and the contribution they make to community building. (Anheier 2009:1082-85)

In the same paper, Anheier pictures several scenarios, which may serve as markers that different stakeholders, such as the government, opposition, and nonprofit sector representatives, may wish to address to chart deeper policy visions. These scenarios are said to imply different roles for the state, including:

The active state regards contributions to public benefit (other than pure public goods) as a task of civil society, as part of a self-organizing, decentralized, and highly connected modern society. The direct state contribution to public benefit will be limited, and nonprofits, along with other private actors, will be called on to make substantial efforts to mobilize monetary and other resources for the common good. (Anheier 2009:1092)

What can be surmised from the above excerpts is that, indeed, it is challenging to provide a specific label for the organizations (namely, nonprofit and nongovernmental) that belong to the sector (namely, third and nonprofit) that clearly belong to the sphere of civil society. An interesting point that can be derived from Anheier’s (2009) piece is that the service role vis-à-vis social-integrative and participatory and community building functions of nonprofits are highly dependent on which principle these characteristics are based on: NPM or civil society arguments. As discussed in various parts of this dissertation, the public sector – influenced by NPM, increasingly puts emphasis on effectiveness and measurable results of its contracted collaborators, including NPOs. This, thus, partly explains the increasing interest by practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in combining the logics of the social mission and market, a model that has gained prominence through social entrepreneurship. This, in effect, challenges the role and distinctive character of nonprofits according to civil society arguments.

Therefore, the usage and understanding of civil society throughout European and Western history, as argued by Ehrenberg (1999), has been shifting over time; furthermore, the term has been assigned with different contents and different roles in society, evolving from a two-polar, to a three-polar, and then to a four-polar model of society (Wijkström 2004). This four-polar model consists of the nonprofit sector (the sphere of civil society), the household sector (the sphere of family and friends), the business sector (the sphere of trade and industry), and the public sector (the sphere of the state) (ibid.). The discussion earlier, which differs slightly from Wijkström's four-polar model, thus, better serves the purposes of this dissertation, where civil society can be regarded as the sphere to which all sectors (public, private and civic) belong.

Viterna, Clough, and Clarke (2015:174) argue, on the other hand, that civil society is an omnibus concept as it has been imbued with several distinct meanings: a normative meaning (civil society as civilized), a functional meaning (civil society as democratizing), and a structural meaning (civil society as a third sector). They propose in empirical research that 'civil society' should be replaced with the structural 'third sector' concept to narrow the gap between the actors that are being studied and the theoretical construct that they are supposed to represent. By so doing, the third sector becomes conceptually aligned with our understanding of the first and second sectors (namely the public and the business/market), and which enhances our efforts to compare findings across cases and to develop theories.<sup>4</sup>

The civil society debate will continue to divide scholars in fundamental ways (Edwards 2014) and to map everything that has influenced our view of civil society today or a society that is civil is difficult, to say the least. Edwards (2014), therefore, tried to shed some light by giving a historical account of the three contrasting schools that have considerable influence on the forming of and disagreements on what a civil society is, or is not. These contrasting schools of thought are: civil society as *part* of society (the neo-Tocquevillian school with a focus on associational life); civil society as a *kind* of society (characterized by positive norms and values, as well as successes in achieving particular social goals); and civil society as the public sphere. The first school, however, dominates the debate, and is being

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<sup>4</sup> For a more extensive argument on the merits of empirically studying the sector through the structural third sector approach, as opposed to civil society approach, see Viterna et al. (2015).

conflated with the second school through an assumption that a healthy associational life contributes to, or even produces, the ‘good society’ in predictable ways. In this debate, the public sphere is usually ignored; thus, Edwards (2014) raises his critiques and arguments for a sphere where one sector does not preclude the other. This echoes with what Anheier (2005) argues about modern civil society being the sum of institutions, organizations, and individuals, and can thus be interpreted in such a way that each and all institutions, organizations, and even individual initiatives are encompassed in and by civil society. A pithy synthesis of the key aspects of this discussion is provided in table 1.

**Table 1:** The nonprofit/third sector—civil society debate: A summary from the literature.

Source	Nonprofit/Third sector	Civil society
<b>Anheier 2005</b>	provides the organizational structure of civil society; a third set of institutions that are private, voluntary, and operate for the public benefit	the sum of all institutions, organizations, and individuals between the family, state, and the market to advance common interests
<b>Gramsci: Setianto 2007</b>		an arena that is separate from the state and market; social and community organizations that both challenge and uphold the existing order
<b>Anheier 2009</b> New Public Management	espouses mixed economy of welfare; service role of nonprofits	
<b>Anheier 2009</b> Neo-Tocquevillian		emphasis on social-integrative and community building, voluntary associational aspects
<b>Viterna et al. 2015</b> Normative meaning Functional meaning Structural meaning	→	as: - civilized - democratizing - a third sector
<b>Edwards 2014</b>		as: - part of society (the Neo-Tocquevillian with a focus on associational life) - a kind of society (characterized by positive norms and values and the achievement of social goals) - the public sphere (usually ignored, but premised on the idea that one sector does not preclude the other; similar to Anheier 2005)
<b>Salamon in Salamon and Anheier 1992;</b> <b>Billis 2010; Viterna et al. 2015</b>	the space between the state and market being the third sector	
All three sectors of society are interdependent in creating a good modern society that is civil (Edwards 2014; Anheier 2005). Civil society is also a public sphere where political, economic, and social activities transpire and interact (Edwards 2014).		

Inasmuch as the empirical context in this dissertation is organizations that can be viewed as not directly belonging to the state and the market (Anheier 2005), I use ‘third sector’ here as an overarching concept, as suggested by Viterna et al. (2015), as an alternative or complement to the nonprofit sector (hence, I use nonprofit sector, third sector, or nonprofit third sector interchangeably). However, I do not discount or exclude the normative and functioning meanings ascribed to civil society (and its organizations). It is because of the overlap of such meanings, and the overlap between the core conceptual components as Anheier (2005) argues, especially related to the contributions of, for instance, NPOs and NGOs in, among others, building a democratic society or contributing to the common good. It means that the variations and commonalities are acknowledged, and civil society organizations (CSOs), nonprofit organizations (NPOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which are all not-for-profit, are all third sector organizations. In short, these are the organizations that belong to and are part of the third sector or the nonprofit sector.

I acknowledge the argument that the spaces occupied by the various organizations and individual initiatives with social goals belong to the civil society sphere. However, our interest and hope for a good society, for the common good, are fundamentally linked to the interplay between all three sectors of society working together – public, private, and civic, which is the best way to overcome social and economic challenges (Edwards 2014:11) and which comprise a modern society that is civil. As Setianto (2007) notes, between the state and the market lies civil society, where state interests and market interests are contested; and that this space between the state and the market is termed by Salamon (Salamon and Anheier 1992), referred to by Billis (2010), and suggested by Viterna et al. (2015), as the third sector.

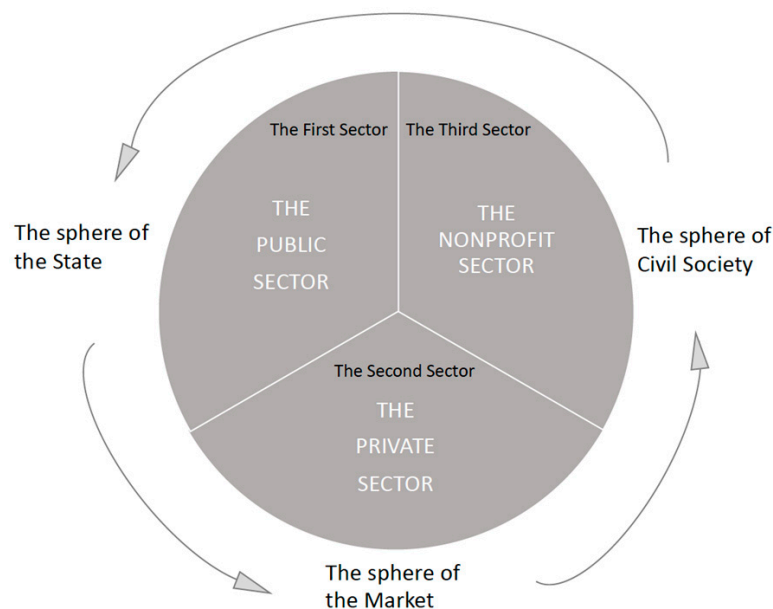
My take on what Edwards (2014) and Anheier (2005) offer, in combination with the discussion in this dissertation on how to frame civil society, is that the three sectors of society – the public (the first sector), private/market (the second sector), and the civic (third sector), are interconnected with and are dependent on each other in creating a good society. Civil society, therefore, encompasses not only the organizations (as represented by the nonprofit organizations studied in this dissertation), associations, and individual initiatives with explicit social goals, but it is also a public space (Edwards 2014), where shared experiences of public and political life underpin public deliberation. This public sphere where various



activities – whether they are political, economic, or social – transpire and interact, is hence part of the sphere of civil society.

Further to the synthesis provided in table 1, I illustrate in figure 1 how I interpret this literature discussion on the various organizations (and other activities) in the third sector, in relation to and separate from the first and second sectors. Without a disregard of the sectors' interdependence, this separation signals the institutional logic in which each sector is embedded. It elucidates the source of possible tensions that organizations and individual actors in the third sector have to contend with as they are ushered into applying market principles that define the private sector, as well as meeting efficiency demands that characterize the public sector's new public management.

This model, simplified and adapted from Wijkström (2004), fits this dissertation where the third sector organizations studied are more specifically regarded as nonprofit and non-governmental organizations. Accordingly, the sector can be regarded as the nonprofit sector and/or third sector (and conversely, its organizations as TSOs, NPOs, or NGOs), apart from other terms that are explicitly used in the literature, such as civil society and civil society organizations. The organizations studied in this dissertation, irrespective of the degree of hybridity of their goals, belong to the third/nonprofit sector, as illustrated in figure 1.



**Figure 1:** How the sectors are referred to in this dissertation and for its purposes, where modern civil society is the sum of all parts between the spheres (Anheier 2005; Edwards 2014).

In many countries, including Sweden, attention and interest on activities organized by nonprofits have increased from the 1990s and the early years of 2000 (Wijkström and Einarsson 2011). Between 1992 and 2002, the number of nonprofit organizations has grown and today, they play a vital role in Swedish society, in terms of variety of organizations, not least in economic terms that include the number of hired employees, with an approximated turnover of 140 billion Swedish kronor and around 145,000 employees in the early 2000s (ibid.).

Despite the increasing research interest in the nonprofit sector (Ahrne, Roman and Franzén 2003) and its expansion and ongoing changes, particularly in the context of Sweden, the existing knowledge and empirical studies are still limited (Wijkström and Einarsson 2011). Wijkström and Einarsson's (2011) interest lies in questions that address the way and through which fundamental models the nonprofit organizations will be organized in the future. Such questions that probably affect the organizations themselves are raised from management and organizational perspectives, but they argue that these questions are essential even in a broader societal perspective. The interdependence of the sectors in providing welfare services has spurred extensive research on the three institutional sectors and how they address different tasks (Steinberg 2006) but most of the empirical work that has been done so far is not from a Scandinavian context, rather from an American context. Therefore, modes of organizing and special privileges, such as nonprofits' tax-exempt status, become greatly associated with their broader social and/or charitable purposes (Renz 2010).

In the Scandinavian context, a need to strike a balance between equivalent service quality and a sufficient variety in the services has become apparent in order to maintain support for government-funded services through people's taxes (Sivesind, Traetteberg and Saglie 2017). Thus, this has a particular relevance to the increasing pressure on the sector to become entrepreneurial or to generate its own income beyond aid or government funding.

Although the focus of this study is on the micro-level, the changes in the way that nonprofit or third sector organizations<sup>5</sup> are organized and managed have wider societal implications. The questions on some properties and propensities that may arise at the micro-level can give some insights as to how these are related in a larger

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<sup>5</sup> Adding to the plethora of names, the sector is also called *idéburen* (idea-based) sector in Swedish.

level within the third sector or other sectors where similar situations may occur (Barnes 2001).

Therefore, from the above discussion and for the purposes of this dissertation where the studied organizations are composed of nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), I define nonprofit organizations (including NGOs) as organizations that belong to the nonprofit sector and/or third sector, which are private and organized, self-governing, not-for-profit, and value-based organizations. The values that are distinctive for NPOs include solidarity and voluntarism that serve as a counter force to the purported coercive authority of the state and the market-based profit rationale, and contribute in making a society that is civil. Now, I turn to the influences and role of neoliberalism in the current changes that have previously entered the public sector through New Public Management (NPM).

## Neoliberalism and NPM in the nonprofit sector

The word ‘neoliberalism’ stands for new forms of political-economic governance based on the extension of market relationships (Larner 2006). It promotes market-led economic and social restructuring. The neoliberal regime shift in Britain and the US in the late 1970s was associated with the initial rise of neoliberalism as a wide-ranging economic and political strategy. Neoliberal policy adjustments during the 1980s and into the 1990s were initiated in an increasing number of coordinated economies, including the social democratic economies of Scandinavia. With the collapse of the Soviet bloc, Western neoliberal forces and international institutions under US leadership, with strong British backing, launched in 1989-1990 their program for a neoliberal system transformation for the post-socialist economies in Eastern and Central Europe (Jessop 2002).

The economic growth of the previous decades slowed down in the 1980s and 1990s,<sup>6</sup> and the limitations of large and bureaucratic welfare states became apparent (Brandsen, Verschuere and Trommel 2014). Another ‘kind’ of

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<sup>6</sup> An effort to locate the geographical scope of this economic decline had failed. A fair assumption would be that it involves countries in the ‘west’ or industrialized part of the world, based on the presence of ‘welfare states’.

government was argued for by an increasing number of observers and policymakers under the umbrella of NPM, where a more business-like governmental system includes performance management and measurement, competition and outsourcing (Brandsen et al. 2014). The idea of making the public sector more efficient and cost-effective makes NPM attractive to policymakers and governments across the world (Lapsley 2009).

The methods and values of the market are being increasingly adopted by the public sector to guide policy creation and management (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004). The neoliberal governance paradigm operates in public administration through NPM with two basic streams: managerialism and modes of control. Managerialism is defined, among others, as involving continuous increases in efficiency, a labor force disciplined to productivity, and a clear implementation of the professional management role (Pollitt 1990, 2-3 in Evans et al. 2005). Managerialism “builds on an instrumental logic that requires an agentic and progress-oriented approach to the ideas of how to structure and govern organizations and of how people are defined, related and expected to perform” (Hvenmark 2013:227). This professional management, or managerialism, according to Leung (2002:63), has “become a dominant ideology” with a pronounced focus on efficiency where there are clear objectives and strategies, performance indicators, and outcome measurement (see also Terry 1998).

Extensive changes have occurred in the structure of government outsourcing as a result of the NPM movement, such as the governmental shift away from using grants to using contracts and vouchers (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004). It has resulted in an increased expectation for NPOs to improve performance measurement/ efficiency, effectiveness, managerialism, and quality in return for the governmental subsidies, and to compete with commercial suppliers. Efficient coordination of activities within organizations is therefore believed to be necessary through professional managers knowledgeable in management techniques (Srinivas 2009), creating expectations for NPOs to act according to managerialist principles or to be business-like (Meyer, Buber and Aghamanoukjan 2013). This movement has meant that the NPOs’ trust-based legitimacy as nonprofit seeking suppliers of common goods is not taken for granted any longer (Brandsen et al. 2014); hence, government agencies no longer grant contracts to providers based on what they are but on what they can do (Ryan 1999:129) and how efficiently they can do it (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004). As Hwang and Powell (2009)

contend: “widespread efforts to professionalize are likely to have the effect, perhaps unintended, of making a heterogeneous collection of organizations into a distinct, coherent sector with a common set of organizational routines.” For instance, the nonprofit–state collaboration in the provision of social services has led many organizations to lose contact with their traditional member groups, and therefore their original legitimacy.

The public sector thus plays a major role in the evolution of the nonprofit sector from its traditional role into increasingly market-oriented (welfare) service providers, especially through the shift from core funding to competitive tenders and contracts, which are subject to competition and performance measurement. NPOs are, therefore, under pressure to demonstrate their effectiveness according to an extensive range of performance metrics in the social service area, where most results take time before they become visible and measurable. Moreover, they also need to manage more complicated tasks within the organization (internally) and meet the sometimes competing (external) expectations that arise from different funding sources or sectors and the broader environment that includes private markets and socio-political domain (Osula and Ng 2014).

Many parts of Europe, including the Scandinavian countries, are not immune to these developments. Today, it can be seen that market-like types of governance, in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, increasingly regulate relations between public contracting authorities and welfare services providers – from nonprofit to for-profit and public sectors (Sivesind 2017). In Sweden, for example, the opportunities for NPOs to engage in the delivery of welfare services have increased in recent years in line with the changes in national policies and the privatization of the welfare sector (Arvidson and Linde 2021).

These developments are claimed to be detrimental to the role of government and democratic accountability. This is also claimed to be disadvantageous to the role of the nonprofit sector as value guardians and voice of the voiceless, and which can lead to mission drift. As nonprofits, for example, are spending significantly greater amounts of resources chasing government contracts and then administering the contracted programs, they become inevitably financially reliant on the government and are more likely to be in a compromised position to voice public criticism as part of their advocacy (Evans et al. 2005) in giving voice for the voiceless (Taylor 2002). Common to these changes is the apparent influence of neoliberalism, where market orientation is at its core.

The modern world's "ideology that views all aspects of human society as a kind of market" is so pervasive (Zimmerman and Dart 1998:16), making us immersed in the discourse of the market, so that "we are unable to imagine anything else" (Jameson 1991:207). Hence, we may ask ourselves, is this a scenario we, as societal members, want and are ready to embrace? Robert Ware eloquently captures the dangers of this neoliberal market-oriented approach to governance:

Communities are the place for public moral activity, while markets are the place for private economic activity. Communities, at their best, foster recognition, care and co-operation. Markets foster anonymity, independence and competition. Communities are considered the place for openness, security and trust. Markets are the place for secrecy, insecurity and distrust...Communities look for dignity and equality. Markets look for fitness and success...The problem is that our society is awash with markets but in need of substantive community with public values. (Ware 1999:307)

As argued by Edwards and Hulme (1996:967-8), as NPOs enter in a contractual relationship with funding agencies that emphasize short-term quantitative outputs, downward accountability is most likely to be weakened (Neville 2010). NPM has been criticized for its adherence to the application of business-like approaches to public policy implementation and delivery of services, despite increasing evidence of its inapplicability (Flynn 2002; Rhodes 1997). This line of criticism led to a new approach in the early 2000s called New Public Governance (NPG) that posits a plural state where multiple interdependent actors contribute to the delivery of public services, and a pluralist state where multiple processes inform policymaking (Almog-Bar 2018:344). Governance includes the idea that there should be multiple actors beyond government in the provision of public services, including nonprofit actors (see Evans et al. 2005) considering nonprofits' proximity to distinctive user groups, expertise in mobilizing volunteers, their promotion of social values, and a sense of community and activism (Bode and Brandsen 2014; Pestoff and Brandsen 2010).

"Business model" or market mechanism, therefore, is the new paradigm being promoted as a superior means also applicable to social policy (Means, Morbey and Smith 2002). This allows the state to introduce competitive tendering and contracting with aims that include greater efficiency and risk redistribution away from the government (Walsh 1995; see also Graefe 2006). These influences lead us to the next section on the sector's marketization.

## Marketization of the nonprofit sector

Nonprofit organizations, premised on achieving a social mission (Ebrahim et al. 2014), have increasingly adopted the private market's approaches and values (Weisbrod 1998) leading to what Salamon (1997) calls marketization (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004) and rationalization of the third sector over the past decades (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Hwang and Powell 2009; Ebrahim et al. 2014). Charities have generated a substantial portion of their revenues from the sales of goods and services, especially in the arts, education, and healthcare sectors around the 1980s (Child 2010) and they have experienced a growing shift toward employing professional managers and the adoption of formalized practices, such as strategic planning, independent financial auditing, and performance measurement (Hwang and Powell 2009; Ebrahim et al. 2014).

This sector-wide change is characterized by hybridity, where the social mission is achieved through the use of market practices (Mair and Marti 2006; Kerlin 2009; Santos 2012), but the organizations are neither typical charities nor typical businesses. These organizations rely on markets as their primary revenue source, instead of donations or grants to sustain themselves and to scale their operations in order to achieve their primary objective of delivering social value to the beneficiaries of the social mission. Hence, these hybrid organizations combine elements of both charity and business (Battilana and Lee 2014; Besharov and Smith 2014; Mair, Mayer and Lutz 2015; see also Ebrahim et al. 2014).

According to Weisbrod (1998:4), "contrary to the common view, nonprofits are far from independent of private enterprise and government. They compete and collaborate with these other organizations in countless ways in their efforts to finance themselves, to find workers, managers, and other resources to produce their outputs, and to develop markets for those outputs." The marketization of nonprofit services is perhaps the dominant force that is shaping the nonprofit sector in several countries, and most clearly in the US (Anheier 2005). Integrating market principles into nonprofit operations can improve organizations' revenue situation, but it also comes with some unclear consequences (Young 2003; see also Skelcher and Smith 2015). It is argued, for instance, that despite the promising potential of social enterprises for the creation of both social and commercial value (Sabeti 2011), the focus on their social missions is endangered by their revenue-generating efforts, a risk called mission drift (Jones 2007; Weisbrod 2004).

Such a risk for organizations and their workforces of losing sight of their purpose and values in their organizational survival and efficiency pursuit has long been high up on the agenda of organization studies scholarship (Selznick 1949; Weber 1952). This concern, particularly regarding the internal means by which governing boards and managers ensure that organizations remain focused on their social goals, has also been central to research on organizational governance in the social sector (Drucker 1989; Chait, Ryan and Taylor 2005; Cornforth and Brown 2014). “Organizations are driven to incorporate the practices and procedures defined by prevailing rationalized concepts of organizational work and institutionalized society” (Meyer and Rowan 1977:340). Therefore, to understand the internal behaviors and practices of NPOs, one must understand the external environmental constraints and their pressures on an organization. NPOs are thus compelled to take on the methods and values of the market (such as competing for contracts or the practice of social entrepreneurship) (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004). Marketization, therefore, shows the simultaneous pull between the financial directions of operating within a market economy and pursuing a social mission.

## **Benefits and challenges**

There are several benefits from marketization trends that NPOs receive, such as more reliable resource streams, greater efficiency and innovation, better targeting of services to client needs, increased legitimacy, and possibly greater accountability (The Aspen Institute 2001). However, Eikenberry and Kluver (2004) contend that although marketization could be beneficial for short-term survival needs of NPOs, it would be at the expense of the nonprofit sector’s role, which in the long-term harms democracy and citizenship because of its impact on NPOs’ ability to create and maintain a strong civil society as value guardians, service providers and advocates, and builders of social capital. Nonprofits play an important role in mobilizing public attention to social problems and needs and in driving social change, which are significantly challenged in a marketized environment. For example, increased reliance on commercial revenue is said to have caused a shift from services targeted for the poor to those who are able to pay (at least in the United States context) (Salamon 1993). More importantly, nonprofits are encouraged to eliminate unprofitable activities and to enter only into areas with profitability prospects (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004). This means that services that are very much needed by the most vulnerable, and therefore of social value,



become less attractive for nonprofits if such services are not profitable. Similarly, advocacy work, although socially valuable for the disadvantaged and those discriminated against, is not profitable in the same sense as in a traditional market exchange context and thus, in effect, is less attractive for quantitative, efficiency, market, and profit-oriented actors and institutions.

As Edwards (2008:49) argues, the overwhelming emphasis on marketization “has the potential to endanger the most basic value of the nonprofit sector—the availability of ‘free space’ within society for people to invent solutions to social problems and serve the public good.” The NPOs’ ability to respond to individual needs is restrained by the regulations that come with government contracts, making service delivery less adapted to individuals and becomes more ‘one size fits all’ (Lipsky and Smith 1989–90:626; see Nevile 2010). NPOs’ normative legitimacy rests on their distinctive value base, which provides the rationale for the work of the organizations, while output legitimacy rests on the ability of the organizations to achieve desired outcomes (Nevile 2010). The organizations’ relationship with those they are trying to help is part of both normative legitimacy and output legitimacy, yet their demands sometimes conflict with each other, particularly when funding mechanisms are contractual in nature and oriented in short-term quantitative outputs over longer-term qualitative outcomes. Here, governments tend to exert more control over the activities of service providers, especially in relation to accountability and hence, an emphasis on output legitimacy (Brandsen and van Hout 2006:542). Short-term funding, overly prescriptive funding formulas, and complex tender documentation can have a negative impact on service users if the organizations are not in a position to shield service users from cuts in service provision; it also restricts organizations’ ability to respond to individual needs (Nevile 2010).

The demands of competition or the strict accountability and productivity requirements of public funding arrangements compromise the autonomy that enables NPOs to experiment with new services and new clientele, and turns organizations into more professionalized and polarized between specialized staff and volunteers/members, affecting their democratic functions of mobilizing civil society (Ascoli and Ranci 2003). An evaluation of EU pilot projects noted that open competition favored larger, low-cost producers with fewer community links, hence, were less likely to produce social capital (ECOTEC 2001). Increasing

marketization, thus, entails an increase in the demands for efficiency and professional services.

Such demands for greater efficiency and accountability in the third sector that spurred competitive and political pressures can be traced to key stakeholders, such as government and philanthropic funders and associations (e.g. Independent Sector, Panel on the Nonprofit Sector 2005). These, combined with the increasing popularity of venture philanthropy (Letts, Ryan and Grossman 1997) and social entrepreneurship (Dees 1998; Dees and Elias 1998), both of which rely heavily on metrics and practices from the for-profit sector, lead to a broad, seismic shift toward organizational rationalization in the nonprofit sector (Hwang and Powell 2009). Rationalization means the integration of formalized roles and rules around unified sovereignty, entailing the construction of nonprofits as ‘actors’ with clear identities (Meyer, Boli and Thomas 1994; Brunsson and Sahlin-Andersson 2000; Meyer 2002; see also Hwang and Powell 2009).

As shown in the research from the late 1980s and early 1990s, nonprofits became more bureaucratic as they turned to external funding sources (Smith and Lipsky 1993; Grønbjerg 1993; see also Hwang and Powell 2009; Ganezh and McAllum 2012). External funding enables the achievement of nonprofits’ visions and goals, but as in any type of dependence, it also entails challenges such as a possible loss of autonomy (Arvidson and Linde 2021). Insofar as all sectors of society are increasingly exposed to market influences, the nonprofit sector, formerly a world of amateurs and volunteers (Karl 1998), is particularly affected. Here, managerial aspirations and expectations have become infused and penetrate organizations through institutional pressures, competition, employee training, and development. Hwang and Powell’s (2009) study shows that a nonprofit becomes formalized when it transitions from a group of ‘amateurs’ to becoming ‘professional,’ which therefore raises issues that are at the heart of nonprofits’ identity and culture, such as people’s involvement as volunteers, and the sector’s role in society at large (Boris and Steuerle 2006).

In the Swedish nonprofit sector, attached to this rationalized development, are environment demands and expectations that include the public and private sectors in the form of a level of competence stipulated in the contracts with the public sector or norms brought in by people with business backgrounds (Wijkström and Einarsson 2011). With the advent of market influences, the nonprofit third sector is confronted with multiple logics or hybridity, as discussed in chapter 3. The

distinctive values and principles of NPOs that primarily support social goals (Anheier 2000; Nevile 2010), thus, become enmeshed with the values of the market as they acquire resources and competencies to survive in the marketized world.

## Nonprofits in the marketized world: resources and competencies for funding sustainability

NPOs are private and independent and therefore operate in a similar way as the market but also similar to the state because they must contribute to the common good, making the sector a contested arena between the state and the market (Frumkin 2002). For van Til (2000), this ‘third’ space in society creates tensions and contradictions that the NPOs cannot ignore and which may even threaten their survival. As Brainard and Siplon (2004:436) put it: “professional nonprofit organizations must constantly struggle with the extent to which they are to emphasize their role as efficient and competitive economic actors or their role as institutions important to democracy.” With these pressures, community expectations change; hence, organizations must also adapt, otherwise their survival will be threatened as legitimacy theory suggests (Deegan 2006)). Output legitimacy and normative legitimacy (Nevile 2010) are therefore central to these organizations’ struggle to achieve some very much needed outputs, such as funding stability while maintaining social goals, respectively. The increasing involvement of NPOs in the delivery of publicly funded services has therefore fueled debates on the effect of such collaboration on their distinctive value base (Froelich 1999; Sivesind and Traetteberg 2017).

Along with the new forms of cooperatives new actors have appeared in the third sector landscape (such as social enterprises) with a clear role in the production of welfare, which has previously been the sole responsibility of the state (Defourny and Nyssens 2010). Market forces are instrumental in the advent of such new actors. Partnerships between corporations and NPOs are also becoming increasingly popular, where goal displacement risk appears to be higher, as grants are typically restricted to purposes defined by the foundation (Froelich 1999).

Another type of partnership is that between the North and the South. Sweden has a long history of international developmental partnerships and cooperations with

developing countries, with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA, [sida.se](http://sida.se)) as the main actor representing the state and has the central task of appropriating aid and development funding. Swedish cooperation with NGOs, both locally and internationally, is part of the overall Swedish development cooperation efforts and is regulated by the Swedish Policy for Global Development, approved by the government in 2003 (Onsander 2007). SIDA has several frame organizations in Sweden that usually receive and distribute grants to Swedish NGOs in support of social initiatives in partner countries (ibid.). According to Froelich (1999), organizations that depend on a few sources for vital inputs become highly dependent on and tied to those providers. Government funds usually become the means for their survival.

With the increasing demand for effectiveness and accountability, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, signed by over 100 countries proposes a clear shift away from donor fragmentation and externally imposed conditionality (Sjöstedt 2013). Sjöstedt's study shows that the implementation of the new aid architecture puts harsh and competing demands on development practitioners. Central to this tension is the fact that while all donors are supposed to advocate partner country ownership, reconcile their efforts with other donors, and align themselves with the priorities of partner countries, results-based management entails not only a focus on continuously measuring and reporting results but also stringent prioritizations on behalf of donor governments. Thus, although many organizations are in dire need of funding, aid funding – especially from international actors such as SIDA, is contested and perceived differently.

In Sweden, a growing awareness of the shortcomings of existing active labor market policies and increasing openness to new initiatives have occurred during the past few decades (Stryjan 2006). Parent cooperatives experienced a rapid growth in the 1980s as the expansion of the Swedish public childcare slowed down (Pestoff 2004), while the psychiatric care reform of 1989 marked the first new worker cooperatives of care personnel, patients, and ex-patients (Stryjan 2004). According to Sivesind and Traetteberg (2017), realizing that the 'Swedish model'<sup>7</sup> could not be sustained in the long run, reforms intended to reduce the welfare

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<sup>7</sup> The Swedish or Scandinavian social democratic model “represented a ‘modern’ alternative to the market economy and socialism, combining generous benefits and economic equality with high labour force participation for both women and men” (Sivesind and Traetteberg 2017:1).

state were implemented. From 1991 to 1994, the country's municipalities were given an opportunity to introduce competition and choice models by the reigning conservative government. Little was done by the social democratic government from 1994 to 2006 to slow down this development, while the reforms regained momentum with the center-right coalition of 2006-2014, especially due to the passing of a law on public procurement (Public Procurement Act, LOU 2007: 1091) and user choice (Freedom of Choice Act, LOV 2008: 962) (Sivesind and Traetteberg 2017).

The privatization of the provision of services leading to quasi-markets involve supply-based financing, based on the idea of transferring management responsibility of supplying services from a public agency to a nonpublic entity (Sivesind and Traetteberg 2017). This type of service provision contributes to commercialization of nonprofit actors, where they compete on equal terms against for-profit providers, which may lead the nonprofits to adapt for-profit operational logics in order to remain competitive (Haugh and Kitson 2007). The expanding quasi-market for welfare services has strengthened profit-oriented providers rather than the nonprofit sector (Salamon and Toepler 2015).

Organizational survival rests on the ability to acquire and maintain resources (Pfeffer and Salancik (1978:2). Froelich's (1999) study shows that the evolving resource dependence on NPOs is demonstrated by the shifting reliance on various sources of funds, such as private contributions, government funding, and commercial activities. As already hinted earlier, regardless of the type of funding, there are opportunities and challenges involved. Acquiring and maintaining resources have been and still are challenging for the organizations studied in this dissertation.

Government funding's most pronounced effects involve changes in internal processes and structures of NPOs, with strong evidence pointing to government-driven professionalization, bureaucratization, and loss of administrative autonomy (Froelich 1999). In a broad study of government-funded NPOs, Nielsen (1979:18) concludes that "as a direct consequence of their financial dependence, Third Sector institutions have become entangled in an increasingly dense web of government rules and regulations and have lost a large degree of control over their own policies, procedures, and programs."

All of the case organizations in this dissertation (except for Skyddsvärnet, whose government funding ceased some decades ago) are recipients of SIDA funding, either directly or through a frame or donor organization. The tension around ownership and results-oriented management and the dynamics in donor-partner relations depicted in Sjöstedt's (2013) study are also touched upon in the current study, particularly in chapter 7. The studied organizations' diversification of funds, apart from government funding and donor-partner funding arrangements, also includes pay-per-service where organizations generate income by delivering services that are paid for by public institutions, by fundraising for private contributions, and engaging in fairtrade and social enterprises. Through these activities with a business flair, nonprofits are both modifying the locus of their dependence and developing alternative sources, which is consistent with resource dependence theory (Froelich 1999). Froelich (1999:349) argues that this development causes alarm because of the limited insights about commercial funding strategies and their ultimate impact on the structure, behavior, philosophies, and performance of NPOs. For example, business-like approaches, according to Maier et al. (2014:12), may spur a drift away from community-building, and to some degree from advocacy, toward service delivery (i.e. Keevers, Treleaven, Sykes and Darcy 2012).

These funding solutions as the organizations' response to the increasingly competitive and harsh funding climate, and what these entail for mission-premised NPOs are studied and presented in more detail in the empirical chapters. Meanwhile, in order to cope with the changes in the funding climate, NPOs are wedged between maintaining its traditional characteristics while developing competencies to compete and survive.

### **Resource diversification and competencies**

A key to organizational viability and integrity is to understand the opportunities and trade-offs, to choose revenue strategies that are consistent with the mission, and diligently respond to management challenges conferred by each strategy (Grønbjerg 1991; see Froelich 1999:261). Nonprofits are under pressure to demonstrate their effectiveness through a broad set of performance metrics, where impact or results of most inputs take time to become visible and measurable.

With the increasing marketization of the third sector, and the alleged likelihood of concomitant mission drift or goal displacement, the initial impression that we can derive is that the sector has acquired the competencies needed to operate in such a contested context. The current study's empirical insights suggest that success or failure in becoming financially sustainable (and conversely, while maintaining the mission) is related to acquisition of appropriate competencies and how the organizations are governed or managed. Specifically, that it is as important to know why such competencies are acquired (or not), and how these competencies condition the organization's desired outcomes: "To be capable of some thing is to have a generally reliable capacity to bring that thing about as a result of intended action" (Dosi, Nelson and Winter 2000:2). This puts a premium on diversification strategies that are consistent in the knowledge that organizations require (Rumelt 1974; Teece, Rumelt, Dosi and Winter 1994). Organizational path dependence can provide continuity but can also circumvent an organization's ability to survive changing environmental conditions (Teece, Pisano and Shuen 1997). Hence, in this dissertation, I do not necessarily regard competencies primarily as the (main) key to success but more about the NPOs' ability to find appropriate ways and means during challenging times.

Being able to have a foresight (Nelson and Winter 2002), especially during changing and challenging times, is relevant to cases that pertain to the consequences of organizational growth. According to Skelcher and Smith (2015), when growth reaches a plateau or starts to decline, nonprofit executives are likely to evaluate different programs according to their financial viability and sustainability, and may accordingly lead to cutbacks in smaller programs, indicating a market logic. Such cutbacks can be controversial and prompt staff discord and possibly their exit from the organization. Similarly, and as an example of this point, Chambre (2002) found that the closure of nonprofit AIDS service organizations in New York City was related partly to the consolidation of organizational practices, where agencies failed to adapt to changing circumstances (Skelcher and Smith 2015). This type of example is fundamental to the literature on dynamic capabilities (Gavetti 2005), but such capabilities or competencies are usually conceived in terms of routines or procedures devised to overcome the local nature of learning that is involved in typical routine operations (Teece et al. 1997). Conversely, the relevant questions that should be asked – particularly in the case of the increasingly marketized world of the nonprofits, is how organizational members deal with complex challenges that

are not part of the typical operational routines; and/or how and what type of competencies, solutions, or approach they acquire.

The increasing marketization of the third sector has marked the quest to find innovative solutions (Reay and Hinings 2009), such as through embracing an entrepreneurial mindset and transforming organizational cultures (Germak and Singh 2009) and has shaken up the usual nonprofit operational routines. Acquiring the right competencies becomes central, especially as the tenets of success become fluid between achieving financial sustainability and delivering social impact. It is thus not unexpected that market-driving has found its way beyond the traditional commercial markets. The approach of constructing or designing new markets or institutional frameworks has been identified as a 'market-driving' behavior of a firm (Jaworski, Kohli and Shay 2000).

Market-driving stems from the concept of market orientation (McKitterick 1957) in the marketing literature (Agarwal, Chakrabarti, Brem and Bocken 2018). The need to understand customer needs and thereby adapt market offerings to gain a competitive advantage is key to market orientation (see e.g. Berghman, Matthyssens and Vandembemt 2006; Ghauri, Wang, Elg, and Rosendo-Ríos 2016). Market-driving, at least in the context of advanced economies, is a rather well-researched approach and has been positively identified with generating competitive advantage (Berghman et al. 2006), and discussed in extant literature from the perspectives of 'external activities' and 'internal capabilities' of the firm (e.g. Ghauri et al. 2016; see Agarwal et al. 2018).

In Agarwal et al.'s study (2018), it is argued that the 'societal change' dimension can lead to the construction of a new and more inclusive healthcare sector in emerging markets, and this dimension has been ignored by the market-driving literature. A similar development can be seen in fairtrade, which is the area where one of the organizations studied in this dissertation used to operate. Fairtrade started as a solidarity movement, with a goal of providing sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers in developing countries by facilitating better trading conditions, as well as awareness raising and campaigning for a more just trade on an international level. This is done by improving the livelihoods and well-being of small producers by ensuring a better wage, aiding in product development, capacity building, and helping to facilitate export to Western markets (Brown 1993; Fair Trade Foundation 2000; IFAT 2002; in



Randall 2005; see also Lyon 2006). This movement or initiative is, therefore, an example of what nonprofits advocate, according to mission logic.

From a marketing perspective, according to Nicholls and Opal (2005), fairtrade products' point of differentiation lies in helping producers and is communicated to consumers through the stories of the producers, with the emphasis on how consumers' purchases can make a difference in the producers' lives (Randall 2005). In order to increase consumer-reach, distribution channels play a vital role and are therefore re-engineered. The fairtrade organizations find themselves in the dilemma of "continuing to be pure (and marginal) or aligning with large distribution (and losing their soul)" (Low and Davenport 2006:321). A drastic change in the situation has occurred over recent decades entailing the institutionalization of the movement, the mainstreaming of fairtrade products (such as its entry into conventional shopping channels promoted by labels and certifications) and the annexation of its objectives into dominant political discourses (Wilkinson 2007).

The diversification of funds and competencies are therefore central in addressing the current call for sustainability of a mission-premised sector. The challenges in balancing or reconciling multiple goals can thus be regarded as a case of organizational development—where organizations have to adjust to or deal with institutional or external influences, namely market forces. The organizations do so while maintaining the social values and mission as manifested in their practices, and in so doing achieve output legitimacy without compromising normative legitimacy.

Indeed, in the absence of or scarcity in aid funding, nonprofits – as any organization, need alternative resources to survive, hence, the increasing call for the marketization of the sector. This rationalization does make the sector hooked into the logic of capital in order to achieve organizational sustainability. To build a sustainable organization that can continue to deliver social value through the pursuit of its social mission has become the central issue (Weerawardena et al. 2010). In this dissertation, sustainability for NPOs is regarded as an operational strategy through revenue enhancing (Weerawardena et al. 2010) or income-generation as a way for NPOs to finance themselves. It can also be viewed as a way for organizations to reduce the uncertainty that is associated with aid-dependence.

According to Nevile (2010), to manage the tensions from the demands between output legitimacy and normative legitimacy, NPOs engage in different strategies,

such as through maintaining close ties to the relevant community. Other strategies include maintaining a mixed resource base and moving into new activity areas that the organizations think will meet clients' needs (Brandsen and van Hout 2006), establishing networks with like-minded organizations (Nevile 1999), and by adjusting to preferences of governments or other funding sources (Nevile 2010).

Nonprofit organizations are usually dependent on their environments for resources that are critical for their survival, creating uncertainty (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003) as resource-dependence theory suggests (Cornforth 2014). Ensuring adequate resources through this method requires an organization to interact with those that control the resources, making organizations not totally autonomous in how they operate their entities (Froelich 1999). Conversely, changing from aid-dependence to income generation for self-sustainability through tenders and contracts with, for instance, the public sector means that NPOs still need to interact with those (such as the public sector) who control the resources. The possibility for increased accounting and measurement of outputs where, for instance, service delivery (and thus, the payment for it) can become an end in itself, leading to mission drift (Jones 2007; Weisbrod 2004), instead of for primarily addressing societal challenges, is also a constant issue for the organizations studied in this dissertation. The sustainability demands imposed on NPOs (Weerawardena et al. 2010) through market solutions inevitably entail a need to balance the tensions that arise from the dual logics of the market and mission.

## Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a discussion on the context of the nonprofit sector where the pressure to become self-sustaining beyond aid is surmounting. This entails that nonprofit organizations are exposed to heightened competition for funding and, at the same time, increased pressure to diversify resources that involves market activities. The chapter has also discussed the various labels and names that describe the sector of study in this dissertation. Considering the lack of agreement in the literature, the use of nonprofit or third sector (and its organizations), which serves the purpose of this dissertation, is accordingly suggested. In view of the increasingly volatile funding situation of nonprofits that prompts them to consider market-oriented solutions to achieve funding

sustainability, they become exposed to the practices and values that characterize market logic through, for example, contractual collaborations with the public sector. A discussion of neoliberalism and NPM was thus deemed relevant, including the ensuing marketization of the sector, and what the sustainability goals entail in terms of resources and competencies. The concepts and theoretical foundation in the next chapter are set up in order to approach and analyze the peculiarities brought about by the nonprofits' market-mission interface.

## *Chapter 3*

# Institutional logics, hybridity, and agency: a theoretical overview

Society's search for more innovative, cost-effective, and sustainable ways to solve social problems has led to a heightened blurring of the boundary between the for-profit and nonprofit domains. This has resulted in an increase in hybrid organizations and, in research, greater attention on hybridity with its corresponding potentials, challenges, and complexities. The institutional influences that pose challenges in managing and studying organizations have inspired researchers to promote, extend, or challenge specific theories or assumptions. Insofar as hybridity is premised on the presence of two or more logics, this chapter first directs our attention to institutional logics and hybridity. After this succinct account of the interplay between these concepts, I then move more closely to how we may understand hybridity and the logics of market and mission. This is followed by the role of agency in the institutional environment and, finally, how actors respond to multiple logics.

## Institutional logics and hybridity

Friedland and Alford (1991) conceive of institutions as a combination of symbolic constructions and material practices that people engage with in their social and organizational life that give them meaning. They suggest that the central institutions of the contemporary capitalist West, such as the capitalist market, bureaucratic state, democracy, nuclear family, and Christian religion, form individual preferences and organizational interests along with the set of behaviors by which these can be achieved (p. 232). These institutions are potentially contradictory, thereby exposing individuals and organizations to multiple logics.

By exploiting these contradictions, individuals and organizations transform the institutional relations of society.

Over the past decades, research in institutional theory has studied the role logics play in shaping actors' beliefs and practices and how these logics emerge, rise, and fall (Dobbin 1994; Thornton and Ocasio 1999). The review of the literature shows that the interplay between the competing set of values and the fundamental change in organizational rules, norms, and beliefs that had been neglected in previous research (Mair and Schoen 2007; see also Fowler 2000b) has later gained considerable attention (see, for example, the studies of Greenwood et al. 2010; Day, Armenakis, Feild and Norris 2012; Pache and Santos 2013a-b; Jay 2013). These studies provide insights on how such competing set of values or logics can be approached through institutional theory. Skelcher and Smith (2015) argue, however, that the public administration and nonprofit literature has under-theorized the hybridity concept, while the theory of hybrids still lacks a clear theoretical foundation that can explain what it is that creates a hybrid, if different hybrid forms emerge in different situations, and if so what the consequences are.

Hybridity is described in various ways; thus, providing a straightforward definition is difficult (Larsson and Lönnborg 2019). The constitution of hybrid organizations is premised on striving for dual or multiple goals with their own set of logics (Alexius and Furusten 2019), such as the logic to generate profit (market logic) or the logic of working for the common good (social mission logic) or public good (public sector's welfare logic). In the nonprofit sector, hybridity mostly refers to the complex organizational forms that emerge as voluntary, charitable, and community organizations address differentiated tasks, legitimacy, or resource environments (Skelcher and Smith 2015). Environments may place demands on organizations in two ways: economic and technical demands, and social and cultural demands, as suggested by institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell 1991b). The former stems from the market or quasi-market in which organizations operate, while the latter 'requires' organizations to behave or operate in certain ways. Common institutional pressures over time result in organizational forms and practices, specifically organizational fields converging or becoming isomorphic (ibid.) as discussed earlier. Due to the embeddedness of organizations in different systems and fields (Feeney 1997), there are thus "rules and requirements to which individual organizations must conform if they are to

receive support and legitimacy” within the institutional environment (Scott and Meyer 1994, cited in Jaffee 2001:228).

Organizational fields are described as the network of organizations and actors that combine to produce similar products or services. Within these fields, various ideas and practices gain legitimacy and become the accepted or usual way of thinking and doing things, thereby shaping organizational behavior. Institutionalization of these ideas and practices, which is a central idea of institutional theory, results in “a rule like status in social thought and action” (DiMaggio and Powell 1991a:9). Organizations are hence not merely shaped by the need to be efficient and effective (as stressed in economic theories) but by ‘cultural elements’ of the environment as well, making taken for granted beliefs and widely shared rules as templates for organizing (DiMaggio and Powell 1991a:26-27).

The tensions between the organization’s original internally and externally imposed institutional logics sometimes provoke serious angst amongst organizational members. When these intrinsic tensions between logics are irreconcilable, referred to as the *blocked* hybrid, it can lead to organizational dysfunction (Skelcher and Smith 2015). This is exemplified in a community health agency in the USA, which was started by a group of dedicated volunteers who remained as board members after the agency became formally incorporated as a nonprofit. The newly appointed executive director brought a growth provision and a more entrepreneurial style to the organization that was anchored in market logic, and which was not compatible with the board’s identity that was anchored in community logic. As a result, the agency experienced difficulties in progressing with its strategic priorities (Skelcher and Smith 2015), showing the challenges involved in hybridity or the presence of multiple logics.

Skelcher and Smith (2015) propose that the institutional logics approach (ILA) can help fill the gap in the theoretical foundation as it firmly locates the study of hybridity – the plurality of rationalities where actor identities in an organization are in play, within a well-developed theoretical tradition (e.g. Alford and Friedland 1985; Kraatz and Block 2008; Thornton et al. 2012). They further propose that a nonprofit hybrid (and public hybrid) is an organization that incorporates plural institutional logics where organizational members are then confronted with multiple identities. ILA is developed within the broader field of institutional theory as a way of explaining the interactions between normative societal structures, organizational forms, and individual behavior. Skelcher and

Smith (2015) further argue that these logics give identity and meaning to actors, but tensions in logics plurality also provide actors with space to elaborate or manipulate the cultural and material resources, hence, transforming identities, organizations, or societies (Thornton and Ocasio 2008; Greenwood et al. 2010). Combining logics is thought of as a means to bring together novel combinations of capital, resulting in a 'sense of dissonance' (Stark 2009). Dissonance, for instance, following a certain decision, can be reduced by amplifying the positive aspects of the chosen alternative compared to the rejected alternative (Harmon-Jones and Mills 2019).

Institutional logics are accepted social prescriptions that represent shared understandings of what constitutes legitimate goals and how they may be pursued (Scott 1994). They are the organizing principles that shape the behavior of field participants, provide a link between institutions and action, thus, an important concept for understanding organizational fields (Friedland and Alford 1991; Thornton and Ocasio 2008). Moreover, logics are an important theoretical construct as they help to explain connections that create a sense of common purpose and unity within an organizational area (ibid.). An organization that operates within multiple institutional spheres faces a situation of institutional pluralism, where it is subject to multiple regulatory regimes, ingrained within multiple normative orders, and/or composed of more than one cultural logic; hence, it possesses multiple, institutionally derived identities. Heterogenous institutional environments, therefore, impose multiple identities, making disparate demands that generate persistent and deep-rooted tensions within the organization itself (Kraatz and Block 2008).

A study by Greenwood et al. (2010) shows how multiple institutional logics produce heterogenous organizational responses, especially upon considering the importance of historical context. Their quantitative data was drawn from a Spanish database (Survey on Business Strategies), and the surveyed firms belong to the Spanish manufacturing sector between 1994 and 2000, with 'downsizing' as the dependent variable. Their study suggests that organizations in market settings face complex institutional contexts, to which they respond in different but patterned ways. It shows how an overarching market logic is impacted by both regional state logics and family logics and that the *non*-market logics of the state and the family temper the logic of the market, such as decisions to downsize, especially in smaller firms. Thus, the study provides organizational responses that

show the influences of non-market institutions on market behavior other than the more usual studies that focus on the responses to market logic that characterize institutional isomorphism.

A good example of how logics plurality can provide actors with space to elaborate cultural and material resources (Skelcher and Smith 2015) is Jay's (2013) study of the Cambridge Energy Alliance (CEA). The CEA case implicitly answers the call for some concrete and responsive measurement methods that are more suitable for mission-oriented or hybrid organizations, and captures what qualifies as success or failure when multiple institutional logics are combined under a single organizational roof. CEA is a hybrid organization in a public-private partnership that combines the dual logics of public service and client service in its efforts to generate innovative solutions to complex problems by promoting energy efficiency as a solution to climate change. Jay (2013) found that the organization's combination of institutional logics did not result in overtly competing interests or factions. It resulted instead in a latent organizational paradox that involves contradictory schemes. In sensemaking about paradoxical outcomes, actors grapple with a definition of success, which can transform the organizational logic. The organization's actions led to paradoxical outcomes that were difficult to define as either successes or failures. Jay's finding is that as members of a hybrid organization take actions to achieve its mission and later interpret the outcomes of those actions, they discover that some outcomes are ambiguous and paradoxical: the outcomes are viewed as failures if seen through the lens of a client service business logic as it did not draw revenue, but successes when viewed through the lens of a public service logic because it advanced city-level climate goals. This shows that managing paradox entails accepting tensions as inherent (Smith 2015). These tensions in paradoxes co-exist and persist over time, posing competing demands that require ongoing responses rather than one-off resolutions (Lewis 2000).

Hence, as actors experience increased pressures to simultaneously embed multiple competing demands within organizations (Besharov and Smith 2014; Greenwood, et al. 2011; Kraatz and Block 2008), being able to explore alternatives and at the same time, exploit what the organization already has in place becomes imperative for organizational survival. *Exploring* carries with it the pursuit of novel innovations to gain long-term sustainability; *exploiting*, on the other hand, seeks to secure operational advantages in existing offerings for short-



term performance (Smith 2015:59). As organizations explore and exploit simultaneously, it entails demands that are paradoxical and contradictory.

The above shows that hybrid organizing entails that organizations and their members grapple with competing external demands (Pache and Santos 2010) and internal organizational peculiarities (Kraatz and Block 2008) where excessive change may characterize the life of organizations struggling with these multiple influences and therefore put increased pressures on organizational members. With such instability, organizations' ability to solve complex problems can be drained, especially if change leads to the collapse of hybridity and the dominance of one logic (Kraatz and Block 2008). Hybrids may get trapped in internal conflict and confusion (Ashforth, Reingen and Ward 2009) or to an isomorphic pull toward the domain of one field (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) in an attempt to internally reconcile the competing demands (Jay 2013).

## Understanding hybridity

Hybrids, as previously discussed, are defined as formal organizations that embrace multiple logics, where the presence of profit and not-for-profit components is commonplace (Dees and Anderson 2003) and is an organizational form that is generally embraced by many social enterprises (Mair and Noboa 2003; see also Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Skillern 2006). The number of social entrepreneurs who want to combine a social purpose with a for-profit element has therefore been on the rise (Dees and Anderson 2003; Dees 2007).

Drawing from Greenwood and Freeman (2017), Alexius and Furusten (2019:4) argue that “departing from the more neutral concept of hybrid organization offers an advantage over more normative concepts such as social enterprise.” This normative stance can be seen in many recent studies, where it is argued that “the hybrid form *per se* renders a particular capacity to better handle complex missions and societal challenges” (Alexius and Furusten 2019:4). Relatively recent-established microfinance organizations and work integration social enterprises (WISEs) are typical examples of the empirical scope of such studies with a more normative stance. Bruder (2020) argues that the mere use of the prefix ‘social’ already connotes a positive element, being particularly legitimate and beneficial to society; namely that it is “a discourse about the adequate grounding of social

entrepreneurship's inherent normative validity claim of being good entrepreneurship" (p. 1). But whether or not this normative connotation holds is an open question and subject to critical examination. Hence, the neutral departure point of 'hybrid organization' offers an advantage because the concept of hybrid organization spurs a critical analysis of possible impacts, such as social and ethical, of the hybrid, which are not determined a priori (Alexius and Furusten 2019). It means that organizational hybridity provides no guarantee of good outcomes.

Like Alexius and Furusten (2019), I agree and also follow Greenwood and Freeman's (2017) argument that departing from the more neutral concept of 'hybrid organizations' opens up for better theorizing over more normative concepts such as 'social enterprise', as I deem that social enterprise as a current popularized hybrid form is but one of many examples of hybrid constellations. This is particularly relevant to the empirical cases studied in this dissertation, where the organizations, which date back decades and even over a century of operations, were constituted as nonprofits. Due to these nonprofits' increasing exposure to funding instability, they are enjoined to seek resource diversification that usually entail market adaptation. Market logic is not an element that is present at the outset and is, therefore, not how these organizations were constituted, as in the case of social enterprises. Organizational hybridity is today an interesting topic for practitioners, policymakers in different sectors, and among scholars from across disciplines and empirical fields; it therefore inspires us to identify and better recognize already-existing hybridity in organizational life (Alexius and Furusten 2019).

According to Mair and Noboa (2003), the implications of the recent trends in the social and economic environments leading to the hybrid organizational form are hardly affecting sector boundaries, but they have a strong impact at the micro-level. More recently, Alvehus (2018) finds that although hybridity between conflicting logics may appear on the organizational level, a single logic dominates the everyday work of individuals. The TaxCon professionals he studied produce conflict and agreement between HRM and professional logics simultaneously. The study suggests an inverted appropriation, "by which a logic is deemed irrelevant but simultaneously coexists with and supports a conflicting logic" (Alvehus 2018:41). The notion of inverted appropriation shows that stability in an overarching ideology, in this case that of HRM, produces an image of a balanced hybrid on a strategic level, but the everyday practice remains anchored

in the professional logic. We may then regard this and similar situations as a hypocritical coping mechanism (Brunsson 1989) as organizations espouse the hybrid form and yet the actors who have to contend with the logics behind such a form may well show salience to one of the logics.

Insofar as the nonprofit and for-profit hybrid combination is espoused as a possible sustainable solution for funding-scarce NPOs, it thus becomes interesting to inquire how the hybrid model is experienced by actors. This dual focus inevitably poses challenges to actors' identity because organizational members make sense of what they do in relation to their understanding of what their organization is (Fiol 1991). Hannan and Freeman (1984) contend that constraint on change is very strong when it comes to the core features of organizations, which means that when inertia is present, the speed of change in the core features of an organization is lower than the rate of environmental change (Kelly and Amburgey 1991). Consequently, when faced with environmental threats, organizations seldom succeed in making radical changes in strategy and structure due to strong inertial forces (Hannan and Freeman 1984).

Conversely, in hybrid situations where actors have to relate to multiple logics, there are both enabling and constraining forces that influence any change that may occur; such forces can be positive – urging us toward a behavior, or negative – propelling us away from a beneficial behavior (Kaminski 2011; see also Lewin 1945). In the midst of the environmental changes going on in these organizations, their organizational culture therefore becomes a central construct in understanding the evolution of organizational identities (Ravasi and Schultz 2006). This suggests that collective history, organizational symbols, and consolidated practices provide prompts that help members make new sense of what their organization is really about (*ibid.*) – for instance, in light of the encouragement to combine market and mission and share that new sense with others.

## **Market and mission**

For Friedland and Alford (1991:234), a market is “not simply an allocative mechanism but also an institutionally specific cultural system for generating and measuring value.” Neoclassical economics operate with a means–ends, subject–object dualism, and are premised on the assumption that individuals are instrumentally rational and evaluate their presence in social relationships based on

the costs and benefits these relationships impose upon them (*ibid.*). A market is “an arena where commercial dealings are conducted” with an exchange between products/services and money, and with profitability as the main goal ([en.oxforddictionaries.com](http://en.oxforddictionaries.com)). Based on the corporate logic of the market, profit-making is thus regarded as the core purpose and the basis for valuation and evaluation (Alexius and Furusten 2019:7). It has been argued that a market logic has generally been diffused in social life, such that the market “contributes to individualism and more shallow interpersonal relations (...)” (Aspers 2011:59). In such a view, competition, combined with the value of money, particularly when every other value is reduced to money, is said to profoundly affect social life (Aspers 2011:62). It means that competition and profit-making become the building blocks of our lives; it becomes about engaging in transactional relations instead of building social relationships.

The goals associated with business ventures involve market success and profitability measured by specific, quantitative, and standardized metrics and address a narrower stakeholder-group such as owners and investors (Jensen 2002). Hence, and although with good intentions, the increasing ambition of, for instance, social enterprises to grow and scale in order to increase the impact of their mission (Dees, Anderson, and Wei-Skillern 2004) can simultaneously threaten the mission’s impact. It is because the factors that facilitate achieving the social mission – namely local ties, communal trust, and values, diminish in size in smaller organizations (Haigh and Hoffman 2012).

The argued pervasiveness of market dogma (Eikenberry 2009) can be witnessed through lifestyles that are created around brands and logos (Klein 2002), where consumerism is increasingly acknowledged as a key form of political and civic action (King 2006). Through consumption, even philanthropic actions are increasingly co-opted by market, for example, cause-related marketing and celebrity philanthropy (King 2006; Nickel and Eikenberry 2009). Thus, according to Jameson (1991:207), because of our immersion in the discourse of the market, “we are unable to imagine anything else.” Therefore, it is an “ideology that views all aspects of human society as a kind of market” (Zimmerman and Dart, 1998:16).

A social mission, on the other hand, is associated with goals that aim to make a difference to diverse stakeholders that include employees, beneficiaries, communities, and families (Grimes 2010; Haigh and Hoffman 2012). There is an increasing number of organizations that use business ventures to achieve a

social mission. Some organizations, for example, work integration social enterprises (WISEs), seek social improvement by offering skills development training (Battilana, Pache, Sengul and Model 2011); other organizations seek to improve human welfare and market conditions for those producing goods in developing countries (Nicholls and Opal 2005) and environmental welfare (Jay 2013). Social goals involve qualitative, ambiguous, and non-standardized metrics (Ebrahim and Rangan 2010; Epstein 2008), for example well-being of individuals seeking employment, making its evaluation and progress measurement and comparison of the success of social missions challenging (Smith et al. 2013). The contradictory goals, metrics, and stakeholders thus create several conflicting demands and tensions in existing organizations employing the multiple logics of market and mission. The discussion below suggests that there is this constant negotiation of conflicts between the ideologies behind market and social goals.

The imposition of neoliberal governance is argued as straining traditional nonprofit organizations and posing challenges to their social mission. NPOs thus face a dilemma on how to balance their quest for a social mission with financial constraints, especially when additional resources may be available from sources that distort such a mission (Weisbrod 1998:165). Moreover, the increasing pressure to contain costs and to generate revenue in competition with private enterprises compromises nonprofits' ability to pursue social missions (Weisbrod 1998) and hampers holistic tailoring of services to client needs (Almog-Bar 2018) as this generally entails extra costs, thus, a cost inefficiency not predicated by market logic.

According to James (2003), tax exemptions for the income of and donations to NPOs that produce quasi-public services are sometimes granted by governments and is an approach more favored in heterogenous societies, where there is a disagreement as to which and how much 'public goods' should be produced. This is addressed via tax deductions and exemptions instead of direct support, and this heterogeneity in values is characteristic of the US. Provision of services through nonprofits can be a discreet way of dividing consumers of services and providing the ideological or cultural 'flavor' that each group prefers. In the US, although Jewish and Catholic day care, elderly care, and schools may be sectarians, they do give associative signals to and attract various constituents. Government grants and tax privileges are sometimes a political response to pressures from the ideologically-motivated nonprofit service providers; therefore, their nonprofit status preconditions receiving these grants and privileges. Meanwhile, as James

(2003) contends, the more homogenous European countries are likely to employ direct allocations of funds. However, as discussed earlier in this dissertation, NPOs in general – including those in European countries, such as Scandinavia, although they retain some tax privileges, are exposed to a growing decline in funding allocations that fuel increasing professional management and market competition in order to generate their own income.

Holborow (2007:51) contends that the ideology of (global) market ‘insinuates’ itself everywhere in both macro- and micro-levels. From IMF, the World Bank, and the OECD, the need to deregulate, to open up state companies and services to market competition, and to extend trade liberalization, down to every company website, where mission statements and strategic plans that indicate ‘demand’ and ‘competition’ equate efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and best practice are espoused. This thus epitomizes the neoliberal world where “free markets in both commodities and capital contain all that is necessary to deliver freedom and well-being to all and sundry” (Harvey 2003:201). Ideology can aptly be described as meaning in the service of power (Thompson 1990:7); “it is a set of ideas that emerges from specific social relations and supports the interests of a particular social class” (Holborow 2007:52). In other words, there is a bias involved in an ideology. For Gramsci (1971:333), there are competing and different ideologies that exist in society, which means that even dominant ideologies do not always prevail and are open to unpredictable opposition depending on the significance of other forms of social contest. The power of capital is the drive for profits, which is the driving force of the system as a whole (Jones 2004).

Ideology “is assumed to provide the rationale for defending or challenging various social arrangements and conditions” (Snow 2004:396)—for instance, the level of market-oriented activities or market-driving in otherwise mission-premised nonprofits. Insofar as there are enabling and constraining properties of logics (Giddens 1984), the role of individual agency in organizational responses and actions (Thornton et al. 2012) is, therefore, central in reconciling the competing demands that arise from the ideologies that these logics are built upon.

## Agency in the institutional environment

The institutional logics approach (ILA) is argued to offer a solid theoretical base for explaining hybridity, and where the actor dimension is brought into the analysis (Skelcher and Smith 2015). At the organizational level, the competition between logics is played out through the politics of form and structure, and at an individual level through the politics of identity, or to which elements of what the logics represent the actors identify with. The ILA “introduces questions about the process by which plural institutional logics are constructed, contested, and negotiated, the ways in which settlements are reached between them, the factors that disrupt such negotiated orders, and the consequences for the work of the organization and its relationship with members, users, and stakeholders” (Skelcher and Smith 2015:444). Institutional logics that are embedded in broader macro institutions, such as government aid policies and funding arrangements, are logics that organizations are exposed to; hence, they can be considered as meso-level phenomena. At the same time, they are also linked to micro-level dynamics insofar as organizational actors have to relate to these logics in their everyday life. Thus, we can say that how organizations and their organizational members are exposed and respond to logics is enmeshed, and a distinct separation between organizations and individual actors can only be made to a certain extent.

According to Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012), establishing a coherent set of assumptions about individual and group behavior is one of the key challenges of developing micro-foundations of institutional logics. They argue that rational choice theory, for instance, has dominated economics and is highly influential in political science but not as prominent in sociology (*ibid.* p. 78). A sociological challenge to rational choice theory is posed by Granovetter (1985) by developing a concept of embeddedness, where it is argued that both rational choice and bounded rationality accounts (e.g. Williamson 1975) bring an under-socialized view of how actors act. At the same time, Granovetter argues that traditional structural, cultural, and institutional accounts (e.g. Parsons 1956) give an over-socialized view, with a narrow role for individual agency. He suggests that individual choices and actions, albeit instrumental, are constrained by the networks in which they are embedded. Zukin and DiMaggio (1990) extend Granovetter’s theory of structural embeddedness to include three types of embeddedness, which are inherently sociological concepts (Thornton et al.

2012). They are 1) cognitive embeddedness, which is “the ways in which the structured regularities of mental processes limit the exercise of economic reasoning”; 2) cultural embeddedness refers to “the role of shared collective understanding in shaping economic strategies and goals” (p. 17); while 3) political embeddedness is “the manner in which economic institutions and decisions are shaped by a struggle for power that involves economic actors and nonmarket institutions” (p. 20).

Of these types, Thornton et al. (2012) argue that the social nature of human behavior can be explained by putting an emphasis on cultural embeddedness. It is because “the culture of social groups, of which individuals are members, provides individuals with symbolic structures to understand and construct their environments” (ibid. p. 79). They further argue that embedded behavior, although it is subject to constraints, implies individual agency that allows the pursuit of self-interest and the satisfaction of individual needs. Individuals are guided by their social identities and identification (March and Olsen 1989), and their social identification is derived from a perception of oneness with a group of persons (Ashforth and Mael 1989).

It has been argued that the effects of institutional logics on organizational action can be derived through theories of attention (Ocasio 1997). Although not explicitly accounting for individual agency and interaction, Thornton and Ocasio (1999) and Thornton (2004) give an account on institutional logics’ macro-to-micro effects through individual and organizational cognition, and they emphasize how the limited attention of individuals is structured by dominant institutional logics. This means that organizational actors are culturally embedded in dominant institutional logics. Thornton et al.’s (2012:80) framework of the micro-foundations of institutional logics take into account “not only how individual agency is culturally embedded in institutional logics, but also how individual agency is involved in the reproduction and transformation of these logics” (cf. Giddens 1984). Put differently, institutions, in effect, not only constrain action due to individuals’ embeddedness in a particular institutional logic, but they also enable action as it allows individuals to exercise agency when they have to navigate in contexts characterized by multiple institutional logics.

In Thornton et al.’s (2012:81) approach, “logics are viewed as either a set of rule-like structures that constrain organizations or a set of cultural toolkits that provide opportunities for change in existing structures and practices.” There is, thus, a



paradox involved in the reproduction and transformation of institutional logics by individual agency because actors' actions, intentions, and rationality are all conditioned by the institutions wherein they are embedded. Therefore, although institutional logics possess both constraining and enabling properties as Thornton et al. (2012) argue, due to the paradox of embedded agency (Holm 1995) or the paradox of embeddedness (Uzzi 1997), organizational decisions are likely to lead to the continuing reproduction of prevailing institutional logics.

Individuals' actions and responses in the situation of mission-premised NPOs, where market solutions are increasingly espoused to address funding instability, are thus a potentially interesting exemplification of this paradoxical embeddedness. Sanders (2015) argues that most theoretical perspectives of nonprofit organizing are currently centered on economic explanations focusing primarily on what a nonprofit organization is not, instead of what it is (Koschmann 2012; Lohmann 1989; Valentinov and Iliopoulos 2013). This leads to the tendency to emphasize conflict and the need for resolution in attempts to understand the market–mission tension (e.g. Brainard and Siplon 2004; Ruud 2000). “The notion of being business-like in the nonprofit sector can be understood as a communicative construction whose meaning is not fixed but is negotiated and transformed in practice” (Sanders 2015:206). Hence, as Sanders (2015) argues, the market-mission tension is not simply an economic challenge to address situations of resource scarcity but a challenge that comes from different logics rooted in discourse. And unleashing or negotiating such meanings at a local level can open new prospects for defining nonprofit work in its own right and help in determining how particular understandings of the market–mission tension may enable or constrain the successful pursuit of a social mission (e.g. Jager and Beyes 2010; Sanders 2015).

While institutions provide the basic elements and guidelines for social interactions, the meanings of institutions are constructed and driven forward by social interactions as the idea of inhabited institutions suggests (Hallett and Ventresca 2006:213). In this local embeddedness, people's (re)construction of meanings becomes central to how “institutions are formed, reproduced and modified through an interplay of action and structure” (Barley and Tolbert 1997:94). It can therefore be said that how actors actively construct and negotiate meanings can both challenge and reproduce institutional logics (Everitt 2013).

In this dissertation, negotiation entails actors' processing of meanings (negotiation of meanings<sup>8</sup>), where the mind is a "social phenomenon—arising and developing within the empirical matrix of social interactions" (Mead 1934:133; cf. Thornton et al. 2012) and thus modifies the perspective of individual cognition and information processing (ibid.). People's active sensemaking is both ongoing and retrospective in nature, which is a key role of human agency in institutional functioning (Everitt 2013). Negotiation of meanings as a retrospective sensemaking process means that actors reflect on their own understanding that guides their actions in relation to their environment (Huzzard 2000). Here, the negotiation of meanings is, therefore, a person's mental processing in reference to how others respond to or confront institutional logics, where language is key to both thought and action (Mead 1934). How actors negotiate meanings as they make sense of the introduction or presence of multiple logics – referred to here as logics negotiation, is discussed in more detail in the methods chapter.

Rather than thinking of an organization as a 'big machine' or as a 'natural system,' it is therefore useful to regard it as a negotiated order (Strauss 1978). The ever-shifting pattern of organizational activities that has arisen or emerged over time is an outcome of the interplay between the variety of interests, understandings, reactions, and initiatives of the individuals and groups involved in the organization; these interests and differences reflect patterns of power and inequality applying in the society and economy of which the organization is a part (Watson 2006:62). This resonates with the situation where external influences enter organizations, and where, in turn, organizational members negotiate and re-negotiate their understandings as they face and resolve their differing values and assumptions surrounding market and mission logics.

## **Tension between structure and agency**

As actors contend with differing logics, their capacity to reflect on and strategically operate within the institutional context wherein they are embedded becomes an ongoing activity. This interaction between agency and institutions is highlighted in the concept of institutional work, a perspective that is argued to attend more closely to practice and process than to outcome. It addresses "the 'why' and 'how'

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<sup>8</sup> Negotiation of meanings is used, for example, in language studies; see Varonis and Gass (1985); Foster (1998).

instead of the ‘what’ and ‘when’ as actors respond to pressures from many different institutions (or institutional logics) locally, creatively, incrementally and more or less reflexively” (Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca 2011:57). A similar line of reasoning to bridge the gap caused by the neglect of the role of actors is also part of what is being addressed by the institutional logics approach that belongs, like institutional work, under the institutional theory umbrella.

While some authors argue that there are various sectors and institutional logics that govern individuals and organizations according to the institutional logics perspective, they are determined a-priori by the conceptual framework, rather than emerging from the empirical data (Zilber 2013). As Zilber (2013) aptly raises, while the intentions of actors, on the one hand, and the consequences of their work, on the other hand, are central to the notion of institutional work, following intentions and consequences in the study of institutional work is problematic. Zilber (2013) further contends that finding out the intentions of an actor can be challenging, as actors are not always aware of their intentions and may act in a way that does not align with such intention. The current study addresses this shortcoming not through ascertaining actors’ intentions but through their interpretation of and degree of salience to institutional logics as expressed in their verbal accounts, the ‘consequence’ of which becomes manifest through its influence on organizations’ actions and decisions. Here, I want to neither capture nor explain institutional logics and institutional work *per se*. Instead, I wish to capture an understanding of the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions posed by institutional work through the actors as they respond to institutional logics (Lawrence et al. 2011) in order to better understand the interface between competing logics and the possible feasibility of the market-mission hybrid form.

Inasmuch as organizational-level structures and practices gain precedence over actors’ ideas, understandings, and interpretations, zooming-in on how actors relate and respond to institutional logics can hence address the distance of institutional logics studies from the day-to-day experiences and behavior of actors through a better treatment of the role of meanings (Zilber 2013). It means that apart from meanings that are infused in institutional logics, they also arise through social interactions (Hallett and Ventresca 2006). Through the current study’s empirical exploration, how meanings are produced and negotiated, how they are part of social actions and are used by social actors (Ahearn 2012), will thus receive greater attention.

I propose, therefore, to highlight the “impact of individuals and collective actors on the institutions that regulate the fields in which they operate” (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006:218) through how the logic salience of actors in hybrid contexts may influence organizational responses. Moreover, this study also addresses the challenges of establishing actors’ ‘intentions’ through the possible consequences of such intentions. In so doing, we can hopefully encourage and initiate studies that not only focus on the more immediate ongoing, messy institutional work (Zilber 2013), but also the possibility of gauging or tracing how such institutional work might possibly, and actually, lead to maintaining, creating, or changing the institutional order (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006), thus making logics negotiation (or actors’ intentions behind the logic) less abstract (Zilber 2013). Accordingly, the connection between individuals’ negotiation of meanings and organizations’ actions in the presence of multiple logics can be made clearer.

While a serious consideration of how actors experience institutions is promoted, actors oftentimes do not understand their own motives for succumbing to social pressures (Mills 1949; Goffman 1961). Hence, the emphasis on how these taken for granted practices can be changed through more or less conscious actions of individuals, along with bringing about change through institutional work (Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca 2009), is problematic. The problem, for instance, with the very term ‘entrepreneur’ is the value ascribed to it that is drawn from the institution of economy. Mutch (2018:244) writes: “The combination of a focus on change and a focus on the role of agents in enabling such change places too much emphasis on the ability to select items from a menu and not enough on the enduring and conditioning nature of the contexts in which actors find themselves.” Indeed, the purported purposiveness of actions of individuals and the tendency to overstate actors’ agency are problematic because the power of institutionalist approaches in providing resources for selection and in shaping the categories of agency available to actors is undermined (Mutch 2018). Mutch further argues that because of these concerns, some institutionalist scholars have turned to institutional logics, a notion developed by Friedland and Alford (1991).

Institutional theory projects organizations as “hypermuscular supermen” instead of passive cultural dopes, where “their efforts to resist institutional pressure, transform organizational fields and alter institutional logics” are carried out singlehandedly (Suddaby 2010:15). This has come to mean that any change, regardless of degree, is now ‘institutional’ and any change agent is an ‘institutional entrepreneur.’ This

development on a hypermuscular view shows, just like the previous excitement in identifying examples of isomorphism, how theorists have overlooked the central point of institutional hypothesis: “understanding how and why organizations attend, and attach meaning, to some elements of their institutional environments and not others” (Suddaby 2010:15); and why change theorists need to attend carefully to the notion of the paradox of embedded agency (ibid.).

The literature on agency gives a particular focus on and positions institutional entrepreneurs – who are usually endowed with resources (Greenwood, Suddaby and Hinings 2002; Greenwood and Suddaby 2006), as possessing the ability to create and enforce logics by the monopolization of ‘symbol systems’ (Berger and Luckmann 1966). This depiction has been critiqued in an increasing stream of literature that challenge the view that only the elite and resource-rich institutional entrepreneurs are agentic (Glynn 2000; Zilber 2002; Coule and Bennett 2016). A study by Turco (2012), involving an organization working with support for mothers and motherhood, illustrates how non-elite internal actors could disrupt commercialization activity by refusing to adopt, in its entirety, the new language and narrative due to the great discomfort with the commercial attributes of the business that is being promoted by the organizational elites. Turco’s study highlights the need for sensitivity to power imbalance and between power relations within institutional work. This means that addressing the tension between structure and agency entails an acknowledgment that power – for instance, to maintain institutions or create change, is not a territory exclusive for those that occupy higher hierarchies such as elites, or the so-called institutional entrepreneurs.

Although the concept of institutional entrepreneurship also amplifies the role of agency, originally introduced as a way of dealing with the relative neglect of interests, agency, and power (DiMaggio 1988), its tendency to convey a ‘hero image’ of institutional entrepreneurs (Lounsbury and Crumley 2007; Lounsbury 2008) with their capacity to successfully effect change as potentially overstated (Yang and Modell 2010) does not resonate with and serve the purposes of the current study. Such a tendency is also argued as diverting attention from constraints embedded in organizational fields (ibid.), as in the case of individuals responding to competing multiple institutional logics that exist in organizations. Moreover, there are conditions that need to be fulfilled in order to be regarded as institutional entrepreneurs such as 1) to initiate divergent changes and 2) to actively participate in the implementation of these changes, as laid out by Battilana, Leca, and

Boxenbaum (2009). We can, therefore, infer from this discussion that all individual actors have agency and do participate in institutional work (Lok 2010) as they interpret and respond to multiple logics, irrespective of their explicit intention to initiate change, their political capital, or hierarchical position.

In short, what this dissertation shows is how the proposed concept of logic salience homes in on the recent realization within research in the field of institutional logics and institutional work of the need to bridge the tension between structure and agency, to amplify the role of actors, and on how meanings are produced and negotiated. Bridging the distance between institutional forces and actors, and instead of focusing on intentions as institutional work suggests, the proposed concept dwells on how individuals make sense of, negotiate, and respond to competing institutional logics according to their values and ideologies, which, in turn, influences organizational actions.

Individual logic salience as an emerging concept shows, among others, a potential to inform and explain why certain organizational actions come about. This study, thus, directs our focus on how institutional forces influence organizations by zooming-in on how organizational members, through their accounts, negotiate meanings between multiple logics. The empirical chapters show this logics negotiation (chapters 6, 7, and 8) and where logic salience sometimes propels some individuals toward the logic of the market, others toward the logic of the mission, but without complete indifference to, nor is void of understanding for, what the logic of least preference also entails.

## Understanding how individuals respond to multiple logics

When individuals believe there is a conflict between newly adopted practices and the organization's identity, a decision to adopt the new practices may encounter significant resistance (Gawer and Phillips 2013), and they may struggle to make sense of and come to terms as to who they are, in relation to what they do. How individuals respond to embeddedness in competing logics emphasizes the actors' role in making sense of, interpreting, enacting, or resisting institutional prescriptions within organizations. Here, the availability of competing models for

action allows latitude for individuals to exercise some degree of choice (Pache and Santos 2013b). These antagonistic demands challenge the taken for granted character of institutional arrangements; they make individuals more cognizant of alternative action and require them to make decisions as to what logic to obey, alter, ignore, or reject, to address not only their identity but also their organizational legitimacy needs (Pache and Santos 2010:12).

When individuals operate in environments embedded in multiple competing logics, their responses become more difficult to anticipate because adhering to one logic may signify defying the other (Pache and Santos 2013b). There are many factors that influence decisions and decision-making processes, such as past experiences, an increase in commitment and deteriorating outcomes, individual differences that include age and socioeconomic status, and a belief in personal relevance (Dietrich 2010). Moreover, how individuals enact strategic decisions is influenced by their cognitive capacities (Gavetti 2005), and/or inertial and path-dependence properties (Argote et al. 1990; Szulanski 1996). This essentially means individuals' perceptions and beliefs, and capacity to promote or inhibit new knowledge, respectively. Responses may also depend on their interpretations often shaped by a single logic (Greenwood et al. 2011), through education and work experience or membership in a given society (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Thornton et al. 2012), or their identification and degree of adherence to logics (Pache and Santos 2013b). Such identification and adherence to each of the competing logics, in turn, is likely to drive how they may respond to competing templates for action, such as in organizational decision-making.

Organizational decisions are arguably influenced by actors who bring their own interpretation of priorities and preferable outcomes to the decision process (Ocasio 1997; Chung and Luo 2008). The structural division of labor within an organization creates intra-organizational communities with connections to field-level occupational communities and are "quite likely to differ in their awareness of, and receptivity to, institutional pressures" (Delmas and Toffel 2008:1032). From these institutional pressures, hybrids emerge that incorporate incompatible logics, which produce coalitions or groupings (Pache and Santos 2010). As the conflict is brought inside, these coalitions are likely to espouse the template that they prefer (Zilber 2002) because the goals, beliefs, opinions, and actions of individuals are justified and based upon logics (Friedland and Alford 1991; Townley 1999).

Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994) suggest that people attempt to preserve a sense of integrity and self-worth as indicated by research on self-affirmation (Steele 1988) and self-justification (Staw 1980) processes. A different set of responses is therefore likely when members perceive considerable inconsistencies between expected and actual organizational actions. As a response, people may downplay the importance of these inconsistencies through excuses or justifications (Bies and Sitkin 1991), without necessarily impacting the strength of their organizational identification. As another response, they may revise their perceptions of the organization's identity, which can strengthen member identification if such revision enhances the attractiveness of the perceived identity. People may also respond by changing their self-definitions (Breakwell 1986) if the inconsistencies are experienced as threats to their own identities (Dutton et al. 1994). Their decision-making process includes reasoning out from general goals and values and external forces (Brunsson 1990). We may well connect this to how individuals' images of work organization shape the strength of their identification with the organization.

According to Dutton et al.'s model, there are two key organizational conceptions; one is based on what members believe as distinctive, central, and enduring about their organization (i.e. internal values), and the other is based on members' beliefs about what outsiders (i.e. external forces) think about the organization. The members then appraise the appeal of these conceptions by how well these preserve the continuity of their self-concept, if they provide distinctiveness, and enhance self-esteem.

Juxtaposing these identification conceptions allows us to make an assumption that individuals develop their salience to a particular ideology, value, identity, and a sense of belonging. Ideology provides a set of organized categories that individuals use to process and integrate incoming information from the external environment (Hymes 1986), and ideological identification is said to be one of the strongest and most consistent on issue attitudes (Jacoby 1991). Insofar as ideological identification in a political context represents individuals' perception of their position along the liberal-conservative continuum (Jacoby 1991), a similar perception can be assumed to represent individuals' ideologies and values they identify with along the market-mission logics spectrum. Through this alignment with certain demands over other demands (internal, external, or both) that incumbents reflect and embed into decisions and strategies, it brings to us



questions on how actors' adherence to a particular logic influences the responses of nonprofits to multiple goals. These ideological preferences are manifested by actors exercising agency as they make sense of the relationship with the normative expectations of an institutional logic and the organizational context they are in (Skelcher and Smith 2015).

The concept of institutional work highlights the interaction between agency and institutions. As stated, the institutional work perspective attends more closely to practice and process than to outcome; it addresses "the 'why' and 'how' instead of the 'what' and 'when', as actors respond to pressures from many different institutions locally, creatively, incrementally and more or less reflexively" (Lawrence et al. 2011:57). A similar line of reasoning to redress the neglect of the role of actors is also part of what is addressed by the institutional logics approach. As we bring actors back into the conversation, meaning is thus shown not only through institutional logics but also through social interactions as suggested by the concept of inhabited institutions (Hallett and Ventresca 2006).

When actors are wedged between logics and grapple with competing external demands (Pache and Santos 2010) and internal organizational peculiarities (Kraatz and Block 2008), developing logic salience as a concept can help explain why certain actions are taken within an organization. The preliminary findings derived from the first case organization reveal, as presented and discussed in more detail in chapter 6, that although there is a general recognition of the comparable importance of market and mission logics, the organization's expansion and hiring decisions that favor hires with a market orientation indicate a stronger salience toward market goals, showing an ideological preference for market logic.

Inasmuch as the process of decision-making includes reasoning out from internal values and external forces (Brunsson 1990) where institutional pressures are interpreted, given meaning, and 'represented' by occupants of structural positions (Greenwood et al. 2011:342), logic salience neither excludes nor downplays the role of those in a weaker position. It helps us to understand why, for instance, certain decisions that do not represent the collective come about. However, and by implication, oppositions to such types of decision are a manifestation of logic salience of individuals who may or may not be holders of formal authority. Logic salience, within and between hierarchies, is proposed here as a representation of individuals' understanding and interpretation of institutional logics, which thus entails agency. The key ideas/approaches for putting agency into the institutional

logics and institutional work literature and what they offer provide a reference point in relation to the proposed concept of logic salience with its own set of key ideas depicted in the succeeding empirical and analysis chapters. These ideas will be illustrated in table 9, chapter 9.

## Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a discussion on institutional logics and hybridity, where hybridity can be understood as a situation to which nonprofit organizations are exposed to multiple logics that give rise to challenges in hybrid organizing. What constitutes market and mission logics are expounded and where actors' agency comes into play as they have to contend with and respond to the various demands that are tied to these logics. The chapter's discussion of the role of actors and how they may respond in this hybrid context highlights the interdependence between the actors, their organizations, and the context that they are in. By implication, this chapter provides a framing for the proposed concept of logic salience that has emerged from the preliminary conversation with the theoretical frame presented in this chapter and the first case organization. The emerging concept will be explored and developed through further conversation between theory and the succeeding empirical findings.



## *Chapter 4*

# Methodological considerations

If we can only see from within the blinkers of capital's logic we will never understand or recognize the values that live beyond value. Our own analysis will trap us into that which we are expected to reveal. We therefore, as sociologists have a duty to look beyond and search for the gaps, the un-captured and better ways of being and doing.

- Skeggs (2014:16)

My earlier academic and practical experiences in the areas of business, social entrepreneurship & innovation, and nonprofit organizing have helped form the way I understood and regarded the adoption of business and entrepreneurship in mission-premised initiatives. I used to cast the lens and idea of social entrepreneurship an almost unshaken vote of confidence. But then, I realized from conferences and seminars arranged by local and international actors on social entrepreneurship & innovation that everyone in the community seemed to share a common language and ideology, thus, not leaving much room for critical reflection. As I embarked on my Ph.D. journey and started to immerse myself into the literature on nonprofit studies, it became apparent that the promise of what Reilly (2016) calls the 'social enterprise model' (SE model) to address societal challenges can no longer be taken at face value. However, it is often risky to challenge assumptions that underlie existing studies, since it means questioning existing power relations in a scientific field (Breslau 1997; Starbuck 2003; Bourdieu 2004). This encouragement to challenge assumptions explains my motivation for this dissertation. Without denying the potential of the SE model (or otherwise called, the hybrid model) to address societal challenges, the variety and scope of these challenges and the organizations and initiatives to address them make, however, a one-size-fits-all theory or solution seem implausible.

As Rosenberg (2012) argues, we researchers are not merely spectators but are active participants in a research process and bring with us our ideas and preconceptions, making the research not value-free (Nagel 1994). This hermeneutic stance is also offered by bracketing/reflexivity which helps researchers in understanding the effects of their experiences rather than in using their energy in making these experiences irrelevant (Porter 1993). Moreover, Harrington's (2005:8) argument that "social *facts* are meaningful to us only insofar as they are value-laden, and we only come to be engaged with these facts insofar as we have values about how the world ought to be or ought not to be" strengthens the role of our saliences and preconceptions. Preconceptions actually enable the identification of issues or situations (Heidegger 1962) making researchers alert to themes in common with the broader human experience (see also Ahern 1999). Beliefs tend to be strong determinants of behavior (Rosenberg 2008) and of how we see things; beliefs guide us, and our perception is always colored by our beliefs (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009). This is in tune with Hausman's (1992) suggestion of rejecting Hume's 'foundationalist' view where prior knowledge is permitted, making problems manageable. Therefore, the shared construction, interpretation, and reporting of meanings surrounding a phenomenon is "believed to involve far more rich insights into human experiences, through the process of interpretation, and leads to meanings being negotiated, rather than constructed, by the researcher" (Doyle 2007:892).

As in any research endeavor, there is always something special or at least peculiar that catches our interest and sparks research ideas. And surely, we all reflect on events and discussions we have observed or participated in. The excerpt in the next page contains (or how I picture the excerpt) of such a discussion from a management meeting at Skyddsvärnet, a Swedish nonprofit organization, that I observed as part of my fieldwork for this dissertation. From what I regard as a normal meeting scenario where the discussion departs from an agenda and where everyone gets an opportunity to raise issues and answer questions, two peculiar parts (or moments) ushered my discovery of a breakdown in this situation.

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As the discussion unfolded (.....), a casual mention of the word *professionalizing* by one Section Manager was met with a momentary silence ( \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ), only to be broken by moving on to another topic (.....), as if nothing out of the ordinary was mentioned or had occurred. However, the subtle effort to disregard or ignore the mention of professionalizing had the opposite effect on me as an observer. It became apparent that there was a possible tension or discord in how the members of the management group regarded whatever the word professionalizing meant to them and what it entailed for the organization; namely that it possibly was a meaningful detail (Gabriel 2018). I therefore realized that I might have just found an antecedent to a mystery, a breakdown, during the early stage of my fieldwork. I then decided to use this word as my ‘guiding light’ (Alvesson and Kärreman 2011) in designing my interview questions and in conducting my interviews.

Reflecting on my research journey, this breakdown not only directed me to the main focus of this dissertation, that is – not professionalization per se, but some core issues it suggests, namely how individuals engage with multiple logics. It also unleashed the potential and merits of an abductive approach to theory building and presentation of findings. An abductive approach enables our engagement in a back-and-forth movement between theory and data in a quest to develop a new theory or to modify extant theory (Dubois and Gadde 2002). This approach allows me as a researcher to identify, if need be, to go back to whatever it is that sparked an idea, and from there successively refine insights and concepts. My research process and the case composition are therefore presented in order to understand more about how the research started and the context of study before

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<sup>9</sup> This cryptic excerpt is in Swedish, and professionalizing is the English translation I use for *professionalisering*.

going through the research design, data collection, methodological and philosophical standpoints, the abductive approach, a discussion on the emergence of a concept and its potential as an analytical tool, followed by data analysis and ethical considerations. The chapter ends with reflections on the methods and research process that this study had undergone.

## Research process and case composition

Just barely two months after I started with my doctoral journey, I was contacted by Famna, a national umbrella organization for idea-based (in Swedish– *idéburen*) health and social care in Sweden. Famna’s mission, together with their member organizations, is to work with information and impact work on issues related to development and growth within the *idéburen* Swedish welfare. Famna’s coordinator for research and education heard from colleagues about my research project, which she found interesting from different perspectives related to her own research interests and the works of Famna and its member organizations. This facilitated access to Famna member organizations and their participation in my research through surveys. A contact with another *idéburen* umbrella organization Social Forum ([socialforum.se](http://socialforum.se)) also facilitated access to Forum Syd’s ([forumsyd.org](http://forumsyd.org)) member organizations.

The questionnaire surveys were conducted and used not to establish correlation and statistical measures that are usually associated with surveys and other more quantitative tasks. Rather, they were used in order to gain an easier and organized access to information as to which organizations among the two umbrella organizations with 50 members (Famna survey, spring 2015, 33% response rate; [www.famna.org](http://www.famna.org)) and 158 members (Forum Syd survey, summer 2015, 14% response rate; [www.forumsyd.org](http://www.forumsyd.org)) respectively, are applying (or not applying) business principles and to solicit some general views on the role and significance of business for their organization being a nonprofit. These two surveys facilitated an informed choice of cases of study that I assess as showing the greatest potential for conducting worthwhile research. It led to the selection of the present cases Skyddsvärnet, and Afrikagrupperna (with partner organizations in South Africa, Wellness Foundation, and Surplus People Project). A third case organization selected from the survey was replaced by Individuell Människohjälp Fair Trade (IM or IMFT), explained in the next page.

The first case is Skyddsvärnet, a Swedish nonprofit organization located in Stockholm. It was chosen primarily because the answer to the survey indicated that this nonprofit organization is financed solely through market-based activities, hence considers itself as a 'business.' A nonprofit organization that is presented in the survey as a business sounded interesting, especially since nonprofits are usually perceived as being premised on a social mission, while at the same time, the more recent development points to the increasing marketization of the third sector.

The second case, Afrikagrupperna (AG), is a nonprofit, non-governmental aid organization with its headquarters in Sweden. Unlike Skyddsvärnet, the survey indicated that market-based activities are regarded much less enthusiastically at AG and where its NPO-NGO status was given greater emphasis. Since AG is a SIDA frame organization and works with NGOs in several countries in Africa, insights from this Swedish-funded international partnership are potentially interesting and fruitful, considering the current funding instability that is anticipated to affect donor-partner relations. Because of their partnerships, their inter-organizational alignments become of significance in understanding how funding instability affects the organizations and how their members respond to it. Accordingly, AG's partners in South Africa, Wellness Foundation (WF), and Surplus People Project (SPP) were chosen and added to the second empirical case, making it a multiple case study that includes both organizational and inter-organizational analyses based on the respondents' perspectives. Here, it is to be noted that the organizations in this partnership are all nonprofits, but also regard themselves as NGOs.

Individuell Människohjälp (IM), unlike Skyddsvärnet and AG, with its partners WF and SPP, was not part of the participating organizations in the surveys. I was approached by a respondent that I met during an interview at the prospected third case organization, for a possible continued research cooperation, this time at his new workplace. IM is also a member organization of Forum Syd and a SIDA frame organization. I chose and included this organization as I deemed that my work could be greatly enriched considering the interest from this respondent and the opportunity to follow his day-to-day activities from day one, and the interesting combination of development/aid and volunteer-manned fairtrade stores. This decision is therefore a matter of a judgment call (Glick et al. 1995). It has to be noted though that the original idea was that my role was supposed to be a researcher-adviser (a role reminiscent of action research), but due to some internal matters, this did not materialize.



All of these organizations are considered nonprofits, but they are financed differently. I assumed that these similarities and differences would provide interesting and rich insights into how the organizational members view and relate to their respective organization's form of funding.

I build on the synthesis presented earlier where organizational or managerial responses become central in studies that concern hybridity and hybrid management. In particular, given that organizations and their members are exposed and compelled to respond to external forces imposed on them, studying these responses became my way in to understanding the dynamics and implications of the market-mission logics. I explore different cases and contexts, and the micro-level of analysis, without disregarding the possible external influences on the internal responses (Cornforth 2014).

## Qualitative case study design

Insofar as this study involves the complexity (Stake 1995) of managing conflicting logics within the third sector, it employs and follows a qualitative research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification during the collection and analysis of materials. Semi-structured interviews are chosen in order to understand the meanings that interviewees attach to issues and situations in context, which have not been structured in advance by the researcher (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe 2002). Semi-structured interviews allow us to obtain both retrospective and real-time accounts of experiences by respondents (Morgan 1983). In line with the exploratory nature of this study, the research design for the cases is varied in the form of qualitative single case study and multiple case studies. The selection of the cases for this dissertation is based on the anticipated opportunity to learn (Stake 1995) about how multiple logics play out in a nonprofit context facilitated by two surveys I conducted in 2015, as discussed above and elsewhere, which indicated, among others, how organizations are financed and which of them are in business as a way of financing the organizations.

Case studies can involve either single or multiple cases, and several levels of analysis (Yin 1984). The first and third studies are using a single case – a research strategy that focuses on understanding the dynamics occurring within single settings (Eisenhardt 1989), and wherein the case is the object of interest in its own right,

where my intention is to provide an in-depth elucidation of the case's unique features, known as an idiographic approach. The benefit of using a single case study is its tendency to focus on intensive examination of the setting, and with which observation, semi-structured interviewing, and documentary collection of company reports can be combined, as suggested by Knights and McCabe (1997). Cases 1 and 3 are thus single case studies, but the design of case 3 somehow became elevated as my informant, who was a respondent during an earlier study, approached me for a continued collaboration at his new workplace, as mentioned earlier. My informant then maintained a diary from day 1 for over a year, which became my departure point in forming the questions during subsequent interviews with other respondents. However, part of the original plan of using the diary notes as the main source of empirical material to be compared against other (interview) materials had to be abandoned as requested by the informant.

Case 2 uses multiple-case studies, which are extensions of the case study design that allow exploration that puts focus on the cases and their unique contexts, and to compare and to contrast the findings derived from each of the cases. To the extent that case 2 involves three organizations in a donor-partner relationship, this multiple case involves an analysis of each organization and, at the same time, involves a cross-case analysis. It entails an inter-organizational comparative study of three organizations in a partnership context. These therefore have spurred and provided me with an opportunity to consider what is unique and common across cases that usually prompt theoretical reflection on the findings through comparative analysis (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

## Data collection

Case studies typically combine data collection methods that include archives, interviews, questionnaires, and observations (Eisenhardt 1989). The methods used in collecting data for this dissertation are surveys, observations, semi-structured interviews, diary notes, and a documentary study. The questionnaire surveys were the first to be conducted as a source of initial information for this dissertation. They were not used to establish a correlation and statistical measures that are usually associated with surveys and other more quantitative tasks. Rather, their purpose was to have an easier and organized access to information as to which organizations were

applying (or not applying) business principles. They also solicited some general views on the role and significance of business for the organizations being NPOs or NGOs. The surveys facilitated an informed choice of cases of study that I assessed as showing the greatest potential for generating data.

In keeping with the open character and flexibility of an explorative approach (Stebbins 2001), the fieldwork and first case started with a non-participant observation of Skyddsvärnet's management meeting, making my presence at Skyddsvärnet's office in Stockholm, on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015, unobtrusive. It was designed to capture verbal exchanges and interactions, specifically what type of vocabulary and focus of conversations transpire in such a meeting, including comments that differ or stand out. Unspoken nuances were also noted with regard to who tends to be more or less active in the conversation, including body language. All these gave an insight into how to better formulate the questions raised during the interviews. The onsite interviews with (four members of) the management group followed thereafter, and on the next day. The process of selecting additional interviewees was a result of snowballing. It included phone interviews with two more from the management group, followed by two former employees and the former Director. To increase insight into how the organization functions (mission, decision-making, and strategies) and corroborate the (varied) views, and to reach a point of saturation, four members of the Board were also interviewed. The interviews for the Skyddsvärnet case were completed on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015.

For the Afrikagrupperna (AG) case, a non-participant observation of the management group and interviews with four of its group members, including the General Secretary, were carried out in Stockholm on January 25-26<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Another non-participant observation of the Board, followed by interviews of one Board Member and the Chair were conducted also in Stockholm on February 13-14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. An interview with another Board Member and one middle Manager was conducted in March 2016 via Skype. For AG's South African partner, Wellness Foundation (WF), I combined group meetings with individual interviews and observation of their fieldwork. For Surplus People Project (SPP), the interviews were mostly individual, with the exception of one small group interview with interns. I combined this with a non-participant observation of its mid-year staff meeting and a field visit of two farming projects that two of the interns were involved in. All these were done personally in Cape Town in April

2017, except for the two follow-up interviews with two employees at WF, which were carried out through Skype and completed on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

For the IM case, during the 14- month period of my informant's diary writing, we had five meetings to discuss his work experiences, especially those that he wrote down in his diary. We also had several e-mail conversations that continued after this period. Around 8 months after my informant started with his diary notes, I commenced interviews with his co-workers. My informant facilitated the initial contact with his co-workers. My departure point for the interviews was the issues from the diary notes, which I found interesting and relevant to my research study. However, I made it a point that these issues did not constrain my inquiry, which was in line with the exploratory nature of this study. The meetings I had with my informant were usually after I had incrementally received and reflected on his diary notes. The data collection for the IM case culminated in September 2018.

The similar and complementary approach to the data collection was applied throughout this study's research process (with the exception of the diary notes, which are unique to the IM case). These different data collection methods were partly for the purpose of increasing the opportunity to capture as much insights as possible and necessary, and partly to increase rigor and enhance structure in the data collection (and data analysis) process. Overall, the interviews were the main source of empirical data, and the rest of the methods for data collection had a complementary purpose. How these methods were conducted, and the specific types of materials gathered are discussed further below.

## Surveys

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, two surveys were conducted in the spring and summer of 2015, prior to the fieldwork for this dissertation. The surveys were for the purpose of identifying the nonprofit organizations that are into business and those that are not and choosing the cases from them. The questions centered therefore on how the organizations are financed, what type of resources or funding they have, and if they combine different types of funding or are into some business-related activities, including the approximate extent of these. These surveys (facilitated by two umbrella organizations, discussed in the section Research process and case composition) revealed that the organizations that participated, vary in terms of application of business or market principles and

from which two organizations were selected; thereafter, a third case organization was included through a different selection process (also discussed in the Research process and case composition section). It was then assumed that the variation in funding or application of market solutions could have an effect on how the members of these organizations relate to these changes and/or regard themselves. Hence, hybridity – and tension – may well depend on the extent and/or explicitness of the duality of the organizations' social mission and economic goals.

Questionnaires that are completed by respondents themselves are one of the main tools for gathering data using a survey design (de Leeuw 2008). I used an online survey tool called Sunet Survey, through Lund University. The questions, for example, How is your organization financed, and why? Are you into business-like activities; if so, to what extent? What type of business are you into?, were designed according to the purpose of the questionnaire, which was to determine how the organizations participating in the survey were financed, as explained earlier. Ultimately, the selection decision from the surveys was based on the extent of the organizations' business activities, as part of their funding or the main form of their funding. Skyddsvärnet was chosen as it is financed entirely through business activities, while AG (and partners WF and SPP) is financed entirely through aid funding.

The inclusion of IM, an organization that is aid-funded and at the same time is into selling (of fairtrade products), was a decision made at a later date, as explained earlier. The response rates varied dramatically between the two umbrella organizations (partly due to survey participation exhaustion that the organizations have cautioned me about, and it can be partly attributed to the summer season when many organizations in Sweden either have reduced operations or are closed), but they were good enough to provide good insights as to which organizations were potentially excellent case choices.

The disadvantages of self-completion questionnaire, such as the lack of opportunity to prompt, probe, and help the respondents (de Leeuw 2008), are acknowledged here, but considering the main purpose for conducting the surveys in the present study, these disadvantages did not affect the end results. Since said surveys were digital and addressed to specific individuals (through direct e-mail), I was aware of who the respondents were, and their answers were used to guide the forming of questions raised during the subsequent interviews.

## Observations

Besides what was previously mentioned, I also conducted five simple observations. In these observations, I have tried to make my presence unobtrusive (Maxwell 2018). The participants were made aware of my role as a non-participant observer and as such, I was not expected to take part in the meeting or discussion. Apart from the introductory pleasantries and when obliged to answer any question, I therefore uttered no words to avoid an unnecessary effect of my presence on how they usually carry out their meetings. In all the observations I conducted, it was always apparent during the first interaction (or initial stage of the observation) that people felt conscious of my presence, as revealed by their body language. I therefore made some adjustment, according to the situation. For instance, during an observation of the management meeting at Skyddsvarnet, as soon as I started scribbling something on my notepad, I noticed how it grabbed the attention of some of the participants. I therefore minimized note taking and concentrated instead on listening and in making mental notes of what was being said and how things were said or ignored.

My general intention with the observations was to get an idea of what was being discussed during the meetings, how the discussions transpired, and most importantly, to capture any deviation or peculiarity that would help me locate any possible ‘mystery.’ This, in turn, I thought would help me to better design my interview questions, which it actually did. It is, for example, through the observation of Skyddsvarnet’s management meeting that the mention of the word ‘professionalizing’ by a section manager suddenly brought a momentary silence in the group, only to be broken by moving on to another topic without addressing the Section Manager’s comment (as illustrated earlier). It made me realize that anything to do with professionalization or professional management of their activities can be a source of tension within the group. This insight did help me in designing my interview questions.

The simple observation I performed at AG and at the partners, WF and SPP, was for the same purpose. At AG, the management meeting did not lend any remarkable observation, except for a sparked interest in what their Regional Director in South Africa can shed light on from a perspective of an AG employee and at the same time from the perspective of someone from the South in a donor-partner context. I also joined their *fika* (coffee break), where I observed an obvious divide or a sense of isolation of a small group of employees. Although it can be

adjudged as insignificant, just like at Skyddsvarnet, this simple observation gave an indication of the management challenges at AG in general, and the tension from introducing market-based activities in this mission-premised organization in particular. For IM, I did not get an opportunity to observe any of their meetings due to internal issues. In a way, the diary notes from my informant at IM, although from one particular perspective, still served as my window into the possible challenges tied to combining market principles with nonprofit values in a nonprofit aid organization.

## **Interviews**

In qualitative case-studies, interviews are the most common source of data (Yin 2009; Miles and Huberman 1994). The strength of qualitative interviewing is the opportunity it provides to collect and rigorously examine narrative accounts of social worlds (Miller and Glassner 1997). Qualitative interviewing usually differs from interviewing in quantitative research in several respects. Qualitative research is less structured, and the interview is flexible, where the interviewer can depart from any schedule or guide, can vary the order and wording of questions, and ask follow-up questions (Easterby-Smith et al. 2002). Quantitative research, on the other hand, is structured to maximize the reliability and validity of measurement of key concepts, so structured that interviewees' point of view is usually regarded as a nuisance, the order and wordings of questions are not changed so as not to compromise the standardization of the interview process and hence, the reliability and validity of measurement.

Since I was after the respondents' point of view, and rich and detailed answers, qualitative research was chosen. I conducted a total of 48 main individual interviews, including three follow-up interviews and two group interviews. The length of these interviews varied considerably between approximately 30 minutes and two hours. There was also a more informal set of interviews (four lunch meetings) with my informant at IM between 2017 and 2019.

For this study, I have employed semi-structured interviews; moreover, for each interview conducted, I had a short interview guide, and I gave the interviewees a great deal of leeway in responding. My experience had shown that this interview method ensures that what I have in my mind, or my purpose, is met without constricting the opportunity to unleash unexpected insights. For all the

interviews, and as mentioned earlier, whenever possible, I used the insights obtained from the simple observation that I had conducted in most of the organizations, in designing or adjusting the interview guide that I had prepared in advance. I have also made use of the insights from the surveys, particularly when the interviewed respondent was the same person who participated in the survey (usually from the organizations' management). This means that there had been questions that were common for all the respondents, such as introductory questions and pleasantries, specific themes such as their funding situation and their resource diversification, and so forth, and that there had also been questions that were spontaneously raised as a response to what the respondents themselves have said and which I deemed as relevant and/or interesting to explore.

Due to this combination of guided and flexible interview questions (and follow-up questions), I was able to gather varied and rich answers. Because of the variety and number of questions that were asked and treated, it therefore becomes impossible to reproduce and account here for each and every question raised. Nonetheless, the following questions, which I deem as a good representative set, can give an idea of the types of questions raised and how the interviews have progressed. For example, for the first respondent at Skyddsvärnet, the questions asked include, but are not limited to: Please tell me about yourself, your background, and/or your role in the organization. Can we then say that your background is within and between social and economic facets of work/work-life? How was it to bring everyone together toward a common goal? Why are some a bit skeptical (about the changes)? What do you mean by quality assurance, and is that relevant to what (one Section Head) said about professionalization (of your operations/organization)? What is your opinion on professionalization? How do you then find a balance (between the clients' well-being and measuring whatever you do)? Do these changes have to do with the fact that you do not receive government or any other type of external funding? What do you think of profit-making in welfare services? We have now talked about professionalization, but what do you think of the marketization of the third sector, where you (as you say) compete with market actors? So, what you are saying is that professionalization and marketization are interrelated? What is it that you gain from being in the market? Anything that you lose from it? What is it that makes you (your organization) a nonprofit association?



For the first respondent at Afrikagrupperna, and following my observation of their management meeting, among the interview questions asked after the introductory questions were: Is that what you want (referring to the respondent's view on how to tackle the world problem on resource inequality), to start from oneself? Is it why you started to work at AG? Can you give me some examples of the changes that you have made (in the organization)? Was it easy to make people support your ideas? Why did the Board think that you (the organization) need to renew? So, you mean that there are tensions, and tensions must exist? Besides the challenges, what are the things that make your work fun or rewarding? You talked a lot about financing/funding during the management meeting, but have you had any discussion that you may need to try to earn your own money? You mean that you cannot exist without funding? Why do you have this distance from the business sector? Is it about conflict of interests? I want to connect back to what you said earlier about the beyond-aid scenario. Do they (your partners in the South) have a possibility of supporting themselves? What is actually meant by solidarity? What is it that hinders civil society organizations from adapting to the market if you think it is not that strange? Do you think there are any risks? But you (organization) are dependent on SIDA as you have already said. Can you then still raise your criticisms as part of your advocacy work? It is what research says about those who recommend market solutions, because aid does not work (in solving the growing societal challenges/world inequalities), but do you mean that the market is not the solution either?

A similar line of questions was raised in the rest of the interviews and at the same time was adapted to the organizational contexts and to what the respondents' answers were about. Throughout the interviews, it became apparent that all of the organizations of study were exposed to funding volatility. This influenced them to diversify their resources, which entailed challenges and tensions other than those that are tied to their funding instability. This resource diversification involved different attempts, and in varied degrees, at finding market solutions, and there were differing views and responses to these changes.

## **Diary notes**

A former respondent contacted me and showed strong interest in collaborating further when he was to start at another workplace, IM. Seizing this opportunity, I proposed to this respondent to take notes of his daily activities, challenges, reflections, and whatever comes to mind – which means without censoring himself. Through his diary notes, I was able to access the peculiarities of work-life according to the informant himself. As in Zimmerman and Wieder's (1977:481) study, the diary refers to an annotated chronological record (cf. Sorokin and Berger 1939) or 'log' (cf. Allport 1942). Diary is a method to collect data, usually on a daily basis or even several times a day. This method allows "work and organizational psychologists to study thoughts, feelings, and behaviours within the natural work context as well as characteristics of the work situation which may fluctuate on a daily basis" (Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen and Zaph 2010:80). These diary notes, complemented by the recollection of events by several respondents at IM, made it possible to study and present the course of events at IM at different stages, making what this particular case study offers rather unique.

The diary notes also helped me to design the questions I raised during the interviews with other co-workers and volunteers. Zimmerman and Wieder (1977) view the diary-interview as an approximation to the method of participant observation, and where the diarist serves as an informant.

## **Documentary materials**

Atkinson and Coffey (1997) argue that documentary materials should be regarded as data in their own right. They often hold a distinctive documentary version of social reality, and their own characteristics that inform their production and circulation (Silverman 1997). Considering that two of the case studies for this dissertation are very mature organizations, the richness of their organizational history is deemed to provide good insights (especially, in comparison to insights from the interviews) as to the changes that the organizations have gone through over the decades. The available documents hence provide valuable insights on how their operations have been and are financed (from donor-funded to income-generation) and the associated changes in 'who' the organizations are.

## Methodological and philosophical standpoints

Social scientists have long been encouraged to be more self-conscious about their methodology (Friedman 1966). However, and unlike in any of the natural sciences, there is an absence of agreement about theories and benchmark methods of inquiry among the social sciences. Hence, the only source of guidance for conducting research must come from philosophical theories (Rosenberg 2012). While it is the philosophy of science that guides inquiry (Rosenberg 2012:3), “the lack of method nevertheless can at best lead to irresolvable disagreements about the weight and adequacy of evidence; at worst it is an invitation to mistake arbitrary and a priori ‘interpretations’ for evidenced conclusions” (Mink 1966:38). It is said that our view of the world (ontology) and how we go about attaining knowledge from it (epistemology) influence how we formulate a problem and select a method for addressing the problem (Bryman and Bell 2011).

From drafting the research proposal and during the different stages in writing this dissertation, I experienced a dilemma in having to choose (and hence, become constrained by) a particular perspective. It is acknowledged here that the philosophy underlying our scientific practice is a choice and should not simply be a default inherited unquestionably from our teachers and mentors (Van de Ven 2007:37). Moreover, too much armchair theorizing brings risks in becoming over-dependent on earlier authorities and “tangled up in all the old problems,” making it difficult to see new possibilities (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009:58). Therefore, I lean here toward Alvesson and Sköldbberg’s call for a qualified movement between different methodological conceptions to avoid becoming blindly locked into a particular philosophical position. This entails, nevertheless, that I understand that indeed we as researchers need to be familiar with the different scientific and research methods and apply them to obtain rigorous research while exercising reflexivity so that creativity is not compromised. I seek further support from Van de Ven (2007) who says that an understanding of a complex problem or phenomenon can be enhanced by engaging and communicating across different philosophical perspectives. For me, these instances epitomize pragmatism.

I therefore adopt in this study an abductive/iterative research approach (discussed more closely on p. 108) to allow movements between methods and perspectives and use empirical findings to build, rather than to test, theory. This is considering

the limited theoretical basis for understanding how multiple institutional logics leading to hybridity co-exist and are managed at the micro-level (Besharov and Smith 2014; Mair et al. 2015). This exploration (or movement) is arguably a more inviting and accurate way of representing social research with its open character and emphasis on flexibility, pragmatism, and the specific interests of the investigator.

When it comes to methods, a particular choice between, for example, quantitative and qualitative is usually taken as signifying a researcher's philosophical standpoint or paradigm on how reality is viewed (Morgan 2007) and thereby is associated, for instance, with positivism or constructivism. There are different ways of drawing boundaries within the field of philosophy in general, and within philosophy of knowledge as a subfield. One version would be a metaphysics consisting of issues related to the nature of reality and truth, where it contains the field of ontology that concentrates on the nature of reality and connects between ontology and epistemology through questions about the possibility of 'truth,' in the form of 'objective knowledge' about reality. The metaphysical paradigm that started with ontological assumptions about the nature of reality captures Guba and Lincoln's 'top-down' approach (Morgan 2007) and which, in turn, imposes constraints on any subsequent epistemological assumptions of the nature of knowledge. Specifically, their comparison of positivism and constructivism has imposed limits on assumptions about the nature of knowledge and what could be known, leading to a limited range of methodological assumptions about generating knowledge.

By pragmatism, I do not only and primarily mean the possibility of combining different methods, such as quantitative and qualitative. I mean, rather, that although the world and everything around and in it is socially constructed, an understanding or sharedness about it, irrespective of time and space, and sometimes even without the involvement of language, is a source of objectivity (Duranti 2010). Husserlian intersubjectivity includes, in its most basic sense, a mode of participation in the natural and material world that does not require an immediately perceivable human presence; it is constitutive of the Subject and of the very notion of an objective world. Intersubjectivity is regarded as a domain of inquiry that spans the entire scope of the human experience, where the natural world is a shared world of experience. Natural here, which was translated as 'the natural standpoint' (Husserl 1931) to 'the natural attitude' (e.g. Husserl 1998), is

a very anthropological notion that can be easily rendered as ‘the cultural attitude,’ considering that Husserl uses ‘natural’ to mean taken for granted, rather than belonging to the world of nature (Duranti 2009).

I interpret this in such a way that a thing becomes *something* (hence, socially constructed) because we come to an agreement or understanding that such a thing or subject is indeed something or someone (e.g. a table, a woman), making it an almost common-sensical or a logical understanding that we share in a similar situation or context. Moreover, here the subject woman becomes an object. This happens when we, for instance, objectify humans as a set of traits, generalized identities or roles, and so forth: an epistemological representation of an ontological subject, where the interpreted embodied subjects become interpreted categorized objects; therefore, subject and object are in some way mutually implicated (Cunliffe 2010).

However, intersubjectivity for me does not undermine that how we regard the same thing can be different or subjective on an individual level (that is – a nice table, a nice lady). Duranti (2010) argues that when the misunderstandings are resolved, for instance, on Husserl’s tendency to return over and over again to the epistemological and ontological foundations of his philosophy without providing enough exemplifications of what he had in mind, intersubjectivity “can constitute an overall theoretical frame for thinking about the ways in which humans interpret, organize, and reproduce particular forms of social life and social cognition” (ibid, p. 29). Garfinkel (1967) and Schutz (1970) frame intersubjectivity as a commonly experienced and understood world of shared meanings, interpretations, and culture – a common-sense knowledge enacted in social practice and studied through ‘interpretive procedures,’ such as reciprocity of perspectives (Cunliffe 2010).

Indeed, being “tangled up in all the old problems” (namely being immersed in one particular approach) makes it difficult to see new possibilities; therefore, a researcher’s reading should have a certain breadth because seeing links between distant phenomena is a common feature of creative research (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009:58). There are many researchers who adopt a pragmatic view of combining different methods; adhering to one particular approach is not necessarily due to a traditional association with a chosen paradigm of science, nor a question of which approach to reasoning is correct (Hyde 2000). Through

reflexivity, one adopts a conscientious and pragmatic approach to find the best formula in addressing research questions and goals.

In a similar vein, it is this pragmatic stance that makes me consider the interconnectedness of the internal and external, the micro and the macro; that the internal and the micro, through meanings that respondents assign to the issues and situations as well as provide an indication of what is going on externally and in the larger context (Barnes 2001), and vice-versa. It is this interconnectedness, the complementarity and not the fruitless competition between modernism and postmodernism (Boisot and McKelvey 2010) (and by implication, positivism and constructivism) would help explain my pragmatic stance, which, in my view, allows me to achieve an understanding that transcends the straitjacket imposed by choosing a strictly either–or perspective of how we regard and understand truth.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, insofar as it is argued that complete objectivity is impossible, so is complete subjectivity. Any practicing researcher must work iteratively between various frames of reference, where the pragmatic emphasis on an intersubjective approach captures such duality (Morgan 2007). For Berger and Luckmann (1966), society possesses an objective facticity, and is indeed built up by activity that expresses a subjective meaning. It is this dual character of a society that makes its reality *sui generis*. Hence, the insights from the objectivist-subjectivist based research can help create a fuller understanding of organizational practices (Cunliffe 2010).

A pragmatic stance helps move the current methodological discussions beyond the pros and cons of oversimplified, either–or choices, such as quantitative and qualitative, inductive or deductive (Stebbins 2001). This approach also allows to capture complexities and detect patterns and regularities across cases (Yin 1984; Miles and Huberman 1994). One of the main purposes of an exploratory study, according to Zimmerman and Dart (1998), is to map poorly understood phenomena, which is how they describe the charity-commerce interface. I am thus taking advantage of the leeway that an iterative/abductive approach offers, allowing me to (still) have a critical stance on the different assumptions and theories concerning the subject of study while not being constrained by the strict

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<sup>10</sup> For more on the complementarity of modernism and postmodernism, the objective against the subjective, the intersubjective objectivity, see Boisot and McKelvey 2010; for more on pragmatism, see Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004.

either—or choice. Finally, as I build my arguments, becoming normative is inevitable because I believe that being purely critical can only take us so far.

## An abductive approach

Grounded theory (GT) emerged in the 1960s as a result of Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss' sociological research project on dying in hospitals (Walker and Myrick 2006). GT is said to be one of the most popular methods ever developed in social sciences and has contributed to a more qualitative character to social research (Reichertz 2007). According to Suddaby (2006), this methodology is a reaction by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to the extreme positivism that had permeated most social research. Glaser and Strauss specifically challenged common assumptions of 'grand theory,' namely that the purpose of social research is to uncover pre-existing and universal explanations of social behavior. In supporting their challenge, they considered the pragmatism of Charles Peirce (1839-1914) and early symbolic interactionists who dismissed the assumption that scientific truth reflects an independent external reality (Suddaby 2006:633).

In this pragmatic approach to social science research, Glaser and Strauss regard 'empirical reality' as the ongoing interpretation of meaning by individuals engaged in a common project of observation. They argued that by being attentive to the contrast between "the daily realities (what is actually going on) of substantive areas" (Glaser and Strauss 1967:239) and the interpretation of said daily realities by the participants themselves (Suddaby 2006), new theory can be developed. Grounded theory research always tries to achieve a practical middle ground between unrestrained empiricism and a theory-laden view of the world. It allows for a systematic data collection to develop theories that address the interpretive realities of actors in social settings (Suddaby 2006). In order to achieve this middle ground, we need to pay attention to extant theory, but at the same time to always remind ourselves that we are only humans and that what we observe is a function of both who we are and what we hope to see (Suddaby 2006:635).

The method as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) is built upon two main concepts of 'constant comparison' and 'theoretical sampling.' In constant comparison, data are collected and analyzed simultaneously, which therefore contradicts the myth of a clean separation between data collection and analysis.

In theoretical sampling, the theory that is being constructed determines decisions on which data should be collected next, which therefore challenges the ideal of hypothesis testing where the direction of new data collection is determined, not through a priori hypothesis, but by ongoing interpretation of data and emerging conceptual categories (Suddaby 2006). These two concepts contradict persistent positivist assumptions about how research process should work. Grounded theory is most appropriate for our efforts to understand the process by which actors construct meaning out of intersubjective experience, when we want to make knowledge claims about how individuals interpret reality (ibid.).

The pragmatic core of grounded theory research also clarifies, or rectifies, incorrect descriptions of quantitative approaches as necessarily deductive and grounded theory as inherently inductive. Peirce recognized that there is no pure induction and pure deduction, insofar as new ideas result from a combination of these fundamental approaches, which he termed 'abduction'. Abduction "is the process of forming an explanatory hypothesis. It is the only logical operation which introduces any new idea" (Peirce 1903:216). Abduction, as described by Peirce, is a 'flash of insight' that generates new conceptual views of the empirical world (Suddaby 2006:639). Abduction, the process by which a researcher moves between induction and deduction, has become incorporated into grounded theory as 'analytic induction.' Strauss and Corbin (1998) observed that induction had been overemphasized in grounded theory research, while in fact researchers also engage in deduction whenever they conceptualize data. Therefore, an effective grounded theory requires "an interplay between induction and deduction, as in all science" (Strauss and Corbin 1998:137).

Abduction, sometimes referred to as the reflective approach, is therefore an alternative approach to rigid induction or deduction. Traditionally, our research process is a means to an end, and is thus accounted for in the methods section. However, the reflective approach means that the research process itself is treated as a subject for constant interpretation and refinement through an oscillation between the data, on the one hand, and theory or preunderstanding, on the other (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2000).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) explain that our experience, data, and theory interact abductively. As they put it, "the root sources of all significant theorizing are the sensitive insights of the observer herself" (p. 251), and that our experience or pre-understanding "may appear just as fruitfully near the end of a long inquiry as near



the outset” (ibid.). The way in which this dissertation’s research process is explicitly displayed is an attempt at and an exemplification of how we may develop theory abductively, while some of the significant emerging insights are simultaneously presented at the outset. Instead of reserving emerging insights for presentation later (as is traditionally done), I engage here in the preliminary insights that I have observed at an early stage from the interaction between my first empirical data and theoretical framework through writing abductively. Such insights can clearly be regarded as part of my pre-understanding. However, our pre-understandings or experiences are generally suppressed or adjudged as insignificant instead of deliberately harnessing them in our work (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Hence, by virtue of too strict adherence to existing theory, or for that matter to existing methods, researchers often stifle potential insights.

Abduction thus involves a repeated process of alternating between (empirically-laden) theory and (theory-laden) empirical ‘facts,’ which are successively reinterpreted in the light of each other (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009:4; see also Knox 2004). “This means a hermeneutic process during which the researcher, as it were, eats into the empirical material with the help of theoretical preconceptions, and also keeps developing and elaborating the theory” (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009:5). In other words, abduction does not simply mean that the research data and its fit with the findings are taken seriously but also that the research is presented in such a way that allows for new hypotheses to appear at every level, where the interpretation of the data is not finalized at an early stage so that new codes, categories, and theories can be further developed if necessary (Reichertz 2007).

Since how we interpret phenomena is always perspectival and the so-called facts are always theory-laden, strict application of either induction or deduction (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009) is therefore purposively avoided here. Although the deductive process as generally adopted by quantitative enquiry (being ‘positivist’) and inductive process as adopted by qualitative enquiry (being ‘relativist’) is true in general, it is not an accurate description of the actual practice of quantitative and qualitative researchers. It is thus essential for researchers to acknowledge that an iteration between theory and data is what most research endeavors apply (Hyde 2000), and which characterizes this present research.

Abduction is a logical inference – hence, reasonable and scientific, but it extends into the domain of profound insight – thus generates new knowledge. I address

the potential negative aspects of interpretative case studies' dependency on a continuous application of theory through a clear and conscious use of abduction throughout the research process (Åsvoll 2014). Abduction, just like induction, starts from an empirical basis but does not reject theoretical preconceptions and is, in that respect, closer to deduction. I acknowledge that induction and deduction appear more one-sided and unrealistic compared to abduction based on how we actually conduct research (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009:4; see also Knox 2004).

In this dissertation, particular attention or sensitivity to different theories and research methods (namely, induction vs. deduction) to allow open generation and interpretation of empirical materials is observed. Considering that this study mainly relies on interview transcripts, how individuals relate to the introduction or presence of market-oriented activities in their otherwise nonprofit, mission-premised context that captures *in situ* sensemaking (namely, that being done during the interview), the contextualization of institutional logics here can be said as temporal (Garud, Gehman and Giuliani 2014). Although temporal, it can also be argued that such sensemaking is not divorced from before-and-after mental models (Lane and Sirmon 2003).

Strauss' theory of negotiated order (1978) underscores that every social interaction is a negotiation (Thornton et al. 2012:94). Negotiation entails actors' processing of meanings, where we regard the mind as "arising and developing within the empirical matrix of social interactions" (Mead 1934:133). Through interaction rituals (Collins 1993), actors compare their expectations against their understanding, for example, of identities and schema, and action and meaning are then contextually moderated through negotiating modifications based on power differences (Thornton et al. 2012). It can therefore be said that this social phenomenon modifies the perspective of individual cognition and information processing (ibid.) insofar as we as thinking humans process information in reference to the social interactions we have or social environments we are in (Mead 1934). Considering that language is a key to both thought and action (ibid.), this dissertation examines individuals' accounts on how they negotiate or relate to multiple institutional logics.

Indeed, it is rather a taken for granted assumption that it is our responsibility and freedom as researchers to interpret meanings that represent the worldviews of actors (respondents) engaged in a social situation (for example, during an

interview) (Svensson 2003). My take on this is to first consider how people negotiate meanings, considering that the respondents in this study are exposed to institutional logics of mission and market, which are increasingly regarded as competing, and as a researcher draw my interpretation and conclusion accordingly.

A negotiation of meaning, although occurring within individuals just like sensemaking, is not isolated from how surrounding actors respond (Lane and Sirmon 2003), making it an interaction ritual. This also reminds us of how meaning arises through social interactions, as suggested by the concept of inhabited institutions (Hallett and Ventresca 2006). In this interaction, a unique sharing and negotiation of an interpretive stance between respondents, and between respondents and researchers, transpires (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Doyle 2007). Research examining the socio-cognitive influences on individuals explicitly or implicitly assumes that these individuals engage in 'sensemaking' (Weick 1995). This approach is in tune with qualitative research being "fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on events, processes and structures of their lives" (Miles and Huberman 1994:10).

This can be construed in such a way that actors (can) enter into a negotiation (of meanings, and actions) in an episodic manner, but this does not necessarily mean that negotiations, as we normally perceive them are long processes observable only through longitudinal (ethnography-inspired) studies. It means that such negotiation of meanings usually accounts for past events or episodes in relation to the present and how we imagine what the future may hold (Weick 1995). The negotiations of meanings going on in the phenomenon we are studying can hence lead to an enriched set of data for our (co-)interpretation (with respondents) and analysis.

Thus, the 'artificial interview situation' and 'the very presence of a researcher' may elicit actors' intentions, goals, and plans, or after-the-fact justification of their behaviors, rather than the behaviors themselves (Bullinger 2014). Therefore, the empirical cases in this study mainly account for the after-the-fact justification of how and why the respondents regard the logics in the way that they do, with a recursive currency that prompts actions inasmuch as sensemaking involves beliefs and actions (Weick 1995). According to Weick, there are beliefs that are embedded in frames, such as ideologies, which influence what people notice and how events develop. Weick further argues that to believe is to initiate actions

capable of lending substance to the belief (1995:134), which can be developed through collective sensemaking processes and result in negotiated understanding of how things work and why (Lane and Sirmon 2003:V3).

I apply this abductive reasoning by allowing for new insights from the second set of empirical materials (case organizations 2 and 3) with whatever contextual nuances they bring, to further develop the concept (logic salience) that emerged from the first set of materials (case organization 1). To build and develop logic salience as a concept by exploring it across the cases and in the final analysis, I work reflexively through abductive reporting/writing, making the research process more explicit. Abductive research and writing are my creative take emanating from my curiosity on how loosening the straitjacket or how making a text less boring (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009) can be applied in practice, instead of merely citing it as a method (that is, cut and paste) leading to empty words. By so doing, I do not necessarily discard method, but I am willing to work ‘against method’ in a justified circumstance (Feyerabend 1975).

I derive support from Dubois and Gadde (2002) in my interest to not only employ an abductive design where I do the analysis abductively, but also in ‘writing the text abductively’ – where I don’t have to reserve/bracket the presentation of the emerging concept for later. In case studies that aim at theory development, Dubois and Gadde argue that the researcher needs to be open to the myriad meanings that a particular concept can bring about: “*The successive refinement of concepts implies that they constitute input, as well as output of an abductive study*” (2002:558, italics added). They further argue that what we learn is articulated in the theoretical framework together with the case, and learning takes place in the interplay between search and discovery. However, as Dubois and Gadde also argue, the successive steps in the learning process and what we learn are seldom explicitly discussed in a research report.

Similar to what was argued by Westrum (1982) on the slow development of and medical attention to what was later labelled and published “The Battered-Child Syndrome” being due to barriers to the reporting of hidden events (cf. Weick 1995), I argue that exploring non-traditional research methods – namely, abductive design and writing, is slow to develop because there are barriers to such a method of reporting. Dubois and Gadde (2002) are convinced that “*Learning in the research society as a whole would be improved if more of the processes of how we have learned were revealed to the reader*” (p. 560, italics added). They explicate that

in studies that rely on abduction, the original framework is successively adjusted, partly according to unanticipated empirical findings and partly based on theoretical insights gained during the process. From the abductive design, these emerging findings and insights are explored in this dissertation to develop theory, and which are simultaneously reported abductively. This explicitness is essential “in order to observe and communicate the analysis between researchers and in reporting the results of the research” (Ågerfalk 2004:5).

I, thus, find the combination of abductive design, the reporting of the results of research, and not least the reporting of the process of how we have actually learned and arrived at the results of research are revealed to our readers, as a rather novel set of ideas, which is perplexedly unexplored in contemporary research design. We can only assume that part of the reason why this remains today as a terrain untested is due to conventions on how we conduct research (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009). It can also be partly due to the challenges involved in such an undertaking, which, in turn, contributes both to maintaining the status quo and (hence) an absence of inspirational pieces in conducting and writing research unconventionally. As new combinations are developed through a variety of established theoretical models and new concepts derived from the encounter with reality (of research), rewarding cross-fertilizations can thus be created. This dissertation is, therefore, an attempt to address this methodological shortcoming, albeit at a rather limited extent, owing to the same prevailing conventions.

## The emerging concept and analytical tool

From, and during, the interaction between theory and empirical material, this study’s preliminary insights point to an emergence of a concept. By exploring the emerging concept of logic salience in analyzing the remainder of the empirical cases, it aims to contribute to developing the same emerging concept, which is in line with the input-output mechanism of an abductive study (Dubois and Gadde 2002), discussed earlier. This study therefore attempts to exemplify what an abductive and iterative research approach can offer, not only in the form of take-aways—namely, research contributions that are usually consumed after they have been approved and published. The abductive approach has also allowed, at least in the current study, for a concept and an analytical tool to take form. In the first

case organization, Skyddsvärnet, which will be presented in more detail in chapter 6, as the respondents grappled, made sense of, and negotiated meanings between the logics of market and mission, it became apparent that their responses are very much tied to their salience to a particular logic. This, in turn, as I argue in this dissertation, is connected to, yet distinctive from, the dominant logic of the organization (Friedland and Alford 1991): logic salience derives from actors exercising agency, which influences organizational responses, and which, in turn, makes a particular logic dominant. Therefore, dominant logic is the logic that prevails in an organization that can be maintained or challenged by actors; it can therefore be regarded as the end-product of actors' salience to a particular logic (namely, stronger adherence to either, or both, market and mission logics).

In the presence of competing logics, the preliminary findings indicate that organizational actors respond according to the logic they identify themselves with the most. The case of Skyddsvärnet reveals that although there is a general recognition of the comparable importance of market and mission logics, individual logic salience has conditioned more market-oriented expansion and recruitment strategies, showing a preference for the market logic. The constant "internal battle," expressed by one of the respondents, will be regarded as an ideological dispute as I present and analyze the material in the empirical chapters.

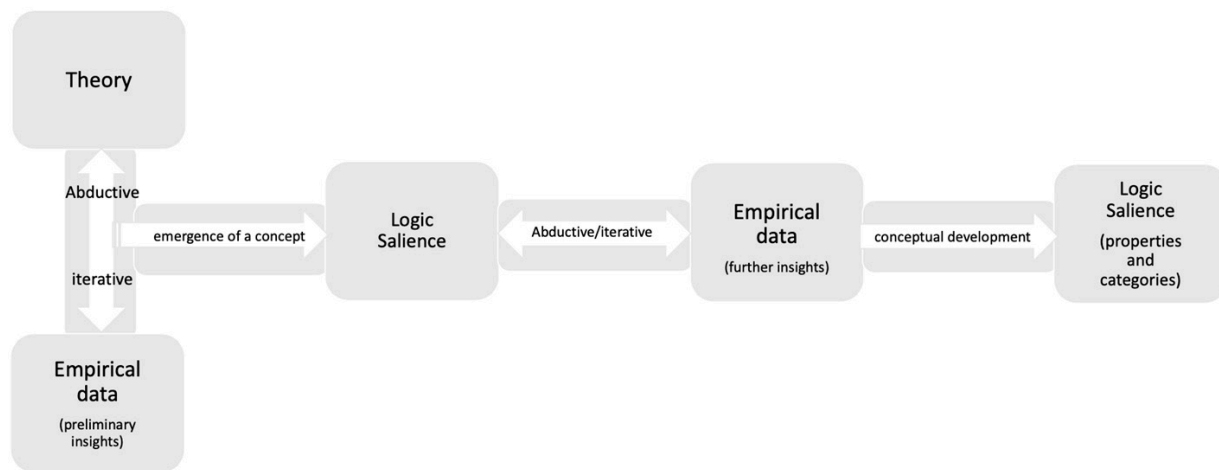
I readily accept, however, that logic salience alone does not encompass actors' understanding of and enactment between competing logics. Nevertheless, I would argue that other factors affecting such views and responses – for example, an organization's propensity to acquire competencies in market-driving or in shifting from advocacy to more tangible and saleable services or products in order to achieve financial sustainability, are also a part and manifestation of the logic salience of actors in organizations.

With this valuable emerging insight, and as I progressed in the further analysis of each case and the study as a whole, I realized that finding some type of explanation for or understanding certain organizational actions (for example, decisions), especially in situations marred by institutional complexity, is rendered possible by looking at organizational members' salience to a particular logic (or logics). Since this insight is preliminary, and leveraging on what an abductive approach offers, exploring logic salience in analyzing each empirical case is anticipated to help develop this emerging concept, in order to explore and explain the dynamics of hybridity. Considering that the rest of the case organizations experience and are

exposed to institutional complexity, and at the same time are influenced by their members' affiliation to a particular logic, it made good sense to use the theoretically and empirically informed emerging logic salience concept as an analytical tool. By so doing, my intention of developing logic salience as a concept is not only acknowledged upfront, and the conceptualization is not bracketed and reserved for later, but this conceptual development process also becomes integral and continuous whilst and after building the empirical support. Hence, this deeper unpacking is a hermeneutic process, where I work with the empirical material with the help of theoretical preconceptions and, at the same time, carry on developing and elaborating the concept (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009).

Put simply, the dissertation 1) starts off with institutional theory and related concepts as the 'theory-in' with an argument that agency is undertheorized, particularly in hybrid contexts where actors contend with institutional logics. From this preliminary, yet iterative, conversation between theory and the first empirical case, 2) a concept emerges, and which shows the potential of helping to analyze the second and third empirical cases due to their similarity with the first case in the sense that they are exposed to similar logics contestations, yet distinctive in the sense that they have dissimilar organizational contexts and composition. The emerging concept of logic salience thus serves as this dissertation's analytical toolbox or 'theory-in-use,' in tandem with relevant concepts presented in the literature and theory chapters.

As the cases are abductively analyzed, from which we build and gain further insights into how the respondents in other contexts relate and respond to competing logics, the emerging concept undergoes an incremental development. Thus, 3) the developed and final version of logic salience becomes this dissertation's 'theory-out' and main contribution, together with the implications for the organizations and the dynamics of hybridity. How the abductive and iterative conversation between theory and empirical data led to the emergence and development of a concept is illustrated in figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Theory-data abductive research approach.

It means that the first case organization (in chapter 6) sparks the development of the concept and will guide and show the reader how the empirical data are analyzed and informed by the emerging logic salience concept. In the empirical cases, I then further unpack the material by exploring logic salience in paradoxical (chapter 7) and adversarial (chapter 8) settings. In the second case organizations (chapter 7), I explore logic salience in paradoxical settings, where it became apparent that individuals' salience to mission logic is prominent. In the third and final empirical case (chapter 8), I explore logic salience in adversarial settings, where it became evident that there is a comparable prominence of saliences to market and mission logics, but which are held separately by groups of individuals.

Finally, as I further analyze and synthesize the insights from all the empirical chapters, I will show how the abductive and iterative approaches have provided a way of going backwards and forwards and back again (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009; see also Svensson 2003) with the analytical process, where the preliminary insights in chapter 6 set the scene and facilitated the exploration of logic salience in the succeeding empirical chapters. From this exploration, chapters 7 and 8 bring about the properties of logic salience, which, therefore, answer the second research question. The core insights from the logics negotiation across the cases are thereafter synthesized and the various logic saliences of individuals identified (see chapter 9) that lead to the full development of the emerging concept previously proposed in chapter 6. As I explore logic salience as an analytical tool, it therefore becomes a direct product of the methodology used and an immediate consumption of (part of) the study's contribution. It thus brings logic salience



into a greater abstraction level that becomes useful in this study, and hopefully in relevant future studies as well.

## Data analysis

As mentioned earlier, in one of the observations, I discovered professionalizing or professionalization (referring mainly to professional management of operations or services) as a critical breakdown, an insight that has helped me in designing the interview questions. During the interviews at the first case organization, Skyddsvärnet, and later on in analyzing the individual accounts of the respondents, it became apparent that the management practices that the respondents associate with being a professional organization become a contrast to the humanist character of the organization. The respondents' accounts indicated the presence of multiple logics in the organization, which they made sense of in different ways. This insight and initial analysis initiated further and continued analyses of the rest of the data across cases where tension between the logics behind competing goals became central.

In all the cases, I explore the interpretive repertoires at play, referred to as the culturally variable ways of discussing and evaluating certain actions or events that constitute cultural common-sense (Charlebois 2015; see also Whittle 2006) as the organizational members respond to the funding challenges that their respective organization is exposed to, and how they negotiate meanings and manage the interplay between market activities and social goals. The analysis of empirical data for the first case provided preliminary insights into what further reading was necessary, which, in turn, facilitated the forming and structuring of the literature review. During transcription, the recorded interview materials were played and replayed, and the written texts were read and reread (Ryan and Bernard 2003), and this was where the analysis simultaneously commenced. From this stage, general themes were formed.

The themes or categories are created based on the prominence (or recurrence) of some issues or topics that the interviewees (or respondents) have mentioned, or expressions used. Coding as a key process in grounded theory and in approaches to qualitative data analysis is criticized for its tendency to fragment the data (Eisenhardt 1989). Hence, in the coding-process, I was conscious of the

importance of not forcing any data under one category or topic and to continuously compare the categories to ensure that they stem from 'reality,' and not be unconsciously developed by myself as the researcher; therefore, it represents, as closely as possible, what it is designed to represent (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009). The need to stop collecting and codifying data when the categories have been exhausted, and no longer contribute to any new discoveries in the data so-called theoretical saturation (Silverman 2006; Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009), is acknowledged.

For the first case (Skyddsvärnet), the analysis of the empirical data was carried out in different stages. First, I organized it according to themes that were later tabulated: Funding, Tension, Strategy, Professionalization, Marketization, Values, Nonprofit (what it means for the interviewees), What makes Skyddsvärnet different? Public Procurement/Tendering, Profit in the welfare system, and Measurement of Success. These varied themes came about as a result of the explorative approach, which poses both advantages (making the data more open) and challenges (on how to locate a specific focus of study).

It then brought me to the second stage: finding out what the text is telling me; that 'something' which is not so pronounced it makes me miss seeing what is novel or most relevant, or so pronounced that it makes me disregard or consider it as a nuisance (see Wästerfors 2008). In other words, I asked myself: what's going on here? (Alvesson and Kärreman 2007). To facilitate this, I opted for a rather basic tool of cut-and-paste, where I literally cut the sentences and paragraphs from the printed themes and re-organized them in such a way that the only way to trace the origin of the statements (interviewee) is by going back to the tabulated themes. From here, I started to see an attributed potential of market solutions for the organization of study (Sanders 2012) as a means to survive (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Anheier 2005). At the same time, it became apparent that the respondents attribute equal importance to their values and ideology as a nonprofit. This therefore produces insights as to both the challenges and opportunities in embracing market and mission logics. Here, logics can be seen as either a set of cultural toolkits that provide possibilities for change in existing structures and practices or a set of rule-like structures that constrain organizations (Thornton et al. 2012).

The 'chunking' process (Sweller 1994) was done in statements because deconstructing the material word-by-word is not only close to impossible but

what I also consider risky considering the many variations on how we express similar experiences or views, and the danger of losing contextual meaning. This proved to be another (good) way of working on, and cross-checking that brought new angles from the same materials. It produced twenty new sub-themes that were dramatically reduced through regrouping (on organizing and reducing qualitative materials, see Rennstam and Wästerfors 2018). Through this regrouping, the material became manageable and at the same time enabled inclusion and illumination of information that I deemed interesting and relevant for the purpose and the working research question at the time. Finally, from the regrouping, I did further thematization that brought about the specific themes, which facilitated my data presentation and analysis (see table 2 for an illustration).

**Table 2. Sub-themes regrouping**

An example of how the sub-themes in the entire empirical material were regrouped (from Skyddsvarnet case).

<b>Tension</b>	This sub-theme provides a lot of insights into how the respondents perceive the challenges as well as the opportunities in embracing market demands in order to finance the organization.
<b>Strategy/Goals</b>	The strategy includes the organization's vision of becoming bigger, effective, and financially stable, which can be achieved through the decision to expand and the recruitment of competencies outside NPO with a stronger business orientation.
<b>Professionalization</b>	Making the procedures and structure effective is part of professionalizing the organization, which is necessary when it is a market actor.
<b>Marketization</b>	Adapting to the demands of the market is regarded as a must, otherwise they cannot compete, generate income, and survive. This is used as a justification for the market logic (expansion & recruitment of more business-oriented staff).
<b>Values/Mission</b>	The organization's values (and history, ideology and mission) are regarded as equally important as their economic goals. These are also used to establish the "we" and "they" and their corresponding identification to/between the market-mission logics.
<b>Nonprofit</b>	The respondents link the values, goals, and distinctive characteristics of nonprofit (organization or sector) to their own values as an organization.

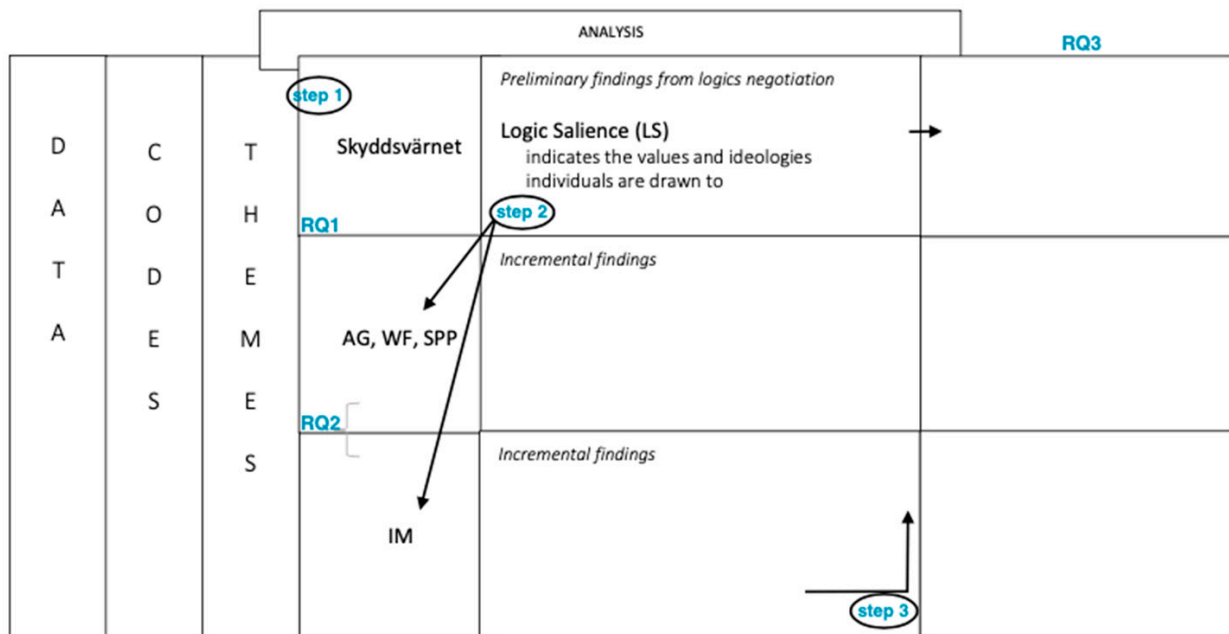
A similar analytical process throughout the entire research study was employed, where an effort is exerted to find underlying patterns and to understand the whole through the parts and vice-versa (Silverman 2006; Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009).

The analyses for the rest of the cases were similar to how the data for case 1 was analyzed, except for the cut and paste tool. After each case analysis, I started to see common themes and patterns across all cases as well as some deviances. From the cross-case analyses, the common denominators that emerged include the presence of both resistance to and support for market logic, the tensions caused by it, the

corresponding decisions or strategies that are influenced by their salience to the market logic (e.g. diversification of funds), their challenges or failure in achieving the desired results (e.g. from such funding diversification), and the frustration in or resignation from the idea of becoming self-sustaining without aid. The most distinct deviance is the first case's success in becoming self-sustaining, despite the resistance and tensions. Table 2 illustrates how the coding process resulted in themes through regrouping, which, in turn, are used in further analyzing the data.

From the first case, it became apparent that although the respondents generally acknowledge the comparable importance of both their market and mission goals, some individuals have greater inclination toward market logic, some are more salient toward mission logic, and others are sandwiched between these two logics. It also became apparent that some of the respondents identify themselves as 'humanists,' in contrast with others who they regard as 'economists.' Further scrutiny of the empirical data through an iterative and abductive conversation with the literature on institutional logics and relevant areas indicates that the varying saliences of the respondents to either (or both) the market or mission logic are tied to their ideological affiliations. The cases illustrate the novel idea behind combining the logics of mission and market (Stark 2009); however, due to the disparate demands attached to these logics, tensions are at the same time inevitable (Kraatz and Block 2008).

The case analyses were conducted in two stages; first through each case, followed by a cross-case analysis. Unlike Van Maanen's (1979) first-order and second-order analyses where the analysis departs from the respondents' and the researchers' perspectives, respectively, the within-in case analysis and cross-case analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994) done in this thesis can be regarded accordingly as 'first-level analysis' and 'second-level analysis'. It is because the within-case analysis as a first stage in the analysis process provides us with preliminary understandings of what's going on in each case, while the cross-case analysis as a second stage provides us with a deeper interaction with the empirical insights.



**Figure 3:** An illustration of how the analysis of empirical data is carried out and how the research questions (RQs) are answered.

Figure 3 illustrates how the analysis of the empirical data is carried out in three steps: 1) sorting of all data, followed by coding and thematizing; 2) feeding of the emerging concept of Logic Salience into the two remaining cases to develop and nuance it; 3) gathering the incremental findings from all cases and doing the cross case analysis. The figure therefore simultaneously illustrates how logic salience as an emerging concept (from the findings in the first case organization Skyddsvärnet) is used as an analytical tool for the remainder of the cases (AG, WF & SPP; and IM). This shows that the data analysis is conducted not only in a similar way (with coding and thematization of the data) across the cases, but that the analysis of how they relate to competing logics also continues by exploring the antecedents of logic salience, namely how the values and ideologies that individuals are drawn to influence their respective inclinations. This process thus allows a similar analysis pattern (data sorting, coding, and thematizing) across cases to progress and at the same time allows incremental findings to take place in and from the succeeding cases.

The abductive and incremental way of how the emerging concept will be built and how the research questions will be answered is also illustrated in figure 3. We can see in this illustration how the first research question is addressed in the Skyddsvärnet case, from which the concept of logic salience emerges. This emerging concept is then explored as a tool in analyzing the insights from the

cases of AG with its partners WF and SPP, and the last case organization, IM. Figure 3 will be adjusted and completed in chapter 11 (figure 7) with the incremental findings from these cases and which shall therefore complete the analysis process and the development of the proposed and emerging concept. Hence, figure 7 shall include a synthesis of these findings (cross-case analysis) and ultimately, the answers to the second and third research questions.

From the outset of this research study, the pre-understanding that I held centered around an assumption that the idea of a sector premised on achieving social goals while engaging in business is a very interesting and socially relevant phenomenon. Specifically, the potential of achieving self-sustainability through market solutions is enticing, at the same time as it prompts obvious questions on its compatibility with a mission-centered sector. Therefore, this assumption that involves the opportunities, challenges, and implications of business in the third sector has been my compass during the entire research process. From the call for the third sector organizations to become self-sustaining, the wheel of change started rolling. In this landscape, we can see the influences coming from outside or the marketized world (where market logic dominates), entering the organizations (premiered on mission logic), and triggering different responses. Considering that the responses from the exposure to competing logics are solicited *in situ*, they essentially are sensemaking efforts (or post-rationalization) of how they negotiate(d) or navigate(d) between competing logics.

In this study, it becomes obvious that “no *man* is an island” and what is happening inside the organizations is not an isolated work exercise, but it is influenced by and as a response to the overall environment (Morgan 2006). In these responses, the logics are negotiated and re-negotiated. The line of order between the means and the goals are enmeshed. The question of what the organizations are for, hence, becomes recurring. From the responses, I build the story of third sector organizations in motion as the market and mission logics enter the negotiation landscape. From such a negotiation, we as the readers will understand from what the organizations through their members learn, as they respond to external forces, where they make sense, take initiatives, and experiment to tackle the changes and challenges, and negotiate their role as organizational members and as organizations as a whole. We will also learn or at least be ushered to reflect on what counts as success or failure, an understanding of the relevance of the sector’s work to our societies, and our relevance and impact as societies as we continue to

influence (for instance, through our tax contributions) the sector's work and role, especially tied to its funding needs and sustainability.

In each of the empirical case studies, I explore how organizational members relate to the competing logics of market and mission as a result of their respective organization's response to funding challenges. It has become apparent in the first case – Skyddsvärnet, that organizational members respond to the funding challenges and the competing logics of market and mission, according to the logic that they identify themselves with the most. Considering that this insight emerged from an interaction between the theories and the empirical data in view of the abductive and iterative approach that I have employed (as discussed earlier), the empirical chapters are structured according to themes. First, in chapter 5, I present the organizations of study and their funding challenges. In chapter 6, I answer the first research question as I present the ideologically-torn logics negotiation at Skyddsvärnet, where the concept of logic salience emerged and where its potential as an analytical tool is discussed in greater detail. Thereafter, in chapter 7, I explore what responses are prompted by individual attachments to logics in paradoxical settings, where the organizations of study are exposed to funding challenges and at the same time face constraints in exploring alternatives, and which incrementally answers the second research question.

I continue to answer the second research question incrementally by exploring the responses prompted by individual attachments to logics in chapter 8, but this time in adversarial settings considering the comparably strong but separately held salience by groups of individuals toward mission and market logics. The insights and findings across these empirical cases are further discussed and synthesized in the chapters that follow. Hence, through exploring how organizational members respond to funding challenges and relate to and manage the competing logics of market and mission, this study seeks to obtain a theoretically and empirically informed understanding of the possible viability of market-oriented solutions (or the hybrid form) for mission-premised and funding volatile nonprofit third sector organizations.

## **Level of analysis**

Due to the current funding scarcity, the organizations of study are obliged to resort to strategies that involve market solutions, which, thus, expose the

organizational members to multiple logics with which they have to contend. Institutional logics that are embedded in broader macro institutions, such as government aid policies and funding arrangements, are logics that the organizations of study are exposed to, and they can be considered as meso-level phenomena. At the same time, they are also linked to micro-level dynamics, insofar as the organizational members must relate to these logics in their everyday life. We can, therefore, say that how organizations and their organizational members are exposed and respond to logics are enmeshed, and a distinct separation between organizations and individual actors can be made only to a certain extent. Here, the interconnectedness of the external and internal, the macro and micro, thus becomes evident.

Without disregarding this interconnectedness, the study zooms into the micro-level to explore how organizational members relate to what their respective organization does as a result of its interdependence with the environment where it operates (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978), and how these members respond to the concomitant challenges in combining market and mission logics. Moreover, the study is confined to the context of nonprofit third sector involving nonprofit organizations as cases of study.

Case 1 involves members of the management group and former employees; case 2 (multiple case) involves members of the management group, employees, and interns; and case 3 involves members of the management group, employees, and volunteers. Without disregarding outside influences, such as the reduced or unstable resources from funding bodies that have prompted organizations to consider market alternatives, this research focuses on individual actors; therefore, it is a micro-level study.

The respondents do not belong to a single restricted group or category and the analysis remains at the micro-level through the respondents' accounts as they respond to competing logics in relation to what and how their respective organizations do, in light of the funding challenges. In these organizations, the respondents all contend with their respective organization's funding needs and the concomitant challenges brought about by market-infused activities like fundraising. Such challenges can be construed and experienced by the individual respondent differently or similarly, regardless of whether he or she is a manager, a staff member (employee), or a volunteer. Moreover, this research is not studying a particular group, profession, or hierarchy; in addition, being a qualitative study,



it is not designed to establish generalizability or preciseness (typical for quantitative methods) but to achieve an understanding of how organizational members in the studied nonprofit organizations respond to competing logics.

My idea of synthesizing the ‘lessons learned’ from each case organization drawn from insights from the individuals – regardless of their position, is a manifestation of my pragmatic stance to see new possibilities and an attempt to unlock the ‘either–or’ straitjacket (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). Moreover, the ‘variables’ in the study (e.g. in nonprofit or nonprofit hybrids) are attributes of the same social entity (Dolma 2010) where individuals remain as the unit of analysis regardless of which hierarchy they tend to be categorized as belonging to. This study thus consists of two single case analysis and one multiple case analysis (Yin 1984). Becoming intimately familiar with each case enables the identification of unique patterns, or divergences, across the cases (Eisenhardt 1989) which forms the basis for a comparative synthesis of the overall insights I obtain from the case analyses.

## Trustworthiness and ethical considerations

Huberman and Miles (2002) argue that if qualitative studies cannot consistently produce valid results, then policies, programs, and other results from these studies cannot be relied upon. Hence, validity has long been a key issue in debates on the legitimacy of qualitative research. I, thus, acknowledge that it is crucial to convince the audience that the research process was conducted in a reliable and valid manner (Silverman 2006). An absence of a ‘standard’ means of assuring validity, such as a quantitative measurement, has been a primary flaw with qualitative studies, according to the proponents of quantitative and experimental approaches. This critique has been supported by the fact that existing categories of validity (e.g. predictive validity, internal/external validity) are based on positivist assumptions that underlie quantitative and experimental research designs (Salner 1989). Qualitative researchers deny the quantitative or scientific paradigm’s relevance to what they do (e.g. Guba and Lincoln 1989) or say that qualitative research has its own procedures for attaining validity (Huberman and Miles 2002).

Validity pertains, in a broad sense, to the relationship between an account and something outside of that account, whether this something is construed as

objective reality, the constructions of actors, or a variety of other possible interpretations (Huberman and Miles 2002). During the transcription and interpretation of interviews, I am usually (probably as any qualitative researcher) concerned with the accuracy of *my* account of what the interviewees share during an interview. At the same time, I also acknowledge my role as a researcher and how I work with and interpret the text and therefore as a co-producer of text. Another concern that is present is in what way such an account or text is valid theoretically. Hence, this study observes Huberman and Miles' (2002) typologies of validity: descriptive, interpretive, and theoretical validity.

Descriptive validity can refer to issues of omission as well as commission, as no account can include everything. "Accuracy is a criterion relative to the purposes for which it is sought" (Runciman 1983:97). Descriptive validity is a category that pertains to humans, which is referred to by Kaplan (1964:358) as 'acts' rather than 'actions' – activities seen as physical and behavioral events, rather than in terms of the meanings that these have for the actor or others involved in the activity. This corresponds, to some extent, to the category of understanding that Runciman (1983) calls 'reportage' or 'primary understanding.' The descriptive validity of what the research reports having seen or heard is called primary descriptive validity, while the validity of accounts of things that could in principle be observed, but were inferred from other data, is called secondary descriptive validity (Huberman and Miles 2002). Descriptive validity, according to Huberman and Miles (2002), is by no means theory independent, as all observations and descriptions are based on theory, although this theory is implicit or common sense. Reliability refers to an aspect of validity or to a separate issue from validity, but to a particular kind of threat to validity. To observe this, an application of the idea of triangulation is employed across the cases through interviewing different sets of respondents (plus the organizations' books and annual reports/narratives). This enabled cross-checking if there was some level of 'agreement' on (or disparity in) statements given between/among the respondents.

Qualitative researchers are also concerned with what the objects, events, and behaviors *mean* to the people engaged in and with them. This type of understanding is called interpretive, and the validity associated with it is interpretive validity. This aspect of understanding is most central to interpretive research, which seeks to comprehend phenomena not on the basis of the researcher's perspective and categories, but from those of the participants in the

situations studied. Interpretive accounts are grounded in the language of the people studied and mostly rely on their own words and concepts, which means that accuracy is applied to the perspective of the individuals included in the account (Huberman and Miles 2002). Attention to this type of validity ensures that I, as the researcher, see to it that my interpretation is a good representation of the respondents' own accounts of events.

Theoretical validity refers to an account's validity as a *theory* of some phenomenon; the issue is the legitimacy of the application of a given concept or theory to established facts, or whether any agreement can be reached about the facts. Theoretical understanding goes beyond concrete description and interpretation and explicitly addresses the theoretical constructions that the researcher brings to, or develops during, the study. It can refer to either physical events or mental constructions. Ensuring theoretical validity commenced during my reading and writing of the research proposal and this Ph.D. manuscript, from comments and discussions with the advisors, discussants and colleagues, to the presentation of the proposal and manuscript, where theory-fit usually forms part of the discussion (Huberman and Miles 2002).

This study is not meant to establish generalizability of the results, as I acknowledge that generalizability in the sense of producing laws that apply universally is not a useful standard or goal for qualitative research (Schofield 2002). Some qualitative researchers share several areas of consensus: Stake's naturalistic generalizability, the writings of Goetz and LeCompte (1984) on translatability and comparability, and Guba and Lincoln (1981) on fittingness. Here, thick descriptions become crucial, since without them one does not have the information necessary for an informed judgment about the issue of fit.

Stake (1978) agrees with many critics of qualitative methods that one cannot confidently generalize from a single case to a target population, of which that case is a member, since single members often poorly represent whole populations. He argues instead for the possibility of "naturalistic generalization" to take the findings from one study and apply them to understanding another *similar* situation. Through experience, individuals are able to use both explicit comparisons between situations and tacit knowledge of those same situations to form useful naturalistic generalizations. Most researchers writing on generalizability in the qualitative tradition agree that their rejection of generalizability as a search for broadly applicable laws is not a rejection of the idea

that studies in one situation can be used to speak to or to help form a judgment about other situations (Schofield 2002). Here, we generalize to theoretical propositions, not to populations (Silverman 2013).

During the entire research process for this study, some ethical guidelines were followed. I always asked permission or informed the interviewee of my intention to record the conversation. I also adhered to all requests for anonymity. The limited information provided in this dissertation about the respondents, although it can pose some limitation in understanding their background or profiles, corresponds to the extent to which the respondents themselves would want to be known publicly. Tim Rapley's (2007) guideline, 3 Ethics and recording 'data', sums up what needs to be observed to uphold a good ethical standard:<sup>11</sup>: that it is my duty as a researcher to be aware of the relevant guidelines, recommendations, or codes of ethical conduct, which could apply to the research that I undertake; that my research should not cause harm or distress, either psychological or physical, to anyone taking part in it; that anyone taking part in the research should be aware of it, understand what the research is about, and consent to take part; and that I should never place myself in any potentially dangerous situations. I tried to observe and abide by these guidelines to the best of my ability in every step and stage of the research process.

## Reflecting on the methods and the research process

The research process and the methods used along the way were a result of a pragmatic approach. I acknowledge that such an approach has, on some occasions, made the research process somewhat complex, in the sense that it opened for a broader range of ideas and directions. However, it has also allowed me to see several possibilities, which I managed through what I regard as my elimination process, where I retain the angle (or phenomenon) that I thought as being most interesting and which has a higher plausibility for gaining relevant/important knowledge. In short, it was a judgement call, and part of my learning process. Would I do it again in future research? Probably yes, but the skills gained here would definitely help me to decide the dose of exploration. And since future

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<sup>11</sup> For more on ethics in research, see Fisher and Anushko (2008); Bryman and Bell (2011).

research that I would be involved in would most probably be around a similar context or discipline, the degree of exploration would most likely be less. But if I were to progress to another discipline, such progression will be planned to occur incrementally. I think, however, that pragmatism will continue to guide how I will approach future research expeditions.

## *Chapter 5*

# The nonprofit organizations of study and their funding challenges

In order to establish the context, this chapter describes the funding landscape that the nonprofit organizations of study are exposed to and situated in, mainly through the accounts of organizational members or respondents. The studied organizations are Skyddsvärnet (Sweden), Afrikagrupperna (Sweden) with its partner organizations Wellness Foundation (South Africa) and Surplus People Project (South Africa), and Individuell Människohjälp (Sweden). This funding context also provides the reader with some idea on the strings attached to aid funding (discussed in more detail in chapter 7) and consequentially how diversification of funds beyond aid becomes relevant for their self-sustainability and nonprofit organizing. Considering that Afrikagrupperna (AG), Wellness Foundation (WF), and Surplus People Project (SPP) work within a donor-partner relationship, their inter-organizational alignment and disputes are also explored in this chapter.

## Skyddsvärnet

Skyddsvärnet is a nonprofit organization that is politically and religiously independent. There are no owners, and all surpluses are reinvested in the organization. Its vision is to prevent crimes and social exclusion; moreover, it works with advocacy and social work, while aiming to support individuals in increasing their ability to use their own resources to become functioning citizens. During the time of my fieldwork (2015), Skyddsvärnet had eighty employees and thirty hourly-paid employees. Because of a request for anonymity from some respondents, all of the respondents' names are withheld (see table 3 for a list of

respondents). My decision to use Skyddsvärnet as the first case study for this dissertation was primarily based on the answers received from the organization during the survey conducted in 2015. According to its Director, Skyddsvärnet is one hundred percent financed through business-related activities.

From Skyddsvärnet's start in 1910, its structure and processes in care, surveillance, and personal investigation of offenders were developed over a period of 30 years. This program was taken over by the state in 1942 (Director, interview August 2015) and marked the start of the state-owned *frivård* (probation) system.

### The changes and challenges in the funding landscape

Due to public funding cessation in the 1990s, Skyddsvärnet was left with no choice but to embrace the market in order to survive (interview with the Director; Engström et al. 2010) and operate in an increasingly commercial environment. Skyddsvärnet has evolved from having former offenders and substance dependents as its clientele to including several areas under its flag name *Vårdkedjan* (care chain): *Familjevård*, *Björka boende*, *Halvvägshus*, *Träningslägenheter med kontaktperson*, *Leg. Psykolog*, *Öppenvård*, *LifeRing*, *Arbets träning via Sociala företag* and *SAFE Stockholm* (for details, in Swedish, see [www.skyddsvarnet.se](http://www.skyddsvarnet.se)). With this change in funding, Skyddsvärnet essentially had no choice but to find solutions:

We are forced to earn our own money; it is not of our own will, but there are other factors that caused it. We need to have someone to pay for the services, through [government] contracts. (former Employee #1)

The financial vulnerability of the organization because of the cessation of public funding was compounded by the type of target group it has, which is relevant in order to qualify for funding, and which also complicates any effort or interest to raise funds through private donations:

The 'right' to funding is influenced by the type of target group; organizations are placed against each other in competition for funding (...). We would gladly accept donations, but it takes a certain process and we have seen that . . . people prefer to give to women and child victims but to give to . . . we are working with offenders and substance dependents and now with minor refugees, and the public doesn't want to give to this group: *what, you have committed a crime!* Rather, it is 'cute' with women and children who are victims. (Director)

Since Skyddsvärnet has no owners and does not receive grants, embracing the market, by entering into, for example, government tenders and contracts in selling their services and in competition with other actors beyond the third sector, has become the most viable source of income. However, it has resulted in some internal changes that include an increasing level of professionalization in order to retain and strengthen the organization's market position. In addition, although the organization did not have much of a choice, this arrangement felt 'bought' according to a former employee (Employee #2). As will be shown in the succeeding empirical chapter, such internal change made the organization, for instance, more inclined to look for and venture out in projects that show strong profitability potential in order to succeed in the market, instead of having social needs as a precursor to starting a new venture.

To stabilize its financial standing, the empirical material shows that Skyddsvärnet has resorted to aggressive commercial expansion, to which a high degree of staff exit can be attributed. The increased employee turnover, in turn, paved the way for the recruitment of staff that have greater competence outside of the nonprofit area, namely those with a business background, and partly, those with public sector experience. The organization's decision-making around the expansion and staff hiring has caused tension and resistance. By recruiting new employees with a stronger market orientation, the tension has essentially decreased. This preliminary insight that points to a stronger market orientation makes this case interesting, especially due to the presence of a collective acknowledgment of the comparable importance of both the logics of market and social mission. The respondents were in agreement that both market and social goals are needed, especially in view of how society works today. They also expressed the need for a balance between the two goals, which were referred to by one of the respondents as "yin and yang." I refer to this collective acknowledgment as *the common talk*. The comparable importance of market and mission logics for Skyddsvärnet has sparked my interest in inquiring about why the organization's actions, according to the accounts of individuals, were manifesting an increasing focus on their market goals, and thus a deviance from the collective understanding. The common talk will be presented in more detail in the next chapter.



## Concluding remarks

The respondents' expression of understanding for their twin goals and in finding a balance between them illustrate the common talk. This need for balance and the common talk indicates their values, assumptions, and beliefs that define institutional logics (Thornton et al. 2012).

Through the Skyddsvärnet case, I address the scarcity of studies on the way organizational members experience conflicts from logics multiplicity and how they carry out individual responses (Pache and Santos 2013b) and on the walking of the talk (Pager and Quillian 2005). Despite the common talk, Skyddsvärnet – as will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, has intensified its adoption of and focus on market solutions to address its funding challenges and become self-sustaining, which was met with mixed reactions. Through an abductive research process, the preliminary insights I obtained from this first case point to the emergence of a concept on how to understand what influences organizational members as they make sense of and respond to competing demands of market and mission logics.

**Table 3:** Composition of respondents at Skyddsvärnet.

Respondent/position	Background	Tenure From/To <sup>12</sup>
Director	Public sector (correctional system) Criminologist	2006
Development Manager	Public sector, owned a business, HR-educated	2014
Personnel and Office Manager (PO Manager)	Private sector, worked with finance, accounting, recruitment, studied economy	2013
Section Manager #1	Worked mostly at Skyddsvärnet, in different positions, Social worker	1972
Section Manager #2	Public sector (correctional system) Lawyer/Jurist	2015
Section Manager #3	Public and private sectors, Master's degree in Humanities	-
Former Employee #1 (Section Manager)	Private, public, and nonprofit sectors, Social pedagogue	2008/2015
Former Employee #2 (Fosterhome Counsellor)	Nonprofit and public sectors, Social worker	2009/2015
Former Director	Worked mostly at Skyddsvärnet, worked his way up	1972/2009
Chairman of the Board	Public sector (correctional system), worked in social work and HR, studied national economy, sociology	2014
Vice Chairman of the Board	Public sector, worked entirely within social services in different positions	2015
Board Member	Social work, but mostly works as economist	1994
Board Member	Prison Chaplain, Priest in the Swedish Church	2005

<sup>12</sup> The tenure duration includes what was known during the time of fieldwork.

## The Swedish-South African partnership-organizations

Swedish cooperation with NGOs, both locally and internationally, is part of the overall Swedish development cooperation and is regulated by the Swedish Policy for Global Development, approved by the government in 2003 (Onsander 2007). The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has several frame organizations in Sweden that usually receive and distribute grants to Swedish NGOs for support to civil society in partner countries (ibid.). One of these frame organizations is Afrikagrupperna, the case organization referred to here as the donor (or funder). Among the partner organizations in Africa that Afrikagrupperna supports and collaborates with are Wellness Foundation and Surplus People Project in South Africa, the case organizations referred to here as the partners.

### *Afrikagrupperna (AG): the funding organization, Sweden*

AG is an ideal, nonparty, politically and religiously independent, solidarity organization. AG cooperates with partner organizations in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe where they have worked for over 40 years, originally in solidarity with the struggle for freedom from colonial powers, and later with civil society organizations that fight for everybody's rights to a dignified life (afrikagrupperna.se). According to the Operations Manager through the survey, AG has a vision of a fair world with its roots in solidarity movements in Sweden in the 1960s, in supporting freedom movements, and for being a strong force against the apartheid in South Africa. In the African countries where AG operates, resource distribution is unequal, poverty widespread, and where the prevalence of HIV is the highest in the world. These entail huge challenges for the civil society. AG continues to work with long-term change processes by focusing on the causes of poverty and resource inequality than merely alleviating the symptoms. With its headquarters in Stockholm, AG works with fundraising, information and opinion building, and during the time of my fieldwork had twenty-one full-time employees, one part-time employee, and two volunteers.

## The changes and challenges in the funding landscape

According to Froelich (1999), organizations that depend on a few sources for vital inputs become highly dependent on and tied to those providers for survival. This is apparent in the case of AG because, although being a SIDA frame organization entails a more stable stream of funding (a usual funding agreement runs for 5 years, and is renewable), AG still feels insecurity and a need to diversify as there are many factors that are beyond its control, which can affect SIDA's decision to continue, lessen, or discontinue its funding. In the past, AG sold solidarity products that were produced by their partner organizations in the South. The initial and primary purpose was to help the producers sell their products in Sweden, but this did not become a viable project and therefore was discontinued, together with other activities like micro-loans.

During the start of my research fieldwork at AG (2016), the organization was in the midst of its fundraising efforts, targeting private individual donors. The period before and during the fundraising campaign was marred with tension and resistance from employees, members, and partly from some board members, primarily because such an activity was generally regarded as 'evil' or something that does not belong to the NGO/aid world. There is an evident concern among the respondents on the instability and scarcity of funding and on the organization's dependence on SIDA:

It is vulnerable to have a major financier like SIDA for AG. They're 80% of our budget; that's really a lot of money. If something happens to SIDA, we are standing without any other cards to play with, basically. That's it. And we need to widen our funding; therefore, we want to get money from different institutions and so on. (Board Director)

The General Secretary concurs that without SIDA funding, AG cannot survive. And precisely because of the hardening funding climate, competition with other organizations has intensified:

I am worried about it. I see how tough the competition is with the other organizations. I think, sometimes I feel that I have a more realistic picture, and what we need to invest in order not to incur a deficit or go backwards. (Board Member #1)

In the prevailing competition for funding, the likelihood of getting support, for instance, from a business company is less because AG is not 'top of mind' as there is less politics in supporting an organization that works with children than one like AG that is working with political issues, like labor rights (Fundraiser #1). This leaves an organization like AG having to cling to major financiers like SIDA, as the funding menu does not offer a wide array of alternatives from which to choose. It entails some inevitable level of adaptation or alignment with financiers when it comes to its agenda and how the said agenda should be carried out. To ensure continued funding, organizations are hence driven to be in sync with financiers like SIDA:

(...) there are many organizations that have switched from working with a country focus to working with a thematic focus because SIDA has done so themselves. It can be a good idea, but it can be. . . what I see that can be a problem is that many organizations have gone to this theme focus because SIDA itself had done it, but it might not necessarily be what is best for the organization. (...) but I believe that somehow, in the back of their head, they have this – 'what does SIDA want? what does SIDA think?' so as not to lose them in any way. (Board Member #2)

For the above respondent, it could mean that not all organizations can keep up with adapting to financiers because they have their own strategic plans, agenda, or mission. Frame organizations, like AG, in turn, allocate funding received from SIDA to its partner organizations. Consequently, there are contractual obligations with SIDA that AG must adhere to, and similar obligations that partner organizations have toward AG (Controller). This co-dependence in funding with the corresponding obligations, therefore, entails that the torch is passed on, so to speak.

For AG's Regional Director in South Africa, the power imbalance between the North and the South perpetuates the condition of Africa, despite – or precisely because of, aid. She referred, among other things, to the power imbalance between the South and the North, where decisions are made with the North sitting at the table and the South sitting on the floor, and aid as a sort of a pay-off for the imbalance in trade and the exploitation of world resources:

I am saying that we are all part of a system that is corrupt. If we don't acknowledge that the system is corrupt, we can't even attempt to try to fix it. And that is the limitation of aid. (Regional Director, AG South Africa)

Considering that AG receives its major funding from SIDA, whatever changes that occur within SIDA affect AG, and consequently its partner organizations:

(...) there are major changes and strategic decisions within SIDA that affect us directly, which they had during the last few years, and I think that some here, those who are working in aid organizations, are aware of it. So, you don't really understand sometimes how the strategies can affect how we can collaborate. (Board Member #1)

Because of the above interdependence, a current trend in the world that is worrying is:

when aid is controlled, when the agenda is set somewhere other than the organizations themselves. (Operations Manager)

The Operations Manager adds that they, as an organization, are able to criticize despite the funding and thinks that it works both ways. SIDA (through Sydsam<sup>13</sup>) is also interested in what the frame organizations think, and it also depends on how critiques are being presented, "whether it's constructive or not, because it's, of course, about keeping a good relationship with financiers." Indeed, maintaining a good relationship with financiers, as in any type of relationship, seems a must, something positive and unproblematic. However, AG has a different agenda than the government; according to the former regulatory government body, the money from SIDA can only be used for information purposes, and not for advocacy work. There is, therefore, a conflict of interest here:

Yes, but [the former Minister] expressed that why should the government finance the criticism of itself. (General Secretary)

This situation very much embodies a typical colonial or patriarchal mindset where the ruled or the offspring (including the female gender) become involuntarily indebted. Another challenge that is tied to funding is the difficulty in selling a long-term approach that AG has, because donors/people sometimes want to see results faster, according to Fundraiser #1. Moreover, one must consider the relevance of the project to those who will do the work:

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<sup>13</sup> Sydsam is a network of municipalities and counties in the Scania region.

And this is really hard; it means you will work long-term, and it is difficult. You have to build relationships and you have to fit in; you have to try to understand that development takes a really, really, long time. (Board Member #2)

For AG's own future sustainability as aid continues, the Operations Manager was of the opinion that such a scenario depends on the organizations' (service or product) offerings:

Yes, I think some organizations will never be self-sustaining; it's only organizations that produce something that can generate money to become self-sustaining...we are SIDA dependent (...). There are parts of civil society that need to be financed, and there are parts that can survive by themselves. Civil society is an important force in relation to the state and companies and other institutions, and it is there that aid can make [a difference]. (Operations Manager)

### **(Inter)organizational areas of alignment and disputes**

In line with the changes at SIDA, where the frame organizations were to shift from a country focus to a thematic focus (e.g. feminism), AG had to implement such thematic activities within the organization. The related changes were met with resistance from some employees, which the General Secretary had to contend with.

The organization was much flatter before; now it is very much hierarchical. It is a management team that rules everywhere. When they have information, they discuss one thing with this one, other thing with the other. They shut people out who do not have the same attitudes like them. They have frozen out people. . . when they did the reorganization they have [thrown out] people. (Controller)

When probed by asking whether some decisions simply have to be made, the Controller explained that he agreed and that they were told that people were laid off because of redundancy, but these people were activists and those from the board left for the same reason. The management team, with the General Secretary in the lead, faced challenges that caused tension and resistance, especially with the common assumption that they belong to a flat organization:

Flat means a consensus and everybody's involvement; having a leader only matters when everything is good; otherwise, the leader gets the blame. (General Secretary)

The organizations that AG partners with are chosen based on their activities, their business plans and strategies, and values. It is for this reason, for instance, that AG continues to support Wellness Foundation (WF) despite the organization's volatile condition, as AG believes in what WF stands for and does for the plight of the careworkers (Operations Manager). AG's ambition to cooperate more closely with its partners does not preclude the contractual obligations that any funded organization needs to fulfil (ibid.). For AG's Regional Director in South Africa, evidently speaking on behalf of the partners, the requirements on partners are getting more demanding, adding that the value chain of responsibility is pushed down so the requirements at the bottom are more than the requirements at the top. This is about control and power:

You are coming from an understanding that the poor don't know what to do and what the Africans don't know, so you want to fix it.... I am saying if you come to a paradigm that says these poor people in Africa need help; it is different from a perspective that it is the structure that needs to be changed, and the way you deal with power and trust is different. So, it goes back to power, and how you deal with aid. (...) That is the point; efficiency is perceived at the bottom, not the top. Efficiency should be at the organizations in Sweden, but aid is never about the ones giving, it is about [the efficiency] of the ones receiving. (Regional Director, AG South Africa)

The Accountant at AG's Swedish office understands the difficulty that partner organizations are facing when it comes to reporting and measurement. He expressed that SIDA's requirements are not reasonable as the rules oftentimes reflect the reality in Sweden, but they cannot work in other countries that are poor and may not have the same level of education. He added:

So, they would rather have 10 lines too many than a line too little (...) SIDA requires us and we will also require our partners. So then, our partners perceive it as a major requirement. It is like that, just because of what SIDA requires from us. It can have consequences. (Accountant)

The resistance is regarded as a product of being naïve and people's lack of knowledge for the need to develop as the sector becomes more professionalized, where reporting is necessary for accountability and transparency not only in Sweden:

...we must be able to respond to the challenges and we cannot afford to ignore the challenges and do not think realistically. What I think [is that] we have enough ideology within the board to continue [to support] our partners who need a bit more capacity development. (...) I was actually thinking for the next meeting that we have to find people who also have experience in business, and to discuss some more. (Board Member #1)

For the Controller, AG indeed needs to have accountability and documentation to be able to show to, and get the confidence of, the auditors, accountants, and financiers. Moreover, the Controller sees his role as a double-edged sword – of control and mentoring, which he prefers to call a learning dialogue with partners. In this respect, he provides constructive feedback to improve partner organizations' financial reporting. Not being able to give sensible or comprehensible answers can be a sign that something wrong is happening in the organization. Although there may be differences in the level of competencies amongst the partners, this does not lessen the need for a system that works where people can be held accountable:

I need to show that we are in control. If I circumvent it, it is misconduct in my opinion. I must be able to document and present it. (Controller)

The Board Director concurs that reporting is inevitable because SIDA needs to account for the taxes that the partners receive in the form of funding. Another challenge that is tied to funding is that the money cannot be used entirely as the organization wants because there are objectives that they must live up to. For this reason, they also encourage their partners in the South to look for funding alternatives: "(...) it's also something that we try to work on with our partners, to expand their generated revenues" (Controller). He adds that a functioning management and control system is healthy for organizations, and that it is useful:

to broaden out its base, so that you do not have donors and donors that control what the organization does better, rather than about what the organization does with its own [premises]; its access to funds that do that. (Controller)



## Concluding remarks

The above shows that because funding comes from people's taxes, meeting contractual obligations is a must. However, SIDA's requirements reflect the 'reality' in Sweden, which does not necessarily work in other countries/contexts due to, for example, the level of education, based on the experience of AG's Accountant. Since SIDA has its requirements, AG, in turn, passes on the requirements to their partners. The role of the Controller is a double-edged sword of control and mentoring, and for a learning dialogue with partners. The differences in the level of competencies do not lessen the need for a functioning system to uphold accountability. In turn, the partners feel that the requirements and responsibilities are pushed down, and it becomes a matter of control and power. Aid becomes a tool to address poverty instead of putting the focus on the structure, which, according to AG's Regional director in South Africa, is what needs to be changed. Nonetheless, the requirements are necessary for accountability and transparency, and the sector needs to develop and become professional. The Board armed with ideology continues to work to support partners' capacity development. An idea to find people who have business experience is to be raised. With the limitations tied to how funding can be used, AG encourages partners to look for funding alternatives.

These instances show how organizational members make sense of the various demands and interpretations around the challenges tied to funding, the power imbalance between funder and partner(s), and the increasing pressure to acquire non-traditional nonprofit competencies as the sector becomes all the more professionalized (Ascoli and Ranci 2003). It means that there are those who defend the increasingly professionalized reporting requirements brought about by the marketization of the sector. By implication, it indicates some presence of organizational members' adherence to market logic. At the same time, the greater extent of resistance toward activities that have more direct business elements, such as fundraising and business partnerships, can be interpreted as showing a general stronger salience to mission logic in this organization. These also show that with the increasing societal challenges (Fowler 2000b), where crises are becoming more complex, the need to find more effective social interventions (Nielsen and Samia 2008) is heightened. However, there is also a need to address how the demands of competition, or the strict accountability and productivity requirements of public funding arrangements, compromise the autonomy of the third sector

organizations and their unique characteristics, which might affect their democratic functions of mobilizing civil society (Ascoli and Ranci 2003).

From the above, we can understand that the alignment between the funder and the funded is increasing, which is straining some organizations. Organizations, like AG, adapt to the strategies of their financiers, although it could mean a diversion from the organizations' own strategic agendas and mission. In the context of aid-development, it shows how environmental factors limit organizations in their scope or space for pro-active strategizing (Hannan and Freeman 1984). Moreover, it suggests that there is an understanding of the contradictions and possible negative consequences of succumbing to outside influences in order to secure financial support. Therefore, it can affect the role of the third sector, as opposed to the role of the state or the private sector (Graefe 2006; see also Van Gramberg and Bassett 2005); and indicates that aid or resource dependence puts organizations in a volatile position (Froelich 1999; De Corte and Verschuere 2014).

Moreover, the strings attached to aid – namely, where one is reminded 'not to bite the hands that feed you,' and of the structural challenges within the aid world, bring the significance of NPOs' role of giving voice to the voiceless (Taylor 2002) and part of which is its ability to criticize governments (that are usually funders as well) to be able to protect and promote democracy and civil society (Sanders 2012). The statements also suggest that nonprofits face a strategic challenge of balancing vertical accountability demands (de Waard, de Bock and Beeres 2018) and pressure to deal with competing demands, between meeting the expectations from donors and the nature of their work and mission, where results cannot be achieved overnight (Osula and Ng 2014). The insights, thus, suggest that the number of alternatives to diversify funds for organizations like AG is limited, especially due to the fact that the organization does not produce tangible saleable products, and the apparent presence and influence of aid-dependency syndrome (Edgren 2002).

Nevertheless, the acknowledgment that the funding challenges cannot be ignored and where an idea of involving people with business experience suggests an understanding of the demands of working in the sector at the same time equating people who resist as being naïve, shows a stronger inclination toward market logic. Inasmuch as SIDA needs to account for the taxes that the partners receive in the form of funding, the requirement for formal reporting from partners, where

efficiency and check and balance are central, indicates the influences of managerialism (Hvenmark 2013; Pollitt 1990 2-3; Evans et al. 2005), hence, also suggest influences of market logic.

## *Wellness Foundation (WF): partner organization, South Africa*

Wellness Foundation (WF) has been providing wellness services to organizations, community health careworkers, and secondary caregivers since 2001. Its mission is to mobilize and support individuals, organizations, and communities through enabling and empowering them to respond in a caring, creative, and sustainable manner to the challenges they face. WF's vision is to create a caring, inclusive, and well society. The organization provides psycho-social support for careworkers who are exposed to poverty and especially gender violence, and advocate for their rights as workers. Careworkers in South Africa are predominantly women, who provide primary healthcare in communities, but are not recognized as workers. This is something for which the organization advocates a change.

### **The changes and challenges in the funding landscape**

WF, like its donor AG, was exposed to a similar funding instability during the time of my research fieldwork in 2017. At that time, WF was in a quite unstable situation and was barely recovering from a more recent near-bankruptcy crisis. It had tried to run a social enterprise as an extension of its project with careworkers. The social enterprise called Simple Touch Enterprise Development, is a program focused on the economic empowerment of women who are trained and activated to become service providers (massage treatments), and in so doing, earn a sustainable income ([wellnessfoundation.org.za](http://wellnessfoundation.org.za)) for themselves, and partly for WF. This program lacked sufficient operational infrastructure and was more or less dormant in 2017. Around the same period, the efforts were underway to expand the organization's campaign for the rights of careworkers in the region, and such network expansion was seen as a way of making the organization visible and of increasing legitimacy. Considering the near bankruptcy that they had experienced, there was an understanding regarding the need to have such an

exposure or for regarding it as a marketing strategy. However, with a team of five members, driving national and regional operations was starting to create tension and take its toll on the employees, combined with the fear of defeating their original social mission.

According to the Director, WF previously received funding from the National Department of Health, which is part of their government, and the National Health Insurance (NHI) policy for South Africa. He quoted that:

“Careworkers are the backbone of the health system.” And yet the government doesn’t recognize the work that they do. (Director)

In 2013, when this funding was withdrawn because of a shift in the government’s focus, it covered 60% of WF’s budget. In 2014, the organization had depleted its reserves and by 2015 the Board decided to close down the organization. The staff, however, fought to keep it open. They elected the Program Manager to act as the Director. At that point, the organization was barely surviving, and the staff members were unable to do their work because of a lack of funding and human resources. They had to work from home and at some point, used the Director’s home as an office, and had to make some cuts to their salary. This experience shows how much they wanted to resolve the situation. It made them realize that they really needed to increase their resources and to become less dependent on donor funding in order to pursue their social mission. WF’s unstable funding situation continued after its near bankruptcy in 2015. With AG’s own share of funding insecurity, additional funding from AG was not possible, which confirmed WF’s understanding of its extreme vulnerability and need to diversify resources.

The careworkers, who provide primary health care in the communities (similar to *hemvårdstjänst* in Sweden), currently receive a stipend in the amount of approximately 1700 rand (equivalent to approx. 1040 SEK) as monthly remuneration, which can even be less in some areas. From this stipend, the careworkers would have to deduct their lunch and transportation costs to and from the communities they are serving. The South African Government’s withdrawal of funds in 2013 can be attributed to WF’s advocacy to make the careworkers’ job be recognized as a real occupation, hence, get reasonable remuneration as workers, which the government was not willing to concede. Insofar as the nonprofit WF needed funding for its survival, it had realized as an

organization that there is no such thing as ‘unconditional love.’ They were told by the government:

You don’t bite the hands that feed you. (Director)

Similarly, there are other requirements for the funding that WF receives from some donors that do not match with what they are doing, particularly in a network collaboration (Advocacy Officer). Since they are very much dependent on funding and at the same time cannot compromise on their ethical values and work methodology, conflicts are unavoidable (Director). The idea behind a network collaboration is to drive similar goals and, in principle, to share funding, which is endorsed by certain funders. The 5-member staff was in agreement that collaboration with other organizations locally is challenging because of discrepancies in the agenda and values. Because of the importance of their values, they are not unfamiliar about leaving a partnership.

### **(Inter)organizational areas of alignment and disputes**

WF’s view and experience of the different donor requirements echoes that of AG’s:

I have to manage; I have to check. That is an additional load and these different donors, different requirements in terms of reporting and stuff, so you have to satisfy all these three people. So, it is a lot of work and we don’t have a... as much as we try by all means to put our work on paper; there is no person who is like doing it. We do it ourselves. (Advocacy Officer)

For the Director, a lot of their donors operate on the same basis as AGs, where they are more like partners than mere funded organizations. Although at first, she said that donor requirements are very reasonable, the documentation (which ironically is part of the requirements), nonetheless, is comprehensive and compounded by different preferences by donors:

(...) not all donors want to hear these stories; they want numbers, they want to be able to see ...you know when it is a story it is not really real, it is not tangible enough, but when there’s statistics to support it, it is more tangible. So yeah. So, we are stuck there at the moment. (Director)

## Concluding remarks

Wellness Foundation has been experiencing serious funding instability and scarcity after the government withdrew its support and brought the organization to near bankruptcy. The withdrawal of government support could partly be attributed to WF's advocacy work for the recognition of labor rights of careworkers as legitimate workers, which the government does not acknowledge. WF, similar to AG, was also told by its funder (the government) "not to bite the hands that feed you," referring to the mission of WF to advocate for the rights of careworkers, which meant working 'against' the government. This made the organization realize, through the respondents, its extreme vulnerability and need to diversify resources. It had tried to join local partnerships, but funding requirements at times do not match with what WF is doing as an organization. WF had ceased partnerships with local NGOs on several occasions due to value incompatibilities. It also does not want to lose focus by trying too much to become financially sustainable beyond aid funding.

Moreover, the organization was encouraged by other funders to join in network collaborations in the hope of being able to achieve similar goals at lower costs through sharing of funds. WF, therefore, faced a dilemma between aligning with its funders and compromising its mission. Aligning, for instance, with the directives from NHI could have probably increased the probability of keeping the funding, and maintaining collaborations could have meant extra resources. Compromising its mission, however, could mean a dissolution of the organization (Taylor 2002; Sanders 2012) because the mission is what it is about and what it stands for.

This situation instantiates the danger for organizations and their workforces of losing autonomy (Froelich 1999; Arvidson and Linde 2021) and sight of their purpose and values in their struggle for organizational survival (Ebrahim et al. 2014). It also suggests that there is an understanding about the contradictions and the undeniable negative consequences of abandoning the organization's *raison d'être* for the sake of securing financial support. Moreover, the strings attached to aid – namely, where they are reminded not to 'bite the hands that feed them,' and of the structural challenges within the aid world, bring the significance of NPOs' role of giving voice to the voiceless (Taylor 2002). Part of this role is NPOs' ability to criticize governments (that are usually funders as well) to be able to protect and promote democracy and civil society (Sanders 2012).

These insights also suggest that there is an understanding amongst the respondents regarding the contradictions and possible negative consequences of caving in to the external influences in order to secure funding. It therefore delineates the role of the third sector as opposed to the role of the state or the private sector (Graefe 2006; see also Van Gramberg and Bassett 2005) and indicates that organizations are in a volatile position in this aid or resource dependence environment (Froelich 1999; De Corte and Verschuere 2014; see also Arvidson and Linde 2021). Furthermore, the increased focus on performance measurement, audit, and inspection that is part of managerialism's modes of control (Evans et al. 2005) resonate with what AG's Accountant thinks of the requirements on partners, and where such type of measurement is based on quantitative terms (Hwang and Powell 2009).

### *Surplus People Project (SPP): partner organization, South Africa*

Surplus People Project envisions a transformed and just society and stands in solidarity with radical social movements in struggles for pro-poor agrarian transformation for food sovereignty. It is committed to challenging neoliberal capitalism, power, and patriarchy and to promote and advocate for agrarian reform for food sovereignty with strategic alliances. Specifically, SPP's support amplifies the agrarian struggles of social movements, and community formations in the Northern and Western Cape. SPP believes in social justice and equal rights for all. The organization has made a choice to work with the rural poor and to facilitate the voices, choices, strategies, and approaches of struggle as determined by the people themselves. It believes in the particular power and possibility of young people and women and actively facilitates opportunities for their growth in the organization's strategy.

Like AG and WF, SPP has also had its share of funding instability in the past, but was enjoying a good funding stream during the time of my fieldwork in 2017. Its strategy to ensure sustained funding stability is to try to recruit a new funder every year. SPP's apparent funding success can be attributed to an ability to keep its mission intact and where the management team delivers on its own area of

responsibility without losing sense of a shared organizational responsibility, hence increasing its legitimacy that helps explain why ‘the money follows.’

## **The changes and challenges in the funding landscape**

SPP experienced a cessation in funding some years ago, which was described by the former Program Manager as:

There I was. I was young and new, and our Financial Manager was in total paralysis, really didn't see it, obviously didn't see it coming, how to move beyond this, and many staff then left because they were worried. So, there were a few resignations. (...) and then I just started having conversations with the existing donors and, you know, look at ways where we could cut costs; also, it was a learning [experience], do not put the eggs in one basket, you can't have funders only paying salaries. We began to look at projects, spreading the risks across donors, and I knew that was a point of involving others. (CEO)

Despite SPP's stable funding stream at that time, the organization was not immune from the general funding challenges that the sector is exposed to:

It is always an issue around raising resources; so, honestly, that is a standard thing if you are in the sector. (R&A Manager)

The Research and Advocacy (R&A) Manager added that despite the constant concern surrounding resources, they are restrictive in finding alternatives to aid funding, such as government tenders. According to the CEO, they sometimes refrain from doing government tenders as they do not want to be accountable to the state. However, she also thought that building a relationship with donors is important for both parties. Taking funds from the government is the same principle when it comes to other donors:

You can't bite the hands that feed you. (CEO)

When it comes to collaborating with the government, Fieldworker #1 thought that they could work with the government, but it is challenging because SPP's strategic objectives and vision differ from the government's; moreover, there are contradictions in what they want to achieve. During the early incumbency of the CEO, the shift in SIDA's (and consequently in AG's) country focus to a thematic



focus entailed a strategic shift for SPP. This shift also entailed that the organization had to review its resource situation:

At that point, I just knew that this was what I had to do. The organization was at the point of having...had to have a strategic shift in decision from working very closely with the state toward more radical organization that looked at social mobilization, that had to look from land rights to agrarian transformation, that had to look at gender. So, there were key things that I knew from [being the] Program Manager that had to change. (CEO)

For SPP, being able to exist without funding from the North is what they wanted to see for themselves, but it was not feasible at that point:

I wish we could say yes. I think, we are not there yet; the desire is to be independent because aid comes with lots of strings you know whether... there's always that negotiated terms in one way or the other, even with a progressive organization like AGs.<sup>14</sup> Once they get government funding, then you must maneuver within certain [parameters] ...so, of course, we would like to do that in the end. Whether we are ready for that type of independence, only time will tell. (CEO)

For the R&A Manager, there could be an imbalance in the allocation or proportion of funding between the partners and the Northern donors:

The donors sometimes complain that the costs of the people in the South are too high, but the Northern donors get half of the money and do not look at their own costs. (R&A Manager)

Moreover, there was a paradox in aid and aid dependence. According to Intern #1, to keep on receiving aid means that they will never become self-sustainable. She also thought it could depend on how and what the aid was used for, and in her worldview, many countries take out a lot of resources from Africa, and they give back whatever they no longer want. And because they (Africa, African countries) are so dependent, they follow whatever the investors or donors want:

For the moment [it helps], exactly, because you give us a fish and eat for the day, but teach us how to fish and eat for a lifetime. But it also depends on the intention of the aid. (Intern #1)

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<sup>14</sup> Partner organizations refer to Afrikagrupperna as AGs (plural), instead of AG.

## **(Inter)organizational areas of alignment and disputes**

For SPP, measuring impact, evaluation, and reporting are the most difficult part of their operations and can be challenging because donors might have a different way of looking at things, and there may be different requirements from different donors, which can change in the next period:

(...) it's more the ongoing monitoring that becomes challenging, especially in terms of what donors expect you to report on and how they see change. (CEO)

The CEO adds that due to the nature of their work, their interest is more in qualitative change on the individual and human level, but usually the donors are for quantitative, for example, how many gardens are tilled. They also look at the quantitative, but the tension lies in how to balance the quantitative and the qualitative, which becomes tricky because each donor requires different things. Moreover, the problem with the question of measuring impact (or success) is not only on the impact that the organization makes, but it can also be a result of many other factors (R&A Manager). Managing an NPO is similar to a corporate company, namely there are many dynamics and similar issues to consider, and while the latter has shareholders who get the profits from the business, the former's profit is the social impact that it makes (CEO).

## **Concluding remarks**

SPP's earlier experience of a cessation in funding made it aware of its vulnerability. Funding challenges and raising resources are therefore a standard issue in the sector. SPP's organizational members have learned not to put all their eggs in one basket, by spreading the risks across donors and by involving others. Although surviving without aid funding is not feasible at the moment, to exist without funding from the North is what they want, especially because of the negotiated terms with aid, even with a progressive organization like AG. These negotiated terms exist both for government and donor funders – “you can't bite the hands that feed you.” It is why they sometimes do not engage in government tenders, so they can avoid or at least lessen their accountability to the state. Nonetheless, building a relationship with donors is regarded as important for both parties.

There is a paradox in aid and aid-dependence because through it, organizations can deliver on their goals, but at the same time, they can never become self-

sustaining because of it. Aid can be seen as a sort of compensation for the resources taken away from Africa. But because of the dependence, they (from Africa) follow what investors or donors want. Aid could have a short-term effect and could help, depending on what its intention is. There is, for instance, an imbalance between the Southern partners and the Northern donors (funders) in the allocation or proportion of funding, where the latter does not look at its own costs and usually associates ineffectiveness with the Southern part. SIDA's shift from a country to a theme focus entailed a strategic shift for SPP and a review of its resource situation.

The type of dependence of organizations like SPP on their environments for resources critical for their survival, thus, creates uncertainty (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003). Such a funding environment requires organizations to interact with those who control the resources and use resources according to the purposes defined by the donors (Froelich 1999), as is suggested by SPP's alignment with AG's change, for instance, from a country focus to a theme focus. Also, this imbalance between the giver and the receiver (Froelich 1999; Pfeffer and Salancik 2003) as well as the differing agenda between the state and the third sector (Nevile 2010), exemplifies the very reasons for the encouragement to move beyond aid (Fowler 2000b). However, and despite the prevailing admonition not to bite the hands that feed them, the strings attached to government and aid funding, and the imbalance in the allocation of funds between the Northern donors and partners, SPP – although it would very much like to be free from aid-dependence, is just not ready at this point. Such dependence further shows how volatile the position (Froelich 1999) is for the partners in the South.

The accounts show the respondents' understanding of what can be gained or lost in an aid-dependency scenario. The statements also indicate how the respondents make sense of the forces of the market and the precepts of the social mission. Moreover, they indicate the challenges that organizations face due to the increasing focus on performance measurement, audit, and reporting (Brandsen et al. 2014; Evans et al. 2005) and the common notion or practice of measuring the results or the difference that NPOs make according to the quantitative metrics (Hwang and Powell 2009) although their social impact is difficult to quantify and the factors difficult to ascertain.

**Table 4:** Composition of respondents: AG, WF, and SPP.

<b>Afrikagrupperna (AG) (funding organization, Sweden)</b>		
<b>Respondent/position</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Tenure: From/To<sup>15</sup></b>
General Secretary	Nurse, Amnesty International	2001/2017
Operations Manager	Peace & Conflict studies, Pol. science, worked mostly at AG	2001
Regional Manager	Social science and theology	2004
Controller	Activist, project leader/coordinator	1989 (4 yrs); 2006/2016
Chief Accountant	Economy/accounting	1992/2017
Fundraising Manager (Fundraiser#1)	Social science, economic/management assistant, etc.	2003/2017
Fundraiser (#2)	Natural resource and business economics, private sector	2013/2017
Board Director	Trade union, NGO	2015/2016
Board Member (#1)	NGOs incl. AG	2015/2016
Board Member (#2)	Economy and International Affairs, program officer	2014/2016
<b>Wellness Foundation (WF), (partner organization, South Africa)</b>		
<b>Respondent/position</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Tenure: From/To</b>
Director	Former WF operations manager, ex WF program mgr 2012	2015
Advocacy Officer	Volunteer, provincial coordinator (HIV project), diploma	2013
Trainer #1	Careworker, intern, transactional analysis certificate	2012
Trainer #2	Careworker, sexual abuse survivor	2016
Trainer #3	Volunteer/founded a touch rugby team, social work student	2015
Careworker #1	Mother, sexual abuse survivor	2015
Careworker #2	Mother, sexual abuse survivor	2017
<b>Surplus People Project (SPP), (partner organization, South Africa)</b>		
<b>Respondent/position</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Tenure: From/To</b>
CEO	Teacher/counsellor, linguistics & psychology, ex SPP mgr 1999	2002/2017
Implementation Manager	Teacher, geography, masters in forestry	2007
Research & Advocacy Manager	Activist, teacher, social science, masters in geography	1994
CEO/Management Assistant	Volunteer, intern, business management	2015
Receptionist	Private sector research, public administration	2016
Intern #1	Food grower	2015
Intern #2	Food grower	2015
Intern #3	Food grower	2015
Intern #4	Journalism	2016
Fieldworker #1	Intern at SPP 2011 Community development, agriculture	2013
Fieldworker #2	Office admin at SPP 1997	2014

<sup>15</sup> Table 4 shows the tenure period known during the time of the fieldwork.

## Summary: AG, WF, SPP

By studying how the organizational members in a donor-partner relationship (see table 4 for the composition of respondents) respond to funding challenges, we get insights into how organizational members view and respond to the challenges tied to funding as individual organizations and as members of a partnership. Moreover, this donor-partner relationship involves organizations in Sweden and South Africa, depicting a typical aid context where the South is the recipient, and the North is the donor. With the mutual contractual obligations between the partners in such a context, and the increasing pressure to diversify funds through fundraising and selling of goods or products, not to mention their respective obligation to deliver on their social mission, this multiple case study, therefore, offers another layer of insight into the market-mission interface (discussed in more detail in chapter 7).

There is a striking semblance across these partnership organizations when it comes to the challenges that are tied to aid funding or funding in general, regardless of the organization's structural position (funder or partner, from the South or North). And because the South is 'dependent' on the North, the financial vulnerability of the funding organizations in the North can trickle down to its partners in the South, as this partnership indicates. Another denominator that is common across the studied organizations is how market-oriented or business-like activities are regarded and acted upon as influenced by their stronger adherence to their mission, and the subsequent outcomes of these activities (discussed in more detail in chapters 9, 10, and 11). SPP, however, distinguishes itself when it comes to its ability to deal with the generally unstable funding climate.

## Individuell Människohjälp (IM)

IM is a Swedish nonprofit, nongovernmental organization founded in 1938 and operates in Sweden and internationally. Specifically, IM combats poverty and exclusion through aid, fairtrade, and integration, as well as takes a stand for humanity and against injustice. Its work is based on human rights and is designed to assist in self-help. During the time of my fieldwork (2016-2018), IM had eight volunteer-manned stores in Sweden that used to sell products mainly produced

by small and disadvantaged producers in the South that it was supporting and working with. Several years ago, these stores became IM Fair Trade stores (IMFT) but remained volunteer-manned. However, the stores have not been profitable for years; moreover, during the recent years, it had a high turn-over of managers who were responsible for fairtrade and the stores (the stint at IM of two of these managers, #2 and #3, is presented and triangulated here through a recollection of events by several respondents). Common among these managers, as soon as they started with their post, were strategies that were based on a direct assumption that the stores have a strong sales potential, and that turning the sales' negative trend would not be difficult. However, reconciling solidarity work and business orientation turned out to be particularly challenging.

Similar to the previous case organizations, IM is presented here to further our understanding of how organizational members relate and respond to the changes and manage the interplay between market activities and social goals (see table 5 for the composition of respondents). Moreover, it is also a study of how fairtrade as part of the organization's mission to help small, disadvantaged producers and the concept of volunteer-manned fairtrade stores across Sweden work in practice, especially as the organization navigates in the increasingly competitive market environment.

Frame organizations in Sweden receive grants through SIDA and usually redistribute them to Swedish NGOs for support to civil society in partner countries (Onsander 2007). The Swedish organization Individuell Människohjälp, just like Afrikagrupperna (AG), is one of SIDA's frame organizations in Sweden.

Selling products in Sweden as a way of helping the disadvantaged and refugees has been integral to this organization since the aftermath of the Second World War and has been its primary purpose for engaging in this market-like activity.

**Table 5:** Composition of respondents: IM Fair Trade.

IM Fair Trade (Sweden)		
Respondent/position	Background	Tenure: From/To <sup>16</sup>
General Secretary	NGO, advocacy, global development	2013
Fairtrade Manager	Business sector, studied trade and admin.	2017
Fairtrade Product Developer	Nurse, worked with youth	1998
Fairtrade Coordinator	NGO, social enterprise manager	2016
Logistic & Customer Service Officer	Food technology, logistics officer, security admin.	2008
Procurement Officer	Tour guide, volunteer, political science, economics	2007
Controller	Former fairtrade manager	2011
Volunteer #1	78 yrs old, former librarian	2004
Volunteer #2	80 yrs old, former teacher	late 1990s
Volunteer #3	28 yrs old, masters student	2016
Volunteer #4	78 yrs old, former university lecturer	2000

## The changes and challenges in the funding landscape

According to the accounts of some respondents, the pressure for the stores to increase the profitability started to accelerate around 10 years earlier. Accordingly, a consultant was commissioned to look into fairtrade's potential to increase sales and generate money not only for fairtrade but also for IM as an organization. The consultant then recommended favorably, and IM became an official member of World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) in 2008. With this membership, a formalized focus on fairtrade products in 2009 led to an increased procurement via WFTO, heightened focus on product range, quality, costs, and sales.

Such procurement through WFTO meant that products sold at IM Fair Trade stores became increasingly similar to various fairtrade stores and other channels, which contributed to losing the uniqueness of IM products. Moreover, it meant a reduced procurement via the more disadvantaged producers, which is according to the organization's original mission. These producers are small and disadvantaged and have less possibility to meet the fairtrade criteria and reach the (Swedish) market without support. It is for this reason that IM has been supporting them under IM's producer development program, so that these producers can become self-sustaining; hence, they are called IM's 'own' producers.

As the story was unfolding in this case organization, and as mentioned under the methods chapter, I was following an informant's work journey at IM from day 1

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<sup>16</sup> Respondents' end of tenure was not known during the time of the fieldwork.

for over a year through his diary notes. These diary notes and the informant's suggestions guided how I chose the subsequent set of interviewees and the type of questions raised during the interviews. I call my informant 'Erik.' The diary notes with our follow-up meetings and the succeeding interviews with other respondents indicate a crossroads between advocacy (to support the most disadvantaged small producers, volunteer work, and fairtrade as ideology) and an increased focus on sales turnover (so that fairtrade producers can have better margins). The empirical material also indicates a clash between logic inclinations, which entail/require an increased sales skills that the volunteers may not possess or a sales environment they may not want to see themselves in. Simultaneously, this situation created tension within the organization as the rationale for their existence (what they are for) became blurred. Since becoming fairtrade, the product focus and product range changed:

And then you can say they were like a springboard into something or some place that could not be known, because before we had not worked in such a way that we had to make money. (Employee #1)

There were several employees who left IM, specifically a high turnover of fairtrade Managers (three managers in about 5-6 years) or a lack of a manager in between, which affected the continuity of operations and contributed to the level of uncertainty among employees and volunteers. The succeeding managers (#2, 3, 4; see table 6) pursued a similar course of action (or strategy) in trying to improve the sales figures. I refer to these managers as the 'challengers.' Moreover, they also directly assumed that there was something wrong with the product range which therefore needed changing, that there was no (or, at least, not much) complexity or contradiction in combining their mission (of supporting and developing small, disadvantaged producers) and market logics, by making the stores competitive on the market. The challengers have therefore all resorted to similar (more market-oriented) solutions. But reconciling solidarity work and business orientation turned out to be more challenging than what they initially thought. Faced with the challenges of combining mission<sup>17</sup> and market logics, a considerable number

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<sup>17</sup> Mission logic refers here to the organization's solidarity work, owing to the nature of IM being a development aid organization, and fairtrade being based on the advocacy for and ideology of solidarity. Solidarity and aid logics are at times used interchangeably, and both pertain to mission or mission logic.



of the respondents (employees and volunteers) struggled to make sense of the purpose of their sales activities.

So, we think that one thing is very important; we think it's important to. . . so fairtrade is about helping everyone, no matter where they are. It can be China, it can be North Korea or South Korea, anything. But when someone says you have to make money, then we have to act as any commercial actor, and when you do, we have to buy goods that have a high margin [so] you can make money, and you cannot buy cheap items at our... what should you say older partners. They are small scale, so it costs more. (Employee #1)

The series of changing the product lines that were not always produced by the small producers that IM has been supporting and working with for many years, combined with the procurement of products via established fairtrade wholesalers, meant that the products became less unique and characteristic of IM, and that their original mission of supporting and developing their 'own' small, disadvantaged producers took a backseat. Moreover, the procurement via fairtrade wholesalers was considered as a necessary trade-off to cover for the instability and higher costs of products supplied by the disadvantaged and often less organized small producers.

**Table 6:** IM stores' Fairtrade phases.

<b>Periods</b>	<b>Processes/Changes</b>	<b>Managers</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approach/Strategy/Results</b>
Pre- and early Fairtrade	IM stores (right before becoming fairtrade)	Mgr #1	Late 1990s until early 2011	Focus: selling of handicrafts, produced by disadvantaged (own) producers. Support small and disadvantaged producers through product development and procurement of their products that were then sold at IM stores.
	WFTO membership (2008)	Mgr #1	Late 1990s until early 2011	Product procurement via WFTO officially started (2009), but procurement via 'own' producers was still the main source of products.
	Conversion to: IM Fair Trade stores (2011)	Mgr #2	Aug. 2011 to mid-2015 (with long leave of absence of mgr in between)	Considered the situation as having a strong potential for making money; changed the product range directly; started to increase procurement of products via WFTO/wholesalers (hence, fewer via 'own' producers); failed to turn the figures around.
	IM Fair Trade stores	Mgr #3	Summer-fall 2016	Similar view as Mgr #2 that there is a potential for making money and continued the procurement via WFTO/wholesalers, but his short stay at IM provided less possibility to see the results of the strategy, etc.
Recent Fairtrade	"One IM"	Initiated by the General Secretary	2015	Combined 'own' producers and FT producers under one roof: economic empowerment. Integrated fairtrade into IM's three organizational pillars.
	IM Fair Trade stores	Mgr #4	January 2017	Similar view as Mgrs # 2 & 3; directly introduced a new product line with a clear concept; considered the mix of procurement via WFTO/wholesalers and own producers as a necessary trade-off. However, not only failed to turn the figures around, but the figures turned worse.
Post-Study	A motion was submitted to close down the fairtrade stores.  A decision to close down the fairtrade stores and lay off employees involved in the store operations was made.	Info from The General Secretary	Early summer 2018  Early fall 2018	The motion to close down the stores came from a local (Lund) association, as the stores have been costing a lot for the organization; the recent changes (i.e. cohesive product development) have not produced positive results and the sales figures continued to plummet.  The Board decided the closure of the stores, and the General secretary was given the task of implementing the decision.

## **(Intra)organizational areas of alignment and disputes**

The frequent change of managers, and at times absence of managers, who were responsible for managing the IM Fair Trade stores, and the apparent disconnect between them (new managers/the challengers) and the people involved in the stores and the fairtrade enterprise (the incumbents) for many years, have exacerbated the challenges in aligning its financial goals with the mission of the organization behind the selling activities. Because of the challengers' excessive faith in the potential of the fairtrade stores to generate sales and profits through new product lines and increased procurement via WFTO, without seriously taking into account the organization's original mission, and what the incumbents can shed light on, especially around the previous challenges in relation to who they are (aid organization) and what they do (market-driving), misalignment and disputes were inevitable. These adversarial disputes are discussed and analyzed in more detail in chapter 8.

## **Concluding remarks**

IM's official membership with WFTO became the organization's entry into something unfamiliar for many of the respondents, like the increased procurement of fairtrade products through WFTO's wholesalers, making the products sold at IM stores less unique. It also entailed that their support for the smaller and more disadvantaged producers (their 'own' producers) became less and thus can be regarded as a neglect of their original mission. Accordingly, the pressure to turn costs into sales or profit increased, which was something that they, particularly the 'incumbents,' were not accustomed to. The new managers resorted to new product lines, and the continued procurement via WFTO was used as a justification to offset the costs incurred from procurement through the smaller disadvantaged producers.

However, as will be presented in more detail in chapter 8, this not only made the organization's original mission take a backseat, but it also made IM miss its financial goals. What we can see in the case of IM is that there is an indication of the presence of comparably strong logic saliences held separately by groups of individuals. This becomes manifest through an emerging pattern of extended and repeated series of similar actions to improve the sales figures as the organization contends with the conflicting logics, making the strategy that was used become a futile exercise of

*fitting square pegs into round holes.* This shows that underestimating the complexity from convergence of logics can cause stagnation, making any deviant and desired result inconceivable (Jay 2013) or altogether stifle an organization's ability to find alternative innovative solutions (Greenwood et al. 2011).

## Chapter summary

This chapter has established the funding landscape that the nonprofit organizations of study are all exposed to, as well as the situation they are in, as described through the accounts of the respondents. In this funding context, we came to know of the strings attached to aid funding (further discussed in chapter 7) and consequentially how diversification of funds beyond aid becomes relevant to their self-sustainability and nonprofit organizing. The nonprofit organizations' experience of funding volatility prompts them to find market solutions as an alternative to aid. Combining the logics of mission and market is thought of as a means to bring together novel combinations of capital (Stark 2009), but it comes with deep-rooted tensions within the organizations due to the disparate demands attached to these logics (Kraatz and Block 2008). The organizations are therefore all exposed to conflicting, paradoxical, and even adversarial situations, albeit in varying degrees. In the succeeding presentation and first-level analysis of empirical insights, we will be introduced to how Skyddsvärnet contends with these disparate demands, despite an expressed, common, support by its members for both logics, while the case of organizations in the Swedish-South African partnership is more paradoxical in nature, and finally, the IM case organization shows a more adversarial characteristic.



## Chapter 6

# How individuals relate to multiple logics: ideologically-torn logics negotiation

The topic of tension in many nonprofits – particularly those seeking government contracts or working in areas that compete with the private sector, has garnered increasing research attention (Myers and Sacks 2003; Battilana and Dorado 2010). The tensions from competing logics – between the institutional logics of business-market and nonprofit-mission (Skelcher and Smith 2015) impose differing institutional demands on organizational members based on the means or courses of action they prescribe or the ideological goals they deem legitimate (Pache and Santos 2010). In this chapter, I present and analyze the findings from Skyddsvärnet and answer the first research question: *How do individuals relate to multiple logics?* As we may recall from the previous chapter, the cessation of public funding of a century-old Swedish nonprofit organization Skyddsvärnet in the 1990s left the organization without much choice than to embrace a more market-oriented and professional management of its operations in order to be able to compete and survive. The organization in recent years has extended its reach through an aggressive expansion, which caused tensions and resistance, and to which the consequent staff exit can be attributed. There is, however, a general acknowledgment amongst the respondents of the comparable importance of both their market goals and social mission, which puts the issue of tension in an interesting light.

## The Common Talk: comparable importance of market and mission logics

The respondents expressed awareness of the organization's intention and efforts to expand. The following statement shows an acknowledgment that the organization needs to be a market player and at the same time be guided by its nonprofit values and foundation:

So, you need both sides to find a balance, it's *yin* and *yang*; what you want to achieve in the social work by growing and developing an existing organization. (Employee #2)

This need for balance is aptly expressed by another respondent:

We need to be conscious that we operate in the market sphere, so that we don't become what we don't want us to become. Instead, we still keep our distinctive character. (Section Manager #2)

The main set of respondents, comprised the management group and the former employees, were in agreement on the importance of being part of and operating within the market while keeping their nonprofit values. Speaking on behalf of Skyddsvärnet, the Director thought that it is best for the organization to be both the society's voice and as a service provider, otherwise it cannot survive. It was because:

The society of today does not allow any other choice. (former Employee #1)

Moreover, making progress and development (of Skyddsvärnet being a nonprofit) through the market is considered to be more feasible (Personnel and Office Manager, thereafter PO Manager), and both aspects are needed to find a balance:

Knowing what you want to achieve in the social work by growing and developing an existing organization. (former Employee #2)

Despite this apparent common understanding, due to the expansion's speed, scale and the approach used, the statements give some hint on what has caused disparity. The issues related to the expansion have, as will be elaborated later, affected the personnel situation and the consequent hiring procedure. The

following utterance shows how a respondent negotiates meaning on what the organization was going through:

I think it's both yes and no [on having a consensus as to the path Skyddsvärnet was taking]. I think it's very clear what we want, both to be humane and work with quality and to grow. There may be disagreement; sometimes some think that the growth is going too fast, and some think it's going too slow (...); yes, you can lose the quality, you start to let go of quality to make it fast. (Board Chairman)

Although institutional logics are at times viewed as competing (Mair and Schoen 2007; Cornforth 2014), regarding the market and mission logics as 'yin and yang' suggests that they are two sides of the same coin, where a balance is considered as necessary (for a similar argument, see Sanders 2012). This common talk and the need for balance indicate the values, assumptions, and beliefs that define institutional logics (Thornton et al. 2012). However, the empirical material, as is shown below, reveals that the approach used, which concerns the expansion's speed and scale, has caused divergent views among the respondents. As the respondents make sense of their social goals and their economic goals, it became evident that they held varying degrees of inclination to a particular logic, along the same market–mission logics spectrum depicted in their common talk. Clearly, the common talk, which can be understood as the espoused theory of the organization surrounding their (multiple) goals, was not universally manifest in the actors' theory in use or how they engage with these goals.

## Individuals responding to multiple logics

Some of the respondents associated market activities with money or profit, while there are some who were in the middle-ground in viewing the market-mission combination, and still others who associated resistance to commercialism with idealism, whereby the former is reflected in the decision to expand and recruit staff with greater orientation toward professional management and business. Through this associative comparison, the ideology that underpins the respondents' salience starts to surface and provides key insights into how such logic inclination influences the management of tension and consequent decision-making. Those who defend the business element of their organization find



justification, for instance, for how the profits are being used. Quite bluntly, in making sense and bringing the point across, the Director said:

The common public perception that business in the third sector is ugly is becoming irritating. Nonprofit is about how you manage the profits and what the values stand for. Not everybody understands who you are, I suppose.

In addition, how they produce these profits could be attributed to how they make their processes effective, and by implication produce the profits that the Director referred to, which can be discerned here:

If I use 25% each to help two [persons] and do it right instead of 100%, then I have time to help two more. This is management, it is about having an overview of how you work and it's about methods, understanding finance, and processes. (PO Manager)

According to the Director, unguaranteed room/bed occupancy from the government heightens the risk to NPOs of losing profits:

We listened to the *Kriminalvården*<sup>18</sup> that wanted housing facilities for women offenders, so we bought and furnished a huge house, but never got placements.

In the organization's aim of becoming more effective, it realized the importance of being "more restrictive in opening projects that are unprofitable" (Director). These statements, although touching upon both the business and nonprofit values, suggest a justification for the business and professional management component where profitability becomes a prerequisite for embarking on new projects and can be construed as possessing a stronger salience to the market than the mission logic.

Due to the increasing financial focus associated with the planned expansion, many employees left the organization. According to a former Employee (#1): "I left because I am done with Skydssvärnet" because there was more control over how much money that came in and a lot more thought was given to money. This respondent added:

you think more of economy... you think purely economic sort of.

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<sup>18</sup> The Swedish Prison and Probation Services

Because of the increasing focus on money instead of what their organization stands for, Employee #1 left the organization. Not being able to withstand the increasing focus on money, and by implication the lesser focus on their mission, this thus indicates a stronger adherence to the mission logic. The same statement reinforces the market logic, where Skyddsvärnet's decision-making favors a stronger economic or market logic. The organizational members also recognize the need to be constantly conscious that they operate in the market sphere and must keep their distinctive character so that "we don't become what we don't want us to become" (Section Manager #2). This ambivalence between their multiple goals of delivering their mission as a nonprofit and achieving economic returns continues to baffle several of the respondents, where their intermediate position becomes evident, as is further represented by the following excerpt:

The idea that it's a nonprofit association, the humanist side, helping people help themselves, should mirror the association but becomes a contrast to the fact that it is also a business, and we need to survive. It is NPO but still it's profit that you want to achieve . . . it is social entrepreneurship in that sense, so you can't think that we don't like to generate profit . . . but such profit goes back to Skyddsvärnet for further development, it's a big difference [compared to for-profit companies].  
(former Employee #2)

The above excerpts, therefore, indicate the emphasis that individuals put on what the organization stands for, at the same time how and why the profit component can be justified. In the midst of such an ambivalence, there is an existing general appreciation of and support for Skyddsvärnet's values. For example, a former employee was ecstatic about her former workplace, saying that she still feels the same today and stands for its values with pride because it always wanted the best and worked for the clients' welfare over economic gain. She added:

We always tried to find alternative ways, even during economic situations. And it is important; otherwise, it's just like any company. (former Employee #2)

Putting Skyddsvärnet in this light, which differentiates the organization from financially-oriented business companies, does indicate a leaning toward the mission logic. It also accentuates the general aversion for anything that espouses the currency of money, hence versus the currency of values, as depicted in the following excerpt:

In the social sphere, earning money has been discussed extensively; you can't think about money, can't think about making money, and that I think is even stronger within the NPOs. Because there, you want to work from the heart and stuff instead of money first. It's an ideology. (former Employee #1)

Sharing the views of former Employee #2 and Section Manager #2, former Employee #1 also thought that it is important to maintain the ideals, the self-help ideology, as these are the driving forces for those who do the daily tasks and part of why they seek to work at nonprofits. Section Manager #2 said she wished to be able to make the organization more congruent with what Skyddsvärnet is all about, which meant that:

There should be a ground to stand on when developing the organization. We have our history that I think we should take with us when making decisions. We should take our vision and values as departure points in what we do today.

These statements reveal what these respondents thought is the generally prevailing assumption within the sector, namely that the values and ideology of the nonprofit organizations should take precedence when making decisions and developing their organization.

## Expansion and staff hiring: marketization features

As mentioned earlier, in view of the organization's ambition to extend its reach and achieve financial growth and profitability, decisions were made concerning service offerings and geographic expansion. There had been an excitement over the organization's expansion, as can be discerned in this statement:

We want to become bigger, to reach a wider clientele and provide greater societal benefits. (PO Manager)

However, the expansion's pace, scale, and approach caused dilemmas and tensions. Similar to the excerpts presented earlier, different stances on the developments concerning the expansion and the consequent staff hiring are also a reflection of differences in the respondents' salience to a particular logic. The expansion has resulted in a high employee turnover, and the organization

witnessed a trend of – in the PO Manager’s words: ‘new blood’ coming in. Citing his own experience:

I met ‘N’ and what she liked is that I have the business side combined with HR, and within the nonprofit sector it is ugly to talk about money, but I dare say that money is very important, and it can be used as something good, not bad. We need to dare talk about money in order to develop the organization. (PO Manager)

This personal account of the PO Manager’s recruitment into the organization is confirmed by the Director saying that the recruitment of new employees, notably from the business and public sectors, is part of Skyddsvärnet’s attempt to establish a structure to make their processes effective:

When I hired both ‘A’ and ‘C’ (the PO and Development Managers), who are from a different world, it was a very conscious decision; not just [people] from the nonprofit sector who know that sector, but also something else. It’s to get a wider scope of everything and a different perspective. (Director)

Along with these changes, the Director shared that there had been some talks regarding whether to convert the organization into a normal business company, although no decision was made on this front. Nevertheless, the need to adapt, which includes the choice of new employees, was reinforced by other respondents:

My co-workers are aware that if we don’t always renew ourselves, we wouldn’t be around for long and the market often demands new things. I think most of them understand that we operate in such a branch that is constantly changing and we should be able to adapt. (Section Manager #3)

The greater emphasis here on money, competencies outside the NPO, and the need to constantly adapt to market demands reflects the influence of commercialism. Competencies from the public sector can be regarded here as influenced by market logic in relation to how markets have helped shape NPM, and how NPM (and NPG) have affected the nonprofit sector. The Development Manager, on the other hand, was concerned that Skyddsvärnet needed to be mindful of:

How to grow, why we need to grow, not to grow for the wrong reasons and get blinded by size and success; it has to be grounded on our values; not to lose credibility. . . There must be a(nother) value to work with us, something that makes one proud, with a sense of belonging that makes a difference, that we are a nonprofit.

This statement indicates an encouragement to exercise caution over the possible implications of the decision-making around the organization's expansion, suggesting an intermediate position along the market-mission logics spectrum. Nonetheless, the expansion associated with Skyddsvärnet's adaptation to the market has a downside, according to a veteran Section Manager (#1), who said that "being big is the culture and the name of the game" and that many employees left because they no longer could put up with the changes that emphasize Skyddsvärnet as a commercial player more than as a nonprofit.

It is too much for an association or a workplace when people choose to leave, one should be cautious of the reason... (former Employee #1)

The long tenure of the veteran Section Manager at Skyddsvärnet has afforded her an opportunity to witness the varying cultures in the organization over the years and decades. Despite an understanding of the organization's financial needs and goals, there can be more to lose than gain through such organizational growth:

I think it is dangerous to grow too much because that is not the idea behind the civil society or third sector . . . my feeling is that the benefit from civil society is its proximity to the target group, to the people, the close interaction, the strong connection. (Section Manager #1)

Moreover, former Employee #2 thought that the changes – on how the organization should work forward, its objective, what it leaves behind and takes with it, were never-ending and posed risks over what the organization stood for: "An almost aggressive expansion can get you lost and lose something on the way; one has to find a middle pace." The above statements indicate a stronger salience toward a mission logic and show how the sensemaking extends beyond the 'now'; it encompasses and alternates between the organization's (and sector's) history and past, and an apprehension about what challenges the current changes may pose to who they are or are becoming.

## Toward market funding: The causes of tension

The findings also indicate that tension between the forces of the market and precepts of the mission are regarded differently. For some of the respondents, the tension does not come from the increasing market propensity of the organization but from the organizational members who are ideologically-predisposed. The following excerpt represents how the tension is perceived and what it is attributed to:

Tension is caused by ideals. People don't think that everything costs money.  
(PO Manager)

Moreover, the tension is also attributed to how the glories of the past, when funding was a less challenging enterprise, could still cloud some staff members' view of nonprofits, and how Skyddsvärnet eventually changed many of these members:

This tension or negativity toward earning money can be attributed to people's perception of a nonprofit, and in the case of Skyddsvärnet, that money would just come from nowhere. It can also depend on co-workers who have been in the organization for a while and have lived and experienced another period. We have changed a lot [of people]. (Director)

Another statement from the Director strengthened the status of money by highlighting the tension caused by those who are more negatively-predisposed:

We will do what we need to do and believe in, but it has to be financially viable, otherwise we can't do anything for anyone in the long run when the money runs out. For me, it doesn't matter but I can say that it is a continuous internal battle, when there is always someone who thinks sometimes that we make money, so we do like this. But then when we do so and there's no more money, you lose your job and all of us here can lose our job in two years or right away, and then we can't help anyone.

These statements when taken altogether and put into context (including the organization's financial needs and the Director's responsibility for it), not only provide a justification for the decisions to increase their market share through effective management, indicating a greater leaning toward the organization's output legitimacy (over normative legitimacy) (Nevile 2010), but they also signal

a differentiated power position between those who are more negatively-predisposed and those who are more positively-predisposed. However, tension is also considered by some respondents as important in seeking a balance between the logics, as noted below:

Tension is necessary; otherwise, it is easy to end up on the wrong side and you lose the humanistic aspect. You get lost when you chase after the next level. So, you need both sides to find a balance. (former Employee #2)

Similarly, the following statement suggests this need for a balance with a degree of caution, showing that the two logics are interdependent:

There is always a risk in growing, depending on how you choose to grow. I am for a controlled growth, where we try on a smaller scale, produce processes, find methods . . . we should always know what we get ourselves into; if we fail, what should we then do? I don't know a single company where economy is not central, so it is possible that I don't see a contradiction in it. (Section Manager #3)

Akin to the excerpts earlier presented on how the respondents confront the multiple logics and their views on the expansion and staff hiring, a similar framing that suggests the respondents' leaning toward the mission logic can be discerned in the following account. There is an indication of an increasing concern about the risks and 'evils' of money at the expense of the mission:

One has to be wary of growing too much. . . if you only think of money, then you lose the possibility of capturing such a situation [social problem]. So, there is a risk in professionalization that you become a big market player and it entails a risk of losing that little extra. Because we project ourselves to be those who work with people and for being humanistic, then it should not be too much. To be completely controlled by money-making when operating in the social sphere means that one has completely lost the point. (Section Manager #1)

The tension here between earned income activities and 'charitable' purposes causes conflicts at the operating level, as staff loyalties become divided between the old and the new (Skloot 1987) and the organizational *raison d'être* are placed against each other. Section Manager #1, who has seen the changes over the recent decades, reminisces about what Skyddsvärnet had been and what it is becoming or has already become:

I don't think it [profitability] is the leading intention, rather the human needs come first. And there have been different cultures within Skyddsvärnet over the years, and today there is much more of an economic mindset. During the 1970s, it was a lot more human. But you sacrifice yourself, you work idealistic...

Clearly, these statements reveal a stronger adherence to mission logic and indicate that such an increasing focus on economic concerns shows the dangers of switching the focus away from the social mission (Ebrahim et al. 2014).

As we consider the excerpts provided above, we can surmise that the common talk, around the comparative importance of both the organization's market and social goals, did not hold water, due to the varying degrees of individuals' inclination to a particular logic along the same market-mission logics spectrum. There are individuals who have a stronger salience to mission logic, there are those who are situated in between the market-mission logics spectrum or have an intermediate position, and yet others who are more inclined toward the mission logic.

## Conceptualizing logic salience in ideologically-torn nonprofits

Skyddsvärnet used to be financed by the state, but now has to strengthen its market position by selling services to the institutions of the same government that terminated the organization's funding. As suggested by the ongoing tension and the tipping toward a more market-oriented focus of the organization, the stability of the organizational identity usually associated with mature hybrids (Battilana and Dorado 2010) is, thus, not apparent. This clearly indicates Skyddsvärnet's challenges in combining multiple logics under one roof (Jay 2013).

As Skyddsvärnet in 2015-2016 explored new ways of rejuvenating its resources through aggressive commercial expansion and hiring of new staff who are more business-oriented to ensure long-term sustainability (Smith 2015) and hence the survival of the organization (output legitimacy) (Nevile 2010), the tension between the competing logics (Myers and Sacks 2003) had somewhat diminished. Instead of selective coupling of intact demands or elements from each logic, as in the study of Pache and Santos (2013a), this case somehow reminds us of Battilana and Dorado's (2010) study of microfinance organizations in Bolivia, in the sense



that (the pre-empted) tension is downplayed in one of the studied organizations through hiring personnel free from attachments to either logic. However, and despite this semblance, the Skyddsvärnet findings indicate an interesting insight that is rather unique. Because although the market and mission logics can be captured conceptually as yin and yang, each with equivalent importance as generally expressed by the respondents, the essence of this metaphor is not reflected in the organizational responses.

The stronger salience driven by a concern to satisfy institutional pressures to ensure survival (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) through the aggressive market undertakings takes precedence over social acceptance, status, and identity related concerns (Pache and Santos 2013b) that the respondents commonly adhere to. In other words, what they say – namely market and mission logics being of comparable importance and described as yin and yang, is quite different from what they do. This insight points to the fact that along the same market-mission spectrum, the emerging concept of logic salience indicates the types and varying degrees of individuals' inclination to a particular logic. It therefore indicates that individuals ultimately act according to their logic of preference, or the values attached to this particular logic. The discussion below will further help in carving out how logic salience can be referred to in a situation where multiple logics are present.

The logics of market and mission, of idealism and money, were placed against each other, creating incompatibilities (see e.g. Cornforth 2014; Sanders 2012). Generating profits and strengthening market position gained a stronger foothold, causing uncertainty among the respondents as to who they are (Corley and Gioia 2004): are they 'economists' or 'humanists'? Such an identification signifies the dispute between the ideologies that the respondents hold and contend with. Although it has been argued that the challenges of hybrids increase as the incompatibility between the logics increases (Besharov and Smith 2012), the findings from Skyddsvärnet indicate that another type of challenge – of maintaining the multiple logics, may occur when the incompatibility is acted upon by an organization based on its members' salience to a particular logic.

### **The (in)consistencies between thought, talk, and action**

Skyddsvärnet's decision to embrace a more business orientation can be traced to the salience of key individuals toward a market logic. This kind of internal

response to external forces reminds us of Pache and Santos' (2012) argument that individual responses to competing logics are driven by their degree of adherence to each of the competing logics, which, in turn, is likely to drive how they may respond to competing templates for action. Here, the tension was used by proponents of both the market logic and the mission logic to defend their respective positions. This therefore deviates from the common talk on market and mission logics' comparable importance that the respondents initially expressed. In other words, although the findings indicate a similar propensity to adhere to either of the competing logics as argued by Pache and Santos (2012), the common talk in the current case was supposed to signify and espouse for a similar or comparable adherence to both logics. It means that this insight not only tells us about individuals' varying degree of adherence to multiple logics that Pache and Santos (2012) argue about, but also about individuals' interpretations, which, according to Greenwood et al. (2011), are often shaped by a single logic.

Moreover, and interestingly, the tension is attributed to those who are mission-ideology predisposed and the decision to expand and recruit more business-oriented staff becomes an evident action that counters what these ideologically-predisposed represent. Hence, a lessening of the tension is an inevitable bi-product in this dispute or battle of ideologies. The logic they enact (Thornton et al. 2012) deviates from the common talk and shows a pull toward one particular logic (Kraatz and Block 2008; DiMaggio and Powell 1983), which can dissolve the organization's hybrid state. This is thus an important insight, and the empirical study has led us to ask why the decisions made are more business-oriented in spite of the respondents' explicit acknowledgment of the comparable importance of both logics?

The organizational market response, manifested through expansion and hiring decisions, shows that it results from a consideration of both internal (e.g. general goals and values) and external forces (Brunsson 1990) (e.g. market influences), as the two key organizational concepts in the minds of organizational members (Dutton et al. 1994). This implies that individuals' images of work organization shape the strength of their identification with the organization, and they appraise the appeal of these conceptions by how well they preserve the continuity of their self-concept (ibid.), that is – whether they identify more with being a 'humanist' (a mission logic) or an 'economist' (a market logic). As these identification conceptions are juxtaposed, individuals develop their logic salience that

encompass a particular ideology, value, or identity. The concern to satisfy institutional pressures to ensure survival (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) takes precedence over social acceptance, status, and identity related concerns (Pache and Santos 2013b). Hence, how individuals align themselves with certain demands over other demands (internal or external) and how they embed these demands into decisions and strategies reveal the values and ideology behind the logic with which they identify the most.

As organizations confront institutional complexity whenever they deal with conflicting prescriptions from institutional logics (Greenwood et al. 2011), logic salience reveals how individuals relate to these multiple logics. Here, the stronger salience toward the market by key individuals – manifested in the commercial expansion of Skyddsvärnet and the concomitant hiring decisions, led to a market logic occupying a dominant position. How the organizational members internally negotiated and made sense of the conflicting demands of multiple logics is, thus, shown here through their logic salience. Specifically, in the context of institutional complexity, the findings confirm that individuals are shaped by and shape institutional logics (Pache and Santos 2013b); and that logic salience is conditioned by a particular ideological preference that lies within these institutional influences. Individual logic salience as a proposed concept informs and helps to explain why certain organizational responses come about. Through logic salience, we can approach our inquiry as to how individuals make sense of and interpret competing demands involved in multiple logics (the thought), how they express their (dis)agreements with it (the talk), and how these lead to certain responses by key individuals that ultimately informs the organizational decisions (the action).

The expectation of hybrid organizations to maintain dual mandates (Battilana and Dorado 2010) complicates the kind of institutional complexity they experience (Greenwood et al. 2011). The *enabling* function of individual logic salience *disables* the walking of the talk, reinforcing what Waldorf, Reay and Goodrick (2013) argue, namely, that logics can simultaneously constrain and enable action. This suggests that the negotiated order (Strauss 1978; Thornton et al. 2012) in hybrid organizations results from a combination of the *means* and the *ends* (Waks 1999) which can accordingly be regarded as output legitimacy and normative legitimacy, respectively (Nevile 2010).

Institutional logics are ‘represented’ and given voice (Pache and Santos 2010) through enactment by actors (Zilber 2002) and manifested in various organizational actions, such as hiring and expansion decisions, and the oppositions to these actions as influenced by actors’ logic salience. While certain power positions must be occupied by individuals in order for their logic salience to shape and enact organizational responses, this does not preclude the remaining organizational members<sup>19</sup> from making sense of the logics that they may contend and identify with. Logic salience can therefore be referred to as the inclination of any individual or group of individuals toward a particular logic to which they are drawn ideologically. In practical terms, regardless of structural position, all organizational members try to make sense of and respond to competing logics according to their own logic salience and ideological predisposition.

## Chapter summary

The cessation of Skyddsvärnet’s public funding prompted the organization to find alternative ways to finance its operations. The organization’s growing focus on marketing practices was for the purpose of increasing its market share and thus to maintain and strengthen its financial stability. An aggressive expansion phase ensued. A number of employees left the organization, which can be attributed to the more market-oriented direction that the organization was taking. The empty seats paved the way for Skyddsvärnet to employ new hires who have a stronger market orientation or market competencies. These changes, in turn, have resulted in a more professionalized management of the operations and contributed to the divide among the organizational members.

Due to Skyddsvärnet’s exploration through expansion and hiring strategies for the purpose of achieving financial sustainability in response to the funding challenges, tensions arose that brought questions and doubts as to what the organization was for, and who the respondents were in terms of being ‘humanists’ or ‘economists.’ Despite a common acknowledgement of the comparable importance of both market and mission logics, the findings suggest that some individuals have a

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<sup>19</sup> Noteworthy, however, that the power asymmetry here is less as the interviewee-set is primarily the management level.

stronger salience toward a market logic, some have a stronger salience to a mission logic, and others have an intermediate salience between the logics, and such salience is tied to the individuals' identification to the values and ideologies that each logic represents.

Although the exploration through expansion of services (Smith 2015) brought financial stability, it can be said that the organization's mission and proximity to its target group was not exploited (ibid.) simultaneously and which inadvertently became second place, showing the prominence of output legitimacy over normative legitimacy (Nevile 2010). In other words, the organization's leaning toward a more market orientation, although key to its success in achieving self-sustainability, indicates an imbalance in combining the logics of market and mission and therefore can lead to a dominance of one logic (Kraatz and Block 2008).

In this chapter, the findings indicate that key individuals' *stronger salience to market logic* has conditioned and enabled Skyydsvärnet to pursue more market-oriented strategies. Logic salience helps explain the role of individuals' inclination to a particular logic, which leads to certain (organizational) action that does not necessarily represent what is commonly shared by the organizational members. It is intimately linked to people's perceptions and corresponding actions or decisions. Inasmuch as the increasing marketization and professional management of the organization has led to competing logics of market and mission, we can assume that actors who are exposed to a similar situation would have to engage in a similar negotiation of meanings that influences their responses according to the values and ideologies they identify themselves with the most. Individual logic salience, thus, shows a potential as a useful analytical tool to evaluate or gauge how and why people relate to and respond in the way that they do as they are wedged between competing logics.

With this preliminary insight, and which addresses the first research question *How do individuals relate to multiple logics?*, logic salience will be used in analyzing the data and findings in the remainder of the empirical analysis chapters, as earlier stated. Exploring the emerging concept would hence help develop its analytical currency in understanding how individuals negotiate meanings around logics and issues that are relevant to and may affect the viability of alternatives to aid funding. Moreover, such exploration would allow for a continued engagement with the first research question, would facilitate the incremental development of logic

salience as a concept, and would make it possible to delve into and explain the dynamics or types of hybridity.

The Skyddsvärnet case exemplifies the challenges involved in managing hybrid organizational arrangements (Dalpiaz et al. 2016), considering the incompatibilities between prescribed templates (Gautier et al. 2018). Insofar as the findings indicate that the salience to market logic by certain individuals has conditioned the more market-oriented decisions made by the organization in order to achieve financial sustainability (output legitimacy) (Nevile 2010) but with a corresponding challenge of maintaining a consistent focus on its mission (normative legitimacy) (ibid.), could this mean that other actors would also be susceptible to a neglect of their organization's mission logic, especially within funding-volatile NPOs? The emerging concept of logic salience is explored further in the next chapter in the funding-volatile context of organizations in an aid development partnership. The chapter will show how organizations are able to deliver on their mission because of aid funding, but at the same time seem destined not to become self-sustaining because of it: a paradox the organizational members have to contend with and which they try to address through pursuing market alternatives.



# The individual attachments to logics and their responses: in paradoxical settings

Due to the funding instability that is generally prevailing in the nonprofit sector, organizations are encouraged to diversify their sources of funds, which includes undertaking market-oriented activities. Rather than choosing between alternatives, it is argued that engaging in both can enhance long-term performance (Smith 2015). But as the actors in these organizations try to diversify resources and adhere to their contractual obligations, addressing different demands simultaneously puts pressure on them (Kraatz and Block 2008). Actors grapple as they make sense of paradoxical outcomes, especially if the outcomes of the organizations' actions are difficult to define as either successes or failures (Jay 2013). They may also experience a paradoxical situation, as the findings from this chapter indicate, where aid and aid-dependence allow organizations to deliver on their goals but ambitions of becoming self-sustaining can be curtailed because of it.

In this chapter, I thus look into how organizational members in a donor-partner relationship relate and respond to competing logics. As presented earlier, Afrikagrupperna (AG) is one of SIDA's frame organizations that disburses funds to its partners in the South. Among these partners are Wellness Foundation and Surplus People Project, located in Cape Town, South Africa. All three organizations have experienced funding challenges, and being a frame organization does not shield AG from funding volatility. AG is also obliged to adhere to SIDA's reporting and accounting requirements, and similar requirements essentially need to be passed on to its partners.



Paradoxes recur in the extant literature and different contexts, particularly through market-making in mission-premised organizations, such as developing social entrepreneurship and through realizing its potential to create social capital and inclusion (Graefe 2006). These tensions in paradoxes co-exist and persist over time, posing competing demands (Lewis 2000) that actors struggle to reconcile. Considering the funding volatility of the organizations studied in this chapter, we may thus ask, would they be prone to neglecting their mission? How do organizational members pursue paradoxical goals, and how can we understand their responses to competing logics, especially if they show greater propensity to maintain the status quo? Here, I therefore further explore the emerging concept of logic salience and address the second research question: *What do individual attachments to logics prompt in terms of responses?*

## Afrikagrupperna (AG)

### **Diversification of funds and self-sustainability**

In response to the funding climate, AG tried to diversify through importing and selling solidarity or fairtrade products, but this was not profitable. The organization also tried consulting, livelihood projects, and microloans, which did not yield good results either or at least were not seen as a possible and integral part of their operations. In the current competitive funding climate, working with business partnerships can be an alternative, as long as the criteria or guidelines are adhered to:

Yes, we did get guidance that we should not, for example, work with tobacco companies, the arms industry, but it has to be [companies] with the same values that we have... it must be a company that stands for a just world. (Board Director)

There are those who are against partnerships with companies, who regard it as dirty money and are therefore ideologically-predisposed to the mission logic. The suspicion around collaboration with businesses is reciprocal, according to the General Secretary:

(...) I do not think it is only civil society that looks suspiciously at the business [sector], but business also looks suspiciously at civil society. But I also believe that one can find synergies from cooperation, and there is a lot to learn from each other.

The resistance toward money and money-making is a problem and an issue that AG has been working to address strenuously. Because of a history of strong state funding, it was to some degree taken as a given that the state gives them money and they therefore do not have to work for it.

And it's a little bit, where this idea beyond aid comes from, where it is usually along the aid path that people think... (General Secretary)

For the Board Director, to work in a more market-oriented way, like regularly selling consultancy services, will take a very long time for AG to master. The challenges of this kind of diversification involve legal issues:

It is a bit problematic for tax purposes to have profit-making activities; then you lose your tax status, then you need to form a limited company, so that's not easy. Therefore, there is almost no one who does it; (...) but to establish a business on a larger scale as the next step, I think there are others who can do better. (Accountant)

The Accountant also added that the business community and economy are important but other actors are important as well, and that their (AG's or NGOs') competencies or line of expertise lie in: "democracy training, the whole civil society. That's what we can do, that's what we work with." Because of this specialized line of expertise that is tied to their mission, the data suggest that any initiative to step away from aid-dependence remains minimal and is thus not substantiated with serious efforts to acquire relevant competencies in order to make it feasible.

### **The ideological dispute**

Drawing upon the emerging concept of logic salience of individuals, which shows the values and ideology that they are drawn to, I find in this organization a similar propensity of individuals to respond to competing logics and defend their respective stance according to their logic inclination. Despite the business flair involved in fundraising, and the strong resistance to get involved in the

fundraising activities, the Board decided in 2012 to invest in a fundraising campaign that was to run for three years (2013-2016). However, as in any investment, the payoff usually comes later. Moreover, the campaign entailed huge costs and did not yield so much more than the investment itself (7.5 M SEK): “We have received the 8M SEK [from fundraising] and if you think about how much it had cost, it [8M] is not much” (Board Member #1). In this fundraising at AG, Fundraiser #1 thinks that:

The risks in fundraising and other more market-oriented approaches are no greater than the risks of losing ourselves, being dependent on external funding like from SIDA, and donors in general who want to control matters. If SIDA decides not to support any organization, for example, in Mozambique, this would mean that AG would have to end the whole program there.

The resistance toward business partnerships and fundraising had been strong in and before 2011. This resistance came mainly from the members,<sup>20</sup> a majority of the Board, and to some extent from the office employees.

To make a change in a nonprofit organization is very slow because there is likely to be a built-in resistance. We’re also a member-based organization, people have chosen to engage themselves with us for the type of organization we are, and then we’ll be another type of organization, so there is resistance within the organization when it comes to change. (Fundraiser #1)

Throughout the years, this resistance has lessened (although remained noticeable until and during the time of this study in 2016-2017) owing to the role of leadership:

Ah, it’s more the management, I would think. It’s mostly the General Secretary who has drawn quite a huge load to be an innovator of the organization, and it has not been easy for her...then the Board has also changed because I remember the annual meeting. I think it was 2011, when postcode lottery was discussed and then there were many within the Board who were very much against it; maybe 30% for and 70% against. I think everyone who is on the Board now has a little more comprehensive picture around...[such type of activities]. (Board Member #2)

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<sup>20</sup> Members refer here to organizational supporters and not employees (sometimes including interns) who are, otherwise, referred to in the manuscript as organizational members.

The Operations Manager agreed that the resistance comes from both staff and members. This shows the tension, which arises from the contradiction that they felt in getting involved in activities that are not typically in line with their engagement or activism. Although AG has worked with fundraising before, it has not identified itself as a fundraising organization; rather, it was seen as a necessary evil:

So, it has been the political that has been our identity, but we are also dependent on our fundraising and therefore, we have tried to raise the fundraising status of the organization. But it has been difficult. (Operations Manager)

Two from the fundraising team (of three) left AG partly for a greener pasture someplace else, but primarily because they felt that the resistance toward their work was strong, and the situation was becoming unbearable. Moreover, although the fundraising campaign was officially sanctioned by the Board, the fact that fundraising was not integrated in the organization made the fundraising team members feel that their role was not valued or wanted. During a follow-up interview in December 2017, Fundraiser #2 said that the situation had not improved since my last visit one year previously. Her colleague in the fundraising team left for many reasons, but mainly because she did not feel well in the organization, was not invited to meetings any longer and basically got ill-treated. What is perplexing with this insight is the apparent ostracization of some employees (namely, the Controller and Fundraisers) that was attributed to the leadership, although not for exactly the same reasons.

As discussed in chapter 5, the Controller felt ostracized because of the less value given to (his) activism and ideology, while the Fundraisers felt ostracized because their work in fundraising was not supported by the management, and with a prevailing aversion within the organization toward active market visibility through organized fundraising. The fundraising team, according to Fundraiser #2, had tried for a long time but after a while they had finally lost interest. They did not feel that they had been able to get through the integration of fundraising into the organization due to lack of support from the top, the lack of understanding and competencies in fundraising, and the lack of interest in acquiring said competencies. What can be gauged in this alleged ostracization is the apparent ambivalence from the top between espousing activism/ideology, on the one hand, and fundraising, on the other hand. In making sense of this ambivalence, a Board

Member (#1) raised the need for the organization to take a more realistic position on the funding situation:

I feel that we collect money to implement our solidarity work, that's the idea...I think it is naïve to think that you can survive only if you have wishes.

On becoming more aggressive in their fundraising efforts, the Board Director said:

I think it is necessary because there are many organizations that compete for attention; it's kinda hard to position oneself out of this...there are many organizations that want money.

The Board Director thought that the resistance toward fundraising could be attributed to how people had been schooled in a certain way for quite some time, making it difficult to change, combined with a strong political conviction to work for a just world:

I think that these ideologies... I think the members have a really strong conviction toward the left; they maybe don't really agree, and then maybe we lose them. So, it's unfortunate. (...) well, it is good to reflect why there is resistance. But it is somehow ugly to ask for money, sort of, when it comes to fundraising. (Board Director)

Because of the resistance – which had been labelled as a culture that existed coming from different parts of the organization, Board Member #1 also realized that:

...I do not think our organization fits our fundraising, [in a similar way that] there are organizations that do not fit our strategic thematic areas...

According to the General Secretary, the view that money and money-making is ugly posed a challenge, aggravated by strong state funding which was taken as a given, and therefore there was not much incentive to exert more serious efforts to explore alternatives. The resistance, which eventually led to resignations of several employees, particularly the fundraising team, also affected the members' commitment. For Board Member #1, although commitment became less, there were still many members who had a lot of interest, and although some effected resistance, they (in the Board) had their ideology and therefore had a good combination to deliver on their responsibility. According to Fundraiser #2, the suspicion or doubt on the fundraising efforts could be attributed to a lack of trust

from members and a general lack of understanding for the need for resources in order to survive:

I think the fear is totally unwarranted, to. . . the members must also have confidence in the office that when they hire a person, those who employ this person are doing their best to choose a person [who] is also right for the task, so I think. . . not all types of fundraisers are interested in this position, and not all fundraisers are relevant in this type of position. And what I can feel is that there maybe was no trust, that they [thought they] knew what they were doing, actually (...).

Fundraiser #2 added that during the first annual meeting, she was approached by some members:

It was pretty special. I had to defend why I have been hired; (...) they do not understand the economic situation; we are completely dependent on money; otherwise, we will disappear.

The Operations Manager expressed an understanding of why the Fundraising team leader (Fundraiser #1) left: “Yes, I think, it may be that she felt that she did not get an audience for the things she wanted to do.” The Manager added that with all the changes, there were some things that made everyone identify with AG nonetheless:

...as we usually describe ourselves, we are...that it’s a solidarity feeling, which is at the center of being flexible when it is necessary; that perhaps, not an ambition to grow all too much actually, instead to go for depth, to cooperate closer with those we work with.

In such a volatile economic situation, professionalizing the organization was necessary as it was the same as being effective, according to the Board Director:

We have, after all, our history, our background. That will not change, no matter how professional we are. It’s just [to ensure] that the new ones who come to the organization become aware of this background that we have.

The Controller agreed with this type of description of AG. Just the same, there remains a risk when using market principles. He said:

There is a risk that an organization then becomes a player that is controlled by its own needs and ignores others and operates on their own agenda.

## Logic salience in paradoxical setting

Paradoxes, unlike dilemmas, are said to persist and are impervious to resolution; while dilemmas involve trade-offs and are resolved with “either-or” decisions (Cameron and Quinn 1988; Clegg 2002). As actors experience increased pressures to simultaneously embed multiple competing demands within organizations (Besharov and Smith 2014; Greenwood et al. 2011; Kraatz and Block 2008), being able to explore alternatives, and at the same time exploit what the organization already has in place, becomes imperative for organizational sustainability. *Exploring* encompasses novel innovations to gain long-term sustainability. *Exploiting*, on the other hand, concerns securing operational advantages in existing offerings for short-term performance (Smith 2015:59). As organizations explore and exploit simultaneously, these actions entail demands that are paradoxical and contradictory. This is exemplified in the case of AG, where it explored alternatives, albeit to a limited extent, and at the same time exploited its core competencies.

As an attempt to diversify funds, AG sold fairtrade or solidarity products, did consultancy, livelihood projects, and microloans. However, these were not profitable or did not yield good results. Also, because of tax issues, these were not viable as full-scale activities. Moreover, AG’s (and NGOs’) line of expertise is building democracy and societies, not the market world – where there are many other actors who are more competent or have the right competencies. There is a suspicion from AG/NGOs around collaboration with the business sector because money and money-making are regarded as ‘evil,’ but such suspicion can be mutual. With government funding taken as a given, the incentive to find alternatives is curtailed, making a scenario that is beyond aid challenging, and it therefore becomes the ‘curse’ of the aid-dependence syndrome (Edgren 2002).

The change in AG from a country to a theme focus to align with SIDA and the fundraising campaign were met with resistance. The results of the campaign were seen positively by the fundraising team, while others thought that the results were not enough compared to the size of the investment. The risks involved in fundraising are no greater than the risks of losing themselves to being aid-dependent; and become a matter of choice of a ‘lesser evil.’ The organization’s failure to contain the resistance (e.g. from some members and inside the organization) and to integrate fundraising into the organization resulted in the resignation of the two key fundraising team members. This failure was attributed

by the fundraisers to the lack of understanding and support for fundraising from the management, and from lack of competencies and interests in acquiring fundraising competencies. The resistance was attributed to people who are 'old-school' with their ideologies and political convictions, making money and money-making 'ugly' and aggravated by strong state funding, which, in turn, minimizes the incentive to exert serious efforts to explore other alternatives. These clearly suggest a stronger salience to mission logic.

The accounts also suggest that it is possible that fundraising does not fit AG, and that there can be (partner) organizations that do not fit AG's thematic areas. Although there is resistance, the fundraising efforts nonetheless received support, for example, from some of the board members, as it is seen as important to be able to implement their solidarity work. Being 'aggressive' is necessary because of the many organizations competing for attention, showing how market competition works. The essence of their solidarity work, nevertheless, binds them together, and combined with their history and background, some believe that AG will not change no matter how professional they become. However, the risks remain in using market principles when organizations become controlled by their own needs and agenda and ignore others.

Through juxtaposing what AG stands for and where its line of competencies lies – that is, its solidarity work and mission to create a just world, and to build democracy, against what lies beyond this line – that is, business expertise in the private sector, it becomes evident that the respondents' general salience to mission logic is in line with the organization's values and ideology. This shows the distinctive role and value base and the corresponding nonprofit status of the organization (Anheier 2000). And although this looks self-evident at first glance, considering how NPOs are adjudged as predicated by values, it becomes paradoxical because such nonprofit status as an asset concurrently becomes a liability, considering that profit-making activities are hampered by the same nonprofit status.

Although there is an indication that the organization does respond to institutional pressures to embark in market-oriented alternatives, such as the selling of various products, the hiring of an experienced fundraiser thereby reinforcing the fundraising team, and the formal launch of a funded fundraising campaign, yet such efforts seem half-hearted. For instance, although the fundraising campaign was sanctioned by the Board, the integration of fundraising into the organization



failed due to a lack of competencies in fundraising and the lack of interest in acquiring said competencies, which was attributed to the absence of support from the management. With the increasing need to compete, this brings the issue of acquisition of non-traditional nonprofit competencies (Ascoli and Ranci 2003) into the sector's agenda. Such competencies are supposed to enable an organization to sense changes, define and align possible resource action to environment changes (Kaltenbrunner and Reichel 2018).

There is an underlying resistance toward fundraising, and market-oriented solutions are therefore not regarded as belonging to what the organization is for because it has always identified with idealism and its political identity. There is also an assumption that what the organization is about will not change regardless of how professional it becomes. The organization is thus torn between its ideology and political identity and its need to raise their resources beyond aid funding. However, after the crisis, borne out of the resistance that culminated in staff exit, it was acknowledged that fundraising does not marry well with the organization. Indeed, such general aversion from activities that involve money and have a business flair, by implication, can be construed as an indication of the organizational members' stronger salience to mission logic that is tied to the organization's values and ideology, with which the members identify. How the organization operates is compounded by how people are accustomed to behaving or thinking along the aid path, which makes the lingering of the alleged aid-dependency syndrome apparent (Edgren 2002).

Furthermore, there is also a general indifference at AG and in the broader third sector on the role and essence of money from sources that are perceived as not being congruent with what the respondents identify themselves with. This is despite the fact that the risks tied to fundraising are no greater than the risks involved in being aid-dependent. This shows that there is a consciousness within the organization on the risks of mission drift or goal displacement involved in the increasing business-related activities among NPOs and NGOs (Fowler 2000b; Jones 2007; Weisbrod 2004) and in dependence on aid funding (Froelich 1999). This thus indicates the intrinsic contradictions in the nonprofit sector (Sanders 2012) and how strong the core features of the organization are (Hannan and Freeman 1984) making the speed of change slow (Kelly and Amburgey 1991).

More importantly, it is not only that the organization's market-oriented efforts are hampered by its nonprofit status as being paradoxical, but the same paradox

also solders the organization's aid-dependency. Hence, while AG did explore and exploit simultaneously in order to achieve sustainability, the paradoxes remained impervious to resolution (Cameron and Quinn 1988; Clegg 2002) owing to the prevailing stronger salience to mission logic, compounded by the aid-dependency syndrome. Such aid-dependency continues to be *exploited* despite the aspiration to become independent, and by implication does not answer for the organization's *long-term* sustainability (Smith 2015), which is a paradox in itself.

## Wellness Foundation (WF)

### **Diversification of funds and self-sustainability**

As a response to the withdrawal of government funding and the near-bankruptcy situation that ensued, with an aftermath that continued for several years and with the general funding scarcity climate, WF became determined to find alternative income-generating activities:

So, this is why we feel it is important that we become financially independent and more sustainable, which is why we want to strengthen our social enterprise arm of the organization and start selling our services more so that we can generate income that we can use at our discretion. (Director)

WF also planned to hold fundraising dinners with a focus on fighting gender-based violence, and which can become a huge income drive. Apart from trying to recruit more donors, and because the social enterprise venture did not take off, the organization does not have any other concrete and feasible ideas, considering that it works primarily with advocacy:

We can't sell advocacy; no one is gonna buy advocacy. (Advocacy officer)

The social enterprise called Simple Touch started in 2013, with the training of several careworkers to develop skills in stress release body massage services where they tried to set up an income generating stream from selling that service. However, the program, with the recruitment of people involved and the recipients of the training, was not properly thought through and set-up:

So, even though it benefited them, we're happy that it did, it didn't really have a kick back to the organization. So, we need to find a way to do that differently and in a way that could also benefit the organization. (Director)

To address or at least alleviate the funding scarcity and competition, WF also tried to work collaboratively and to share the money with other NGOs. However, according to the Director and the staff, the challenge in collaboration is finding a fit, especially in values and goals, between collaborators. On several occasions, they have ceased their partnership with local NGOs because of incompatibility in the values. WF wants to be able to sell its services on a big enough scale, to increase and do it more regularly. However:

What we don't want to do is focus so much on becoming financially sustainable that we lose our actual focus, our core, so it is about finding a balance. (Director)

With the organization's financial and human resources scarcity, developing the social enterprise was put on hold; hence, becoming self-sustaining beyond aid funding was at that time not an imminent reality. They, however, have focused on extending their reach to other African countries through network expansion.

### **The ideological dispute**

Drawing upon the emerging concept of logic salience of individuals, I find in this organization, just like in the case of AG, a similar propensity of individuals to respond to competing logics and defend their respective stance, according to the values and ideology attached to their logic of preference. Despite, or because, of the challenges in diversifying funds, WF has been working on its regional expansion in eight Southern African countries since 2015 which is seen as a form of collaboration to make the plight of careworkers more visible and at the same time as a form of marketing the organization. The expansion plan is to cover the 15 countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC<sup>21</sup>). However, as interesting as it may sound, WF is a 5-staff member organization:

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<sup>21</sup> Along with South Africa, the countries in the SADC region include Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe ([www.sadc.int](http://www.sadc.int))

I think that...it is a challenge, definitely a challenge, and we do need more; we do need a bigger staff, but the challenge though is that we don't have the resources to employ additional staff. And so, at the moment, all five of us work round the clock. And we don't...very seldom do we have weekends off, and that's how we are coping at the moment, and it is not sustainable which is why we're saying that we need to move toward a more financially sustainable independent way of functioning as an organization. (Director)

Although the staff members have a general understanding of the rationale behind the expansion, it also became evident that they are conflicted because there was no way of not being able to do the math and realize that expanding into more SADC countries was not viable, considering the already strained staff situation. Further expansion meant fewer resources and driving the focus away from their original goal of supporting local careworkers. They already had been cancelling scheduled workshops in their communities because there was basically no money available (Trainer #2). Trainer #2 added that she was torn between the exposure the organization can get from such an expansion and the fact that there was just not enough money at the time for other countries. For the other Trainer, the focus should be on the local communities first, as being their original mission:

It scares me and it concerns me, especially with the work that I do, in the kind of work that I do. Yeah, it scares me a bit, leaving who we are behind and adjusting to certain things (...). We look at healing the nation, instead of first healing here [our community]. I understand that it is inevitable, but there are certain things for me that we can control and there are things we can't control. But the things that we are looking at changing are things that we are in control of. Because these are things that have brought us this far, that we have controlled to bring us this far. And it seems like we are leaving those things behind in this process. (Trainer #1)

There is a general agreement that WF is a flat organization, that they have a more flexible staff structure where no one is more superior than the other (Trainer #1). The Director said that although everybody has a say and voice, there is an understanding within the organization that the final decision needs to be made by the Director or the Board of Trustees. And because of the very strained funding situation affecting the resources available for their activities and for their own development, well-being, and remuneration of the staff who are putting in more hours than they should, the role of the Director is paramount. There is a need for "someone who manages everything and everybody to avoid a crisis, a kind of

Director that doesn't wait until things get out of control" (Trainer #2). The mounting frustration over lack of resources was, at times, attributed to mismanagement, and to the management's lack of competencies:

From the beginning, that's what we thought; why the staff said the upcoming [Board] members must be people with expertise related to the work that we do, not [choosing] the people that we know. (Advocacy Officer)

Apart from attributing the chaos to mismanagement and lack of resources, the staff members thought that competencies in documentation, marketing and communication, monitoring and assessment (including key performance areas, KPAs) were also lacking (Advocacy Officer; Trainer #2).

Considering the limited progress of WF's social enterprise, there had been no actual or perceived risk in being carried away by the business side of the venture, except for the expansion to the SADC region which bears a similarity to businesses that expand or merge as an efficiency or marketing measure. For WF, however, such an expansion is mostly to strengthen their advocacy work and the marketing benefits become second place. When it comes to partnerships with other NGOs and with donors, they stand firm on their mission and ideology:

I think we've been lucky in that the donors we have onboard at the moment we've been able to find a middle ground and negotiate, and the donors have been quite understanding. But if it does come to a point that a donor doesn't agree and we can't compromise on the expectations, then we would rather say take your money back. (Director)

The strength of their ideology and commitment to their mission also has a strong bearing on why one staff member, despite the many challenges at WF, would not hastily leave the organization:

I think... I would think three times before I make a decision [to leave WF]. The reason for that, you know working in the kind of environment I am working, it has taught me that it is not all about money... So, it is about learning from my participants the struggles they have been through and how they cope with the stipends that they have gotten, and you have to look [at] yourself, at how much you earn. (Trainer #1)

## Logic salience in a paradoxical setting

The extreme financial vulnerability of WF made it determined to strengthen its social enterprise venture, but this did not take off as intended due to a lack of the right infrastructure and resources. This shows that the organization, insofar as such an initiative is commendable, did not have inhouse competencies to drive the social enterprise forward. It thus indicates the pressure and inevitable need to acquire non-traditional nonprofit competencies, if such an initiative is to be run more professionally (Ascoli and Ranci 2003).

In view of the funding scarcity, WF was encouraged and eventually made efforts to partner with other local NGOs. But oftentimes, partnerships are marred with challenges, and the experience of WF suggests that it is difficult to work due to incompatibility in values. Partnerships, as an idea, are part of the changes in the aid architecture where increased collaborations are encouraged (Whitfield 2009) and which also show that aligning with or on behalf of donor governments imposes challenges (Sjöstedt 2013).

Therefore, the organization, on one hand, tried to diversify through the social enterprise and partnerships, but, on the other hand, such diversification showed very limited potential of working. Considering that WF works with advocacy, which is not saleable, such advocacy was instead used as a marketing strategy through network collaboration with the countries in the SADC region. Although networking with SADC countries is anticipated to increase the organization's visibility and awareness on the plight of careworkers in the region, the general lack of resources and the inevitable neglect of their local communities have caused resistance and tension.

The above accounts show why WF is in dire need to expand its network. However, the accounts also show the organizational members' resistance to change that they think could take them away from their community work and their concerns regarding the danger of losing their original mission. There is thus a consciousness amongst the respondents on the risks of mission drift (Weisbrod 2004; Jones 2007) despite the intention behind the expansion being for a greater purpose. It is for a similar reason, which is tied to ideology and commitment to mission, that one respondent intends to stay at the organization regardless of the current instability. Despite the funding challenges, the respondents claimed that they stand firm with their values and would decline funding if donor expectations

would compromise their work. This, therefore, indicates their stronger salience to mission logic.

Clearly, WF is situated in a dilemma. An expansion into other countries is seen as a way of increasing awareness of the plight of careworkers locally and regionally, and it also signals a promising solution to its extreme funding instability considering the expansion's marketing potential, which could eventually increase the organization's appeal to donors. Doing so, however, means fewer resources (if any at all) in delivering their original mission to the local communities in South Africa. It is for the same resource constraint that the social enterprise venture did not work, aggravated by the lack of infrastructure on how to run a social enterprise. It can be said that the overall support by the respondents for the network expansion and the support for focusing on local communities emphasized by some of them, both engender their stronger salience to mission logic. The preference to focus on local communities has entailed some level of resistance against expansion but which does not mean resistance to increasing its outreach. Similarly, the support for an expansion does not mean an intent to sacrifice the local communities in favor of communities overseas. As they evidently have a stronger salience to mission logic, it is more about a matter of prioritization considering the extreme funding scarcity.

WF explores the potential of a network expansion at the same time as it also tries to exploit its existing offerings (Smith 2015). Trying to do both – showing the “both-and” approach through the lens of a paradox, however, inevitably meant some trade-offs (namely, prioritizing the expansion over local programs, at least momentarily), which are usually tied to dilemmas that are said can (only) be resolved with “either-or” decisions (Cameron and Quinn 1988; Clegg 2002). The findings show that in an organization with members who have a stronger salience toward the mission logic, the dilemma is navigated not with “either-or” decisions but through the “both-and” approach (Jay 2013) of exploitation and exploration (Smith 2015).

The dilemma of serving local communities and remaining less relevant and thus, less attractive to funders, and of extending their reach to include foreign communities in order to become more relevant and hence, more attractive to funders, could not be solved but could be navigated through “both-and” approach (Jay 2013) if seen through the lens of a paradox (Smith and Lewis 2011). It confirms that paradoxes are impervious to resolution (Cameron and Quinn 1988;

Clegg 2002). However, because of the extreme funding scarcity, the exploration and exploitation could not essentially be done fully without comprising one over the other. Paradoxically, although the network expansion was mainly for increasing the organization's outreach, it also caused a momentary neglect of their original mission, which is a trade-off that they had to make in trying to resolve the said dilemma (ibid.).

## Surplus People Project (SPP)

### **Diversification of funds and self-sustainability**

Despite its current financial stability, SPP looks into different ways of diversifying resources:

There's always a conversation, so we look at individual giving, we look at possible contracts that we can do to build our reserves... so we will ...like a government tender, maybe. But we are also selective because it must be something that will add value to our work or something that we also would like to understand whether it is research, etc. (CEO)

The CEO adds how important integrity and strategy are when trying to grow and in diversifying funding resources in such a way that an organization does not expand too fast and not to take money and hold on to the money just because you can, which is unethical and irresponsible. SPP sometimes does some consultancy work, which provides some additional resources, but it is something that is not integral in its operations; however, it tries to recruit a new funder every year to ensure funding stability (R&A Manager). Similar to AG, becoming self-sustaining through other means than aid or government funding is not possible due to tax rules. Moreover, building up its reserves can only be to a certain extent that is needed for delivering the mission, otherwise the organization will not be a nonprofit anymore.

It is not possible. It is not a proposition, otherwise we will lose our status. I mean all the things that we've...unless someone gives us a huge grant, for instance, 200 million and we can invest... but not in the current context. (R&A Manager)



The staff dynamics at SPP exuded a familial first impression and a sense of confidence on what and how they do their work individually and collectively, and the expertise of the organization in the management of other people's resources (namely, funds granted to SPP). To maintain a good funding flow:

I think it is about building relationships, so it should never be the money first, and there is a holistic approach that each one part cannot be neglected. You must have a balance in the organization, the governance is important, good governance, ethics, eh...good control systems must be in place, there must be internal wellness, your staff must be valued, must take care of their well-being. So, the relationship with your stakeholders you know is not only the donors, with the communities, real authentic relationships... without power end, as power...you know flat, and then you must have a clear strategy and be true to that. (CEO)

Indeed, building relationship starts internally, as attested by the Management Assistant who says that "SPP feels like a second home and like a family." For the CEO, with leadership, values, integrity, good strategy and how you deliver on your mission, money will follow because your work will be known, and marketing will come naturally through word-of-mouth.

### **The ideological dispute**

Drawing upon the emerging concept of logic salience of individuals, I find in this organization, just like in the case of AG and WF, a similar propensity of individuals to respond to competing logics and defend their respective stance according to the values and ideology tied to the logic they identify themselves with the most. For SPP, the strength behind their current good flow of funding lies in the expertise that the organization has in the management of other people's resources and their ability to read the times:

I mean, this is not our money, the money we're getting, so the financial management I think, that is critical. So it means that being able to comply with whatever the obligations are, contractual obligations that you have, so that...and then having the skilled people to be able to do that...if someone would ask her [the Financial Manager], she can tell you just as eloquently as I can tell you what we are doing...It is important that in terms of, from an organizational point of view to be able to read the times. I mean, we are in ...it is the way you pitch what is happening. So, it is like I mean using the phrase that being ahead of other people.

So, if we are ten organizations doing the same work, we need to have a foresight and say this is gonna be the important thing that we need to [do], and we are already moving into that. (R&A Manager)

The R&A Manager added that “you need to be on top of your game, in terms of doing funding proposals and similar undertakings so that people can see that you are really making a difference and that you are contributing to the society, otherwise the donors would not give you money.” The CEO had a similar stance, namely that there should be an ability to understand when times are hard and be able to spread the risks. Rhetorically, she asked: “part of it is logic – how can you put all your eggs in one basket?”

These accounts certainly show how their work methods equip them to endure the test of times. Nonetheless, the values and mission of the organization precede money; therefore, donors and donors’ agendas should fit their values:

We have done that before; we don’t take funds from the US, US Government, we don’t take funds from the Gates Foundation...Gates Foundation supported the green revolution in Africa, which has a lot of negative effects, land grabbing, you know divorcing people from their sovereignty, they look at genetic modification, so all these... . (CEO)

The CEO added that:

if you have principles, if the donor comes with attachments, then say no, and don’t take the money if you will sell yourself.

In sync with this stance, the Implementation Manager said:

If it undermines us and the country and development, then we won’t accept that funding.

### **Logic salience in a paradoxical setting**

SPP is not immune to funding challenges; nonetheless, in recent years, it has had a rather stable funding stream. The accounts of the respondents suggest the organization’s general preference for and importance given to values-based management and work methods, which becomes a precursor to the good funding situation that they are currently enjoying. The acknowledgment that building up

their reserves should only be to an extent that is needed for delivering their mission clearly indicates how the former is simply the means to achieve the latter. The modes of organizing and special privileges such as nonprofits' tax-exempt status because of their broader social and charitable purposes (Renz 2010) become highly relevant, especially in view of the increasing pressure on the sector to become entrepreneurial or to generate its own income through market-oriented solutions, which do not warrant tax exemption privileges.

SPP tries to recruit a new funder every year; moreover, despite the current funding stability, it looks at different ways to diversify through individual giving, possible contracts, or government tenders. However, it is important for SPP that these should add value to its work, or it is something the organization would like to understand in order for it to engage in, for instance, in terms of research. It is therefore important to have integrity and strategy, not to expand too fast and not to take money "just because you can", and so on. To maintain a good funding stream, building a relationship is key and never about the money first; there should be a holistic approach where no part is neglected: good governance, ethics, good control systems, internal wellness, authentic relationships with stakeholders and the community, and mission delivery. With these, the respondents are convinced that money will follow, and marketing will be through word-of-mouth, as is what precisely happens with the organization.

Moreover, SPP's current good funding stream is very much associated with its expertise in the management of other people's resources, its compliance with contractual obligations, having skilled people, being able to read the times, a foresight to be able to compete, being able to show its contribution to society so that donors will be inclined to give money. For SPP, values and mission come first, and the donor's agenda should fit these values. The organization embodies the idea "don't take the money if you sell yourself" by declining funding, for instance, from the Gates Foundation that has, among others, supported GMO<sup>22</sup> activities in Africa. These thus show the importance of the organization's societal contribution (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Sanders 2012), how the competition within the sector looks like (Ascoli and Ranci 2003; Germak and Singh 2009), and the staff's competencies and their ability to have a foresight (Nelson and Winter 2002) to manage and survive in the tough funding climate.

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<sup>22</sup> Genetically modified organisms

The respondents devote a great deal of commitment to what their organization stands for – their values and mission, which constitutes their normative legitimacy over their need to achieve some desired outcomes, such as additional funding that constitutes output legitimacy (Nevile 2010). These clearly show how salience to mission logic takes precedence (over market logic), to which the respondents attribute why and how the money follows.

However, becoming self-sustaining other than through aid or government funding is not possible, especially due to tax rules, and the nature of their work that centers on advocacy. The case of SPP thus exemplifies the dilemma that nonprofits are exposed to, of becoming self-sustaining beyond aid. But doing so contradicts the very values and ideologies toward the left that the organization is built on, which basically is averse to capitalism. If seen from the lens of a paradox (Smith and Lewis 2011), the organization does navigate through the “both-and” approach (Jay 2013) by exploring alternatives and at the same time exploiting (Smith 2015) what they are about and good at. Such exploration – for example, through government tenders and consultancy work, is done selectively as it should add something of value to the mission-premised organization. It is for this reason that the organization devotes greater effort in exploiting its main offering, which is advocating for the rights of those who are underprivileged or discriminated against. Accordingly, it becomes evident that the “both-and” approach of exploration and exploitation does not translate into an equal endeavor, where exploitation of its main offering solders the organization’s aid-dependency.

The competing demands hence require ongoing responses from the organization (Lewis 2000), albeit in varying degrees. It shows that nonprofits need to manage paradoxes in such an environment where tensions are inherent (Smith 2015) due to their exposure to institutional complexity (Greenwood et al. 2011). In view of the prevailing stronger salience to mission logic, the organization’s social goals are evidently not compromised, but to the detriment of finding source alternatives beyond aid.

## Logic salience in paradoxical settings: Inter-organizational analysis

From the above data, I found several issues that are common across the three organizations, and other issues that, although they are not perceived similarly, nevertheless show their interconnectedness, especially in a donor-partner relationship and paradoxical context. These are highlighted below as I summarize and try to find some salient features across the organizations in this donor-partner relationship. Insofar as the exposure of the organizational members to multiple logics is intimately tied to their respective organizations' funding challenges and attempts to combine the logics of market and mission that individuals have to contend with, it becomes inevitable here to also take into account this funding context and the related organizational governance issues.

### **Funding landscape: becoming self-sustaining through market solutions**

The findings suggest that the Swedish donor organization Afrikagrupperna and the partners Wellness Foundation and Surplus People Project in South Africa have all experienced funding instability and vulnerability, and they are all exposed to competition for funding. Being a SIDA frame organization does not shield AG from funding vulnerability and for that reason it had tried different ways to diversify funds, like selling fairtrade and solidarity products and livelihood projects, which did not result in favorable outcomes. More recently, they invested in a fundraising campaign, which was met with resistance from different levels of the organization. Although the idea was to integrate fundraising into the organization, it failed. The failure was associated with the general notion that money is evil, coming from strong values, idealism, and the political solidarity conviction that exists. This was compounded by what was argued as the lack of skills and interest in acquiring competencies in fundraising. Another possible aggravating factor, paradoxically, was the state funding, which lessens the incentive for the organization to find alternatives.

The staff at WF experienced a near-bankruptcy due to government funding cessation, the effects of which were still very much present during my research fieldwork in 2017. They have tried to launch a social enterprise and were going to expand through network collaboration with the SADC region. The social

enterprise did not take off, primarily due to a lack of resources, as well as a lack of functioning structure and competencies on how to build and manage the project. The expansion into the SADC region was regarded as a way of highlighting the plight of the careworkers on a broader scale, and as a marketing tool for WF, which, in turn, was hoped would increase its appeal for funders. Although the staff members somehow understood the idea behind the expansion, they started to resist due to the decreasing focus on their local community, which is their original mission, and the general financial resource shortage that was taking a toll on them. Despite their apparent commitment to their work where they advocate for careworkers' rights and general human well-being, their own internal well-being inevitably became of lesser priority.

For SPP, a funding cessation that was experienced for over a decade made it aware of their vulnerability, and they learned that 'you should not put all your eggs in one basket.' According to the respondents, they spread the risks by recruiting several donors; they have also tried consultancy and government tenders but were selective to ensure that these add value to their work. There is an apparent focus on a holistic approach that includes internal well-being, integrity, belief in their goals and competencies, in meeting obligations, relationship with communities and other stakeholders, among other things, which in their opinion are key to their current funding stability.

The fact that all three organizations are working with advocacy aggravates their chances of becoming self-sustaining beyond aid funding because, in the respondents' words, "you can't sell advocacy." Moreover, other organizations that, for instance, work with children have a better appeal for donors over organizations that work with advocacy and labor rights. Hence, becoming self-sustaining depends on the organization's product or service offerings. For AG, there are many other actors, for instance, business companies, who are much better equipped to compete in the market world, and that AG's line of expertise is in building democracy and societies. The experience of WF from their social enterprise initiative shows a similar lack of business acumen, but does not discount the strength of their expertise in working for women and careworkers' rights. Just like AG and WF, for SPP – although they very much want to, becoming self-sustaining beyond aid funding is not possible, at least not yet.

The above exemplifies the pressure that is put on third sector organizations to find alternative ways and means to aid funding, so that they themselves can support

their operations (Fowler 2000b). AG, being the donor organization, has its own share of funding insecurity and tried to address it through different alternatives, but without much favorable results, according to the respondents' own accounts of events. Realizing the general funding challenges reigning in the sector, AG encourages its partners to also consider resource diversification. WF and SPP, in turn, adhered to the encouragement and did their own share, but which produced similar outcomes as AG. This indicates that, in times of environmental uncertainty, organizations attempt change by mimicking the behavior of other legitimate organizations (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

However, and although they indeed tried to address the challenges imposed by the hardening funding climate through market-related solutions, there is no significant evidence that these organizations truly embraced the market. Their acquisition of business competencies, for example, was not apparent: for AG, the lack of interest in fundraising remained, and the management did not seek to acquire fundraising skills either; for WF, the social enterprise failed to work, mainly because of lack of a well-thought-out framework compounded by a lack of financial and human resources; for SPP, it purposely limits itself from engagements that do not add value to the organization. What is apparent is the claimed commitment to the social mission or goals, which the organizations would not compromise. That said, we cannot completely disregard that considering these organizations are exposed to an increasing number of inconsistent and conflicting norms, demands, and paradoxes, they may, as the concept of hypocrisy suggests, incorporate different organizational structures, processes, and ideologies as a natural and effective way of achieving organizational legitimacy (Brunsson 1989).

In other words, any or all of these three organizations may genuinely want, for instance, to integrate fundraising into the organization (AG), but the general logic of these organizations based on the members' salience dictates their preference for working traditionally, that is – focusing primarily on their mission, involving solidarity and advocacy work, which has generally worked in practice and was made possible by aid funding. This thus brings to mind the “paradox of embeddedness” where actors are culturally embedded in the dominant institutional logic of mission, which constrains the studied organizations to change their structure and practices (Thornton et al. 2012) into being more market-oriented in order to achieve multiple goals.

However, although there is no explicit effort to acquire competencies outside the sector, it does not necessarily mean that they are depleted of competencies that are usually attributed to professional organizations, considering their need to meet contractual obligations such as reporting and measurement requirements. The efforts to enter the 'market' through, for example, fundraising (AG), social enterprise (WF), or government tenders (SPP) show that both economic and technical demands, and social and cultural demands are placed on the organizations (Cornforth 2014).

There is therefore also a need to address how the demands of competition (namely, in the market) or the strict accountability and productivity requirements of public funding arrangements (namely, aid funding) put the autonomy of nonprofit organizations and their unique characteristics to test, argued as affecting their democratic functions of mobilizing civil society (Ascoli and Ranci 2003).

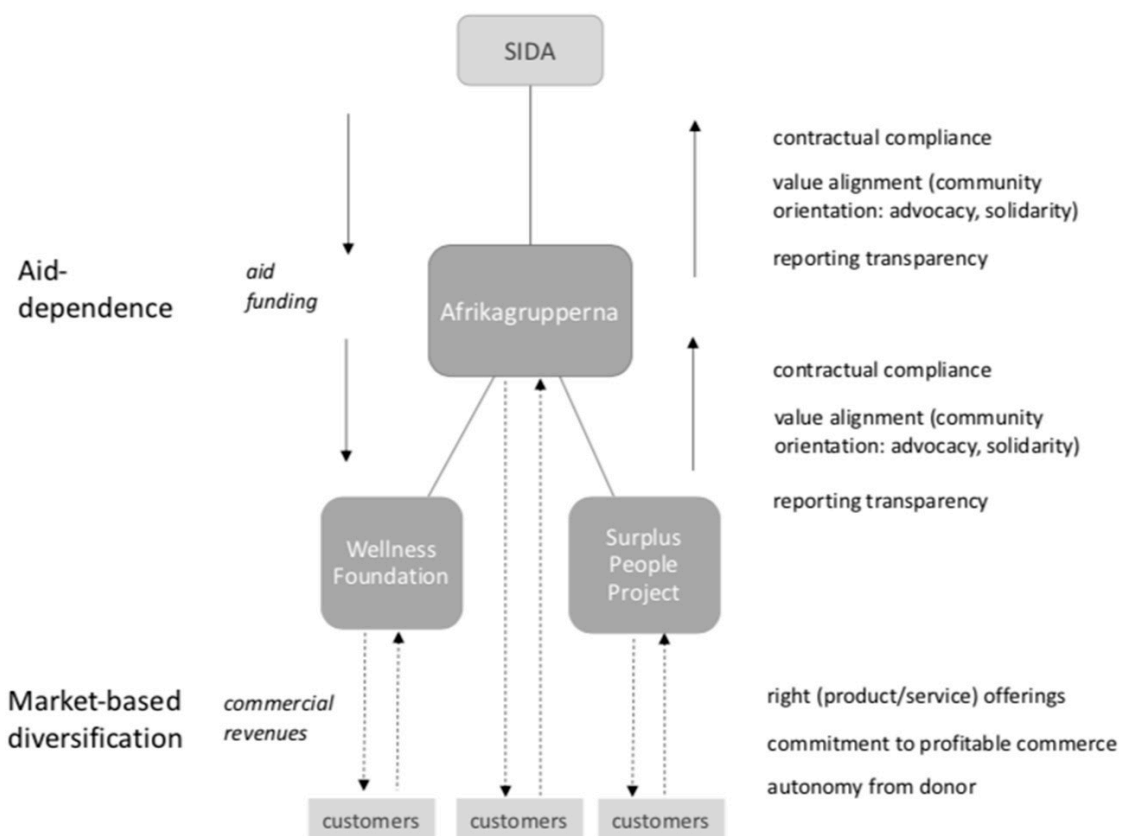
### **From aid-funding**

As we may recall from the earlier presentation of the findings, Afrikagrupperna, Wellness Foundation, and Surplus People Project have a first-hand experience of being told 'not to bite the hands that feed you,' a phenomenon that the North and the South share. Not being able to criticize states and governments very much embodies the most pronounced effects tied to government funding that involve changes in internal processes and structures of NPOs, especially on their loss of administrative autonomy (Froelich 1999; see also Arvidson and Linde 2021). Such inability to act as the voice of the voiceless (Taylor 2002) "as a direct consequence of their financial dependence, where Third Sector institutions have become entangled in an increasingly dense web of government rules and regulations and have lost a large degree of control over their own policies, procedures, and programs" (Nielsen 1979:18), therefore, harms the sector's role in building a society and democracy (Sanders 2012).

This dense web of rules and regulations also encompasses reporting and documentation requirements imposed on NPOs by donors. Although part of the risks of aid-dependence is when the agenda is not owned by the organizations, AG itself has aligned (purposely or not) with SIDA, for instance, during its shift from a country focus to a theme focus, which according to a Board Member was to somehow ensure funding from SIDA, although it may not be the best for AG as an



organization. This means that organizations like AG not only ‘do not bite the hands that feed them,’ but they also had to succumb to what is dictated from above by following where the money is, so that they are able to finance their operations and survive. For the received funding which comes from taxes, AG needs to fulfil its contractual obligations through documentation and reporting to SIDA. These obligations are then passed on to AG’s partner organizations (refer to figure 4). Some employees at AG feel that the requirements and responsibilities are pushed down to partners and become a matter of control and power; that aid becomes a tool, for instance, to address poverty instead of changing the structure that causes poverty. At the same time, the requirements oftentimes reflect the ‘reality’ in Sweden without much consideration, for example, on the possibility that partner organizations have less capability to be able to meet the reporting requirements.



**Figure 4**<sup>23</sup>: Illustration of the partnership context with aid funding alignment requisites (upper part) and market-based resource diversification to address funding challenges (lower part).

<sup>23</sup> To be noted that this figure is replicated in a published paper (Jönsson and Huzzard 2020) based on the material from this manuscript

For both WF and SPP, their contractual obligations, impact measurement, evaluation and reporting are the most difficult and challenging because donors might have differing requirements and ways of looking at things or issues, especially because donors usually focus on quantitative results. SPP is more for qualitative change on the individual and human level, while donors are usually for quantitative outputs, for example, how many gardens are tilled. For the organization, managing NPOs is similar to a corporate company with similar issues and dynamics; however, NPOs' profit is the social impact they have, which is difficult to measure. The type of measurement that is based on quantitative terms (Hwang and Powell 2009) and the increasing focus on it is part of managerialism's modes of control (Evans et al. 2005), making measurement of impact (or success) difficult. This is further aggravated by other factors that are beyond what the organization contributes, which, according to SPP, makes impact or success even more difficult to ascertain and hence makes impact measurement more challenging. Moreover, WF and SPP tried to work in partnership with other local NGOs, but even this is difficult as organizations have different agendas and values; therefore, partnerships do not always work. Hence, these show the negotiated order (Strauss 1978; Thornton et al. 2012) in a donor-partner relationship.

The findings reveal that these organizations have no alternative income sources, making them dependent on government funds for their very existence (Froelich 1999). The implementation of the new aid framework makes them tied to such requirements and increases the demand for effectiveness and accountability, putting harsh and competing demands on them as development practitioners. While all donors are supposed to advocate for partner country ownership, reconcile their efforts with other donors, and align themselves with the priorities of partner countries, results-based management entails not only a focus on continuously measuring and reporting results but also on stringent prioritizations on behalf of donor governments (Sjöstedt 2013). The current results-oriented management imposed by donors and the existing competition for funding mean that these organizations are preconditioned to struggle with the extent to which they are to emphasize their role as efficient and competitive economic actors and their role as institutions important to democracy (Sanders 2012).

Hence, this type, a more business-like aspect, of performance management, measurement, and competition, adopted by government funding institutions, shows another 'kind' of government under the umbrella of NPM (Brandsen et al.

2014), where multiple interdependent actors contribute to the delivery of public services, as posited by New Public Governance (Salamon and Toepler 2015). These demands of competition, or the strict accountability and productivity requirements of public funding arrangements, turn the organizations into more professionalized and polarized entities, and are argued as compromising the organizations' autonomy and affecting their democratic functions of mobilizing civil society (Ascoli and Ranci 2003).

This chapter also shows that the inter-organizational alignment in a donor-partner relationship context is inevitable and has many strings attached. This is perpetuated by the increasing demand for efficiency and accountability, imposed not only on partner organizations in the South, but also on the funding organizations in the North. Passing on the torch is therefore a response to environmental forces that nonprofit and non-governmental organizations have to contend with. Also, an interesting insight is that partner organizations are encouraged to expand their resource base outside what AG or SIDA is providing, to address the funding volatility. However, partnering with other NGOs (Sjöstedt 2013) as a way of resolving the funding competition by 'sharing' the resources has a very limited success potential due to the differing values and goals that organizations like WF and SPP have compared to their collaborators. The elements and mechanisms tied to aid funding and to market solutions as an alternative in a donor-partner relationship are illustrated in figure 4.

## **Toward market alternatives**

In addition to the compromised autonomy and advocacy functions of NPOs discussed earlier, Evans et al. (2005) argue that they are also attributable to the imposition of neoliberal governance structures, such as the encouragement to commercialize nonprofit service providers that impose burdens and have strained organizational capacity and moved them away from their community-oriented focus toward a 'business model.' The data suggest that the three organizations of study in this chapter achieved limited progress in their more market-oriented activities, owing to their main line of expertise, which is advocacy and solidarity work that is more aligned with the mission and values of the sector. For some at AG, embracing market principles can entail risks when organizations become controlled by their own need and agenda without regard for others. However, some argue that the risks in fundraising are no greater than the risks of losing

oneself from being aid-dependent. The resistance within AG and WF can be construed as a manifestation of the organizational members' stronger salience in mission logic than market logic.

At AG, those who are less enthusiastic and resist fundraising were equated with 'old school' ideology, while those who are for fundraising blame the failure of the organization to integrate fundraising due to an absence of support from the management that causes a lack of interest in acquiring fundraising competencies. For WF, although the regional expansion of their work holds great potential for marketing and wider outreach, there was an underlying resistance against it because it was seen as compromising their local community work, especially considering their already very strained human and financial resources.

According to Hwang and Powell (2009), the adoption of corporate management methods often proves challenging because the fundamental values that characterize the third sector are easily compromised. In this sense, the resistance can be viewed as a mechanism that ensures a balance as the organizations deal with competing pressures (Hailey and James 2004) as they combine social and economic value creation in setting up self-sustained organizations (Mair and Schoen 2007). For SPP, there is no evident resistance toward market logic, considering their lesser need to engage in the market due to the current stable funding stream (output legitimacy) attributed to how they meet the expectations of various stakeholders (normative legitimacy) (Nevile 2010). Hence, actors at SPP, similar to AG and WF, also have a strong commitment to their mission and values, indicating a salience to mission logic.

AG and WF differ slightly, however, from the funding stability that SPP currently enjoys. But such stability comes not from embracing market solutions but from SPP's donor funding, which they, in turn, attribute to their expertise in managing people's money (the funding received for their work) and in maintaining authentic relationships with stakeholders, such as donors and communities that they serve, and delivering on their mission, thus "money follows." For the respondents at SPP, being able to read the times or having a foresight has helped them reach a stable funding situation. This therefore shows that to be able to understand the opportunities and trade-offs, to choose revenue strategies that are consistent with the mission, and diligently respond to management challenges conferred by each strategy, are keys to organizational viability and integrity strategy (Grønbjerg 1991; see also Froelich 1999:261). SPP's experience shows a

learning curve in addressing complex challenges, which has enabled its ability to have a sophisticated foresight on how to logically structure deliberation and/or improvisation of novel action patterns as a response to external or environmental changes and forces (Nelson and Winter 2002).

Embracing an entrepreneurial mindset and transforming the organizational cultures (Germak and Singh 2009) as an innovative solution (Reay and Hinings 2009; Stark 2009) to funding scarcity, as espoused by the increasing marketization of the third sector, did not translate well in these three studied organizations. This can be attributed to how the logic salience of individuals prompts them to resist resource diversifications and/or makes them uninterested in acquiring competencies. It can also be attributed to the organizations' lack of the right offerings, lack of resources, or lack of incentive to find alternative solutions due to what can be aptly called aid-dependency syndrome, or a combination thereof. This therefore means that they cannot survive without aid funding.

Not being able to survive without aid funding when NPOs, on the other hand, are encouraged, even pressured, to step away from such dependence through market-oriented solutions makes this inquiry on how organizations respond to funding scarcity and the market-mission logics interface all the more interesting and relevant. The circumstances surrounding both market solutions and aid funding or aid-dependence become inevitably central and enmeshed in NPOs' sustainability in order to deliver their mission.

## Logic salience properties

It can be concluded that all three organizations in the partnership, regardless of their structural position (namely, being the donor – AG, or the partners – WF and SPP), are exposed to the same pressures that are tied to the existing funding scarcity and instability. They all resorted to both exploration of alternatives through market-oriented solutions and exploitation of their aid-funded main offering of advocacy work (see figure 4).<sup>24</sup> However, the extent of their market activities, hence the concomitant level of ‘success,’ was affected by their stronger salience to mission logic anchored in their nonprofit values. Such salience constrained their propensity to acquire market competencies, at least more clearly for AG as indicated by the strong resistance.

For SPP, there was a lack of resistance as market solutions were never a threat due to its stable funding stream owing to the legitimacy obtained from its uncompromising focus on its mission logic (hence, the ‘money followed’). This mission delivery-borne legitimacy, in effect, made market alternatives less attractive for SPP. In the case of WF, because of its extreme funding instability and ambition to join forces with like-minded actors to pursue their mission, it resorted to an expansion, despite the lack of human and financial prerequisites, which was met with resistance. Both the ambition and resistance indicate a similar salience to mission logic. What slightly differentiates WF from AG and SPP is that the same extreme lack of resources hindered WF from acquiring the competencies it needed regardless of whether such competencies were for market-related activities or for aid-funding related requirements.

Therefore, and paradoxically, despite the hardening funding climate, the decades of aid funding that has led to the aid-dependence syndrome have created fewer incentives for the organizations to persevere in finding alternatives beyond aid. The organizations’ advocacy is evidently their key for continued grant of aid funding and in attracting new funders, which clearly makes market solutions less attractive and plausible and, in effect, would most likely make the organizations

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<sup>24</sup> Figure 4 illustrates the alignment of funding-related strategy and resource diversification to address funding challenges in a donor-partner relationship. The alignment entails contractual obligations and informal understanding of what is expected in such a context, indicating the negotiated order. For the resource diversification during funding scarcity, the negotiated order lies in how members of the organizations contend with their mission and the forces of the market.

remain aid- dependent for the longer haul. We can, therefore, surmise that if seen through a paradox lens (Smith and Lewis 2011), the organizations' attempt at doing both is a way of achieving organizational legitimacy, considering that these organizations are exposed to an increasing number of inconsistent and conflicting norms, demands, and paradoxes. The practice of incorporating different organizational structures, processes, and ideologies through the organizations' exploration of alternatives can thus be considered a hypocritical coping mechanism for achieving legitimacy (Brunsson 1989) which they (anyway, already) have through the exploitation of their mission-oriented offerings, highlighting the paradoxical context they are in.

What we have also learned in the analysis of empirical insights in this chapter is that organizations are constantly exposed to environmental threats, and they indeed seldom succeed in making radical changes in strategy and structure. This is not only due to strong inertial forces (Hannan and Freeman 1984) but also because of the lack of the right prerequisites. These prerequisites include right offerings, insofar as organizations like AG, WF, and SPP are working with advocacy, which certainly is difficult, if not impossible, to sell; structures that allow them to generate income as constrained by the tax regulations governing the nonprofit sector; and the incessant reinvention of ways and means to disprove and improve the role and impact of nonprofits through the new aid architecture (Sjöstedt 2013) mainly posited from an economic perspective. All of these occur despite the apparent lack of 'better' alternatives, other than nonprofits for addressing both market and government failures (Anheier 2005).

In view of the funding challenges faced by the studied organizations, I have looked into how the organizational members responded to and managed the competing logics internally and inter-organizationally. Funding in this donor-partner relationship is set up as a two-way task in such a way that alignment is observed through meeting contractual obligations for the funding received. The findings indicate that there is an evident understanding and acknowledgment of the organizations' need to address the funding instability.

The organizational responses, however, were mostly driven by their members' stronger salience to mission logic. The members' general salience to mission logic, compounded by the lack of the right prerequisites and the continued lingering of aid-dependence syndrome in their donor-partner environment, diminished their incentive as organizations to embrace market solutions. The role of resistance tied

to the stronger salience to mission logic, in this case, became a double-edged sword: it countered the risk for mission drift, but curtailed the potential of the organizations to become self-sustaining beyond aid. They, therefore, did not thrive in their efforts to diversify funds. For an illustration of the inter-organizational structural aid alignment and their diversification of funds to address funding instability, refer back to figure 4.

The aid-dependence scenario, being the standing alternative for the organizations, entails a continued state of volatility (Froelich 1999) due to nonprofits' limited 'bargaining power' as resource-dependence theory suggests (Cornforth 2014). With the challenges tied to both market-oriented and aid funding solutions, finding resources so that these organizations can sustainably finance their operations and achieve their social goals, thus, becomes a matter of choosing a 'lesser evil.' This partnership and the attempts to find market-oriented alternatives to aid funding also become a site for viewing the paradoxes that the organizations are exposed to, which their members have to confront through negotiated meanings that explain and resonate with their logic salience.

### **Enabler and/or constrainer of responses**

The findings, therefore, indicate that organizational responses are conditioned by individuals' stronger salience to mission logic. The respondents' stronger salience to mission logic thus enables the achievement of the organization's social goals. Therefore, considering the tensions, contradictions, and paradoxes caused by the competing internal and external demands of multiple logics, individuals are indeed shaped by and shape institutional logics (Pache and Santos 2013b), as indicated by the concept of logic salience. However, and despite the funding challenges, the partnership organizations also show that the stronger affiliation of organizational members to their mission complicates efforts to combine logics and uphold the hybrid form as an alternative form to aid funding.

For AG, its effort to diversify funds through fundraising and the failure of the organizational integration of fundraising were attributed to the prevailing resistance within the organization (and generally in the NGO/aid world) regarding fundraising as 'evil,' and to the management's limited interest in fundraising and in acquiring fundraising competencies. Such resistance is conditioned by the ideologies and values toward the left, democracy training, and



solidarity. As an implication, there was a limited interest in acquiring market competencies which upheld the social goals but at the expense of integrating fundraising into the organization. This can, thus, be attributed to the prevailing stronger salience to mission logic.

A similar resistance and conditioning values were evident in WF, which made it survive the near bankruptcy, and shielded it despite financial constraints from not succumbing to requirements (e.g. from local collaborations) that did not match their values and what they believed in. In other words, their stronger salience to mission logic enabled them to weather the times, which, in turn, enabled them to keep AG as one of their handful of donors. However, due to the same financial constraints, irrespective of their intent or need, WF was unable to acquire competencies to make their social enterprise venture work. For SPP – although or precisely because there is a similar salience to mission logic, their current stable funding stream allowed the organization to be selective in its initiatives that have more market-oriented flair; hence, there was no apparent cause for resistance. Neither was there an obvious lack or need for competencies outside their solidarity/advocacy context, as the stable funding stream did not give enough incentive to consider diversification of funds through market alternatives more seriously. This means that the salience to mission logic that enabled these organizations to maintain a focus on their social goals was also the key to their relative financial stability, although such stability (more so for AG and SPP than for WF) is not derived from alternatives to aid funding.

The availability of competing models of action has allowed individuals to exercise some degree of choice (Pache and Santos 2013b) through incorporating different organizational elements, such as market-oriented solutions, as a natural and effective way of achieving organizational legitimacy (Brunsson 1989), albeit half-heartedly, hence somehow a hypocritical coping mechanism. The strength of their identification with their respective mission-premised organization (Dutton et al. 1994) was not shaken by the challenges involved in their funding situation. Their stronger salience to what their missions represent justifies the half-hearted market efforts to address the funding scarcity. This has downplayed the relevance of inconsistencies between expected and actual organizational actions through excuses or justifications (Bies and Sitkin 1991) that center on who they believe they are or what they are premised on as organizations doing advocacy and solidarity work. These findings thus show how people attempt to preserve a sense

of integrity and self-worth, as indicated by research on self-affirmation (Steele 1988) and self-justification (Staw 1980) processes.

What we can infer from these insights, which incrementally address the second research question,<sup>25</sup> is that individuals attempt to comply with competing demands as a way of dealing with the complexity of their inhabited world (Gautier et al. 2018). However, attempts at complying do not readily translate into being able to reconcile the competing demands in such a complex environment. They therefore engage in justifications/excuses and self-preservation mechanisms, making logic salience both an enabler and a constrainer of responses. These enabling and constraining properties occur as organizational members experience and navigate around tensions from multiple logics that cause adversarial conflicts between them (Pache and Santos 2013a). These actors evidently become entangled in the paradox of embeddedness (Uzzi 1997) where intra-organizational communities with connections to field-level occupational communities have differing awareness and receptivity to institutional pressures (Delmas and Toffel 2008).

As actors bring to the decision process their interpretation of priorities and preferable outcomes (Chung and Luo 2008; Ocasio 1997), their agency thus comes to the fore. This inevitably has implications for the hybridization of the organizations to which they belong, and it suggests what Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) argue as agency's influence in creating, maintaining, or changing the institutional order, and hence exemplify institutional work. These organizational outcomes and implications for hybridity and other insights are further discussed in chapter 10.

## Chapter summary

What can be construed from the above findings is that members in these organizations relate and respond to competing demands of logics based on what they value the most and what ideology they identify themselves with. Irrespective of the extent of their funding challenges, the soundness of their funding strategy, and the level of their reporting competencies, among other things, what primarily

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<sup>25</sup> The second research question is also addressed in adversarial settings, in the next chapter.

guides them in their quest to find alternative solutions in such a contested and paradoxical setting is their commitment to their values and social mission, which indicates, generally, their stronger salience to mission logic. Accordingly, AG, WF, and SPP have all tried to explore alternatives by diversifying funds through a more market-oriented set of alternatives, but where their progress remained marginal. The marginal progress of their market-oriented activities was compounded and thwarted by the constraints related to tax rules and regulations.

What we have learned from this chapter which answers the second research question: “What do attachments to logics prompt in terms of responses?” in paradoxical settings, is that due to the *organizational members’ stronger salience to mission logic*, they have a greater focus on exploiting their organizations’ main offering (Smith 2015) of advocacy and justify that their competencies lie in delivering their social goals. Such justification (Bies and Sitkin 1991), thus, becomes a defense mechanism for why their response to the funding challenges is through a half-baked exploration of market-oriented solutions. It can also be construed as an attempt to comply with competing demands as a way of dealing with the complexity of their inhabited world (Gautier et al. 2018). This can thus be regarded as a superficial hybridization (Alvehus 2018) insofar as such a half-baked initiative gives an impression of engaging with plural logics, while actors’ salience to the mission logic remains dominant. Such saliences become both an enabler and constrainer of responses.

Therefore, if it is challenging to pursue market solutions in funding volatile mission-premised organizations (Fowler 2000b), how can we then achieve multiple goals? And considering the complexity of maintaining hybridity (Skelcher and Smith 2015), how can we in that case avoid failing to reach the multiple goals? This line of inquiry will be addressed in the next chapter, where the complexity in embracing both market and mission logics is exemplified, especially when groups of individuals separately hold comparably strong adherence to both market and mission logics. Insofar as the organization studied in the next chapter is involved in a more direct market-exchange with its fairtrade store operations, such a context offers another type of complexity compared to the organizations studied in this chapter.

## *Chapter 8*

# The individual attachments to logics and their responses: in adversarial settings

When individuals operate in environments dominated by a single logic, their responses will likely be determined by the ties they have developed with this logic (Pache and Santos 2013b). However, responses clearly become more difficult to anticipate when this environment becomes infused by an emerging logic that carries a different set of demands, means, or courses of action, and ideological goals (Pache and Santos 2013b) than what is embedded in the organization. Therefore, we may ask what organizational consequences arise from participating in multiple fields or from combining multiple logics under one organizational roof (Jay 2013), especially when individuals become engrossed in their own group's affiliation to one of the logics and respond accordingly?

Individuell Människohjälp (IM), the final case organization in this study, is a Swedish aid development organization and one of SIDA's frame organizations in Sweden, just like Afrikagrupperna (AG). Selling products in Sweden as a way of helping the disadvantaged and refugees has been integral for IM since the aftermath of the Second World War and has been the organization's primary purpose for engaging in this market-like activity. The organization's official membership in World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) in 2008<sup>26</sup> kickstarted IM's procurement of fairtrade products in 2009 via WFTO. Such procurement had thereafter increased significantly, along with a focus on product range, quality, costs, and increased sales. In this chapter, I continue to explore how

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<sup>26</sup> According to the IM website, although respondents gave different dates.

organizational members relate and respond to changes and manage the interplay between market activities and social goals with the possible outcomes. The chapter specifically addresses the second research question, albeit this time in adversarial settings: *What do attachments to logics prompt in terms of responses?* Moreover, it is also a study of how fairtrade as part of the organization's mission to help small, disadvantaged producers and the concept of volunteer-manned fairtrade stores across Sweden work in practice, especially as the organization navigates in the increasingly competitive market arena.

Considering how the empirical material was obtained for this particular case, namely through the respondents' current and retrospective accounts of events (Huzzard 2000; Everitt 2013) and my informant's (Erik) diary notes, it allowed me to cover several stages of IM stores' organizational life. These stages are summarized in table 6 (chapter 5), which shows the changes that have taken place and evolved at IM, particularly tied to its stores. I therefore cover three periods here: the Pre- and early- Fairtrade period, Recent Fairtrade period, and Post study period. Such an approach also establishes the context for why and how the respondents responded to the changes before, during, and after the organization's stores became fairtrade and more market-oriented.

## Pre- and early- Fairtrade period

IM works both in Sweden and several countries worldwide in areas that include people's right to education, good health, and in fighting poverty where people develop an ability to sustain themselves. IM's aim to strengthen civil society is integral to its work. Selling products produced by refugees started in the aftermath of the war. A sales center was established, and IM continued to develop and increase its support and cooperation with self-help projects involving small, disadvantaged producer partners, and the products were sold by the so-called *ombud* (or agents) who were members or supporters of IM (Olauson 1996). During this period, IM only sold products from their 'own' producers; therefore, the organization acted as the guarantee behind the products (Employee #1). The products were described as handmade, unique, and of high quality. These self-help products came from abroad and some areas in Sweden. There were different groups of people who contributed their time to sell and in getting involved in

other activities like lectures, market fairs, collection of used clothes, fundraising, and similar activities, which were regarded as a way of supporting the cause and the goal to be in close contact with the community (Olauson 1996). There had been no remarkable change in these characteristics and structure, not until the organization became a member of the WFTO.

During this period, the stores operated more socially and like 'aid'; people bought to help, and the stores had a completely different target group (Employee #2). The business development Manager or IM Manager (hereinafter Manager #1) who held this post for 16 years (and left the post in 2011 to become IM's Controller) said that the job requires a lot, not just education, but also heart and extra time and effort; it requires a certain taste or sense of what sells, a lot of parts in one and the same person:

It is an aid organization, and it's an interesting combination for our target groups. The craftspeople who manufacture the goods need aid because they need jobs. So, you have to come up with ideas; that is the aid part. But then, when we have brought the goods to Sweden, then it's really a retail trade. (Manager #1)

Manager #1 added that her successors failed because something from this combination was missing. One should have analytical skills and be both a visionary and an implementer. There is a need to procure the right products, to value the unique and high-quality handcrafts with the country-of-origin, and to find and reach the right clientele:

Keeping this balance all the time, having a very good relationship with the suppliers, developing them, helping them develop, helping them with ideas and so on. And this (information) should reach the customers.

During Manager #1's time, the volunteers were treated like employees with development talks, so that each and every one of them could say what their expectations were and what was expected of them, to be able to answer customers' questions, being their first link to the customers. To be able to connect all these parts has been their key to success:

So, you cannot say, oh, it's just business, it's just aid; it's both. It must be treated equally, because they are equally important. (Manager #1)

## Recent Fairtrade period

Upon the incumbency (2013) of IM's General Secretary, who was hired primarily "to lead the modernization and professionalization of the organization," the work on integrating different activities kickstarted. It included strengthening the fairtrade enterprise and linking it to the organization's economic empowerment program under the organization's aid development work. From working in silos, it started to integrate fairtrade and its work with producers to strengthen IM in order to become a professional SIDA frame organization. IM has therefore made a huge leap, from giving the producers economic support to focusing on capacity development, and from working with implementation to working through partner organizations. These are some of the principles that IM has to follow, being a SIDA frame organization, according to aid effectiveness with CSO strategies, including how they choose partner organizations (General Secretary). For IM, being professional entails:

That there is clarity that IM is here to make an impact, and therefore we need to have the right competencies from members, volunteers, and the employees. It also entails that IM has to be a professional employer, unlike many civil society organizations, where there is no clear division between work-life and volunteering. (General Secretary)

In line with a more professionalized running of the operations, a recognizability survey was conducted in 2016. According to the General Secretary, 30% of the respondents recognized IM and IM Fair Trade (IMFT) stores with some help or cues. Those who recognized IM and IMFT stores without prompts were older people; however, this was not unexpected as they have seen and known about IM through the years. A useful insight for IM from this survey was how the respondents associate IM with the stores, or how the stores represent IM and fairtrade. This means that apart from selling fairtrade products, the stores and the work of volunteers actually contribute to marketing the organization and its work.

The idea behind the incorporation of fairtrade was not just to sell but to contribute to sustainability and economic empowerment of the producers, including women. The campaign 'One IM' was launched in 2015, where fairtrade became one of the three pillars of the organization. This was seen as a way of working smarter, where all activities that pertain to economic empowerment are

consolidated. 'One IM' was also to strengthen the organization's work and what it stands for, to be able to show to the outside world who they are as an organization, especially because of the increasing competition and IM's limited resources for marketing. Based on how civil society looks today, with the level of aid organizations in existence, the General Secretary thought that in 15 or 20 years, frame appropriations from SIDA can disappear. It is for this reason that competition is extremely high, and there is a need to somehow act as if you are in a commercial market to be able to compete. To be able to achieve impact and do more:

We need to be more visible; we have to be a little bigger. (General Secretary)

### **The ideological dispute**

The above indicates a rather conscious strategic decision made by the management in professionalizing the organization. IM as a voluntary organization with a business operation is emphasized; thus, it is not a business company and there is no profit requirement:

...but the results need to improve because it is becoming a burden due to the high costs of running the stores. (General Secretary)

However, improving the results entails not only a continuous flow of new products – which they did not have (Volunteers #1 & 2) but also trainings on how exactly sales can be improved. The volunteers understood that they needed to sell more, and they were aware of the projected 7% sales increase, but it was a complex issue and the conditions varied. A greater degree of involvement and responsibility from the organization, like what was being showed by Erik (the informant here) (Volunteer #1) was called for in order to create the right preconditions: "(...) we can do our best, and then it is up to the organization itself to promote, to advertise, to spread the information that we are here" (Volunteer #3).

The volunteers expressed warmly about what IM and volunteering mean to them. Volunteer #1 felt at home at IM and wanted to help raise money. Being a volunteer allows her to know what is happening in the world, like refugee politics, and do something else like helping people to learn Swedish. Volunteering is regarded as meaningful work:



When you feel that you may contribute some value. I think, maybe some girls in Malawi who can go to school because I have worked here in the store. It's just an example. And then, it's really fun; you get new friends – like volunteer #1, we did not know each other before and many other colleagues and you meet nice customers. (...) It is very positive. One feels that you probably do something of value. (Volunteer #2)

For Volunteer #4, the stores need to become more like a business because if the losses continue, they cannot help anyone and therefore it has to be done professionally. She thought that the problem is the type of employees involved in fairtrade and the fairtrade stores:

I think the problem is in the IM Fair Trade stores, that they were managed by amateurs; wanted to [make it work], but could not. (Volunteer #4)

Volunteer #4 added that the situation changed when Manager #2, who was a professional, was hired. She refurnished the stores; there were new types of goods, and a warehouse, and a web shop that worked. Manager #2, however, left IM only after a few years (around 4-5 years according to several sources, with a long leave of absence in between and without a replacement) and her successor (Manager #3) held the post for a short time (see table 6). Accordingly, the new Manager (#4) who is very commercial-oriented but also has orientation on human rights and sustainability, was hired in 2017 with the main task of improving the sales results. The General Secretary expressed confidence and high hopes that the new manager with her business contacts, skills, and experience in the private sector can make a difference in the IMFT stores.

However, the former manager (Manager #1) thinks that part of the problem is the backgrounds, orientations, and approaches of the managers that were hired after her. One of her successors had been a salesman and had no sense of aid work, no sense of craftsmanship. Hence, it may not be his fault, but the type of work (aid development work) did not fit him. The current manager, on the other hand, was described this way:

Manager #4 is very commercial, but at the same time she is very focused on human rights, sustainability, and everything. So, it is fantastic. (General Secretary)

According to Manager #4, she always engages her colleagues whenever she is working on something new:

I feel this way, you must not forget what you have in-house. We have a diverse set of people here, and I do not go without asking anyone what we should do. I ask different people, what do you think of this. If five different people say that it looks good, then you know it works. You don't have to go that far; one plus one becomes two. I don't need to hire any consultant to find out about this. Resources that are for free are sometimes underestimated.

At the same time, she admitted having a pre-planned idea when she starts a project:

Ah, I am very on-spot and I think...I can say like this, before I start, I have a finished picture in my head. So, I never start anything without having a picture done, what we should do, what it should look like; in my head, I have a picture what it should look like. (...) So, what we're doing now is that we're building a concept, and that's what I'm used to coming from the commercial [field].

What is apparent, however, is the difference in perception or in walking the talk when it comes to translating a flat or an inclusive leadership style. Manager #4 has been very vocal about her inclusive leadership approach and the importance of taking advantage of the existing inhouse competencies. Apart from the contradiction that can be seen in her own statements above, there is a consensus amongst the employee respondents that it (inclusive leadership) has not been the case; instead, Manager #4 ostracized the people who have worked with fairtrade and the stores for years.

We perceive that our knowledge is not utilized. (Employees #1 and #2)

She is so full of herself; she thinks she is so capable that she does not need anyone else; no, it is my experience. I can't force (...). I don't want to lie to you, but I say how I see it myself. I could be wrong. But I don't think that she is interested [in what others have to say or offer]. (Manager #1)

Through the above accounts, we can construe that there is an understanding of what the organization's mission stands for and what the goals of the stores are, and the varying degrees of inclination between and toward the organization/stores' mission and sales goals. It can, however, be said that there are two main groups/sides that hold differing but comparably strong views on how

the stores should be run and what the selling activity is for, compared to their original mission. As the analysis of my empirical data progressed and became more in-depth, the presence of these adversarial groupings, which I refer to here as ‘incumbents’ and ‘challengers,’ became more apparent.

### **Incumbents vs. challengers**

As we may recall, the idea behind the selling activity and opening of the stores was mostly due to the strong interest and commitment of groups called ‘ombud,’ which primarily involved women. For most of the employees who understood the need to increase sales but were unsure about or challenged the reason behind why they sell – whom I refer to here as the incumbents, the idea was not to scan the market and open stores in the best locations where they can sell best or the most, but it was to engage volunteers and provide them with a space to come together, and at the same time, support small producers. However:

All of a sudden, the game plan is changing, and now we are going to make money. But we still have the same stores; we still have the same structure. (Employee# 2)

Because of the change in focus and goals, it has become very challenging for the volunteers and members who have very strong opinions about what they believe in and what IM should stand for (Employee #2). There was a common understanding among the interviewed paid staff (e.g. Employees #1 & 2, Erik, Manager #1) that what the managers (#2, 3, & 4) – whom I refer to here as the challengers, have in common was a belief that it is very possible to make a lot of money if the products are changed. However, without understanding the role of the volunteers and the goals or mission of the organization, where disadvantaged producers and volunteer work are central, such an optimism in increasing sales profits would remain a challenge. Employees #1 & 2 thought that combining aid and trade/business is difficult, a challenge that the new manager did not see:

Well, no manager we’ve had in the last six years or so has or had experience of aid and trade, but it had (only) been trade; they come here from the business sector, and we know that when she [Manager #2] came here, she thought ‘shit, here we can do anything.’ But it took a year for her to see, ‘shit, it’s not possible; I have to do it in a completely different way’, and then everything takes a lot longer. (Employee #1)

Volunteer #3 thought that what IM is for should be put forward and that the organization should avoid succumbing to what the market constantly dictates, which fuels the competition frenzy:

It's also so that em...maybe it's naïve what I will say, when you have an [existing] collection (...) you have to find a way so that, that collection is actually sold; so, it's not a matter of what it is that is produced, instead it is a question of how we can sell what we have.

Volunteer #3, therefore, meant that in this way a balance can be maintained between what a voluntary organization is for and its selling activities. Informant Erik reminisced (from his prior stint at IM) a problem that occurred after the 2011 business plan where many thoughts and ways of working went toward professionalization and a more regular trading type of running the stores:

It does not work so easily – *to fit square pegs into round holes*. Now, it feels a bit the same again; you want to take an activity onto a road that it's not really meant to take.

In his diary notes, Erik emphasized that the organization can either go back to its roots where the focus is developing small, disadvantaged producers and build on what is unique with the current structure with volunteers and their commitment in running the stores, or move forward to a more professional and market-oriented path with procurement via wholesalers and with paid staff at the stores. In that case, this should be anchored and discussed within the organization. If fairtrade is heading elsewhere, it has to be processed properly, with transparency and through involvement of different perspectives to ensure that other parts are not ruined, like the commitment that still exists at IM. The latter alternative (a more market-oriented path) has far more significant consequences than the former, considering that IM is a nonprofit. These accounts clearly show the contestation between the logics and the incumbents' stronger salience to mission logic.

The issues around making and not making money, of having no manager or the frequent change of managers, of changing the product range as soon as a new manager comes because s/he thinks it is how they can make money, are taking a toll on them, as “it is difficult to tread in the same hole all the time” (Employee #1). Employee #2 agreed and added that developing producers and new product ranges should be allowed time to work, to consider the role of the volunteers, and

have a long-term plan that is sustainable. Neither had any interest in applying for the manager position because the management has greater confidence in people from the outside. This was because the organization should be commercial but without having the prerequisites for being commercial and because an understanding from the management had not existed. The General Secretary, however, does not see any conflict between the role and engagement of volunteers and the goal to improve sales figures, despite what she had been hearing for years. Similarly, Manager #4 saw no conflict in being an aid organization that also runs a business. The global goals of fighting poverty, inequality, and environmental sustainability cannot be achieved without cooperation, and the business sector is in it. Moreover, she did not see any risks of deviating from their social goals when focusing on making money:

So, I do not see a conflict, but today, it's in business. This is the new model. You've got to think all the way; you're talking about circular economy, so it's like it's not possible to build a business plan without this. (...) There's nothing wrong with making money, but one thing is really important – it's how you make money and what you make them for; what is the purpose of making money and where will it go? Had we had CEOs who distribute the money, CEOs with percent ah, you know, all this in business, but we do not have that, this is an NGO. So, the more we earn money, the more we can go out in this ... [being able to help more].

The only challenge Manager #4 saw was that it is difficult price-wise, and that is why she can understand that many are slipping away from their mission because there are costs to be covered. The idea behind what they do in fairtrade is not just to sell products, but it should also contribute to sustainability and economic empowerment of the producers in the country with which IM is working (General Secretary). For Volunteer #3, sticking with the small producers that the organization is supporting is more important. It is a rather complicated subject, and there is a need to find a balance because there are a lot of things that can break or disappear:

But it's not profit that controls the operations, and that's what you have to keep in your head. And it is what we do that must be put forward.

Inasmuch as the stores exist with the purpose of selling, Volunteer #4 therefore thought that selling was the priority. She recalled that the former manager (Manager #2) started with a newly designed product line exclusively for IM, but

it resulted in losses because it came in huge volumes. Accordingly, they reduced their own design and started to buy from wholesalers where they can purchase in smaller volumes and therefore entailed smaller risks. However, according to Volunteers #1 & 2, because they had been purchasing via WFTO (or wholesalers), the products they sold were the same ones you could find in other stores in Lund and elsewhere; therefore, they had lost the uniqueness they used to have. More importantly, this means that it became less of their own (IM) projects – some of these projects have even been closed down. Hence, because of fairtrade, they have less contact with the producers they used to support (Volunteer #2).

Buying from the more established producers through WFTO and its wholesalers that are usually located in Europe is regarded by some respondents (for example, Volunteer #1, Manager #1, informant Erik) as the middlemen. This means that the middlemen also add their margins on the prices, the products are less unique as many other retailers are buying from the same source, and it makes the task of the volunteers, i.e. to ‘tell the story’ of the small and disadvantaged producers that IM is (supposedly) supporting, more challenging (Volunteer #1, Manager #1, Erik). Losing the products’ uniqueness and the story – which employees and volunteers alike support and associate with IM, is seen as causing the deteriorating performance of the stores.

Moreover, supporting and developing the smaller producers, and not competing with chain retailers, is what the staff and volunteers regard as the organization’s main goal:

And this business in Sweden is only to help us to help them because if we do not have the stores, we cannot place orders, then the business does not work; then we have no money to continue with it, but it [sales competition] is not the main goal ... why should we at IM do business in Sweden, there are many – HM, Lagerhaus, others who are professional who can do better. Should we compete with them? We cannot! (Manager #1)

Manager #1 added that the old producers whom she knew no longer get orders from IM; moreover, she thinks that it should be about buying from those who nobody wants to buy from. The challenge in Sweden is that customers in general are price-sensitive and products are usually sold according to an average price, with a minimal possibility of going over and under the average prices (Manager #4). Procuring from WFTO and the middlemen is being done because it is

simpler and faster (Manager #1), something with which Employees #1 & 2 agreed, saying that buying from fairtrade producers through suppliers from Europe is a necessary complement because buying directly from the producers takes time and costs more. Hence, this is a trade-off, and the possible losses from smaller producers can be offset from the more reliable and established sources. Moreover, although the products that were bought to help marginalized producers and were 'very IM' used to sell easily, the consumer segment had changed from older ladies to younger and family clientele who had another product preference. Employees #1 & 2 sometimes heard from the volunteers that they are buying from the wholesaler, from factories, which, in turn, made it difficult to tell and sell the story. The majority of the respondents were in agreement that they could not compete with bigger retailers that offer similar/equivalent products compared to the products procured via WFTO. Volunteer #3 said:

I understand the question because we are actually not Cubus or Lindex, and when I hear some volunteer organizations that start talking like an enterprise, like that, I'm actually a bit skeptical.

Volunteer #3 added that she gets it, and that there were many different players now and there has to be a way to compete. However, at the same time, she was a little idealistic, and wanted to believe that competition is something that does not belong to nonprofits, and which therefore makes one a 'dreamer.' Volunteer #1 saw the connection between having fewer of their own IM projects and more fairtrade products procured via wholesalers because it is not economically viable with more of their own projects. They still buy from India, but it has grown as a big business and has become structured as a factory. She hoped that those who have worked on IM projects will be able to get into the fairtrade groups because to get the small ones in is the point of what they are doing. The respondents agreed that mixing the procurement from WFTO and marginalized producers is necessary at the moment, but there is a need to reflect on why they are engaging in the selling business in the first place:

It's unrealistic. The question is that you have to formulate the goal. Again, why do we do business in Sweden? (...) Because we are not so good, IM is not a business company, IM is an aid organization. We have a handful who know the business in this organization, then why are we doing it? How come? (Manager #1).

The above resonates with the core question in my informant's diary, namely that there is a need to go back to the roots and if the organization wants to drive the organization into another direction where the focus is more on profit-making, then a discussion should be held with the people involved because supporting marginalized small producers is the goal and running the stores with volunteers should be taken into consideration since IM is very much associated with the volunteer-manned fairtrade stores, and not by professional sales employees.

Because of the differences in how the situation should be approached, the employees feel, without being told directly, that the management think that they are backward-looking or old school (Employee #1) just because they are for building the marginalized producers to develop a product range, but things are not working because they are not given the additional resources (Employee #2). For Employee #2, IM is an organization and working for IM means humanity, commitment from volunteers and employees; she is passionate about developing the most marginalized producers, so that they can be self-sustaining in the future; her driving force is being able to contribute something to society. She added that the combination of producer development and volunteer work was the red thread and what made IM fascinating. Without volunteers, the stores could not survive (Volunteer #4).

To find a solution to the store crisis, Manager #1 says that the management should reflect on why there have been three challenging periods with new managers and involve the people within the organization who have worked or are working in the area. The lack of continuity has made the situation even more challenging. She thinks that a manager should know his/her role as a manager, be able to motivate people, and be able to say that an employee is good or dare to say that something is wrong. Taking in consultants who would tell them what is wrong and what they already know does not help and is not appreciated. She thinks that activating and involving the staff would help. For Employee #2, there is a need to determine what IM's priority is and what is valued the most, which the management should agree on because of what IM stands for and which should be anchored within the organization:

Is it about commitment [to support and develop marginalized producers and the role of volunteers] or is it about making money regardless of the consequences?

These accounts thus show how individuals make sense of the opposing forces through their respective logic salience. For Manager #1, to resolve the situation,



although it is the hardest, it is important to start by admitting that the management had failed, to identify the reasons for failing three times, and to ask for help by gathering together the people who have worked with it before, especially during the time when it was working. And if fairtrade becomes integral in mainstream chain stores, IM can indeed not compete at all, but it could also mean that their work to promote Fairtrade through producer development and product sales has played out its role, which is basically a positive outcome (Employees #1 & 2).

### **Market-driving efforts: treading in the same hole**

A few months after the new manager (Manager #4 – the latest addition to what I regard as the challenger group) was hired, the work to develop a new product line started:

So, what we are now working a lot on is that we, together, produce products that are adaptable to the Swedish market. (Manager #4)

They started to build a base product range, according to needs and lifestyle. Similar to the General Secretary, Manager #4 did not see any conflict between improving sales results and having volunteers selling the products because their approach is holistic, and everyone is dependent on each other. Everyone is welcome to share their ideas, which she listens to because this is about a concerted effort. Moreover, her goal is also to work further with the most vulnerable, especially women who produce something but can never be a part of the WFTO because they are on the run (namely, refugees). Manager #4 is aware that IM has not worked enough with small, disadvantaged producers that IM is supposed to develop, which she thinks is the main reason for their being, but to be able to do that they need the more established producers/WFTO in order to get the operations up and running. Working with the more established producers under WFTO entails continuity that is needed for the selling operations, which would then allow IM to work with the vulnerable and unorganized producers whose production and delivery capacity can be unpredictable. The more established sources also offset the higher production costs and inefficiency that the small productions entail. Pursuing production and procurement of products produced by the smaller producers would, on the other hand, ensure that some products are unique, which can also be used to tell the story of the women and people behind

the products. Manager #4 adds that their biggest challenge being an aid organization is resources. The lack of resources is nonetheless not seen as rendering everything impossible, as long as there is a will and passion:

Right now, I'm sitting without money, without staff... . But it's about believing in something and understanding and because this is a relief organization, we don't have that luxury. So, we can try to cut and paste; so, we try to solve with bended knees every day.

Manager #4 reiterates that her recipe in order to succeed is not to underestimate what is available inhouse; that it is a flat organization with skilled people, and everyone is welcome to contribute his or her ideas, and they do not need consultants to tell them things. However, according to several respondents, and as the excerpts presented earlier point to, these people were not directly consulted, or even if they had some talks, they felt that the manager (#4) already has a finished picture of what she wanted to do or change. Most of these changes – new product line, combining procurement from WFTO and own producers, and the challenge in not having resources, resemble what already has happened before, as relayed by the respondents:

It has been done before; it is like treading in the same hole. (Employees #1 & 2)

## Post study period

### **Point of realization: lesser treading in the same hole**

In the early summer of 2018, I conducted a follow-up study, partly to clarify some details and partly to see how the situation had changed or improved with the new FT management. During this post study, I failed to get Manager #4 to continue to participate, but I conducted follow-up interviews with some employees instead (May 2018) and the General Secretary (June 2018). According to the General Secretary, unlike during the time of the previous manager when they ordered from major suppliers, they have now switched to supporting the really weak producers that IM supported long before they became a pronounced fairtrade actor (this,

however, was not the view of my informant<sup>27</sup> during our follow-up lunch meeting in October 2018), for example, fairtrade producers in Guatemala and Nepal and the Tibet exile groups. This kind of support is in line with IM's economic empowerment and sustenance, which the organization is looking more in depth at in order to get a clearer picture of its strategy, including its work in Sweden in education and training, and advocacy. However, without new and bigger investments, the organization's challenges with the fairtrade enterprise cannot be resolved, especially due to increasing competition from retailers and grocers that are selling fairtrade products. There was no competition of this magnitude for the last 5-7 years, according to the General Secretary. The lack of resources is amplified by the employees. The implementation of 'One IM' means that all tasks involved in the fairtrade enterprise become centralized:

It felt good that we were supposed to get help, but we get less help instead.  
(Employee #1)

Among the most recent changes was the dissolution of the FT coordinator position, the termination of catalogue printing, and the reinforcement of the separation of the tasks of the logistics and procurement– which meant that the two sections, with one employee each, cannot work together as they used to:

She [Manager #4] wanted to streamline the functions, but it doesn't work when we don't get help from IM. It is a bit difficult right now. (Employee #1)

Recently, however, the Manager (#4) realized that these sections are far too small and such a set-up does not work, especially when there are no resources (Employee #2). Apart from getting a little more understanding for the aid part of the organization from Manager #3, whose short stint at IM could not provide a more nuanced picture of his work, the managers had/have a similar view on the stores' strong potential to generate money:

What others here thought was we can make money, but it's not like running any business; we wanted her (Manager #4) to understand from the beginning, but she's strong and did not really want to hear it. I understand her that it was her task.  
(Employee #2)

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<sup>27</sup> It should be noted though that I make the connection between the statements/events based on what the respondents say, and not through passing on one respondent's statement to the other respondent and vice versa.

The former manager (Manager #1) agreed that the current manager (#4) did not seem keen on taking in feedback and ideas from people who have been involved in the stores in the past. This entailed that:

We end up in a vicious circle when you just want to make money without investing (Employee #1); Yes, we have to do some magic, sort of. We'll turn our sales around but do not get resources. We end up in a vicious circle. (Employee #2)

Not having printed catalogues meant that they lost the old clientele, but nothing had been done to reach a new client group. While the website now had a more modern look, the older clientele wanted a catalogue for placing orders, and the sales loss of 1 million SEK is bigger than the costs (that is, what was saved from catalogue printing) (Employees #1 & 2). Moreover, Manager #4 had dramatically reduced their margins and today, they are lower in price compared to the mainstream trade. Consequently, they needed to sell more to cover for the lowered price, and if they did not get new customers, they would inadvertently fail (Employee #1). Employee #1 thought that the new Manager had recently realized the negative consequences, but the changes that do not lead to something are wearing them out; hence, they were unsure if they could manage to stay in the organization (Employees #1 & 2).

The challenges remained unresolved, according to the General Secretary. The new Manager, although it had only been a year since she started, already admitted to the General Secretary that she could not turn the negative results around, not until maybe 4 to 5 years. Meanwhile, the Board had not given any signs of allocating more resources for the fairtrade enterprise. Therefore, it was a 'catch 22' for the organization, with all the requirements that they had to do and meet and to have a budget in balance, which cannot be achieved without resources; thus, they kept on resorting to the same 'solutions':

But no, I have not seen any change; it's the result of the sales – nothing happens even though we did these... even though we have changed managers, so you cannot say that if we just get a new manager now, we could turn everything around; we think that we have now learned that it's not what this is about. (General Secretary)

The General Secretary thought that it was about them being too weak and not having financial resources like regular companies. Along with this reflection, she added:

I think voluntary organizations like NGOs need to understand, as you say, what is our basic mission? Are we a rights-based solidarity movement, how do we tackle our resources and work to get the best impact in those parts that actually have a commercial flair? When more and more of funding for development issues are increasingly focusing on what commercial forces can address, there are big risks with it. Therefore, aid work is in a paradigm shift, making the questions raised in your<sup>28</sup> research interesting and relevant.

### **Point of no return: no more treading in the same hole**

According to the General Secretary, during the recent annual meeting, a local association in Lund came with a call that questioned the extremely high costs being incurred by IM Fair Trade for the organization. Even though it was not a formal motion, the meeting's chairman chose to address it for consideration. It was decided during the annual meeting that this matter would be investigated and if there was not any other advice but to shut the stores down, there was a strong likelihood that it would happen. Although IM had no profit demand in the fairtrade stores, the costs of 4 to 5 million SEK per year were considered far too high. A board meeting in August 2018 was to address this issue.

In September 2018, several articles were published in local newspapers on the possible closure of IM Fair Trade stores, of merging some offices, and laying off some employees. This was confirmed by the General Secretary during another follow-up interview in October 2018.

## **Logic salience in adversarial settings**

The study covered three periods in IM stores' organizational life: Pre- and early-Fairtrade period (IM stores), Recent Fairtrade period (IM Fair Trade stores), and Post study period (for an overview of these periods, refer back to table 6 in chapter

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<sup>28</sup> Respondent refers to this dissertation.

5). The findings suggest that Individuell Människohjälps membership in WFTO was seen by the management as a support for the movement (and the producers) and at the same time something that could enhance the stores' profitability. Such exploration (Smith 2015), thus, was supposed to contribute to IM's output and normative legitimacy (Nevile 2010). It was also seen as an alternative, if not an easier, way of procuring products and of delivering on their mission to support small, disadvantaged producers. However, due to the mainstreaming of fairtrade products (Nicholls and Opal 2005), making them available everywhere, IM lost its unique offering. With the costs involved (for example, membership and procurement) and with unsold and accumulating stocks of products, the need to turn costs into sales intensified. The difference between buying and selling of products, compared to direct funding disbursement to small producers, became clearer in the financial spreadsheet, so to speak. In a business scenario, costs are being offset from sales; the end product is profit. In an aid scenario, funding is a support that does not require a quantitative monetary output; the end product is social impact. Buying products from the disadvantaged producers and selling them in Sweden had, however, become a business-like undertaking (Meyer et al. 2013), where product procurement could easily be regarded as costs, compared to direct financial subsidy to the same producers that had traditionally been considered as *support*.

The lack of resources was repeatedly raised as a huge constraint in being able to compete in the market. Moreover, the increasing procurement via WFTO meant that the organization's 'own' producers who were more disadvantaged and much less organized than the WFTO-accredited producers had been side-tracked, and the same WFTO products that were sold in many parts of the world including Sweden, made the IM product offering less unique. The findings suggest that all these contributed to the weakened market share of IM.

To address the deteriorating sales, managers with business competencies were hired. Two of these IM fairtrade managers resorted to a new product range, which, according to Manager #4, is a way to cater to the Swedish market or lifestyle. However, instead of recovering from sales stagnation, the sales did not improve; on the contrary, it plummeted (2017-2018). According to several respondents, the organization and the stores cannot compete with the mainstream retail with this type of product and sales strategy. Going back to their roots, that is – supporting and developing own partner producers, not only can contribute to

maintaining a unique product offering, but it can also justify or at least help explain the organization's rationale in market-driving. Furthermore, this increased competition between fairtrade organizations and retailers shows what Wilkinson (2007) describes as the inevitable and undesirable influence and effect of fairtrade movement's mainstreaming, especially so given that the support for seriously poor producers (Low and Davenport 2006) becomes indirect and the WFTO acting as the middleman has its own set of interests, where there is neither transparency nor operational price controls (Wilkinson 2007).

As suggested, there is a need to identify not only the responses to competing logics (Jay 2013) but also the conditions and processes through which they appear competing in the first place (Greenwood et al. 2011). The case of IM does show the responses to competing logics where the challengers and incumbents espouse a separate agenda between market and mission logics respectively, which thus shows the tension between the logics. Apart from this, the way the complexity from the presence of competing logics was downplayed or underestimated (Greenwood et al. 2011) by both groups of individuals makes the case of IM unique, particularly in relation to the other two cases. The market logic salience held by the challengers limited them from seeing the internal challenges and the general (external) challenges involved in market-driving, in an otherwise mission-oriented aid context. This case shows that competing logics could be "played out in full, yet not together" (Zilber 2011:1553) and therefore exemplifies the constraining properties of logic salience.

More importantly, a lack of foresight as to the cumulative effects of the mainstreaming of fairtrade affected not only the internal dynamics, but also their 'market appeal.' For the internal dynamics, several employees and volunteers experienced the procurement and increased sales targets as disenfranchising them from IM as an organization and IM's mission that they identify themselves with, while their market appeal was heavily affected by loss of product uniqueness due to the same increased WFTO procurement and mainstreaming. These contributed to the continued loss in sales regardless of the most recent (2017-2018) effort to change the product line. This lack of foresight, as to what can be improved or not and when it is time to 'kill your darling' after a holistic consideration of external and internal factors, can therefore be seen as a case of organizational learning where capabilities become central (Gavetti 2005).

The challengers and the incumbents became adversaries, which entangled and confined them within their own values, interests, hopes, and the logic that made sense to them and rendered them unable to see beyond the here and now. Because of this indifference, owing to their comparably strong but separately held logic saliences, they failed to reconcile the competing logics. An unintended consequence was the reproduction of a similar course of action while expecting a different result. This shows the harmful effects of such conflicts to organizations (Glynn 2000) as the coalitions of members adhering to a given logic resist the influence of alternative logics (Pache and Santos 2013b) or the way the opposite coalition engages in the alternative logic, and hence an attempt to preserve their respective coalition's logic of preference. This adversarial context with such detachment or lack of foresight has stifled creativity in finding alternative and innovative solutions; instead, it resulted in stagnation or 'stuckness' (Jay 2013), where the *fitting of square pegs into round holes* was repeatedly reinforced.

The treading in the same hole was finally put to a halt by a decision made in September 2018 to close all the IM Fair Trade stores across Sweden. However, and although this might be the suitable solution, this also brings to mind the prevailing encouragement for nonprofits to eliminate unprofitable activities and to enter only into areas with profitability prospects (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004).

On a broader scale, the series of events also show an important insight as to the influences of institutional forces that became manifest in the organizational members' corresponding responses and actions. The mainstreaming of fairtrade has, ironically, increased its reach but decreased its legitimacy. As Low and Davenport (2006) argue, maintaining a parallel system of trade and distribution alongside the mainstream finds no unified ideological commitment within the movement. Moreover, such a system drives the organization away from its work and in making an impact by the decreasing support for the increasing numbers of seriously poor producers (Low and Davenport 2006). As an aggravating result, procuring through the big wholesalers or WFTO as a necessary trade-off has made the organization's product offering less unique, which has also affected the 'story' behind the products that used to help customers in their buying decisions. Such a trade-off has therefore contributed to losing the organization's competitive advantage (Berghman et al. 2006), which continued to plummet regardless or precisely because of the over-faith by the management



representatives in the potential of increasing market share through the mainstreamed fairtrade in an aid context.

This case shows how the fairtrade movement reproduces the very evils against which it first positioned itself (Oppenheim 2005; Jacquiau 2006 in Wilkinson 2007). Taken altogether, these events boil down to an aid organization that lacks capability in reconciling the external and internal – the forces of the market and the precepts of mission, in finding an alternative and suitable solution, and the lack of foresight as to what aggravates or mitigates the challenges.

Indeed, the organization somehow went astray from its original mission that most of the respondents and volunteers identify themselves with, through the increased focus on promoting fairtrade and increasing market orientation, and which consequentially has brought them to the current situation. However, the shortage in capabilities to combine solidarity work and market-driving or the lack of foresight as to what works or not, or when an activity has reached a saturation state, do not discount the fact that the organization took initiatives to address the growing social inequality. It had been, at least initially, creative and innovative in finding solutions to societal problems and through its involvement and proximity to communities (Evans et al. 2005) until the organization (willingly or unwillingly) signed into the lure of the market (namely, succumbing to the influences of the mainstreamed fairtrade), which became the start of its (stores') demise.

Paradoxically, the increasing marketization of third sector organizations that marked their quest in finding innovative solutions (Reay and Hinings 2009) through embracing an entrepreneurial mindset and transforming the organizational cultures (Germak and Singh 2009) is the same 'solution' that somehow divided them internally and alienated them from their original mission. Their exploration through fairtrade meant that their original mission of supporting and developing the smaller and more marginalized producers was not concurrently exploited (Smith 2015), hence became compromised. In a wider context, the proliferation of fairtrade products that aggravated the market share of IM Fair Trade stores can be attributed to the contribution of organizations like IM in promoting the original novel idea behind fairtrade. It is therefore not far-fetched, although difficult to explicitly ascertain and quantify, that their fairtrade work and advocacy have helped to promote the idea and ideology behind fairtrade in Sweden, which by implication is a value in itself.

## Logic salience properties

The complexity in embracing both market and mission logics (Skelcher and Smith 2015) is exemplified in the fairtrade case, especially when groups of individuals separately hold comparably strong adherence to market and mission logics. Faced with the challenges of combining mission and market logics, the organizational members struggled to make sense of the purpose of their sales activities. The series of changing the product lines that were not always produced by the small producers that IM has been supporting and working with for many years, combined with procurement of products via the established fairtrade wholesalers meant that the products became less unique and characteristic of IM, and that the organization's original mission of supporting and developing its 'own' small, disadvantaged producers took a backseat. Moreover, the procurement via fairtrade wholesalers was considered as a necessary trade-off to cover for the instability and higher costs of products supplied by the disadvantaged and often much less organized small producers. An emerging pattern of extended and repeated series of similar actions to improve sales figures indicates that, as the organization contended with the conflicting logics, the strategy taken became a futile exercise of *fitting square pegs into round holes*.

This case shows that when the complexity from convergence of logics is underestimated, it can stifle the ability to find alternative innovative solutions or capabilities (Greenwood et al. 2011) and cause stagnation, making a deviant or desired result inconceivable (Jay 2013). Here, the interplay between internal and external influences in an organization involved in market-driving efforts in an aid development context becomes highly relevant. This is exemplified by the role played by the mainstreaming of fairtrade, which increased its reach but decreased its legitimacy and therefore was argued as possessing no unified ideological commitment within the movement (Low and Davenport 2006) that the incumbents and challengers alike neglected to consider closely, which had detrimental ramifications for the IM fairtrade enterprise.

### Constrainer of responses

The findings thus indicate that IM's failure to reconcile the competing demands of the multiple logics can be attributed to groups of individuals' comparably

strong but separately held salience to mission and market logics. The incessant treading in the same hole caused by the groups' indifference to each other and failure to find a middle ground had inevitably compromised their original mission, defeated both of the goals, and thus left nothing and no one as a winner. These comparably strong but adversarial and separately held saliences suggest the ideologies and values tied to their respective logic of preference: the incumbents with their stronger salience to mission logic, and the challengers with their stronger salience toward market logic (these saliences and the consequent failure to achieve both of the goals will be further discussed in the next chapter and illustrated in figure 5). In other words, the comparable strength and adamant logic salience of the incumbents and challengers made them adversaries, and hence stuck (Jay 2013) in their own tribe or the so-called coalitions (Pache and Santos 2010), where they justified their goals, beliefs, and actions based on the logic to which they adhered (Friedland and Alford 1991; Townley 1999). This resulted in a neglect of the internal and external conditions and processes through which logics may appear competing or irreconcilable in the first place (Greenwood et al. 2011).

IM, in its effort to generate money and at the same time be able to support the producers in the South, joined the WFTO. This entailed increased product procurement via WFTO or its accredited wholesalers. Consequentially, the procurement via the organization's 'own' producers who are smaller, and disadvantaged, became much less, thus diminishing IM's connection to their original mission of supporting the more disadvantaged. This made IMFT's product range less unique, particularly considering the mainstreaming of fairtrade; it also made telling the 'story' behind the products less straightforward. As a result, some employees and volunteers became somewhat disenfranchised between fairtrade and IM as an organization.

Moreover, there were several factors that compounded IM's challenges in its market-driving efforts such as: the continued reinvention of similar strategies (without access to additional investment) by the succeeding managers in charge of the IMFT stores that failed to reconcile the demands of the market and the mission; the failure from both the challengers and the incumbents to welcome and acquire competencies from each side of the coin or to cross-fertilize, owing to the values and ideologies that they identify themselves with the most; and their inability to read the times. Hence, instead of creating a competitive advantage

through market-driving (Berghman et al. 2006), these challenges in IM's market-driving efforts finally led to the demise of the IMFT enterprise.

The above means that the comparably strong salience of two groups of individuals to market logic (challengers) and mission logic (incumbents) inhibits actions or responses that could have led to achieving financial stability and social goals. Instead, such incessant salience to promote separate agendas constrained achieving any of the goals. Hence, for IM, the comparably strong adherence to market and mission logics held by the separate groups of individuals preserved what each coalition espoused (Pache and Santos 2010) according to their respective logic salience. Their inability to resolve internal conflicts (Friedland and Alford 1991) held back, at the same time, the reconciliation of the competing logics that led IM's failure to achieve financial sustainability and uphold its mission. Logic salience, thus, became a constrainer on the pursuit of both goals.

Similar to the previous chapter, this chapter also addresses the second research question, only this time in adversarial settings. What we can infer from the insights here is that the groups of individuals (incumbents and challengers) attempt to comply with competing demands as a way of dealing with the complexity of their inhabited world (Gautier et al. 2018). However, their attempts to comply do not readily translate into being able to reconcile the competing demands in such a complex environment, particularly due to their internal divisions. They therefore engage in justifications/excuses and self-preservation mechanisms, making logic salience as a constrainer of responses. This constraining property occurs as organizational members experience and navigate around tensions from multiple logics that cause adversarial conflicts between them (Pache and Santos 2013a). These actors evidently become entangled in the paradox of embeddedness (Uzzi 1997) where intra-organizational communities with connections to field-level occupational communities have differing awareness and receptivity to institutional pressures (Delmas and Toffel 2008), as revealed by the division between the incumbents and challengers.

The actors' agency hence becomes apparent, as they bring their interpretation of priorities and preferable outcomes to the decision process (Ocasio 1997; Chung and Luo 2008). With the constraining property of the groups' logic salience, it inevitably entailed implications for the hybridization of the organizations to which they belong. It exemplifies institutional work, as what Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) argue as an agency's influence in either creating, maintaining, or

changing the institutional order. These organizational outcomes and implications for hybridity and other insights are further discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter summary

What can be construed from the above findings is that organizational members in the studied organization relate and respond to competing demands of logics based on what they value the most and what ideology they identify themselves with. This is similar to the findings from the partnership in the previous chapter. However, IM shows a distinctive set of factors that differentiate it from the other organizations studied here. The fairtrade enterprise is more straightforward in a market exchange context; therefore, at first glance, it had a greater likelihood of achieving both market and mission goals.

What we have learned from this chapter, which further answers the second research question: “What do attachments to logics prompt in terms of responses?” in adversarial settings, is that *the comparably strong but separately held attachments to a particular logic* by the incumbents and challengers had made it difficult for them to integrate their knowledge and competencies and to work toward a common goal. These groups’ respective logic of preference – the incumbents with their stronger salience to mission logic, and the challengers with a stronger salience to market logic, turned them into adversaries and made them immersed into their own camps and preferences, resulting in them being less inclined to appreciate and welcome whatever the other camp has to offer. Accordingly, the decisions made in running the stores were similar, but with an expectation of a different result. This internal division between the respondents also made them unable to see the bigger context that involves changes in the external environment, especially how the proliferation of fairtrade products – although a positive societal development, has affected the uniqueness of IMFT products due to the increasing procurement via WFTO wholesalers. The adversarial camps’ logic saliences therefore became a constrainer of responses. These, in sum, had an adverse effect on the organization’s competitive advantage at the same time that the organization’s original mission of supporting the smaller and more disadvantaged producers took a back seat.

The original purpose of the fairtrade movement is to improve the lives of the smaller and most disadvantaged producers. However, this case indicates that these disadvantaged producers ended up in the periphery, as they do not have the capacity to obtain certification, showing the 'darkside' of the movement. The growing procurement via WFTO has also contradicted the organization's original mission of supporting the most disadvantaged producers. We, therefore, see here a paradoxical situation in the current environment brought about by the increasing marketization of nonprofits, where groups of individuals became adversaries. The organization's solution to alleviate the situation of small producers through selling fairtrade products procured via WFTO also became the cause of internal disputes, the neglect of its original mission, the plummeting of sales, and ultimately the demise of the stores. This means that neither of their market and mission goals were achieved, and the attempt at hybrid organizing was blocked.



# Logics negotiation across the cases

The increasing demand for nonprofit organizations to find alternative ways of financing their operations is attributed according to the literature (e.g. Fowler 2000b) to decreasing funding availability, increased competition between funding recipients, and the alleged inefficiency of the sector despite or possibly because of the decades-long aid-dependence. With such pressure to find alternative sources of income, the third sector has started to succumb, albeit not always voluntarily, to the precepts of neoliberalism through marketization and professional management of their programs. Some see marketization as a potential and viable solution and acknowledge the inevitability of having to embrace both market and mission logics. However, the findings from the case organizations here suggest that the increasing prominence of the market logic is being met with varying degrees of resistance by those adhering to the mission logic.

It can be surmised that across the cases, there are several common as well as some divergent denominators on how the organizations have addressed the funding scarcity and how the organizational members have understood and responded to the pursuit of multiple goals. In this chapter, I further analyze and synthesize the insights from these cases.

In order to understand the internal behaviors and practices of NPOs through their organizational members, one must understand the external environmental constraints and their pressures on an organization (Battilana and Lee 2014). Hence, I first summarize the funding challenges and the organizations' responses to these challenges and give a brief note on the interconnectedness of the internal and external environments. Thereafter, I account for how I explored the analytical currency of logic salience as an emerging concept by providing a synthesis of the core insights from the empirical chapters and identifying the various logic saliences of individuals. This exploration, as discussed earlier, is undertaken simultaneously to developing the emerging concept. This chapter also summarizes



what logic salience offers in relation to the institutional logics approach and institutional work.

## Funding challenges and organizational responses

Skyddsvärnet, Afrikagrupperna (AG) with its partners Wellness Foundation (WF) and Surplus People Project (SPP), and Individuell Människohjälp (IM), have all experienced funding instability and competition for funding. The fact that AG and IM are both SIDA frame organizations did not shield them from funding vulnerability. Skyddsvärnet is a nonprofit organization that lost its state funding some decades ago, which prompted it to find alternatives to finance its operations by becoming a competitive market actor. This marked the increasing professionalization of Skyddsvärnet.

AG, on the other hand, is an aid organization that in recent years formally embarked on a fundraising campaign and tried to integrate fundraising into its operations. Similarly, AG's partner organizations, apart from the funding received from AG and other donors, also tried to diversify funds through a social enterprise and expansion into the SADC region (WF), and through consultancy and government tenders, albeit sparingly (SPP).

IM, however, intensified its market-driving through joining WFTO and transforming its stores from being IM stores with products produced mostly by their 'own' small and disadvantaged producers, into becoming IM Fair Trade (IMFT) stores. This started the increase in product procurement via WFTO producers or associated wholesalers. Insofar as all organizations studied here have experienced funding scarcity or instability, they all resorted to market solutions, although to varied extents and levels of progress. With the mix of funding diversification or set of offerings, the organizations are essentially bound to have interactions internally and externally.

## *The interconnectedness of the internal and external environments*

Organizations are best understood as embedded within communities, political systems, and other coordinative fields of organizations (Feeney 1997) as one of the core assumptions of institutional theory. According to Lawrence and Suddaby (2006:220), actions carried out by individuals and groups should be analyzed in relation to this institutional order that governs them. Being institutionally embedded, organizations and the actors that inhabit them thus become inevitably socialized into practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules that form institutional logics (Thornton and Ocasio 1999) and shape what constitutes legitimate goals and the legitimate means of how they may be pursued (Friedland and Alford 1991; Scott 1994). In other words, institutional logics shape organizational behavior (Cornforth 2014) and actors' beliefs and practices (Dobbin 1994; Thornton and Ocasio 1999). According to Pache and Santos (2013b), when individuals operate in environments dominated by a single logic, their responses will most likely be determined by the ties they have developed with this logic. This means that the logic of an organization (based on the logic that characterizes or dominates a certain field or institution in which the said organization is situated) is what its organizational members are socialized into, making responses by organizations and their members intimately linked.

Therefore, considering that logic or logics already exist at the field level, we can say that organizations in this field or institutional sector have a pre-existing, oftentimes, dominant logic. This, in turn, is supposed to guide organizational behavior, and actors' beliefs and practices. However, responses clearly become more difficult to anticipate when individuals operate in environments embedded in multiple and competing logics because complying with one logic may signify defying the other logic (Pache and Santos 2013b). Hence, determining individuals' adherence to logics becomes more complex in a hybrid context exposed to competing logics. Like in any actions or decisions, especially in a context where there are different logics vying for attention, there are other factors that may influence people's salience that drive these actions. Taking into account the possible role of individual agency in organizational change and trying to understand its features and origins does not disregard other influences (Battilana, Leca and Boxenbaum 2009). We cannot therefore rule out, for instance, the

interconnectedness of the internal and external environments that help shape individuals' logic salience.

Moreover, the concept of hybridity starts with the premise that organizations do not emerge independently of the external environment (Battilana and Lee 2014). The developments concerning the studied organizations presented earlier are indeed not isolated from each other, and they also show how these organizations negotiate with their environments, such as how they relate to or interact with the funding sources through selling services to the government (Skyddsvärnet), aid funding (AG, WF, and SPP), or product selling (IM). The interplay, not only internally between the market and mission logics, but also between organizations and their environments, and the lack of the kind of resources that normal business firms have access to, have made, for instance, market-driving particularly challenging for an aid organization like IM.

The donor-partner organizations in the second case (AG, WF, and SPP), on the other hand, had minimal 'success' in funding diversification owing to their advocacy offering, and which, according to their own words – could not be sold. Advocacy, being their line of expertise and which is anchored in their values and ideologies as nonprofits doing development work, does not provide enough room for these organizations to develop potentials and acquire market-driving competencies. There is an understanding, as particularly expressed at AG, that there are others who are better suited to sell and compete in the market world. All these are used as a justification for the minimal effort to venture on alternatives. The years of aid funding, or the so-called aid-dependence syndrome (Edgren 2002), aggravated the lack of incentive for these organizations, more explicitly expressed in AG and SPP, to exert more serious efforts to diversify outside the usual aid funding environment. These inertial and path-dependence properties (Argote et al. 1990; Szulanski 1996), however, do not necessarily mean that the organizations are divorced from the demands related to any professional organization that typically exists in the private and public sectors. On the contrary, these three partnership organizations are constantly pressured to meet performance goals and are exposed to extensive reporting and documentation to satisfy donor requirements (Sanders 2012; Brandsen et al. 2014).

AG, WF, and SPP showed some level of learning on how to deal with environmental threats, hence the efforts to diversify funds. However, SPP seemed more able to read the times that had evidently brought the organization to the

current funding stability that it enjoys. Nonetheless, insofar as there are other factors that have an impact on societies and communities beyond what any organization does, the level of ‘success’ or potential of these organizations in securing funds through market solutions or aid funding proposals is also dependent on outside factors. Among these factors are the tax regulatory structure (Taylor 2002), measurement tools (e.g. qualitative vs quantitative), the differing requirements of donors and level of competencies to deliver such requirements, the organization’s autonomy (e.g. the ability and preconditions to criticize governments) (Sanders 2012), or a service/product offering that sells.

The study does show that the organizations, being embedded in a mission-premised way of organizing, dealt with the pressures from funding instability through market solutions as alternatives. However, as they did so, they had to deal with challenges that come with such embeddedness, while at the same time deal with the challenges when working with market alternatives with their own share of embeddedness. These mean that regardless of the type of solutions implemented to address the prevailing funding scarcity or instability – be it through market initiatives or continued aid funding, each has its own set of risks and challenges.

A point of particular interest here is the increasingly professionalized and bureaucratic way of assessing the potential, success, or progress of these organizations (Froelich 1999). This is made even more complex by expecting results from programs that usually take time to become visible and measurable, in order to meet requirements based on the agenda of the donors and which is said could compromise the role of the third sector (Osula and Ng 2014). For an aid scenario (for instance, the donor-partner relations), actors are expected to deliver quantitative results for their work that usually entail qualitative elements, such as rights advocacy and solidarity work. The organizations are hence not immune from environmental threats that entail increasing marketization and professional management of the sector, irrespective of their resources being aid-based or market-based.

The above thus gives us an understanding that there indeed has been a deliberate strategy in embedding the neoliberal agenda of governments into the operations of the third sector with which they have contractual collaborations, as a way of ensuring that the funding of organizations is tied to provisions of specific types of welfare to recipients (and which are subject to performance measurement). Because of the scarce availability of traditional grants/funding and the current general trend where the third sector becomes the public sector’s surrogate for

delivering public services, the third sector's silent compliance with government's agenda was ensured while effectively quashing potential political opposition; the sector has also provided the government with a convenient means to get itself rid of difficult and unprofitable welfare sector functions (Graefe 2006; see also Van Gramberg and Bassett 2005).

This brings us to the problematic homogeneity of measurements that is overwhelmingly tied to economic, quantitative, and standardized metrics (Hwang and Powell 2009) that usually address a narrower stakeholder-group, such as owners and investors with goals associated with business ventures involving market success and profitability (Jensen 2002). This is despite the fact that the third sector's social impact is difficult to quantify and the factors difficult to ascertain. It is because social goals involve qualitative, ambiguous, and non-standardized metrics (Ebrahim and Rangan 2010; Epstein 2008), for example, well-being of individuals seeking employment, or advocating for and protecting the rights of careworkers and supporting disadvantaged producers through solidarity work, making its evaluation and progress measurement and comparison of the successes of social missions challenging (Smith et al. 2013). This shows that organizations are not merely shaped by the need to be efficient and effective (as stressed in economic theories) but by 'cultural elements' of the environment as well, making taken for granted beliefs and widely shared rules as templates for organizing (DiMaggio and Powell 1991a:26-27), such as how logic salience prompts individuals to respond to multiple logics in particular ways.

Although power mostly resides and remains in the North, we can say that there is inter-/co-dependence between donors (AG) and partners (WF and SPP). The money is passed down, and so are the corresponding contractual obligations. On the other hand, organizations that engage in a more market-oriented alternative may succeed in achieving financial sustainability, which would ensure that sustained operations also have to deal with challenges that include the risk of mission drift (Skyddsvärnet), or in missing the point altogether (IM) due to the complexity in managing competing logics. IM's failure to reconcile the tensions between the logics can be attributed to the indifference between the groups owing to their comparably strong but separately held logic saliences, which has led to organizational dysfunction or the most common consequence of blocked hybridity and hence, failure (Skelcher and Smith 2015) in achieving both financial and social goals.

As actors experience increased pressures to simultaneously embed multiple competing demands within organizations (Kraatz and Block 2008; Greenwood et al. 2011; Besharov and Smith 2014), the concept of logic salience helps us to understand why actors have a greater propensity to adhere to a particular logic, and therefore accounts for how this plurality of logics is managed internally while considering the influence of institutional context (Battilana and Dorado 2010). It is because individuals are guided by their social identities and identification (March and Olsen 1989) and their social identification is derived from a perception of oneness with a group of persons (Ashforth and Mael 1989), for instance, being either a 'humanist' or an 'economist,' an 'incumbent' or a 'challenger.'

## Logic salience and its currency as an analytical tool

Chapter 6, with the case organization Skyddsvärnet, sets the scene, as it introduced the role of individual logic salience for an organization in its decisions and strategies as it contended and managed the interplay between competing logics. In this particular nonprofit hybrid context, we have come to learn that individuals possess varying degrees of salience to logics: one that is stronger toward market logic, one that is situated between market and mission logics, and another that is stronger toward mission logic. For Skyddsvärnet, despite the general agreement amongst the respondents on the comparable importance of both market and mission logics (the common talk), the organization's decision to expand aggressively and recruit new hires who bring with them business and management acumen becomes a manifestation of its key members' stronger salience to market logic. This acquisition of competencies outside the nonprofit sector and implementation of aggressive market methods created an imbalance that has affected organizational hybridity. Consequently, the organization achieved financial sustainability but at the expense of maintaining the same focus on the mission and which was met with reservation from those who had an intermediate position between market and mission logics, and resistance from those who had a stronger mission logic salience.

Logic salience helps to explain the role of individuals or group of individuals' inclinations to a particular logic to which they are drawn ideologically that leads to a certain organizational action (i.e. a more market-orientation) (see figure 5, p. 257)

that does not, in this case, necessarily represent what is commonly shared by the organizational members. It is intimately linked to people's perceptions and corresponding actions or decisions (walking the talk), especially in a collective (organization) versus individual context, where the common talk on the importance of both the market and mission logics was not 'walked through.' This indicates that the common talk as the espoused theory of the organization, did not become manifest in the actors' theory in use, as they engage with the multiple goals. Hence, the *enabling* function of individual logic salience has *disabled* the walking of the talk, reinforcing what Waldorf et al. (2013) argue that logics can simultaneously constrain and enable action. Based on the values and ideologies akin to a particular logic or multiple logics the organizational members identify themselves with the most, individual logic salience, thus, conditions the responses of nonprofit Skyddsvärnet in the pursuit of multiple goals. This, in turn, helps to explain the ensuing outcomes from logics negotiation, especially as organizations and their actors are wedged between competing logics.

From the earlier discussion of the analyzed empirical material, and in order for us to approach and understand the varying logic inclinations of actors, there are thus three categories of logic saliences that can be derived.


## The logic salience categories

I categorize the individuals who have a stronger inclination toward the market logic as belonging to Logic Salience A, the intermediate position as Logic Salience B, and those who have a stronger affinity to mission logic as belonging to Logic Salience C. It is, however, important to note that being identified here, for instance, as belonging to Logic Salience A means that such salience to the market logic is *stronger*, and it does not necessarily mean that the respondent (or respondents under that category) has a total indifference – rather has a *weaker* salience – to the other logic.<sup>29</sup> From the accounts of individuals as they interpreted and negotiated the logics (Greenwood et al. 2011) and how these accounts indicated their adherence to a particular logic (Pache and Santos 2013b), I provide

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<sup>29</sup> Hence, salience (category) is relative and not necessarily exclusive to one logic, particularly in hybrid contexts.

**Table 7:** Individual logic salience categories, along the same market-mission logics spectrum.<sup>30</sup>

Market-mission logics spectrum 	<b>Logic Salienc A:</b> <i>Stronger market logic salience</i>	Individuals who regard the means, at times, as justifiable in order to meet the ends: “We will do what we need to do and believe in, but it has to be viable financially; otherwise, we can’t do anything for anyone in the long run when the money runs out. For me, it doesn’t matter, but I can say that it is a continuous internal battle, when there is always someone who thinks sometimes that we make money, so we do like this. But then when we do so and there’s no more money, you lose your job and all of us here can lose our job in two years or right away, and then we can’t help anyone” (Director).
	<b>Logic Salienc B:</b> <i>Intermediate/in-between logic salience</i>	Individuals who are for controlled growth or see no contradiction between the market-mission logics: “There is always risk in growing, depending on how you choose to grow. I am for a controlled growth, where we try in a smaller scale, produce processes, find methods . . . we should always know what we get ourselves into; if we fail, what should we do then?”; “I don’t know a single company where the economy is not central, so it is possible that I don’t see any contradiction in it” (Section Manager #3).
	<b>Logic Salienc C:</b> <i>Stronger mission logic salience</i>	Individuals who see beyond the practical implications of the expansion and market-related activities, which includes the organization’s <i>raison d’etre</i> – its relevance to the organizational values and to the employees: “Because we project ourselves to be those who work with people and for being humanistic, then it should not be too much. . . . To be completely controlled by money-making when operating in the social sphere means that one has completely lost the point” (Section Manager #1).

in table 7 a sample set of representative excerpts, taken from the Skyddsvärnet case, which illustrate each of the salience categories.

The stronger adherence to market-orientation at Skyddsvärnet belongs thus to Logic Salienc A; the generally stronger adherence to mission logic in the Swedish-South African development partnership belongs to Logic Salienc C; while the comparably strong but separately held salience to market and mission logics at IM belongs to both Logic Salienc A and C, respectively, which inevitably constrained both logics. As we may recall from chapter 6, the initial common talk of the respondents at Skyddsvärnet showed that there is a general adherence to the logics. Upon further analysis, the data also showed that the common talk, which at first glance can be adduced as an intermediate salience (Logic Salienc B) where some individuals espouse both market and mission logics and therefore make them belong to this intermediate salience, did not translate into organizational actions that represent the collective.

Through the accounts of individuals that show how they make sense of the competing logics and their degree of adherence to a particular logic that indicates their salience, this study therefore shows that the kind of institutional complexity they experience from multiple logics (Greenwood et al. 2011) is aggravated by the expectation of hybrid organizations aimed at upholding dual mandates (Battilana

<sup>30</sup> This table of excerpts is a reproduction from a published paper (Jönsson 2019) based on empirical material from this manuscript.



and Dorado 2010). By way of explanation, although there are individuals in this study who espouse this constellation through their salience to both logics (Logic Salience B), maintaining dual mandates that constitute hybridity is particularly challenging as actors respond to and have a stronger propensity to support a particular logic that resonates more with their values and ideologies.

We can thus explore logic salience as we inquire into how individuals relate to and interpret competing demands involved in multiple logics, how they express their (dis)agreements with it, and how these lead to certain responses by key individuals that ultimately inform organizational decisions. Inasmuch as the studied organizations failed to uphold market and mission logics simultaneously, at least not in approximately similar or comparable extent (see table 8), we can gauge the dynamics (or degree) of hybridity of an organization based on its responses, which are conditioned by its members' salience to a particular logic. This then meets either the output or normative legitimacy (Nevile 2010), as discussed in the empirical chapters and in various parts of chapters 10 and 11.

**Table 8:** Exploration and incremental development of logic salience.

	<b>Logic Salience A (Market)</b>	<b>Logic Salience<sup>31</sup> A vs. C</b>	<b>Logic Salience C (Mission)</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Skyddsvärnet	X			enabled financial sustainability compromised mission
AG, WF, SPP			X	enabled/upheld mission <sup>32</sup> maintained aid-dependence
IM Fair Trade		X		constrained both of the multiple goals

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<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that when the logic salience concept emerged (case 1), Logic Salience that is situated in an intermediate position is B where individuals have comparable salience to both market and mission logics (the common talk). In this cross-case analysis/synthesis, however, the stronger salience(s) to market and mission logics are held separately by two different groups of individuals, making them adversaries.

<sup>32</sup> Unlike AG and SPP, WF's mission was momentarily neglected, mainly due to extreme funding challenges that affected their momentary prioritization of activities, but the team's faith in their mission resembles that of SPP's.

## Understanding why and how actors respond to multiple logics

By identifying logic salience through the first empirical case, we came to know that the organizational talk was not translated into an action that represents a coherent collective response, precisely due to individuals' stronger salience to a particular logic, namely market logic. As the analysis of the remaining empirical material progressed, it became apparent that mission logic is more prevalent owing to individuals' stronger salience to it (AG, WF, SPP), while both logics are of comparable strength according to individuals' separately held salience toward them (IM). Further analysis that follows an abductive process has led to the identification of the salience categories (refer back to table 7). These categories inform us that although all the studied organizations share the same nonprofit attributes, their organizational members' adherence to mission logic (the logic that nonprofits are typically premised on) or market logic, for that matter, vary considerably. This exercise of identifying logic salience categories has allowed the interpretations of logics [namely 'interpretations of subgroups being often shaped by a single logic' (Greenwood et al. 2011)] and the degree of adherence to logics [namely 'individuals' degree of adherence to logics that drive their responses' (Pache and Santos 2013b)] to come together in a clearer concept, and therefore arrive at a theoretical contribution.

As actors experience increased pressures to simultaneously embed multiple competing demands within organizations (Besharov and Smith 2014; Greenwood et al. 2011; Kraatz and Block 2008) from external and internal environments (Greenwood et al. 2011), their responses clearly become more difficult to anticipate (Pache and Santos 2013b). Logic salience, through its categories, does show that it encompasses both the individuals' interpretations of the logics they contend with, and the degree of their inclination to any or both of the logics that influence their responses. Through applying logic salience in the remainder of the empirical cases, the meanings that actors attach to institutional logics, exemplified in paradoxical and adversarial settings, gave us a deeper understanding of the market-mission tension, which can enable or constrain the successful pursuit of a social mission (Sanders 2015) or the pursuit of multiple goals (Berger et al. 2007; Brammer and Millington 2008). In turn, such an application facilitated the development of logic salience as a concept, which then helped to explore and

explain the dynamics of hybridity as illustrated by its categories' enabling and constraining properties.

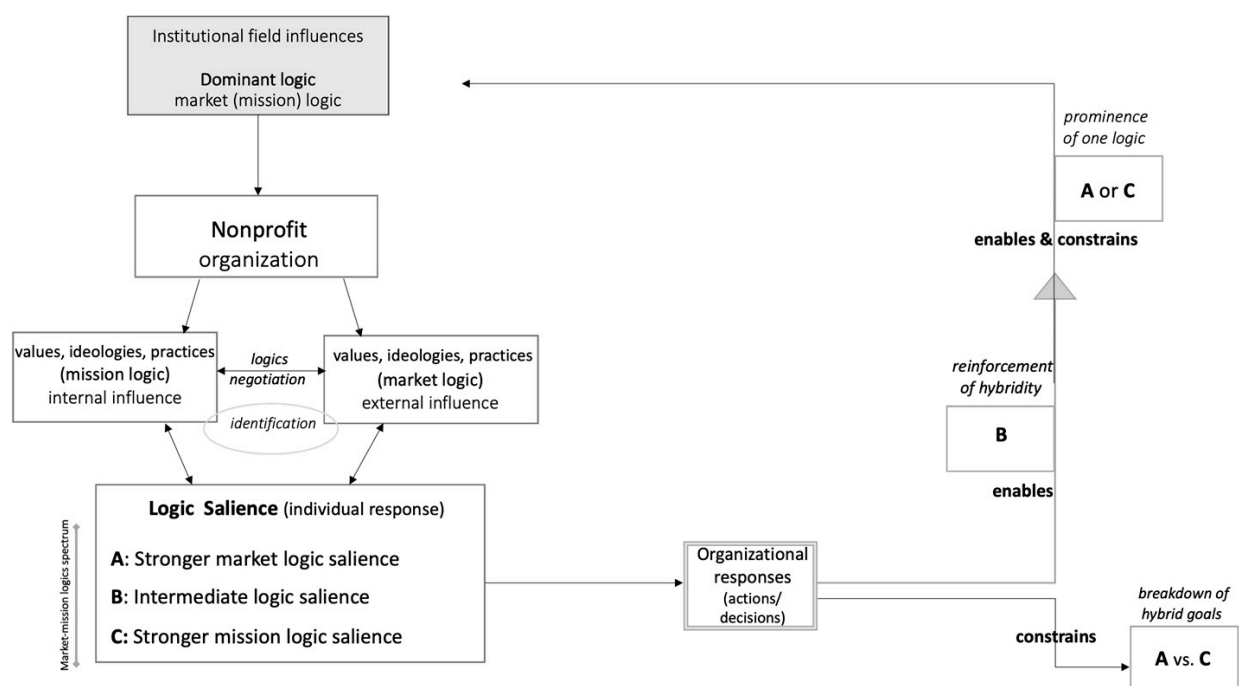
As organizations experience institutional complexity whenever they deal with conflicting prescriptions from institutional logics (Greenwood et al. 2011), logic salience shows how individuals relate to these multiple logics, and how a particular salience can contribute to make one of the logics dominant. It echoes what van Gestel and Hillebrand (2011) are suggesting that "multiple institutional logics remain in play after a dominant logic is settled" (in Greenwood et al. 2011:331).

In the first case, the logic salience conditioned by market ideals (Logic Salience A) has influenced market logic into occupying a prominent position, as manifested in the expansion and recruitment strategy. Here, it became evident that the common talk did not hold, mainly due to *how* individuals identify themselves with the values and ideology that characterize being a 'humanist' or an 'economist.' It shows that although the organization is supposed to be embedded in the institutional logic of mission being a nonprofit, the individuals with a stronger salience toward market logic show *how* they are driven by economic and technical demands (DiMaggio and Powell 1991b) or a concern to satisfy institutional pressures to ensure survival (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) as institutional theory suggests. These resource-related needs 'provide a limit on both the durability and malleability of institutional logics' (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms 2008). Hence, output legitimacy (Nevile 2010) takes precedence over social and cultural demands (DiMaggio and Powell 1991b) or the social acceptance, status, and identity-related concerns (Pache and Santos 2013b) that constitute normative legitimacy (Nevile 2010).

By implication, the opposite applies to the case of AG, WF, and SPP where logic salience (C) has influenced the mission logic into maintaining a prominent position, as manifested in the lack of serious consideration to venture on market-oriented solutions, and which was aggravated by the alleged aid-dependency syndrome. In this multiple case, we are able to take a closer look at how individuals' logic salience becomes manifest in paradoxical settings where the half-hearted efforts to venture on market solutions were justified through their advocacy and solidarity mission that is in line with their expertise. In the final case organization, the logic saliences (A vs. C) conditioned by both market and mission ideals that were held separately by two groups of individuals have constrained both logics into occupying a comparable prominence, or in maintaining a prominent

position for any of the logics. This became manifest through their failure to cross-fertilize or integrate the multiple goals due to the adversarial positions that ensued, which, in turn, led to the demise of the IMFT stores. The organizational members' values and ideologies that are tied to their logic of preference are hence the denominator that is common among them as well as across the cases and various settings.

The concept of logic salience shows us that in contexts where multiple logics occur, individuals are not only shaped by, but also shape, institutional logics (Pache and Santos 2013b); it entails the idea that logic salience is conditioned by a certain ideological preference that lies within these institutional influences, ushering them to respond to logics in particular ways. Individual agency being culturally embedded and how it is involved in the reproduction and transformation of institutional logics (Thornton et al. 2012) is therefore taken into account through individuals' logic salience.



**Figure 5:** This illustration highlights the insights from all the empirical cases. Inspired by Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury's (2012:19) model.

Figure 5 illustrates how the institutional field influences enter the nonprofit organization, causing the organizational members to grapple between the market and mission logics. In this negotiation of logics, organizational members relate and respond to institutional logics, according to the values and ideologies that

they identify with the most. The figure shows the three logic salience categories along the market-mission logics spectrum. The logic salience of individuals – namely the category that is stronger, influences organizational responses. The logic salience-driven organizational decision, in turn, enables either an organization's path toward a more market (logic salience A: Skyddsvärnet), or a more mission orientation (Logic Salience C: AG, WF, and SPP).

The figure also illustrates how the logic salience-driven organizational responses can constrain when salience to both market and mission that is held separately by groups of individuals are comparably strong, resulting in a failure to achieve any of the goals (Logic Salience A vs. C: IM). Although none of the organizations were able to uphold the competing logics equally, by implication if organizational responses are driven by individuals' salience to both market and mission logics (B), the hybridity will be established and reinforced. The illustration also highlights that organizational decisions, driven by any of the logic saliences (A or C), can lead to the prominence of that preferred (or salient) logic, making it dominant at the field level.

Logic salience, as this study has shown, therefore helps us to understand the 'how' and 'why' questions posed by institutional work through individuals or groups of individuals as they respond to institutional logics (Lawrence et al. 2011) and what this entails to organizational actions or decisions (see table 8 for a summary of these outcomes). As argued in the literature, meanings are negotiated at a local level and help us in determining how particular understandings of the market-mission tension may enable or constrain the successful pursuit of a social mission (Sanders 2015), and which is shown here through logic salience (as figure 5 illustrates).

With the expectation of hybrid organizations aimed at maintaining dual mandates (Battilana and Dorado 2010), the kind of institutional complexity they experience from multiple logics (Greenwood et al. 2011) is aggravated. The influence of individuals in decision-making that favors one logic over the other, which the current study has shown, therefore provides both practical and theoretical contributions.

The study contributes by demonstrating the enabling and constraining role of logic salience in organizational decisions at the level of individual and group of individuals (Greenwood et al. 2011). Hence, the appreciation, recognition, and

the choice of which logic to prioritize and how to do so can be dictated not only by those with (structural) power. Institutional logics thus become ‘represented’ and given voice (Pache and Santos 2010) as actors ‘carry’ (Zilber 2002) their logic salience being manifested in various responses, such as hiring and expansion decisions, market-driving, as well as the oppositions to these responses. The concept helps explain the role of individuals’ inclination to a particular logic which leads to certain organizational action. As Laroche (1995) argues, decisions and decision-making are best understood as social representations influencing the way people understand, behave, and give meaning to what happens in organizations. What transpires in organizations thus highlights the “impact of individuals and collective actors on the institutions that regulate the fields in which they operate” (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006:218), as influenced by the logic salience of actors.

The constraining and enabling influences of individuals’ salience to a particular logic, hence, show the micro-foundations of institutional logics that take into account “not only how individual agency is culturally embedded in institutional logics but also how individual agency is involved in the reproduction and transformation of these logics” (Thornton et al. 2012:80), respectively. These facets of logic salience, and logic salience as a concept, can therefore become useful in studying how individuals make sense of multiple logics and in explaining some management and organizational responses, within and beyond formal authority and power structures.

Insofar as individuals need to occupy certain power positions for their individual logic salience to shape organizational decisions, it does not discount how the remaining organizational members make sense of competing logics. Put differently, regardless of their structural position, each individual responds to competing logics according to her/his logic salience as a manifestation of her/his ideological preferences. Table 9 highlights what logic salience contributes in relation to the institutional logics approach and institutional work.

**Table 9:** Logic salience in relation to institutional logics and institutional work.

Concept	What it offers/strengths	Shortcomings/challenges
Institutional logics approach	offers theoretical base for explaining hybridity; brings agency into the analysis; deals with interpretation based on dominant logic; deals with adherence to a particular logic (or logics); meanings are negotiated; responses can be enabled and constrained by institutional logics	elite tendencies (i.e. institutional entrepreneurs) the paradox of embeddedness
Institutional work	highlights the interaction between agency and institutions/structure; addresses the neglect of the role of actors; addresses the 'why' and how' in responding to institutional pressures; meanings are negotiated by individuals; meanings arise through social interactions/ everyday work	deterministic tendencies (i.e. purposiveness/intentions)
Logic salience	offers a conceptual idea for understanding how individuals relate to multiple logics; addresses the need to bridge the tension between structure and agency; exemplifies and highlights the role of actors – neither elite nor completely passive nor purposive: every actor has agency, albeit at varying degrees; addresses the 'why' and how' in responding to institutional pressures; meanings are negotiated by individuals; meanings arise through social interactions; with both enabling and constraining properties; deals concurrently with the interpretation of and adherence to logics	the paradox of embeddedness  limited application, namely in hybrid contexts, presence of multiple logics (or values, etc.), attempts at hybridity

This study thus suggests that there, indeed, is a contradiction in running nonprofits as for-profits and that NPOs, either in an aid-dependent scenario or as self-sustaining via commercial alternatives, are not less immune to several challenges that are also intimately tied to their role and distinctive value base. Therefore, to understand how individuals relate to and why they respond to competing institutional logics in particular ways, the findings suggest the relevance of values and ideologies that resonate more with the actors. This ideological identification accounts for the salience actors have toward market or mission logics or both. It also explains how they exercise agency in making sense of the relationship with the normative expectations of an institutional logic and the organizational context they are in (Skelcher and Smith 2015). Logic salience can help us to understand how and why individuals respond in ideologically-torn, paradoxical, and adversarial settings, where their identification to an ideology or set of values tied to a particular logic enables or constrains any or both of the competing goals in institutionally complex hybrid contexts. This dissertation,

therefore, responds to the scarcity of studies on the way organizational members view and experience conflicts from multiple logics and how they carry out individual responses, and by so doing has proposed and developed the concept of logic salience in a context of multiple logics. These insights bring us to the next chapter, where the third and final research question is addressed. In addition, the organizational implications of actors' logic salience is discussed.





## *Chapter 10*

# Toward understanding the funding sustainability of NPOs beyond aid

[p]rogress in the sense of the cumulative growth of knowledge and power over nature is a term that says little about whether the new state will give us more satisfaction than the old. What matters is the successful striving for what at each moment seems attainable. It is not the fruits of past success but the living in and for the future in which human intelligence proves itself. Progress is movement for movement's sake, for it is in the process of learning, and in the effects of having learned something new, that man [sic] enjoys the gift of his intelligence.

- Friedrich Hayek (1960:41)

Nonprofit organizations are encouraged to step outside of the so-called aid 'begging bowl' due to the decreasing resources available to address the increasing societal challenges, and the alleged decades-long ineffectiveness of aid programs. This has led to the increasing pressure for these organizations to find funding alternatives, such as through market-oriented activities. With the call to pursue studies on how hybrid organizations can sustainably combine multiple forms (Battilana and Lee 2014) and the challenges involved in balancing the interplay between competing sets of values or logics (Hailey and James 2004), I have therefore looked into how individuals relate and respond to these challenges and what it entails for organizations and hybridity.

In the previous chapters, I have addressed the first and second research questions. For the first question, "How do individuals relate to multiple logics?," I argued that we can understand how individuals relate and respond to conflicting logics through their logic salience that is tied to their values and ideological

identification. By bringing people back into the conversation, meaning is shown through their sensemaking around institutional logics and through social interactions in the institutions that they inhabit (Hallett and Ventresca 2006). By doing so, I have answered the call to bridge the tension between structure and agency where the role of actors is amplified and how meanings are produced and negotiated (Zilber 2013; Everitt 2013).

As a result of the individuals' attachments or identification, and in answering the second research question, "What do individual attachments to logics prompt in terms of responses?," I find and argue that the logic salience of individuals that prevails within the organizations, in turn, informs responses that enable or constrain organizational actions/decisions.

Based on the insights that build on each other from the empirical exploration of the first and second research questions, in this chapter I specify the opportunities, challenges, and implications of market orientation in the third sector particularly as an espoused sustainable alternative to aid funding (Germak and Singh 2009; Weerawardena et al. 2010), with the concomitant outcomes for the organizations and hybridity in order to address the third and final research question, *What are the implications of such responses?* The benefits of this study are not solely confined within academia and the third sector, but include areas dealing with organizational change, hybridity, identity, and contracting or partnerships in various organizations – be they public or private. It is anticipated for practitioners and decision- and policy- makers to obtain an informed basis whether or not to venture on the hybrid model, or at least what needs to be improved or avoided. Understanding why and how such an innovative approach works (or otherwise) in the context of the third sector or any organization pursuing multiple goals is anticipated to increase the viability of future projects and funding decisions. Accordingly, this study's theoretical contributions include knowing the challenges and how organizations respond to competing logics. For instance, its members' salience to the market logic can be a key to success in becoming self-sustaining but at the expense of the mission logic, or where failure in becoming self-sustaining due to lack of market-driving competencies shields the mission logic.

The practices of engaging in market-oriented and professionally-managed activities so that NPOs can generate income and, at the same time, deliver on their mission, inevitably lead to organizational hybrids. The organizational responses to funding challenges and the interplay between the competing set of

values and consequential changes in organizational culture are topics that have received increasing attention recently. However, in Sweden, knowledge and empirical studies on the changes in the nonprofit third sector are limited. By looking at the interplay between social mission and economic goals as the organizations address the funding challenges, this dissertation provides us with an increased understanding as to what business entails for NPOs, and its implications within (and beyond) the third sector.

From the three identified categories of logic salience, I have shown how organizational members respond to and manage the competing demands of market and mission logics, according to the values and ideologies attached to their logic of preference. Logic salience not only informs and explains why certain responses come about, but the salience categories also indicate where the individuals and groups are on the market-mission logics spectrum. In the absence of quantifiable indicators or measures, the extent of an organization's hybridity can be gauged through organizational responses/processes that are influenced by logic salience. These organizational responses hence become the manifestation of actors' logic salience. In other words, the logic saliences of actors, by implication, show or become an indicator of the approximate extent of an organization's hybridity, through its influence on organizational responses. An aggressive market expansion decision, as an example of such organizational responses, becomes a manifestation of (key) organizational actors' salience to market logic.

All of the organizations studied tried to diversify their resources through market-oriented activities to address the funding scarcity. The individual responses to these activities, for example, resistance or acquisition of competencies, were conditioned by the values tied to their logic salience. In short, if the prevailing logic salience is toward mission, it means it is conditioned by the traditional values prevalent in and associated with NPOs, which then explains the limited or lack of interest in acquiring competencies outside of the sector, namely market competencies. Clearly, the same principle applies when a stronger salience toward market logic is conditioned by the values of the market; hence, an interest in acquiring NPO competencies is less likely. Nonprofit organizations' responses when facing competing logics is thus influenced by their organizational members' logic salience. It means that there are both enabling and constraining faculties (Lewin 1945) in logic salience. Actors' salience, as conditioned by the values and ideologies attached to the logic,

therefore, informs organizational responses that enable or constrain the achievement of either or both of the goals espoused by the logic(s).

## Understanding the opportunities, challenges, and implications of business in the nonprofit third sector

The case organizations in this study serve as excellent examples, whereby instability or scarcity of funding resources is a constant part of organizational life. Resorting to market solutions is contested in the third sector, which is primarily premised on working for and achieving social missions or goals. Combining market and mission logics through diversification of funds (e.g. fundraising or social enterprise) is an organizational response to the external influences on funding volatility. All the studied organizations resorted to this internal response, which was mostly met with resistance that created tension. Apart from the opportunities, challenges, and implications of applying business or market-oriented activities that are identified across the cases, there are also several challenges tied to aid funding.

While there was limited ‘success’ in most of the organizations’ market-oriented initiatives, their aid dependence at the same time curtailed the organizations’ incentive to exert more effort to find alternative funding solutions. There were also other structural challenges that aggravated either or both of the NPOs’ market success and achievement of social goals. By putting focus on the responses to the funding challenges through the different diversification of funds initiatives, the empirical insights have inevitably led us back to aid funding that was being promoted to be escaped from in the beyond-aid scenario. This study therefore demonstrates the symbiosis of the internal and external in understanding how market forces influence the third sector as a result of the hardening and changing funding climate and how the sector through the organizations and their members, in turn, managed these forces.

## *The opportunities and challenges: two sides of the same coin*

At Skyddsvärnet, there is a pronounced agreement amongst the respondents on the comparable importance of their dual mandates of generating income to become sustainable and be able to deliver on their social goals. Although the increasing focus on market-oriented activities was met with resistance, the stronger salience toward market logic (A) has facilitated achieving financial stability (logic salience as an enabler), but at the expense of the original mission (logic salience as a constrainer), where the human side was supposed to take precedence over the economic side. Notwithstanding the toppling of the mission, this 'success' demonstrates the capacity potential of the hybrid model to generate sustainable resources for the organization, ensuring long-term survival with an accompanying operational flexibility that earned income bestows, and the reduction of the organization's overall dependence on donor support (Alter 2002; Boschee and McClurg 2003).

For AG and its partners WF and SPP, their share of experience had endowed them with a chance to venture on business-like activities that are atypical for NPOs. Although their 'success' was minimal, it is precisely the same reason that made them realize that their respective organization's strengths and line of expertise lie in advocacy and solidarity work. It has reinforced the view that their role is within building society and democracy fueled by their values attached to mission logic (C). It has thus facilitated upholding their social goals (logic salience as an enabler) although at the expense of becoming free from aid-dependence (logic salience as a constrainer).

IM, on the other hand, had its share of 'glory days' in running the stores. However, this changed upon the organization's membership of WFTO. The challenges escalated despite, or because of, the incessant attempts to reinvent the wheel with the hope of producing different results. The inability to reconcile the tension between the logics that the challengers (stronger market logic salience: A) and incumbents (stronger mission logic salience: C) represent had finally led them to miss achieving both financial stability and the original mission (making logic salience a constrainer). The same challenges, after a prolonged period of time, however, gave them the opportunity to re-evaluate their position behind the fairtrade collaboration. The collaboration, despite the good intentions behind it, spurred greater focus on market-driving, which then alienated the organization

from its original goals and from the conditions under which such goals were to be achieved. Figure 5 provides an illustration where logic salience either enables or constrains achievement of market and/or social goals.

Put simply, the market-oriented activities provided an opportunity to achieve self-sustainability and concurrently an opportunity for learning or understanding about the risks of imbalance between the market and mission goals (Skyddsvärnet); an opportunity for learning, where they realize that market-oriented activities do not benefit their operations considering that their offerings and values-based context are more suitable in an aid-funded environment they are accustomed to (AG, WF, and SPP); and for understanding that market-driving is particularly challenging due to the complexity of reconciling market and mission logics, especially when the prerequisites for market-driving are not available (namely resources, competencies needed by both challengers and incumbents) compounded by external factors (i.e. mainstreaming of fairtrade) and lack of foresight on its adverse effects (IM).

These indicate that how actors make sense of the differing demands of logics can change, congruent to the context that they are in (Skelcher and Smith 2015), and since logics can change or develop over time (Thornton et al. 2012), so can individuals' logic salience, possibly and eventually. It also indicates that the antagonistic demands of the logics challenge the taken-for-granted character of institutional arrangements and indeed make individuals more cognizant of an alternative series of action or in accepting or rejecting whichever of the demands tied to each logic appease or agitate their identity, more specifically referred to here as identification to such an identity (as, for instance, being a 'humanist' or an 'economist') as well as their organizations' legitimacy needs (Pache and Santos 2010).

It has been argued that there are several benefits from marketization trends that NPOs receive, such as more reliable resource streams, greater efficiency and innovation, better targeting of services to client needs, increased legitimacy, and possibly greater accountability (The Aspen Institute 2001). However, as Eikenberry and Kluver (2004) contend, although marketization can be beneficial for short-term survival needs of NPOs, this is at the expense of the sector's role which in the long-term can harm democracy and citizenship because of its impact on NPOs' ability to create and maintain a strong civil society as value guardians, service providers and advocates, and builders of social capital. This study therefore

shows not only the potential of the hybrid model for financial sustainability of NPOs (Fowler 2000b; Alter 2002; Boschee and McClurg 2003) but also the risks of goal displacement involved in the increasing business-related activities among these organizations (Fowler 2000b; Jones 2007; Weisbrod 2004). However, given the limited favorable reach of the model across the studied organizations, such risks of mission drift are likewise limited. At the same time, and by implication, the organizations are thereby generally destined to remain indefinitely within the confines of aid-dependency.

### *The implications: organizational outcomes and types of hybridity*

As has already been established, the volatile funding landscape and increasing competition has entailed increasing demands for professionally prepared proposals, requiring accountability for the financial metrics, program-, revenue-, and service- milestones (Germak and Singh 2009). It also implied that organizations in the third sector are pushed to find alternative solutions to aid funding. Nonprofit organizations, premised on achieving a social mission (Ebrahim et al. 2014) have therefore increasingly adopted the private market's approaches and values (Weisbrod 1998). All of the organizations studied tried different market-oriented funding diversification activities, albeit to varied extents, which include expansions, fundraising, social enterprise, government tenders, consultancy, and fairtrade. As discussed in the preceding empirical and analysis chapters, the organizations responded to and managed the interplay between their market and social goals through decisions or strategies that resonate with their organizational members' logic salience.

The practical implications are generally indicative of the weak potential of the hybrid model for organizations, like Afrikagrupperna, Wellness Foundation, Surplus People Project, and Individuell Människohjäl, primarily because of the stronger mission logic salience held by key actors. Such salience is rooted in the values and ideologies attached to the preferred logic of these actors, and partly due to a lack of competencies, the acquisition (or non-acquisition) of which became dependent on the prevailing logic salience (namely, Logic Salience C). Theoretically, the former indicates that organizational identities help members



make sense of what they do in relation to their understanding of what their organization is (Fiol 1991). Hence, when faced with environmental threats, organizations seldom succeed in making radical changes in strategy and structure due to strong inertial forces (Hannan and Freeman 1984). The latter, on the other hand, indicates that the transfer of competencies across organizations and markets, especially across 'distant' contexts, becomes challenging also due to inertial forces as well as path-dependent properties of organizational capabilities (Argote et al. 1990; Szulanski 1996). This puts a premium on diversification strategies that are consistent in the knowledge that organizations require (Rumelt 1974; Teece et al. 1994). It has to be noted though, that in the case of IM, the stronger mission salience, namely that which the incumbents held against the stronger market salience that the challengers held (and vice versa), has aggravated the acquisition of competencies for market-driving, and for gaining an understanding on the complexities involved in this mission-premised aid organization.

A small, divergent, yet important outcome is Skyddsvärnet's success in achieving self-sustainability attributable to the stronger salience toward market logic, but which has meant that their mission became second priority. Leaning toward a more market orientation, thus, means a lopsidedness of hybridity, which is a pre-stage to the collapse of hybridity and the dominance of one logic (Kraatz and Block 2008). Theoretically, this indicates that although there is, indeed, a potential in the hybrid model as an alternative to aid funding (Fowler 2000b; Alter 2002; Boschee and McClurg 2003), the risk of goal displacement or mission drift (Jones 2007; Weisbrod 2004) is very much present.

As actors experience increased pressures to simultaneously embed multiple competing demands within organizations (Kraatz and Block 2008; Greenwood et al. 2011; Besharov and Smith 2014), being able to explore alternatives, at the same time exploit what the organization already has in place, becomes imperative for organizational sustainability. All the studied organizations have tried, in varying degrees, to explore and exploit, but which entailed demands that are paradoxical and contradictory. Although it is said that *exploring* encompasses novel innovations to gain long-term sustainability, while *exploiting* finds operational advantages in existing offerings for short-term performance (Smith 2015:59), the findings reveal that this is not necessarily always the case. For Skyddsvärnet, exploration indeed accorded long-term sustainability. However, for the donor-

partner organizations, exploitation of their existing offerings – namely, their mission of advocacy and solidarity work, did not accrue them short-term sustainability. Instead, it is precisely because of their mission, which they used to justify their half-hearted market initiatives and (in)action based on the logic they adhere to (Friedland and Alford 1991; Townley 1999), that they were able to achieve long-term sustainability (which is usually attributed to exploration) although such sustainability remains in the confines of aid funding and aid-dependency. From a legitimacy point of view, it can thus be said that the exploitation of existing offerings is where their normative legitimacy lies, which becomes the key for their output legitimacy (Nevile 2010).

For IM, its fairtrade exploration as a way of increasing profitability, albeit claimed as a simultaneous support for the producers, became detrimental to its original mission of supporting smaller and more disadvantaged producers. The coalitions failed to interact and accommodate each other's interests in creating negotiated orders through partisan mutual adjustment (Lindblom 1965; van de Ven 1992). The failure of the challengers and the incumbents to reconcile the competing demands and the challenges involved in the fairtrade enterprise has therefore failed to reach either of the multiple goals. Hence, this shows that the challenge of hybridity is not only around managing the interplay between logics (Hailey and James 2004), but also the risk of failing to reach either of the multiple goals. It, therefore, becomes a matter of learning for the organizations, through their members, to reconcile and ascertain the *means* (output legitimacy) and the *ends* (normative legitimacy); otherwise, the contradiction for nonprofits that they are run for-profit remains just that, as the blocked hybridity (Skelcher and Smith 2015) in this organization shows.

The findings lead us to inquire into the relevance of logic salience to institutional work (and vice versa), and if the institutional work involved in logic salience can possibly and actually lead to maintaining, creating, or changing the institutional order (Lawrence et al. 2011). Institutional work is defined as the “purposive actions of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006:215). The work involved in creating organizations is often depicted as an area of institutional work that is “the most extensively examined in the literature” (Lawrence et al. 2009:8). This concerns activity around the construction of rules, property rights and boundaries, and mechanisms of work practices. In defining the types of actors who attempt to

create new institutions as a type of institutional work, it is argued that the notion of institutional entrepreneurs is critical (Eisenstadt 1980; DiMaggio 1988). However, the ‘heroic imagery’ that the introduction of institutional entrepreneur tends to evoke (Lawrence et al. 2011; Lounsbury 2008) within institutional theory has been criticized for its functionalism (Clegg 2010). I have earlier taken the stance that all individual actors, and hence not solely the so-called institutional entrepreneurs, have agency and they therefore engage in institutional work that contributes to the creation and evolution of institutions.

Organizations are assumed to be self-reproducing and hold a taken for granted position; hence, maintaining organizations is often regarded as unproblematic and more common (Lawrence et al. 2009). For this reason, institutional maintenance was previously a rather neglected and under-theorized part of institutional work, but this assumption has more recently been challenged because there are “relatively few institutions that possess such powerful reproductive mechanisms that no ongoing maintenance is necessary” (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006:229). Rather, to preserve institutions, sustained institutional work is required over time (Zilber 2002; Dacin, Munir and Tracey 2010) in order to respond to threats to existing institutional peculiarities (Dacin et al. 2010), deter change, and ensure that other actors comply with the usual reproductive procedures (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Jepperson 1991).

The notion of changing or transforming organizations has received the least attention in institutional research; thus, there is limited knowledge about the practice associated with actors who attempt to disrupt institutionalized arrangements (among this limited line of research are Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca 2009; Coule and Patmore 2013; Coule and Bennett 2016). More recently, a study by Alvehus, Eklund and Kastberg (2019) suggests that actors need to work with relations and ultimately with the division of labor in order for replication or revision of institutional changes to ‘stick.’ This means that in order to understand the full process of institutionalization, the underlying work processes – the everyday work, need to be given attention as well.

With the increasing pressure on nonprofit organizations to combine nonprofit and for-profit elements (Battilana and Lee 2014; Besharov and Smith 2014) making them hybrids (Mair and Noboa 2003; Dees and Anderson 2003), the institutional work involved in why and how organizational members respond to logics therefore becomes evident. This hybrid development comes with

concomitant precautions where continuity is, instead, recommended to be valued (Salipante and Golden-Biddle 1995), considering the mission of nonprofits in addressing the constant increase of societal needs (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Nielsen and Samia 2008).

In view of key individuals' adherence to mission logic at Skyddsvärnet in order to survive its funding challenges, it engaged in a survival mode through aggressive market solutions. The organization's effort to combine market and mission logics can be said to be an attempt at creating an institution (namely, a hybrid organization) that has resulted in financial stability, albeit with a more prominent market orientation over mission orientation. For the organizations in the partnership case, due to their generally stronger salience to mission logic, their attempt at hybridity is half-hearted, which has resulted in continuity or in maintaining the status quo. On the other hand, and similar to Skyddsvärnet, IM had serious attempts at hybridity but the failure of the opposing coalitions to reconcile the tensions between market and mission logics, showing the paradox (Uzzi 1997) of their respective logic's embeddedness (Thornton et al. 2012), had instead resulted in disrupting the sales and fairtrade operations as well as the organization's mission of supporting its smaller and more disadvantaged partner producers.

The various saliences to market and mission logics prompted the aggressive market expansion in order to survive, the half-hearted efforts to engage in market solutions using the organizations' line of expertise (advocacy and solidarity work) as justification, and the adversarial position taken in order to self-preserve their own tribe, all demonstrate the institutional work involved in creating, maintaining, or disrupting the institutional order, respectively. This suggests that individuals are capable of harnessing awareness, albeit at varying levels and types, prompting them to engage in institutional work (Battilana and D'Aunno 2009). In other words, this suggests that the structural division of labor within an organization creates intra-organizational communities with connections to field-level occupational communities and are "quite likely to differ in their awareness of, and receptivity to, institutional pressures" (Delmas and Toffel 2008:1032).

It is therefore crucial to understand the institutional work involved in the way organizational members relate and respond to competing logics. It could help organizations from becoming blocked or dysfunctional hybrids as a common outcome, owing to their inability to resolve internal conflicts (Friedland and

Alford 1991) and in balancing the interplay between competing sets of values or logics (Hailey and James 2004), and other implications of hybridity for nonprofit organizing (Kraatz and Block 2008). Studying and identifying individuals' logic salience is one way to achieve such an understanding and outcome.

Since competing demands attached to a certain logic vie for attention (Thornton et al. 2012), studying tensions, paradoxes, and conflicts<sup>33</sup> that these pose between individuals and groups can therefore be studied through logic salience. The agency involved in individuals' sensemaking and interpretation of institutional logics in their environment (Greenwood et al. 2011) that simultaneously indicate the degree of their adherence to any or both of the logics (Pache and Santos 2013b) are displayed in individuals' logic salience. Inasmuch as research has focused more on how institutions shape the behavior of actors where agency was a secondary consideration, through institutional work "the scope and extent of agency was understood as dependent on the influence of the social context and the interactions among organizational actors" (Lawrence et al. 2009:4). Hence, sensemaking is enacted here by people as they inhabit this institutional context (Hallett and Ventresca 2006) and instantiated through actors' logic salience that has both enabling and constraining properties.

Insofar as NPOs are encouraged, at times even pressured, to step away from the aid 'begging bowl,' this study has also revealed that the preconditions for them to be able to do so are not in place. Such preconditions include the constraints imposed by the tax regulatory structure; the autonomy and role of nonprofits as being the voice of the voiceless (Taylor 2002) being compromised by funders' aversion for criticism; and the performance metrics and reporting requirements that are tailored for the market economy (Sanders 2012). Operating within the market economy poses a risk for values, such as commitment beyond self, tolerance, freedom and responsibilities of citizens that underlie nonprofit work to take a back seat (O'Connell 1988).

The simultaneous pull between the financial imperatives of operating within a market economy and pursuing a social mission that is produced by marketization (Sanders 2012) is present according to the findings of this study – and interestingly, regardless of whether an organization is financed through market activities or through aid funding. The logics are continuously negotiated and re-

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<sup>33</sup> But does not exclude other contexts, where logic salience may find analytical currency.

negotiated from outside in and inside out. Hence, this means that in order to increase the potential of these seemingly equally challenging alternatives, the right prerequisites should be in place. Hence, there is a need to continue to address how the demands of competition or the strict accountability and productivity requirements of public funding arrangements compromise the autonomy of NPOs and its unique characteristics which might affect their democratic functions of mobilizing civil society (Ascoli and Ranci 2003). Indeed, the challenges involved in attempts at addressing resource dependence (Froelich 1999; Arvidson and Linde 2021) entails ongoing and continuous negotiated order (Strauss 1978; Thornton et al. 2012) occupied by the *means* and the *ends* (Waks 1999) when organizations are wedged between competing logics.

In relation to how individuals respond to multiple logics and as the exploration and building of the emerging concept of logic salience continues in this study's abductive process, this chapter finally addresses the third research question "What are the organizational implications of such responses?" The findings suggest (see table 10) that logic salience-driven organizational responses can: simultaneously enable (market) and constrain (mission) multiple goals, resulting in a lopsided hybridity (Skyddsvärnet); enable the continued pursuit of the mission but inhibit market initiatives and thus constrain achieving market goals, suggesting a half-baked hybridity (AG, WF, and SPP); and constrain both of the multiple goals if organizational responses are influenced by logic saliences that are comparably strong but separately held by groups of individuals, resulting in a blocked hybrid (IM/IMFT).

**Table 10:** Types of hybridity.

Skyddsvärnet	Logic Salience A: stronger market orientation <b><i>lopsided hybridity</i></b>
AG, WF, SPP	Logic Salience C: stronger mission orientation <b><i>half-baked hybridity</i></b>
IM/IMFT	A vs. C: comparably strong but separately held LS <b><i>blocked hybridity</i></b>

As we now understand from the research questions, organizational responses are influenced by the organizational members' logic salience to either or both of the market and mission logics. Such salience then enables or constrains achieving either or both of what the logics represent. Therefore, given this understanding, and to address the general purpose of this study, the findings suggest that there is

a deep-seated tension between these institutional logics (Sanders 2012), making their integration challenging, and rendering the promise of the hybrid model as highly unlikely for sustaining nonprofit organizations. Of particular relevance are the mission trade-offs when becoming financially sustainable beyond aid and, more so, the imminent risk of missing both the market and social goals (see figure 5 and also table 8). This is due to the complexity that individuals and organizations experience from conflicting prescriptions of institutional logics (Greenwood et al. 2011) and the hybrid form (Battilana and Dorado 2010), especially for mission-premised and aid-dependent organizations.

The challenge in integrating and balancing the tensions between the logics is illustrated in figure 5. The illustration covers the insights from all the empirical cases. As logic salience conditions organizational responses, it either enables an organization's path toward a more market orientation (A), or a more mission orientation (C). Logic salience can also constrain when salience to both market and mission held separately by groups of individuals are comparably strong, resulting in a failure to achieve any of the goals (A vs. C). By implication, if and when individuals' support for both logics is balanced, it can help reinforce hybridity (B).

Accordingly, although the presence of multiple logics in the nonprofit third sector can possibly be a more permanent phenomenon (Besharov and Smith 2014), the findings also suggest that this does not necessarily mean that multiple logics can co-exist benignly, notably not with comparable prominence. It means that combining nonprofit and for-profit elements does not translate well as an innovative solution for the studied organizations (Reay and Hinings 2009).

Moreover, and even if these organizations seriously want to consider market-driving as an alternative to aid funding and to integrate both the logics of market and mission, the current environment – namely tax structure, their product/service offering, is not conducive for the context of the sector. On the other hand, aid funding and the resulting aid-dependence entails a continued state of volatility (Froelich 1999), where NPOs' limited bargaining power (Cornforth 2014) is destined to persist. Both direct aid-funding and more market-oriented alternatives such as pay-per service arrangements between government institutions and nonprofit service providers are heavily infused with market influences with a focus on efficiency and performance measurement and competition with commercial suppliers (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004). These, by implication,

prompt nonprofits to adapt, for instance, by acquiring professional managerial techniques (Srinivas 2009) signifying market logic, creating expectations for nonprofits to act according to managerialist principles or to be business-like (Meyer et al. 2013).

Since both aid funding and market solutions are riddled with metrics and frameworks from corporate management (Hvenmark 2013), one does not readily become more preferable to the other. It therefore becomes a matter of choosing – if choice is available, a ‘lesser evil.’ It is because despite the contractual obligations with extensive reporting requirements tied to aid funding, the findings also suggest that NPOs are exposed to similar professional managerialist requirements, making them more or less just as vulnerable and their role greatly compromised when they enter into a direct market exchange.

The findings also indicate that regardless of NPOs’ source of funding (namely, through market solutions and/or aid funding), the prevailing valuation metrics do not capture the needs and goals of the sector. Therefore, we can and need to be critical of how the organizations studied have dealt with the funding challenges, but there is also a need to take into account their societal impact, which usually takes time to achieve and is complex to ascertain, as it involves a web of factors outside the organizations’ direct programs. These programs involve soft immaterial values that are difficult to assess according to the prevailing quantitative metrics which are institutionalized, being based on economic theories, which usually serve the purposes of those who hold the resources.

Moreover, the type of offerings is highly relevant considering that these organizations work with advocacy that cannot be directly sold in a typical market exchange. This is aggravated by competition where organizations that work with women and children who are victims or are disadvantaged, generally have a stronger market appeal for potential donors (especially private individuals and businesses) than organizations that work with the ‘menaces’ of societies or labor rights, whose impact takes a long time to manifest or is difficult to ascertain. An exception is Skyddsvärnet as its service offerings, for example, providing shelter for former substance addicts, are more straightforward in a market exchange environment with its pay-per-service arrangement, especially in the context of welfare societies, and IMFT, where there is a direct product-payment exchange. Another point of interest here is that although direct market exchange applies to the type of services that organizations like Skyddsvärnet offer, such type of service



and organization remains disadvantaged when it comes to raising funds through private donations.

The belief that the third sector is a more effective alternative to welfare state and market arrangements in solving pressing social problems is fueling debates (Brandsen et al. 2014). Clearly, we cannot disregard the probability that NPOs can succeed in becoming self-sustaining through market solutions and in simultaneously achieving their social goals. But this is not the scenario that emerged in the current study. Nonetheless, does or should 'failing' in market activities qualify as a failure in the context of a sector that is premised on achieving social goals? On the other hand, does or should 'failing' in delivering on their social promises but succeeding in their market activities, hence becoming self-sustaining, qualify as a 'success'? Although we can be critical, for instance, of the mainstreaming of fairtrade, the role of organizations like IM in promoting solidarity ideologies through fairtrade and their very own solidarity or economic empowerment programs deserve, I think, some credit and attention. This current study suggests that in the context of the mission-premised third sector, succeeding in a commercial venture in order to generate income should be seen as a means, not a fulfilment of its (traditionally, social) goals.

Given that nonprofits are mainly interested in some type of immaterial value maximization or non-monetary returns that show value bases and ideologies (James 1987, 1989), the current valuation models (Hwang and Powell 2009) are therefore ill-fitting to the democratic governance structures (Hvenmark 2013) of the studied organizations. Therefore, and to address my quest of understanding the viability of the hybrid form, the findings of this theory-informed empirical exploration suggest that market solutions are not readily suitable for the distinctive character and purpose of nonprofit organizations, which constrain them from making it a viable funding alternative to aid. And because of its limited potential for making a sustainable alternative to aid with a strong likelihood of compromising the mission, we may ask what market solutions are for, if the third sector is not able to remain in the sphere of our communal life where we together address the common good (Elshtain 1999)?

## *Chapter 11*

# Concluding discussion and reflections

I conclude not because it ends,  
but because what's next needs a start.

In recent years, the push for nonprofit organizations to find a sustainable alternative funding scheme to traditional aid funding has intensified. The interest in the combination of for-profit and nonprofit values in order to address the growing funding scarcity has accordingly increased among practitioners, government representatives, and researchers. This dissertation extends our understanding of how the funding climate looks like today, how organizations address their funding challenges through market solutions, and ultimately – how organizational members relate to and respond to the competing logics of market and social mission arising from these changes, and what these entail in terms of organizational outcomes and hybridity. Methodologically, the abductive approach of this study facilitated the emergence of a concept and an analytical tool in empirically studying individual responses to competing logics. This concept–analytical tool, logic salience, is also where the study's main theoretical contribution is posited. Before specifying the contributions of this study, I discuss how the three research questions are addressed.

## Revisiting the research questions

### **How do individuals relate to multiple logics?**

The findings suggest that, although the market and mission logics were supposed to have comparable importance for Skyddsvärnet and were to represent the common talk, the respondents held different degrees of inclination to and between the logics. The logics of market and mission, of idealism and money, were pitted against each other, thus creating incompatibilities. Generating profits and strengthening market position gained a stronger foothold, causing uncertainty among the respondents as to who they were: ‘economists’ or ‘humanists’? Such an identification signifies the dispute between the ideologies that the respondents hold and contend with.

Despite the common talk, there were individuals who had a stronger salience to mission logic; those who were situated in between on the logics spectrum or had an intermediate position; and others who were more inclined toward the mission logic. This ideological identification speaks for the salience actors have toward market or mission logic or to both logics, as they exercise agency in making sense of the relationship with the normative expectations of an institutional logic and the organizational context that they are in. Indeed, in order to understand how they relate and/or respond to conflicting institutional logics, the findings show our need to take into consideration the values and ideologies that actors identify themselves with the most.

The stronger salience driven by a concern about satisfying institutional pressures to ensure survival through the aggressive market undertakings took precedence over social acceptance, status, and identity related concerns that the respondents commonly adhere to. To put it differently, what they said – namely, market and mission logics being of comparable importance and described as yin and yang, was quite different from what they did. This insight points to the fact that along the same market-mission spectrum that represents the common talk, the emerging concept of logic salience indicates the types and varying degrees of individuals’ inclination to a particular logic. It therefore suggests that individuals ultimately act according to their logic of preference, or in line with the values attached to this particular logic.

Logic salience helps explain the role of individuals' inclination to a particular logic, which leads to a certain (organizational) action that does not necessarily represent what is commonly shared by the organizational members. It is intimately linked to people's perceptions and corresponding actions or decisions. Inasmuch as the increasing marketization and professional management of the organization has led to competing logics of market and mission, we can assume that actors who are exposed to a similar context would have to engage in a similar negotiation of meanings that influences their responses according to the values and ideologies they identify themselves with the most. Individual logic salience hence shows a potential as a useful analytical tool to evaluate or gauge how and why people relate and respond in the way that they do as they are wedged between competing logics. I therefore explored this potential in analyzing the succeeding empirical insights, which led to answering the second research question.

### **What do individual attachments to logics prompt in terms of responses?**

What we can infer from the findings is that individuals attempt to comply with competing demands as a way of dealing with the complexity of their inhabited world. However, attempts to comply do not readily translate into being able to reconcile the competing demands in such a complex environment. The generally stronger salience to mission logic of respondents in the partnership (AG, SPP, and WF) enabled a continued exploiting and hence, upholding of their mission. However, this was possible through the traditional source of aid-funding. Their efforts to explore market alternatives were half-hearted, insofar as they regard their mission being in line with their expertise, showing the paradoxical situation that they were in. The attachments to logics by respondents at IM, on the other hand, showed another dynamic. Here, to the extent that its store operations were more straightforward in a direct market exchange context, there was a more serious effort to make their market activities work. However, the comparably strong but separately held salience to market and mission logics made the incumbents and challengers adversaries, and they became stuck in their own tribes. They were unable to integrate each other's competencies and interests, leading to failure to achieve both their market and social goals, which ultimately led to the demise of the stores.

The individuals in these organizations therefore engaged in justifications/excuses and self-preservation mechanisms, making logic salience both as an enabler and a

constrainer of responses. These enabling and constraining properties occur as organizational members experience and navigate around tensions from multiple logics that cause adversarial conflicts between them. These actors evidently became entangled in the paradox of embeddedness where intra-organizational communities with connections to field-level occupational communities have differing awareness and receptivity to institutional pressures.

Through actors' salience to a particular logic, they bring to the decision process their interpretation of priorities and preferable outcomes and hence exemplify institutional work. This inevitably has implications for the hybridization of the organizations to which they belong, and suggests the agency's influence in creating, maintaining, or changing the institutional order. This then led to answering the third and final research question.

### **What are the organizational implications of such responses?**

Although it has been argued that the challenges of hybrids increase as the incompatibility between logics increases, the findings indicate that another type of challenge may occur, of maintaining the competing logics, when the incompatibility is acted upon by an organization based on its members' salience to a particular logic.

We have thus understood that organizational responses are influenced by the organizational members' logic salience to either or both of the market and mission logics. Such salience then enables or constrains achieving either or both of what the logics represent. The findings suggest (see table 10) that logic salience-driven organizational responses can simultaneously enable (market) and constrain (mission) multiple goals, resulting in a lopsided hybridity (Skyddsvärnet); can enable the continued pursuit of a mission but inhibit market initiatives and thus constrain achieving market goals, suggesting a half-baked hybridity (AG, WF, and SPP); and can constrain both of the multiple goals if organizational responses are influenced by logic saliences that are comparably strong but separately held by groups of individuals, resulting in a blocked hybrid (IM/IMFT).

Consequently, there is a deep-seated tension between these institutional logics, making their integration challenging as well as making the promise of the hybrid model of limited potential in sustaining NPOs. Moreover, the mission trade-offs when becoming financially sustainable and notably the imminent risk of missing

both market and social goals are of particular relevance here (see figure 5 and also table 8). This is owing to the complexity that individuals and organizations experience from conflicting prescriptions of institutional logics and the hybrid form. This is especially evident for organizations that are premised on a mission at the same time are inflicted by the purported aid-dependence syndrome.

Accordingly, although the presence of multiple logics in the nonprofit third sector can possibly be a permanent phenomenon, we can infer from the findings that it does not necessarily entail that plural logics can co-exist benignly, notably not with comparable prominence. It means that there indeed is a contradiction in running nonprofits as for-profits. Combining nonprofit and for-profit elements does not translate well as an innovative solution and therefore, is not a viable alternative to aid for the studied organizations, especially if sustainability is predicated on a comparable prominence of multiple logics.

Under conditions of institutional complexity, the study shows the importance of individuals in shaping organizational outcomes as what the literature on competing institutional logics and institutional work suggest. The role of individuals and their agency in shaping change or in maintaining the status quo is demonstrated in this study through individuals' logic salience. Hybrid organization/organizing or hybridity can therefore be studied and understood through organizational members' logic salience. The dissertation has thus contributed to developing theory on hybrid organizations and shown how institutions are shaped in the organizational field; moreover, it provides some insights for practitioners on how they can approach and manage organizations that employ the hybrid form. The aims of this study are therefore addressed, and the contributions are summarized below.

## The contributions of the study

This dissertation has shown how individuals relate and respond to competing logics according to their logic salience, with implications for organizational outcomes and hybridity. Logic salience refers to the inclination of any individual or group of individuals toward a particular logic to which they are drawn ideologically. The dissertation offers several key contributions:

## What logic salience entails and does

Through studying individuals' negotiation between the logics of market and mission, we came to learn the three categories of individual logic salience that condition organizational actions and decisions. These logic salience-driven organizational responses, in turn, can enable one of the logics (market or mission) to become dominant at the field level, or in reinforcing the hybrid form (refer to figure 5 for illustration). Logic salience-driven organizational responses can also constrain or prevent from achieving whatever goal(s) both of the logics represent or espouse. This study therefore theoretically accounts for both the enabling and constraining properties of logics (Giddens 1984), and, at the same time, elucidates and strengthens the role of individual agency in organizational responses and actions (Thornton et al. 2012) through logic salience. Institutional logics hence become 'represented' and given voice (Pache and Santos 2010) by actors as the 'carrier' (Zilber 2002) of logic salience.

### *Bridges the gap*

The call for bridging the gap between structure and agency that both the concept of institutional logics perspective and institutional work approach argue for is addressed in this dissertation through logic salience, which centers on how and why individuals make sense of, negotiate between, and respond to competing institutional logics. The abstractness of actors' intentions (and by implication the challenge of showing consequences from said intentions) is likewise addressed through the driving force of logic salience on organizational responses, which, in turn, enable or constrain achieving one or both of the dual goals. Logics are said to both enable and constrain action (Waldorf et al. 2013). Through the findings of this dissertation, however, we can grasp that there has to be agency to enable and constrain action, as logics *per se* do not do this. Actors do – through their salience toward one or both of the multiple logics that prompts their responses or actions, which, in turn, condition the responses and actions of the organizations they inhabit.

### *Indicates the extent of hybridity and instantiates institutional work*

Through logic salience, we can also gauge the extent of an organization's hybridity. That is, if organizational responses are mostly driven by the members'

stronger salience to a market logic or stronger salience to a mission logic, it creates an imbalance in the degree of hybridity, or what I call lopsidedness of hybridity (see figure 6), which is a pre-stage to the collapse of hybridity, and thus the eventual dominance of one logic (Kraatz and Block 2008).

By way of explanation, with the “impact of individuals and collective actors on the institutions that regulate the fields in which they operate” (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006:218), we now have a possibility to gauge or trace why and how actors engage in multiple logics (Lawrence et al. 2011). Through organizational members’ logic salience to either of the logics, as what this study has shown, mission-premised organizations could become more business-like but run risks of neglecting their mission, or remain mission-focused yet aid-dependent, or run risks of missing both goals. Although none of the studied organizations was able to benignly combine competing logics, this can be a possible outcome if and when actors succeed in reconciling the competing demands of multiple logics through understanding their saliences.

The various saliences of actors toward market and mission logics prompted their respective organization to engage in aggressive market expansion against the espoused theory of their respective organization in order to survive, to engage in market solutions half-heartedly using its advocacy and solidarity work as justifications to deal with the paradox, and to take a defensive position in order to preserve each coalition’s ideological identification. These evidently show the institutional work involved, as the actors respond to conflicting logics through their respective saliences. Moreover, these responses instantiate how organizations through their members can actually create (Skyddsvarnet case), maintain (the partnership case), or disrupt (the IM case) the institutional order.

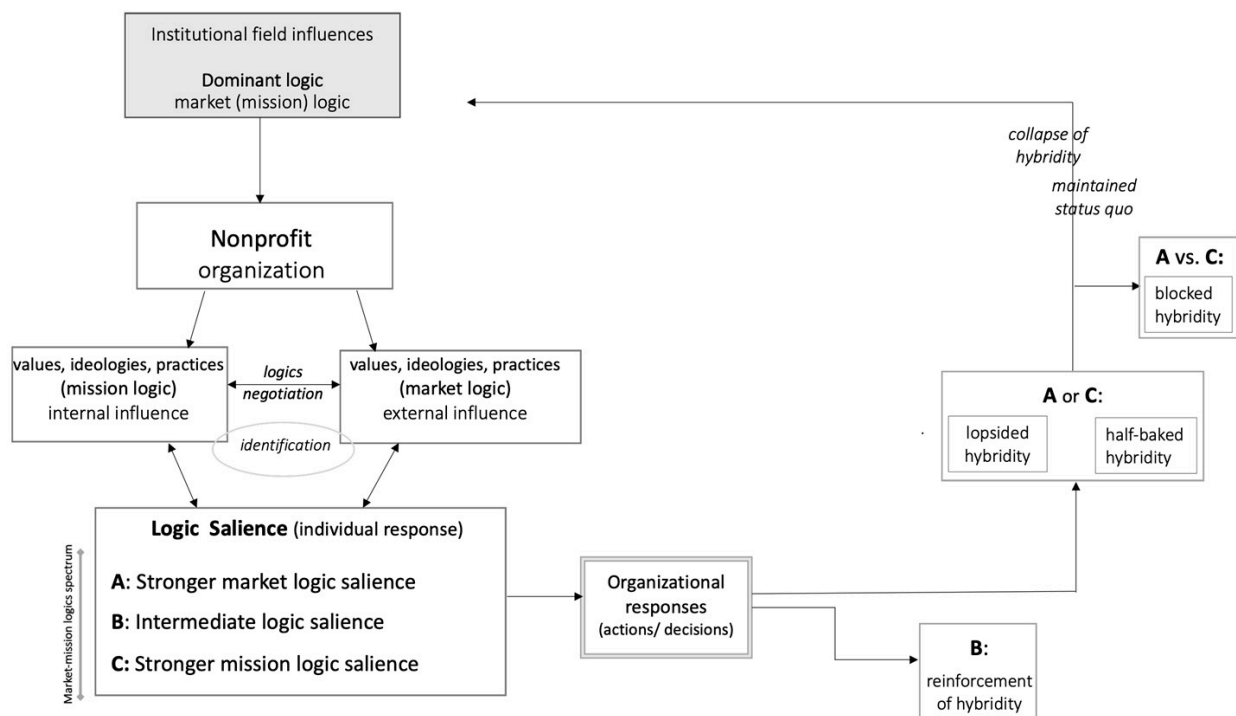
It is therefore crucial to understand the institutional work involved in the way organizational members make sense of and respond to competing logics in order to help organizations in their multiple goals, especially from becoming blocked or dysfunctional as a common outcome of hybridity. This outcome is commonplace because of the challenges involved in balancing the interplay between the competing set of values or logics (Hailey and James 2004) and actors’ inability to resolve internal conflicts (Friedland and Alford 1991). By identifying and/or mobilizing logic salience in plural contexts, we can obtain an understanding of actors’ intentions behind the said institutional work. To put it differently,



studying and identifying individuals' logic salience can help us understand (the why and how of) the institutional work involved.

### *Provides a framework*

Moreover, this study contributes to the fields of institutional logics, institutional work, and hybridity, through a framework that illustrates a cycle that starts from institutional field influences down to the organizational and individual levels, and back to the institutional field, which thus exemplifies the interconnectedness of



**Figure 6:** This figure builds on and advances from figure 5 and shows how the logic saliences can reinforce hybridity or result in different types of hybridity, showing the abstraction level of the logic salience concept in studying hybrid contexts.

the external and internal environments. Figure 6 illustrates the cyclical account of this external-internal-external constellation where organizations are motivated to incorporate the practices and procedures defined by prevailing rationalized concepts of organizational work and institutionalized society (Meyer and Rowan 1977). In this cyclical pattern, the role of individual agency takes center stage as institutional logics are negotiated and re-negotiated by organizational members (Skelcher and Smith 2015) through the concept of logic salience. This pattern mediated by the concept of logic salience also shows us that in plural contexts,

individuals are shaped by *and* shape institutional logics (Pache and Santos 2013b), which thus suggests the presence of institutional work. It implies that logic salience is conditioned by a particular ideological preference and degree of identification that lies within these institutional influences. Equally important, this study has also shown the weak viability of the hybrid form.

### **The challenges of the hybrid form**

The weak viability of the hybrid form elucidates the organizational challenges and consequences of combining multiple logics under one organizational roof (Jay 2013). The studied organizations experienced challenges in integrating competing logics, primarily due to the values and ideologies attached to their logic saliences, where one can easily topple the other, resulting in a lopsided hybridity, or where efforts to incorporate dual mandates are not carried out fully, resulting in a half-baked hybridity, or they constrain each other leading to a breakdown of both market and mission goals, resulting in blocked hybridity (see figures 6 and 7). The findings of this study therefore address what Skelcher and Smith (2015) argue on the shortcomings of the theory of hybrids in explaining what it is that creates hybrids, if different hybrid forms emerge in different situations, and if so, what the consequences are. The funding scarcity and the concomitant pressure on nonprofits in this dissertation to embrace market alternatives have resulted in attempts at hybrid organizing; producing the lopsided, half-baked, and blocked types of hybridity; and the challenges in upholding the nonprofit–for-profit model. Therefore, the viability of the hybrid form for NPOs as a sustainable alternative model to aid-funding is limited.

This dissertation has thus achieved its theoretical quest to articulate how individuals working in nonprofit organizations engage with multiple logics. The individuals' logic salience prompted various responses. These responses propelled the said various attempts at hybrid organizing and resulted in the different types of hybridity, which thus contribute to developing theory on hybrid organizations. These responses and developments also shape institutions in the organizational field insofar as some organizations' institutional logic either remains dominant, flips to the other side, or ends up in a state of oblivion. Moreover, these insights on the challenges in managing the interplay between competing logics can be of practical help for practitioners who are interested or are already involved in

managing hybrid organizations. Identifying staff members' logic salience can help managers and practitioners in understanding their personnel's propensity to support or reject any or both of multiple goals.

### **Findings and contributions through abduction**

It can thus be concluded that through the abductive approach to theory-building and the presentation of findings (expounded below), this dissertation has delivered on its theoretical quest to articulate how individuals engage with multiple logics through their logic salience, which contributes to the ways we may understand how hybrid organizations evolve and how this may shape institutions in the organizational field. The findings of this dissertation hence account, as in the study of Powell and Sandholtz (2012) and Besharov (2014), for both the responses of individuals and the consequences of these responses, both for the individuals themselves and the organizations in which they operate (Gautier et al. 2018).

The dissertation also provides insights for practitioners and policymakers on the potentials, challenges, and implications of the hybrid form for mission-premised third sector organizations in particular, and for societies pursuing the common good in general. The insights are also relevant for organizations in private and public sectors that are exposed to, or interested in pursuing, multiple goals.

### **A note on the abductive writing process: an attempted contribution**

It is of particular importance to note that the emergence and subsequent development of logic salience as a concept would not have been possible, or at least would have required two separate research projects, without the abductive design deployed here. Explicitly accounting for my abductive research design has enabled my thought and writing process to consider and embrace the "behind the scenes of research," where research is not linear or does not follow an 'either-or' in inductive or deductive methods. Indeed, the identified mystery facilitated finding a concept that helped me approach and understand the empirical material, resulting in this study's focus on individuals' negotiation of meanings and

responses to competing logics. As I progressed in my analysis, writing, and sensemaking of my findings, it became increasingly apparent that there was a potentially promising emergent concept from the conversation between theory and the first empirical data. It also became apparent, considering my backwards and forwards research process (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009; Svensson 2003), especially as I tried to locate patterns across and between the empirical cases, that the emerging concept also possessed an analytical currency.

As I reflected on my data, for instance, by asking myself these questions – Why do the respondents in the partnership try to diversify whilst at the same time tend to amplify their role and values as nonprofit actors? Why do the respondents in the fairtrade enterprise fail to find a common ground?, it became clearer that their salience to a particular logic can help explain how they navigate in paradoxical and adversarial settings, respectively. Obviously, such a realization did not present itself suddenly. The realization that what was happening in the remaining empirical chapters could also be a case of logic salience, or that individuals' logic salience could be an enabling or constraining force as actors are wedged between competing logics, became possible and apparent through the abductive research approach.

This dissertation is thus a product of abductive research process and reporting. Armed with my curiosity on how loosening the straitjacket of research (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009) can be applied in practice and deriving support from Dubois and Gadde (2002), I made my abductive process more explicit by not having to reserve or bracket the presentation of the emerging concept at the end of the dissertation. Instead, I have written it in such a way that the emerging concept was presented upfront and developed incrementally by exploring it as an analytical tool in the remaining empirical chapters. Because a concept is always abstract, explicitly stating it as part of the phenomenon under study is essential “in order to observe and communicate the analysis between researchers and in reporting the results of the research” (Ågerfalk 2004:5).

Following Dubois and Gadde (2002) who have inspired the abductive process and structure of this dissertation, we can therefore see that what we learn is articulated in the theoretical framework together with the case, and the successive steps in the learning process and what we learn become explicit, which is seldom discussed and rarely the case in a research report. As they further argue, a researcher needs to be open to the myriad meanings that a particular concept can

bring about: “*The successive refinement of concepts implies that they constitute input, as well as output of an abductive study*” (Dubois and Gadde 2002:558; italics added). Simply put, the emerging concept of logic salience constitutes the output from the preliminary analysis. As I used it as an analytical tool, it became an input, which then (again) became an output, as the concept was successively refined

		ANALYSIS	RQ3
RQ1	Skyddsvärnet	<i>Preliminary findings from logics negotiation</i> <b>Logic Salience (LS)</b> indicates the values and ideologies individuals are drawn to; enables-constrains hybrid goals	<b>A: stronger market orientation</b> <i>lopsided hybridity</i>
RQ2	AG, WF, SPP	<i>Incremental findings</i> <b>LS as enabler-constrainer of responses</b> introduce but justify the limited extent of market solutions	<b>C: stronger mission orientation</b> <i>half-baked hybridity</i>
	IM	<i>Incremental findings</i> <b>LS as constrainer of responses</b> self-preserve by justifying each group of individuals' comparably strong but separately held saliences to market and mission logics	<b>A versus C:</b> <i>blocked hybridity</i>

**Figure 7:** The abductive research process and concept development and results.

through and across the remaining empirical chapters (van Aken 2001) (see figure 7, that builds on and advances from figure 3, for an illustration of this abductive and incremental concept development). According to Dubois and Gadde, in studies that rely on abduction, the original framework is successively adjusted, partly according to unanticipated empirical findings and partly based on theoretical insights gained during the process. From the abductive process, the emerging findings were used to unpack succeeding empirical insights in order to develop theory that was simultaneously reported abductively. Being able to explore the dynamics of hybridity through logic salience showed its abstraction level, thus contributing to its development as a concept.

With this research and writing approach, I strove to find my own voice and take. It is understandable to usually strive for a readerly text, especially in an academic

context where clarity and structure precede creativity (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009). This thus means that a text does not require efforts from the reader to understand it, because it is a predictable, controlling text and hence a more conventional writing method (Barthes 1974): “It is comfortable; it is satisfying; but in many ways, it is anaesthetizing” (Sumara and Luce-Kaper 1993:390).

A writerly text, on the other hand, requires special effort to understand the text and the reader becomes a co-constructor where we could not rely on the author to derive meaning: “we needed to *work to* connect disparate images in the text (Sumara and Luce-Kaper 1993:389). Hence, what differentiates readerly from writerly is that in the former, ambiguity is avoided through a linear construction, predictability of the narrative structure, definite and clear directions for how to understand the text, thus leaving the reader with little room to ‘write in’ his/her own interpretations. For writerly text, the case is precisely the opposite: it is a more accurate representation of life itself, more open, more ambiguous, and more unpredictable. Readers are not meant to feel comfortable, rather if they commit themselves to this type of text and engage in ‘writing’ while reading, the initial reading discomfort often leads to a deeper understanding of oneself and living situation (ibid.).

By trying to adopt and adapt this idea to academic writing, I did not intend to inadvertently compromise research rigor and confuse the readers, but rather invite them to co-create the writerly experience and share with them the living situation behind the actual research process. By making the abductive process more explicit through writing abductively, at least to a certain extent, I therefore address the barrier attached to the reporting of our results using traditional research methods (Westrum 1982). By doing so, learning in the research society as a whole is improved by making more of the processes of how I have learned revealed to you (Dubois and Gadde 2002:560). Needless to say, an abductive research process and reporting can benefit from further and continued exploration of its use by peers in order to address the challenges it entails and strengthen possible weaknesses such as those discernible here, so that similar abductive writing ambitions can be achieved to a greater extent.

## Reflections, practical implications, limitations, and future research

Nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations have received stark criticism because of their alleged inability to use resources effectively and for failing to show concrete impact. These shortcomings have affected the ‘charitable’ giving and/or the aid funding environment that has prompted the sector to look for alternative solutions. Market solutions, at least based on the first case organization, can be a viable source of income that ensures the financial sustainability of the organization. However, the case also shows that because of the increasing salience to market logic, the organization developed its competencies to operate in the market field, albeit to the detriment of its mission. Market solutions were less viable for the partnership case because of a stronger salience to mission logic, which, in turn, inhibited incentives to acquire competencies to operate in the market arena. The challenges were compounded by the kind of offering (namely, advocacy – that is not saleable in the traditional market exchange) and other factors (namely, tax regulations). Market solutions were not viable for the fairtrade case either, because of the coalitions that espouse adherence to the logics separately. This study provides limited evidence for the potential of scaling up financial sustainability (Weerawardena et al. 2010) through the nonprofit–for-profit combination. It can thus be said that the viability of the idea of a sustainable third sector beyond aid remains at the conception stage.

These findings suggest that NPOs do and can respond to institutional forces, but like any other organization, public or private, they are also dependent on both resources and legitimacy to survive. Insofar as this dissertation centers on how actors relate and respond to competing logics in relation to the funding scarcity that their organizations are exposed to with the concomitant implications, the findings and insights can therefore be applicable or relevant to contexts and organizations beyond the third sector that are exposed to similar phenomena. This can be private firms with high social engagements, or institutions that are part of the reason why such phenomena exist – namely, government agencies and funding bodies.

The ever-increasing global inequalities and turbulent times, for instance, the recent influx of refugees to different parts of Europe, especially Sweden, have put public systems and services to the test and where the role of nonprofit

organizations in addressing public and market failures becomes even more pronounced. In Sweden, the indecisiveness on whether or not NPOs should be allowed to generate profits is an example of a lack of understanding and agreement on the role and needs of the sector. Indeed, as this dissertation has shown, there are strings attached to government and donor funding, and there are even more trade-offs and challenges that are tied to a market-oriented form of resource diversification. In the absence of public funding and the existing constraints on profit generation, how do we then expect the NPOs to survive to be able to deliver on their mission, part of which is filling in the gaps created by the failures of the government and the market?

A basic precept of economic theory is that the market best provides pure private goods, while the state or public sector best provides pure public goods (Anheier 2005). Nonprofits, on the other hand, are suited for the provision of quasi-public goods, and these provisions usually occur to address market or government failures (for specifics on the different 'failures,' see Anheier 2005). James (1987, 1989) argues that nonprofits try to maximize non-monetary returns, for example, faith or voluntary work; they are mainly interested in some type of immaterial value maximization, and the non-distribution constraints on profits are only secondary to their organizational behavior.

When talking about the nonprofit sector, we tend to refer to organizations, foundations, and associations. However, the sector also covers individual activities and the values and motivations behind them, like people's concerns, commitments to, and compassion for others outside their immediate family; respect for others; care about their community; and similar engagements (Anheier 2005). These are related to charity, philanthropy, volunteering, and giving, and more recently, to the concepts of civil society and social capital, which have entered the field of nonprofit studies. How can we then take advantage of people's engagement through volunteer work with some acknowledged benefits that accrue to volunteers themselves, to the organizations that make volunteer activities possible, and to societies in general, when opportunities for such an engagement are curtailed by the increasingly market-oriented modern society? These are among the insights from this dissertation that give us an idea as to why we should care about the changes and challenges that nonprofit organizations and actors face, and that point to the weakness and limitations of subsuming our studies and inquiries on organizations and organizing according to economic theory.



Certainly, there is an overlap between the first (public), second (private), and the third (nonprofit) sectors. However, there are also areas where they are distinct from each other, and which can be the weakness of the non-reflective subsumption of all sectors under the rule of market economy. According to Moulaert and Ailenei (2005), the extant literature (for example, Salamon and Anheier 1996; Laville and Delfau 2000; Leyshon, Lee and Williams 2003) deals with several features of social economy initiatives which include redistribution of income and wealth within the market economy, diverse allocation systems and their political governance, solidarity and reciprocity relations, and satisfaction of both individual and collective needs. The role of public, private and third sectors in operating and governing the social economy is therefore seen as alternative for Keynesianism<sup>34</sup> (Moulaert and Ailenei 2005:2038). They also argue that theoretical links between the market economy and social economy are not established in these studies. For instance, in stakeholder theory that is built on Hansmann's (1980) trust argument, consumers might have difficulty to police the conduct of producers through normal contractual or market mechanisms, thus resulting in contract or market failure. This theory, associated primarily with the work of Avner Ben-Ner, is rooted in organizational economics and economic theories of institutions (Hansmann 1987).

### **Where do we go from here?**

Considering the above and related issues, how can we work toward levelling the gaps caused by the misappropriation of world resources and power? It is therefore relevant to ask ourselves, where shall we go from here? The strong tendency to regard market-based solutions as the precursor for success and the basis for how to measure success pose challenges for mission-premised organizations. This is because the 'investments' in the third sector vis-à-vis the corporate world differ in

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<sup>34</sup> A number of features governed the relationship between the Keynesian state and NPO service providers and distinguish it from the neoliberal period: funding provided by the state to NPOs was core funding, allowing for a significant latitude for spending purposes; and was long-term and stable which enabled NPOs to build institutions that became embedded in communities; the relationships between the state and NPOs tended to be regulated by bonds of trust, not highly regulated contracts, which awarded nonprofits considerable autonomy in how they constructed and delivered programs supported by public funds; the role of NPO service providers was not to replace/displace state-provided public goods but to fill gaps, thus complementing Keynesian welfare state measures; and a system of adhocism, rather than rigid forward planning via bureaucratic regulation (Evans et al. 2005).

many ways: the purpose of the investment (social goals, not financial goals), target groups (beneficiaries, not shareholders), and returns (social impact, not return on investments). These issues can be observed from the empirical cases in this dissertation through market-oriented activities as the organizations respond to the external and market influences imposed on them that have caused resistance and tensions. Empirically, there is an apparent incompatibility in measuring the outcomes and the governance of the nonprofits' activities from the perspective of the market, which warrants theoretical attention. Hence, there is a need to raise the issue of the valuations' yardstick – of what to measure, how to measure, whose measurement, and whom the measurement is for.

With the growth in size and sophistication of organizations in the third sector, they have become professional organizations characterized according to the qualities required to manage the delivery of development-related services with the use of cost-benefit calculations (Banks, Hulme and Edwards 2015). For Banks et al. (2015:713), 'professionalization' is not necessarily a bad thing, rather it is vital when working at scale, building a solid reputation, and establishing political relationships – all of which are critical to success. But because it results in significant tensions between nonprofit activities and their overarching mission for lasting change, a qualitatively different set of capacities, relationships and metrics is needed.

Neoclassical theory views the firm as a set of feasible production plans, where a manager presides over and chooses a plan that maximizes the owners' welfare. Welfare is usually defined through profit, or, if profit is uncertain in such a way that profit-maximization is not well defined, through expected net present value of future profit or by market value (Hart 1989).

Therefore, the questions that remain unanswered include the ways we can address the unsuitability of the existing (market-economy based) theory in studying nonprofit organizations; the unsuitability of the prevailing valuations yardstick or metrics, based on economic and quantitative frameworks for assessing the immaterial values and impact of the third sector; the need to revisit the role of the third sector in a strong civil society and in sustaining democracy, and their funding needs, and potentials/challenges in finding alternatives.

There have been some attempts to quantify qualitative values in order to address the challenges tied to measuring social impact, for example, through the

frameworks of social return on investment (SROI). Although a novel attempt, SROI, however, is riddled with some practical and theoretical challenges (Jönsson 2013; see also Arvidson, Lyon, McKay and Moro 2010). In sustaining democratic societies, it goes without saying that accountability and transparency are also important. How then can organizations and practitioners be held accountable without compromising their role and without neglecting contextual and structural differences? The power structures involved in partnerships between the North and the South exemplify these contextual and structural differences. What are the bases and goals of such partnerships, really? These thus deserve to be made a living research agenda and part of the vibrant public debates and policy decisions, in local/national, regional, and international political communities.

### **Classification of organizations, tax structure, and policies**

Based on the insights from this dissertation, it can be of benefit to consider a classification of NPOs' service or product offerings in order to better design the tax structure and form of funding that suits the needs and roles of organizations. Although all these organizations may be considered nonprofits, those that work with advocacy are disadvantaged in the increasing marketization of the sector, as advocacy is not saleable in a direct market exchange and takes time to produce an impact. Advocacy work is usually designed to give a voice to the voiceless, to strengthen the weak, to make the unseen visible, to defend the oppressed, to challenge the status quo, among other things. And since these are qualities and missions that cannot be quantified and sold, it seems futile to incessantly pressure advocacy and solidarity organizations to pursue market solutions. Hence, societies will gain greater benefits if these organizations are supported in pursuing what they are meant to do and what they are good at, by making government and/or international aid funding available.

Other organizations in the third sector with service and product offerings that are more suited in a direct market exchange can benefit from an adapted tax structure so that they do not always have to cover for unprofitable programs that public authorities pass on to them through outsourcing. An adapted and better tax policy is not a guarantee that there will be no mission drift but at least if and when there will be surpluses from our common taxes that pay for the services, such surpluses will stay within these organizations for their development and in delivering their mission, and not for re-distribution to private shareholders or to be tucked away

in tax havens. Of equal importance is how we can find ways and means to curtail unreasonable profit maximization by private organizations and companies that provide public services. I highly recommend that the debate on and actual political actions and policies surrounding public services, such as education and healthcare that are paid for by our common taxes, be strengthened and made, in order to highlight and counter ethically-indefensible benefit packages and profit distribution to venture capitalists and shareholders.

It can thus be said that if advocacy and solidarity organizations are to remain in aid-dependency, contractual obligations, reporting, and performance measurement requirements are more likely to persist. In that case, finding ways to report on results and impact qualitatively (namely, through narratives, stories, or theories of change), which better suit the role and needs of the sector, should be encouraged and developed.

Clearly, actors' and organizations' identity are challenged as they engage and contend with competing demands in hybrid contexts. Increased focus on studies around identity in this context can advance our knowledge, for instance, on how actors' identification with a particular logic (as suggested by logic salience) can contribute to maintain or change organizational identity. Needless to say, in other types of services, for example, recovering substance dependents and ex-offenders, professionalization of organizations in terms of formal training of staff in view of the sensitive nature of their services, deserves consideration. That said, it can also be relevant to inquire how this type of services advances nonprofit work.

On a broader note, inasmuch as constant growth has been and is the core of economic theory and which has not so far been sufficient in addressing the increasing ills of societies, the time is ripe for us to consider a post-growth movement. This movement has been emerging within the nonprofit world and academia whose work suggests that it is possible to improve quality of life, restore the living world, reduce inequality, and provide meaningful jobs – all without the need for economic growth, provided we enact policies to overcome our current growth dependence (The Guardian 2018). Suffice to say, considering the earlier discussed government and market failures (Anheier 2005; Edwards 2014), pressuring NPOs to grow and develop according to economic metrics like most part of the modern society, is counterintuitive.

## Limitations, future research, and closing remarks

This study brings to our attention the challenges involved in the elite tendencies (i.e. attributed to institutional entrepreneurs) and the paradox of embeddedness within the institutional logics approach. It also highlights the deterministic tendencies (i.e. purposiveness/intentions) that underpin the concept of institutional work. Theoretically, I would like to argue that the logics negotiation studied here exemplifies institutional work, where actors' capacity to reflect on and operate within the institutional context wherein they are embedded (Granovetter 1985; Thorntorn et al. 2012) is an ongoing activity; where it addresses the 'why' and 'how' as actors respond to pressures from many different institutions (Lawrence et al. 2011). But institutional work, with its focus on actors' intentions being abstract, is problematic and hence with consequences that are unascertainable (Zilber 2013).

The concept of logic salience, on the other hand, dwells on actors' negotiation and interpretations of meanings and degree of adherence to institutional logics tied to the values and ideologies that they identify themselves with the most. It means that this study, through the concept of logic salience, is able to show that agency is not an exclusive prerogative of the elites, but that all individuals and groups of individuals regardless of their structural position exercise agency through their logic salience. It also entails that the abstractness of actors' intentions behind institutional work is addressed through the driving influence of key organizational members' logic salience on organizational actions and decisions, or other members' resistance to such decisions.

What remains problematic, and constitutes the limitations of this dissertation, are 1) the challenges in countering the paradox of embeddedness and 2) the limited application of the logic salience concept (see table 9). For the first limitation, the findings suggest that insofar as the notion of institutions (or institutionalism) pertains to any practice or logic that has become institutionalized (Rowlinson 1997), introducing a market logic became more difficult because the organizations are embedded in mission logic that the actors primarily adhere to (Pache and Santos 2013b). A similar tendency was seen through those who espouse a market logic (i.e. the challengers at IM) whose values and practices are embedded in the business field. The findings also suggest that responding to institutional pressures (i.e. funding scarcity) and balancing competing demands is particularly challenging, thus showing the strength of logic embeddedness.

An exceptional case in this study is that of Skyddsvärnet where the market logic became more prominent, hence – and however, being able to maintain multiple logics benignly remains (as) a challenge. It also suggests that the dominant logic can shift, namely from mission to market logic exemplified in this case, which then has its own embeddedness that an(y) organization has to deal with. The findings thus suggest that such a paradox from embeddedness is impervious to resolution (Cameron and Quinn 1988; Clegg 2002) and from which logic salience is not exempted. This circularity challenge and in entangling the *how* question in studies of institutional logics would therefore benefit from further research. Insofar as the Skyddsvärnet's case shows that a shift of logic is possible, we can advance our knowledge on embeddedness of this new dominant logic, for instance, by looking closer into the possibility that embeddedness can be temporal. That is, it is impervious to resolution not because embeddedness can't be broken, rather, embeddedness in one logic is and can be replaced by another embeddedness in another logic.

For the second limitation, the application of the logic salience concept is limited to hybrid contexts, where there is a presence of multiple logics or values, or where there are attempts at hybridity or hybrid organizing. Individuals' stronger salience to one logic means a weaker salience to another logic. This means that the concept's applicability is dependent on the presence of two or more logics.

Further developing logic salience as a concept can benefit from an increased focus on other factors that may affect actors' stability in their support for a particular logic. It would also benefit from an increased attention to how logic salience-driven organizational responses help create, maintain, or change the institutional order and thereby make institutional work with its focus on intentions and consequences less abstract, hence easier to operationalize as a concept. The purposiveness of institutional work, in particular, can benefit from further studies, as this simplistic claim is difficult to observe and ascertain, as acknowledged by Lawrence et al. (2009).

To the extent that practices are guided by existing institutional logics, where current practices are altered or new ones are established (Thornton et al. 2012), it would be highly relevant for future research to inquire if and how logic salience develops or changes over time, while taking into account the changes in the personal, internal/organizational, and environmental contexts. This is because it may affect an individual's affiliation with different values, which, in turn, may

affect her/his logic salience and ultimately the practices (organizational, field/societal levels) that such salience espouses. Although logic salience accounts for individuals' interpretation of and adherence to any of competing logics regardless of hierarchy, the role of power needs closer consideration in future studies inasmuch as decisions and decision-making often belong to the hands of those who hold power.

Although I deem that the methods used in this dissertation served my purpose on how to approach, analyze, and understand hybrid organizing, quantitative methods can possibly provide some concrete information as, for example, on the prevalence or number of organizations affected by funding scarcity, the rate of 'success' of organizations that are into hybrid organizing, and so forth, through numerically-quantifiable methods.

If studying responses is placed in a broader institutional/societal context, where history becomes central, I suggest that one way to understand societal changes is by inquiring into whether and how individuals' values change over time. As argued by Pache and Santos (2013b:29), "as individuals spend time in a given institutional environment and in a given organization, and as they interact, over time, with various constituencies and get exposed to various institutional influences, they are likely to evolve in their degree of adherence to the logics surrounding them." Why do we have, for instance, the recent political climate, how and why are we witnessing a comeback of the fascist era in Sweden and in many parts of Europe, USA, and elsewhere? Have people's values changed, hence their salience to nationalism? What are its implications for organizations and modes of organizing?

Reflecting back on my research process, I would have to say that my own values and preunderstanding – my own *logic salience* – not only influenced my decision to take on the topic of this dissertation, but also shaped how I approached the phenomenon. My background, both personal and professional, has allowed me to see and experience diverse socio-economic-political situations that involved and affected the lives of people around me. Without this type of background combined with the changes (experiences) I have gone through over the years, I would have probably magnified the promises of the 'SE model.' Interest in exploring the SE model has been rising in the United States, but it is much more common in Europe (Reilly 2016). The efforts in social entrepreneurship to achieve social change find commonality with the role of existing and traditional

nonprofit organizations in mobilizing public attention to social problems in order to achieve social change (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004).

In view of the increasing funding instability, it becomes inevitable for nonprofits to have to embrace different strategies as a vehicle for achieving said social change. But as this dissertation has shown us, embracing the hybrid or 'SE model' is equally, if not more, challenging as aid-dependency for the studied organizations. Since this dissertation involves and is limited to nonprofit organizations, it can be argued that our inquiry on the sustainability of the SE model can be closely studied in a context where a combination of logics is itself the organization's *raison d'être* as in the case of social enterprises.

In the context of radical innovations, innovations frequently occur at the interstices of communities and networks that rely on the integration of knowledge (Swan, Scarbrough and Robertson 2002). Similarly, in the world of practice, managers are urged to engage in participation and translation – where the interests of one community are framed in terms of another's worldview (Brown and Duguid 2001). There is evidence that translation efforts can succeed through actors' engagement with frame transformation and the creative combination of incompatible logics (Boxenbaum 2006). However, as this dissertation suggests, translating the nonprofit–for-profit logics combination into the complex and varied nature of the nonprofit third sector makes this market-standardized solution difficult to work.

On another note, it is not the intention of this dissertation to assess how, for instance, nonprofits live up to the expectations of their funders (for example, Swedish NGOs funded by SIDA), in terms of the way they account for their output vis-à-vis funds received, nor the funder's objective in providing the funds.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, I would have probably been less critical of the increasing marketization of most part of our human lives and societies, because there is no denying that modern societies cannot survive without a market-centered economy. But it does not necessarily mean that every shred of our society needs to be 'marketized' (market-standardized), where the market is the standard that has to fit all. I believe

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<sup>35</sup> For instance, in Monkam's (2008) study, the potential causes of the low performance of foreign aid is examined, in particular, the role incentive that structures within international donor agencies could play in leading to "a push" to disburse money. This pressure to disburse money is termed as the "Money-Moving Syndrome." Money-moving syndrome exists when the quantity of foreign aid committed or disbursed becomes, in itself, an important objective, side by side or above the effectiveness of aid.



that there would always be some of us, either by choice or by unfortunate circumstances, who are and will be unable to join the race for a corporate career, or to exercise the right to vote, or to simply feed themselves.

It is for these and similar reasons that I find it justified to be critical of the world's increasing reliance on markets and commodification of our lives, making us unable to figure out something else. We ought to know by now that the homogenous valuation of human life and activities through markets do not and would not suffice. We will always need a social net, a communal sphere where we together share responsibility for those who are less fortunate than ourselves, where humanity and well-being are equally valued.

The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt

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# Logic Saliency

## Navigating in the institutional landscape of funding volatility and ideological disputes in nonprofit hybrid organizing

The concept of institutional logics is key to those who investigate organizational change, especially those who seek to understand the tension and impact of combining the logics of market and mission. Such a combination of logics, being an espoused financial sustainability solution for the funding-scarce nonprofit sector, is an increasingly prominent phenomenon. While there are several studies on various ways in which logics co-exist in hybrid contexts, the role of actors in this institutional complexity has received lesser attention. The organizations of this study are nonprofits in Sweden and South Africa. Through qualitative methods, the role played by individual actors in negotiating multiple logics is examined.



The findings suggest that nonprofit actors may express support for multiple logics, but they ultimately respond to them according to the logic that they identify themselves with the most, tied to the values and ideological preferences they hold.

From these findings, a concept emerged. The concept of 'logic saliency' is proposed and developed abductively by exploring it as an analytical tool throughout the remainder of the case organizations, which are situated in paradoxical and adversarial settings. The successive refinement of the concept constitutes both input and output of the abductive research approach. Specifically, three categories of individual logic saliency are identified. These prompt various individual responses, which, in turn, condition organizational responses that have implications for nonprofit organizing and hybridity. In addition, three types of hybridity that give an indication of the viability of the market-mission hybrid form are also identified.

Through logic saliency, this dissertation theoretically accounts for both the enabling and constraining properties of logics and at the same time elucidates and strengthens the role of individual agency in organizational responses and actions. It contributes to the fields of institutional logics, institutional work and hybridity through a framework that illustrates a cycle that starts from influences from the institutional field down to the organizational and individual levels, and back to the institutional field, which thus exemplifies the interconnectedness of the external and internal environments. Apart from a concept that can be useful in studying and understanding how and why actors respond to multiple logics in particular ways, the dissertation also provides an update on the current funding challenges to which nonprofit organizations are increasingly exposed. These challenges have significance not only for practitioners but also for funding institutions, policymakers, research and societies considering the nonprofit third sector's attributed role in addressing government and market failures.