Social Media for Development

An exploratory study of social media use in development activities by Dutch development NGOs

S. SHEOMBAR

PhD 2019

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An exploratory study of social media use in development activities by Dutch Development NGOs

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Manchester Metropolitan University

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

MMU Business School in collaboration with HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht

2019

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Abstract

This PhD research project is about how Dutch development NGOs use social media for their development projects. For this, the following research question has been investigated: how do Dutch development NGOs use social media to further the development activities of their organisations? The purpose of this study is to understand how development NGOs are trying to get to grips with social media.

Given the exploratory nature of this research, a qualitative research approach was adopted. Both case studies and the grounded theory method were used for this study. This combination is ideal because with a case study one tries to understand, or explore a phenomenon, whereas, in grounded theory studies, one tries to build theory. Given that this study is concerned with how Dutch development NGOs perceive social media for their development projects, an interpretive paradigm seems appropriate. The grounded theory methodology for this research is consistent with the epistemology of interpretivism. The combination of case study research and grounded theory works well for theory building and has been applied in Information Systems and ICT for Development studies before.

As the use of theory before data collection is in opposition to the principle idea of the grounded theory methodology, in which theory emerges from the data, this needs to be addressed when combining case studies and grounded theory. This issue was resolved by using an initial high-level conceptual framework as a guiding instrument for both the noncommittal literature research and for the conceptualisation of the research problem, whilst not distorting the emergence of theory from the data.

This study focuses on formally organised development NGOs who receive funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their development projects. From the approximately 100 organisations, fourteen NGOs were selected for this study. The choice of fourteen NGOs was driven by a theoretical sampling strategy.

Data was collected via semi-structured interviews with 18 respondents and field-notes of meetings or events of 14 development NGOs. The data was analysed using the Glaserian coding procedure of grounded theory, starting with open coding, followed by selective coding, and ending with theoretical coding.

Three major themes (or core categories as they are called in the grounded theory method), were identified.

This study's first contribution is captured in the theme ‘NGO Enacting Values in Development’. This is about how an organisation’s values are enacted in the context of international development. The organisational mixture of development mind-sets influences organisational activities in development. The ideological trends that are stimulated by societal and technological changes have an impact on the organisation’s development strategy and the strategic collaboration network of development NGOs.

The second contribution of this study is captured in the theme ‘NGO’s Views on Social Media Use’. This core category discusses the organisation’s view on the meaning of social media and includes the four following categories: technological, individual, collective and contextual views attributed to organisational social media. The four categories empirically demonstrate the concept of affordance clusters and the connections between them.

The study's third contribution is captured in the theme 'NGO's Use of Social Media in Development', encompassing the social media activities of the studied development NGOs in their development projects. This has led to an assessment framework of organisational social media use by development NGOs, constructed by cross-referencing the organisational goals of development NGOs to the social media activity areas in the context of development.

These themes represented by three core categories are inter-related. Feedback loops between NGO's values in development, views on social media, and the actual uses of social media for development purposes have been discerned.

This grounded theory study aims to build an initial theory of how NGOs might approach the use of social media in a development context. This qualitative study has produced some new concepts. This study has led to a substantive theory in the context of international development. Furthermore, this substantive theory is compared with three theory lenses, when applied on the data collected for this PhD research, in their ability to identify similar concepts as reached with the substantive theory following the grounded theory method. Finally, the thesis presents some avenues for future research that may help expand the substantive theory that has been developed under this research to formal theory

Keywords: *Information and Communication Technology (ICT), social media, development NGO, organisational social media, ICT for development*

Dutch summary: Nederlandse samenvatting

Dit promotieonderzoek heeft het gebruik van sociale media door Nederlandse ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties in hun projecten onderzocht. Het doel van dit onderzoek was om te begrijpen hoe deze organisaties proberen vat te krijgen op sociale media. Daartoe is de volgende onderzoeksvraag onderzocht: hoe gebruiken Nederlandse ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties sociale media ten behoeve van hun projecten?

Vanwege het verkennende karakter van het onderzoek is gekozen voor een kwalitatieve onderzoeksopzet. Hierbij is een combinatie van case study onderzoek en de grounded theory methode gehanteerd. Deze combinatie is geschikt omdat met behulp van case study onderzoek men probeert een fenomeen te begrijpen of te verkennen, terwijl met grounded theory men probeert theorie te vormen. Gezien de opzet van dit onderzoek om de percepties van ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties op sociale media gebruik voor ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsprojecten te analyseren is een interpretatief paradigma toepasbaar, waarbij je als onderzoeker probeert om subjectieve ervaringen te begrijpen en te interpreteren. Vanuit dit interpretatief paradigma is de wereld complex en voortdurend in beweging. Bij interpretatief onderzoek probeert men subjectieve ervaringen te begrijpen en welke betekenis mensen geven aan de sociale werkelijkheid.

De combinatie van case study onderzoek en grounded theory methode werkt heel goed voor theorievorming is vaker toegepast in de disciplines van Information Systems en ICT for Development.

Omdat het gebruik van theorie voordat data wordt verzameld en geanalyseerd indruist tegen een fundamenteel principe van grounded theory, moet dit geadresseerd worden bij het combineren van case study onderzoek en grounded theory. Dit is opgelost door gebruik te maken van een initieel high-level conceptueel raamwerk als een duidend instrument for zowel het niet-committerend (verkennend) literatuuronderzoek als voor de conceptualisering van het onderzoeksprobleem, terwijl de ontwikkeling van theorie vanuit de data niet verstoord wordt.

Het onderzoek richtte zich op de Nederlandse ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties met een professionele organisatie inrichting en cofinanciering vanuit de Nederlandse overheid. Van de ongeveer honderd organisaties zijn veertien ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties middels een theoretische sampling strategie geselecteerd.

Dataverzameling omvatte semigestructureerd interviews met achttien respondenten en secundaire data van de veertien ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties. De data werd geanalyseerd met de grounded theory coderingsprocedure van Glaser, die begint met open coderen (labels aan tekstfragmenten), gevolgd door selectief coderen (clusteren en categoriseren van codes rond hoofdcategorieën) en eindigt met theoretisch coderen (relaties leggen tussen de hoofdcategorieën en reflecteren aan de literatuur).

De analyse bracht drie grote thema's of hoofdcategorieën aan het licht, ofwel 'core categories' zoals deze genoemd worden in de grounded theory methode.

Het eerste thema heet 'NGO Enacting Values in Development'. Dit thema gaat over hoe ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties hun organisatiewaarden uitoefenen in de context van ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Het mengsel van verschillende organisatie mind-sets over ontwikkelingssamenwerking beïnvloedt de activiteiten van de organisatie. De ideologische trends die gestimuleerd worden door maatschappelijke en technologische veranderingen

hebben gevolgen voor de ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsstrategie en de strategische samenwerkingsnetwerken van de onderzochte organisaties.

Het tweede thema is ‘NGO’s Views on Social Media Use’. Dit thema gaat over hoe de ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisatie kijkt naar sociale media. Het omvat vier categorieën: technologisch, individueel, collectieve en contextuele zienswijzen. Deze categorieën zijn gerelateerd aan het concept van affordance clusters en vertonen onderlinge verbanden.

Het derde thema is ‘NGO’s Use of Social Media in Development’. Dit betreft de sociale media activiteiten van de organisaties in hun ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsprojecten. Dit heeft ook geresulteerd in een evaluatieraamwerk voor organisatorisch gebruik van sociale media door ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties, door de organisatiedoelen van deze organisaties te vergelijken met de sociale media hoofdactiviteitsgebieden in de context van ontwikkelingssamenwerking.

Deze thema’s zijn onderling gerelateerd. Dit onderzoek toont een wisselwerking tussen de thema’s ‘NGO’s Values in Development’, ‘NGO’s Views on Social Media’, en ‘NGO’s Use of Social Media in Development’.

Deze grounded theory studie beoogt een initieel theorie te ontwikkelen over hoe ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisaties sociale media benaderen in de context van ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Deze theorie (‘substantive theory’) is vervolgens vergeleken met drie bestaande theoretische modellen om te bezien of de ontwikkelde theorie gelijke concepten omvat wanneer die modellen gebruikt worden voor analyse van de verzamelde data.

Tot slot geeft het onderzoek suggesties voor vervolgonderzoek waarmee de ontwikkelde ‘substantive theory’ uitgebreid kan worden tot geformaliseerde theorie toepasbaar in een ander context dan ontwikkelingssamenwerking.

Keywords: Informatie en Communicatie Technologie (ICT), sociale media, ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsorganisatie, organisatorisch gebruik van sociale media, ICT for development

In memory of my mother, Nita.

Acknowledgements

I want to express my deepest gratitude for the best supporting supervisory team I could wish. I am very grateful, humbled and honoured to be able to say I am one of the PhD students who was supervised by Professor Cathy Urquhart. Her supervision, coaching and words of wisdom have been invaluable for finishing the PhD thesis and also for my personal development as an academic scholar. I could not have wished a better Director of Studies and world-renown expert in the field of Grounded theory than professor Cathy Urquhart to steer me through all these years of being a part-time PhD student.

She devised a team of three at Manchester Metropolitan University with complementary areas of knowledge expertise. I am thankful for their feedback to steer me under the guidance of a great Director of Studies professor Cathy Urquhart towards the completion of the PhD study: Dr Tidings Ndhlovu, Dr Oliver Kayas, and Dr Bex Lewis. This team was complemented with the Dutch connection, lector Pascal Ravesteijn.

It is time to recall the start. The PhD journey began nine years ago and was instigated by an encounter between Dr Gilbert Silvius (then my supervisor for my business informatics master thesis on a subject in the field of ICT for development) with Professor Cathy Urquhart at an ICT for Development conference. This led to my visit to Manchester to discuss the research idea, and that meeting led to fruitful guidance and collaboration with a marvellous supervisory team.

The foundation for this research was laid by first finishing the master of the research programme and preparing the PhD research proposal at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School. I am grateful for the encouraging feedback at the annual review from Professor Tony Hines. His remarks that he foresees a future for me as an ‘engaged scholar’ still resonates. Furthermore, I am grateful professor Richard Heeks ensured that as a PhD student, I was welcome at and could participate at colloquia from the Centre for Development Informatics, University of Manchester.

The PhD journey would not have been possible without strong support from my sponsoring institution Hogeschool Utrecht, HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, particularly the research group Process Innovation & Information Systems under supervision of lector/professor Pascal Ravesteijn who provided me with a supporting environment for developing my research and teaching skills, and the motivational encouragement of my colleagues. The continuous support and professional research position at the research group at Hogeschool Utrecht help me to further develop as an academic.

I am also grateful for the welcoming atmosphere and constructive feedback I received at the various doctoral colloquia and conferences in the fields of ICT for Development (ICTD, IFIP WG 9.4, IPID), Information Systems (ICIS, ECIS), Development Studies (DSA) and Internet & Communication Research (IR, ECREA).

Last but not least, I want to thank my love, my girlfriend Pamela Lucas, for her support in good times and in bad times. This journey has absorbed much time, and I hope we can catch up some quality social time now I am about to finish this episode.

A big and warm thank you for all of you!

Anand

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C4D	Communication for Development
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GTM	Grounded theory method
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
ICT4D	ICT for Development
IS	Information Systems
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NGDO	Non-governmental development organisations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMAC	Social media, Mobile technologies, Analytics and Cloud computing
WEIRD	Western Educated Industrialised Rich & Developed

1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the context of the research and the research problem addressed by this PhD research. Furthermore, the outline of this PhD dissertation is explained.

1.1 Background and Context

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are active players in the field of international development, and Dutch development NGOs are not alone in considering how social media might help them to achieve their aims. More and more development NGOs are harnessing the power of social media to affect change (Ørecomm, 2012; Haikin & Flatters, 2017). Social media have been used for activities such as organising community activism, empowering citizens, and coordinating emergency or disaster relief efforts (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Mukkamala & Beck, 2017). Examples of mapping disaster struck regions using social media after earthquakes or after hurricanes have shown the potential of crowdsourcing for NGOs involved with relief activities (Crowley & Chan, 2011; Livingston & Walter-Drop, 2014; Meier, 2014).

However, for many of these organisations, the benefits or the potential uses of social media in the development context are not entirely clear (Berente et al., 2011; Nicholson et al., 2016; Obregón & Tufte, 2017).

How social media is used in the area of development is a key issue for development NGOs (Waters, 2009; Kanter & Fine, 2010; Pavlovic et al., 2014; Carboni & Maxwell, 2015). Digital technology, such as social media, “is here to stay, [development] NGOs need to adapt to it, it’s not going away”, Haikin (2017) argues. The impact of social media for development purposes is still not completely understood, and more research is needed, “specifically to the theoretical and empirical linkage between social media and development” Nicholson et al. (2016, p. 357) state.

What makes a study on organisational social media use by development NGOs somewhat different from other studies on organisational social media is the context of developing countries in which the development projects of these NGOs take place. Although we should not generalise about developing countries, certain characteristics can be identified that may influence (ICT for) development projects (Roztocki & Weistroffer, 2011; Heeks, 2017). These characteristics are uncertain because of (political) instability and volatility in systems likes supply chains and markets, resource constraints (shorter supply of money, skills, technology), inequality (both in the distribution of resources, as well as in power and control), institutional differences because of different language values and cultural norms, and localism which means more reliance on closer ties.

Much research on social media focuses on a Western context, and this focus has limited our understanding of social media technologies in the Global South (Burgess et al., 2017). Studies are also often limited to WEIRD populations, i.e. those in Western, educated, industrialised, rich, and developed countries (Henrich et al., 2010). This is of particular concern when looking at the stakeholders the development NGOs attempt to reach in developing countries, or the phrase I will use the Global South. The phrase ‘Global South’ refers to the economically disadvantaged regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania (Dados & Connell, 2012; Clarke, 2018).

The plethora of technologies with possible uses for ICT for development (ICT4D) requires ICT4D research to become more multidisciplinary than ever before, Zheng et al. (2018) argue.

They posit that to avoid technological determinism in ICT4D research, linkages are needed between disciplines ranging from computer sciences, information systems, development studies to ethics, human geography, political and development economics, and applied fields of health and agriculture.

Social media can be seen as one in a long line of ICTs that have been used for development purposes. How social media is used in the area of development, where in contrast to the private sector, the purpose of social media is not to drive sales, is a key issue for NGOs (Waters, 2009; Kanter & Fine, 2010; Raman, 2016). Some country-specific studies have been done, for example, Nigerian NGOs' use of Facebook and Twitter (Armstrong & Butcher, 2018), or the use of social media by NGOs in Indonesia (Nugroho, 2011). This study is not country-specific but looks at specific NGOs, Northern development NGOs, and their use of social media for development purposes.

1.2 The Research Problem & Research Question

Social media use by many Dutch development organisations has increased (Mion & Heemskerk, 2009; Turnhout, 2009; Partos, 2010; Schellens, 2011). However, for many of these organisations, the potential benefits or pitfalls of the uses of rapidly evolving new technologies like social media in the development arena are not entirely clear (Partos & The Spindle, 2018).

The idea for this research arose when I observed the intensive use of social media during an annual meeting of Dutch development NGOs in 2009. This observation led to this research idea on the role of social media as an ICT instrument for development.

The impact of social media for development purposes is still not completely understood (Nicholson et al., 2016). Organisations are trying to get to grips with the latest digital technologies, and Dutch development NGOs are no different. Incorporating these new, rapidly evolving digital technologies like social media brings challenges to these organisations. The NGOs and their staff try to make sense of social media and its value for development projects while they lack complete knowledge of these new technologies, or are overwhelmed by the various social media and their applications, which have the potential for multiple interpretations and effects.

In that sense, social media can be called equivocal technology where organisations such as development NGOs struggle to make sense of the potential application of social media to their projects (Berente et al., 2011). Even when equivocal technologies such as social media are thought to make new organisational usage possible, the specific applications are not well stated or comprehended, or information is incomplete or ambiguous (Swanson & Ramiller, 1997). This quest to make sense of social media brings up an overall contextual overlay for this research project. Therefore the focus of the research is on understanding how development NGOs cope with social media. The main research question explored by the study is:

> **How do Dutch development NGOs use social media to further the development activities of their organisations?**

To address this question, three sub-questions were examined:

1) What organisational values steer the activities of the development NGO?
2) How do development NGOs view the concept of social media?
3) In what way do development NGOs apply social media for development purposes?

The approach of the study is to analyse in a conceptual manner, without focusing on any particular social media technology, or relying too much on today's social media technology. The research has the following objectives:

- Examine the issues, opportunities and drivers that are likely to influence the usage of social media by development NGOs for their development activities, and its impact on these organisations.
- To critically examine the theoretical and empirical findings related to opportunities arising from social media usage by development NGOs.
- To produce practical outcomes that may be of value to development NGOs using social media for development activities.

1.3 Research Approach

Given the exploratory nature of this research, qualitative research was adopted (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The methodology of grounded theory method combined with a multiple case study was applied. In this study, the research approach used is the Glaserian grounded theory method (Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 2002a). It was used for both data analysis as well as theory building. The Glaserian approach is useful when starting with a broad research question that becomes narrower during the process of data collection and analysis (Alammar et al., 2019).

1.4 The Researcher

This study has been done as a part-time PhD student, next to a position as an IT business consultant in healthcare & higher education, during a period of over eight years. My personal background is that of a practitioner in the field of ICT. I have almost 25 years of work experience in the field of ICT for (higher) education, research and healthcare. My passion for societal implications of ICT started in my early student years as an astronomy student when I discovered the possibilities of the World Wide Web in an era that universities were still communicating with text-based systems (Gopher). Maybe the moment I coordinated setting up the first web page for Erasmus exchange students in Europe in 1995 without official university support helped me to see the potentially disruptive effect of communication over the Internet. The work that came afterwards brought me into the impact of ICT in non-profit organisations like educational, research and healthcare institutions in The Netherlands. During that time, as a proponent of lifelong learning, I have studied (part-time) business informatics. I got the suggestion to do a part-time PhD study after finishing my master thesis and having published some scientific papers on multinational ICT companies and the Base of the (economic) Pyramid. I got curious about what more is happening with ICT in the context of development. So the idea for this research was born after noticing the intensive use of social media by development NGOs.

1.5 Rationale and Significance

Thompson and Heeks urge for further research, including empirical examples of attempts to introduce social media models to serve developmental aims (Heeks, 2008; Thompson, 2008; Heeks, 2017). Nicholson et al. (2016) argue that limited attention has been given to theoretical

and empirical relations between social media and development. This study aims to contribute by examining the role of social media in the activities of development NGOs.

The rising popularity of mobile (smart)phones, the increasing access to the Internet and popularity of social media including the underprivileged in societies in the Global South have resulted in social media being a means of ICT that cannot be ignored by both development practitioners as well as academic researchers (Kemp, 2019b; Souter & Van der Spuy, 2019).

The novel contributions of the research of this PhD study are:

- Three themes (core categories) and their reciprocal relationships were identified. The NGOs organisational values are related to its perception of the potential & pitfalls social media has for development, and the actual use in development, which all three reciprocally influence each other.
- This study has developed some new concepts. Four affordance clusters, namely technological, individual, collective and contextual views, and interrelationships between them are identified.
- The identification of a possible transformation of some development NGOs to digital social enterprises have implications on the development sector.
- The relationship of different NGO mind-sets governing their development activities and thereby requiring different approaches and use of social media for development.
- Methodological contributions in grounded theory method, regarding theoretical sampling and applying theory lenses to assess the substantive theory developed in this study.

The next section describes the structure of this PhD thesis.

1.6 Overview of Thesis Structure

Chapter one introduces the research problem and the research question.

The second chapter provides an overview of the literature relevant to this study and shortly highlights the nature of a literature review in a grounded theory method study, which is a phased literature review. The first phase, noncommittal literature review, helps the researcher to set the boundary of the problem domain. Later, during the data collection and analysis stage, more literature is examined in the integrative phase. The structure of the literature review chapter reflects this two-phase approach.

The main concepts that are discussed in the literature are related to what constitutes development, development NGOs, and the use of ICTs, such as social media for development.

In this study, social media is defined as a *techno-social system for participatory culture, having characteristics like openness, participation, conversation, connectedness and community*. This definition integrates ideas from Fuchs (2017) and Mayfield (2008a) and remains flexible and technology agnostic for future changes in social media meanings.

Characteristic of NGOs are being an *institutionalised organisation, separate from the government (non-state), non-profit, self-governing and often some degree of voluntary participation in its activities* (Korten, 1990; Salamon & Anheier, 1992; Vakil, 1997; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Brunner, 2019; Davies, 2019).

More specific, Northern development NGOs like the Dutch development NGOs focus on activities that can be classified along with their development paradigms: emergency assistance, development (Global North as an example), development as a self-reliant political process, human and sustainable development, and development beyond aid.

The literature chapter discusses the main concepts of this study: development, development NGOs, social media and then combines them in an overview of the concept of ICT for development, and more specific, social media in the context of development. This is followed by a discussion on the use of social media by non-profit organisations, and specifically development NGOs.The chapter then discusses Communication for Development and Affordance theory literature regarding theory lenses that could be applied to the data to compare and contrast with the theory developed in this grounded theory research.

The third chapter delves deeper into the methodology of this study. The chapter explains the chosen approach of a combination of multiple case studies with the grounded theory method for this qualitative research. This chapter discusses the Glaserian grounded theory method and its application for data collection and data analysis procedure. The theoretical sampling strategy is discussed, and a short case description of the 14 Dutch development NGOs is provided.

The fourth, fifth and sixth chapters present the findings of the three emergent themes (also called ‘core categories’ in a grounded theory study) that were identified from the data. For each theme, the identified categories are presented, including illustrative quotations from the data. The three themes identified in this study are NGO enacting values in the development, NGO’s Views on Social Media Use, and NGO’s Use of Social Media in development.

Chapter seven discusses the analysis of the data of the three themes (core categories) and their relationship to the extant literature. Furthermore, the relationship between the three emergent themes (core categories) is discussed.

The thesis concluded with chapter eight in which the conclusions of this research and their relevance to academic knowledge contribution and practitioners are presented. This is followed by an evaluation of the way the research was conducted and suggestions for future research. This chapter also includes a short discussion on whether the collected data would have been interpreted differently if a particular theoretical lens had been applied, instead of the chosen approach of not adopting an *a priori* theoretical lens in the applied grounded theory study for this PhD research. The thesis finishes with some concluding reflections and ideas for follow-up publications.

2 Literature Review

The literature review in a PhD study following a grounded theory approach consists of a phased literature review. The grounded theory study typically starts with a pre-study literature review to set the boundary of the problem domain and the methodology to be applied (Urquhart & Fernández, 2013). This review phase is called a noncommittal (preliminary) literature review.

During and after data analysis, further literature review activities take place in the so-called integrative phase. That integrative phase consists of thematic and theoretical literature review activities, which are guided by concepts found in the data and the relationships between those concepts. How the literature is positioned vis-à-vis the grounded theory approach is shown in the following diagram, Figure 2-1.

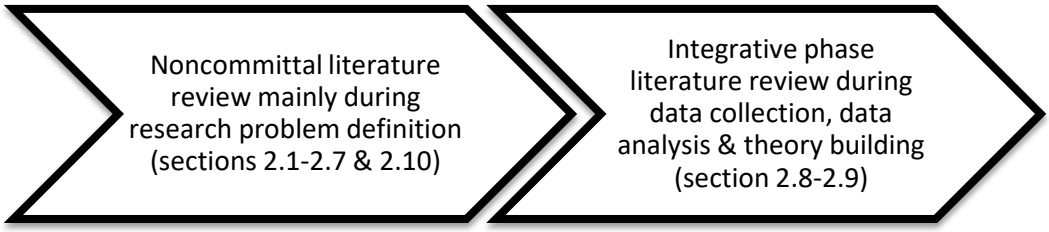


Figure 2-1. Structure of literature review in this PhD study following a grounded theory approach.

In this chapter, sections 2.1 to 2.7 & 2.10 cover the noncommittal literature review sections which have been revised and updated when finishing the writing of the PhD thesis. Sections 2.8 and 2.9 are sections that have been added as a result of the literature review activities during the integrative phase. Additional literature that relates the findings to the extant literature is introduced in the Discussion chapter. The position of the literature review in a grounded theory study is further elaborated in the next (methodology) chapter in section0.

The following diagram (Figure 2-2) expresses both the research problem and the key concepts affecting that problem – social media as forms of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), concepts of development, and the context of Dutch development NGOs operating in international development. The relationship between these three sensitising concepts with the subject matter of this study will be explored.

Together this encompasses the research subject of social media for development. The literature review examines the key concepts, and the sections are organised according to these concepts in the following way.

First, this chapter explores the literature on the concept of ‘development’ and the role of development NGOs. Then the use of ICT for development is addressed, focusing on social media. This is followed by how non-profit organisations, in particular, development NGOs, are using social media.

The chapter then continues with two sections about the concepts of communication for development and affordance theory which were considered during the integrative phase of the literature review process. The literature review ends with concluding remarks on the identification of gaps in current knowledge related to the problem area of this PhD research.

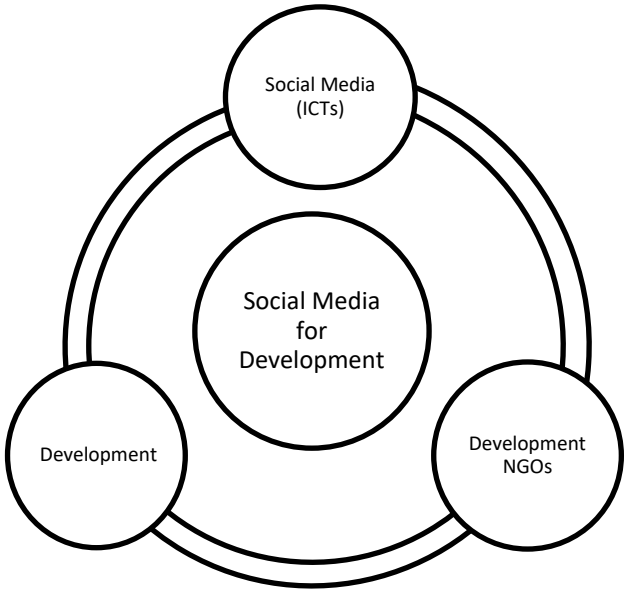


Figure 2-2. Conceptual framework for the research problem.

2.1 **Development**

The question 'What is development?' is not easy to answer. The concept of 'development' is highly debated and often not clarified in ICT for development projects (Avgerou, 2010; Unwin, 2014a; Avgerou, 2017). Zheng et al. (2018) argue that even scholars from development studies find it difficult to create a definitive list of the different views on development. The concept is relative, both in terms of values, as it has different meanings to different people, depending on what is considered like economic, geographic, political, social, cultural, religious, or ethnic contexts, and in terms of theory, as different theories and different academic disciplines disagree about what will lead to progress (Prakash & De, 2007; Reddi, 2011).

Schaaf (2013) observes a wide range of issues when it comes to what constitutes development and covers a wide range of areas, such as health and education, child poverty, urban and rural development, housing, gender roles and (in)equality, population growth, globalisation, industrialisation and economic growth, and natural resource use. She argues that "development is multidimensional and the dimensions are arguably interdependent in that they can all affect one another" (Schaaf, 2013, p. 16).

The meaning of development has changed over time, where the traditional development paradigm is associated with the modernisation theory in which the West is seen as a role model for progress (Sein et al., 2018).

Sumner and Tribe (2008) identify three somewhat intersecting areas of conceptualisations of 'what is development', representing three different schools of thought: 1) development as a long-term process of structural societal transformation, 2) development as a short- to medium-term outcome of desirable targets, and 3) development as a dominant 'discourse' of western modernisation.

The first of these conceptualisations considers development as a long-term structural societal transformation “in socio-economic structures such as property ownership, the organisation of production, technological infrastructure and institutional arrangements” (Zheng et al., 2018, p. 4). The second conceptualisation looks at measurable short- to medium-term goals for development outcome (Sumner & Tribe, 2008). The third conceptualisation of development presents a plethora of discourses, such as the dominant paradigm of Western-centric modernisation theory (Zheng et al., 2018). Instead of three areas, Zheng et al. (2018) (drawing on Mabogunje (1980), observe four broad perspectives on development that also influence ICT for development discourse: development as economic growth, as modernisation (the West as a role model), as distributional justice, and as socio-economic transformation.

Furthermore, development discourses sometimes outline institutional logics (Hayes & Rajão, 2011) and provide a rationale for partnerships in technology-enabled development (Ismail et al., 2018).

From an idea originally focused on economic growth and Western-style modernisation and industrialisation, the notion of development has evolved into a rather holistic human development paradigm, that looks at the process of development through a more people-centred and humane approach (Mchombu et al., 2004; Pieterse, 2010). The human development approach recognises the importance of the well-being of all people instead of solely a narrow focus on economic growth (Mchombu et al., 2004). Alkire (2010, p. 40) states “human development is development *by* the people *of* the people and *for* the people” and aims to expand people’s freedom. Participation and empowerment are two essential components of theory and research on human development.

Sen (2009) argues that development is profoundly about promoting human freedom, the freedom to choose how to use our capabilities and the freedom of choice in the personal, the social, the economic and the political spheres. Following Sen’s argument, Unwin (2014b) argues “development is the removal of major sources of unfreedom by enabling people to freely and creatively express their capabilities”. Sen’s approach is highly influential in the development discourse, while according to Kleine (2009), it offers common ground for communication between practitioners in international development organisations and researchers in academia.

There are also post-development paradigms that often reject the entire ‘development or aid project’ (Escobar, 2011; Moyo, 2011), and they sometimes challenge the existence of (Western) development NGOs (Easterly, 2006). Escobar argues that local communities need to address their own problems, using their own ideas, believing that people have to develop themselves, instead of trusting on ideas from overseas that may be contextually inappropriate (RGS, 2017).

The concept of development is not exclusively associated with the so-called developing countries. Kleine (2013) argues that from Sen’s capabilities approach, it is apparent that development equals freedom, and therefore, *all* countries are developing countries. Slater (2014) highlights the epistemological gap or bias (Northern versus Southern interpretation) in development projects and encourages the development sector to embrace Southern ideologies. For example, globalisation is associated with participation in the neoliberal economy by people from the Northern hemisphere. In contrast, for many Southerners, the

intercultural exchange value through amassing networks of international contacts and actively participating in the production of global culture is more prevalent, Slater argues.

Sustainable development has emerged as one of the most prominent development paradigms in recent decades. In 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) stated that "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Schaaf, 2013, p. 25; RGS, 2017). Sustainable development has four pillars: economic, environmental, social, and cultural. However, different perspectives based on both Western and Eastern philosophical principals have resulted in a more holistic and integrated vision of sustainable development in recent interpretations (Van Egmond, 2014).

Servaes and Malikhao (2016a, p. 317) argue that sustainable development implies a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach where "communication and information play a strategic and fundamental role by; (a) contributing to the interplay of different development factors, (b) improving the sharing of knowledge and information, and (c) encouraging the participation of all concerned."

Schaaf (2013, p. 16) argues that the term 'development' is now commonly used by development NGOs to mean "the intentional doing of development to reach desirable short-to-medium-term targets." At present, this relates directly to the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs).

2.2 Development NGOs

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are active players in the field of international development, both as providers of aid and services to underprivileged communities as well as policy advocates (Clarke, 1998; Atack, 1999; Davies, 2018). Development NGOs are considered a subset of organisations belonging to the non-profit sector (also known as the third sector) (Salamon & Anheier, 1992; Northern Bridge, 2019). They are recognised as key third sector actors in the landscapes of international development, humanitarian action, human rights, environment, and many other areas of public action (Lewis, 2010; Salamon & Sokolowski, 2016).

Sometimes non-governmental development organisations are referred to as NGDOs, c.f. Makuwira (2013), or when they originate from the northern hemisphere, like the Dutch development NGOs that are the subject of my research, NNGOs (see Figure 2-3).

One of the most widely used definitions for NGOs is from Operational Directive 14.70 of the World Bank. The World Bank (2014) defines non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as "*private organisations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development. NGOs often differ from other organisations in the sense that they tend to operate independently from government, are value-based and are guided by the principles of altruism and voluntarism*." The World Bank also argues that NGOs have become "important actors for the delivery of social services and implementation of development programs, as a complement to government action".

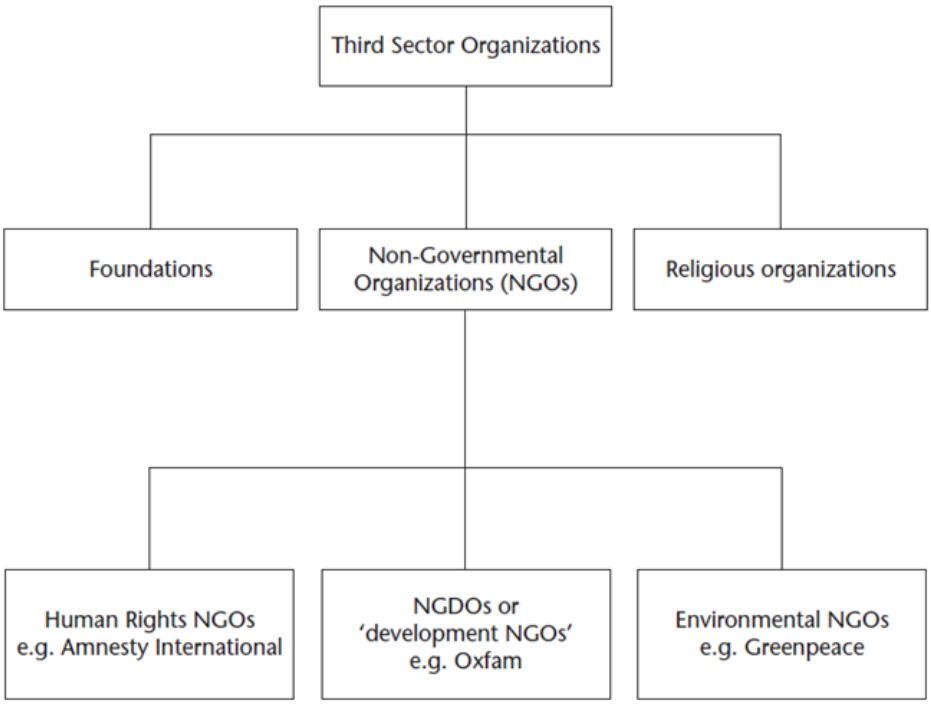


Figure 2-3. Situating Development NGOs within the third sector. Source: Lewis (2014)

Another often-used definition is by the Union of International Associations (UIA, 2014): "*A non-governmental organisation (NGO) is a legally constituted organisation created by private persons or organisations without participation or representation of any government. The term originated from the United Nations and is usually used to refer to organisations that are not a conventional for-profit business. NGOs can be organised on a local, national or international level*".

The OECD defines NGOs as *"any non-profit entity in which people organise themselves on a local, national or international level to pursue shared objectives and ideals, without significant government-controlled participation or representation. NGOs include foundations, cooperative societies, trade unions, faith-based organisations, and ad-hoc entities set up to collect funds for a specific purpose. NGO umbrella organisations and NGO networks are also included"* (Wood & Fällman, 2019, p. 14). This definition is equivalent to how they use the term civil society organisation (CSO).

NGOs exist in various forms, and for this reason, definitions of NGOs are diverse and based on different conceptual paradigms, origins, and geography. The notion of NGOs has become broader, and the interpretation more flexible, to also include organisations involved with operations in a single country (Davies, 2019). Furthermore, Vakil (2018) noted that in the literature, often the terms NGO, private voluntary organisation (PVO) – especially in the United States-, civil society organisations, and non-profit organisation (NPO) were used interchangeably. "Non-profit organisations are seen by many as similar or equivalent to NGOs", she states (2018, p. 97). Ahmed and Potter (2006) also argue that non-profit organisations and NGOs are almost the same concepts, having the same characteristics, thereby referring to the definition of a non-profit organisation by Salamon and Anheier (1996).

Despite the enormous diversity of NGOs, a general definition of NGOs is nonetheless possible within the context of this research. The essence of this definition is a set of five core structural or operational features that differentiate the NGOs from other types of social institutions. NGOs have the following five characteristics: *institutionalised organisation, separation from the government (non-state), non-profit, self-governing, and often has some degree of voluntary participation in its activities* (Korten, 1990; Salamon & Anheier, 1992; Vakil, 1997; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Brunner, 2019; Davies, 2019). Vakil (2018) suggests adding to these attributes, primarily for development NGOs, the distinction between organisations with commodified and non-commodified outputs, meaning differentiating between organisations receiving cash payments below or at the market value for goods or services provided. This suggests classifying NGOs as a kind of service provider.

Table 2-1. Generations of Northern NGO development programme strategies. Synthesis of ideas from Korten (1987); Korten (1990), De Senillosa (1998), Bendell and Murphy (1999), Fowler (2000a), Potter et al. (2008), Lewis and Kanji (2009), Willis (2011), Schaaf (2013) and Davies (2019).

	First Generation	*Second Generation*	*Third Generation*	*Fourth Generation*	*Alternative Fourth Generation*
Development NGO Dominant mind-set	**Emergency assistance**	**Development (North as an example; 'trickle down' effect)**	**Development as a self-reliant political process**	**Human and sustainable development**	**Development beyond aid**
Defining features	Emergency relief & welfare	Small-scale self-reliant community development in the South; public awareness in the North	Sustainable systems development. Partnerships with South and protests in the North.	People's movement or global change. Decentralisation. Empowerment in the South and Lobbying in the North.	Public Private Partnership (PPP) Inclusive business. Increased incorporation into state and market systems, with a focus on transparency, accountability and business best practice.
Problem definition	Lack of goods and services	Lack of economic and technological resources. Underdevelopment & neo-colonialism.	Institutional and policy constraints	Poverty as a denial of fundamental human rights. Inadequate mobilising vision	The unsustainability of projects in the South.
Time frame	Immediate	Project life	Long-term (10-20 yrs.)	Indefinite future	Variable
Scope	Individual or family	Neighbourhood or village	Region or nation	National or global	National or global
Chief actors	NGO	NGO + community or beneficiary organisations	All public and private institutions that define the relevant system	Networking-oriented NGOs, loosely defined networks of people and organisations	Super networks: networking-oriented NGOs, including local and global business
NGO role	Doer	Mobiliser	Catalyst	Activist/Educator	Civic 'partnership' with states and markets.
Management orientation	Logistics management	Project management	Strategic management	Blending and energising self-managing networks or civic innovation	Social entrepreneurship
Development education	Starving children	Community self-help	Constraining policies and institutions	Global citizenship	Public-Private Partnership (PPP) for Social Development

Furthermore, she suggests adding advocacy to this list. Advocacy may well be linked with the development of an NGO's dominant mind-set, as seen in Korten's classification. A

classification of development NGOs along their historical advance was introduced by Korten (1987). He proposed a classification of development NGOs in initially three categories rooted in the historical beginning of those organisations.

The period of the twentieth century up to 1970 saw the first generation of NGOs focused on emergency relief and welfare. As a development strategy, relief and welfare are mostly a temporary alleviation of the signs of underdevelopment. The second generation came up in the late 1970s and brought more attention to small-scale and self-reliant local community development. However NGOs soon realised the limited impact of this approach, and this led to the present third generation, aiming at sustainable systems development, in local public and private organisations that are linked into a supportive national development system. These NGOs are moving from a service delivery role to a more facilitative role, where they facilitate the creation of capacities, relationships and responsibilities by other organisations to address designated needs in a sustainable way (Korten, 1987, p. 187).

Although the categories seem to suggest an evolution from one generation to the next, all three categories may well co-exist as strategic orientations of the development NGO and are by no means exclusive. For example, the NGO's emergency relief efforts fall under the first generation, whereas their local intervention programmes are considered second or third-generation. Policy studies and advocacy are unquestionably third-generation oriented. The development activities of an NGO can be placed in a framework combining all three strategic orientations, which can be used to classify or analyse the work of that particular development NGO. Korten (1990) and De Senillosa (1998) go even further, suggesting the need for a fourth-generation category, which will facilitate the coming together of loosely defined networks of people and organisations to transform the institutions of global society (Korten, 1990, p. 123). Fowler (2000b) speaks of civic innovation for creating new solutions to old and new social problems based on action and support from the citizen base.

An alternative scenario is that development NGOs are beginning to stimulate the role of international and local businesses in the social sustainability of the South (Bendell & Murphy, 1999) or even take up that role themselves as social entrepreneurs using commercial undertakings to cross-subsidise social interventions (Fowler, 2000b). Table 2-1 shows Korten's original three-generation development NGO classification, including the extension of two varieties of a fourth generation. The table is a synthesis of ideas from Korten (1987); Korten (1990), De Senillosa (1998), Bendell and Murphy (1999), Fowler (2000a), Potter et al. (2008), Lewis and Kanji (2009), Willis (2011) and Schaaf (2013).

Lewis and Kanji (2009) argue there are five broad activity areas of NGOs in development: democratisation, privatisation, developmentalisation, social transformation and charity. These areas can be loosely mapped onto the suggested NGOs' dominant mind-set, as shown in the table above. Emergency assistance is related to charity, development and also development as a self-reliant political process to developmentalisation, development as a self-reliant political process to democratisation, human and sustainable development to social transformation, and development beyond aid to privatisation. Where they argue that an NGO has one particular role, I suggest that multiple mind-sets persisting within the same NGO should be considered. Considering this classification of the development strategies used by NGOs, and how social media supports those strategies, will add a useful perspective for this research. It may be that social media use in these organisations spans a number of these development activities.

It is important to note that development NGOs do not operate alone, but collaborate in networks. In Figure 2-4, the INGOs depict international NGOs like the Dutch development NGOs under study (sometimes referred to as Northern NGOs, NNGOs). Among their collaboration partners are local NGOs, nation-states, the private sector and multilateral donors (Schaaf, 2013). Often the so-called beneficiaries of development projects are reached via local partners.

Atouba and Shumata (2014) found that international (infectious disease) NGOs are more likely to collaborate when they have the same status, similar (closer) founding dates, and are headquartered in the same global hemisphere (north/south). Not only did they find global region homophily (flocking with the ones operating in the same area), and North/South divide homophily, they also noticed institutional homophily playing a role in inter-organisational collaboration among the studied international NGOs. It would be interesting to see if institutional isomorphism, the similarity of the processes or structures of organisations, plays a role in the studied development NGOs (Kontinen & Onali, 2017).

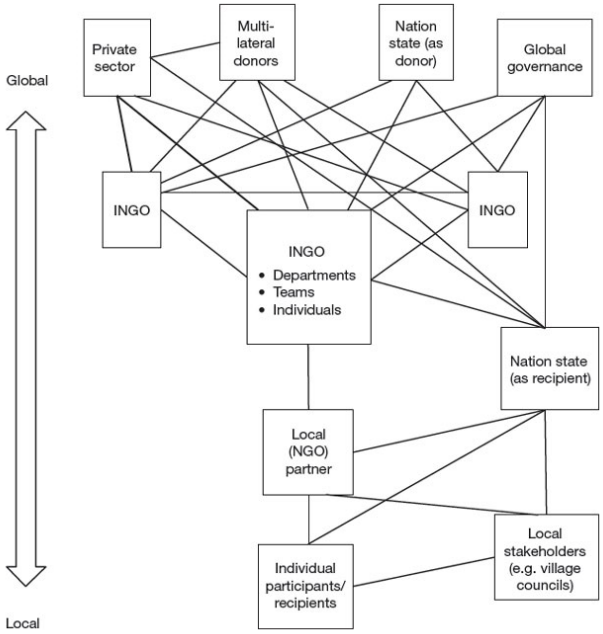


Figure 2-4. Network of relationships within the development sector and the position of INGOs (Schaaf, 2013).

Tapia et al. (2013) argue there is more willingness in the development sector, especially for humanitarian aid, to collaborate and create collaborative systems.

2.3 ICT for Development (ICT4D)

Walsham (2017, p. 25) argues there is a need for further unpacking of "what is meant by development and how ICTs can contribute to it". Zheng et al. (2018) have formulated five points of departure ICT4D should take to be beneficial for development:

- ICT4D is not about achieving a designated level of technology adoption or diffusion, but multifaceted, dynamic and contentious socio-technical processes;
- ICT4D is relevant in all societies;
- ICT4D may give rise to unintended consequences and contradictory effects on development;

- development does not progress linearly, nor is there a one-size-fits-all solution;
- It is important to embrace the multiplicity, heterogeneity and openness of development, both as a concept and as a socio-technical process.

Zheng et al. (2018) argue that this conceptualisation of development and IT artefacts applied in the ICT4D project enhances the rigour of the research, while a theory of change (ToC) approach improves its practical relevance.

ICT has the potential to be a powerful enabler of development goals because its unique characteristics improve communication and the exchange of information to strengthen and create new economic and social networks (UNDP, 2001). Social media can be seen as one in a long line of ICTs that have been used in this way. As such, social media in the development context is discussed in section 2.4.1.

The reasons for this potential are: faster and more accessible information delivery, dissemination of information and knowledge, connectivity and network creation, efficiency and transparency gains, the transformation of people's lives, and lastly, decentralisation and empowerment (UNDP, 2001; McNamara, 2003; Sachs, 2008; Yamamichi, 2011).

In this context, ICT, as an enabler of development, is also referred to as ICT for Development (ICT4D or ICTD). ICT for development is aimed at bridging the digital divide[1] and aiding economic development by ensuring equitable access to up-to-date communications technologies (UNDP-APDIP, 2004). "The term ICT4D can be conceived as a research question, i.e. 'what does ICT mean for development?', reflecting a primary interest in understanding the implications of ICTs for development and not merely their adoption and diffusion" (Zheng et al., 2018, p. 2). Unwin argues that ICT4D is ICT with a profoundly moral agenda, that aims to empower people and communities by answering the difficult questions of not only "what should be done" in the practice of development but also "how should we do it" (Unwin, 2009, p. 33).

Avgerou (2017) argues that a distinguishing feature of ICT4D research is the *inclusion of the local context*, i.e. national, regional or community conditions and processes in the explanation of information system-related phenomena.

Heeks (2009) and Walsham (2017) provide a general overview of the evolution of thinking in the area of ICT for Development (Table 2-2). In a timeline for ICT4D, we can distinguish a pre-digital paradigm which was mainstream from the mid-1940s to mid-1980s, and see a clear distinction between digital ICTs and development (Heeks, 2009). Since the mid-1990s, the ICT4D paradigm has emerged. This paradigm identifies digital ICTs as a tool for development. From the so-called ICT4D 1.0 (marginalising the role of the poor, inducing a supply-driven focus) it developed to ICT4D 2.0 (reframing the poor, seeing the poor as active producers and innovators). As the use of ICT is changing, this will require "new technologies, new approaches to innovation, new intellectual integration, and, above all, a new view of the world's poor" (Heeks, 2009, p. 1).

[1] The term "digital divide" refers to the gap between individuals, households, businesses and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regard to both their opportunities to access information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use of the Internet for a wide variety of activities. (OECD, 2006)

Heeks (2014, p. 2) suggests the use of various technologies for ICT4D: "near-ubiquity of mobile, the spread of broadband, more big/open/real-time data, use of field sensors and embedded computing, more social media, more crowd-sourcing models, more cloud, more smartphones, and 3D printing".

Over the last decade, a new paradigm has begun to rise. Digital development "conceptualises ICT not as one tool among many that enable particular aspects of development, but as the platform that increasingly mediates development" (Heeks, 2016a, p. 2).

The discussions of digital development project implementations and the good practices identified by the community of development practitioners have resulted in the creation of principles for digital development, which have been supported by some of the larger development NGOs and donors, such as DFID and USAID (Rogers, 2016). The nine principles are 1. Design with the user; 2. Understand the existing ecosystem; 3. Design for scale; 4. Build for sustainability; 5. Be data-driven; 6. Use open standards, open data, open-source and open innovation; 7. Reuse and improve; 8. Address privacy and security, and 9. Be collaborative (DIAL, 2016). How these principles affect the use of social media for development purposes remains to be seen.

Table 2-2. Summary of ICT4D research history based on Heeks (2008) and Walsham (2017).

Period	Characteristic features	Some research outcomes
Early beginnings: mid-1980s to mid-1990s	• Largely within information systems field • Social implications of information systems in developing countries	• Themes from mainstream information systems applied to developing countries
Expanding horizons: mid-1990s to mid-2000	• Major changes in technology • Increase in scope and range of ICT4D research in IS field • But also start of interdisciplinary focus of ICT4D • ICT4D 1.0 (marginalising the role of the poor, inducing a supply-driven focus)	• Wide range of issues, theories, levels, and focus of analysis • Start of critiques on development, gender, et cetera.
Proliferation: mid-2000s to present	• The explosion of technology in developing countries, for example, mobile. • Many disciplines involved in ICT4D research • ICT4D 2.0 (reframing the poor, seeing the poor as active producers and innovators) • Digital development (conceptualises ICTs as a platform that mediates development) • ICT4D 3.0 (collaborative, user-centred inclusive design and development process) • Decolonising ICT4D	• Substantial research work in a range of areas • But critiques continue to raise complex issues, for example, on nature of development, the role of new technologies, possible negative effects of ICTs on development, "dark side" of ICTs, need for interdisciplinarity (e.g. computer science, development studies, digital anthropology or sociology, communication studies)

Some scholars argue for an ICT4D 3.0 approach, in which ICT4D is seen as a complex, decentralised, open-ended, and networked innovation process with more attention paid to the contextualisation of efforts and real participation of the beneficiaries (Bon & Akkermans, 2014). ICT4D 3.0 is characterised as a collaborative, user-centred approach, that positions the users' needs and context at the centre of the technology design and development process.

Proponents of ICT4D 3.0 argue that `Digital Development' is still being *"conceptualised content-wise as the rolling out of current Western ICT infrastructure of connectivity to the Global South"* (Bon & Akkermans, 2019, p. 9). A different approach would focus on *decolonising* theory and practising solidarity, they argue. This discourse criticises the interventionist type of technology transfer from the Global North to developing countries, without inclusion in production of the technology in the Global South and consultation of the beneficiaries (CGD, 2017; Bon, 2019).

Another trend related to this study is 'open development'. Open development embodies an emerging set of models to catalyse positive change (Smith et al., 2011). Open development is considered a subset of ICT4D that "studies the potential of IT-enabled openness to support social change among poor or marginalised populations" (Reilly & Alperin, 2016, p. 51).

Bentley (2017) argues that definitions of open development can be formulated in terms of *what it is for* and *how it works*. Regarding what it is for, ICT use in open development relates to openness in at least three dimensions: content, people, and process. This translates to open (peer) production, open consumption (e.g. using, remixing, and repurposing content), and open distribution (e.g. sharing and republishing content). In this sense, open development is defined as the leveraging and reshaping of "information networked activities to alter how we (such as people, groups, organisations, or governments) mobilise and organise resources (information and people) to catalyse development outcomes that are both more inclusive and transformative" (Smith et al., 2011, p. iii).

According to Smith et al. (2014) 'open' refers to information-networked activities that have, relatively speaking, more information that is freely accessible and/or modifiable and more people who can actively participate and/or collaborate. In terms of what it is for, Reilly and Smith (2013, p. 32) position 'open development' close to Amartya Sen's view on development (1999), by arguing that open models are processes that constitute development (the ends) as "they create the conditions for people to escape from the *unfreedom* of poverty, and they can result in development (the means) by permitting people to more effectively execute capabilities."

Another aspect related to openness is the use and, in particular, the sharing of data in development practice: open data (Heeks & Renken, 2018). There are multiple definitions, but a commonly used and short version is: "*Open data is publicly available data that can be universally and readily accessed, used, and redistributed free of charge. It is structured for usability and computability"* (Young & Verhulst, 2016, p. 5). The definition highlights general public availability and access to the data, the possibility to re-use and redistribute, and universal participation.

How open is 'Open Development' remains to be seen. There are critical questions about the actual implications of this openness in development and what they indicate for access, participation and collaboration (Jeet Singh & Gurumurthy, 2014; Roberts, 2015). More access may lead to less participation, and more participation may not necessarily lead to more collaborative outcomes. "Open ICT ecosystems do not exist in a power vacuum; neither does our (nor anybody else's) thinking about open development." (Buskens, 2011, p. 71)

"It is not clear on what basis a general connection between openness and positive development outcomes has been made", Smith et al. (2014, p. 174) argue. The "Open Development" agenda is being discussed by practitioners and academics alike, for example,

Raftree (2013) points out the possible ethical and risk issues in open development, while Bentley (2017) argues accountability concepts are relevant for minimising ambiguities between what open development is, and what it is for.

Both Thompson (2008) and Heeks (2008, 2009) argue that a cross-disciplinary approach is needed to understand the complex nature of impact assessment of ICT for development.

This is corroborated by Zheng et al. (2018) who argue that the range of technologies used in development is rapidly growing (mobile computing, social media, artificial intelligence, Internet of things et cetera) and that this requires ICT4D research to become more multidisciplinary to avoid technological determinism.

Furthermore, they contend that more attention should be paid to the "dark side" of ICT4D, the negative effects or implications of ICT in development, such as digital surveillance, digital data abuse, or identity theft.

Berdou (2011) foresees some implications of the new trends in ICT4D. She identifies new actors and social movements that convene to form communities around shared ideals and technologies. Heeks (2012, p. 339) observed the changing landscape of actors and their changing roles in the ICT4D field, challenging the 'natural position' NGOs have: "[ICT for] *'Development' used to be something that was done by governments, supported by donors. Then NGOs muscled their way onto the scene. But more recently, the picture is far more mixed, with private firms and social enterprises playing a greater role*."

The following typical ICT benefits are appealing to development NGOs, Colle (2008, p. 144) argues:

- individual information searching through a vast array of information sources, on-demand and often 24 hours a day;
- timely interaction between and among computer users that allows convenient and 'contemplated' exchanges: exchanges that are quick but not necessarily instantaneous;
- broadcasting of information to many by ordinary individuals, including easier 'bottom-up' and collaborative message initiation;
- global reach almost always and instantly, and at relatively low cost; convenient storage facilities for text, graphics, audio, video and data;
- and intermixing of media forms and content.

A recurrent theme in the literature is the recognition that ICTs alone cannot change peoples' lives or contribute to human development; they need to be part of broader approaches.

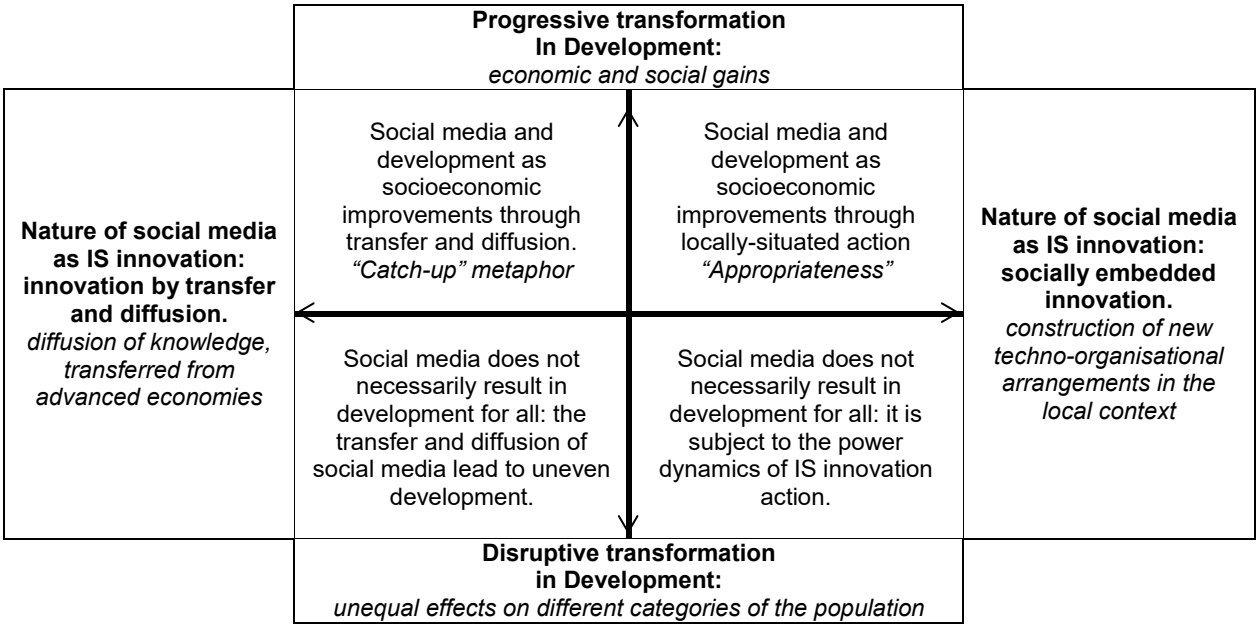
2.3.1 Discourse on ICT and Development research

Walsham (2017, p. 18) states "Information and communication technology for development (ICT4D) is a relatively new label for the academic field concerned with the use of ICTs for international development." He argues that it is relevant for research to unpack what is meant by development and how ICTs can contribute to it, and warns against too much optimism: "we need to be cautious about assuming only positive effects from social media".

We start by exploring the various streams of discourses in ICT and Development research.

In a seminal paper, Avgerou (2010) presents an informative scheme that is still applicable to position views on ICT innovation and development. These four views, or discourses, are plotted along two axes for innovation and transformation. She concludes that there are two major perspectives on the development transformation contributed by ICTs, in this case, social media: progressive transformation and disruptive transformation (the vertical axis of the diagram in Table 2-3). The progressive perspective sees ICT as an enabler of transformations in many domains of human activities, whereas the disruptive perspective stresses the political nature of development.

Table 2-3. Nature of social media as ICT4D innovation combined with the nature of development, creating a diagram with four discourses. Adapted from Avgerou (2010).



The two perspectives regarding ICT innovation in developing countries are 'transfer and diffusion' and 'social embeddedness' (on the horizontal axis in Table 2-3). The first views innovation as steered by knowledge transfer from developed countries to developing countries (often referred to as "catching-up").

The 'social embeddedness' perspective takes the view that the development and use of ICT in developing countries necessarily involves the creation of new techno-organisational arrangements adapted to the local context of those countries (appropriateness). This means that local users can make sense of the technology in their daily lives, while its use and purpose are found in tackling local problems or even they use local-developed technology.

Four discourses are formed by combining the perspectives on the nature of ICT innovation (using social media), as well as on the nature of development transformation. Following Avgerou's arguments, four discourses on IS Innovation and ICT for Development, adapted to social media, can be identified (Avgerou, 2010). These are illustrated in Table 2-3.

The top-left quadrant in the table is similar in approach as the 'laboratory' pro-poor ICT innovation process by Heeks (2009). The pro-poor model focus on knowledge transfer, ICT innovation adoption and diffusion of ideas from developed countries to developing countries. Heeks warns against what he calls the danger of design-reality gaps: a mismatch between the assumptions and requirements built into the design of ICT innovations, and the on-the-ground

realities of poor communities. Some scholars argue this transfer could be interpreted as digital colonialism by exporting values and practices of the global North (cf. Kwet (2019)). This view is further elaborated on in section 2.4.2.

The top-right quadrant bears a resemblance to the 'collaborative' (para-poor) ICT innovation for development idea from Heeks (2009). Innovation is reached in collaboration with the local communities. The ICT innovation is socially embedded and has the potential for progressive transformation in development, such as socioeconomic improvements through locally-situated actions. To some extent, this quadrant also fits with per-poor innovation efforts. Per-poor innovation happens within and by poor communities (Heeks, 2009).

Furthermore, this quadrant has some similar ideas to the concept of 'open development' in its approach of including the local communities (Smith et al., 2011). Often technologies are adapted and applied in new ways, resulting in new processes, business models, or products or services. An example of this is the use of mobile airtime as currency, cf. Lonie (2007).

The bottom-left quadrant describes scenarios of ICT innovation by transfer and diffusion, whereas the developmental transformation is disruptive. The ICT innovation does not necessarily result in development for all; so the transfer and diffusion of social media lead to uneven development.

The bottom-right quadrant describes scenarios in which the socially embedded ICT innovation (here social media) does not necessarily result in development for all; it is subject to the power dynamics of Information Systems (IS) innovation action. This quadrant also has some ideas resembling the concept of 'open development' in its approach of including the local communities (Smith et al., 2011).

The two last quadrants are sometimes apparent in ICT4D projects when socio-political aspects are not considered. Based on their field research in Rwanda and Togo, Keja and Knodel (2019) argue that a thorough understanding of the importance of the reigning mistrust in society and the existing social hierarchies are needed and should be taken into account. ICT4D practitioners can take a participatory approach, including the users and local communities in the design process of an ICT4D project to address these issues.

The use of the model does not suggest that ICT for development related activities can be classified unequivocally using this diagram. The diagram aids as an informative scheme to put ICT interventions and developmental transformation into perspective.

We can identify social media as an Information Systems (IS) innovation in the context of development. Majchrzak (2009) argues that there is a growing opportunity for IS research to build a theory about social media and associated practices. Urquhart and Vaast (2012b) further elaborate that the opportunity not only involves theory-building but can be drawn to the specific context of development in this study of social media use by development NGOs.

This PhD study is embedded in the social embeddedness discourse and has adopted an emergent concepts approach. This discourse focuses on the social embeddedness of IS innovation in the context of development NGOs and their projects in the Global South. From this discourse, we continue by discussing the literature on the concept of social media.

2.4 **Social Media**

This section discusses the meaning of social media, resulting in a working definition for this study. The concept of social media has a technological foundation; it is a social phenomenon and has overarching principles (cf. boyd (2015)).

Two apparent challenges are linked to the conceptualisation of social media (Obar & Wildman, 2015). First, the rapid pace of technological changes makes it hard to see a clear-cut boundary around the concept. Secondly, social media offers some forms of communications that are similar to what is offered by other forms of technologies. As will be shown later, the suggested working definition for this study attempts to address these issues.

The first known use of the term 'social media' can probably be ascribed to AOL executive Ted Leonsis who in 1997 commented that organisations needed to provide users with "social media, places where they can be entertained, communicate, and participate in a social environment" (Bercovici, 2010).

The terms social media, social networks, social networking sites (SNSs), web 2.0, and new media are often used interchangeably (Parameswaran, 2007; Iriberri & Leroy, 2009; Zuniga & White, 2009; Siapera, 2017). boyd and Ellison (2008) claim that SixDegrees was chronologically the first social network in 1997, but it vanished in 2000. Tim O'Reilly was the first to use the term Web 2.0 at a conference brainstorming session (O'Reilly, 2005). He defined Web 2.0 as:

> "Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the Internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform. Chief among those rules is this: Build applications that harness network effects to get better the more people use them."(O'Reilly, 2005)

Tredinnick (2006) and Wenger et al. (2009) describe social networking as those activities that involve Internet technology driven by user-participation, social interaction and user-generated content. Tapscott and Williams (2008) characterise social networks as 'mass collaboration' environments. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content".

Ellison and boyd (2013) define social network sites as:

> "A social network site is a *networked communication platform* in which participants: 1) have *uniquely identifiable profiles* that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-level data; 2) can *publicly articulate connections* that can be viewed and traversed by others, and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with *streams of user-generated content* provided by their connections on the site. (Ellison & boyd, 2013, p. 158)

Yamamichi (2011) argues that the following features enable social media to be differentiated from other media: (1) Internet-based, (2) mobility and ubiquity, (3) focus on users, (4) multi-direction group communications, (5) large-scale and flexible interactive participation, (6) co-creation, and (7) low cost.

Both Kane et al. (2014); Obar and Wildman (2015) identify four commonalities among current social media services: social media are currently Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, user-generated content is essential for social media, individuals and groups create user-specific profiles for social media sites or apps, and social media services facilitate the development of online social networks by connecting a profile with those of other individuals and/or groups.

Kietzman et al. (2011) define social media using seven functional building blocks: identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups. Andres and Woodard (2013, p. 8) state that social media "refers to Internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among people, where social media also refers to the content itself: user-generated information, opinion, video, audio, and multimedia that is shared and discussed over digital networks". Social media connect people via shared interests and aims. Some scholars have adopted a broad definition, like Leppänen et al. (2014) who define social media as including any digital environment that involves interaction between participants.

Some authors, like Herring et al. (2007), look at the role of social networks in different cultures to find out whether social networks are more successful in some cultures or countries. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 67) argue that although social media is a communication tool, it distinguishes itself by making it possible "to engage in timely and direct contact at relatively low cost and higher levels of efficiency than can be achieved with more traditional communication tools".

The notion that mobile phones are included in the perception of what social media constitutes is corroborated by Yamamichi (2011) who speaks of mobile-enabled social media. In the global North, no distinguishment is made between mobile phone access and use, whereas in the Global South, this difference is important when designing social media outreach (Raftree, 2019). Phone sharing is a common practice to have access to a phone through informal sharing with family, friends, or through community phone shops (Bon & Akkermans, 2014), especially among the youth (Banaji et al., 2018). Phone sharing varies according to socio-economic factors such as income level, gender, or living in rural or urban areas (Coyle, 2005; Nokia, 2006; Bon & Akkermans, 2014).

This mobile phone use versus access distinction in the Global South illustrates an aspect of the changing meaning of social media that one needs to consider in the context of development. Papacharissi argues that a definition of social media can only be dynamic and context-specific.

> "Our understanding of social media is temporally, spatially, and technologically sensitive—informed but not restricted by the definitions, practices, and materialities of a single time period or locale. How we have defined social media in societies has changed, and will continue to change. Our use of the term social media is aimed at embracing the social character of media as it presents itself in media past, present, and future." (Papacharissi, 2015, p. 1)

Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 29) argue that the difficulty in defining social media is related to the attempt to account "for developments that lay beyond the horizon of these rapidly-changing technologies". Recent technological advances are, for example, Web 3.0, the semantic web. The Semantic Web is described as "large scale integration of, and reasoning on, data on the Web", a so-called Web of Data (W3C, 2019). Vast collections of interrelated datasets, also called linked data, are made accessible via standardised data formats and communication

protocols. This is related to the trend of open data web portals, often abiding by the IATI standard for development data, used for reporting by development NGOs on their development projects (Huijboom & Van den Broek, 2011; Schwegmann, 2012). Some of these data are collected using social media tools.

Carr and Hayes (2015) suggest that determining the core elements that all the social media have in common is key for better understanding; furthermore, they argue that the concept of communication itself may need to be reconceptualised as technology evolves. They arrived at the following definition, I have chosen their less technical version:

> "Social media are Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others." Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 8)

Specifically mentioning online interaction between organisations and individuals, Filo et al. (2015, p. 167) define social media as: "New media technologies facilitating interactivity and co-creation that allow for the development and sharing of user-generated content among and between organisations and individuals".

An interesting global study on social media use across the world, called Why We Post, led to the following definition, which the authors do not claim as an absolute definition, but used as a heuristic device to aid their ethnographic study of social media use and online behaviour across the world:

> "Social media as the colonisation of the space between traditional broadcast and private dyadic communication, providing people with a scale of group size and degrees of privacy that we have termed scalable sociality." (Miller et al., 2016, p. 9)

Dyadic refers to communication between two persons. Sociality means the way "in which people associate with each other to form social relations and societies" (Miller et al., 2016, p. 3). Scalable sociality, in this definition, is related to the degree of *privacy* or *size of the group* the social media user wishes to communicate with or interact with.

Based on a literature study on definitions of social media, Sloan and Quan-Haase (2017) conclude that there is relative consensus on the meaning, by identifying three themes: what social media enables, how social media does it, and content of social media. They propose the following definition:

> "Social media are web-based services that allow individuals, communities, and organisations to collaborate, connect, interact, and build community by enabling them to create, co-create, modify, share, and engage with user-generated content that is easily accessible." (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017, p. 17)

Gershon (2019, p. 48) starts defining social media by characterising the virtual community and activities, but finishes with the key essence of relationship building with social media:

> "Social media represents a category of Internet-based activity where a virtual community of users share information through the use of individual profiles, contact information, personal messages, blogs and commentary, and videos. Simply put, social media is about relationship building."

All definitions share at least the characteristics of *openness, participation, conversation, connectedness and community* (Mayfield, 2008b; Chan-Olmsted et al., 2013; Siapera, 2017). Participation refers to the encouragement of contribution and feedback from everyone. Openness refers to the apparent lack of barriers to access content, make use of it, and stimulate sharing. The conversation characteristic is, with social media, extended to a two-way conversation rather than merely broadcasting. Connectedness highlights the ability to link to other sites, resources and people with social media. Lastly, community reflects the formation of groups around shared interests.

For this research, social media is defined as a techno-social system for participatory culture, having the characteristics of openness, participation, conversation, connectedness and community. This definition relies heavily on the ideas set forward by Fuchs (2017) and Mayfield (2008a) and in its compactness is both flexible enough and technology agnostic for future changes in social media.

The term 'techno-social' instead of 'socio-technical' refers to the interrelatedness of the social and technical aspects of an organisation or for society as a whole. This term is used not only to underpin the social nature of technology but also to stress that technological systems as considered subsystems of social systems (Raffl et al., 2008).

When looking at concepts such as Web 3.0 or the semantic web, this definition may still hold.

Unlike early definitions such as that of Fuchs (2010) who included aspects such as 'co-operation' in the definition of web 3.0, these aspects are now generally regarded as part of a web 2.0 concept. The web 3.0 concept is transcending the idea of what Fuchs et al. (2010, p. 51) called a "dynamic threefold knowledge system of human cognition, communication, and co-operation".

I argue that cognition, communication and cooperation are already the foundational characteristics of contemporary web 2.0, sometimes even referred to as 2.5 technologies. In contrast, web 3.0 fundamentally differs in its ability to learn and adapt behaviour from human-to-system and system-to-system digital communications. The latter is related to how data is dealt with, and information is derived by Web 3.0 technologies using artificial intelligence, connected or hyperlinked data (linked open data) and (big) data from the Internet of things (IoT)[2] sensors and devices. A definition of Web 3.0 reads:

> "Web 3.0 technologies can be applied to linking other sorts of information; to linking social interaction and conversations on the Internet directly to the data or documents, discussions are about; to finding, accessing and playing with very specific sub-sets of information; to better connecting people, real-world resources and the knowledge required to take effective action; and other tasks which have yet to be imagined." (Powell et al., 2012, p. 6).

The definitions of Web 3.0 often encompass technologies such as the semantic Web, Artificial Intelligence, 3D graphics and ubiquitous sensory systems. All of these may have a future

[2] There are multiple definitions; see (Oberländer et al., 2018), who define IoT based on their literature review as "the connectivity of physical objects equipped with sensors and actuators to the Internet via data communication technology. We also refer to such technology-enabled physical objects as smart things."

impact on what constitutes social media. A result of web 3.0 is the creation of massive amounts of data.

To add to the complexity, Fuchs (2010) observed that both the Internet and social media, in particular, do not follow a linear path of evolution. However, different parts of this integrated socio-technical system coexist and evolve with different timelines and stages. One could argue that the result is a mesh of Web 1.0, Web 2.0, Web 3.0, Web X.0 et cetera.

Citing boyd (2015, p. 2), social media "have been taken up around the globe at an unprecedented speed, revealing the extraordinary nature of the social media phenomenon. For this reason alone, it is imperative to analyse the phenomenon of social media.", we move on to social media in the context of development.

2.4.1 Social Media in the Context of Development

Social media use has grown dramatically across the world. Rising Internet diffusion figures, including amongst underprivileged groups in society in developing countries, show the ubiquity of these media, making it worthwhile to scrutinise their potential for development activities (ITU, 2018; Kemp, 2019a, 2019b).

The most used current social networks were established after 2002. The number of social media users has seen remarkable growth across the globe, while most current and future growth is expected in Asia, Latin-America, the Middle East and Africa (Aka et al., 2013; UNDP, 2013; Pew Research, 2014). Around the world, the home-grown social network still plays a vital role next to the dominant global social networks like Facebook (Aka et al., 2013). Burgess et al. (2017) argue that social media such as Twitter, Facebook and WeChat have become an integral part of the information and communication infrastructure of societies.

Most users in developing countries get online with a mobile device (ITU, 2013). Mobile devices have become a dominant entry point for social media use. Worldwide, mobile phones account for half the time that people spend on the Internet, a significant number of social media users access social media sites and apps using mobile (smart or feature) phones (Kemp, 2019a).

Bennett (2008) and boyd (2014a) argue that social media provide young people means of self-expression, information seeking or exploration and personal and social identity development. Although the data of both studies are were collected in the U.S., many other researchers rely on their findings and identify similar ideas in other geographies, although variations may occur due to contextual or demographic factors (Vleugels & Van Audenhove, 2011; Gasser et al., 2012; Kumar, 2013; boyd, 2014b). Others have identified the potential of social media for other demographics, such as the elderly (Macnamara & Zerfass, 2012).

Henrich et al. (2010) point out that many studies on social media were often limited to 'WEIRD' populations—those residing in Western, educated (& English-speaking), industrialised, rich, and developed countries which are by no means representative for other regions, like the Global South. Caution must be taken when generalising those findings or applying them to another context. A study covering several countries from the Global South is the Global Kids Online cross-national research on children's use of the Internet. In this study, Banaji et al. (2018) analysed youth's engagement with ICTs in low-and middle-income countries and found a gap between what adults expect youth to do and what they do with digital media. They caution that ICT-related interventions often focused on the supply side while ignoring the

demand and use with the riks of maintaining gender- and age-related power hierarchies (Banaji et al., 2018, p. 440).

Ahlqvist et al. (2010) foresee five societal developments that may be induced by social media: the first is transparency and its increasing role in society, second is the rise of a ubiquitous participatory communication model, third is the empowerment of citizens, fourth is personalisation, and lastly, fifth is the intertwined relationship of the physical and virtual worlds. Thompson (2008, p. 832) cautioned that "*the transformational potential of Web 2.0 models will be limited without attention to broader structural inequalities within which these are trialled*".

Some examples of societal development induced by social media are presented in the following paragraphs.

Social media helps in the diffusion of new ideas and sharing of information or news, and facilitates communication in real-time regardless of time zones, geographic borders or physical space (Kamalipour, 2019). The negative side is the rapid dissemination of misinformation or disinformation ('fake news') (Jin et al., 2014; Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). An example is the case of the rapid online spread of misinformation on social media about the deadly Ebola virus during an outbreak of that disease (Jin et al., 2014).

Social media may foster existing relationships and allow users to meet new people. However, social media may also result in contact with imposters online, or online abuse (cyber-bullying), cf. Mawere and Mpofu (2014), and Webb and Buskens (2014).

Social media plays a vital role in the online mobilisation of people to action by providing information on an event, a demonstration et cetera. This was visible in the 2011 Arab Spring across the MENA region (Tufekci, 2017). However, in some cases, online surveillance has led to prosecution and atrocities against protesters (Christensen, 2011) or religious groups (Lewis, 2018). Furthermore, social media is being explored as a tool for conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities (Baú, 2019; Denskus, 2019; Puig).

From societal development, we move on to social media and development organisations.

More development organisations and social movements are exploring the potential of social media for change (Ørecomm, 2012). Social media have been used for social good, such as organising community activism, empowering citizens, and for coordinating emergency or disaster relief efforts (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012).

Examples of mapping disaster-struck regions using social media like Twitter, Ushahidi and other platforms, in China, Haiti and Chile after the earthquakes, and in the Philippines after typhoon Hayan, have shown the potential of crowdsourcing for the NGOs involved with relief activities (Crowley & Chan, 2011; Livingston & Walter-Drop, 2014; Meier, 2014; Moule et al., 2016). Updated maps facilitated the difficult logistical task of getting relief to the disaster area, and social media provides a real-time communication bridge (Ahmed et al., 2019). Suggestions for social media use in disaster planning, response (like a Crisis Communication Matrix), and research are conceptualised by (Houston et al., 2015), Mukkamala and Beck (2017) and (Reuter & Kaufhold, 2018).

Social media has also provided a means for reuniting missing people with their relatives. Social media use is also transforming the way humanitarians engage with, monitor, and react to violent events. The interest in such technologies in the development sector has been growing

(Roberts & Marchais, 2017). Others noticed the potential of social media to facilitate the development of farmers' capacity, by sharing knowledge on agricultural practices, or by enabling farmers to gain a voice (Nadeau & Rudgard, 2007; Suchiradipta & Saravanan, 2018).

In order to embed social media in their activities, a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities by development NGOs is essential (Mukkamala & Beck, 2017). The relevance of social media in the context of aid and development can be summarised as connecting with other people via social networks, collaborating and doing things with other people, creating and sharing content, and finding, using, organising and reusing content (Masetti-Zannini, 2007; Zuniga & White, 2009; Kanter & Fine, 2010; Lutu, 2015). Table 2-4 presents the characteristics of social media illustrated by some examples of social media use associated with these characteristics, in the context of development.

Carlman (2010) argues that social media may contribute to human-centred development. She defines Development 2.0 based on Thompson (2008) as the application of Web 2.0 thinking to development studies. "Development 2.0 practice takes advantage of networked social interaction and data generation, reaching the 'long tail' of the world's poor; it actively employs transparency, collaboration, and citizen participation with the aim of continual, reflexive improvement in sustainable human-centred development" (Carlman, 2010, p. 3).

Thompson (2008, p. 828) envisioned that "the concept of 'Development 2.0' calls for a radically different conception of agency that acknowledges the considerable power of ICT-enabled social networks to transform the dynamics of group interaction". Development 2.0, Thompson and Carlman argue, is about empowering the poor to determine the appropriate course of development and is analogous to the concept of ICT4D 2.0 (Heeks, 2008).

Thompson (2008, p. 833) asserts that Development 2.0 is about "engendering a networked and plural form of social and economic exchange" catalysing self-determined development that is less dependent on donors and international programmes. Addison (2006, p. 623) asks what implication this would have on organisations involved with development: *"How profoundly is the development of communications, and in particular the Internet, changing the development community and the way in which it works?"*

Heeks agrees with the view that the poor can be active producers and innovators, generating new sources of income through ICTs (Heeks, 2002). Heeks (2008), and Silva and Westrup (2009) assert that innovation within and by the poor is a key focus of an ICT4D 2.0 strategy and shares many characteristics with the principles of Web 2.0 itself. The Development 2.0 models have some value perceptions based on the functionalities of Web 2.0: users as digital producers, the power of the crowd, digital participation, network structures, and the potential of large-scale data and openness (Heeks, 2017, pp. 223-224).

Thompson (2008) calls for understanding and proof of the links between enabling network infrastructure and Web 2.0-enabled social and economic behaviour, in search of a (possibly interdisciplinary strand of) Development 2.0 perspective that increasingly engages with peoples' demands to participate, peer-to-peer, in the information society.

Thompson and Heeks urge for further research, including empirical examples of attempts to introduce Web 2.0 (social media) models to serve developmental aims (Heeks, 2008; Thompson, 2008; Heeks, 2017). Nicholson et al. (2016) also acknowledge that there has been sparse attention to the theoretical and empirical relationship between social media and

development. They continue by identifying the knowledge gap in this area and posit that social media for development necessitates a reflection on the beneficiaries of development. In their view, a dichotomous approach is required by both treating them as objects for development and as sociotechnical artefacts that are embedded in the daily lives of their users.

Table 2-4. Social Media in the context of Development.

Characteristics of Social Media	In the context of Development (examples)
Openness	Creating, sharing, finding, using, organising and reusing content. (Zuniga & White, 2009) Sharing knowledge of agricultural practices (Nadeau & Rudgard, 2007; Suchiradipta & Saravanan, 2018) Open development: positive change through open information-networked activities (Smith et al., 2011) Potential of large-scale data and openness (Heeks, 2017) Tapping into knowledge and voices of the South (Owiny et al., 2014)
Participation	Citizens empowerment and for coordinating emergency or disaster relief efforts (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Roberts & Marchais, 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019) Crowdsourcing (Crowley & Chan, 2011; Livingston & Walter-Drop, 2014; Meier, 2014) Mobilising for participation (slacktivism) (Lane & Dal Cin, 2018) Collaborating and doing things with other people (Mayfield, 2008b; Chan-Olmsted et al., 2013; Heeks, 2017; Siapera, 2017). Development 2.0 calls for a different notion of agency (Thompson, 2008). Understanding the online behaviour of certain (demographic) groups, like youth (Bennett, 2008; Gasser et al., 2012; Banaji et al., 2018)
Conversation	Networked communication between NGOs and NGOs with political actors on a global stage (Fenton, 2009). Informing the public and communicating with stakeholders (Waters et al., 2009) Enabling farmers to gain a voice (Nadeau & Rudgard, 2007; Suchiradipta & Saravanan, 2018)
Connectedness	Connecting with other people, even across vast distances (Edwards et al., 1999; Kola-Nyström, 2008; Zuniga & White, 2009; Kanter & Fine, 2010) Next to connecting people, it broadens their experience (Andres & Woodard, 2013) Social media strengthen connectivity and information flows and can sometimes affect the balance of power in society (Edwards, 2011)
Community	Digital community activism (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Hutchinson, 2019). Fortifying network culture; social movements (Kirstein Junge, 2012; Ørecomm, 2012) Doing things with other people (Zuniga & White, 2009) Social media provide new arrangements of social behaviour and means of collective action (Moule et al., 2016) Conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities (Költzow, 2013; Tellidis & Kappler, 2016; Baú, 2019; Denskus, 2019; Puig, 2019)

Similar to frameworks suggested in the base of the economic pyramid (BOP) studies suggest that the technological exclusions of social media can be analysed by using the Five 'A's of technology access. The five A's are: (1) availability = to whom is social media (un)available; (2) affordability = to whom is social media (un) affordable, (3) awareness = who is (un)aware of the social media application, (4) ability = who has (in)ability to make active use of the social media, and (5) accessibility = to whom is social media (in)accessible in terms of disability or local language support.

Furthermore, with social media, people are not only users, but they are also able to create, share and perform other activities as digital participants. This means that beneficiaries of social media for development span a range of users in resource-limited environments, making use of social media in various ways that are not conventionally typified as development, such as leisurely activities, cf. Bruns (2008) and Arora and Rangaswamy (2014).

Arora and Rangaswamy (2014), drawing from their study on digital leisure practices in the Global South, argue that ICTs are social artefacts, a product of the social behaviour of groups in their interaction with ICTs before they are considered tools for development. This is an aspect that cannot be overlooked when analysing social media in the context of development. Nicholson et al. (2016) argue that theories about social media for development need to be constructed by applying critical, human development or institutional conceptual lenses.

2.4.2 Different Views on The Impact of Social Media

There are various discourses around the concept of social media, web 2.0 or social networks. Three types of discourse are identified in the literature: techno-pessimistic social media research, techno-optimistic social media research, and critical social media research (Fuchs, 2009). Morozov (2012) categorises the former two as dystopian and utopian perspectives on social media.

The techno-pessimistic view can be characterised as ‘victimisation discourse’, and stresses the dangers and threats of social media for the user. McLennan (2015); Nicholson et al. (2016, p. 361) argue that social media for development is a contested process that instead of giving voice to the poor might strengthen existing inequality and power structures, by transforming “a fairly open online space as a proxy for mediated participation in support of the status quo.”

The second approach is techno-optimistic, and its discourse is that of empowerment, providing the potential for freedom, autonomy, personal development and community formation. McLennan (2015, p. 4) explains that proponents of social media for development underline “the disintermediated nature of online spaces, and the resulting participatory and diverse nature of online networks”. The techno-optimism surrounding online networking and social media in development is also fuelled by the premise that social media facilitates disintermediation, in which the online networks and use of social media create somewhat open and flattened structures that remove the need for an intermediary (Heeks, 2010a), and allow direct outreach and contact with ‘networked publics’ by the poor and development organisations (boyd, 2010).

Next, to this disintermediation, the techno-optimism surrounding online networking and social media for development is inspired by the potential of (online) participation. Srinivasan (2012) presents the arguments of availability and low cost of social media (use) as elements of the view that social media can give a voice to the marginalised and enable their participation in developmental projects. This approach is considered a ‘per-poor’ innovation, meaning that innovation occurs within and by poor communities, enabled by social media, the Internet and mobile technologies (Heeks, 2008). The ‘advantages of social media outweigh the disadvantages’ is prevalent in this approach.

Contrasting with the techno-optimism are concerns of ‘information colonialism’: “The idea that Western worldviews and the priorities of the powerful are embedded in information technology

and the Internet, and that these technologies, therefore, exacerbate rather than challenge global inequalities." (McLennan, 2015, p. 383). So the concern is that one-way flow of Western ideas and information is disseminated.

This resonates with the third approach, which is considered critical social media research. This approach assumes that there are no easy solutions to societal problems. Citing Fuchs (2009, p. 21) in this case: "such problems will neither disappear by using more or less technology or using technology differently nor by changing individual behaviour".

For example, Morozov (2009) cautions against overstated optimism on the effects of digital activism, where feel-good online activism, or 'slacktivism', actually has zero political or social impact.

This critical view considers the relationship between technology and society as dialectical: "technology is conditioned, not determined, by society, and vice versa" (Fuchs, 2013b, p. 203). The view is that political changes are required to curb corporate, economic or political interests in technologies such as social media.

Slater (2014) is critical of what constitutes development and social media projects as a way of transforming developing countries to Western standards. Slater considers the so-called 'beneficiaries' of ICT4D projects as partners to be treated equally with development practitioners or experts. In a similar vein, Shade (2003, p. 114) argues that by equating technology with development, modernisation theory resurfaces. Modernisation theory holds that "communication and media are the conduits for the spread of modernisation (defined as things that are Western and therefore 'good' or 'better')" she states. Shade calls the re-emergence of this thinking modernisation 2.0.

Manyozo (2017) is critical about the notion that digital technologies like the Internet or social media can simply lift people out of poverty, and argues that this is discredited in the critical academic literature, but that this mind-set is still present in many initiatives launched by the development sector, even if it is presented as 'participatory'.

Regarding inclusiveness, Nemer (2016) observed that the socially well-off flock together online while not welcoming people of poor communities, so Web 2.0 does not immediately open the door to the social integration of poor communities.

Furthermore, van Stam (2016) questions whether dominant (Western) technologies aligned with African or regional practices in the Global South. He argues that 'orientalism' is embedded in technology for development. Orientalism disregards or trivialises the humanity of another culture, people or geographic region, he states. This view tends toward a more dystopian view of the merits of technologies for development.

A similar view is expressed by Slater (2014), who likens the promotion of new digital technologies in the Global South with the dissemination of values and practices of the global North. This approach treats people in the Global South as passive recipients of digital technologies to aid their "development" and increase their connectedness to the rest of the world.

Table 2-5. Different views on the impact of social media

Techno-social pessimist	**Critical social media research**	**Techno-social optimist**
⟷		
Techno-dystopian view	**Dialectical relationship between technology and society**	**Techno-utopian view**
'Victimisation' discourse *(debunkers)*	No easy solutions to societal problems	Empowerment discourse *(virtues of technology)*
Social media may lead to: • Harm and oppression • Digital surveillance • Censorship • No real impact, e.g. 'slacktivism.' • Digital colonialism by exporting values and practices of the global North. • Cyber-bullying • Dis- and misinformation • Considers techno-utopianism as nothing more than technological determinism.	Maintain a critical, contextualised perspective on the relation between technology and society. Social media may have potential, but it depends on the approach, context, etc. Does not believe in panacea but does not rule out the impact of social media, and has a critical stance on the real role of social media or other factors. Technological advances come with new forms of inclusion and exclusion, integration or fragmentation.	Social media may lead to: • Empowerment • Personal development • Revolution by digital activism • Openness • Disintermediation • Organisational or societal transformation

The domination of western or northern digital technologies is sometimes referred to as digital colonialism. The American GAFAM (Google-Alphabet, Amazon, Facebook, Apple and Microsoft) and the Chinese BATX (Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent, Xiaomi) technology empires are examples of this (Peiró, 2019). Major U.S. and Chinese technology firms "exercise imperial control at the architecture level of the digital ecosystem: software, hardware, and network connectivity" (Kwet, 2019).

Most ICT4D practitioners and researchers position themselves between the optimist or dystopian view and sit somewhere between these two, while critically analysing the inhibitory and stimulatory factors for developmental use of ICTs (Kleine, 2013; Heeks, 2014; Unwin, 2014b; Walsham, 2017).

The voices of these different schools shall be heard while considering the potential and pitfalls of social media in the context of international development. The discourse on the impact of social media is presented in Table 2-5.

Considering the different discourses around social media will help in arriving at a nuanced view of social media use in these development NGOs – mainly because, as discussed, the development NGOs under study are set up with societal objectives in mind.

2.5 Organisational Use of Social Media

The emerging literature on social media use by organisations has investigated their use as tools for awareness building, persuasion, and the achievement of marketing objectives (Blom, 2009; van Alphen, 2009; Waters, 2009). Private and public sector organisations are increasingly using social media for corporate and organisational communication and public relations (Macnamara & Zerfass, 2012; Van Osch & Coursaris, 2013). However, within organisations, social media also have the potential to transform knowledge dissemination (Aral et al., 2013). Organisations also seek to develop relationships with their stakeholders by using social media (Van Osch & Coursaris, 2017).

From an organisational perspective, social media profoundly changes the manner of online communication towards a dialogue between people inside and outside organisations (Cheung et al., 2011; Janssen Danyi & Chaudhri, 2018). This not only affects the way of communication but can also lead to innovation of the services and processes of an organisation (Lehmkuhl et al., 2013). Bradley and McDonald (2013) distinguish six broad patterns of collaboration for which organisations are using social media: 1) expertise location to identify the right expert or solution, 2) collective intelligence to discuss and contribute in online communities, 3) emergent structures of hidden virtual teams who are communicating with one another, 4) interest cultivation to bring like-minded people together, 5) mass co-ordination with the aim of spreading messages virally, and 6) relationship leverage for maintaining and getting value from online relationships. The deployment of own social network platforms by organisations (i.e. developed by themselves) for community building is suggested by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010).

There may be downsides to organisational social media. Social media can cause problems for organisations such as work-related misbehaviours or reputational damage (Broughton et al., 2010). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), Horn et al. (2015), and Moghrabi and Al-Mohammed (2016) advocate the alignment of social media, websites and traditional media communication to avoid contradictory messages between the organisation's communication channels.

Kent (2010) and Cardon and Marshall (2015) express a cautionary note on the overhyped benefits of social media for public relations and work-related collaboration. Organisations often struggle with the adoption of social media, according to Kuikka and Äkkinen (2011). Their findings show that issues such as lack of resources, attitude towards social media, organisation's reputation, ownership and authorisation of the social media activities hinder the adoption of organisational social media use. They suggest that organisations should create clear strategies and guidelines for social media use but do not clarify in their study how this should be accomplished.

Van Osch and Coursaris (2013) have suggested a social media definition for the context of organisations, calling this organisational social media. They argue that social media can allow organisational actors to acquire a (virtual) identity, help manage relationships, produce user-generated content, share and exchange resources, and coordinate collectively. Others refer to organisational media as enterprise social media (ESM) or enterprise social networking (ESN), where ESN focuses on internal organisational/company use, and ESM

encompasses both platforms for internal use and publicly available online social networks (Wehner et al., 2017). Leonardi et al. (2013, p. 3) define enterprise social media as:

> "Web-based platforms that allow workers to (1) communicate messages with specific co-workers or broadcast messages to everyone in the organization, (2) articulate a list of co-workers with whom they share a connection, (3) post, edit, and sort text and files linked to themselves or others, and (4) view the messages, connections, text, and files communicated, articulated, posted, edited and sorted by anyone else in the organization at any time of their choosing."

In general, the goal of a company or organisation when applying organisational social media is to increase efficiency and effectivity in accomplishing its business or organisational objectives (Kane et al., 2014). These definitions of organisational social media, ESN or ESM focus on collaboration, crowdfunding, or fostering knowledge-sharing practices among employees or platform users.

Turban et al. (2011) observe five modes of usage within organisational social media: 1) participation in public online social networks, like Facebook, 2) using internal Enterprise Social Networks (ESNs) for the exclusive use of employees, 3) creating enterprise-owned publicly accessible social networks, 4) enhancing existing communication applications such as e-mail by including functionalities, and 5) developing tools that include capabilities to support social networking applications (e.g. Microsoft Teams). From these general descriptions of organisational social media, we move on to their use by non-profit organisations.

2.6 Social Media Use by Non-Profit Organisations

"Social technologies can empower anyone to have a positive impact on society by creating networking effects and initiating community engagement", Bresciani and Schmeil (2012, p. section II) declare. Kanter and Fine (2010) and Carboni and Maxwell (2015) suggest that non-profit organisations can reinforce their organisational support and brand by tapping into social technologies.

However, Kanter and Fine (2010) state that non-profit organisations frequently create 'fortresses' and dread what is shared with the general public. They argue that NGOs can become a 'networked non-profit organisation' by interacting with their stakeholders and the community as a whole in real and transparent ways through the use of social media, reiterating the importance of relationship-building through social media (Kanter & Fine, 2010; Kanter & Paine, 2012). Ogan et al. (2009, p. 667) argue that "ICTs have been identified as important tools in the alleviation of poverty in a sustainable manner, and not-for-profit organisations need to change their policies and practices in order to build infrastructures to accommodate the use of the new technologies."

Aitamurto (2011) discusses the changing role of non-profit organisations which is changing from an intermediary to a platform facilitator in a networked organisation. She also argues that non-profit organisations should radically shorten the distance between the donor and the beneficiary (Aitamurto, 2011).

Sometimes the resistance of staff in changing working habits inhibits social media use (Mefalopulos, 2008; Kanter & Fine, 2010; Lehmkuhl et al., 2013). Kanter and Fine (2010) and suggest some activities to overcome this inhibition which include taking time, listening,

developing relationships, scale efforts, create a change culture, emphasise purpose and vision for strategic implementation.

Waters et al. (2009) and Carboni and Maxwell (2015) advise non-profit organisations to monitor, analyse and carefully plan their social media activities as they try to develop social networking relationships with their stakeholders. Nonetheless, it looks like non-profit organisations are not using social media to its full potential (Eyrich et al., 2008; Obar, 2014). Waters et al. (2009) and Carboni and Maxwell (2015) found that non-profit organisations mainly use social media to streamline management functions, inform the public, and communicate with stakeholders, often not utilising the full potential of the interactive nature of social media.

Auger (2013) suggests that non-profit organisations use social media for different purposes, such as messages of thanks and recognition on Twitter, feedback and two-way communication on Facebook, and use of authority figures on YouTube. This is also confirmed by Waters and Jamal (2011) and Lovejoy et al. (2012), who found that non-profit organisations are primarily using Twitter to convey one-way messages, as a means of sharing information instead of relationship-building. Janssen Danyi and Chaudhri (2018) identify opportunities for NGOs to use social media for strategic communication, outlining strategic social media process for organisations, that includes strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Curtis et al. (2010) and Brunner (2019) note that social media tools are becoming useful methods of communication for public relations practitioners in the non-profit sector. Fenton (2009) argues that social media facilitates communication between NGOs and NGOs with political actors on a global stage, where their credibility has increased. Furthermore, their relationship with news media has intensified as some NGOs have become more newsworthy with their online engagement and even own news production (Wright, 2019).

Edwards et al. (1999) suggest that NGOs can use social media to promote serious changes in politics and civil society activism. They acknowledge that social media can strengthen connectivity and dissemination of information, and sometimes affect power balances in society. However, they are less effective in overcoming different interests and in offsetting structural problems when it comes to inclusiveness, especially inequality. Vu et al. (2019) found in their study of international alliance NGOs fighting climate change that they sporadically connect or interact on Twitter and maintaining a Global North/South hierarchy in their online network.

Lovejoy and Saxton (2012, p. 337) argue that microblogging, such as Twitter, provides non-profit organisations with a better means “to strategically engage their stakeholders via dialogic and community-building practices than they have been with traditional websites”. The study was based on content analysis and did not measure the underlying motivations for using Twitter by the practitioners of these NGOs.

Another study, by Guo and Saxton (2014) looking at Twitter communication content from NGOs, showed NGOs are using Twitter as a communication tool for what they call ‘public education’ approaches. Furthermore, the study presents a two-dimensional view of advocacy communication on social media, examining the form of communication and relevance to core advocacy mission. Regarding communication from most NGOs focused on providing information to stakeholders, followed by online community building and calls to action.

Regarding the mission-relevance aspect, they observed that NGOs were using a mix of strategic and support messages on Twitter to inform their audience on the NGO's core values. The results from both studies, as mentioned above, were based on a study of large U.S-based national NGOs.

Crowdsourcing is used to create and increase collective knowledge, build community, achieve collective creativity and innovation, crowdfund, source cloud labour, and drive civic engagement (Bott & Young, 2012; Esposti, 2012). Bott and Young (2012) identify that crowdsourcing is not only limited to industrialised countries but already has a substantial impact in developing countries. Regarding crowdfunding, in a study conducted in the United States on non-profit organisations, it was shown that online giving is rather small, and only a few organisations are raising a significant amount of their total revenue through the Internet (Waters, 2007, p. 60).

Waters et al. (2009) argue that non-profit organisations lag behind others in social media adoption, waiting to see how others use this new technology. Although many studies are U.S.-based, the studies conducted elsewhere, like in Europe, do show similar patterns (Sheombar, 2012; Verhoeven et al., 2012).

2.7 Social Media and International Development NGOs

Ballantyne and Addison (2000) observe five trends that contribute to cooperation on the Internet in the development sector: increasing decentralisation, more reliance on databases, more attention to content, the emergence of thematic 'gateways', and attention to the notion of 'communities'. They argue that the ICT4D strategies of development organisations should be based on cooperation and communities.

Exemplifying this cooperation and community aspects are the guidelines for establishing knowledge portals for development NGOs (Cummings et al., 2019). Online development networks may contribute to knowledge-sharing between development NGOs (Cummings et al., 2006). Tapia et al. (2013) argue there is more willingness in the development sector, especially for humanitarian aid, to collaborate and create collaborative systems for development projects.

Masetti-Zannini (2007) argues that most development NGOs still are not able to develop two-way communication with those whom they seek to represent, and are still favouring top-down approaches and therefore treat social media as an extension of their other communication tools. At the same time, they need to ensure that information reaches those who need it, to empower them and help them make informed decisions about their lives, he states.

Powell (2003) warns that if the information transfer between the NGO and the target audience is weak or lacking, the decisions taken by development NGOs can be erroneous, or have unintended negative consequences. Holmén (2002, p. 5) asserts that often, individuals maintain networks between organisations rather than them being maintained as a formal institutionalised task

Social media have been used for leveraging public support (Vleugels & Van Audenhove, 2011). Sometimes development NGOs struggle with communicating the complex message of development issues (Mefalopulos, 2008). Mefalopulos (2008) advises having that message packed in a clear and easily understandable way that is appealing to the audience and

addresses their information gap effectively. Ballantyne and Addison (2000) and Ferguson et al. (2013) observe growing online collaboration and knowledge sharing between NGOs.

According to Mefalopulos (2008, p. 5) and Servaes (2008), communication between NGOs via social media may be part of a broader set of so-called 'Development communication' activities. The purpose of 'Development communication' is to support sustainable change in development operations by engaging key stakeholders, Mefalopulos (2008, p. 5) argues.

Furthermore, next to language issues and (digital) illiteracy, the relevance of information and cross-cultural differences should not be overlooked when using social media (Toyama, 2010; Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Andres & Woodard, 2013; Owiny et al., 2014).

Masetti-Zannini (2007, p. 23) cites Sam Myangi, an African social activist who participated in the NetSquared Conference 2007, who explained that social change through online collaborative technology bears a resemblance to the African concept of 'Ubuntu' and "taps into the core of African philosophy on social networking… Collective mentality means tapping into the root of African beliefs, which is the root of all community Action", or 'I am because We are' (van Stam, 2014).

Therefore scholars like Ranganathan (2005), Masetti-Zannini (2007), van Stam (2014), and Owiny et al. (2014) advocate that development NGOs should embrace traditional knowledge management practices and social Web 2.0 technology to tap into the indigenous knowledge and voices of the South. Suarez (2009, p. 284) states "…online technology is transforming patterns of work and interactions in all sectors of society", and this could also be the case for international development NGOs.

Thompson (2008) calls the convergence of Web 2.0 and development studies 'Development 2.0'. Development 2.0 is a call for collaboration and the reduction of overhead by joining forces between development organisations. Development 2.0 (or international cooperation 2.0) is characterised by massive online collaboration, self-organisation, open knowledge flows, collective intelligence, and crowdsourcing (Jansen, 2009), and as the association with Web 2.0 suggests, Development 2.0 is 'networked development' (Kirstein Junge, 2012; Acevedo Ruiz et al., 2015).

Development 2.0 aims at achieving development goals to enable human agency, consistent with the capabilities approach by Amartya Sen and the Human Development paradigm, and it also sits well with the Network Society concept described by Castells (Acevedo Ruiz et al., 2015). The network society is defined as "a social structure based on networks operated by information and communication technologies based on microelectronics and digital computer networks that generate process, and distribute information on the basis of the knowledge accumulated in the nodes of the networks." (Castells, 2005, p. 7).

The view that ICT holds potential and brings new opportunities for development NGOs because of the rapid development in social media is also held by other scholars Tufte (2014); (Tufte, 2015; Haikin & Flatters, 2017).

Others are more cautious about the benefits of social media for NGOs. According to Edwards (2011, p. 12), social media may "be less successful in bridging different interests and in counteracting the structural problems that weaken participation, especially inequality". Masetti-Zannini (2007, p. 37) argues that NGOs have struggled for a long time to build effective

participation mechanisms in the developing world, but “Web 2.0 technologies can give people in the developing world increasing tools to let them speak out for themselves, and seek those development paths that reflect their local realities and meet their aspirations and needs”.

Although the Internet facilitates the control or influence of individual people and small organisations and stimulates agency, it is not guaranteed that the poorest will be reached and engaged (Baud, 2009). NGOs have funded or initiated many development projects using ICT across a wide range of areas such as health, education, poverty, and gender, and used social media to gain support for developmental causes (Avgerou et al., 2016). Often there are high expectations for developmental effects from these ICT-related projects. Avgerou (2003) argues that there is no simple relationship between ICT and development, as suggested by some influential international development organisations. More ICTs do not automatically mean more development.

2.7.1 Synthesising NGO’s use of social media in the context of development

As will be further explained in the methodology chapter, the literature review in a PhD study using grounded theory method includes a phased literature review. After writing the pre-study literature review (also known as a noncommittal or preliminary literature review) to set the boundary of the problem domain (Urquhart & Fernández, 2013), further literature review phases follow during and after data analysis (see Figure 3-3).

A result of the literature review during and after the pilot data analysis is presented in the following table. The table links the institutional features of development NGOs to general characteristics of social media. From the initial analysis of the pilot data came the idea that this link may need further investigation. Further inspection of the link between NGOs and social media characteristics in the literature may hold clues for this research.

Table 2-6 cross-references the characteristics of social media, based on Mayfield (2008b), with the five most common attributes of NGOs, as argued by Salamon and Anheier (1992) and Lewis and Kanji (2009). Two of the NGO characteristics are combined in one column (self-governing & separate from the government) as they are closely related.

Again, considering the various features of an NGO versus the potentialities of social media should allow a more nuanced understanding of the research problem and increase the depth of the discussion.

The next sections on Communication for Development and Affordance theory discuss one of the theories that have been used in the Discussion chapter to relate the analysis to the extant literature, as well as a being used as a corroborative lens to examine the emergent concepts derived from the grounded theory method of this PhD study.

Table 2-6. Cross-referencing NGO and social media characteristics.

Characteristics of NGOs / Social Media Characteristics	Institutionalised organisation	Non-profit	Self-governing & Separate from the government	Voluntary participants
Openness	Tapping into knowledge and voices of the South (Masetti-Zannini, 2007; Owiny et al., 2014) Social media may contribute to human-centred development (Carlman, 2010).	NGOs have become effective infomediaries (Graham & Haarstad, 2011).	Open development: positive change through 'open' information-networked activities (Smith et al., 2011)	Finding, using, organising and reusing content; creating and sharing content (Zuniga & White, 2009)
Participation	NGOs struggle to build effective participation mechanisms in the developing world (Masetti-Zannini, 2007). Social media empower NGOs by enabling participation and knowledge aggregation (Punie, 2011). Social media are transforming patterns of work and interactions (Suarez, 2009). Phone sharing varies according to socio-economic factors such as the income level, gender or living in rural or urban areas (Coyle, 2005; Nokia, 2006; Bon & Akkermans, 2014)	Non-profits are likely to share their information (Lovejoy et al., 2012). NGOs will need to produce more high-quality content to attract and engage audiences (Foundation, 2014) Strategic social media process that includes strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation (Janssen Danyi & Chaudhri, 2018).	Increasing decentralisation in development (Ballantyne & Addison, 2000). Social media may be less successful in reducing "the structural problems that weaken participation, especially inequality" (Edwards, 2011, p. 12) Guidelines for knowledge portal for international development (Cummings et al., 2019)	Collaborating and doing things (Zuniga & White, 2009). The role of communication in trying to influence stakeholders' voluntary change (Mefalopulos, 2008). Potential of crowdsourcing for relief activities (Crowley & Chan, 2011; Livingston & Walter-Drop, 2014; Meier, 2014). Potential of social media as a driver of sustainable behaviour of slacktivism for organisations (Langley & van den Broek, 2010; Lane & Dal Cin, 2018).
Conversation	Auger (2013) suggests non-profit organisations use different social media for different purposes. Non-profit organisations are primarily using Twitter to convey one-way messages as a means of sharing information instead of relationship-building Waters and Jamal (2011).	Informing the public and communicating with stakeholders (Waters et al., 2009)(Waters, Burnett, Lammb, et al., 2009). Next to language issues and (digital) illiteracy, the relevance of information and cross-cultural differences should not be overlooked (Toyama, 2010; Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Andres & Woodard, 2013; Owiny et al., 2014)	Social media facilitates networked communication between NGOs and NGOs with political actors on a global stage (Fenton, 2009). Social media as a tool for development because of the power to organise in scale or to speak (Hatem Ali, 2009).	The resistance of staff to change working habits inhibits social media use (Mefalopulos, 2008; Kanter & Fine, 2010). Citizens empowerment (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012)
Connectedness	Connecting via social networks (Zuniga & White, 2009).	'Networked non-profit organisation' (Kanter & Fine, 2010). The effects of social media on organisations and individuals (Blom, 2009; van Alphen, 2009; Waters, 2009) Low-cost solution for engaging with and obtaining information from the public (Lutu, 2015).	Networking is often between individuals rather than a formal and institutionalised undertaking (Holmén, 2002). Social media strengthen connectivity and information flows and can sometimes affect the balance of power in society (Edwards, 2011) In order to embed social media in their activities, good understanding by development NGOs of the challenges and chances is essential (Mukkamala & Beck, 2017).	Potential of crowdsourcing for disaster relief activities such as mapping, or for establishing real-time communication used to share knowledge during disasters (Crowley & Chan, 2011; Livingston & Walter-Drop, 2014; Meier, 2014; Ahmed et al., 2019) A functional framework for social media use in disaster planning, response, and research Houston et al. (2015); Mukkamala and Beck (2017). Crowdsourcing has a strong impact on developing countries(Bott & Young, 2012).
Community	Attention to the notion of 'communities' in the development sector. (Ballantyne & Addison, 2000) Technology is a magnifier of underlying human and institutional intent and capacity, which can themselves be positive or negative (Toyama, 2011)	Information -sharing and mutual learning for networking among NGOs (Holmén, 2002). Online development networks may contribute to knowledge sharing (between development organisations) (Cummings et al., 2006; Longo, 2014).	Increasing decentralisation (Ballantyne & Addison, 2000). Develop relationships with stakeholders (Waters et al., 2009) Community activism (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012).	Community is forming around shared ideals or technologies. (Berdou, 2011) Social media have been used for social good (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012) Social media has created a scalable online sociality (Miller et al., 2016).

2.8 Communication for Development (C4D) as a lens after GTM analysis

The literature on communication for development (C4D) is used in the integrative phase, where the emergent theory of this grounded theory method study is related to the extant literature. C4D provides a lens with a practitioner focus. In an academic taxonomy, the discipline of communication for development is classed as a branch of communication studies, at the intersection with development studies (Quebral, 2006).

The term communication for development originates from and has been used interchangeably with the term 'development communication' (Manyozo, 2008). The concept of development communication or abbreviated as ComDev was for the first time introduced by Nora Quebral in the 1970s. That initial concept was gradually changed to her later definition. Development communication is "the science and human communication linked to the transitioning of communities from poverty in all its forms to a dynamic, overall growth that fosters equity and the unfolding of individual potential" (Quebral, 2012, p. 3).

Communication for development has over the decades, developed into a pluriform school of thoughts. These schools are a result of different approaches to development theories, to (strategic) communication, affiliations to academic, training or research institutions, sources of funding, and applications for different cultural, geographical and ideological contexts (Manyozo, 2008, 2017). These schools are Bretton Woods, Latin American, Indian, African, Los Baños and the Communication for Development and Social Change.

The Bretton Woods school originated in the post-Second World War Marshall Plan economic strategies. It originated from a modernist development communication paradigm, although contemporary approaches acknowledge a better understanding of indigenous contexts and involvement of the local community (Manyozo, 2008). The Bretton Woods school has influenced many international NGO and Northern development NGOs. The Latin American, Indian, African, Los Baños (Philippines) schools brought in the (post-colonial) development paradigms from scholars and practitioners from those regions in the Global South. These schools comprise communication approaches that have an emphasis on participatory communication. They regard "culture and indigenous knowledge as springboards on which to build successful and effective social communications in which communities participate to share and manage knowledge" (Manyozo, 2008, p. 37). The Communication for Development and Social Change school comprises institutional collaboration of development research and training organisations from the five schools of thought mentioned above. It has also influenced many Northern development NGOs.

Despite this variety of approaches, a generalised description of C4D is possible. Davies (2015, p. 1) defines communication for development as: "C4D is about systematically approaching communication in all its forms as a way to do development well, or even to do it better and in the process, achieve those goals and hit those targets. Moreover, it is about giving a little help in order for people to flourish as their own communicators, expressing their views, advocating, and having their say."

McAnany (2012) links the establishment of C4D's dominant paradigm of the modernisation-diffusion model to three seminal texts: The Passing of Traditional Society (Lerner, 1958), Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers, 1962), and Mass Media and National Development (Schramm, 1964). These texts suggest that mass communication technologies can have an implicit modernising effect and therefore, modern communication systems are enabling the

transformation of developing countries. Some of the other C4D schools of thought are influenced by non-Western paradigms such as Freire (Manyozo, 2008, 2017).

The paradigms of C4D are to some extent the *consequences* of the underlying paradigms of development governing the institutions that are concerned with development activities, such as development NGOs, where a move is observed from top-down diffusion to a more empowering participatory approach (Hemer et al., 2005; Manyozo, 2017).

While the concept of C4D continues to advance and to adjust to changing development paradigms, the underlying pattern of approaches remains the same. Manyozo (2017) identifies three common approaches in C4D theory and practise: 1) those with a focus on communication content, 2) those with a focus on media practices and structures, and 3) those with a focus on communication processes. The diffusion and participatory models, as shown in Table 2-7, are seen as opposite positions on a continuum of possible approaches that are in use (Servaes, 2008). Roberts (2015) relates 'Commscentric-ICT4D' initiatives that approach ICT as a medium of magnifying communication-centric development to C4D

For assessing C4D, some assessment frameworks have been suggested. One model is the framework for assessing the effect of mass communication programs by Bertrand et al. (2006). This framework studies how communication of information, for example, via ICT4D projects, changes behaviour, such as health, agricultural, or educational practices. The model establishes a relationship between the context (political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, legal) and 'change in behavioural precursors, such as knowledge, attitude, self-efficiency, which in turn influences 'change in behaviour', finally resulting in broader developmental impacts of the communications intervention. The model assumes some quantifiable measurements or observations.

An adaptation of this model was suggested by Heeks and Molla (2009b). Their DIKDAR model (adapted from Heeks 2005) for a C4D Framework more directly connects information, communication, and behaviour, arguing that "communication alone is insufficient to cause behavioural change" (Heeks & Molla, 2009a, p. 23). The acronym DIKDAR stands for Data communication, Information, Knowledge, Decision, Action and Result. The model is relatively simple in structure, but there may be difficulties in "eliminating conflating causes, and of directly measuring some behaviour changes" (ibid). The aforementioned models focus on "ICT4D project actors as recipients of communicated data", while the recipients can be regarded as "communicators who are themselves transmitting data" (ibid). One-way communication seems to be prevalent in these models.

These kind of models are useful when assessing so-called A/B testing[3] of different communication modalities (i.e. means of communication) in an action research setup. These two models, as mentioned above, are from the 'behavioural change' strand of C4D.

Another strand is the participatory social change strand, which considers the behavioural change approach to be narrow, top-down, and somewhat paternalistic. Their approach is focused on reaching empowerment for the whole community, identifying what communication

[3] A/B testing is a way to compare two versions of something to figure out which performs better; it's most often associated with websites and apps (Gallo, 2017).

needs there are and the communication channels to be employed (Figueroa et al., 2002). This kind of model acknowledges that communication is two-way, as seen with social media.

A potentially useful assessment framework has been suggested by Lennie and Tacchi (2013), which fits in the participatory, social change strand of C4D research. They studied and assessed several frameworks used for assessing (C4D) development projects and combined this with their own practical experience in the field of assessing C4D projects.

Table 2-7 Distinction between diffusion and participatory as opposite on a continuum of possible approaches in communication for development (C4D). Derived from Servaes and Malikhao (2005) Servaes (2008), Mefalopulos (2008), Scott (2014), Paquette et al. (2015) and Lennie and Tacchi (2015).

	Diffusion model	**Participatory model**
Problem formulation	Lack of information and inappropriate attitudes	Structural inequalities/power relations
'Solution' space	Information transfer: knowledge of» attitudes » practice Symptom curing; evolutionary change.	Participation/ownership information exchange/participation Aimed at the elimination of root causes; structural change
The main scope of the desired outcome	Outcome-oriented: behaviour change Behaviour change and/or Persuade audiences to change attitudes/behaviours/social norms	Process-oriented: empowerment, equity, community Assess, probe and analyse the situation. Involve stakeholders in decisions over key issues. Ensure proper dialogue for sharing knowledge and perceptions to achieve broad consensus leading to change
Definition of communication	Communication to inform or persuade. Vertical (top-down) information transfer One-way, linear (mono-logic mode)	Communication to assess or empower. Horizontal dialogue Two-way, and circular (dialogic mode).
Definition of development communication	Communication methods and media applied in the development context. Information dissemination via mass media. Using dialogue to achieve a predetermined objective.	Professional use of dialogic methods to assess and ensure stakeholders'involvement. Grassroots participation via group interaction Giving up control over the outcome of dialogue.
Definition of culture	Culture as an obstacle	Culture as a way of life
Definition of the audience	Passive individual receivers of information. Segmenting publics by attributes, using two-way communication strategies to resolve problems/issues	Active citizens who are part of a community Valuing the 'other' as an equal in discussions, hearing and empathising with their concerns.
Learning relationship	Teacher-student; know–all versus know-nothing. Paternalistic.	Everybody is a teacher and student at the same time; everybody has something of interest to share.
Catalyst of change	External change agent	Facilitator/internal community member
Change is seen as	Improvement	Transformation
Valuation of knowledge	Western knowledge is superior.	Traditional knowledge is equally relevant.
Paradigms / Frameworks	Modernisation/diffusion of innovations/banking pedagogy/monologic	Praxis (Freire)/social mobilisation/liberating pedagogy/dialogic
Types of intervention	Social marketing/behaviour change communication	Participatory action research (PAR) Rapid Participatory Appraisal (RPA) Community Involvement in Health (CIH)
Model orientation	Output-oriented, with the outputs defined at the outset	Process-oriented, with the outcome determined by and through the process
Assessing Impacts and Outcomes of C4D	The dominance of instrumental, upward accountability-based approaches that focus on proving impacts, using linear cause-effect logic and formal reporting of results.	Flexible, holistic, interdisciplinary approach based on ongoing learning, improvement and understanding. Takes the complexity of social change and the particular context into account and focuses on outcomes that an initiative can realistically influence.
Progress evaluation	The pressure to produce short-term results within rigid and unrealistic timeframes. This results in a focus on more tangible, short-term changes that are not good indicators of long-term social change	Seen as more important to focus on progress towards long-term social change and the contribution of C4D. This is a more realistic measure of effectiveness and provides practical recommendations for the implementation of policies and initiatives

The framework is a circular diagram representing seven key concepts used for evaluation in international development or C4D. These seven inter-related components are: participatory, holistic, complex, critical, emergent, realistic and learning-based. These key components and concepts of the framework for evaluating C4D are depicted in Figure 2-5.

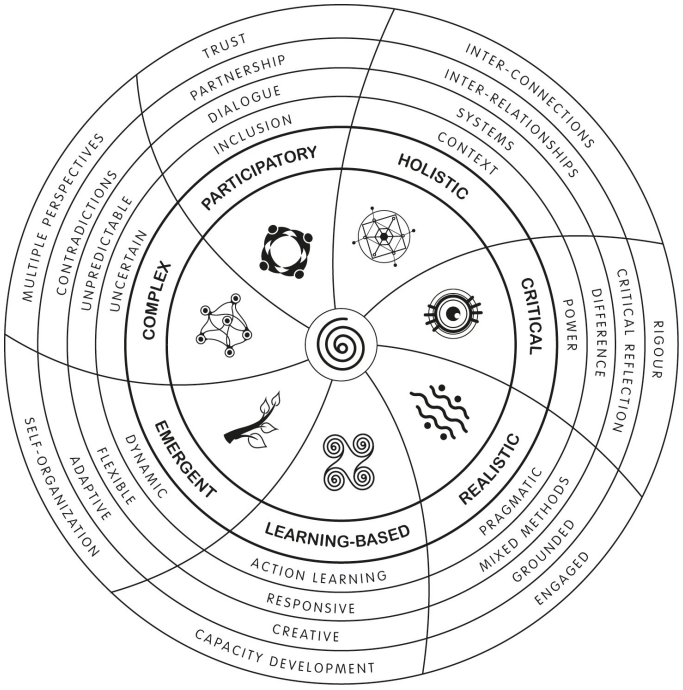


Figure 2-5. Key components and concepts in the framework for evaluating C4D (Tacchi & Lennie, 2014).

The framework is positioned in a holistic approach to development, which the authors argue is gaining popularity among development scholars and practitioners in the field of monitoring and evaluation of international development projects, cf. Miskelly et al. (2009). Lennie and Tacchi (2013, p. 1) argue that their proposed C4D evaluation framework *"emphasises people, relationships, processes, and principles such as inclusion, open communication, trust and continuous learning. This approach can help to reinforce the case for effective two-way communication and dialogue as central and vital components of participatory forms of development and evaluation that seek positive social change*".

The first component of this framework is 'Participatory'. Tacchi and Lennie (2014, p. 149)Tacchi and Lennie (2014, p. 305) argue that a participatory approach is fundamental for the effectiveness and sustainability of communication for development. This will help to ensure ongoing development and improvement of initiatives and policies in ways that better meet community needs and aspirations; increased evaluation capacities; greater utilisation of evaluation findings and learnings; and empowerment of participants. Inclusion of the knowledge and experiences of the local participants as well as relevant experts from outside are considered.

The second component is 'Holistic'. This refers to understanding the broader contexts and inter-connections between organisations, groups and individuals involved in a C4D initiative (directly or indirectly). This holistic component may include "the 'communicative ecologies' (or communication contexts) that people experience" (Better Evaluation, 2015).

The third component is ‘Complex’. “The framework recognises that social change and communication for development are complex and involve processes that are often contradictory and challenging”, Tacchi and Lennie (2014, p. 307) argue. “It highlights *complicated aspects:* where there are multiple organisations working in similar ways, multiple components or parts of the initiative, or where we know that C4D interventions will work differently in different contexts. It also highlights *complex aspects:* where change is not predictable but comes about through ‘adaptive’ responses to changing circumstances” (Better Evaluation, 2015).

The fourth component is ‘Critical’, which is about addressing “issues of gender, caste, ethnicity, age and other relevant differences, and unequal power and voice among participants” (Tacchi & Lennie, 2014).

The fifth component is ‘Emergent’ and “recognises the dynamic nature of communities and local contexts. (…) In the framework, social change and the outcomes of communication for development are seen as non-linear, dynamic, messy, and unpredictable processes” (Tacchi & Lennie, 2014, p. 307). Better Evaluation (2015) argues that in communication for development “primary responsibility is to be listening to, learning from and reporting to community groups and partners. Principles and processes such as self-organisation, powerful listening, and continuous feedback loops are important.” Furthermore, this requires accountability: demonstrating results to communities, partners, funders and policymakers.

The sixth component is ‘Realistic’ and relates to unrealistic timeframes for the impact assessment. “A more realistic, long-term view of the outcomes of communication for development and its evaluation” is needed (Tacchi & Lennie, 2014, p. 307). “This approach aims to increase the usefulness of evaluation results, which should focus on intended, unintended, expected, unexpected, negative and positive change. Long-term engagement with organisations and communities ensures effectiveness and sustainability, and a long-term perspective on both evaluation and social change” (Better Evaluation, 2015).

The seventh component is ‘Learning-based’ and “means of fostering continuous learning, evaluative thinking and an evaluation culture within organisations” (Tacchi & Lennie, 2014, p. 308).

From Communication for Development, we move to Affordance theory.

2.9 Affordance Theory as a lens after GTM analysis

Affordance theory is used in the integrative phase, where the emergent theory of this grounded theory method study is related to the extant literature. The perceived potentials of social media identified from the findings can be analysed using the concepts of sociomateriality and affordances.

Sociomateriality refers to the inherent inseparability of social and material aspects of organisational activities (Orlikowski & Scott, 2008). Furthermore, sociomateriality builds on structuration approaches to technology use in organisations, showing that technological artefacts are created by social interaction among people and that their effect on organisations is shaped by social interaction (Leonardi, 2013a). Affordances are a way to bring sociomateriality into the analysis. The affordance lens can help to apprehend the relationship between technology and humans (Stendal et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2018). The affordance theory has been used in organisational studies (Leonardi, 2013b; Strong et al., 2014) and

studies on social media use (Zheng & Yu, 2016). Affordance theory provides Information Systems researchers with a lens for developing a variety of mid-level social-technical theories (Volkoff & Strong, 2017).

Affordances, originally rooted in studies of ecological psychology, were introduced by Gibson (1977), who defined affordance as action possibility (latent) available in the environment and relative to action capabilities of the actor(s). Two perspectives on affordances are distinguished in Information Systems literature (Thapa & Sein, 2017)

The use of affordances theory was popularised in design and human-computer interaction research by Norman (1999). Norman (1995, p. 423) defines the term affordance as "the perceived and actual properties of the thing, primarily those fundamental properties that determine just how the thing could be used." Burden (2012, p. 62) argues that this differs from Gibson's definition because it "includes both the actual and the perceived characteristics and properties of an object."

Primarily in the field of human-computer interaction, affordances are viewed as 'functional', goal-oriented actions that are afforded to user groups by technical objects (Markus & Silver, 2008), designed and implanted into objects, representing the ideas of Norman (1999).

The other perspective is that affordances are not pre-existing in technology, but become apparent as emergent phenomena from the relationship between technology and perceiver (Leonardi, 2013b). Affordances are defined as potentials for goal-oriented action, emerging from the relationship between IT artefact and organisational systems (Zammuto et al., 2007), and provided to certain groups of actors (Markus & Silver, 2008). Proponents of this view argue affordances may emerge from the interaction people have with technologies and have been shaped by their experimentation with, and adaptation of, those technologies (Leonardi, 2011).

The difference between the two perspectives is that the first perspective considers humans, organisations and technology to be independent entities with inherent characteristics, whereas the latter assumed those "to be interdependent systems that shape each other through ongoing interaction" (Orlikowski & Scott, 2008, p. 438). This study fits in that second research stream. Thapa and Sein (2017) point out the ontological difference between these two perspectives: the first perspective sees an 'independent existence' of affordances, whereas the second perspective sees affordances as 'emergent'.

An elaboration of the affordance concept in the field of Information Systems, based on extensive literature review, is provided by Stendal et al. (2016, p. 5270):

> 1) affordances are independent of the individual's ability to recognise them, but exist in relation to the actors and therefore are dependent on the actor's capabilities,
> 2) every object offers possibilities for action, but those actions are different for different agents,
> 3) affordances are both "dependent on the capabilities of an environment or object as on the physical and psychological abilities of the user or individual, in their socio-cultural setting,
> 4) affordances are regarded as "co-evolution between humans and the environment".

Affordances represent potentials that are not directly designed into the social media but emerge from the ways in which users interact with and appropriate or redefine functional

values of these platforms, where the role of the user is not only being a user but shifting toward (co)-creation of content.

Leonardi and Vaast (2016) provide an overview of and research agenda for social media and their affordances for organisational use, arguing, for example, to diversify the inquiry. This study focuses on both a non-profit organisation as well as a development context.

Thapa and Sein (2017) state that affordances have been used in studies of information systems and organisations, cf. Zammuto et al. (2007), and for organisational social media use, cf. Treem and Leonardi (2012). Strong et al. (2014, p. 69) reframed an affordance definition to hold in their words "the nature of affordances in an organisation", namely an affordance is "the potential for behaviours associated with achieving an immediate concrete outcome and arising from the relation between an artefact and a goal-oriented actor or actors".

Many studies of organisational social media use mainly focused on the implications for knowledge sharing. This study attempts to extend that view by looking at all social media activities from development NGOs. Volkoff and Strong (2017) argue that the theory of affordances is very useful as a lens for how we look at a variety of topics in the Information Systems (IS) domain, such as IS adoption, adaptation, and organisational change. Stendal et al. (2016) corroborate this view, but also contend that it requires critical construction to mature the concept. Volkoff and Strong (2017) suggest a range of principles for using Affordance Theory in IS research. A useful principle they suggest is to select an appropriate level(s) of granularity for the affordances.

Pozzi et al. (2014) present an affordances theoretical framework that organises IS affordance studies around four main areas that follow one after the other: affordance existence, affordance perception, affordance actualisation, and affordance effect. Their framework identifies the existence of affordances as the result of a cognitive process of the interaction between IT artefact and organisation. Subsequently, affordances need to be perceived or recognised by the organisation. Only when the organisations act on the perceived opportunity for action, is an affordance actualised as behaviour, and finally, this actualisation will produce effects.

Strong et al. (2014) argue that more theorising is needed on how an affordance potential is actualised. They define actualisation as "the actions taken by actors as they take advantage of one or more affordances through their use of the technology to achieve immediate concrete outcomes in support of organisational goals" (Strong et al., 2014, p. 70). The actualisation of an affordance can lead to the emergence of new affordances (Pozzi et al., 2014; Strong et al., 2014). Furthermore, Strong et al. (2014) argue that more theorising is needed on combinations of interrelated affordances (where one affordance leads to the creation of another one), and affordances in the organisational context.

This distinction between affordances and features is interesting in the context of social media, where Chouikh et al. (2016) suggests identifying the affordances of social media platforms and thereby linking them to their features. Their approach can be viewed as what Thapa and Zheng (2019, p. 51) consider a 'realist' view of affordances, where affordances are "closely associated with functionalities of artefacts, and often a linear causality is implied in the sequence of existence-perception-actualisation", thereby referring to Bernhard et al. (2013). A contrasting view, according to Thapa and Zheng (2019). is a 'relational' view of affordances, as suggested by Robey et al. (2013, p. 391) who argue that "new affordances may be perceived and used over time as human agents experiment with embedded IT artefacts, discovering new features

that afford different kinds of human action." They argue that affordance is consistent with a relational ontology because of its "dependence on the relationship between material objects and human actors" (Robey et al., 2013, p. 384).

Bucher and Helmond (2017) argue that affordance theory often emphasises what technology affords the users, but the socio-technical nature of social media platforms requires a consideration of multi-directionality and a look at possible (non-)human agency affording things to technology.

2.9.1 Organisational affordances & development

An organisational affordance means that the potential actions enabled due to the interaction between ICTs and the organisation's staff are associated with achieving organisation-level immediate concrete outcomes in support of organisation-level goals (Dini et al., 2018). When actualised, affordances produce effects on an individual (microlevel) and organisational (macrolevel) level (Pozzi et al., 2014).

The organisational actualisation is understood as a rather complex aggregation of the many individual actualisation journeys. This framework has been adapted by Tim et al. (2018) to incorporate unintended consequences as an outcome in the affordance-actualisation process, which results in adjusted actions of goal-oriented actors in that process cycle.

In their study of organisational social media, Treem and Leonardi (2012) argue that social media use in organisations reveals four affordances enabled by these technologies, namely visibility, persistence, editability, and association.

The affordance of visibility is explained as follows: "If social media technologies enable people to easily and effortlessly *see* information about someone else, we say that the technology was used to make that person's knowledge visible" (Treem & Leonardi, 2012, p. 150). Hence it allows people to broadcast messages throughout and outside an organisation.

Persistence is another property identified with social media because social media enables communication to persist past the time of initial posts. Thus acts can have consequences long past the initial point of that communication. Interestingly this is somewhat the opposite of ephemerality or short-liveness, another functional affordance of some social media platforms, cf. DeVito et al. (2017).

Editability refers to the fact that asynchronous changes can be made to social media content. Lastly, associations are connections between individuals or between individuals and content (e.g. pieces of information). Treem and Leonardi (2012) argue that describing the actionable properties of social media circumvents a technology-dependent focus on social media, aiding in theory building that has more lasting power.

Treem and Leonardi (2012) suggest that the activation of a combination of these affordances may influence socialisation, knowledge sharing, and power processes in organisations. These affordances, visibility, editability, persistence, and association are considered functional affordances for social media (Treem & Leonardi, 2012).

Thapa and Zheng (2019) argue that functional affordances merely focus on the direct outcome of human action and interaction with a (digital) artefact, whereas in ICT4D research the broader implications for the individual, communities, organisations, or society are of interest.

Hafezieh and Eshraghian (2017) deduced in their literature review study on affordance theory in social media research that navigability, association, information sharing, and ubiquitous communication were found to be relevant affordances for NGOs aiming for social change as an outcome of their social media activities. They argued that more research is needed in the negative effects or outcomes of social media affordances.

An affordance lens is useful to help explain why, how, and when social media is used by organisations such as development NGOs for their activities Faraj and Azad (2012).

Leonardi and Vaast (2016, p. 155) suggest that a "a lens on social media use that focuses theoretical attention on the types of organisational activities that these new technologies afford users the ability to do, as well as the types of activities these technologies constrain users from accomplishing, can provide a compelling framework through which to understand the role of social media in organisations", such as development NGOs.

Sein et al. (2018) suggest Affordance Theory is an appropriate basis for understanding the role of ICT in development and therefore could be used to understand what social media use by NGOs for their development projects could mean.

From theories that can be used as a lens after the grounded theory (GTM) analysis, the literature review chapter end with some concluding remarks.

2.10 **Concluding the literature review**

Walsham (2017) argues that more research is needed on the role of NGOs when applying ICT, such as social media for development. Zheng et al. (2018, p. 9) argue "ICT4D research thus needs to become more multidisciplinary than ever before", linking fields such as information systems and development studies among others. Whether ICT can have a transformational contribution remains an open question (Heeks, 2010b). Walsham (2017, p. 29) believes social media is an expanding area of study for ICT4D research: "It is clear that social media and big data are here to stay, but that they have a complex relationship to development issues. This offers a fruitful area for future ICT4D research."

Avgerou (2010, p. 1) states that "every ICT for Development study incorporates implicit assumptions about the way IT innovation occurs in the context of development, and about the meaning and the nature of the process of development toward which such innovation is intended to contribute." The focus on development NGOs and their use of social media in the context of their development activities provides a specific context useful for further contribution to theory development. Andoh-Baidoo (2017, p. 207) argues that "context-specific theorising will ensure systematic modifications of extant theory to explain unique features of the different context in ICT4D research." Unwin (2017, p. 1) remains somewhat optimistic despite studies having shown that ICTs have increased inequality, believing that the potential of ICTs can be applied to transform the lives of the poor and marginalised for the better. He argues that this "requires a fundamental change in the ways that all stakeholders think about and implement ICT policies and practices." This study intends to take modest steps in that direction. From the literature review, we proceed to the methodology chapter.

3 Methodology

In this chapter, the research methodology for this study is explained, and step by step, both the rationale, as well as the implications of the applied methodology, are elaborated. This chapter provides a summary of the research design, applied methods and methodology and links back to the research question. Subsequently, the philosophy underpinning the research design, the applied methods and analysis are discussed, followed by how data was gathered, organised and analysed.

The research problem explored by the study is: ***How do Dutch development NGOs use social media to further the development activities of their organisations?***

The research problem for this study suggests a research design with a qualitative nature, the potential to develop theory, and a focus on subjective interpretation. Qualitative research questions generally start with 'how' or 'in what ways' and 'what', suggesting an open and emerging design (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2015). Given the exploratory nature of this research, a qualitative research approach has been adopted (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This study is particularly interested in understanding the context (organisational use of social media in a development environment) and understanding the processes that influence development NGO's decisions to use or not use social media for their development projects.

Both case studies, as well as the grounded theory method, are used for this study. This combination suits well because with a case study you are trying to understand, describe or explore a phenomenon, whereas, in grounded theory studies, you are trying to build theory (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2015). Data was collected through interviews with respondents working at the sampled development NGOs. The development NGOs were selected using a theoretical sampling strategy. The list of persons to be interviewed was selected on the basis of accessibility, availability and relevance regarding the research focus. The collected data were analysed using a grounded theory method to reflect upon the meaning of social media use by the development NGOs within the context of their development activities.

3.1 An Interpretive Paradigm for This Study

Various philosophical perspectives rule the paradigm behind any research. The underlying philosophical assumptions of the research are influential in qualitative research (Walsham, 1995). In an interpretive paradigm, the concept of reality, as well as our knowledge thereof, is understood as "social products and hence incapable of being understood independent of the social actors (including the researchers) that construct and make sense of that reality" (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991a, p. 14).

Interpretive studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them, and interpretive methods of research in Information Systems are "aimed at producing an understanding of the context of the information system, and the process whereby the information system influences and is influenced by the context" (Walsham, 1993, pp. 4-5).

Following this classification and given that this study is concerned with how Dutch development NGOs perceive social media for their development projects, an interpretive paradigm seems an appropriate approach (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991a; Hirschheim, 2010).

Kaplan and Maxwell (2005) argue that qualitative methods are, among other purposes, particularly helpful for research on the use of information systems, as is the case in this PhD study on what social media means to people working in the organisational setting of development NGOs.

3.2 Theory Building with Case Studies

This paragraph explains the need for applying case study research to development NGOs examined for their social media use. Each NGO represents a single case.

Case studies are particularly valuable for understanding complex phenomena in context (Walsham, 1995; Crotty, 1998). In a qualitative research strategy, "a case study tends to take an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research" (Bryman, 2004, p. 60).

Case studies are an established method of theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Interpretivist case studies aim at "understanding the worlds of situational actors from their perspective, by describing how these actors make individual and collective sense of their particular world" (Avenier & Thomas, 2015, p. 17). Bryman (2004, p. 67) states that with the term 'case', a case study is associated with a location, such as a community or organisation. "Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period", Creswell (2014, p. 14) argues.

Every researched development NGO is one case study, and the context is social media use for development activities (Gillham, 2000). There is not an a priori lens (unit of analysis) here where the case study approach is combined with the Grounded theory method. A multiple case design allows for cross-case analysis and comparison, and the investigation of a particular phenomenon in various settings that produce both similar and contrasting results (Darke et al., 1998). Given the research goals and nature of this study, a case study seems appropriate, providing methodological strengths and benefits.

First, this study aims to understand how development NGOs see social media for their development activities, thereby building a theory on that subject. Case studies support both theory testing as well as theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989; Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Second, mostly for exploratory or explanatory research, a "case study is used to gain an understanding of the issue in real-life settings and recommended to answer how and why or less frequently what research questions" (Harrison et al., 2017 para 28), supporting the exploratory nature of this study.

Third, a case provides the opportunity to analyse a bounded system. The studied development NGO as a case is bounded by time, space, and activity, although boundaries between the case and context (here, international development) can be blurred. A case is studied in its context, a real-life setting, which is significant to understanding the case (Creswell, 2014; Harrison et al., 2017).

Fourth, the case study enables the study of the phenomenon in its real-life setting (Darke et al., 1998; Myers, 2008, p. 72).

Furthermore, case studies are a common research method in the field of information systems (Benbasat et al., 1987; Klein & Myers, 1999).

These considerations provide support for the choice of a case study as an appropriate research strategy for this study. The next section discusses the use of the grounded theory method, as this is another building block in the research design of theory-building case studies.

3.2.1 Using Grounded Theory Method in an Interpretivist Paradigm

The main purpose of the grounded theory method (GTM) is *theory building.* In their seminal work *The Discovery of Grounded theory*, the originators of Grounded theory, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967), described the research process as the discovery of theory through the rigours of social research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) distinguish substantive theory creation from formal theory creation by relating substantive theory creation with empirical research, while formal theory development is connected with conceptual work or theorising. Charmaz (2006) argues that interpretive definitions of a theory put more emphasis on understanding rather than explanation. The focus is on the interpretation of the studied phenomenon, rather than causal relationships.

Grounded theory approaches have become increasingly common in the Information Science (IS) research literature because the method is extremely useful in developing context-based, process-oriented descriptions and explanations of a phenomenon (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991b). The term 'grounded' refers to the fact that this is not just abstract theorising. Instead, the theory needs to be grounded or rooted in observation (Trochim, 2006; Urquhart, 2012a). Hood (2007, p. 163) argues that three features really stand out when contrasting and comparing grounded theory method with other research methods: *"(1) theoretical sampling, (2) constant comparison of data to theoretical categories, and (3) focus on the development of theory via theoretical saturation of categories rather than substantive verifiable findings".*

Initially, there were two major streams of scholarly thinkers within grounded theory. Grounded theory according to Glaser emphasises induction or emergence, and the individual researcher's creativity within a clear frame of stages, while Strauss is more interested in validation criteria and a systematic approach (Gibbs, 2010). Bryant and Charmaz (2007) consider the versions of grounded theory as a family of methods, in accordance with Ludwig Wittgenstein's concept of 'family resemblances'. Flick (2018) identifies five versions in the grounded theory (GT) family that co-exist and complement each other with their methodological suggestions.

In the Glaserian version of grounded theory, the researcher starts the research with a state of general wonderment, an open mind and not an empty head (Dey, 1999). This means prior knowledge is used to inform but not to direct the analysis and theorising. Data reveals the theory, coding is flexible, and there is constant comparison between incidents. Incidents are empirical data (the indicators of a category or concept) from which a grounded theory is developed (Holton, 2007). This leads to the development of a conceptual theory via an inductive method. The theory is grounded in the data.

In this study, we allow *"the data [to] speak to us… rather than imposing preconceived categories"* (Urquhart, 2001, p. 129), and therefore the Glaserian version of grounded theory is adopted as *"Glaser places more emphasis on the importance of allowing codes and theoretical understandings of the data to emerge than Strauss and Corbin"* (Kendall, 1999, p. 746). Furthermore, the Glaserian approach facilitates an open and broad research question

as a starting point, that becomes narrower in the process of data collection and analysis (Alammar et al., 2019).

A detailed work definition with the key features of the grounded theory method (GTM) by Urquhart (2012a) referring to Creswell (1998) and Dey (1999) is shown in the following table.

Table 3-1. Key features grounded theory method (GTM) based on Urquhart (2012a), Charmaz (2011) & Bryant (2019)

Key features grounded theory method (GTM)	Theory	Literature	In the Field	Data Analysis
1. The aim of Grounded theory is to generate or discover a theory. Substantive and/or formal theory generation. Emphasize theory construction rather than description or application of current theories.	√			
2. The researcher has to *set aside theoretical ideas* to let the substantive theory to emerge. Begins with inductive logic. Openness to serendipity.		√		
3. The theory focuses on how individuals interact with the phenomena under study.			√	
4. The theory asserts a plausible relation between concepts and sets of concepts. Theoretical sensitivity.	√			
5. The theory is derived from data acquired through fieldwork interviews, observations and documents.			√	
6. Data analysis is systematic and begins as soon as data is available. Data collection, data analysis, and theory development simultaneously conducted in an iterative process.				√
7. Data analysis proceeds through identifying categories and connecting them.				√
8. Further data collection (or sampling) is based on emerging concepts – iterative process. Initial purposive/convenience sampling, followed by theoretical sampling.			√	
9. These concepts are developed through *constant comparison* with additional data and memoing throughout the process				√
10. Data collection can stop when new conceptualisations emerge—t*heoretical saturation.*				√
11. Data analysis proceeds from 'open' coding (identifying categories, properties and dimensions) through selective coding (clustering around categories), to theoretical coding (engaging with relevant literature).				√
12. The resulting theory can be reported in a narrative framework or as a set of propositions. Explicates a process. Criteria: fit, grab, work, modifiability.	√			

Table 3-1 shows the elements of the grounded theory method (GTM) definition that cover four broad areas for the research design, namely theory building, use of literature, GTM in the field, and data analysis features. This definition is in close agreement with the nine research actions proposed by Charmaz (2011) as commonalities between the versions of grounded theory with their epistemological differences, the eight core elements of grounded theory across the three ontological and epistemological variants observed by Weed (2016), the seven key components of grounded theory stated by Flick (2018), and the nine 'essences' of GTM by Bryant (2019).

From this we derive the following distinguishing features of the grounded theory method as applied for this study (as summarised by Urquhart (2012a)): the researcher has to set aside theoretical ideas, constant comparison (to and fro between coding & data), overlapping data collection and analysis, theoretical sampling, data collection stops when no new concepts emerge, and emerging substantive theory engaged with existing theories or literature.

The feature '*the researcher has to set aside theoretical ideas'* means that the "research does not *start* with a theory to prove or disprove" and tells us that avoiding presumptions is key while doing Grounded theory (Fernández, 2005). It demands a more inductive than a deductive starting point from the researcher. This does not mean the researcher is not connecting with the literature. Glaser and Strauss (1967) did stress the importance of 'theoretical sensitivity' in Grounded theory. The researcher establishes emerging impressions from the evidence, conceptualises the data, and then analyses emerging relationships between concepts. Dey (1999) argues that "theoretical sensitivity involves repetition in data collection and analysis and a refusal to focus on any single theoretical perspective in advance of those concepts generated by the evidence alone". The researcher must be continuously reading in other substantive areas to increase their theoretical sensitivity (Fernández, 2005). Theoretical sensitivity comprises the whole research process (Chun Tie et al., 2019). Urquhart (2012a, p. 36) stresses the importance by arguing: "This concept of theoretical sensitivity is key – how can we build theories ourselves unless we understand what a theory is?"

Constant comparison with previous data, categories, concepts and constructs is an essential part of the applied method. Constant comparison is the process of constantly comparing instances of data that have been labelled as a particular category with other 'slices' of data, to see if these categories fit and are applicable (Urquhart, 2012a). In this study, the data comes not only from interviews but also from social media sources and other secondary data.

The grounded theory method used for this PhD research is the one developed by Glaser. Glaser (1978) uses three coding structures, namely open, selective and theoretical coding, at incremental levels of abstraction. Data analysis proceeds from open coding (identifying categories, properties and dimensions), through selective coding (clustering around core categories), to theoretical coding (Trochim, 2006; Urquhart, 2012a). Theoretical coding considers the relationships between codes by generating hypotheses for integration into a theory (Glaser, 1978; Fernández, 2003).

Data saturation has been reached when data collection no longer contributes to the elaboration of the phenomenon being investigated (Urquhart, 2001; Egan, 2002). The so-called 'saturated' concepts are then condensed as much as possible to the relationships between core categories, which then form a 'grounded' theory (Urquhart et al., 2010).

Depending on the researcher's epistemological stance, the grounded theory method can be used for positivist, interpretivist or critical research (Madill et al., 2000; Charmaz, 2008). According to Orlikowski (1993), grounded theory fits well with interpretive research, as applied for this study, for three reasons: its inductive nature (useful for areas where no previous theory is in use), it is contextual in the sense that it incorporates the complexities of the organisational context into the understanding of the phenomena, and it is studying process and change.

The application of Grounded theory in the context of the interpretivist paradigm, where interpretations of social practices are constructed, is less problematic because *"there is more commensurability between the notion of coding (generally subjective) and the idea of*

constructing interpretations" (Urquhart, 2012a, p. 61). Furthermore, one strength of the grounded theory method is that it provides a chain of evidence for every concept produced that can be traced back to many pieces of data (Urquhart, 2007; Urquhart et al., 2010). A broader data collection scope can enrich the picture, and in this study, this is done by combining transcripts of interviews with secondary data from social media, websites, reports and presentations from the NGOs.

Urquhart (2007) argues that a transparent chain of procedures from data to theory must support the outcome. Inspired by the diagrammatic depictions of the grounded theory research process by Urquhart (1999), Fernández (2003), Díaz Andrade and Urquhart (2009), Urquhart et al. (2010) and (Urquhart, 2019), I have developed the following diagram to illustrate the data analysis, sampling and theory-building process for this PhD research. Figure 3-1 describes the process of data collection and analysis. Flick (2018) calls this a spiral of cycles of data collections, coding, analysis, writing, theoretical categorisation and data collection.

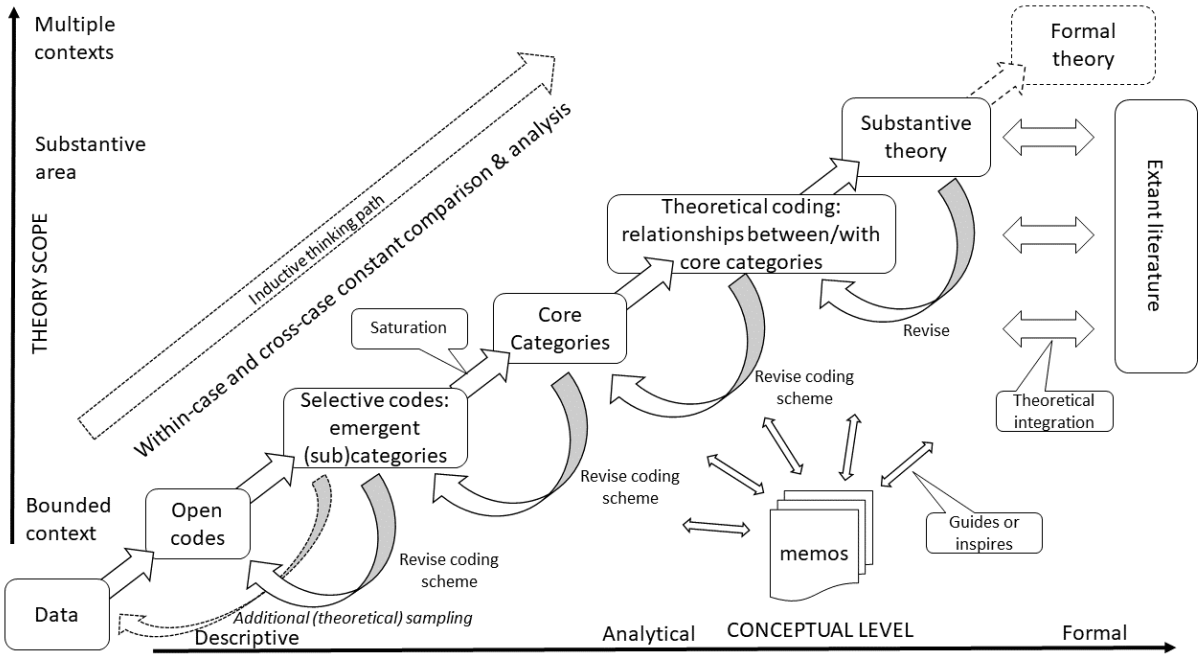


Figure 3-1. Inductive thinking path and Glaserian GTM-inspired coding strategy for theory building in this PhD research.

3.2.2 Combining the Grounded Theory Method (GTM) with Case Studies

The methodology of the grounded theory method, combined with a multiple case study, is applied for this PhD study. When combining methods like a case study and grounded theory, care must be taken to ensure that the principles of case study research do not distort true emergence for theory generation (Fernández, 2003).

Table 3-2. Adaptation of Eisenhardt's (1989) Framework to Build Theory from Case Study Research.

Step	Activity	Examples of how the approach is used in this study
1. Getting Started	Definition of the research question Possibly a priori constructs Neither theory nor hypotheses	A broad research problem that relates to social media for development was initially formulated. A preliminary literature review identifies some broad constructs.
2. Selecting Cases	Case study design Specified population Theoretical, not random, sampling	Each development NGO is a case. The context is international development. Cases studied for a limited period and focused on social media use in the international development projects in the Global South of these NGOs. Participant's cases were analysed for the pilot study, and additional cases are based on theoretical sampling—each case is added to the list to substantiate the emerging theory. Development NGOs actively using social media were selected based on theoretical sampling (see 3.3.2). Multiple Case, Fourteen development NGOs were analysed.
3. Crafting Instruments and Protocols	Multiple data collection methods Qualitative and quantitative data combined	Multiple data collection methods were used: semi-structured, document analysis. Multiple sources of data: interview transcripts, reports, social media and websites. Qualitative data collected and used by a single investigator.
4. Entering the Field	Overall data collection and analysis flexible and opportunistic	Analytical memos help to make adjustments to the interview guide and the case study design during the data collection process.
5. Analysing Data	Within-case analysis Cross-case pattern search using divergent techniques.	Combining transcripts and secondary data per case analysis. Cases are individually analysed first for constructs and relationships in the data followed by within-group analysis for similarities and differences of these constructs and their relationships. Finally, analysis across all cases is conducted for similar and different patterns in the constructs and relationships. Interviews as a primary source, secondary data from social media, websites and reports. Multiple cases to create a more robust theory and grounded in varied empirical evidence (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 27).
6. Shaping Hypotheses	Iterative tabulation of evidence for each construct. Search evidence of "why" behind relationships.	Constructs emerging from the data compared with the evidence obtained from the consecutive cases. Reflexive techniques such as memoing throughout the research; constant comparison are applied (see 3.4.3).
7. Enfolding Literature	Comparison with conflicting literature Comparison with similar literature.	Emergent theory compared with the relevant literature areas
8. Reaching Closure	Theoretical saturation when possible.	Reaching of theoretical saturation achieved when no additional data was found to be contributing to extending the theory.

In an interpretive qualitative case study for exploratory research where grounded theory is applied to generate theory from the ground up, the intended result is a s*ubstantive* theory which is a "description and abstraction of what goes on in a particular kind of social setting"

(Fouché, 2002, p. 271) and theory is developed for a specific area of inquiry, or a *formal* theory, a more general theory, "that is developed for a formal, or conceptual, area of sociological inquiry" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 32).

As the use of theory before data collection is in opposition to the principle idea of the grounded theory methodology, in which theory emerges from the data, this needs to be addressed when combining a case study with grounded theory. A way to resolve this issue is to use an initial high-level conceptual framework as guiding instrument for both the literature research and the conceptualisation of the research problem while not distorting the emergence of theory from the data (Glaser, 2002a). This is the purpose of the conceptual framework that has been used for this PhD study (Figure 2-2). It also can be seen as the basis of a *'non-committal' literature review,* as shown later in Figure 3-3, that can helpfully be used with grounded theory studies (Urquhart & Fernández, 2013).

Eisenhardt (1989) describes a framework that has also been recommended by Urquhart (2012a) for research design using case studies (Table 3-2). The steps described are: Getting Started, Selecting Cases, Crafting Instruments and Protocols, Entering the Field, Analysing the Data, Shaping Hypotheses or Theory, Enfolding Literature, and Reaching Closure.

This approach is adopted for the study and described in the following table. Although the table seems to suggest a linear process, the actual nature of this process is iterative, where the researcher is forced to backtrack certain steps. However, this fragmentation into logical steps helps in planning and managing the research project (Fernández, 2003).

For illustrative purposes, these steps have been plotted on the same diagram, as shown in the previous section (Figure 3-2). This figure visually shows the combination of the grounded theory method with case studies.

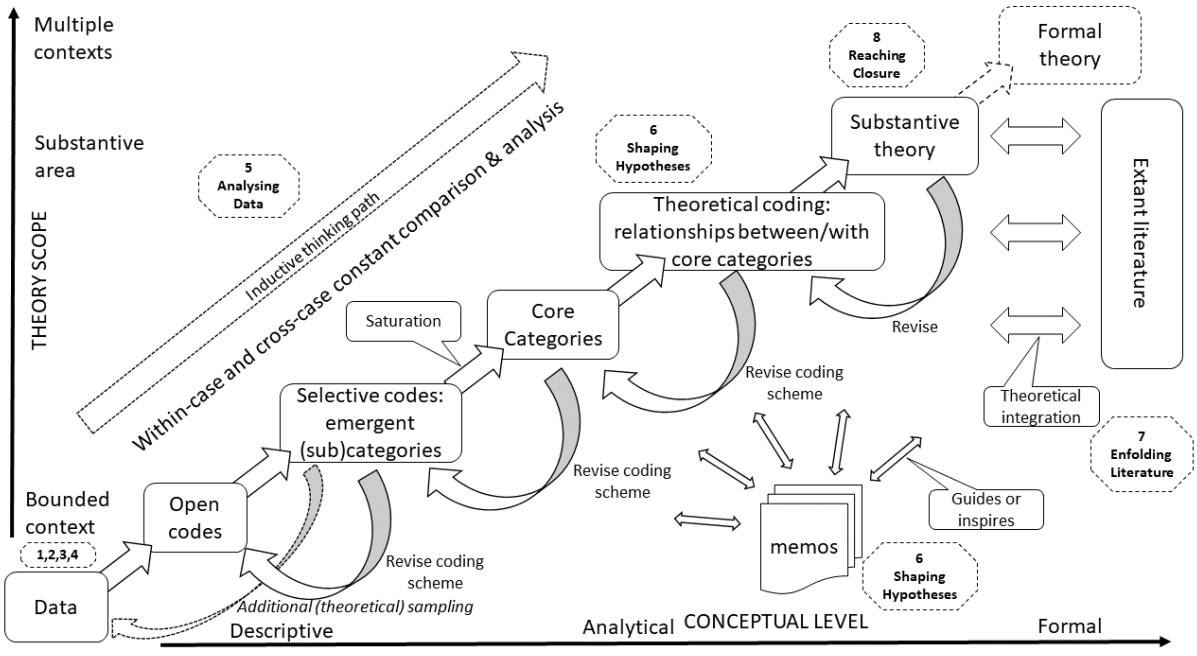


Figure 3-2. The eight steps of Eisenhardt's (1989b) Framework for Case Study Research plotted on the diagram for data collection, and Glaserian grounded theory coding for theory building.

3.2.3 Does the researcher enter the field as a blank slate? The role of prior theory.

This section clarifies the continuous role of a phased literature review in a grounded theory study and the misconception that grounded theory would mean no literature has been consulted before collecting data. Indeed researchers have to *set aside theoretical ideas* and concepts are developed through *constant comparison* in a study using grounded theory. However, as Urquhart (2001, p. 2) emphasises:

> "*setting aside of theoretical ideas seems to imply that the researcher does not look at existing literature. This is not, in fact, an accurate representation of the grounded theory. The position of both Glaser and Strauss on this issue is far more subtle."*

Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue that researchers should not conceive reality purely as a clean slate but should develop some understanding of theoretical perspectives in order to be able to abstract categories from data. For this matter, a pre-study or so-called preliminary or noncommittal literature review can aid in defining the problem domain (Urquhart & Fernández, 2013). Urquhart (2012a, p. 48) argues that a preliminary literature review is useful in a grounded theory study:

> *"The tactic of a preliminary (non-committal) literature review works well when using grounded theory. The preliminary literature review examines what theory exists in the area and how other people may have addressed aspects of a research problem, but does not then impose a framework on future data collection."*

Furthermore, a non-committal literature review fulfils institutional requirements such as a research proposal before commencing the PhD research, as long as the researcher remembers that future coding needs to be done with *'an open mind not an empty head' (Dey, 1999, p. 63).*

Referring to suggestions and guidelines for grounded theory research by Suddaby (2006) and Urquhart (2007), Biaggi and Wa-Mbaleka (2018) suggest that by reviewing multiple disciplines that touch on the research topic instead of focusing on a single substantive area mitigates the risk of forcing the emerging theory to fit existing theories. Therefore the non-committal literature review in this thesis covers literature from ICT for development, development studies, and Information Systems in general, among other disciplines. This improves the theoretical sensitivity and the awareness of relatable theory in general (Urquhart, 2012a).

As shown in Figure 3-3, the use of literature in a grounded theory study consists of several phases (Urquhart & Fernández, 2013). The first phase is a noncommittal phase in which the researcher explores the research problem and develops sensitivity for the research area. The second phase is called the integrative phase and consists of relating the emergent theory to extant theories. That phase consists of a thematic literature review and a theoretical literature review. The thematic literature review helps to further develop emerging concepts that are developed in the empirical study. The literature is sought to compare observed patterns and emerging concepts.

Once the core categories and relationships between them have been theorised, it is important to relate them to the broader literature in that substantive field (theoretical integration). The generated theory determines the relevance of literature and is contrasted with existing

theories. Grounded theorists must engage the generated theory and emergent concepts with the existing literature, for theory-building purposes Urquhart (2016).

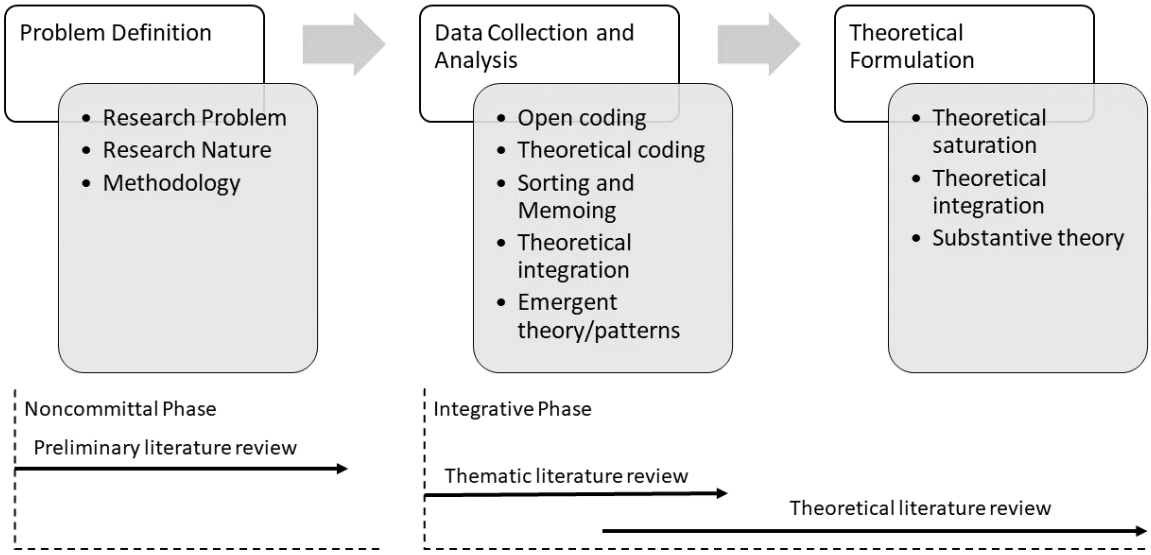


Figure 3-3. Key GTM activities and the continuous role of the literature review. Based on Urquhart and Fernández (2013), derived from McCallin (2003) and Martin (2006).

3.2.4 Justification of methods

Grounded theory combined with case study research method is suitable for this qualitative study. Lehmann (2001) and Allan (2003) claim that the combination of case studies and Grounded theory has been rewarding for IS researchers. Férnandez (2003), Gregor & Hart (2005) and Goulding (2002) argue that the reason for using the Grounded theory approach is consistent with the reasons for using a case study strategy in IS research, namely studying IS in a natural setting and generating theories from practice, gaining an understanding of the processes taking place, and also researching a little-studied area, which is the case with social media usage in the context of aid and development organisations.

Urquhart and Vaas (2012a) emphasise the role the Information Systems research discipline can have in theorising about social media. The combination of case study research and Grounded theory works well for theory building and has been applied in Information Systems before. Birks et al. (2013) argue that the grounded theory method can be a robust tool for IS scholars who focus on theory development, allowing them to research with both flexibility and rigour.

Regarding the theoretical framing of ICT4D research, Avgerou (2017, p. 10) argues that ICT4D research "requires the combination of multiple theoretical strands. Central among them is the foundational theories on technology, on context, and socio-economic development. Also, ICT4D research draws from middle range theories, which shed light on specific topics of ICT related phenomena in the context of a developing world." This is well-aligned with the approach of this study where the middle-range theory built by a combination of the grounded theory method and case studies is reflected in a combination of theories in the field of ICT (social media), in the context of development and organisational adoption of technology by NGOs.

3.3 Data collection strategy

This section presents an overview of the cases included in this research. In this research, the focus is on Dutch NGOs operating in the international development field. All of the organisations that are analysed are members of Partos, the Dutch association of NGOs working in International Development. There are about one hundred Dutch NGOs in the international development cooperation sector (Partos, 2012), the majority of which frequently use social media (say at least once per day). The group of private development organisations is larger - approximately 8,000 initiatives in the Netherlands (Linkis, 2012), but looking at financial and socio-economic impact, the group of the Dutch development NGOs comprises the larger share (Kinsbergen & Schulpen, 2010), and was therefore chosen as the subject of this study.

As an initial step for this research, a pilot study was conducted. Development NGOs in the Netherlands who are actively using social media were identified by desk research, an online survey (Sheombar, 2012), and also through consultation of experts in the aid and development field. Six of those organisations were chosen as the sample group for a pilot study.

Interviews provide a good way of collecting data from the decision-makers in these organisations and are one of the most important sources of case study information (Myers & Newman, 2007b). They help to capture the perception of the use of social media.

Walsham (1995, p. 78) explains that in an interpretive case study the researcher as an outside observer can use interviews as the primary data source, because "it is through this method that the researcher can best access the interpretations that participants have regarding the actions and events which have or are taking place, and the views and aspirations of themselves and other participants."

The interviewees have either senior management, marketing/communications or a development practitioner role in their organisation. The interviews were digitally recorded (audio) and transcribed verbatim. On average, the interviews lasted one hour. The recordings, transcripts and other secondary data were imported and analysed in NVivo, a qualitative data management and analysis software programme (after initially manually coding the pilot data to familiarise with the coding). The interviews were in Dutch, and after transcribing were coded using English terms. Additional data from web pages and reports were also collected as complementary secondary sources for this study. The coding procedure followed the conventions of Glaserian grounded theory, in which theoretical categories and insights are allowed to emerge inductively from the data.

Table 3-3. Sources of data for this study.

Primary source	Semi-structured interviews with 18 respondents & field-notes of meetings or events of 14 development NGOs
Secondary source	Reports, website, social media and presentations from the development NGOs

Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) explain that case studies can accommodate a wide variety of data sources, such as interviews, archival data, survey data, ethnographies, and observations. For this study, the main sources of data are interviews, supported by various types of secondary data obtained from the NGOs (Table 3-3). The data collection spanned the period from November 2010 to July 2017.

3.3.1 Description of the researched development NGOs

There are approximately 100 Dutch development NGOs formally involved with international development. The number of private initiatives and foundations is in the thousands. This study focuses on the formally organised development NGOs who receive funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their development projects. From the approximately 100 organisations, fourteen NGOs were selected for this study.

The main selection criterion for this study was the NGO's intensive use of social media for their development projects. Additional criteria were used, based on aspects like thematic areas and the age of the NGOs, in order to give a diverse sample. By inspecting the NGO's online activities, and consultation of development practitioners, a shortlist was created.

Following the PhD study programme design at Manchester Metropolitan University, an initial pilot study was conducted involving six NGOs for the phase resulting in the PhD research proposal. This pilot study helped both to improve the design of the study as well as identifying the first concepts from the data analysis. The following paragraphs describe the sampled NGOs.

Some of the characteristics of the analysed development NGOs for this study are summarised in Table 3-4. Staff size ranged from 'Small' (less than 11), 'Mid-size' (11 to 75), to 'Large' (more than 75). Each organisation was categorised as 'Single-issue' or 'Multi-issue', depending on whether they focus on one area or several areas of interest, for example, only healthcare or a broad range of themes like education and poverty reduction. The 'Focus area(s)' summarises the main activities the NGO is covering. Finally, the use of social media use across the whole organisation or mainly in one department is presented in the table. I briefly describe the fourteen NGOs that have been analysed for this study.

The Crowdsourcing NGO allows people to fund, provide their knowledge to, and follow small-scale development projects of their own choice via its website. The projects that are supported via the website have to be initiated by people living in a developing country; they need to be small, concrete and limited in time and resources (often less than 5,000 Euros funding) and the project owner need to provide regular updates of the project development via the Internet. They have a main office in the Netherlands and another one in Kenya.

The Water Platform NGO has its activities focused on water and sanitation projects. They offer a platform for these projects, providing a knowledge repository similar to Wikipedia, with information on smart and affordable technical solutions and practical approaches related to water and sanitation. Furthermore, they have developed tools and training for online reporting, field surveys of development projects via mobile phones, and facilitate data transparency (open aid data[4]) and an online project market place to match donors with projects. Although the focus was initially on water and sanitation, the vision of the organisation is to broaden the use of the open-source platform they have developed to other areas.

[4] Open data compliant to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard.

Table 3-4. Characteristics of the examined development NGOs.

Development NGO pseudonym	# Respondents	Interviewee role (*)	NGO age range	Staff size	Single-issue vs Multi-issue	Focus area(s)	Organisation-wide or department focused on the use of social media
Crowdsourcing	2	a, b	1-5 years	Mid-size	Multi-issue	Crowdfunding and wisdom of the crowd	Organisation-wide
Water platform	1	a	6-15 years	Mid-size	Single-issue	Initially in water projects and now data management in development projects	Organisation-wide
Mobile Technology	1	a	1-5 years	Mid-size	Multi-issue	Mobile communication and data collection for development	Organisation-wide
Confederated	2	b, c	> 15 years	Large	Multi-issue	Emergency relief, poverty and inequality, women's rights, fair trade, climate change, refugees, microfinance and education.	Department-focused
Traumatised children	1	b	6-15 years	Large	Single-issue	Youth (post-war) trauma care	Department-focused
Advocacy	2	b, c	> 15 years	Large	Multi-issue	Transparency, women's rights, freedom of speech, sustainable development, sexual and reproductive rights	Organisation-wide
Community knowledge management	1	c	1-5 years	Small	Multi-issue	Volunteering, knowledge management, a community of practitioners	Organisation-wide
Child development	1	c	> 15 years	Large	Single-issue	Child rights and protection, emergency relief, education, children's health	Department-focused
Youth Health and Sex Education	1	b	1-5 years	Mid-size	Single-issue	Health education on promoting safe sexual choices to youth, sexual and reproductive rights	Department-focused
STD awareness	1	b	1-5 years	Mid-size	Single-issue	Promoting awareness of and combating sexually transmitted diseases	Department-focused
Crowdfunding	1	b, c	1-5 years	Small	Multi-issue	Crowdfunding	Organisation-wide
E-learning	2	a, c	1-5 years	Small	Single-issue	Education	Organisation-wide
Agriculture	1	c	> 15 years	Large	Single-issue	Agriculture and its production value chain	Department-focused
Expertise sharing	1	b	> 15 years	Large	Multi-issue	Expertise in agriculture, energy, water, sanitation and hygiene	Department-focused

(*) Interviewee role: a) Management, b) Marketing/Communications or c) Development practitioner

The Mobile Technology NGO was founded in 2007. It uses a mobile phone technology platform to send out and receive text messages, voice and data, making it possible to collect and disseminate health information. The organisation's work is demand-driven, and it sets up complete programs with local and international partners. The interactive and incentive-based SMS services (for example, via a quiz) are used for awareness and behavioural change campaigns and programs. The organisation has offices in Amsterdam and two countries in Africa and has expanded its activities to three other African countries. Furthermore, they are collaborating in a consortium with the Water Platform NGO.

The Confederated NGO is part of a broader international confederation of organisations working in approximately 90 countries worldwide to fight against poverty and related injustice. The organisation states that its policy and strategy are based on the fact that everyone in the world has the same rights, regardless of where they were born.

The Traumatised Children NGO is focusing on helping children in armed conflict regions suffering from traumas associated with armed conflict. They are working in a dozen countries and even in the Netherlands where they help child refugees and raise awareness for children's rights. The organisation started with only volunteers but has grown to an organisation with paid staff and volunteers. The organisation has independent branches operating in 6 countries across the world.

The Advocacy NGO provides advocacy and knowledge sharing in digital activism, social change, and rural innovations and supports organisations in the Global South with this.

The Community Knowledge Management NGO has created a platform on which local communities from across the world share knowledge on mainly rural-specific issues. Topics discussed range from growing crops, setting up water pumps, to microfinance. Furthermore, many communities have created a page promoting their village. The NGO focuses on maintaining the platform, moderating the content, creating online resources on how to use the platform, and promoting the platform via social media.

The Child Development NGO mainly focuses on child rights and protection. They operate in a dozen countries. Furthermore, their activities cover education and healthcare for children. They not only rely on governmental funding but receive a significant part of their income from private donors.

The Youth Health and sex education NGO is concerned with health education to promote safe sexual choices to youth, and sexual and reproductive rights.

STD Awareness NGO is promoting awareness of and combating sexually transmitted diseases. They organise mass events with music and dance for youth where leisure is combined with education and raising awareness.

The Crowdfunding NGO provides a platform for crowdfunding of projects and provides training on crowdfunding and social media marketing.

The E-learning NGO specialises in education, particularly online via e-learning platforms and social media. The NGO argues that their method of approach is to include the local communities in identifying developmental issues and designing solutions.

The Agriculture NGO specialises in development projects in the field of agriculture and the value chain of food production in Asia, Africa, and Latin America for customers in the North. Their activities range from training in farming techniques to, supporting local NGOs to empower women, collaboration with companies on corporate social responsibility, and certification for sustainable crop production.

The Expertise sharing NGO is one of the older NGOs in the sample, operating in more than 25 countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. They predominately focus on advisory activities and training of local partners to improve income and access to basic services, such as healthcare, education, food, and housing.

For illustrative purpose, the studied NGOs are presented in the following diagram (Figure 3-4) where the NGOs' ages are plotted against their focus areas.

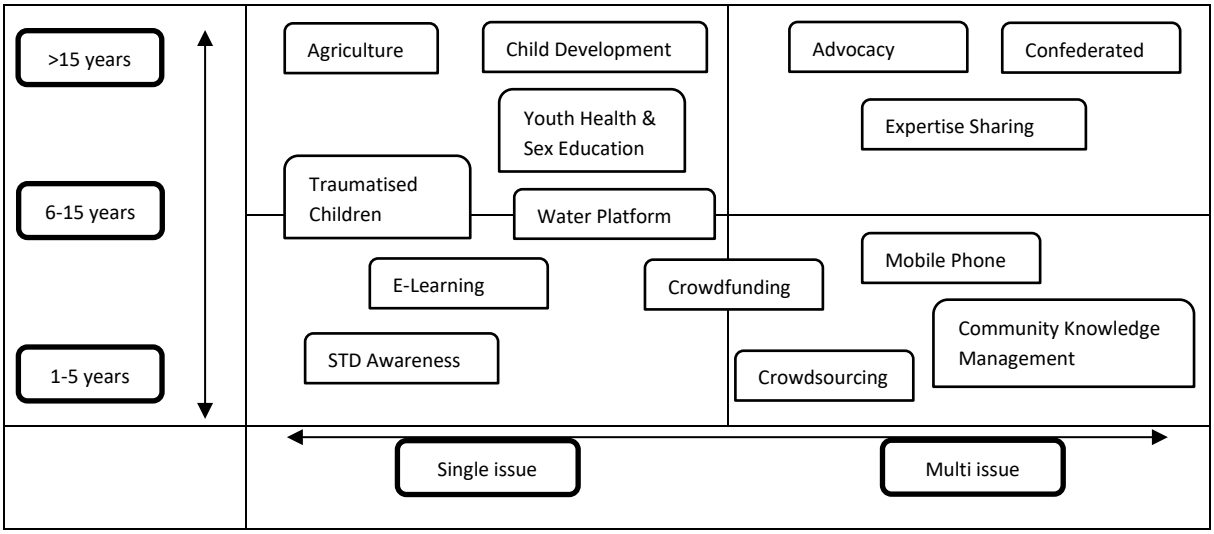


Figure 3-4. NGO's age versus the type of focus area(s).

3.3.2 Theoretical sampling: from pilot data to additional cases

Additional cases for this research were sampled using the principle of theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling refers to the process of choosing new cases to compare with ones that have already been studied. It is a purposeful selection approach based on analytical grounds (Coyne, 1997; Myers, 2008; Urquhart et al., 2010). The data collection (or theoretical sampling) for this research were initially based on the emerging concepts from the pilot study. Urquhart (2012a), building on Glaser and Strauss (1967), sketches four major strategies for theoretical sampling: minimising or maximising the disparities either between groups (e.g. the international development NGOs) or between concepts in the data, as shown in Table 3-5. Urquhart (2012a, p. 64), citing Glaser and Strauss (1967), states that the sampling strategy is driven by two major questions: "what (sub)groups does one turn to next in data collection and for what theoretical purpose?".

Urquhart and Vaast (2012a) contend that a systematic approach of theoretical sampling would be of much aid to social media researchers who face a variety of data sources. Breckenridge (2009 para 13) argues that "theoretical sampling does not aim for full descriptive coverage, but systematically focuses and narrows data collection in the service of theoretical development". The sampling strategy stipulates different ways to construct a theory that becomes broader or deeper. Initial sampling (as in the pilot study) is based on a generally formulated problem, but

as soon as data are collected, and the coding has begun, the researcher is led by theoretical sampling for 'slices of data' in the "directions which seem relevant and work" (Glaser, 1978, p. 46).

Theoretical sampling allows for some flexibility during the research process. Glaser (1978, p. 38) states, *"when the strategies of theoretical sampling are employed, the researcher can make shifts of plan and emphasis early in the research process so that the data gathered reflects what is occurring in the field rather than speculation about what cannot or should have been observed"*.

In grounded theory, sampling is driven by the conceptual emergence and limited by theoretical saturation (Fernández, 2003). Coyne (1997), citing Glaser, argues that theoretical sampling involves some purposeful sampling in the initial stages. "The researcher starts the study with a sample where the phenomenon occurs and then the next stage of data collection is when theoretical sampling begins", she states (Coyne, 1997, p. 625). The researcher starts with a basic knowledge of where to sample, but not necessarily what to sample for, or where it will lead, she reasons. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) notice that sometimes the wrong assumption is made that the cases need to be representative of a population while for theoretical sampling, they are sampled according to the developing theory. The reason for this approach is that this research aims to develop theory and not to test it.

Table 3-5. Options for theoretical sampling. Source: Urquhart (2012a, p. 65; 2019) adapted from Glaser and Strauss (1967)

	Data in category	
Group differences	**Similar**	**Diverse**
Minimised In this study, considering the similarities such as size and activity area	• Verifying usefulness of category; • Generating basic properties; • Establishing a set of conditions for a degree of category • In this study, I will see how saturated some categories are and develop further based on saturation (Urquhart 2013)	• Identifying fundamental differences of category and hypotheses • In this study, I will look at categories that are diverse and try and develop them – based on the level of saturation (Urquhart 2013)
Maximised In this study, examining differences in NGO size and activity area	• Identifying/developing fundamental uniformities of greatest scope • In this study, I will see how saturated some categories are and develop further based on saturation (Urquhart 2013)	• Diversity in data quickly forces dense developing of the property of categories; • Integrating categories and properties; • Delimiting scope of the theory • In this study, I will look at categories that are diverse and try and develop them – based on the level of saturation (Urquhart 2013)

It is important to stress that my choice for where to sample the initial cases, the so-called pilot data, is not steered by randomly selecting cases, but by observing social media activities and websites of organisations to have a selection of organisations that appear to heavily use social media for their activities and resemble or differ from each other in some ways. To further analyse a concept that is found in the initial pilot data collection, one could try to unpack this by looking for similarities and differences across different NGOs (cases), where the NGOs differ from each other (bottom right quadrant in the table), or where the NGOs resemble each other with for example same staff size, organisation age and development activities (top left quadrant).

Additional data is collected until the existing categories are 'saturated', whereby categories and their properties are considered sufficiently dense, and data collection no longer generates new categories (or no more new relations appear (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Urquhart et al., 2010). The 'saturated' concepts are then condensed as much as possible to the relationships between core categories to form a 'grounded' theory. An identified concept may lead to a collection of additional slices of data at the same NGO about this concept. When, in a similar NGO, additional data is collected around this category, we have moved toward a sampling strategy indicated in the bottom left quadrant of Table 3-5. Sampling is theoretically oriented in a grounded theory study: "the sample is selected for the *purpose* of explicating and refining the emerging theory". Breckenridge (2009).

Urquhart (2019) provides guidance – reiterating the advice given by Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 57) – by suggesting "that, at the beginning of generating a substantive theory, differences should be minimised in comparative groups. We can choose to minimise or maximise differences in groups along several dimensions, such as age, country, language, political affiliation, and so on. Maximising those differences helps us theorise on relationships, conditions, patterns, and mechanisms."

If the concept contains different categories that indicate that it is not a core concept, then the diverse concepts may lead to a strategy in the bottom-right quadrant where additional slices of data are collected for the emerging diverse concepts. This sampling strategy is shown in Table 3-5.

This sampling strategy was operationalised in the following way. Sampling after the initial data collection phase follows the sampling strategy of either seeking many variations among the NGOs or minimising those variations.

Another part of the sampling strategy consists of either sampling around similar concepts found in the data or a diverse range of concepts. As shown in the table above "maximising diversity in data quickly forces dense developing of the property of categories" and also helps to delimit the scope of the theory (Urquhart, 2012a, p. 65).

The initial data was collected from NGOs that were selected because of their active use of social media for development activities. This selection was based on observing their online activities on social media, combined with desk research and consultation of some development practitioners. When inspecting the characteristics of the initial cases, a distinction could be made between NGOs that are active on one particular focus area and those who are engaged with multiple developmental areas. The pilot cases were mostly concerned with multiple issues.

This led to a further sampling step of NGOs active with social media based on whether they were active with multiple issues or focused on a single issue in development. Minimising the group differences in sampling compared with the pilot cases led to the choice of the Community Knowledge Management NGO, whereas increasing the difference led to the choice of the single-issue NGO labelled as 'Youth Health & Sex Education NGO'.

The next phase of sampling dealt with the concept of 'NGO values' that were identified through data analysis of the previous cases. The concept of NGO values was chosen because this concept proved to be most promising of the emergent themes during the development of the research proposal of this study which was based on the pilot study data.

Similar values (minimising differences in the concept) in local knowledge use and collaboration partners led to data collection at the Agriculture NGO and the E-Learning NGO, while other values (maximising the difference in concept) led to the selection of the Crowdfunding and the Child Development NGO. In a similar vein, the sampling was based on similar values regarding healthcare led from the Youth Health & Sex Education NGO to the STD education NGO, whereas the Expertise sharing NGO focused on knowledge transfer in a broad range of areas.

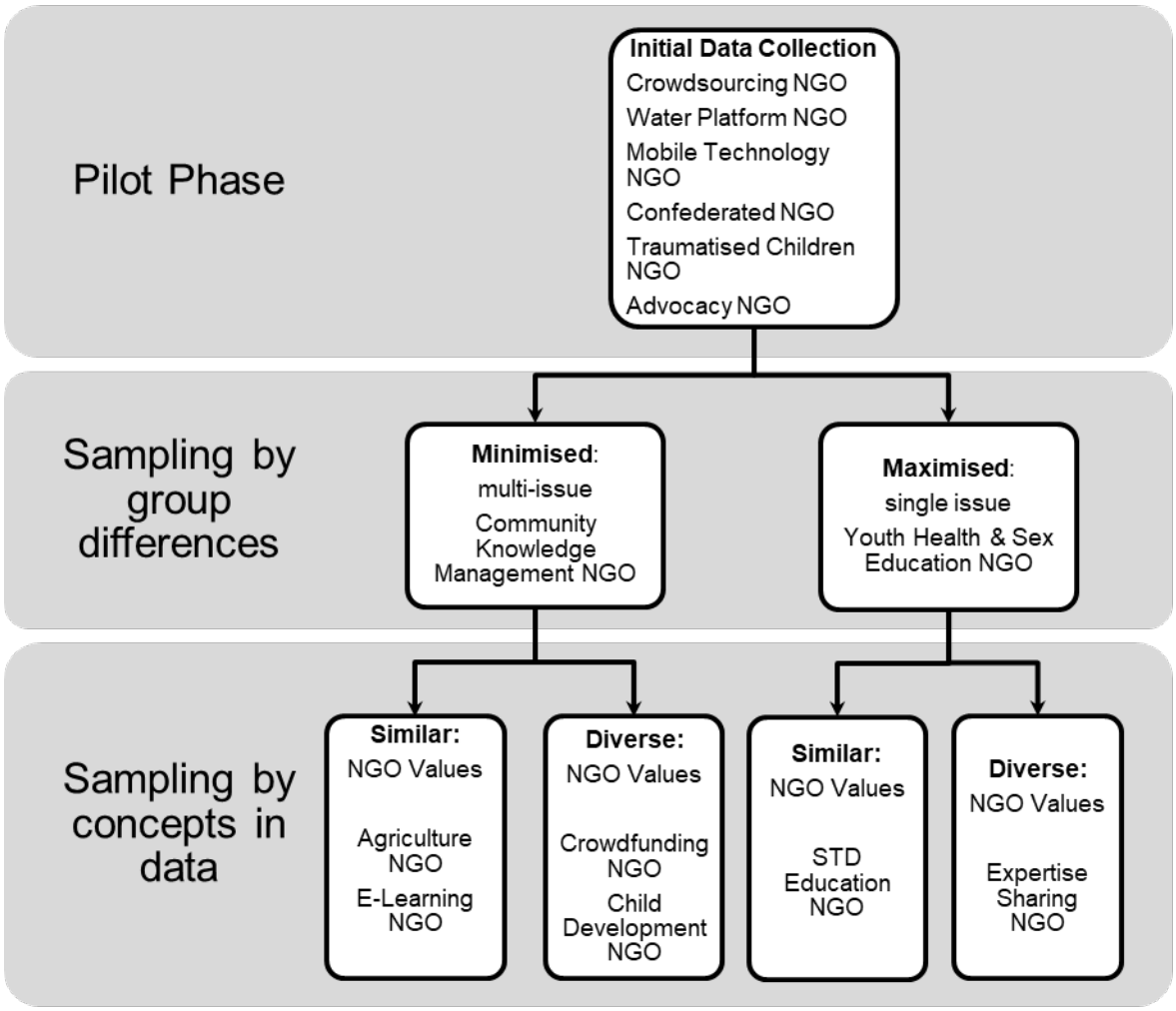


Figure 3-5. Operationalisation of theoretical sampling strategies.

This operationalisation of the theoretical sampling based on group differences and differences in the concepts as visualised in Figure 3-5 may be a methodological contribution to grounded

theory from this PhD study, cf. Urquhart (2012a) and Draucker et al. (2007) who discussed a theoretical sampling guide. In the following section, I discuss the coding procedure.

3.4 Coding and Data Analysis

This section explains the coding process and data analysis for this study. Data analysis proceeded from open coding (identifying categories, properties and dimensions) through selective coding (clustering around categories), to theoretical coding (Trochim, 2006; Urquhart, 2012a). The selective codes (i.e. main themes) were identified after grouping the open codes into (sub) categories and finding close conceptual relationships among the open codes that were clustered into categories, which subsequently were grouped under a single overarching theme. Theoretical coding considers the relationships between these codes (Glaser, 1978). This process is further explained in the next sections.

There are six different coding methods used in grounded theory: open, initial, selective, axial, focused, and theoretical coding (Birks & Mills, 2011, p. 116; Urquhart, 2012a, p. 23; Kenny & Fourie, 2015; Biaggi & Wa-Mbaleka, 2018). Although these methods are used differently in the various grounded theory versions, most of them are characterised by three coding phases (Urquhart, 2012a). The Glaserian coding procedure used for this research starts with open coding, followed by selective coding, and ends with theoretical coding. The discovery of theory is an inductive process with some procedural flexibility and ease of coding (Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 2002b). Rieger (2019) provides an overview of the data analysis and coding procedures applied in various versions of grounded theory from which we focus on the Glaserian grounded theory version (Table 3-6).

Table 3-6. Data analysis procedures in a Glaserian grounded theory (Rieger, 2019).

Grounded theory approach	**(Classic) Glaserian grounded theory** (Glaser, 1978, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967)
Coding stages	Substantive coding has two stages: open and selective coding. 1) Open coding yields descriptions: • Coding through immersion in the data • This sub-phase via emergent categories ends with the discovery of the core category/-ies. 2) Selective coding for interpretation of categories and properties: Selectively coding data that relate to the core category 3) Theoretical coding for the formulation of a theory : • Integrating substantive codes into a grounded theory. • A theoretical coding family may be used.
Analytical tools used during data analysis	Theoretical coding families • Choosing a family of theoretical codes to reintegrate the fractured data • There are at least 18 theoretical coding families, which are flexible sets of codes derived primarily from sociological theory; flexibility of selecting many different paradigms for relating categories.

3.4.1 Open, Selective and Theoretical Coding

Grounded theory relies on giving meaning to data by labelling them. This coding process typically has three levels. Initially, open codes are assigned to data by seeing what it tells you – often line by line or paragraph by paragraph.

Glaser (1978, p. 56) describes open coding as "coding the data every way possible". This leaves the research open in any direction a theory might develop. Urquhart (2012a, p. 24) sees open coding as "the act of attaching initial labels to all available data". Similar open codes are then clustered into categories. Open codes are descriptive in nature while categories capture concepts. The next step is identifying relationships between categories as a step toward theory building. This constructed (substantive) theory is then related to current theories. Böhm (2004, p. 271) provides some practical advice on how to approach open coding: *"As a first step, it is advisable to analyse single short textual passages (line by line). Subsequently larger paragraphs or even whole texts may be coded. In order to avoid simple paraphrasing, the following 'theory generating' questions are asked of the text."* For open coding, he suggests interrogating the text on various questions as shown in Table 3-7.

Table 3-7. Suggestions for 'theory generating' questions for open coding (Böhm, 2004)

Suggestions for 'theory generating' questions for open coding
• What? What is at issue here? What phenomenon is being addressed? • Who? What persons or actors are involved? What roles do they play? How do they interact? • How? What aspects of the phenomenon are addressed (or not addressed)? • When? How long? Where? How much? How strong? • Why? What reasons are given or may be deduced? • For what reason? With what intention, and for what purpose? • By what means? What methods, tactics and strategies are used to achieve the goal?

Urquhart and Fernández (2013) emphasise the flexibility the researcher has in the use of analytical tools such as the coding families, stating the researcher should be truthful as to what the analysis of the data suggests, instead of forcing the data into a preconceived analytical framework.

To illustrate open coding for this research, the following table presents fragments from some interview transcripts and the open codes assigned to them (Table 3-8). Sometimes an 'in vivo' code was applied as a label, which means a word or short phrase is taken from the data is being used as a code to assign a label to a section of data.

Where the open codes result in descriptions, the next step of selective coding results in identifying the categories that are the most important for the research problem (Glaser, 1978; Urquhart & Fernández, 2013). Selective coding results in clustering around emergent categories.

To ensure robust data analysis, the coding and analysis were regularly discussed and evaluated at the bi- or tri-monthly group meetings with the supervisory team, and in the final stage of the PhD study even bi-weekly with the Director of Studies who directly supervised this study.

The process of open coding was the most time-intensive for the first six cases because that period also involved learning to code. In fact, the pilot data was recoded at least six times, which helped me to get a replicable approach for the other cases. I started by coding one case, then the next. After the second case, the first case was revised to check if assigned open codes were consistent with the ones assigned to the data in the second case. This procedure was repeated across the cases. Deviations in the wording of open coding were not seen as an issue because on a higher level of abstraction, and the open codes were grouped into categories during selective coding which captured the meaning of all those codes. Initially, pilot data were manually coded to get accustomed to coding. Afterwards, qualitative data analysis software NVivo was adopted to facilitate data management and analysis of all of the data (including interview transcripts, reports and Internet documents).

Table 3-8. Excerpt from interview transcripts with open codes.

Excerpt from interview transcripts	Open code
The combination of knowledge, fundraising and reporting I have nowhere seen before.	Integrating social media activities in new configurations
Social media is our most important asset, so we have one person fulltime on social media	Social media staffing
I create a weekly dashboard of all our [ed. social media] channels, what happens there. We keep track of the types and numbers of interaction.	Analysing social media
"We monitor social media to see what is said about the organisation. There is not a real crisis team plan, but we can respond	Social media monitoring (webcare)
We talk differently to Dutch people than for example East-Africans	Tone of voice
People in developing countries see a picture of a poor person as a 'victim'. Therefore, we use the image of 'local hero' instead...	Local hero (in vivo code), positive message
…putting the message [ed. on an online platform,] where the people are being much more efficient and save us money	Time and money-saving
A lot of fake Facebook groups have arisen on Facebook using the organisation's logo.	Reputation damage

This process of within-case comparison and cross-case comparison was conducted during the whole data analysis. The process of coding open codes and categories involved consistency checks within one case and across cases by closely examining the text fragments that had the same code assigned. If needed, text fragments were assigned other codes, or codes were renamed. This was repeated several times during this study.

The meanings of the categories and to some extent, the open codes were noted and, if needed, revised during the process of coding. The older meanings were not deleted but kept as remark notes with a timestamp in the qualitative data analysis software NVivo under "node properties". Assigning meaning felt like an ad-hoc non-systematic process, where ideas, thoughts or even 'gut-feeling' were written in a notebook or with digital note-taking software, often at moments when I was not actively engaged in the research (before sleeping, when waking up, under the shower et cetera). Those notes did not have not a fixed structure, other than keeping track of the date, but were expressions of ideas or thoughts, often with a diagram. In retrospect, the memoing – purposefully promoted by my director of studies – was key for getting a more in-depth understanding of the meaning of the categories and identifying core categories and their relationships. Identifying the sub-categories often came after what I call visually sorting and

grouping the codes within one category. This activity was supported by the software, although the first times I did this manually, writing up memos in a notebook.

Selective coding is considered the second step after open coding, in which a category is chosen to be the core category, and all other categories are related to that category. Urquhart describes this as “a process of scaling up your codes into those categories that are important for your research problem” Urquhart (2012a, p. 49).

After this selective coding around emergent categories, the last phase of the coding process for theory building is the identification of one or more core categories. Glaser (1978) underscores the importance of the core category for grounded theory, namely the generation of theory occurs around a core category. Goulding (2002, p. 88) summarises the importance as follows:

> “A core category pulls together all the strands in order to offer an explanation of the behaviour under study. It has theoretical significance, and its development should be traceable back through the data. This is usually when the theory is written up and integrated with existing theories to show relevance and a new perspective. (…) According to Glaser (1978), a core category is a main theme which sums up a pattern of behaviour. It is the substance of what is going on in the data.”

Three core categories, based on selective codes, emerged from the analysis. The selective codes, which were the basis for the three core categories, were identified after grouping the open codes into (sub) categories and finding close conceptual relationships between the open codes. In the remainder of the thesis in the Findings and Discussion chapters, the core categories are labelled as themes.

Glaser (1978) suggests a number of criteria to identify the so-called core category, as shown in Table 3-9 in which I have added some reflections on those criteria in light of this PhD research. From these criteria for identifying the core categories, we move to the theoretical coding phase.

Theoretical coding is the stage where one identifies the relations between the emerged constructs (Glaser, 1978). This is a coding step that relates the substantive categories generated from selective coding to one another, and especially formulates the relationship between the core categories. Often the meaning of the categories and the core categories underlying the theme were revised after careful examination of the coded data and assigned open codes. As a kind of sorting process, the core categories emerged on the surface because of the dominant population of those categories with code data. Furthermore, no new open codes or categories arose when coding the last four interviews indicating saturation of the coding structure.

Glaser encourages grounded theory researchers to develop a broad repertoire of theoretical codes by studying literature in a broad range of disciplines to learn about other theoretical codes. This empowers the researcher to generate theory and keep a conceptual level (Glaser, 2005, p. 11). Thornberg and Charmaz (2014) argue theoretical codes signify underlying logics that could be identified in pre-existing theories, by citing Glaser (1998: 164): “One reads theories in any field and tries to figure out the theoretical models being used. … It makes the researcher sensitive to many codes and how they are used”.

Glaser (2005) argued that theoretical codes were often not clearly mentioned in grounded theory-based papers or dissertations, although often implicit mentioned in terms of range, dimension, or process.

Table 3-9. Criteria to discover the core category based on Glaser (1978) and Goulding (2002), and reflection on their application in this study.

Criteria	Definition	Reflection on this study
Centrality	It must be central and account for a large proportion of behaviour. It "is related to as many other categories and their properties as possible and more than other candidates for the core category It indicates that it accounts for a large portion of the variation in a pattern of behaviour" (Glaser, 1978, p. 95).	Three core categories were identified; in a way, all three showed a central position for their related sub-categories.
Frequent reoccurrence	It must be based on reoccurrence in the data. "By its *frequent reoccurrence* [*sic*] it comes to be seen as a stable pattern and becomes more and more related to other variables" (Glaser, 1978, p. 95).	The three core categories indeed frequently re-occurred. However, the labelling changed various times because of changes due to the addition of open codes and sib-categories.
Longer saturation	A core category takes longer to saturate than other categories/concepts. "It takes more *time to saturate* the core category than other categories" (Glaser, 1978, p. 95).	By its nature as a more abstract category, the core categories took more time to saturate.
Quick connections	It must relate meaningfully to other categories. "It relates meaningfully and easily to other categories. These *connections* need not be forced [*sic*]; rather, their realisation *comes quick* and richly" (Glaser, 1978, p. 95).	Indeed the connection to the core categories was quickly established, but the core categories have changed in names and descriptions multiple times because it took time to clearly identify the core concept of each.
Grabbing Implication for formal theory	It should have clear implications for the development of formal theory. "A core category in a substantive study has *clear and grabbing implication for formal theory*" (Glaser, 1978, p. 95).	The three core categories, based on NGO values, views on social media and use of social media, can be extended to a context outside international development for the creation of a formal theory.
Carry through	The theoretical analysis should be based on the core category. "It does not lead to dead ends in the theory nor leave the analyst high and dry, rather it gets him *through* the analyses of the processes he is working on, by its relevance and explanatory power" (Glaser, 1978, p. 96).	The identified core categories were used for further inspection of the extant literature and relate the developed substantive theory to the literature.
Variable and modifiable	It should be highly variable and modifiable. "Its frequent relations to other categories makes [*sic*] it highly dependently variable in degree, dimension and type. Conditions vary it easily. It is readily modifiable through these dependent variations" (Glaser, 1978, p. 96).	The core categories were adjusted multiple times because of the continuous assigning and restructuring of the underlying open codes and selective codes.
Theoretical code	"The core category can be *any kind of theoretical code*: a process, a condition, two dimensions, a consequence, and so forth." (Glaser, 1978, p. 96).	Formulating the essence of the core categories took some time, but this statement by Glaser helped to condense their descriptions.

Hernandez (2009) summarises theoretical coding as the stage in which a theoretically sensitive researcher analyses the data, and theoretical codes emerge from the data through

the combined activities of coding, memoing and sorting memos and through developing conceptual maps of the substantive codes.

Lastly, Urquhart (2012a) provides an excellent overview of coding families that can be applied, ranging from the 6 C's (Causes, Contexts, Contingencies, Consequences, Covariances and Conditions), to the Causal family, including the various coding families provided by Glaser (1978) and others. For this study, this kind of suggestions provided helpful guidance for the process of coding but was loosely followed, keeping a flexible Glaserian coding approach.

3.4.2 Constant Comparison, writing memos, and theoretical saturation

Constant comparison is "the process of constantly comparing instances of data that you have labelled as a particular category with other instances of data, to see if these categories fit and are workable" (Urquhart, 2001). If the instances fill the categories and no new categories arise, we have reached what is called theoretical saturation (Strauss, 1987). The data demonstrates there is a good spread across all the cases, and the categories are appropriately saturated. The grounded theory method coding, in which a low-level coding approach was followed, i.e. a word or sentence level for coding, provides insights with close ties to the data. Furthermore, *"deciding on which categories are 'core' categories and selectively coding until saturation is reached also provides a comprehensive theory that is well-grounded in the data"* (Urquhart et al., 2010)(Urquhart et al., 2010, p. 372). Thus, having a good chain of evidence underpins a good robust study.

Writing memos played a vital role in developing ideas and deeper analytical understanding of the data. Memoing consists of writing up ideas about concepts, categories, and the relationships among them, that occur during the analysis, and any other reflection related to theorising the data or interpretations of the literature or theories.

Charmaz (2006, p. 71) sees memo-writing as an essential step in the grounded theory method because it stimulates analysis of the data early in the research:

> "Memos chart, record, and detail a major analytic phase of our journey. We start by writing about our codes and data and move upward to theoretical categories and keep writing memos throughout the research process. Writing memos expedites your analytic work and accelerates your productivity".

Through my experience, I agree with Charmaz's statement: "Through conversing with yourself while memo-writing, new ideas and insights arise during the act of writing" (2006, p. 71). It literally acts as a researcher's diary where thoughts and ideas are trusted to paper. The mere act of sitting and putting your thoughts and ideas on paper, even though it seems unstructured or unrelated at first sight helps to literally see "suddenly revealing" structures or relationships or abstractions that you are making as a researcher during the research.

3.4.3 Grounded theory – Substantive and Formal Theory Building

As mentioned earlier in section 3.2.1, the grounded theory method is about theory building. The scope of the theory is differentiated in its level of generality, where a substantive theory is "developed for a substantive, or empirical area of sociological inquiry", and a formal theory is "developed for a formal, or conceptual area of sociological inquiry" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.

32). As Urquhart (2019, p. 93) points out, when progressing from substantive theory to formal theory "gradually the scope is increased, by different contexts and boundary conditions, represented by different substantive cases". She argues that to create a theory, as a start, a bounded context is required where some nuclear concepts are generated. Those concepts may not be empirically rooted but based on the researcher's premonitions (Urquhart et al., 2010). Here the bounded context is that of the NGO and the substantive area the field of international development.

3.5 Research Evaluation Principles

Altheide and Johnson (1994) and Lincoln and Guba (2000) argue that a qualitative (interpretive) research cannot be judged on the positivist notion of validity, because assumptionless research is not possible. Alternative criteria should be considered instead of objectivity, reliability, internal validity, and external validity, which are applied in a positivist study. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2017), in an interpretive paradigm based research, the following evaluation principles can be applied: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Table 3-10 presents these quality and rigour evaluation criteria and some suggestions to improve the quality and rigour of that particular principle.

Table 3-10. Quality and rigour evaluation principles for an interpretive theory-building study. Based on Gasson (2004) and Sikolia et al. (2013).

Issue of Concern	Interpretive Worldview Principle	Some Suggested Measures To Improve the principle
Representativeness of findings	**Credibility**: conclusions depend on subjects and conditions of the study, rather than the researcher.	Corroboration of data (data from interviews, observations, documents, etc.) (Bowen, 2009). Thick descriptions of data of core categories and sufficiency of data assessment or saturation, cf. Urquhart (1999). Theoretical sampling (Breckenridge, 2009). Use of participant words in the emerging theory.
Reproducibility of findings	**Dependability**/Auditability: the study process is consistent and reasonably stable over time and between researchers.	Presentation of detailed audit trail (Bowen, 2009).
Rigour of method	**Internal consistency:** the research findings are credible and consistent, to the people we study and to our readers. For authenticity, our findings should be related to significant elements in the research context/situation.	Presentation of detailed audit trail. Quality of inferences refers to mapping out a logical chain of evidence that allows an external reviewer to follow the inferences made from the raw data to the final case study analysis and drawn conclusions (Avenier & Thomas, 2015, p. 14).
Generalisability of findings.	**Transferability**: how far can the findings/conclusions be transferred to other contexts, and how do they help to derive useful theories?	"Thick descriptions" of the research, the participants, methodology, interpretation of results and emerging theory (Walsham, 1995).

These principles are useful to evaluate the overall research quality of an interpretive study (see section 8.3).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

In carrying out this research, the ethical guidelines of the Manchester Metropolitan University were followed. Before each interview, a participant information sheet and consent form explaining the research project, including contact information of the researcher as well the Director of Studies were given. After consent was given by the interviewees and audio recording was approved the interview was initiated, starting with the researcher stating on the recording the aim of the study, reconfirming the anonymisation of the data, the right to see transcripts or to retract from this study. Myers and Newman (2007a) identify three areas that are important for researchers to maintain ethical standards when conducting interviews for qualitative research. These are summarised in the next table.

Table 3-11. Ethical considerations.

Ethical standards aspect, source: Myers and Newman (2007b)	**How applied in this study**
(A) Permissions – obtaining ethics approval from the appropriate ethics committees, obtaining permission from the interviewee	Before the study, ethics checklist was approved. Each interview was initiated after obtaining consent from the interviewee and stating the right of retraction.
(B) Respect – treating people with respect (before, during, and after the interview), respecting their time, respecting their position within the organisation, respecting their knowledge.	Interviewees were often approached in person during conferences or other events to build trust. Afterwards, interview dates were scheduled. Sometimes other interviewees joined who were notified about the research by the initial contacts. During the interview, interviewees were thanked for the time they had granted, and questions were attuned to the position they had in the NGO and the knowledge they had. Admittedly this led in half of the interviews to exceeding the estimated time for the interviews, which in all cases seemed not to bother the interviewees.
(C) Fulfilling commitments to individuals and organisations. This may involve: ▪ Keeping confidences, keeping transcripts/records confidential and secure. ▪ Presenting findings and results – it may be advisable sometimes to provide early feedback to subjects and organisations and to check with them about factual matters if needed.	Both the identity of the interviewees as well of the NGOs were anonymised. Aliases have been used for the NGOs. Audio files were stored in cloud storage and backed up in another cloud storage and the transcripts – in which the NGO's and interviewee's identity were anonymised- were shown to interviewees for inspection. No corrections were requested. Early findings of the study were shared with the interviewees.

3.7 **Methodology chapter summary**

The following table summarises the research design used for this study.

Table 3-12. A research design overview

Research aspect/activity	Position	Reference
Philosophical perspective	Interpretive	(Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991a; Hirschheim, 2010) Walsham (1993)
Research strategy	Multiple Case study	Eisenhardt (1989) Urquhart (2012a)
Research method	Grounded theory method	Urquhart (2013) Urquhart (2012a)
Research design goals	Exploration, Theorisation, Corroboration	Dey (1993), Urquhart (2013)
Data collection strategy	Theoretical sampling	Urquhart (2012a, p. 65; 2019) adapted from Glaser and Strauss (1967) Urquhart (2013) Urquhart (2019)
Data collection methods	Semi-structured interview and secondary reports	Myers & Newman (2007a) Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007)
Data analysis approach	Glaserian GT coding; three stages of open, selective, and theoretical coding	Glaser (1978) Goulding (2002) Böhm (2004) Urquhart (2013)
Research Evaluation & Ethical considerations	Evaluation principles: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Ethical standards	Denzin and Lincoln (2017) Myers and Newman (2007b)
Theoretical lenses applied for comparing substantive theory developed in this study (further discussed in section 8.4)	Structuration Theory. Affordance theory; Communication for development;	Orlikowski (2007) Van Osch and Coursaris (2013) Treem and Leonardi (2012) Sein et al. (2018) Tacchi and Lennie (2014)

After this elaboration on the methodology of this PhD research, the findings are presented in three chapters. Chapters four to six report the three emergent themes (core categories) of this study.

4 Findings Theme: NGO Enacting Values in Development

This is the first of three chapters presenting the findings from the development NGOs that were researched for this study. Each findings chapter shows what has been found for one of the three research sub-questions. The chapters' names represent the three main themes based on the three core categories that emerged from the data: NGO Enacting Values in Development, NGO's Views on Social Media Use, and NGO's Use of Social Media. This chapter presents the findings for the research sub-question: What organisational values steer the development activities of the NGO? This has led to the core category **NGO Enacting Values in Development** in this chapter.

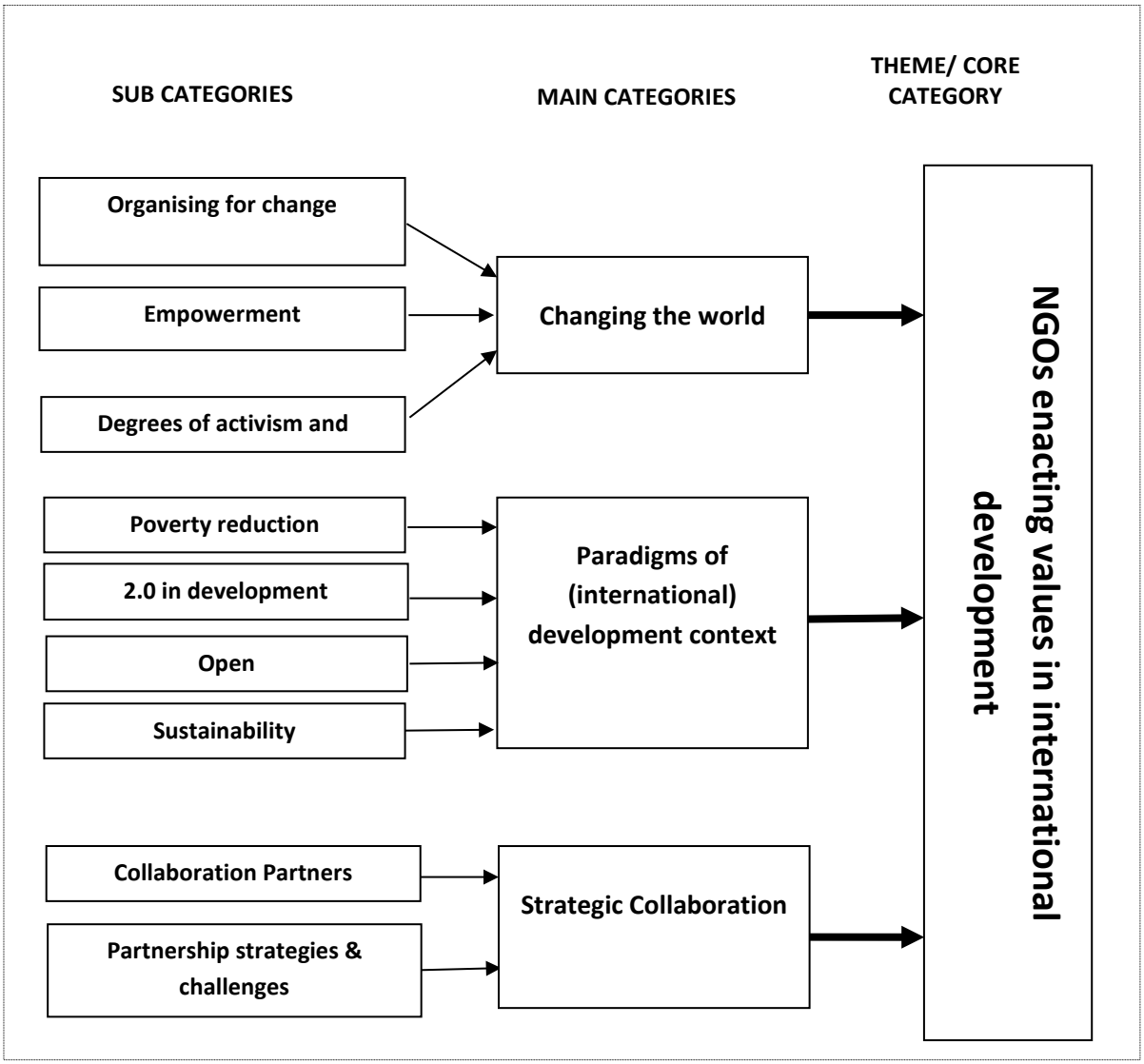


Figure 4-1. Relationships of Categories to Theme/Core Category NGO Enacting Values in Development.

This theme (or core category) is about the organisation's values enacted in the context of international development. Based on the open codes and the categories, the enacting values are unpacked in the organisational mind-set, the approach taken towards development, and lastly the cooperative aspects for which social media play a role for the studied development NGOs. The findings from this theme are categorised in the following three categories:

Changing the world, Ideological trends of (international) development, and Strategic Collaboration. Each category is discussed, and their relationship with the theme is explored.

An overview of the chain of evidence that led to the theme of this chapter and its subcategories is included in Appendix A. The chapter presents the three main categories of the theme NGO Enacting Values in Development, as illustrated in Figure 4-1. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings for this theme.

4.1 Changing the world

The category **Changing the world** is about NGO's organisational identity and internal strategy for achieving the goal of changing the world in the context of international development. Three subcategories are identified with this category: degrees of activism and politics, organising for change, and empowerment.

4.1.1 Organising for change

This subcategory relates to the NGOs' internal activities and the structuring of the organisation to achieve their development agenda. The complexity of poverty and how development programmes can address this is the reason that NGOs are using methods to analyse and understand this complicated matter. A method that has become popular among at least half of the sampled NGOs during the last year of the data collection for this research is the Theory of Change. The approach is participatory.

> *"The process of developing a Theory of Change is participatory so that different perspectives are taken on board, and co-ownership of the strategies, expected outcomes and impact-focus are generated."* (development practitioners, Water Platform NGO)

This participatory method links the NGO's strategy and its development programme activities and considers the assumptions on a development issue and the forecasted outcomes and changes that impact the beneficiaries.

> *"A Theory of Change can be defined as a set of explicit assumptions about what action is required to solve the problem and why the problem will respond to this action. A clear view of the assumed causes of the problem and the underlying generative mechanisms, allows us to identify how our development programme aims to intervene to address the problem. This information is essential to improve existing or future programmes."* (report, Advocacy NGO)

From the change-related subject, we move toward the change to integrate social media in the following; one of the NGOs argued that social media was integrated into the fabric of the organisation:

> *"Social media is completely woven into the [ed. name of the NGO]. For me, it is tough to separate that from the rest of the organisation. For me, it is not choosing between social media or else."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The Water Platform NGO sees its operational activities organised around the strength of social media where it can be expanded and replicated.

> *"I think the power of social media…If something works, it can become huge. (…) We are a type of facilitator for other partners where we can raise money for their projects and make the projects more transparent. You are creating a service that people actually can use."* (management professional, Water Platform GO)

Another NGO sees the alignment of the use of social media with its core activities.

> *"The [NGO's name] engages young people through the use of social media marketing, collaborates with existing NGOs, and draws on music and dance in combination with life skills education through an entertainment-education strategy for HIV prevention."* (communications professional, Health and Sex education NGO)

Some NGOs argue that the mix of people of various ages and backgrounds may be of aid for increasing (social media) communication.

> *"The mixture of the people in the NGO is a success factor to help communicate and link to others: Yes. sometimes it makes life a bit more difficult."* (development practitioner, E-learning NGO)

Some other NGOs acknowledge that some of their staff is not ready yet for social media communication, lacking the skills or knowledge of those platforms.

> *"Not everyone is capable of getting grips with social media."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

They do expect a rise in social media literacy among staff.

> *"Shortly, we will expect from the new staff that they know social media to use.",* said a respondent, while another added: *"The big question is not if they know social media, but what they will do with it."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

Many of the studied NGOs mentioned a *learning culture* in their organisation. Their learning experiences came from activities with social media for their development projects, as shown in these examples.

> *"Our projects, what we do is not academic research, but we are learning from experiences, and all the time, new technologies arise…a continuous process. All the time, new tech, you have to stay up-to-date all the time."* (management professional, E-learning NGO)

> "*We closely monitored the progress of the program to test whether our hypotheses were true or false. We wanted to learn about crowdfunding as a viable alternative for financing social or environmental projects in Africa, and the success factors needed to facilitate effective local crowdfunding campaigns linked to a matching fund."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The Crowdsourcing NGO stated their social media strategy developed alongside their organisational development.

> *"Our strategy is being transparent and that it should contribute to the larger goals of the organisation. [name of the NGO] is completely integrated with social media, we*

grew together to the current level." (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The respondent from the Child Development NGO illustrates this by their approach of learning and replication, in which they start in one country by sending out a project manager and learn from the experiences to scale out.

> *"She has a bit of the pioneering role. The main part of the project is to develop the capacity of [ed. the local branch of the NGO in a country in Asia] to take part in the [ed. the online platform of the NGO] and while she does this, she designs a model for [ed. local branches of the NGO in] neighbouring countries."* (development practitioner, Child Development NGO)

The *strategic focus area* of the NGOs shows a single-theme versus multi-theme approach. 'Theme' in this context refers to the development area covered by the NGO's activities. The NGOs for this research were (theoretically) sampled in such a manner that both those focusing on one theme (e.g. education) and those active in a variety of areas ranging from education to agriculture et cetera, were studied. Some NGOs asserted that there is a clear relationship between their NGO's theme(s) and social media communications:

> *"You need to embrace the principles of social media as an organisation. Without that, you will not see the benefits, for example, for more commercial or fundraising purposes, which you will not achieve otherwise. Then it becomes just another gimmick. An interesting phenomenon is that by deploying social media suddenly, at least potentially, your vision comes true. You enable people, emancipation, that sort of things. You notice that things can be done. Alternatively, they surpass us; they come up with all kinds of initiatives where we had not thought of ourselves."* (development practitioner, Child Development NGO)

Some NGOs point out that they are about to diversify from their original focus area while applying social media tools as they have done for their primary focus area. It may be that this NGO drew lessons from their experience with social media use for their primary activities and now seeks to expand these to adjacent activities made possible with social media.

> *"There is much knowledge about solutions that work in developing countries (…), but that knowledge is tough to find for local parties. Moreover, here is our idea emerged for a kind of Wikipedia for sharing knowledge on water and sanitation. We focus on the local developing countries that need practical stuff. (…) We only do things related to water now, but we are looking ahead for the next five years to do other things as well. Economic development, aids, education that sort of things."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

Next, to shift focus areas, the operational structure of the NGO reflects specific ideological values and strategic goals. In this particular example, the NGO envisions a future operating model in which the North-South inequality of development activities is somewhat compensated with more control by the Southern stakeholder, including local branches of the NGO.

> *"in its recent vision document [ed. name of the NGO] presented the perspective of a decentralised organisation with a strong degree of ownership in the South."* (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO)

Notably, the newer NGOs studied for this research have a somewhat non-traditional origin. They were often set up by a couple of individuals with some experience in the field of international development triggered by a mixture of idealism, pragmatism, focussing on a specific development goal, and their entrepreneurial background.

> *"The idea [for the NGO] already came in 2001 when you had the advent of the Internet for everyday users. He noticed that the current NGOs were not able to solve all the problems in the world since they have not the required capacity. Plus the fact that a lot of the donors of those organisations like to do more than giving a tenner a month to a cause whereas the NGOs were not ready for having the donors play a role [ed. in the actual development activities on the ground]. The first site went live in 2002.*
>
> *Moreover, the whole principle had yet to be tested because not many online communities existed then. In 2005 the first results were visible, and we had garnered a core group of around 5000 volunteers"* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

Some of these newer NGOs aim at keeping their paid staff size small (they do have volunteers involved in their activities).

Many NGOs see an influx of people with a non-international-development-or-aid background, especially the new ones. The use of new technologies demands skilled staff with the required expertise. As the NGOs do not already have these, they hire new staff; many of these have a non-humanitarian/development background. Some respondents argue this new mixture in the staff or collaboration partners is a strength, bringing with them new ways of thinking.

> *"The strength is in the inclusion of people from outside your [ed. development] sector. (…) From that perspective, we started to think, how can it be improved? We said: let us forget everything that is already being done. Let us assume we have to start all over again. How would you then organise?"* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

All of the NGOs had their main office in the Netherlands, but operational activities were mainly carried out in the countries in which they were running development projects. That also included the IT development department of some NGOs like the Water Platform, e-Learning and the Mobile Technology NGO. The organisation chart of the larger organisations showed more management layers and departments where, in general terms, the smaller NGOs had expectedly fewer management layers.

A quarter of the interviewed NGOs, particularly the younger organisations, indicated their aim to reduce or even wholly end their reliance on governmental grants and subsidies for their development project activities. One of these NGOs argued that despite being more demand-driven (e.g. working for other NGOs or local governments) in their development strategy, they would keep anticipating future demand.

> *"Sometimes, we see opportunities for which demand exists but has not been asked yet, and then we start developing itself. We see that in the emerging economies, more young people have access to phones than to computers, and therefore we independently develop sex education via mobile phones."* (management professional, E-Learning NGO)

A couple of the younger NGOs and middle-aged NGOs of our sample have organised their operations in such a way that they run like a *social enterprise*, being less dependent on government subsidies.

> *"The Mobile Technology NGO offers mobile services to organisations that want to convey information or are looking for information. The mobile phone is the medium for this. The Mobile Technology NGO from the beginning had a business model. We are being hired by NGOs, businesses and governments to reach specific target groups in developing countries. The organisation is no partner in the MFS-subsidies [ed. Dutch government's international aid funding scheme], but works as sub-contractor for one of the alliances of development NGOs."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The Crowdsourcing NGO show business-like activities in the area of channelling growth in philanthropy with their digital platform services targeted at companies. The Water Platform NGO is active with providing business services with their platform services for data management and monitoring and evaluation of projects aiming at larger companies, donors and NGOs and helping organisations with data aggregation and analysis for accountability reporting to institutional donors. The Mobile Technology NGO is active in the area of participation in offering mobile survey services to NGOs and companies. The Health and Sex Education NGO offers basic services in health information and sex education. The E-learning NGO established e-learning content and services in cooperation with local NGOs and educational institutions.

An example of how an NGO's strategy changed while maintaining the same mission and vision is illustrated by this. The NGO decided to focus on its core activity with its platform tailored to the need for crowdsourcing campaigners.

> *"Exactly a year ago, we have chosen a radical new strategy. Our mission, enable people to achieve good initiatives for a better world, has remained the same, but our strategy on how to achieve this has changed. Our strategy was first to get as many people as possible to find a good project and then we were looking for as many people as possible that would contribute their knowledge, time or money to donate. You have to pull very hard on both groups to activate them. We have now decided to fully focus on the crowdfunding campaigner, in other words: those who want to collect money or skills online – crowdfunding (money) and crowdsourcing (knowledge). The user of our platform is central; we facilitate the campaigners to mobilise people in their environment."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Another change-related subject in the findings is the following. The complexity of developmental issues and how development programmes can address these is the reason that NGOs are using methods to analyse them. Among at least half of the sampled NGOs Theory of Change has become popular.

> *"The process of developing a Theory of Change is participatory so that different perspectives are taken on board, and co-ownership of the strategies, expected outcomes and impact-focus are generated."* (development practitioners, Water Platform NGO)

This participatory method links the NGO's strategy and its development programme activities and considers the assumptions on a development issue and the forecasted outcomes and changes that impact the beneficiaries.

4.1.2 Empowerment

NGOs realised that making the connection between people in the Global North and South is beneficial to their development activities as an understanding of their work increases. Many NGOs have incorporated a statement on how they aim to achieve empowerment for local communities, or specific groups such as women. *"Women give life. When we empower them, we empower an entire generation"* is an exemplary slogan encountered in one of the NGOs' social media communication.

Making people visible is enhanced using, for example, blogs. The support for local initiatives is seen as instrumental to **empowerment**. Almost all NGOs refer to empowerment in their organisation's objectives, resulting in initiatives by the local (aid receiving) communities. The following quotation illustrates how some NGOs dealt with empowerment.

> *"The [ed. name of the NGO] method has fostered empowerment, where the local community is in charge. Through the NGO's platform, online volunteers transfer knowledge. (…) The local community and its representatives receive new solutions."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

Empowerment also includes the potential for supporters to have the ability to choose what they wish to support.

> *"I think it is a trend that people show what they do and want. People want to have more control over what they support, to be more involved. You need to anticipate this as an NGO. There is more transparency and people are looking for more experience and more dialogue. The time of just broadcasting is over."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Other NGOs do not focus solely on entrepreneurial projects to empower, but for example, on the younger generations in the Global South.

> *"The perspectives of the young people themselves are crucial: how do they feel empowered, (…) Do they empower others? Do they communicate the message to their peers or any other people in their social environment?"* (communications professional, Health and Sex Education NGO)

They argue they are doing this by:

> *"We try to be less steering, less top-down, to say what young people need to do. For example, young people in Zambia look at young people in Russia and think they do it like this so that we can do it too. Thus they can learn from each other and so that it is not all via us. The aim is for youth to feel united by one cause of youth from other countries. Social media is an excellent agent for this.."* (communications professional, Health and Sex Education NGO)

This strategic empowerment potential is identified by many NGOs, as illustrated by the following quotations.

> *"What I think is an interesting phenomenon is that by deploying social media suddenly, at least potentially, your vision comes true. You enable the empowerment idea, emancipation, that sort of things. Moreover, at some point, you notice this can be achieved, or they surpass us, or they come up with all sorts of initiatives where we had not thought of."* (development practitioner, Child Development NGO)

> *"Many NGOs are sitting on tonnes of purposeful content that can spark positive change within various communities if shared strategically across social platforms. The Internet is underutilised by many NGOs sitting on tonnes of information that can empower."* (development practitioner, advocacy NGO)

Furthermore, empowerment also reflects a nuanced image of development aid and the so-called beneficiaries or aid receiving parties. One of the NGOs expressed the pride they took in receiving merits for a campaign they had run, being awarded a prize.

> *"[ed. name of the awarding organisation] honours organisations that create campaigns that tell a nuanced and honest story, give people a voice, and do not create unrealistic expectations or use clichéd images."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

4.1.3 Degrees of activism and politics

The subcategory **Degrees of activism and politics** deals with both the NGO's vision on *politicising development* as well as the internal political dynamics (*organisational politics*) within the NGO, as well as various forms of *activism*. An example of *politicising development* is:

> *"The NGO was challenged to support progressive groups and liberation movements. This led to tensions in the organisation, with a struggle between the 'charity wing' and the 'political wing'. The NGO solved this tension by opting for a two-track funding policy: it continued with traditional aid and development projects, but also started to set up relationships with more progressive organisations."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

For some NGOs development seems to include not only allegedly political neutral activities for human development, but may touch socio-economic ideologies for some activities. This was observed among the elder NGOs with multi-theme approaches in their activities (Advocacy NGO and Confederated NGO), as well among the single-theme NGOs that are involved with activities where a political component is observed (Youth Health & Sex Education NGO, STD Awareness NGO, and E-learning NGO) as shown in Figure 4-2. For example, activities that involve building up of democratic structures, including the voices of groups that had no voice before, gender equality, or sexual reproduction rights and sex education, may lead to politicising development activities by the NGO. Notably, respondents reported that this deviation from the traditional development and aid activities is sometimes met with internal resistance as older NGOs have a long-standing history of focusing on those traditional tasks, and development workers got accustomed to them. By associating with causes such as supporting progressive groups and movements struggling for freedom, the political aspect brings in a different approach to changing the world. The Advocacy NGO presents itself as more involved with politicising development, while the Confederated NGO seems to have devised a two-track approach for dealing with development activities that are either political or non-political by nature.

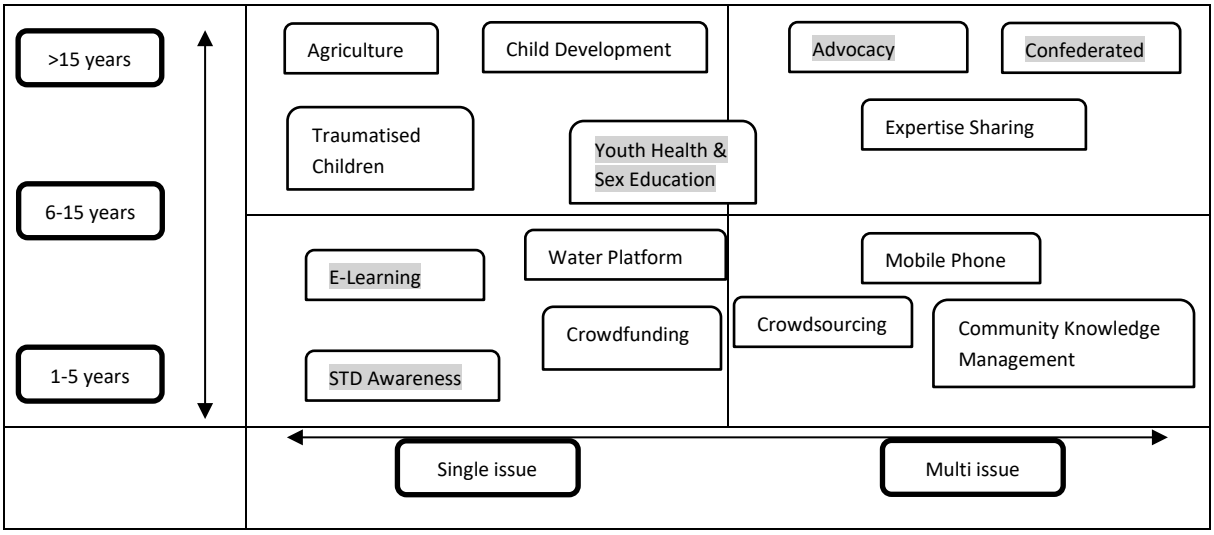


Figure 4-2. NGOs where politicising development occurred (grey highlighted).

Some NGOs try not to politicise development as this may hinder their activities and instead take an alleged neutral stance. The Traumatised Children NGO operates in war-torn areas and seeks to be able to collaborate with all parties. One could argue that actively taking a neutral stance in their development activities is the result of the politicisation of development.

In recent years the same NGO has changed its policy by allocating more resources, although they are aware of the uncertainty of a positive developmental outcome of such activities. So this politicisation of development not only meant a policy change but directly translated into efforts into the fields of democracy and civic participation.

> *"Our lobby and advocacy team has responded to developments such as the Arab Spring by freeing up more capacity to work on civil society space and human rights, as the Arab Spring is a hopeful example of civic driven change. On the other hand, it is far from sure that developments will have a positive outcome. While public awareness and demands are increasing, the repression of civil society organisations is growing."* (report by Confederated NGO)

The Confederated NGO also made clear the organisation was allocating more capacity to work on human rights issues and the rights of the marginalised while responding to the Arab Spring, the anti-government uprisings and protests that spread across the Middle East from 2010 to 2012. The backlash by the governments in the countries where the Arab Spring occurred could result in the closing down of local NGOs that this NGO collaborates with, and reverse the work done on gender equality and the rights of the marginalised. Part of the strategy was the use of social media and a digital platform, in collaboration with local and other Dutch development NGOs, to collect and inform on democratisation news obtained via partners in the region, and to link women activists from different Arab countries to exchange experiences and knowledge. The NGOs are aware of the risks involved with this work, particularly for their local partners.

For example, the Advocacy NGO has created guidelines it uses among their partner organisations on how to conduct digital activism within the scope of the organisational goals.

> *"Digital activism components should point toward a bigger picture that an NGO is pursuing. Every action should aim at a long-term goal in addition to a short-term objective. That is why it is essential to frame social media within the context of an*

organisation's broader goals and to be able to diligently communicate the vision, mission and goals of the organisation using social media." (report by Advocacy NGO)

The Health and Sex Education NGO illustrates a case where an NGO tried not to be openly politically involved. This NGO was very cautious on informing youth too much on their sexual rights, as they may engage themselves in activities that are sensitive or taboo in that country, leading to prosecution (because of criminalisation of same-sex relations in that country) or violence against those youth. The NGO maintained a delicate balance of steering away from public political engagement and focusing on informational campaigns for the youth without directly triggering them into political activities.

This balance is also illustrated in the fact that some NGOs report that they do not get too much involved in communication with, or restrain from reacting to, politicians' communications on social media.

"We do not use social media to make connections to the government or companies." (communications professional, STD Awareness NGO)

"The organisation cannot send harsh messages via social media [ed. about political parties]". (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

However, the latter organisation does stimulate local partner organisations to use social media for *activism* where they argue social media activities to align with the organisational identity.

"Before deploying a presence on social media, it is important to know your organisation's vision, mission, core values and programmatic goals. It is vital to approach using social media with care and forethought. In other words, digital activism components should point toward a larger picture that an NGO is pursuing." (report by Advocacy NGO)

Some organisations face conflicting internal interests between departments when it comes to sharing information, or they are wary of the profound implications social media may have on their organisation's reason for existence by creating a direct link between donor-side and beneficiary-side stakeholders (*organisation politics*). The awareness of this implication is illustrated in the following quotations.

"Social media can eliminate the middlemen that are the international development NGOs by letting communicate and connect people who are well off at one side of the world with people in need at the other side of the world. Think about this…" (communications professional, Expertise sharing NGO)

"Are we as NGO knowledge sharers or knowledge keepers? The risk is that when knowledge is being shared, it will weaken you as an organisation. It makes the neighbour NGO better and weakens your organisation." (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO)

The perception of these respondents seems to be that the risk of open knowledge sharing and other social media practices may erode the value of their own NGO or that reluctance to use social media may be motivated by these factors.

4.1.4 Key findings: 'Changing the world'

- NGOs act differently in the way they incorporate political activities or activism in their development work, and in how this is reflected in their (social media) communication.
- Some NGOs are wary of the profound implications social media may have on their organisation's reason for existence.
- Some NGOs asserted that there is a clear relationship between their NGO's theme(s) and social media communications.
- Technological innovation brings new strengths to organisations by bringing in different types of people with skills and expertise from outside development.
- Some of the younger and middle-aged NGOs run their organisation like a social enterprise, being less dependent on government subsidies.

4.2 Paradigms of (international) development

This category deals with ideological trends that were identified during the interviews with the development NGOs. These ideological trends, externally induced, may influence or (re)shape the NGO's vision or strategy. They are labelled as trends as they seem to arise in a particular timeframe in which these topics are also recognised in societal discussions, beyond the scope of international aid and development. Four subcategories are identified which are discussed consecutively.

4.2.1 Poverty reduction

The most prominent, effectively acting as an overarching paradigm spoken of by all the studied NGOs is poverty reduction. Almost all the development NGOs relate their organisation's strategy and operations to this, in a way underpinning their existence. The activities conducted by the NGO are the means to reduce or eventually eradicate poverty. Poverty is a complex phenomenon in research, and likewise, the NGOs show a variety of opinions on what it means for them and how it is interwoven into their organisational vision and strategy.

The crowdsourcing NGO emphasises the link **poverty reduction** has with personal action.

> *"Poverty is a twisted web of political, historical, institutional, and technical factors. We do not claim to have the answer to everything; however, complicated concerns do come with a personal, specific solution."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

This weaving of poverty reduction with the NGO's focus area is illustrated in this statement:

> *"Too many of those young lives do not have a chance to blossom. Too many live in extreme poverty. The intersection of poverty and sexuality can have lasting effects on sexual norms, such as constraining sexual expression, confidence and self-esteem."* (communications professional, Health and Sex Education NGO)

A certain technology-driven optimism (or solutionism?) is conveyed in the statement from the Water Platform NGO. This respondent initially had no international development background but based on his experiences in IT, he felt there is potential for using IT for development projects.

He argues that society in many countries in the Global South is changing because of the use of the Internet and mobile technologies, even by the underprivileged, and therefore the use of IT for development, and drawing on his previous corporate IT experience, makes sense for solving developmental issues.

> *"It is an exciting place to be. IT is now an industry without rules about who can make a difference, and where they can do it. Moreover, as innovation shifts from desktop to mobile, the biggest impact will be on those accessing the Internet and phones for the first time, who today are very poor".* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

The respondent further explains the reason they set up the NGO.

> *"The whole development sector has been built over the last 70 years, to raise money and to then tunnelled through development organisations to development projects and then they have to report what has been done with that money. They run so many projects and then one does not think of a smarter way to get the money from here to there. The same applies to information, isn't there a smarter way to inform each other? From that perspective, we started to think, how can it be improved? We said, let us forget everything that is already being done. Let us assume we have to start all over again. How would you then organise?*
>
> *Moreover, then it starts to roll…"* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

A similar technology-driven optimism is expressed in this quotation:

> *"Near universal mobile phone coverage leads to a better distribution of wealth without any government interference, stimulates demand-driven development, and is an instrument for effectively targeting poor people"* (report Advocacy NGO).

The Mobile Phone NGO, for example, shared various reports or articles on its social media channels underpinning this claim.

The following three paradigms are not as prevalent as this one but still very present among the NGOs examined for this study.

4.2.2 Sustainability

Next, to **poverty reduction,** another concept emerged as an encompassing concept. All NGOs relate their development activities to **sustainability**. This concept commonly refers to the so-called people-planet-profit aspects, and within the interpretation of the NGOs, these different aspects are highlighted in their specific organisational goals and activities to a greater or lesser extent. All of the NGOs in this study have associated their activities with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to eradicate poverty and hunger and tackle the inequality that drives poverty.

Often sustainability involves the idea that development projects can continue after the formal end of the project and can include the local community during the project and afterwards in the post-project continuation (*local ownership*). It can also involve the ecological impact of the development project or the financial viability, including fair income generation for poor communities. The inclusion of the local community in a development project is illustrated in the

following. One NGO argues that the involvement of local stakeholders (beneficiaries, as NGOs refer to them) is needed for long-term sustainability:

> *"Co-creation for every project: every project should be independent and sustainable in four years. So it only works when you work together with local target groups and involve them in the projects. (…) The method can only be considered a success when end-users appreciate and benefit from the solution, and ideal when they feel a vested interest in the solution's long-term sustainability."* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

Sustainability is sometimes linked to empowerment:

> *"We believe that if you use a bottom-up approach and empower them by helping them gain access to the means to bring their ideas to life, this generation has the potential to generate great sustainable economic development through social innovation."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

All NGOs related their organisation's activities to *sustainability,* as illustrated in this example.

> *"Gender equality, participation and sustainability are integrated into all programs [ed. of the NGO], which also contribute to the realisation of ten of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals."* (development practitioner, Child development NGO)

Some NGOs see their and other NGOs' role changing, and they contemplate on focusing on specific areas within the range of sustainability-related areas.

After these two all-encompassing paradigms, two more specific ideological trends are discussed.

4.2.3 2.0 in development

Many NGOs state they have embraced what they call a development 2.0 approach. The **Development 2.0** approach in contrast with the development 1.0 approach (or international cooperation 1.0) consists of two-way communication, online collaboration, incorporation of Internet principles and collaboration in a network approach, and is aimed at achieving development goals. The respondent of the Confederated NGO said:

> *"So, I am a lot on Twitter and read a lot on the Internet about development cooperation 2.0, and often I try to write or tweet about it. I think it is a very important development in development cooperation and I think it just becomes increasingly important. Thus, not only project campaigns and fundraising but also being transparent and showing the results of your work."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

This development 2.0 approach also meant that a more transparent approach to communication is introduced.

> *"In the 2.0 world, you should not try to hide. It is open, so it is better to admit and openly discuss. People will find out eventually. I did learn that you can afford an occasional mistake if you are operating fair and transparent. Then people accept it. They see what you are doing and what you are trying to achieve."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Another respondent defined this trend as:

> *"International cooperation 1.0 equals broadcasting. The 2.0 model deploys social media so everyone can transmit and receive at the same time. So it is a kind of network. That is now happening within international cooperation. (…) Trust within development cooperation 2.0 is possible because through the new communication technology one can have direct conversations with someone on the other side of the world"* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The respondent argued that the social network idea in the context of international aid and development does not mean devising a grand plan to solve poverty, but rather that people in developing countries can present their own ideas to solve issues online, and other people across the world can contribute, which makes this demand-driven.

They argue that online collaboration at a distance relies on trust-building between individual human beings rather than between organisations and that this also applies in the area of international development. Another observation is that the technologies need to be used for inclusive interaction:

> *"Many organisations claim they are working with web 2.0. White organisations go to Africa, tell an African how they should lead their lives. That is not how it works nowadays. It is better to look at how you can use new technologies for interaction."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The same NGO argued*: "Often, people who live in developing countries have the best ideas on how they can solve problems, and, in fact, they must be able to present that simply online."*

Some NGOs clearly express the direction they foresee NGOs should take with social media adoption for their organisational goals.

> *"What is apparent is that social media is one of the most powerful and unique tools to interact with audiences that NGOs should embrace as part of their strategic communications and programmatic planning."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

The Child development NGO identified convergent values between social media and child-centred community development as both are related to *"information, communication, partnership, openness, transparency, participation, conversation, community, action, interaction, connectedness and ownership"*, but also acknowledged they face the issue of how to use social media tools to enhance their work and *"the potential barriers that needed to be overcome: income, literacy, gender, and electricity."*

It is not clear to some respondents where this development 2.0 trend will lead to, but they are aware of its potential.

> *"The big question is, of course, where international development is heading. It tends to more direct contact between the South and the North. We can learn a lot from this. Our way of interacting with our stakeholders keeps getting more interactive because now we have the possibility [ed. with social media]."* (communications professional, Expertise Sharing NGO)

4.2.4 Open

Another concept found in the data was **Open Development**. This concept refers to the openness the NGO takes in its activities and the use of other NGOs' or other organisations' knowledge and the willingness to freely share their own with others – in the context of the use of ICT. This concept is shared by many of the studied NGOs. One of the NGOs which collaborated extensively around this concept with some other NGOs formulated this as follows:

> *"Open development embraces these new ways of working for a new international cooperation model. One that is more inclusive, including wisdom experts and wisdom of the crowd, accountability to collaboration, and transparency to openness."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

This is illustrated by the following example from this NGO in which openness means the digital account can be used across various platforms for collaboration.

> *"Imagine there is a platform, where a certain Jessica from, let us say, Uganda, can easily share her story and how she works to improve the conditions in her community. Imagine she can also see on the platform who else in her direct surroundings are working on similar issues. Moreover, then imagine she can use the services of various parties on that platform, without ever having to register for another account."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

The same example was used by another respondent elaborating on how this imaginary user 'Jessica' can retrieve information from various sources.

> *"There are more and more platforms like ours [Ed. names of three other NGOs]. So, we thought we separately all very small. However, suppose that if you connect all our websites and databases, then you stand together very strong. (…) You do not have to go to each website to get the information you need. That we are developing now."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The use of the same example with 'Jessica' came not as a surprise as four of the studied NGOs exchanged knowledge and collaborated on this concept of open data exchange, namely the Crowdsourcing, the Community Knowledge Management, the Water Platform, and the Mobile Phone NGOs. Their vision suggests a seamless integration of systems and services to facilitate the needs of those in a community who want to improve the development of a community. They argue that many systems operate in isolation while they envision connecting platforms based on co-developed standards and working on the non-technical issues that may inhibit sharing data. In this perspective, the notion of *open data* is notable:

> *"The Dutch Government was in 2011 among the first countries that published data about spending in the area of international development cooperation and making these accessible in the Open Data standard IATI (Ed. International Aid Transparency Initiative). A nice first step in the field of transparency and accountability. However, we would like to go a step further. We want to move toward Open Development."* (development professional, Community Knowledge Management)

Many of the studied NGOs who were pioneers at the crossroads of international development and the use of the Internet and social media joined a knowledge exchange forum and

participated in an event organised via their umbrella organisation on the subject of open data in international development. All NGOs, promoted by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, take part in activities on open data, providing third party access via an online portal to data on the development projects they run. This data is offered in a format that complies with the standard for development data set out by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). The data is in a machine-readable XML format and can be retrieved from centralised online IATI repository portals.

Where the previous concept (**2.0 in development**) related changes in development to the advances in Internet and social media functionalities, this concept revolves around openness, in either data, knowledge, or tools. This is visible in the approach to open-source software by some of the NGOs. For example, one respondent explained their *Open Source* policy as follows:

> *"We are very open. We are open source. Meaning all software we develop can be used 'openly' [ed. for free] If you want to set up an online platform about HIV Aids, you can in principle take everything we have developed and further develop this.*
>
> *Moreover, if you have developed something you are obliged to share, also with us. It is all rooted in that concept, and I think everything should be open."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

They added to this that this is related to their approach to sustainability strategy:

> *"We create open-source web and mobile software (…). This is important because it improves the way projects are implemented, making them more sustainable, effective, efficient and visible."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

The E-Learning NGO respondent recalled their organisation's use of open source tools such as the Ushahidi platform developed by others:

> *"Following up violent eruptions after last elections [Ed. Not specifically stated in which country], we were encouraged to react, so we made use of the Ushahidi platform for our peace mapping efforts. The Ushahidi platform built in Joomla [Ed. content management system] environment, was initially meant for disaster and emergency relief mapping but is now used for peace mapping, to register peace process, to encourage regular news updates, to support each other etc."* (development professional, E-Learning NGO)

The open development paradigm is close to the development 2.0 paradigm. Both observe collaboration as a critical component. Whereas "open" puts more emphasis on transparency in the development process, the development 2.0 paradigm puts more emphasis on the potential brought by technological capabilities delivered by the Internet and social media for opening up communication, and henceforth collaboration, between parties across the globe. Some NGOs consider openness as a component of their organisational workings.

> *"The reason to use the [ed. crowdsourcing platform of the NGO] to start projects is transparency. People want to know where the money they give to good causes goes. Moreover, also in our top 3 is that the organisation presents what we stand for; we are open and approachable to everyone."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

4.2.5 Key findings: 'Ideological trends of (international) development'

- All development NGOs relate their organisation's strategy and operations to poverty reduction.
- Another encompassing concept for all NGOs is sustainability. This concept commonly refers to the so-called people-planet-profit aspects; The NGOs relate this to their specific organisational goals and activities to a greater or lesser extent.
- Many NGOs embraced a development 2.0 approach. This, in contrast with the development 1.0 approach, consists of two-way communication, online collaboration, incorporation of Internet principles and collaboration in a network approach.
- Open Development refers to the openness the NGO adopts in its activities and the use of other NGOs' or other organisations' knowledge and the willingness to freely share their own with others – in the context of the use of ICT.

4.3 Strategic Collaboration

The third category from this theme is strategic collaboration. This category is about the cooperation NGOs have with external stakeholders, related to social media use, to achieve their developmental goals as an organisation. Development, by its nature, is collaborative. This category consists of two subcategories: *collaboration partners* and *partnership strategies and challenges*.

4.3.1 Collaboration Partners

Various stakeholders that NGOs are collaborating with to achieve their organisational development goals were discussed. In general, the collaboration partners can be characterised as being other international development NGOs, local NGOs, local policymakers/government, (local and international) companies, educational and research institutions, volunteers or the local community. Furthermore, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a prominent (financial donor & policy-making) stakeholder and considered a collaboration partner by some NGOs.

The following example illustrates the exploration and development of collaborative practices among some of the studied development NGOs. In particular, this example shows the cooperation between the smaller and younger NGOs. The respondent claims that this open collaborative attitude may be ascribed to like-minded young people working together.

> *"We are all younger people, maybe that helps too. We can get along well. In the beginning, it was, of course, who was the fastest, doing your own thing. Now we are much more working together. We are better at reporting while they [ed. other NGO] are better at fundraising. You do not have to do everything alone, some things you can do together. We now have entered a bit the stage how can we all work together. So that is fun."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

All NGOs state that local collaboration partners are essential in their development projects, for reasons such as the incorporation of local knowledge, inclusive decision making or knowledge transfer on, for example, social media management. Most NGOs did not choose a particular geographic area of implementation for their partnerships.

> *"The cooperation with the locals is crucial for [ed. name of Crowdsourcing NGO] because we believe in their knowledge and willingness to improve the local situation themselves."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

> *"Social media and social networking cannot be regarded as a stand-alone. Instead, it needs to be integrated into the daily operation of [ed. local] civil society organisations more consistently and systematically."* (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO)

Not surprisingly this NGO explained that their "*partners are stimulated to use ICT and social media"* and that in their network of collaboration partners they have delegated some tasks to organisations with more experience of specialised ICT skills training:

> *"A partner like [named a partner organisation] trains local NGOs in the use of ICT and social media or policy-making for ICT use for development."* (Advocacy NGO)

Some NGOs argued that the spin-off of their projects created some entrepreneurial spin-off with whom they collaborate within a *network* in the Global South.

> *"We already have been starting to work as a network organisation with [ed. names of local organisations/start-ups]. Former students [ed. of the NGO's projects] work there as consultants, and they start doing the e-Learning programme"* (management professional, E-learning NGO)

Regarding volunteers and small-scale donors, this NGO explained the personal touch is important, even in an online environment.

> *"People appreciate the personal contact and an approachable organisation. They want to join on their terms"* (communications professional, Crowdfunding NGO)

There is also a collaboration with companies. This example shows how the collaboration partner provides financial expertise and services for the NGO.

> *"We are collaborating with [ed. name of a bank] because financial flows are very complex. I will not say too much about it, but you cannot just send money from, for example, America to a project in India. Then the Indian Government says we are not a developing country anymore. You get stuck in regulations, so you have to keep money flows sometimes separated as it is called, so that is a very complex thing. Therefore, we are working together with [ed. name of a bank]. For that kind of stuff, you have to have partners."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

The Agriculture NGO explained they had established strategic and project partnerships with communication companies for both offline and online communications.

4.3.2 Partnership strategies & challenges

Partnership strategies & challenges are about the intended goals an NGO has for establishing partnerships with other stakeholders. While the NGOs have different goals and structures, they all work in partnership with other organisations to tackle poverty, injustice and suffering in the Global South. The Confederated NGO had conducted a survey to better understand what the partner organisations needs were.

> *"Most organisations [ed. from their surveyed partners] indicated that they were knowledgeable in something that they thought could be useful for other organisations. Also, they were very interested in knowledge from other organisations, especially about ' what works' to achieve development project goals. This agrees with the organisation's own ideas in which technology has a supporting role."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Achieving more in collaboration than alone was mentioned as a strategic goal. Thereby getting a greater outreach was also mentioned as a benefit of partnerships where social media activities were undertaken.

> *"We jointly achieved a much greater reach. You reach, of course, many more people. We also have different people in our network."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

Furthermore, some specific partnerships were mentioned for achieving such goals. Some of the goals and activities of this partnership are explained here.

> *"The coalition has been ambitious with targets for access to ICT and new media. Some initiatives are still in an early phase and expected to generate results at a later stage. Other organisations are still assessing the role of new media in their programmes and organisation. In 2011 the coalition focused a lot on the Arab Spring…" (excerpt from a joint report from Confederated, Crowdsourcing and E-Learning NGOs)*

The same confederated NGO intends to become a 'platform organisation', acting as an intermediary party in interactions between various organisations:

> *"From broker (distributing the funds to projects) to a more intermediary role as an organisation, that is taking care that funds are reaching the right place, checking the effectiveness of projects, becoming more transparent"* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Regarding partnership strategies, the NGOs choose local stakeholders for various reasons, like training of partner organisations ("train the trainer"), knowledge dissemination, or backing from local leadership.

> *"Computer skills are taught to local partners to train the local communities. A CD is offered, and SMS service is available for support with Q and A via SMS in Zambia. In Senegal, community elders were involved. Also, we do this in co-creation and conduct research to include groups. In the Gambia, the national government was involved in the project development."* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

The Confederated NGO explained that the collaboration partners are also selected for reaching this goal of becoming a platform and intermediary between resources and knowledge instead of remaining a broker.

However, a report from the same NGO states that they also identified competition between NGOs, which causes less sharing of knowledge in some cases, particularly insights on what problems and issues are present in an NGO, as this information can be used to harm the image the NGO has in the outside world.

> *"Employees of partner organisations indicated that competition between organisations leads to participants in meetings to be less inclined to share knowledge. This is not just about what is working well, as well as to what is not working properly because this is information that competitors can use to sketch a negative image of an organisation to* the outside world." (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

When asked if (online) sharing of training resources occurred, some of the staff of different NGOs tended to collaborate and share knowledge, although officially the involved NGOs have not reached an agreement on the level of collaboration.

> "The*re is an online special interest group for the organisation, but it does not work. The individual professionals work together, but there is no consensus between the organisations to collaborate on this level."* [Advocacy NGO]

Another respondent from the same NGO added: *"My advice about social media [ed. use by organisations] is collaborating. Do not stick in old patterns."* The first respondent agrees: *"Collaboration is key. Otherwise, organisations remain monoliths."*

An example of collaborative efforts to link information or projects online is illustrated by the following where NGOs are collaborating on opening up their project related information.

> *"The Crowdsourcing NGO has put itself a bit better on the map in the Netherlands than us, while we are internationally somewhat larger. The Water NGO has a network with water experts. The Community Knowledge Management NGO does have some water projects. So if you can link them together, all that has added value to more people. Their projects could also retrieve via us other expertise. The Crowdsourcing NGO can reach via us more international projects. Also, I think we have better service together.*
>
> *We all have projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America and now have 26 separate "counters" where people should go to now. It is better to have one entry point from where you can reach all. That is the dream! A pilot project is launched by eight organisations. The aim is to promote projects together and develop services [to aid the projects] together. Therein lies the future."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

The intention is that in this way, project application and updates are shared on multiple online platforms, and one does not have to replicate the same information on multiple platforms manually. The efforts so far seem to have been focused on seeking synergies in so-called policy coherence for development and the reporting (to donors) of data on development projects in some geographical regions or as a platform for seeking collaboration partners. The intended single entry point, for example, for the local communities, has not been implemented yet.

Another NGO, the Child Development NGO, collaborated with international development NGOs to gain a better understanding of the concept of *Communication for Development* (C4D)

and how this could improve the effectiveness of their communication in child development projects. C4D is understood by this NGO as a way of giving children *"a voice with which they take an active role in the development of the community."*

One of the NGOs described its partnership challenges as trying to combine the established relationships with larger organisations with the potential social media brings for establishing new connections.

> *"You have two worlds; you have the old one of the large organisations. Moreover, then you have social media, which is a very open network, but I believe the one does not function without the other. There is the power, so to say; how can you combine those two things?"* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

This respondent argued that different collaboration partners are required for different stages regarding the adoption and use of ICT and social media within the NGO. Furthermore, the respondent is concerned with the question of how to get people to collaborate.

> *"At different levels [ed. of innovation adoption] you have different collaboration partners who are the best to work with. Another point I think, is, both internal and external, how do you get people to work together? This is the challenge, and that is not easy."* (development practitioner, Child development NGO)

Regarding different collaboration partners at different stages, the following example illustrates how this NGO has chosen a growth strategy that involves diversifying their activities across a range of partners that were not traditionally collaboration partners for international development. They expand their core activities (services via their crowdsourcing platform) to other organisations like charities and firms.

> *"Our ambitions are, in any case, still larger than where we are now. We think that our operating model is mainly cost-efficient with a larger scale. Eventually, we should be able to crowdfund a multiple of what we cost as an organisation. Moreover, we would like to operate, preferably without subsidy.*
>
> *That is why we have now chosen to offer our crowdsourcing services to companies, charities and events in need of tools and services for online fundraising. With this form of social entrepreneurship activity, we establish our revenue strategy, and we hope to achieve the scale and impact in the world that came with our original ambitions."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

In the following, an NGO describes how social media is incorporated into their partnership research approach.

> "Along wit*h learning more about our existing partners, we work to identify partners that can fill gaps in expertise, such as bloggers, illustrators, and web or mobile programmers. Potential partners can be discovered through professional and social networks, blogs, Twitter, and local TEDx events. Face-to-face contact, either through physical meetings or through services such as Skype, is a particularly important part of partner research."* (management professional, E-Learning NGO)

From the interviews and supported by reports from the NGOs, two clusters of formal collaboration networks between the studied NGOs has been identified in which social media

activities are collectively developed and knowledge is being shared, depicted by the double arrows connecting those NGOs (Figure 4-3). 'Formal' in this context means being part of a government-endorsed coalition of NGOs receiving funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Some development NGOs have delegated tasks to organisations with more experience in certain areas or who are specialised in ICT skills training. The confederated NGO and the E-learning and Crowdsourcing NGO collaborate in an alliance that applied for government funding, and as part of that alliance, they collaborated on a project to set up and stimulate local social entrepreneurship depicted by the dotted lines in the diagram).

> *"The confederated NGO connects the E-learning and Crowdsourcing NGO with local partners and potential beneficiaries. The E-Learning NGO co-designs products with local producers and engage in the marketing of these products. The crowdsourcing NGOs provides a platform where locals can present their project objectives and results, and create a link with volunteers and donors."* (report)

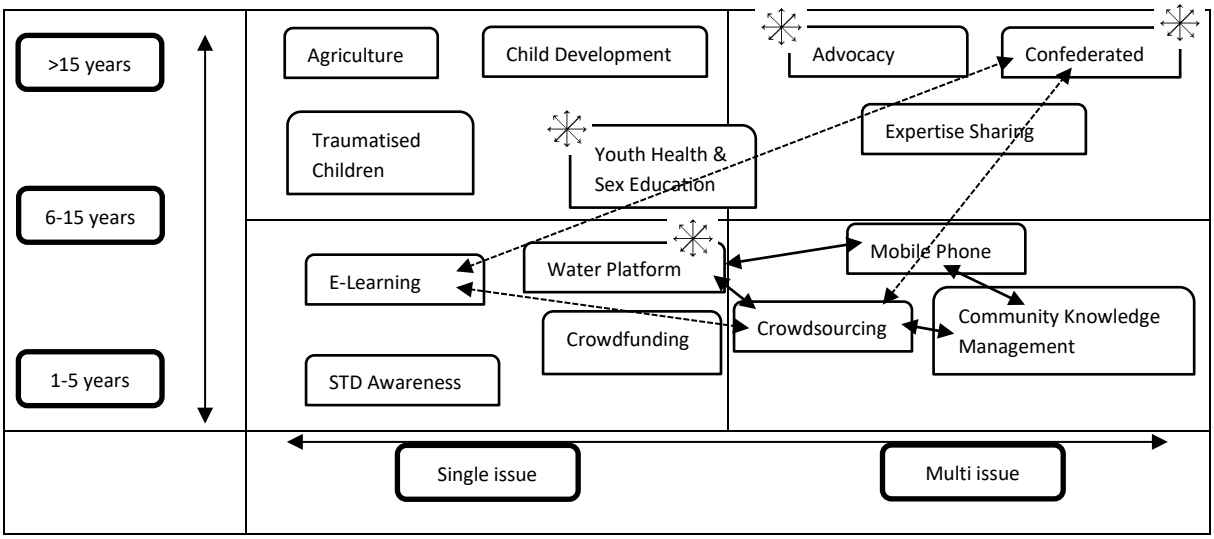


Figure 4-3. Collaboration networks with social media and Internet use knowledge sharing between the studied development NGOs. The multi-directional arrow symbol indicates NGOs with many parties with whom they collaborate on social media use outside this sample of NGOs.

Another network has been identified between four "middle-aged" smaller NGOs who exchange knowledge on the Internet on social media related developments and activities (depicted by the solid arrowed lines in the diagram). The close vicinity of their head offices in one building may stimulate this networking. These four younger/middle-aged NGOs (The Water Platform NGO, the Crowdsourcing NGO, the Mobile Technology NGO, and the Community Knowledge Management NGO) collaborate in the field of open and linked data[5], and open-source software development.

Four other NGOs are operating as a central node in networks with various collaboration partners (which are not part of this sample) in which social media activities occur (depicted by

[5] "Linked Data is about using the Web to connect related data that wasn't previously linked, or using the Web to lower the barriers to linking data currently linked using other methods." (Source: http://linkeddata.org/)

the multi-directional arrow symbol). Furthermore, the collaboration networks of all the older NGOs is extensive, particularly of those with multi-issue activities. Of those, the Advocacy NGO and the Confederated NGO are involved in various social media collaboration activities outside this sample, the respondents of those NGOs reported.

4.3.3 Key Findings: 'Collaboration'

- The collaboration partners can be characterised as being other international development NGOs, local NGOs, local policymakers/government, (local and international) companies, educational and research institutions, volunteers or the local community. Some NGOs consider the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs a collaboration partner, although their role is predominantly funding of development projects and policymaking.
- Some partnership strategy aspects were mentioned, such as the coalitions between NGOs because of grant applications (and reduced development aid budgets by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs which stimulated the creation of coalitions) in which NGOs sought roles to disseminate innovation in their NGO by partnering with younger NGOs.

4.4 Summary of key findings from the core category/theme: NGO Enacting Values in Development

The theme of this chapter ***NGO Enacting Values in Development*** is about the organisation's values enacted in the context of international development. The findings from this theme are categorised in the following way: **Changing the world**, **Paradigms of (international) development,** and **Strategic collaboration**, hereafter summarised briefly.

- **Changing the world** captures the NGO's organisational identity and internal strategy set forward for achieving the goal of changing the world in the context of international development. Three subcategories are identified: ***degrees of activism***, ***organising for change***, and ***empowerment***.
- **Paradigms of (international) development** deal with ideological trends, externally induced, that may influence or (re)shape the NGO's vision or strategy. Four subcategories are identified: ***poverty reduction***, ***sustainability***, ***2.0 in development***, and ***open***.
- **Strategic collaboration** is about the cooperation NGOs have with external stakeholders to achieve their developmental goals as an organisation. The category consists of two subcategories: ***collaboration partners*** and ***partnership strategies & challenges***.

A summary of the key findings of the theme ***NGO Enacting Values in Development*** is presented in Table 4-1.

Key findings	Meaning	Category	Theme/Core Category
NGOs act differently in the way they incorporate political activities or activism in their development work, and in how this is reflected in their (social media) communication. *Example: "Before deploying a presence on social media, it is important to know your organisation's vision, mission, core values and programmatic goals. It is vital to approach using social media with care and forethought. In other words, digital activism components should point toward a larger picture that an NGO is pursuing." (Advocacy NGO)* Some NGOs are wary of the profound implications social media may have on their organisation's reason for existence. Some NGOs asserted that there is a clear relationship between their NGO's theme(s) and social media communications. NGOs see an influx of people bringing in new skills rather than development background. NGO's use of social media necessitated bringing in new skills. Some of the younger and middle-aged NGOs run their organisation like a social enterprise.	This captures the NGO's organisational identity and internal strategy set forward for achieving the goal of changing the world in the context of international development.	Changing the world	NGO Enacting Values in Development
All development NGOs relate their organisation's strategy and operations to poverty reduction. *Example: "Poverty is a twisted web of political, historical, institutional, and technical factors. We do not claim to have the answer to everything; however, complicated concerns do come with a personal, specific solution."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO) Another encompassing concept for all NGOs is sustainability. This concept commonly refers to the so-called people-planet-profit aspects. The NGOs relate this to their specific organisational goals and activities to a greater or lesser extent. Many NGOs act according to some guiding principles when using social media for development purposes. Principles encountered are, for example, Development 2.0 or Open development. Many NGOs embraced what is called a development 2.0 approach, which in contrast with the development 1.0 approach consists of two-way communication, online collaboration, incorporation of Internet principles and collaboration in a network approach. Open Development refers to the openness the NGO takes in its activities and the use of other NGOs' or other organisations' knowledge and the willingness to freely share their own with others–in the context of the use of Information and Communication Technology.	This deals with ideological trends, externally induced, that may influence or (re)shape the NGO's vision or strategy.	Paradigms of (international) development	
The collaboration partners can be characterised as being other international development NGOs, local NGOs, local policymakers/government, (local and international) companies, educational and research institutions, volunteers or the local community. Some NGOs consider the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs a collaboration partner, although their role is predominantly funding of development projects and policymaking. *Example: "The cooperation with the locals is very important for [ed. name of Crowdsourcing NGO] because we believe in their knowledge and willingness to improve the local situation."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO) Some partnership strategy aspects were mentioned, such as the coalitions between NGOs because of grant applications and in which NGOs sought roles to disseminate innovation in their NGO by partnering with younger NGOs.	This is about the cooperation NGOs have with external stakeholders to achieve their developmental goals as an organisation.	Strategic Collaboration	

Table 4-1. A summary of the key findings related to NGO Enacting Values in Development.

5 Findings Theme: NGOs' Views on Social Media Use

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the organisation's values enacted in the context of international development. This chapter presents the findings for the second research sub-question: How do NGOs view the concept of social media? This has led to the theme of ***NGOs' Views on Social Media Use***. This theme is associated with the core category that discusses the organisation's view on the meaning of social media. This includes the four following categories: technological, individual, collective and contextual views attributed to organisational social media. Heek's structural "onion-ring" model of Information Systems (Heeks, 2017) which, in turn, was inspired by the concept of affordances (Anderson, 2011), provided inspiration for a theoretical coding family aided in the development of the categories and relationships of this theme.

All categories show views that can be interpreted as having either a positive, negative or neutral attitude toward social media's contribution to the development activities of the NGOs. Each category is discussed, and their relationship with the theme is explored. Figure 5-3 shows the analytical development of this theme.

5.2 Heek's "onion-ring" model as inspiration for theoretical coding family.

In a grounded research study, the extant literature can also provide clues for theoretical coding families. As a researcher, the engagement with the extant literature has inspired the development of the relationship between the categories of this theme. Theoretical coding families such as Glaser's lift theoretical patterns from the literature (Urquhart, 2016).

As illustrated in Figure 5-1 a pattern was discerned between the four categories of this theme inspired by the 'onion-ring' model of Information Systems, also referred to as the e-development model (Heeks, 2017),

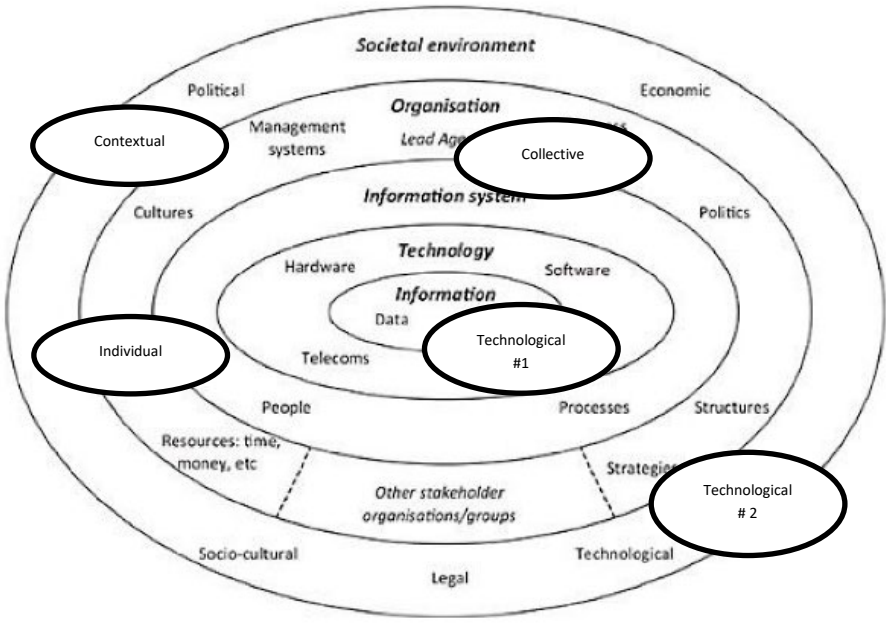


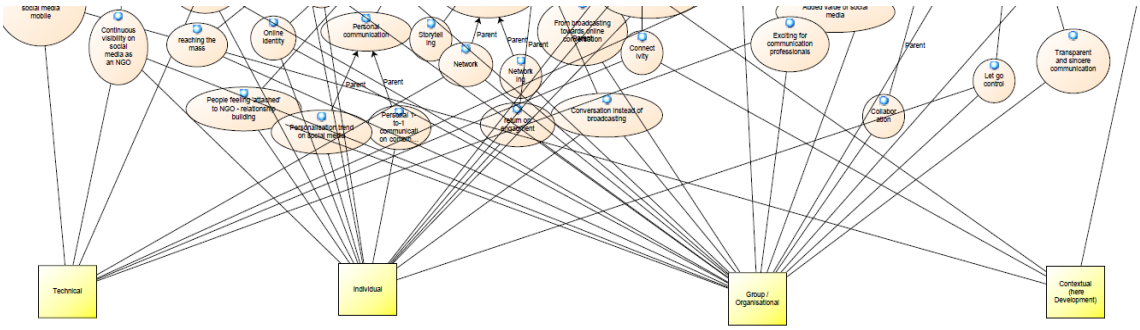
Figure 5-1. Structural "onion-ring" model of Information System (Heeks, 2017, p. 33)

When building theory, you have to be theoretical sensitive (Urquhart, 2012a, p. 71; Glaser, 2016). That means sensitive on how theory is constructed. The sensitivity was fed during the integrative phase of the literature review when the onion-ring model was analysed. In the theoretical coding phase of grounded theory (see also section3.4.1), Glaser (1978) recommends several coding families which are theoretical patterns, ways of relating categories lifted from other theories. What Heeks' onion ring has allowed me to come up with is a theoretical coding family that is appropriate for this theme.

That model inspired me to look at a layered (similar to onion rings) or Venn-diagram alike relationship between the categories for this theme, and I logged this as a theoretical memo for further reflection. Further analysis and development of the categories helped to model how things relate. The relations that I then saw worked and have relevance in the findings. Figure 5-1 shows an excerpt of a theoretical memo I wrote when reflecting on the use of the theoretical coding family based on Heek's onion ring model.

Excerpt from theoretical memo I wrote after figuring out the theoretical model being used in the onion model and deriving a theoretical coding family that works and is suitable for the data collected in this study.

In the NVivo diagram I have highlighted this alternative coding idea by inserting yellow blocks in the diagram for the Category 'Values or Potentials attributed to social media' under Selective Code 'Organisational View of Social Media'.



These views on social media seem to be potentials or attributes one ascribes to social media that are somehow related to technological, individual, group/organisational, or a contextual (i.e. international developmental) aspect.

The views with a Technological aspect relate to the fact that those views describe a technological feature of social media technologies. With Individual I understand the views on social media that are related to the personal sphere of social media use, i.e. how is it related to an individual. With Group/Organisational is meant the views that related to social media use for a group of people or in a formalised structure, such as an organisation. The Contextual aspects are related to those

Figure 5-2. Excerpt from theoretical memo related to the development of this theme using a theoretical coding family.

As Glaser (2005) argued that theoretical codes were often not clearly mentioned in grounded theory-based papers or dissertations, this section intends to clarify the use of theoretical coding for this thesis.

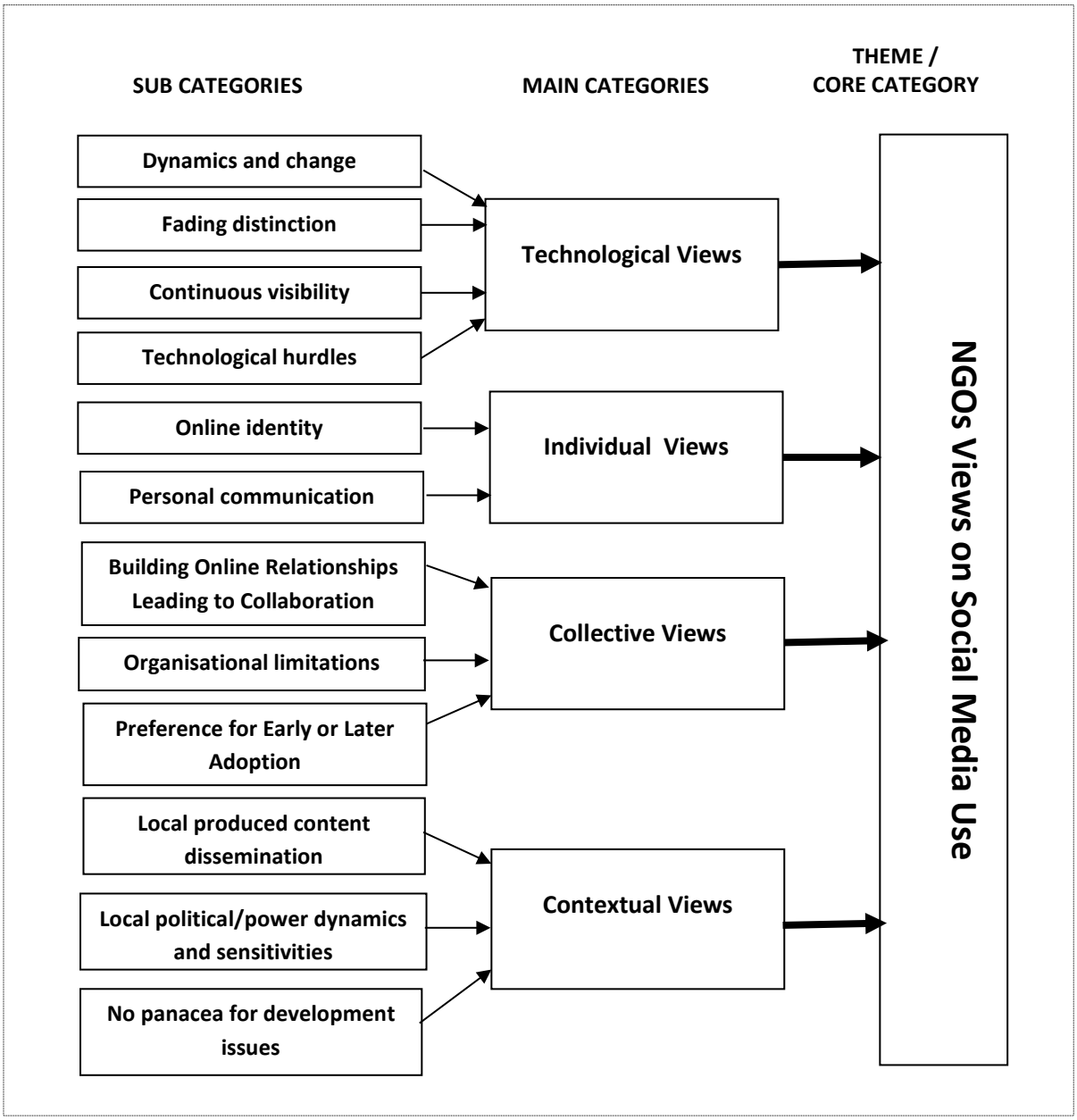


Figure 5-3. Relationships of Categories to Theme NGO's Views on Social Media Use.

This chapter starts with an overview of the relationship between the (sub)categories and core category associated with this chapter's theme. An overview of the chain of evidence that led to the theme of this chapter and its subcategories is included in Appendix B. The chapter continues with the four major sections based on the main categories of the *NGOs' Views on Social Media Use* theme as illustrated in Figure 5-3. Finally, the findings on this theme are summarised.

The views attributed to organisational social media are classified into four clusters, namely, *Technological, Individual, Collective, and Contextual views* (Table 5-1). These views on social media seem to be potentials or attributes one ascribes to social media that are somehow related to technological, individual, group/organisational, or contextual (i.e. international

developmental) attributes. These views can be either positive, negative or neutral. These views are discussed and illustrated in the following subsections.

The views with a Technological aspect relate to the fact that these views of the NGOs describe a technological feature of social media technologies that may shape social media use by the NGOs	Technological views
Individual refers to the views on social media that NGOs have, that are related to the personal sphere of social media use, i.e. how is it related to an individual?	Individual views
Collective refers to the views the NGOs have that are related to social media use between a group of people or in a formalised structure, such as a non-profit organisation	Collective views
The Contextual aspects are related to those views of the NGOs that take into account the 'context in which social media is used'.	Contextual views

Table 5-1. Four clusters of views attributed to organisational media

5.3 Technological views

The Technological views are these views of the NGOs that relate to possibilities ascribed to a technological feature or informational aspect of social media technologies that may shape social media use by the NGOs.

A key observation is a *fading distinction between Internet, social media and mobile communication*. They are not separate silos. This is illustrated by the following statements:

> *"You see an integration of the Internet and mobile. I think that the difference between them gradually will disappear. (…) Twitter is just like text messaging. (…) Social media would be those technical resources that support online social behaviour, communication and collaboration."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO).

> *"Social media is all types of media which are meant to bring together people and have intelligent information exchange. This becomes more effective with mobile."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

This technological view of social media also suggests a stance that some technologies are merely *interchangeable or complementary* when it comes to using for certain (organisational) goals.

> *"People do not have to go to the website to register but can also join via SMS, Frontline SMS tool"* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

The *social media as a communication tool* view is also expressed in this remark:

> *"I think social media is still a tool. You shouldn't classify communication strategy according to tools"* (communications professional, Expertise sharing NGO)

Some NGOs are positive in their views on the development of Internet connectivity for connecting with local stakeholders.

> *"Look, of course, you have people in Kenya with a job that requires the Internet at their work. Moreover, they represent [ed. with regard to the NGO's activities] their region or community. Some just use the Internet connection at their work, while others go once or twice a week to the Internet cafe. I think that is going to change, with better Internet connections in Africa." (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)*

The technological aspects of social media bring limitations that challenge the NGOs to carefully craft their communication messages to be suitable for the particular social media platform. This *communicating with few words* is illustrated here:

> *"Social media isn't appropriate for very voluminous content. You don't upload massive reports. You cannot go in-depth…But, especially, suitable if you are good with limited resources and few words to convey what you stand for."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

> *"The message is adapted to the medium. How we use Facebook is more general…to tell about our work, starting conversations, reacting on questions. But we also use Facebook for campaigning. (…) On Facebook you go more in-depth, you provide context to a message, and on Twitter, you present it as fact. On Twitter, we post more often calls to action and news."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

The technological views also include factors that inhibit organisational social media use related to the sensitivity of the discussed topic for its audience, according to the respondents.

Social media may reveal the user's identity, and that may be harmful in some cases. Certain *sensitive or taboo topics* raised issues when using social media. A direct public conversation on *sensitive or taboo topics could endanger local partner organisations or stigmatise the audience the NGO is interacting with.* The taboo aspect is illustrated here:

> *"We are increasingly moving from traditional media, ads, TV commercials to online where social media is huge, but in some cases, for particular themes, it isn't [ed. less suitable]. Privacy sensitivity of the topics we deal with, particularly on HIV/Aids you really have to be careful with."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

Most NGOs are aware of the exposure certain social media platforms may create and steer along the technological functionalities of them to ensure privacy and anonymity if needed.

Another technology-related issue that was reported is the *abundance of information* (or information overload) users of social media are confronted with.

> *"Yes people complain of about it [ed. too much information]. So we are thinking about new communication strategies. We would like to keep track of who received what and if it was enough. We want to incorporate that people can provide feedback If they do not want more information, or more information but not this."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Also, the *abundance of social media platform*s (some of them in limited to certain geographical areas) was mentioned and viewed as a hurdle for organisations, especially the smaller ones with limited resources. So in that sense, both *abundance of platforms*, as well as the organisational scarcity of resources, are viewed as inhibitors of organisational social media.

> *"We, as a small organisation, lack the [ed. human resources] capacity to be active on all social media. It is already an effort to post everything on Facebook."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

> *"I am getting tired of all these different platforms. Organisations often use email or use another popular network such as Orkut in Brazil. So that is quite cumbersome to manage." (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)*

The plethora of platforms has increased, but at the same time, some platforms cease to exist, like the aforementioned social networking site Orkut which ceased to exist around September 2014, while the dominance of some global platforms, like Facebook or Twitter, made them platforms of choice for the studied NGOs.

Key findings: 'Technological views'

- The fading distinction between Internet, social media and mobile communication and the abundance of social media platforms.
- The view of social media as communication tools or technologies that are merely interchangeable or complementary when it comes to using for certain (organisational) goals.
- The technological views also include factors that inhibit organisational social media use related to the sensitivity of the discussed topics for its audience.
- NGOs steer along the technological functionalities of social media to ensure privacy and anonymity if needed.
- These views are related to coping with functional barriers/technical limitations of technologies and adaptations of the communication for particular social media platforms.

5.4 Individual views

'Individual' refers to the NGO's views on social media that are related to the personal sphere of social media use, i.e. how is it related to an individual? The respondents expressed their views on how social media is related to an individual's *online (self-) expression*. Social media provides the virtue of approachability, according to some of the respondents.

> *"Social Media begins with you as an Individual before you launch an official account on a new social media site for your organisation"* (Advocacy NGO)

One of the respondents of the Advocacy NGO made clear he expressed his personal views on social media as his NGO has no strict social media policy. In this way, personal online identity is expressed.

> *"On Twitter, I am telling my opinion and will not restrict myself by guidelines or social media policies. It is an individual judgment of what to do on social media."* (Advocacy NGO)

The individual person behind the social media account (on the side of the NGO) is regarded as important:

> *"With social media, the actual person behind is more important. E.g. LinkedIn: you do not have an account as an organisation. You need to be a person. You may create a group/organisation page. However, you have to identify yourself as a human being. It is about individuals."* (communications professional, Expertise sharing NGO)

Furthermore, the interaction with the individual person on the so-called recipients' end is considered important as well. As well as a moderated FAQ on their website for broad communication, this NGO is using additional tools such as text messaging to inform young people via one-to-one communication on issues they struggle with and that are considered private or taboo.

> *"Since we use SMS with young people [Ed. for sexual education project], they can SMS us with personal things. They ask everything!"* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

Key findings: 'Individual views'

- Personal online identity can be expressed with social media.
- Personal one-to-one communication is enabled where sometimes anonymity plays a role in enabling the conversation.

5.5 Collective views

'Collective' refers to the NGO's views that are related to social media use by an informal group of people, or by a formalised structure, such as an NGO. NGOs are aware that there is a *shift from one-way communication to engagement and dialogue:*

> *"The old way is really 'I have a message I transmit', and now it is more a conversation in which you have to engage"* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

> *"Social media provides a valuable opportunity for NGOs to reach their communication goals more efficiently and to engage with citizens."* (Advocacy NGO)

However, some NGOs do warn of hasty attempts to jump on social media and suggest a more systematic approach:

> *"Just because you can be on a social media site, does not necessarily mean you should be. Spreading yourself across too many social media sites could dilute your social strategy, preventing you from using any of them effectively. Instead, focus on the social media sites that allow you to share your content with the appropriate audience. (…) An overarching communications strategy and complementary social media strategy are key to enhancing engagement in digitally-based outreach activities."* (Advocacy NGO)

Some NGOs even identify the functionalities of social media in the way they operate.

> *"Well, the Community Knowledge Management NGO is actually social media. If you define social media broadly, so not limited to Twitter but all Internet tools, then the Community Knowledge Management NGO's own platform is a social medium. It is an online collaboration platform. It consists of a set of social media that make it possible for people all over the world to collaborate on projects."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

Although all of the studied NGOs have stated the need for the use of social media for their organisation, some question the clarity of the intended goals.

> *"I think we are past the stage of should we do something with or how important is social media? That is not to say that it is completely clear what you have to do with it. (…) My conclusion, for the time being, is that we all are still searching. We have all kinds of insights learned from each other that we are trying to replicate from each other."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

Almost all the NGOs regard social media useful for building online relationships leading to collaboration. *Community building* activities are illustrated by the following. In these quotations, NGOs argue social media provide them with a combination of approachability to their audience, a personal side to the staff, and understanding of whom they are communicating with, and a more personal communication style.

> *"We want to show more of the faces behind the organisation"* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

> *"We try to be very approachable, meaning that it is fun and easy for everyone to support us, but also providing a piece of added value. The [ed. Name of NGO] brings something you do not find with others [ed. NGOs]. Our target audience is in my head, who has become a person. She has a name and age, location etc. We have her personalized and everything we communicate, we communicate to her."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

> *"We try to use a personal tone of voice, but also mixed with [Ed. NGO's name] facts. To make it personal, we add a personal quote, or include a link to personal blogs of staff who work in the field."* (Advocacy NGO)

The style is not the only aspect which was mentioned. Also, the sincerity of the communication activity was being seen as part of the purpose of social media.

> *"You see many NGOs only sending, sending. Of course, that is not the purpose of social media. The idea of social media is that you have contact with your target group, that you genuinely ask things and answer their questions."* (Health and Sex Education NGO)

Many of the NGOs argue that the intention of their produced content is *stimulating sharing*. They view this as an integral aspect of social media.

> *"When you buy [ed. social media ads] you see actually that the return on engagement is much higher. So it turns out positively, the moment you create content that people find interesting and want to share with their constituencies."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

The advocacy NGO notices a positive impact on communication with their target group.

> "We *do not need to present ourselves in the newspaper when we can publish our articles on well-read blogs, or they are circulated via Twitter "* (Advocacy NGO)

Social media compared with traditional media speeds up the recognition and popularity of the organisation, some NGOs argue.

> *"Social media is not the tool, not social media-driven. It is actually content-driven. Coincidentally, we use social media [ed. for spreading the content]."* (communications professional, Expertise sharing NGO)

Social media also stimulates NGOs to bring the aid workers in the field to the foreground in their communication as this NGO stated.

> *"Listen, the head of communication is not the one who actually should start blogging or tweeting. No one is interested in the adventures of the head of communications [ed. name of the NGO]. What you want to hear is the adventures of the people in the field. Those people have to go tweeting. Interesting is the content of what we do, written by our experts in the field."* (communications professional, Expertise sharing NGO)

To stimulate staff to produce content for social media, some NGOs argue it does not necessarily have to start with high-quality material. The respondent of this NGO thinks overcoming the barrier of content production can be achieved by changing the perception of the quality of the material that needs to be put online.

> *"I had made a video and put it on YouTube to introduce myself. Many of the staff said that it does not look professional. It did not appear very slick. However, eventually, the result was that the people who saw it said, we can do that too or even better. Do not be afraid to look amateurish with social media content. Make mistakes and dare to be vulnerable.*
>
> *Moreover, thus, you get more engagement and connection."* (development practitioner, Child development NGO)

Sometimes staff are used to a particular *way of working, which promotes individual activities* and therefore are less inclined to collaborate using social media. These old patterns are difficult to change; some respondents argue.

In this example, the respondent illustrates this by linking this habit to the nature of what he calls *traditional digital technologies*.

> *"Because particular technologies, the more traditional digital technologies I mean, such as e-mail and Office, eventually lead to people working on their own and putting all their energy and effort into. When they have finished [ed. their document], they go into a meeting and then they do not understand why other people do not appreciate their work. The focus is on who has produced the best piece, and it becomes a competition rather than cooperation."* (development practitioner, Child development NGO)

The reluctance to use social media is present within a segment of the staff. Some respondents view elder staff as less willing to adopt, while others view the middle management staff as less receptive to new digital technologies and new ways of working, and some argue that the NGO's IT or communications department may hinder the adoption of new technologies, effectively acting as *gatekeepers.*

> *"There are many people, the old guard, who are dismissive of social media. They need to overcome their fear. They refuse writing anything that is published online directly online. For that, we have a communication officer, they say. Those fears are present."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)
>
> *"Communications people always want to check [ed. content is going to be published]."* [Traumatised Children NGO]
>
> *"The policy is quite top-down. There is some resistance to the IT department against new tools adoption like Skype. Some innovations were halted by them."* [Advocacy NGO]

The following quotation shows the tension between individual staff seeking innovation and novel uses of social media, but IT departments being more concerned with managing the infrastructure and security. The reluctance to collaborate online sometimes is caused by factors like expecting people to collaborate by just putting them together in an online platform (techno solutionism). A respondent said about this:

> *"We have analysed that it is actually a bit 1.0 that we set up an online platform in which you expect people to learn from each other, while there are also other ways to communicate with each other [ed. online]. I am getting a bit tired of too many platforms"* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Key findings: 'Collective values'

- NGOs are aware that there is a shift from one-way communication to engagement and dialogue.
- Some respondents view departments like their IT or communications department or middle management as gatekeepers who are less receptive to new digital technologies.

5.6 Contextual views

The Contextual aspects are related to those views of the NGOs that take into account the 'context', the environment, with its social, political, cultural and geographical aspects, in which social media is being used by the organisation. The context within this research, the operations area of the studied NGOs, is that of international development.

The following respondent argues that the idea to have relevant content pushed them to look for *content produced in the Global South*.

> *"The focus shifted from access in the South [ed. digital divide] to content from the South, and now shifts to alliances with other content providers like local bloggers who provide relevant content. The latest focus is on training social media and ICT use."* (Advocacy NGO)

Another contextual aspect is *local politics or power-related* issues and affects the *content dissemination*. The local political environment may be restrictive for certain online communication. This NGO ran a peace project but remained discreetly in the background in order to not endanger their local partners, being aware of the local power/political context in which to operate and to communicate on social media. They viewed this as a delicate balance.

> *"Local partners are running the site and consult local NGOs on how to use IT on how to bypass governmental control. With [Ed. example of a peace project in Cambodia] we are not activists who are balancing on the 'risk rope'. Our NGO is just operating discretely."* (management professional, E-Learning NGO)

The cultural norms contextual aspect of social media communication is not overlooked as this quotation shows.

> *"Don't ignore cultural norms and their impact on communications patterns.*" (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

One of the NGOs *argued that social media brings them new possibilities for sharing knowledge.*

> *"Innovative is the use of social media for knowledge management in and with developing countries."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Some NGOs are aware of the sometimes apparent techno-optimistic view of technologies to tackle developmental issues. One of the respondents argued that social media is *no panacea* for solving developmental issues:

> *"New media is not the solution to everything."* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

As already noted in the Technological views section, there is a fading distinction between the Internet, social media and mobile communication. This is particularly visible in the development context and activities of the studied NGOs.

Key findings: 'Contextual views'

- Locally produced content dissemination
- Awareness of local political/power dynamics and cultural sensitivities for social media use
- Social media is no panacea for development issues

From the four separate clusters of views, we move now to the relationships between them.

5.7 Relationships between the views

The data reveal multiple instances where a relationship between different clusters of views occurred (Figure 5-4). The following subsections illustrate the combinations that were found between the four clusters of views.

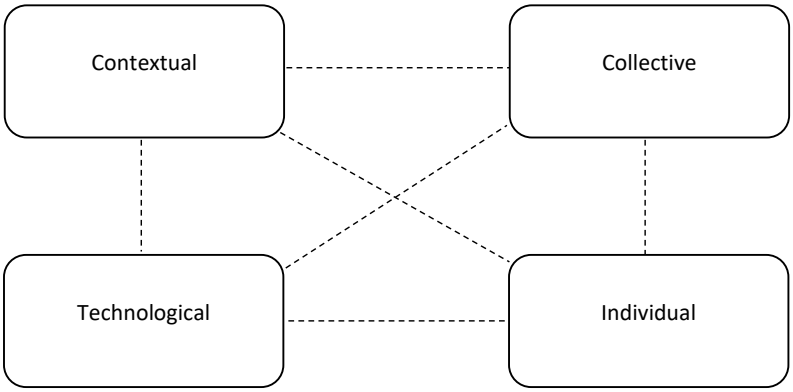


Figure 5-4. Four clusters of views and their possible relationships.

5.7.1 Relationship between Technological & Individual views

Some NGOs argue that social media may shape communication behaviour. The individual professionals of the NGO will use more colloquial speech.

> *"It is almost intrinsic to the technology that it [ed. the conversation] becomes more informal."* (development practitioner, Child development NGO)

A combination where the Technological aspect of the particular social media is enhancing values that contribute to the Individual attributes is illustrated in the following quotations.

> *"If I tell you that we have so many people connect with us, then social media is a very promising channel, a medium. Because of the ability to communicate very quickly."*(communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

> *"(…) social media is huge, but in some cases, for particular themes, it is less suitable. Privacy sensitivity of the topics we deal with, particularly on HIV/Aids you really have to be careful with."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

The Crowdfunding NGO explained that the users on their platform appreciate personal contact and genuine conversation.

> *"What do donors want? The donors want to give in a manner that suits them. They want an authentic message and genuine dialogue. They long for personal contact and participating in their terms."*(Crowdfunding NGO)

Key findings: 'Technological & Individual views'

- Technological views and functionalities shape the potential for a more personal connection and behaviour.
- The nature of social media platforms relates to engagement types and dialogue styles with individuals.

- Technological functionalities are influencing the choice to use or not use social media, because of its influence on individuals (e.g. privacy, identity exposure).

A link between Technological & Individual views on social media for organisational use by development NGOs is shown in Table 5-2.

Technological views◄——	**——►Individual views**
Intrinsic to technology	*Informal conversation*
Channel	*Fast communication*
Online visibility	*Infringing privacy*

Table 5-2. The relationship between Technological & Individual views on social media.

5.7.2 Relationship between Technological & Collective views

The technological view of social media is associated with ongoing novelty and opportunities for the NGO to experiment with new features or platforms to be beneficial to the organisation.

> *"We are experimenting with a list of staff members in a list on Twitter. We want to do this with the partners too. Like a who is who of staff of the organisation."* (Advocacy NGO)

> *"We try all sorts of things out, and some things do not work, but that does not matter. It is not that organised."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

However, the possibilities of social media have to be taken seriously in order to fully grasp its potential, this NGO argues. Another respondent combines the nature of social media with the type of engagement and dialogue the NGOs have with groups on these platforms.

> *"Twitter is very volatile. We do not engage much in discussions on Twitter. If someone wants to conversate longer or deeper, we refer to our online discussion platform [ed. name of the platform]. It is not because we want to avoid [ed. discussion] but there we can go deeper. Sometimes people do join, and sometimes they do not. However, then you know those are not the people who want to start a discussion with you."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

The change of dynamics and potential for opening up communication is considered to be of value for development NGOs.

> *"My view on social media [ed. for development projects]? The first thing that comes to mind is dynamics and change. (…) The real interesting thing about social media is that it completely opens up communication [ed. of our organisation]."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

There are several NGOs who view social media as a kind of laboratory environment, in which they can experiment in one development project and apply the lessons learned to other projects in other countries.

> *"Yes, she has a bit of a role model. She has a bit of the pioneering role, a little bit of pioneering, and trying [ed. social media]. The main part of the task is setting up the*

capacity in Laos to join [ed. name of NGO's internal online collaboration project] to take part, to develop. However, while she does this, she helps to build a model for neighbouring countries." (development practitioner, Child development NGO).

Another respondent illustrates the view that many NGOs have, that social media is now essential in the work of development NGOs, although many are still trying to figure out how to use it.

> *"We are way past the stage that we need to ask whether social media are interesting or not or necessary. That is where we were stuck in and where many organisations are still struggling, I think. Wondering what to do with social media, how to do, why they have to do, and what the risks are etc."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO).

Some NGOs view social media as a platform with constant presence and visibility, requiring an active attitude from the organisation.

> *"We must show that we are present (…) So we must be visible all the time. Like hey, guys, here we are, this is what we have to offer you."* (Health and Sex Education NGO)

Key findings: 'Technological & Collective views'

- Technological developments invite organisations to experiment to understand their potential for organisational use.
- The nature of social media platforms relates to different engagement types and dialogue styles with groups.
- Technical possibilities are evaluated for use based on their acceptability for organisational use.
- The functionality of (appearing) constant online presence and visibility induces an active online attitude of the organisation to reach out.

A relationship between Technological & Collective views is shown in Table 5-3.

Technological views ◄——	**——► Collective views**
Novelty: new features or platforms	*Experimentation*
Nature of the platform	*Different engagement and dialogue styles with groups*
Technical possibilities	*Acceptability for organisational use*

Table 5-3. The relationship between Technological & Collective views.

5.7.3 Relationship between Technological & Contextual views

Regarding technological development, connectivity is improving in many regions, and the growing use of mobile phones and access to the Internet are increasingly having an impact on the activities of NGOs:

> *"There are even villages with a private Twitter account and more followers than [ed. Name of NGO] itself. One of those communities, for example, is a hospital in a slum in Nairobi, who has an own Twitter account, which keeps their followers up-to-date on*

what is happening in the hospital, what projects they are working on. Is Internet tricky? They are in Nairobi, so good connection." (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

"If you want to reach scale in Africa you need to focus on low-end phones!" (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The latter NGO is aware of the abundance of so-called feature phones with custom-designed software and user interfaces, that have Internet access, but with fewer functionalities than smartphones, and are more affordable for low-income groups.

The similarities in the views on social media networking and international development activities are highlighted by these respondents.

"What we call international cooperation 1.0 is like the old transmission model. So television and radio, via which you broadcast and everyone hears the same. And then really only to respond or to call or... There is no real interaction. The 2.0 model actually really deploys social media so everyone can transmit and receive at the same time. (…). So it is a kind of network. That is now happening within international cooperation." (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Illustrating how people from rural regions with less connectivity cope:

"Look you have, of course also people in Kenya with a job that involves the Internet at their work and the like. Some make use of the Internet connection at their work and others just go once or twice a week to the Internet café to communicate [ed. with the NGO]. I think it will go really hard as in Africa more mobile Internet is used. Because what you see in Africa is that everyone actually has a mobile phone, or in each village, there are a few mobile phones, so the fixed telephone line is almost not present anymore." (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

The following quotation illustrates that NGOs understand the intricacies of using technologies in the context of development and the requirement to deal with local cultural norms and beliefs.

"Regarding failures… The [text message] code 666 does not work in a Christian country like Uganda." (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

So, their views are sometimes shaped by experiences, such as this example where the text message number 666 was associated with the devil by some Christians, and forced the NGO to choose a different number, thereby learning that for future projects the local norms and beliefs had to be taken into account.

Based on those kinds of experiences, the Mobile Phone NGO also argues that technology such as mobile phone services are just a tool which should be aligned to the context in which it is being deployed.

"Get your context right. Needs and communications assessment is required. Research the 'local factors'. Technology is just a tool." (management professional, Mobile Technology *NGO)*

Key findings: 'Technological & Contextual views'

- Technological functionalities open up uses for developmental purposes, but the developmental context also showcases the limitation of technological solutionism.
- Technical possibilities are evaluated for use based on their acceptability in the context (context awareness).

A relationship between Technological & Contextual views is shown in Table 5-4.

Technological views ◄——	**——► Contextual views**
Technological functionalities create potential uses for development purposes	*Developmental context also showcases the limitation of techno-solutionism.*
Technical possibilities	*Acceptability for developmental use*

Table 5-4. The relationship between Technological & Contextual views.

5.7.4 Relationship between Individual & Contextual views

Several NGOs view the *tone of voice* in social media as important and consider it necessary to differentiate and adjust to the customs and language use of different audiences or user segments to be more appealing to them.

> *"We communicate differently to East-Africans than to Dutch people"* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The E-Learning NGO identified different target audiences on different platforms (in different countries) and provided an example in Kenya where to appeal to a younger audience they applied English Swahili slang in their online communication.

Key findings: 'Individual & Contextual'

In online communication, approach context matters.

A relationship between Technological & Contextual values is shown in Table 5-5.

Individual views ◄——	**——► Contextual views**
Tone of voice	*Language differentiation for user segments*

Table 5-5. The relationship between Contextual & Individual views.

5.7.5 Relationship between Individual & Collective views

The combination of Individual and Collective values is present in this *mix of private and work-related communication,* which was expressed by many NGOs:

> *"Nowadays, more people are tweeting a lot. Also, our staff is talking about [ed. Name of NGO] in their private tweets."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

The potential of the NGO's own staff to further disseminate social media content from the NGO, by mixing work and private communications is also viewed as a positive effect by this respondent:

> *"Here, we have many people who are active on social media. Despite that private and work are separated - people should know what to do privately, but they all have their own constituencies. Moreover, if those people spread the content, they all can become supporters, which is huge."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

Social media in the view of some NGOs is mainly seen as having a value for *connecting people* and *from there creating community and collaboration:*

> *"We have a strategy to attract our audience via 'Trust me', via 'Tell me' and 'Show me' to 'Involve me'."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Relationship building is, for example, illustrated in the following quotation:

> *"..That is why we must build a relationship with those people; a 'Like' does not mean yet that they will support us."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

Tasking some activities to people on the ground is viewed as beneficial for the authenticity and sincerity of online communication, some NGOs argue.

> *"Although we have an online platform, do not ignore offline. You can delegate some tasks. For example, blogging by aid workers and beneficiaries in the field. Those stories are authentic and much appreciated.* (communications professional, Crowdfunding NGO)

Key findings: 'Individual & Collective'

- Organisations and staff encounter blurred borders between private and work-related communication.
- Online trust-building to activate individuals and crowds.
- Individual staff "on the ground" aid and shape the use of social media by the organisation as they create authenticity and sincerity.

This relationship between Individual & Collective views is shown in Table 5-6.

Individual views ◄——	**——► Collective views**
Blurred borders private & work-related communication	*Creating community and collaboration*
Online trust-building	*Relationship building*
On the ground experience sharing	*Authenticity and sincerity*

Table 5-6. The relationship between Contextual & Individual views.

5.7.6 Relationship between Collective & Contextual views

Another interesting observation was that NGOs acknowledge the local knowledge available to tackle developmental issues, but a means of communication is needed to disseminate that knowledge.

> *"People who live in developing countries often have the best ideas on how they can solve problems, and, in fact, they must be able to present that simply online."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

*Re-purposin*g material on social media is another activity of NGOs. Content produced for a particular development project can be *re-appropriated* for other development projects. This NGO illustrates how content produced has been used for public online communication, re-purposed for other development projects, and used for internal knowledge management and training practices.

> *"One of the aid workers is based in Laos. He is there to set up the local branch. A video is being produced. It has been re-edited for other local content use in one of the languages in Laos. Afterwards, it goes to what I call the cross-organisational workspace where staff from multiple country offices of the NGO collaborate and assess the re-purposing of the online material."* (development practitioner, Child development NGO)

A combination where Collective and Contextual values are simultaneously present is illustrated in the following quotation, where fear of surveillance and oppression of local organisations influences what is put online.

> *"We sometimes collaborate with organisations that are not able to put everything online. There are human rights organisations in a country where they are oppressed when they publish certain things online and for which people can get arrested. You do not want that either…"* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

A research partner of the Traumatised Children NGO has researched how the NGO could use social media.

> *"In these investigations, it is recognised that there is potential for new media, but that there are also limitations and risks such as cultural differences and difference in or lack of skills. Also, the limitations of social media in authoritarian societies is recognised."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

Key findings: 'Collective & Contextual'

- Organisations tap into local knowledge and open up these resources using online collaboration tools.
- Contextual aspects such as political climate shape the use of social media by the organisation.
- Contextual sensitivities (e.g. human rights issues), or potentials are influencing the choice for use or non-use of functionalities social media offered by organisations.

This relationship between Individual & Collective values is shown in Table 5-7.

Contextual views ◄——	——► Collective views
Tapping into local knowledge	*Online collaboration tools*
Contextual possibilities & sensitivities due to e.g. political climate, human right issues etc.	*Use or non-use of functionalities of social media*

Table 5-7. Relationship between Contextual & Collective values (different value clusters).

5.8 Key findings: 'NGO's Views on Social Media'

In the preceding sections, we have discussed the findings for the four identified clusters of views. The key findings of the category ***NGO's Views on Social Media*** are reported hereafter. Four clusters of views are identified: Technological, Individual, Collective and Contextual values. The key findings per cluster of views are summarised below:

Key findings: Technological views

Technological views are those views of the NGOs that relate to possibilities ascribed to a technological feature of social media that may shape social media use by the NGOs. From the findings, it becomes clear the NGOs observe a fading distinction between the Internet, social media and mobile communication, and the abundance of social media platforms.

Furthermore, some of the NGOs view social media as a communication or technology tool that is interchangeable or complementary when it comes to using it for certain (organisational) goals. The NGOs steer along the technological functionalities of social media to ensure privacy and anonymity if needed. The technological views also include factors that inhibit organisational social media use related to the sensitivity of the discussed topics for its audience. The Technological views are related to coping with functional barriers/technical limitations of technologies and adaptations of the communication for particular social media platforms.

Key findings: Individual views

Individual views are the views on social media that NGOs have, that are related to the personal sphere of social media use. Some respondents say personal online identity can be expressed with social media. Personal one-to-one communication is enabled where sometimes anonymity plays a role in enabling the conversation.

Key findings: Collective views

Collective views are the views that the NGOs have that are related to social media use between a group of people or in a formalised structure, such as an NGO. NGOs are aware that there is a shift from one-way communication to engagement and dialogue. Some NGOs are wary of the profound implications social media may have on their organisation's reason for existence. Some respondents view departments like their IT or communications department or middle management as gatekeepers and less receptive to new digital technologies.

Key findings: Contextual views

The Contextual aspects are related to those views of the NGOs that take into account the 'context', the environment, with its social, political, cultural and geographical aspects, in which social media is being used by the organisation. NGOs tap into local knowledge and open up these resources using online tools. Contextual aspects such as political climate shape the use of social media by the organisation. Contextual sensitivities (e.g. human rights issues) potentially influence the choice about whether or not to use functionalities of social media offered by organisations.

The data reveals multiple instances where a relationship between different clusters occurred. The following diagram captures the possible relationships between the four clusters attributed to NGOs' views on social media use.

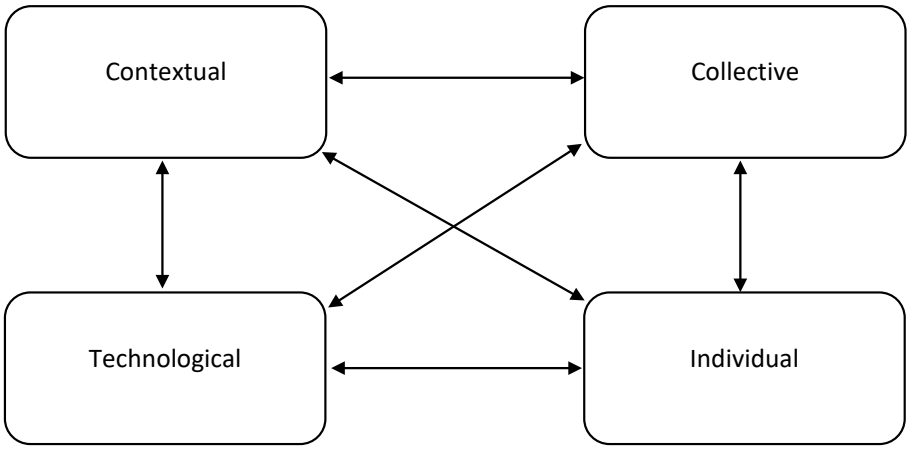


Figure 5-5. Schematic diagram of relationships between the four views clusters for NGOs' views on social media use.

The four clusters may be useful to identify the views on organisational social media according to development NGOs.

A possible explanation for the observation that not many barriers were mentioned is that the sampled NGOs all are active with social media and have gained experience with it. Thus, this leads to understanding the limitations or disadvantages when actually using social media in practice (see core category related to use), and (simultaneously?) shaping the views on social media. Therefore they might not mention these limitations when discussing how they *view* social media (see core category related to views), as they already cope with them in actual use. This means that views are harder to separate from experiences gained by learning through using social media.

A summary of the key findings of the theme ***NGOs' views on Social Media*** is presented in Table 5-8.

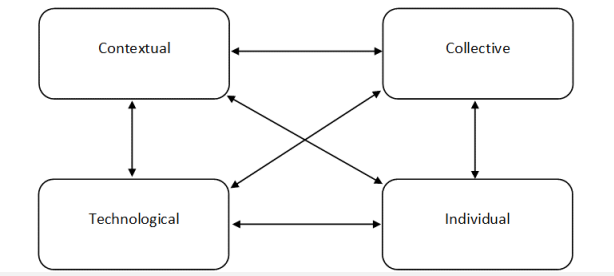
Key findings	Meaning	Category	Theme/ Core Category
The fading distinction between the Internet, social media and mobile communication and the abundance of social media platforms. The view on social media as communication tools or technologies that are merely interchangeable or complementary when it comes to using for certain (organisational) goals. The technological views also include factors that inhibit organisational social media use related to the sensitivity of the discussed topics or for its target audience. NGOs steer along the technological functionalities of social media to ensure privacy and anonymity if needed. These are related to coping with functional barriers/technical limitations of technologies and adaptations of the communication for particular social media platforms.	The views with a Technological aspect relate to the fact that these views of the NGOs describe a technological feature of social media technologies that may shape social media use by the NGOs	Technological Views	NGOs Views on Social Media
Personal online identity can be expressed with social media. Personal one-to-one communication is enabled where sometimes anonymity plays a role in enabling the conversation.	With Individual is understood the views on social media NGOs have, that are related to the personal sphere of social media use, i.e. how is it related to an individual?	Individual Views	
NGOs are aware that there is a shift from one-way communication to engagement and dialogue. Some NGOs are aware of the profound implications social media may have on their organisation's reason for existence. Some respondents view departments like their IT or communications department or middle management as gatekeepers and less receptive to new digital technologies.	With Collective is meant the views the NGOs have that are related to social media use between a group of people or in a formalised structure, such as a (non-profit) organisation	Collective Views	
Organisations tap into local knowledge and open up these resources using online tools. Contextual aspects such as political climate or cultural norms shape the use of social media by the organisation. Contextual sensitivities (e.g. human rights issues), or potentials are influencing the choice for use or non-use by organisations of functionalities social media offered.	The Contextual aspects are related to those views of the NGOs that take into account the 'context in which social media is used.	Contextual Views	
	The data reveals multiple instances where a relationship between different clusters of views occurred.	Relationships between the views	

Table 5-8. A summary of the key findings related to NGOs' views on Social Media.

6 Findings Theme: NGOs' Use of Social Media in Development

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings for the third research sub-question, as outlined in Section 1.2: In what way do development NGOs apply social media for development purposes? This has led to the core category of *NGO's Use of Social Media in Development.* This core category encompasses all uses of social media for development activities by a development NGO. The core category *NGO's Use of Social Media* has two distinct subcategories:

- **Social media for outward engagement**
- **Consequences of adapting/using social media in development**

Each category is being discussed, and the relationship of them with the theme is explored.

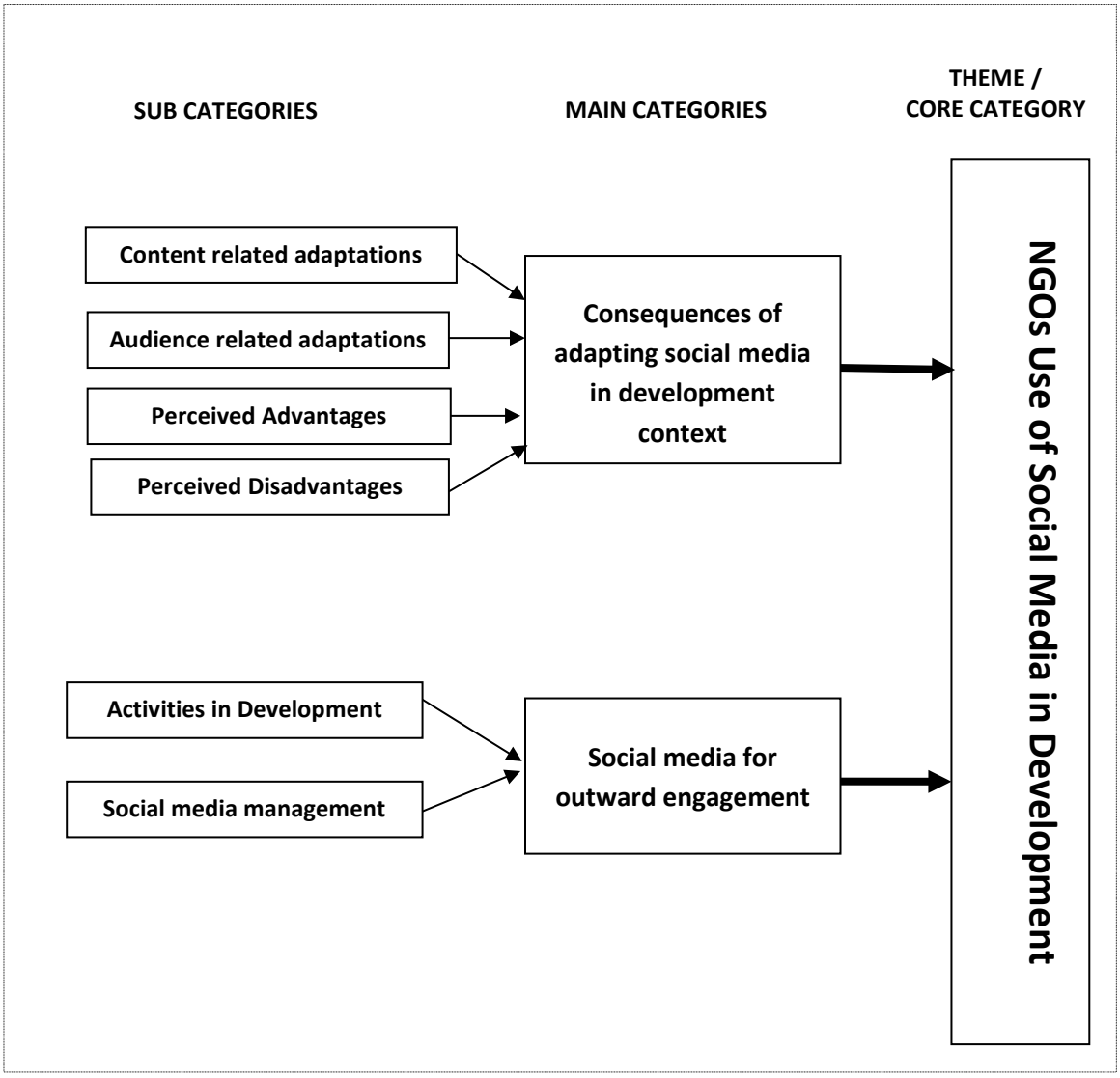


Figure 6-1. Relationships of Categories to Core Category NGO's Use of Social Media.

This chapter starts with an overview of the chain of evidence that led to this theme and its subcategories. An overview of the chain of evidence that led to the theme of this chapter and its subcategories is included in Appendix C. Afterwards, the chapter continues with two major

sections based on the main categories of the ***NGO's Use of Social Media*** theme. Finally, the findings on this theme are summarised.

6.2 Social media for outward engagement

This category **Social media for outward engagement** describes the NGOs' social media activities in the context of development. Two subcategories were found in the data: ***Activities in Development***, and ***Social media management*****.** The next section discusses these subcategories in more detail.

6.2.1 Activities in Development

The aims for using social media are various from *raising awareness* to *fundraising*. These become apparent in the response of the respondent from the Confederated NGO:

> *"Goals [for using social media]…It depends. Sometimes it is raising awareness but also donations or signing a petition."* (communications professional, Confederated' NGO)

This statement highlights a broad range of activities for which social media is used. The respondent further explained that the goals for social media are formulated per campaign while campaigns are embedded within the annual communication strategy. Many NGOs use crowdsourcing to get funding. The respondent of the Traumatised Children NGO explained:

> *"A significant part of our work at HQ is focused on attracting people and getting funding."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO).

The respondent of the Confederated NGO argues that their fundraising activities are a specific activity that they conduct mostly for emergency relief efforts (Open code *Emergency (humanitarian) aid*):

> *"We are not very active in fundraising online. It happens but mostly for emergency aid."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO).

NGOs have identified ways to engage with their audience and receive not only monetary aid from them. Some of the NGOs are figuring out how specific (micro) tasks can be delegated to them. The respondent from the STD awareness NGO said:

> *"Our supporters can mean much more than just providers of money. That could be with things such as delivering us photos in Africa they have been, or stories, a blog they created or a video. Let them deliver that content. Otherwise, we need to send someone to Africa to cover the stories. The crowd can help us with that.."* (communications professional, STD Awareness NGO)

The Water Platform NGO has created an emergency app (derived from their monitoring tool) used by other NGOs to assess the needs of communities in disaster-struck regions (for example, after an earthquake). People can provide feedback on their urgent needs like drinking water, shelter or cash to buy goods.

Social media can be instrumental in *digital activism* some NGOs argued. These NGOs are aware of the use of social media for digital activism by local activists or organisations and have identified the need for knowledge dissemination on this. They are even involved with the production of how-to material or training via local partner organisations.

This may range from digital safety and security to digital campaigning for social causes. The respondent from the Confederated NGO stated:

> "*It becomes more and more important to use social media in developing countries for our work. You have people who use social media in those countries, for example, to denounce human rights violations of for lobbying for better education. The social media activists so to speak. There are all kinds of opportunities, and we want to support projects that are increasingly going to do this kind of things."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Social media has also been used for *campaigning and raising awareness*.

> *"That is an important part of our communications. People need to know us, people need to understand what we stand for, and we want people to get sympathy for our cause. Why do we want that? We want as many people as possible, join us as a movement and support us. Moreover, that may be done by donating money, but that could also be by organising an event for us."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO).

The context of development has stimulated some NGOs to combine social media activities in novel ways (Open code *Integrating social media activities in new configurations*). The respondent from the Water Platform NGO argues that they have an innovative approach:

> *"Well, the combination of knowledge, fundraising and reporting I have nowhere seen before. Yes, elements we have copied from [ed. name of a U.S. NGO]. Those are the frontrunners; we can learn a lot from them. They lend money to an entrepreneur who wants to develop or set up something and then make money on them. They were the first one targeting on the individual. I think we have learned a lot from them.*
>
> *Of course, Twitter, Wikipedia all concepts where you can learn from. However, I do believe that we are the first who have thought this through of combining knowledge sharing, fundraising and reporting, this combination of these three. We have not found any other organisation that is exactly doing what we are doing. Many parties just do one element of what we do."* (sr. management professional, Water Platform NGO)

Another NGO also felt they were acting as early adopters.

> "To *my knowledge, there are not many organisations like us that have introduced an enterprise 2.0 technology, a social business software-like platform*." (development practitioner, Child development NGO)

The same NGO elaborated on *Mobile reporting* or *Monitoring and evaluation with social media*, utilising mobile phone technologies combined with online data collection platforms and social media.

They argue that location-based data collected with mobile phones that do not need to be continuously connected to the Internet improve other NGOs or companies adopting CSR projects to better understand the performance of the development projects.

> *"The other thing we do, is mobile data collection, monitoring and reporting back from the field. In order to enhance visibility and provide insight into local projects with photos and SMS. So, we not only have a marketplace [ed. for NGOs and companies interested in CSR projects], some organisations also come to us and tell us we already have five ongoing projects. Can you make it easier for us to explain what is going on to the larger audience? It is kind of reporting we are offering."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

A similar explanation was given by another NGO, arguing that social media offers them additional monitoring and evaluation or reporting possibilities where they can receive data in a simple, straightforward manner from local communities or people visiting the locale of their projects.

> *"We try to go a step further with social media. You can improve the way you carry out your projects in developing countries. You can deploy it for monitoring and evaluation. If you can produce a video with your mobile phone and you can directly submit this, you can much better track your projects. So we want to move on beyond just communication (ed. with social media]. We are going to experiment with this, with mobile reporting. You can imagine that if a school is being built somewhere, you assign an SMS number in order to receive feedback about this school through that number. That you can show online."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

They highlighted the importance of social media for their organisation: that it had become an integral part of the NGO's *marketing and communication policy*.

> *"Twitter and Facebook are powerful platforms, but we have it all set up using various tools so you do not need to look constantly at your screen, but the moment something is said to us we can respond quickly. (…) So our social media communications are fully integrated into our marketing and communication policy."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

This quotation also illustrates the importance of exposure and growth by social media marketing:

> *"I think without social media, without social networking sites, we had grown less fast."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

Next to a communication policy, another instrument used by non-profit organisations is the active promotion of their causes or campaigns by putting advertisements on social media platforms or in search engine results via online media companies such as Google (open code *social media marketing*):

> *"We are on Twitter; we are on Facebook, we are on Hyves [ed. now-defunct social media platform], we advertise on Google. So in this way pretty much people find us. Sponsored ads? Yes, via Google Ad Grants."* (development practitioner, Community Knowledge Management NGO)

Blogging is a social media practice used by several of the examined NGOs. It helps them to convey their way of working and sharing thoughts with others in the field. The following NGO expressed their way of using blogs as an instrument to allegedly openly communicate with their partners:

> *"We have put elements that we find important about social media together in one system that makes it more useful for our partners. We are very active in blogging. Very open." (management professional, Water Platform NGO)*

Some NGOs argued that social media have benefits for *internal communication* within their organisation. The digital media provides the advantage of using familiar technologies for internal communication. Knowing the person who is blogging worked as a catalyst for fostering online discussion.

> *"One thing is the internal blogging. Internally, it worked well. It did work because people already knew each other. If not from the face than still, you know who it is. That made it easier to respond to a blog or on an announcement or to start a [ed. online] discussion. Often it follows after face-to-face meetings, continuing with an online discussion."* (communications professional, Expertise sharing NGO)

The internal use not only covered communication; some NGOs mentioned the use of *online (internal) collaboration*. Social media or Internet tools have become part of the collaboration practices of the NGO staff. This facilitated working with people with tools mostly familiar to all people involved inside and outside the organisation, they argue.

> *"We have for our website developers (also volunteers) a chat channel, a wiki containing all documentation. So, we have everything from [ed. name of the NGO] online. We work via Google docs, via email, via skype, I sometimes meet people personally, but we also have regular meetings on Skype. Yes, all documentation is online. Everything is online-only, and we make appointments via Twitter or by email."* (development practitioner, Community knowledge management NGO)

Some NGOs, like the Confederated NGO, use a portal for online *knowledge management* activities with their partner organisations and local country branches. This provided them with a single point for the online resources for the activities mentioned above.

> *"The portal provides information on NGO's funds; quickly see what everyone is up to and their latest projects and information; detailed guides for sharing information; supports four online languages, plus it has no language restrictions for content added by users; can be online accessed and maintained by partners and members across the world; allows for full or limited functionality depending on connection speed."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

The same NGO states that the goal of the portal is *"to facilitate and promote knowledge sharing and collaborative learning in the context of the NGO's mission. The purpose is to enable the Confederated NGO and its counterparts to be more effective and efficient in their work."*

The Confederated NGO argues that knowledge management activities encompass field blogs, podcasts or stories, information on best practices and lessons learned, creation of Communities of Practice, and collaborative learning and information sharing. Another NGO explained how they use an intranet platform for their *internal communication*.

> *"Internally, we use WorkVoices, a sort of Yammer. It is a combination of Twitter and LinkedIn within your organisation. We use that to communicate within our organisation here, and with our volunteers at in the field, 80 coaches who guide the projects." (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)*

This NGO, like the Water Platform NGO, has recently adopted another internal communications platform, Slack, which is also a common platform among software developers.

6.2.2 Social Media Management

This subcategory deals with how NGOs manage their social media communications.

Some of the NGOs in this study have identified social media as a valuable communications activity, even having a full-time social media manager as part of their staff (coded as s*ocial media staffing*).

> *"Social media is our most important asset, so we have one person fulltime on social media"* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Various NGOs measure and monitor their social media performance (*social media analysis*). The measurement tools are not necessarily the most sophisticated but show that the organisations are aware of measuring their social media activities.

> *"We map things and conclude, but we have not figured out a model on how we can better monitor things. We are looking for a monitoring tool. At the moment, we use Google alert and Meltwater, a kind of social media reporting tool. However, it is still limited. We are in talks with parties that have developed those tools in which you can monitor, but also can create and analyses and set of 'commands' [ed. for automatic social media activities]. So that is something we want to develop further."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Some NGOs put much effort into *analysing social media* while others follow a different approach, not necessarily analysing their social media communications and interactions in detail:

> *"I create a weekly dashboard of all our [ed. social media] channels, what happens there. We keep track of the types and numbers of interaction. I have deliberately chosen to do it manually because I want to be aware of what those numbers mean. (…) Our social media measures are not recorded in terms of quantity or quality, we have our goals for marketing and communications, and everything we do must contribute to those goals"* (communication professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Although the focus is not on a specific numerical goal, the NGO manually keeps track of the number of interactions on the social media channels they use. The reason that this NGO gives for not aiming for particular social media metrics is that they focus on the crowdsourced projects.

Everything the NGO does needs to contribute to those projects, the communications professional asserts:

> *"Our strategy is being transparent and that it should contribute to the larger goals of the organisation."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Meanwhile, a senior management professional, of this NGO stated that they do use tools to measure what social media delivers to them.

> *"We can measure with Google analytics. We can exactly determine how many visitors there are and every day we measure how many members there are, how many donations, etc."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

This brings us to the use of a *social media strategy* by NGOs. Part of the strategy is sometimes guidelines on how to use social media. Half of the NGOs did not have clear guidelines, whereas some of the others got inspiration from other organisations for their guidelines.

> *"You have social media protocols. However, let me say the communication culture within [ed. name of the NGO] is still very 'centrally controlled broadcasting'. A social media protocol from another organisation was copied, and a few things were changed thinking this would suit us. "* (development professional, Child Development NGO)

A few NGOs have come to realise that they have to develop a strategy for their social media communications after having experimented for a while. They aim to incorporate this into their general communications strategy.

> *"Last year, we tried a few things, but the real strategic use of social media in our communication strategy is something we will start now."* (communications manager Traumatised Children NGO)

Another aspect of the social media strategy is the distinction between a separate treatment of social media communications in contrast with a plan to combine social media with other means of communication. The following example shows an NGO that uses social media in a planned manner alongside other communication channels, referring to this as a cross-media campaign.

> *"To create awareness, we needed to campaign and go to rural areas as well. So cross-media campaign: news, radio, TV commercials, and campaign teams, Facebook and Twitter etc."* (development practitioner, E-learning NGO)

This integrated approach to social media strategy is understood by most of the studied NGOs.

> *"It is part of a bigger picture. You have ways of communication that are online and offline. You use them when you need them and for the target group with whom they fit."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

The strategy also covers the level of experience that the NGO's staff has with social media. For example, one of the NGOs described social media literacy training as a part of their social media strategy.

It became clear for them that the perception of the *media literacy level of the staff* had to be adjusted.

> *"We are training staff to increase literacy in social media. These are hands-on training to groups. However, during training, I overestimated the knowledge of my colleagues."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

The same NGO was involved in social media *training of staff* and train-the-trainer programmes for staff of some NGOs they collaborate with in the Global South.

> *"In order to enhance the capacity of NGOs to use social media in their communications, selected follow up in-house training meetings were held after the training workshop."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

Another NGO also explained the hands-on approach to familiarise staff with how to use social media.

> *"I am writing a communication strategy for the coming years. Moreover, to get a translation to an online strategy, a bureau is helping us. We are developing a kind of manual. Not with the approach on how to tweet, or what you can or cannot do. However, with the approach what to look for when using social media."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

Most of the NGOs have set up a (sometimes an informal) web care team who are regularly *monitoring social media and responding*.

> *"We monitor social media to see what is said about the organisation. There is not a real crisis team plan, but we can respond."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

> *"Yes, we measure [ed. social media]. We map and conclude. However, we have not figured out yet how we can improve monitoring. We are also looking for a monitoring tool. Right now, we use Google alert and meltwater, a kind of social media reporting tool. However, it is limited. We are in discussion with parties that offer those services."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Another NGO explains that they have started monitoring and analysing their social media communications and reactions to them, providing them insights.

> *"The benefit of all the measuring from early on, from analytics to google insights or Facebook insights is that we can exactly measure what does not work or what works. (…) Extremely important are good web care applications. A worthwhile investment to get a clear picture of how effective a campaign is."* (communications manager STD Awareness NGO)

Sometimes, after monitoring, an NGO chooses not to respond based on their policy guidelines. This NGO argues that reacting to a blog from a right-wing or extremist group, where they are mentioned, will only attract online abuse against them. Therefore they choose not to respond to those blogs.

> *"We choose not to react on certain blogs like right-wing blogs"* (development professional, Advocacy NGO)

This is in contrast with this example of a larger NGO that has set up a *web care team.* This team was started when the NGO were confronted with online accusations from bloggers and were forced to defend themselves. From that incident, they learned, resulting in the creation of a team (initially composed of volunteers and now of paid staff) to respond quickly. The argument she put forward is that online responses are meaningful for their campaigns. She continued by reiterating some of the lessons learned.

> *"The press communications officer of the NGO should also monitor social media. The web care team needs to sit closely together and the decision to respond or not needs to be done quickly. It is important to have a written web care policy. Furthermore, the web care team needs to be trained in responding to a range of questions and emotions. They need to be coached and supported by a community manager"* (communications professional, confederated NGO)

This approach hints at a higher level of organisation and differentiation in the functions and roles of the people involved with the web care of this NGO.

As a part of their strategy, a quarter of the NGOs mentioned that they have already reserved their NGO's name on platforms that they are not actively using yet. They wait until that platform gains a large enough number of users from their target audience.

> "*We do not necessarily have to be the first. We keep an eye on other platforms [the NGO is not using yet]. I have registered our name on some of them, so that, if it gets bigger we can start. However, we are not actively involved in them yet."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Another respondent explained their increasing use of social media as follows.

> *"Conveying the message where the people are, that is much more efficient, and that saves us money. So that is just part of our communication strategy."* (communications manager STD Awareness NGO)

For this NGO, managing social media as a part of their communications strategy also has the monetary incentive of cost reduction.

6.2.3 Key findings: 'Social media for outward engagement'

The key findings of this category **Social media for outward engagement** are summarised as follows. Two subcategories were identified: ***Activities in Development,*** and ***Social Media Management***.

- Development NGOs show some typical ***development related activities*** with social media, such as *raising awareness, crowdsourcing, digital activism, emergency aid*, *monitoring and evaluation, online collaboration, and knowledge dissemination*
- The NGOs are aware of the need to manage their social media communications. Most of the NGOs have set up a (sometimes informal) ***web care team*** who are regularly monitoring social media and responding.

6.3 Consequences of adapting/using social media in development

This category covers the consequences of using social media in development. Four subcategories were identified: *Content related adaptations, Target audience related adaptations, Perceived disadvantages and Perceived advantages of social media use in the context of development***.**

6.3.1 Content related adaptations

The subcategory **content related adaptations** describes how the development NGOs adapted social media content. Organisations considered issues such as ***tone of voice***, ***communication language***, the ***use of local knowledge and content***, and ***acceptability of content***.

6.3.1.1 Tone of voice

The Crowdsourcing NGO explains that they *"talk differently to Dutch people than for example East-Africans",* meaning that the informal tone of voice used in social media is different and adjusted to the customs and language use of different audiences or user segments to be more appealing to them. This is corroborated by the e-Learning NGO:

> "*On Facebook* [ed. in Kenya] *you assume younger people are present, so I use typical youngster Kenyan language style, or for mobile games, we use English Swahili slang, that everybody in Nairobi speaks."* (development practitioner, e-Learning NGO)

Whereas for election monitoring, the respondent added, a formal tone of voice is used where appropriate:

> *"In Cambodia, with formal election monitoring. It is different. More formal and more tricky space we are navigating in, it is more sensitive. There we must work slightly different than with user groups. So, it depends on the situation."* The respondent added: *"We use a formal tone of voice where appropriate."* (development practitioner, e-Learning NGO)

The advantage of social media that I coded with the open code *'lightweight communication'* exemplifies the informal tone of voice and networking possibilities. The respondent from the Water Platform NGO argued:

> *"The main difference [ed. from traditional communication media] for me personally is that it is very lightweight. You can follow interesting people. It is very network focused. When I look at that, I have a quick overview of what someone is doing. One message is enough to know what someone is busy with. You get a glimpse of what is going on."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

Some NGOs expressed a *positive tone* in their social media messages. The respondent from the Traumatised Children NGO replied that they want to show a different message.

Rather than showing a poor person to enhance fundraising, they show what local communities can achieve, and have achieved, sending out a positive message:

> *"People in developing countries see a picture of a poor person as a 'victim'. Therefore, we use the image of 'local hero' instead... The image is important, and the message communicated should be positive. Not playing the moral or guilt card."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

The respondent from the Water Platform NGO said they purposefully worked with the *'local hero'* (coded in vivo) concept:

"No more sad stories but images of someone who has achieved something. The image is important. How can you convince someone to contribute to a problem? Our generation [ed. the respondent is 25-30 years of age] *has the mind-set of sure we want to do something but let us keep it positive."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

This particular NGO does not use the feeling of guilt in their communication and keeps a positive tone as their target audience wants to reframe the perception of development.

Some respondents, like the one from the Advocacy NGO, explained their intention to use a *personal tone of voice* in their social media messages (via their private social media accounts) where it is mixed with their NGO's information. Other examples of a personal tone-of-voice or personalisation included use of a personal quote when sending out the information from their NGO or including personal blogs of staff working on the ground. Still, the corporate account has a formal tone of voice. He added that the NGO restrained itself from reacting to politicians (when they tweeted about development policy). One of the respondents of the Crowdsourcing NGO explained:

> *"Two marketing communication staff members have set out our 'branding guide'. We have a certain tone of voice. Not too much about poverty but mainly about successes. Thus, we do not steer to the feeling of guilt to our audience when asked for donations or other contributions, but rather to the message that they can keep most of their wealth and only a small contribution is needed."*
>
> He commented further on the tone of voice: *"Development may consist of course cause very negative reactions, but the goodwill of [name of organisation] is very high, we are aware of that. However, in our tone of voice, the language we speak is less development jargon, but we try to appeal to our audience, and who is not attracted by such jargon or language. Therefore, it attracts less negative reactions".* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

6.3.1.2 Communication language

The respondents of the e-Learning NGO explained what communication language they are using:

> *"The official policy is to use more often English in social media. We also need the [Ed. English or French] content of the partners to re-share."* (management professional, e-Learning NGO)

One of these NGO's respondents explained how they dealt with native language use in one instance:

> *"In Cambodia, the mobile phone was a likely tool for monitoring elections. However, the Khmer alphabet is difficult.*
>
> *Moreover, rural settlements cannot use text message as they cannot read English. Now there is a tool, Freedom phone, which makes audio information from websites. So, you can inform people to dial a number and respond. We are not there yet, but something like that will be developed soon."* (management professional, e-Learning NGO)

The Confederated NGO tried to mitigate language issues by offering documents in four languages.

> *"The problem of language differences is tackled by the Confederated NGO and partner organisations in different ways. The [ed. knowledge management] portal is available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. Ensuring the platform is accessible to more people, although not all documents on the portal are translated in all languages because there is not enough time."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Some of the local organisations translated the documents to local languages. The discussion on local language support in this knowledge management portal is an ongoing debate for this NGO as the request was made from local partner organisations, whereas the development NGO seems reluctant to change the situation as it is sticking to their choice of supported languages in the portal. Four online languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese) are supported in the NGO's portal, whereas documents can be stored in local languages.

> *"People were saying: "can we have a portal in Swahili?" However, I think that is something that is needed to be followed up at an organisational level. I do not think the portal at the Confederated NGO level would want to go into those local languages; I do not think that would happen. However, it is a request which was made and which probably needs to be thought about by all who are involved."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

15.5 million people speak Swahili as a first or as a second language. It is the official language of three African countries (Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda), and it is the only African language of the African Union[6].

6.3.1.3 Use of local knowledge and content

The respondents from the Advocacy NGO stated their use of locally produced content:

> *"We have partners with their own websites with content, and we reuse and relay the content via RSS etc. It has largely been automated."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

[6] http://aboutworldlanguages.com/swahili

RSS is an abbreviation for ‘Really Simple Syndication’ or ‘Rich Site Summary’, a class of web feed formats. The respondent from the Crowdsourcing NGO also acknowledges the value of local knowledge:

> *“The cooperation with the locals is very important for us because they are knowledgeable and willing to improve the locals' situation….the locals know the most of their countries, and they are a useful source of knowledge.”* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO was very explicit about the fact that there is plenty of useful local content produced:

> *“You do not need to bring Dutch technology and information to Africa. If you want to communicate something about a particular disease, you do not have to delve into the contents because of they [ed. the local content producers] know it very well.*
>
> *Moreover, regarding software development, that is also excellent. Kenyan programmers have written our software. That works well.”* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The other respondent from the same NGO also highlighted *this is knowing the local context* in a separate interview:

> *“Often, people who live in developing countries have the best ideas on how they can solve problems, and, in fact, they must be able to present that simply online.”* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The incorporation of local knowledge may result in more effective aid and development projects, he argued.

6.3.1.4 Acceptability of content or adapted content

The e-Learning NGO explained how for various user segments, the content is adapted so that it is more acceptable to them. In a course on sexual and reproductive rights taught at schools, they took a different approach per region:

> *“In the northern part of Nigeria, there is sharia law [ed. compared to the Christian southern part of the country]. So, the content has been adapted to regions using Nigerian government education curriculum guidelines and targeted per age level, for example, no info on pregnancy for the infants. So, the websites are different for the northern and southern parts of Nigeria.”* (management professional, e-Learning NGO)

To be able to provide relevant content to the girls attending the school, the NGO created context-specific content through co-creation workshops:

> *“The girls themselves defined the most pressing issues not covered in the official curriculum, and they are to the point”.* (development practitioner, e-Learning NGO)

With this, a special website targeting the girls was created. They also created a separate website for the parents as they have different concerns than teachers or children. The NGO had the same experience and approach in other African countries like Uganda and Senegal.

Adaptation of content is also observed in the way NGOs produce content for different social media platforms. This is illustrated by this remark by the respondent from the Crowdsourcing NGO:

> *"YouTube and Flickr are for us the main channels to deliver and easily use our content, to embed to be found. If you look at Facebook and Twitter we use for brand management, raising awareness and gaining attention, the moment we get attention, likes or follows we try to get attention from the people outside our network, from the ones we get attention to connect with, and everyone we are connected with to call for action."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The segmented use of social media platforms is also illustrated by the remarks of the respondent from the Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO:

> *"We mainly focus on youngsters and teenagers, age range 12 to 19 years, particularly with Facebook and YouTube. With Twitter, we reach an older audience (age range 20 to 30 years), mainly working in the marketing industry and our business contacts."* (communications professional, Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO)

The respondent from the Community knowledge management NGO explained they are aware of the local stakeholders' use of social media:

> *"There are villages or communities with their own Twitter account. Some of them with more followers than we have. One community, for example, is a hospital in the slums of Nairobi. They have their own Twitter account and keep their followers informed on what is going on in the hospital and what projects they are carrying out."* (development practitioner, Community knowledge management NGO)

The respondent from the Confederated NGO explained their rationale for platform choice, a *targeted approach*:

> *"The message is adapted to the medium. How we use Facebook is more general…to tell you about our work, starting conversations, reacting to questions. However, we also use Facebook for campaigning. Then Facebook has a particular goal within that campaign. We use it for getting in touch and engage, and that is a continuous thing. Depending on the campaigns we choose which online social media to use. We adapt [ed. the message content] to the medium. Indeed, it may be the same messages but presented differently."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

The NGO has an idea about what purpose it uses a platform for, and that the message needs to be attuned to the chosen social media communication channel. The respondent continues by illustrating how this is done on a range of social media platforms:

> *"On Facebook, you go more in-depth, you provide context to a message, and on Twitter, you present it as fact. On Twitter, we do more often call to action and news. Twitter is also quite volatile. We are having very few discussions on Twitter. We will answer two or three times on a Tweet, but afterwards, we will tell people if they want to discuss further they should go to our online discussion platform [name of the platform].*

It is not because we want to avoid [ed. discussion] but there we can go deeper. Sometimes people do join, and sometimes they do not. However, then you know those are not the people who want to start a discussion with you." (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

The choice of social media of this NGO is steered by where most of their target users are.

"You need to be where the people are.", she argued for using platforms that are broadly used. Moreover, she added: *"Two years ago we did a big campaign on Hyves [ed. a local social media platform now extinct] because that was at the time the biggest social media, so that was a very conscious choice." (communications professional, Confederated NGO)*

Actually 'user segmentation' and 'social media platform segmentation' seem to be inter-related when we observe the responses. Platform choice is based on prevalence in a region, or whether the platform is being used by the targeted audience segment.

6.3.2 Audience related adaptations

This subcategory refers to the activities undertaken by the NGOs to attune to the social media behaviour of their target audience. This category consists of three sub-categories identified in the data which are presented in the following section. These sub-categories are ***user engagement***, ***user segmentation,*** and ***mobile phone use***.

6.3.2.1 User engagement

The open code ***user engagement*** refers to how (frequently) and how long NGOs interact with users via social media technologies. The following respondent claims that the NGO responds to people's complaints (as well as to positive messages). Furthermore, they value the so-called 'Like' on Facebook as an important marker of the relationship with their audience:

"We maintain a dialogue. We ask people why they want to leave or abandon supporting us…. Looking at Facebook, if people like us, they decide to do this more consciously. From our fan base on Facebook, we see greater involvement." (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Another respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO replied:

"If people in a small village know from each other they are going to participate in a [mobile phone] quiz more people will join. Then up to sixty per cent of the villagers participate." (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

This illustrates that the NGO relies on word of mouth approaches to gain a broader audience. He added:

"People should want to take part in the quiz if they do not want to answer the question then they just do not. They do not need to answer the question at once; they can text message the answer text messages when they have time for that." (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

This illustrates that there is no need for synchronous engagement between the NGO and the target audience. A respondent from the Crowdsourcing NGO highlighted the social aspect of user engagement:

> *"We talk a lot [ed. on social media] about things our audience are interested in. Thus, not particularly about ourselves, that would be difficult to follow for them and certainly not social."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

One of the respondents of the e-Learning NGO argues the necessity of a participatory approach by learning about and engaging with communities:

> *"I give this workshop on social media to several organisations we work with: it is all out there, but it does not have any impact if you do not work demand-driven and in the context of the people the development project targets. Listen to what people want; focus on a participatory approach."* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

The respondent of the STD awareness NGO argues that it is important to create a strong bond with their donors, arguing that the bonding helps to develop a relationship that is more profound than a simple financial transaction:

> *"You have to make sure that people see what you do as an organisation, and you have to ensure they feel 'attached' and are willing to spread the message. In that stage, people will work for you by being donor, volunteering, sharing on social media, and as they have to say two hundred people in their network, a snowball effect happens. We are an NGO who is fundraising, so we need as many donors as possible. Therefore, we need bonding with them. A Facebook like does not yet mean they will contribute two hundred Euros to us. People should feel their contribution is meaningful."*
> (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

The engagement can be incentive-driven as the respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO noted:

> *"We offer many rewards, such as T-shirts and free HIV tests. We see that more people have taken that HIV test by these gifts. Measurable results. We also give away mobile phone credits if they have correctly answered a certain amount of question on our mobile phone quizzes. Small rewards but offering just enough incentive for people to participate in the quizzes."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The respondent of the Expertise sharing NGO pointed out that the nature of interaction with their stakeholders has changed with the use of social media. Instead of solely broadcasting, their communication has turned into a two-way communication channel with more interaction with their target audience:

> *"Our way of engagement with stakeholders has become more interactive because now we have that possibility [with social media]."* (communications professional, Expertise sharing NGO)

The respondent of the Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO stresses the importance of combining *"online and offline activities in four steps called: awareness, educate, activate and celebrate",* when it comes to the NGO's efforts on health and sex education for young people. The respondent of the Mobile Technology NGO said:

> *"We do like to combine mobile phone campaigns with radio programmes, newspapers and posters. Mobile phone campaigns are faster, though."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

One of the respondents of the e-Learning NGO explained the combination of online and offline as follows:

> *"To create awareness, we needed to campaign and go to rural areas as well. So, a cross-media campaign using news, or radio or TV commercials, and campaign teams, Facebook and Twitter et cetera. People do not have to go to a website to register but can also join via SMS (via the Frontline SMS tool)."* (development practitioner, e-Learning NGO)

This combination of both online and offline was the NGO's chosen strategy, but the respondents explained that their target audience was also responsible for adapting online to offline:

> "[ed. the NGOs country of operation] *the biggest things was having computers and the Internet, or better lack of, but we found out teachers found ways to go around this and how to deal with power outages. There was a paper version of the content. People are creative."* (management professional, e-Learning NGO)

Regarding situations where mobile social media has been measured, the respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO answered:

> *"With radio, it is hard to measure who listens, whereas with the Internet that becomes easier and people can respond directly. It also becomes effective with the use of mobile phones."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The Confederated NGO is aware of the dissemination of the content it provides on social media but would seek more engagement or direct dialogue in the discussion that is generated by that content. This is illustrated in the response from the respondent of the Confederated NGO:

> *"You can see how many times your stuff* [ed. online posts] *is being shared. You can see what is successful and how the content can be adjusted. Sometimes real online discussions arise on Facebook in their own circle* [ed. On the sharer's page]. *We would like to see people discuss these on our online discussion forum, but they often do not, they are too stubborn and remain on their channel. We will keep the online forum because it still has value. The contributions there are of high quality, and it assures our transparency."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

However, the same respondent expanded on the nuances and intricacies of the social media analysis by her organisation:

> *"We have not analysed whether the people who have left Hyves [ed. a defunct social media platform] and moved to Facebook re-joined our group [on Facebook]. That we do not know. This is something we need to find out. Moreover, what platform we use depends on our campaigns."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

A respondent from the Crowdsourcing NGO explained that analysis of interactions with their posts had provided them insight into what can be expected:

"From many things we post online, we track interaction, and we learn from various types of posts what we can expect beforehand: how many have read, likes et cetera. We try to differentiate and keep the posts accessible to a broad audience." (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

6.3.2.2 User segmentation

User or audience segmentation is carried out by NGOs where age, language, geography (country, urban/rural), gender, literacy level, or the potential for contribution by donors (in time, knowledge or financial) plays a role in the identification of specific segments of users to target with their communications. For its activities, the Crowdsourcing NGO specifically targeted a certain group:

"We aim at young professional, thus higher educated with jobs. They are often well off and want to contribute to international aid but often lack enough time. They also do not want to commit for years to a project but are willing to spend a day or a week doing something if they, for example, happen to be in Kenya. Thus, if someone wants to help with a marketing plan or an architect who can design a greenhouse, people can contribute. This works quite well." (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Another respondent from this NGO added:

"You have to know your target audience, then your goal, what you want to achieve and then you choose the communication channels" and continued by saying *"Our target audience I have in my mind, that has become a person. She has a name, and age, a place of residence et cetera. We have 'personalised' her and everything we communicate we communicate to her".* (Crowdsourcing NGO)

This specifically refers to the young professionals in The Netherlands that this NGO is targeting as potential donors or contributors to the crowdsourcing projects. As an example, he illustrated the targeted approach, meaning that young professionals who visit or are interested in a specific country are targeted with appealing and relevant content:

"In Facebook, it is important to target messages at people in Indonesia. We target our messages at different target groups" (Crowdsourcing NGO)

Another NGO pointed out that research is required on the social media use of the intended target audience.

"Technology research is necessary to gain more specific information about when technology is used, for what kind of content, and how usage differs across subgroups. Many young people in Nairobi, for example, use morning traffic as an opportunity to listen to music on their phones or to update their Facebook accounts." (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

The communication in the developing countries is targeted to a particular audience, the respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO explains:

"Target audience is everyone, but in practice, for example, in Uganda, the average respondent is 19 years old and 55% male. At a life expectancy of 46 years, the age of 19 is not so young." (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The same organisation puts effort into reaching out to women but is aware of the gender-based digital divide, as shown in the following excerpt. This targeting approach is also used for illiterate people by using voice-based messaging next to text-based messaging. Furthermore, the text messages are provided in local languages, the respondent added.

> *"Mobile phones are not only for men but also for women [in Kenya]"*
> (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The respondent of the Community knowledge management NGO illustrated the use of social media, not by individuals only, but by communities as a whole:

> *"There are even villages with their own Twitter account, and sometimes with even more followers than my NGO. By the way, on our platform it is not necessarily a village, it can also be a region, in a given city or something like that. One of those villages, for example, is a hospital in a slum in Nairobi. They have their own Twitter account, to keep their followers up to date on what is happening in the hospital, or on what projects they are working on."*
> (development practitioner, Community knowledge management NGO)

This user segmentation is illustrated by this quote from the respondent of the Expertise Sharing NGO in which she explained how her NGO had identified four target groups that they approach differently:

> *"We have a targeted approach to specific groups: first internal/own staff, secondly opinion leaders in international development: people with lots of expertise in the development and who are also a trendsetter in this field. For example, bloggers writing about international development. Third other international development NGOs and fourth the Ministry for Development Cooperation, though the latter not really via social media."* (development practitioner, Community knowledge management NGO)

The respondent from the Confederated NGO explained that they had created online forums for various groups. The same respondent also explained how a new group of donors is reached:

> *"We have a donor panel, only meant for the donors, and it has the same functions as our online discussion forum, but in the donor forum, we can ask specific questions."*

> *"Internal discussion was going on about the changing image of the NGO when certain social media fundraising campaigns were launched. Those led to some donation cancellations but eventually attracted more new donors. A shift occurs in the type of members and donors we attract. Who are these new donors you think? People who share our philosophy. I am not sure who they are. People from an audience segment who are more inclined to activism and lobbying. This appeals to some more than to others. The fundraisers* [ed. colleagues in the NGO] *became somewhat nervous because of this changing image. However, it can have a positive impact, and we should not be afraid."* (the Confederated NGO)

The respondent from the Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO explained that they noticed that celebrities are useful for conveying the message to youth on social media*:*

> *"Celebrities are used to send the message on Twitter and to raise more followers."*

Although this practice is not common across all the studied NGOs, it is noteworthy that the observed examples seemed to target the youth.

6.3.2.3 Mobile phone use

The use of mobile communications technology was highlighted by multiple NGOs. The respondent of the e-Learning NGO explained how it has cross-linked online e-learning platforms to social media and is using locally available technology (mobile phones) to engage with the target users:

> *"In Kenya, for conflict resolution project, an E-learning platform with lessons for the student was set up with a link to Facebook. Facebook is very popular with Kenyan youth. Also, a mobile phone e-learning application has been developed; for lessons where normally computers and classrooms are needed, but mobile phones are broadly available. The mobile phone is 'individual'; one can use SMS to reach someone. Social media makes it social. So, therefore, a combination of social media and e-learning platform are used in the projects". (*management professional, e-Learning NGO)

The Mobile Technology NGO mainly uses mobile technology to reach out to local communities. Its respondent said:

> *"In Africa Internet [connectivity] is bad and too expensive for the poor whereas mobile phones are the only way to reach out to this group" and "9 million of 30 million people [in Kenya] have a mobile phone. (…) It all started when we heard about the extensive growth of mobile phone use in Africa and that this would be an interesting communication channel to look at. There is commercial potential for companies who start with mobile phone games and ringtones. However, also from a social perspective. It has added value".* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The same observation was made by another NGO:

> *"You can see that in Africa, mobile media is notable. There is a great deal happening with mobile phones. Sometimes social networks are used uniquely. In Africa, they have [ed. text-based] chat programs via mobile phones similar to what we do on the Internet."* (communications professional, Health and Sex Education NGO)

Furthermore, this respondent from the Health and Sex Education NGO said the gaming aspect (coded as *gamification*) makes mobile phones interesting as well:

> *"We got this request from this AIDS centre who work for years in the same way but failed to reach the people they were aiming. With mobile phone quizzes, they managed to get more people had an HIV test."* ('Health and Sex Education' NGO)

Many NGOs acknowledge the potential that the growing use of mobile phones in developing countries brings. A phenomenon identified by some of the interviewed NGOs is *phone sharing*. People share a phone because of *affordability*.

A respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO explained that this was anticipated in the mobile quizzes:

> *"With some questions, more responses were possible because multiple people were responding* [ed. via the same phone]*. We ask for gender and age twice because the answers differ when the phones are shared. (…) In richer regions, everyone has a phone. In poorer parts of a country, a mobile phone is being shared by sometimes up to eight people. Then you are not sure the same person replies a text message. Hence you get different responses if questions are repeated twice."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The next sections discuss the subcategories ***Perceived Disadvantages of or Issues with Social Media Use in the Context of Development***, ***Perceived Advantages of Social Media Use in the Context of Development*** in more detail.

6.3.3 Perceived Disadvantages of or Issues with Social Media Use in the Context of Development

The subcategory ***Perceived Disadvantages of Social Media Use in the Context of Development*** discusses the perceived issues and disadvantages encountered in the use of social media for development, according to the respondents.

Some NGOs expressed the need for *traditional media* (e.g. radio or TV) for communication for development purposes as they argue that it still has more impact. The respondent from the STD awareness NGO argued that the NGO still feels the necessity of traditional media to broadcast their message:

> *"If I look at our NGO's brands than their visibility on social media has less impact than for example via a TV commercial"*. (communications professional, STD Awareness NGO)

One of the lessons learned by the Mobile Phone NGO corroborates this:

> *"Involve the right mix of communication channels. Combine broadcasting through traditional media, like radio, newspaper or posters, with narrowcasting via new media, via mobile"* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The language used for communication was mentioned by many NGOs as a point of concern (open code *Language issues*). For example, the respondents of the e-Learning NGO argued that language is an issue:

> *"The 850 partners in the South do not speak Dutch. They will not follow Dutch Twitter streams. The communities are often Dutch language-oriented, whereas most of the audience are English."* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

Low digital skills or social media literacy of staff is something the researched NGOs have to deal with too (open code *Dealing with (digital) illiteracy*).

> *"In Cambodia, the mobile phone was the most suitable tool for monitoring elections. However, the Khmer alphabet is difficult. Moreover, rural settlements cannot use text message as they cannot read English. Now there is a tool Freedom phone which makes audio information from a website. So you can inform people to dial a number and respond. We are not there yet, but something like that will be developed." (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)*

The NGO focused on making information accessible for people who face illiteracy via voice-based tools in the local languages. Digital illiteracy also relates to the ability of staff to use Information and Communication Technologies, specifically social media tools, for their everyday work and their ability to get grips with new social media (tools).

> *"Not everyone is capable of getting to grips with social media"* (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO).

The communications professional, from the same NGO, added to this that to his surprise, during training, he overestimated the knowledge of his colleagues. Differences in staff's skill levels for adopting social media may present an organisational barrier. The development practitioner added:

> *"Shortly, we will expect from a newly recruited staff that they know how to use social media.* (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO)

The communications professional argued:

> *"The big question is not if they know social media, but what they will do with social media".* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

Regarding this latter aspect, the respondent of another NGO thinks that many projects have a technology focus as a starting point.

> *"Technology push or demand is driven? Still, many projects start with technology in mind."* (development practitioner Community Knowledge Management NGO)

Differences in the staff's ability to adopt social media were apparent in many of the interviewed NGOs.

The respondents of the e-Learning NGO also illustrated a situation where both language and illiteracy played a role, arguing that the use of technology (here, social media and mobile phones) is not a panacea:

> *"Sometimes, we get basic. In this project, the mobile phone application was a challenge for the people. So only number codes were used, but due to illiteracy, a lot of wrong reports came in. So, we went back to a paper wheel used for translation Khmer-English. This was already applied to a healthcare project. Sometimes no tech involved but back to the essence."* (development practitioner, e-Learning NGO)

One of the NGOs explained that another risk is online organisational identity theft, leading to potential *reputation damage* and missing part of the audience*.* The respondent of the Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO explained:

> *"A lot of fake Facebook groups have arisen on Facebook using the organisation's logo. It is not possible to get all those removed or to answer the questions that are published there; so, a part of the audience is being missed."* (communications professional, Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO)

The tension between *openness* and *reputation damage* is illustrated by the following quotation.

> *"We want to be transparent and show where it failed and where we struggle. That is exciting because what does that mean and will people still want to support you?"* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

The respondent from the Advocacy NGO described this as an ongoing internal struggle to convince staff to be open and transparent by using social media. The respondent from the Water platform NGO also acknowledged that this is something they are discussing internally, but a result of this is also a discussion on ensuring quality control of their projects that are visible online.

> *"The big question we face is ... Yes, we are very open, but what happens if things go wrong? Should we be open about that? For example, suppose there is a fraud. Suppose you openly communicate about that, what happens then? How do you openly communicate about your [ed. NGO's] mistakes? Social media makes this much more tangible. These are questions we face, how open is open, and how far do you go? What you also get is quality control. How do you ensure quality [ed. of all projects]? If you cannot, we cannot promote that project online."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

Not all NGOs see the benefits of some social media activities, such as *crowdfunding*. The respondent from the Water Platform NGO explained his *scepticism about online fundraising:*

> "*Regarding online fundraising, I have become more sceptic. I previously thought that when you show the projects [ed. on the website,] people would push the pay button, and it was done. I am not sure whether this [Ed. Fundraising] where [calls the name of another NGO] operates in will be quick on the uptake. We are more active with larger projects where we ensure the money collected [ed. by other NGOs,] via a campaign is directed to the right projects, and we provide insightful reporting."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

An inhibitor that arose was that a particular *social media platform (or its design) was less suitable for a specific activity*, according to the respondent. That difficulty was due to choices made in the design of their own platform.

> *"Our platform [ed. Name of the platform]" is not suitable for fundraising."* (development practitioner Community Knowledge Management NGO).

Another drawback mentioned by the NGOs is (open coded as) *Stigmatisation* and *privacy issues.* Social media may expose sensitive or intimate information or issues, possibly leading to stigmatisation.

Alternatively, social media platforms have restrictive policies. The respondents of the e-Learning NGO explained the cautious approach the NGO takes when it comes to sex education projects:

> *"In Senegal, we were trying to get people reacting on the Internet (website) and Facebook, but people are really scared to put their name in the Facebook group. Besides you need to moderate this in Facebook [ed. referring to the policy of the social media platform]. That is why we have no Facebook group for this yet. You do not know what the youth are going to talk about. So, we are hesitant to use a Facebook group for this."* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

They also explained how they circumvented this issue:

> *"Since we use SMS [ed. for sex, education project], young people can SMS us with personal things. They ask everything!*
>
> *Moreover, on the website, we moderate the FAQ."* (development practitioner, E-Learning NGO)

This method of communication provides sufficient privacy, according to the NGO. The respondent from the STD awareness NGO also agreed on the privacy sensitivity of the topics they deal with:

> *"You have to be very careful, especially regarding sexually transmitted diseases or aids. Projects that were not as successful as we expected had to do with sexuality and privacy issues. We underestimated this. Young people do talk about sex, but in combination with social media that has not always been a good match."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

The sensitivity and the danger local partners could face are illustrated in the remark by these respondents:

> *"We sometimes collaborate with organisations that are not able to put everything online. There are human rights organisations in a country where they are oppressed when they publish certain things online and for which people can get arrested. You do not want that either…"* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

> *"As an employee, you cannot just say anything or writing. Freedom of speech is quite fun, but if I risk being expelled from a country, I am not going to write a very critical blog because indirectly bring you may put the children or the organisation at risk. You need to be aware of as an NGO and as an individual staff that you can deteriorate things."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

An interesting remark was made by the respondent from the STD awareness NGO, fearing the *competition* of other organisations' social media marketing seeking the attention of the same audience:

> *"Of course, making a social media campaign costs lots of time, but it can cost much money too. You have to present something really good. Moreover, it has to stand out from the others. You have to try to be unique, to be creative, to stimulate people [ed. to gain attention]."* (communications professional, STD Awareness NGO)

In this light, it is understandable that a few NGOs are hesitant to share knowledge on organisational social media use (open code *Competition of other organisations*). When asked whether there was a joint effort for training or sharing of resources among Dutch development NGOs, the respondents of the Advocacy NGO answered:

> *"In theory, there is... There is an online SIG [ed. special interest group] but for organisations, it does not work. The individual professionals work together, but there is no consensus among organisations to collaborate on this level."* (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO)

The respondent from the Traumatised Children NGO made clear what the reason for the hesitance is, fearing to undermine their own NGO's position:

> *"When knowledge is being shared, it will weaken you as an organisation. It makes the neighbour NGO better and weakens your organisation."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

Fear of competition is seen as a hurdle for sharing knowledge between organisations.

> *"How is sharing your knowledge helping you get ahead and give you a competitive edge? We reward knowledge hoarding and not knowledge sharing."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

NGOs are aware of financial and infrastructural challenges when it comes to reaching out to their audience in developing countries (Open code *Connectivity and affordability issues*). The Mobile Technology NGO respondent said:

> *"In Africa [ed. he later referred to rural areas] Internet connection is so bad and expensive."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

A few respondents made remarks on the (open coded as) *Overwhelming variety of social media*. The respondent from the Confederated NGO argued that the multitude of social media platforms makes it challenging to decide which to use:

> *"I am tired of all those different platforms. Organisations often use e-mail or other social media network platforms like Bebo in Brazil. Thus, that is difficult."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

The respondent from the Crowdsourcing NGO argued that the speed of technological development means that choices made earlier are likely overtaken by new advances in technology (open code *Pace of technological development is overtaking NGO*):

> *"We are getting overtaken by rapid technological developments. Overtaken by reality!"* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

He elaborated that you can wait until technology or features of platforms get more mature, or you can make a choice to be the first, risking being overtaken later by other NGOs who choose to wait.

Another respondent said the larger organisations face difficulties with responding quickly to technological developments such as social media.

> "Most of the failures [ed. with social media use in the NGO's projects,] are related to the slow pace of a large organisation to deal *with [ed. rapid] developments. I have the impression that larger organisations find this difficult."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

The NGO explained their experiences with the development of a knowledge-sharing platform between partner organisations.

> *"It was meant for partner organisations, for sharing lessons learned and best practices from different regions each other and exchange information in virtual communities of practice. However, putting information on the portal turned out not to be the most effective way. Bringing together various parties in learning paths turned out to be more effective. Also, the platform was not user-friendly. Also, the rapid development of web technology and social media have overhauled the technical infrastructure of the portal. A better alternative is being searched for."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Another issue of using social media has to do with the message that the organisation wants to share (open code *Oversimplification of complex development goal message)*. The respondent of the Expertise Sharing NGO said:

> *"The problem is explaining complex abstract bigger stories, whereas a small story or project is easier to show online and for getting support. See for example [name of 'Crowdsourcing NGO] with only projects. My organisation struggles with this."* (Expertise Sharing' NGO)

The issue of either oversimplifying the message or the difficulty of addressing specific issues was also raised by the respondent from the Traumatised Children NGO:

> *"Social media are not useful for profound or comprehensive communication."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

This struggle with oversimplifying the message when communicating via social media was also mentioned by the respondents from the Confederated NGO, who explained the struggle to convey a clear message on rather complex subjects while simultaneously ensuring the donors continue giving to the projects regardless of their complexity:

> "*You do have to make choices on what you post online. Do people just financially support certain things? Perhaps people only give money to things that are simple to explain, but not to things that maybe are much more important but more difficult and more complicated to explain.*
>
> *So how to ensure people get involved and let them choose what they like to do, and on the other hand clarify that some things are not as simple as 'give this money and then that many children go to school?'. However, the danger is: what if people only support smaller projects, what do we do with the larger projects that are also important?"* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Her colleague, a communications professional, said they seek collaboration with other NGOs who have experience with crowdfunding and online fundraising to overcome this issue and learn how to translate rather complex projects into less abstract and more recognisable activities:

> *"We want to make it a bit clearer what are those projects we support and that you could choose where your money is spent and that you can even follow what has happened with that money. So, we are now considering collaborating with [ed. name of the Crowdsourcing NGO] We want to be able to show online how much money a project costs and how much is still needed. That is difficult right now…*
>
> *Listen, [Ed. name of the Crowdsourcing NGO] already does this. They have smaller projects to manage. Those are more concrete while ours are often much larger, sometimes a bit more abstract projects, like the democratisation process in Zimbabwe or something like that. It is not as tangible as a water pump. Those abstract projects we try to subdivide in more tangible things, like training of journalists. So, we can make it clearer what we are doing."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Some NGOs mention the *time-intensive* nature of social media. The drawback is illustrated in this quotation:

> *"[Ed. with social media] it has just begun, you can measure and analyse your campaigns 24/7 by measuring and counting likes and adjust the campaigns. That is great, but it is also much work."* (communications professional, STD Awareness NGO)

Another aspect is the need for fast responses, whereas the organisation is not equipped for that speed. This is illustrated in this example.

> *"For example, [Ed. name of a right-wing Twitter account & blogsite] has a message [ed. Related to the NGO's development activities] gaining 800 comments within a day and then you want to be part of the first ten responders. We are sometimes a bit of a cumbersome organisation because we must first think of what we say etc., and before you know it, it is three days later. That sort of thing we need to learn, how we should act fast who will respond."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

Some NGOs argue that not all their information is useful for social media.

> *"We have, of course, lots of basic information that you need to put down somewhere. Moreover, that is not always suitable for social media. Online resources where people are looking for, for example, for younger people, we have a portal for information about sexuality, that attracts 50 thousand unique visitors."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO).

Several NGOs understand the tension social media use may bring for achieving different goals where short-term goals such as fundraising are more or less in contrast with long-term goals such as relationship building.

> *"You try to retain people, so you have to try to attract and keep them. That means not always asking for funding. A fundraiser will experience that as a limitation, but from a communication perspective, I say no, we are building a different kind of relationship."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

6.3.4 Perceived Advantages of Social Media Use in the Context of Development

The subcategory ***Perceived Advantages of Social Media Use in the Context of Development*** discusses the perceived advantages encountered in the use of social media for development, according to the respondents.

Many NGOs reported the speed of deploying their message via social media. Some argued it saved them financial resources (Open code *Time and money-saving*). The respondent from the STD awareness NGO said:

> *"…putting the message [ed. on an online platform,] where the people are being much more efficient and save us money. So this is part of our communication strategy."* (STD Awareness' NGO)

The Mobile Technology NGO argues that behavioural change can be stimulated by the NGO's activities (Open code *Stimulating behaviour change*). For instance, an SMS intervention enabled a change in how many people visited a healthcare facility.

> *With our SMS intervention, we have many questions regarding HIV or the nearest testing centre. We check what percentage of the people who underwent the HIV test took part in our SMS quiz. That percentage is a real increase in people going to the test facility... You try to change behaviour in that manner and tell people what the possibilities are."*. (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The (in vivo) open code *Social marketing tool for local organisations* was mentioned explicitly by the respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO:

> *"The goal is to inform and to ensure that we are a good social marketing tool for those local organisations who often have trouble to make known where their facilities are."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The potential for digital activism on social media has been recognised by many of the interviewed NGOs. The respondent of the Confederated NGO said:

> *"We can use social media for our work in developing countries. Local people can use social media, for example, to denounce human rights violations or lobby for better education. Social media activism so to say... Sometimes social media is used for education but also lobbying or campaigns. It all goes together, and there are many opportunities for development organisations."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

The respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO argued that the use of mobile technology helps to reach out to women (Open code *Bridging the gender divide*):

> *"Mobile phones are not solely possessed by men, but no also women do have them. Initially, it used to be a toy for the men."* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The respondent from the Community knowledge management NGO explained that there is room to have different opinions on social media (Open code *Room for discussion & different opinions*):

> *"Look if people disagree with you, if they do not like it, they stop following you on Twitter. Where people work together, there is sometimes arguing. So, do engage in a confrontation, yes, of course! If you throw off everyone, if you silence them, then it goes terribly wrong. Your platform is social, so when people disagree with you, then they should be able to express. If you do not allow that, you will get into trouble because then it will turn against you. If you enter into a quarrel, then you disagree once. In that sense, it is truly social. That happens, it is just natural!"* (development practitioner, Community knowledge management NGO)

The speed of change of the Internet is identified both as positive and negative by NGOs. The Water Platform NGO respondent said:

> "*If somebody asks what is your long-term plan. Yes, we do have a kind of long-term vision. However, we act more on a short-term basis. The Internet is changing very rapidly. For example, with online fundraising, I have become more sceptic."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

The NGO sees that developments on the Internet are going fast, and specific activities have shown not to be feasible in the longer run. The speed provides opportunities to more quickly assess the potential impact of new developments (Open code *Rapid development of the Internet*).
Some NGOs argue (mobile) social media have brought some benefits for monitoring and evaluation of development projects (Open code *monitoring and evaluation*). The respondent of the Crowdsourcing NGO:

> *"You can use it for monitoring and evaluation. If you can make a video with your mobile phone and you can directly submit it, you can much better track your projects. We will go to experiment with mobile reporting. You can imagine that when a school is built somewhere, you publish an SMS number and invite people to provide feedback about this school through that number. That you can show online."* (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

The open code *room for experimenting* was identified, for example, in the way the Crowdsourcing, Water, Confederated and Advocacy NGOs use social media:

> *"There is room for experimenting, and if something does not work, it does not matter."* (communications professional, Advocacy NGO)

The communications professional from the Advocacy NGO explained that there is room for experimenting with social media at his NGO. The respondent has the freedom to express his individual opinion via his own social media account based on his own judgement. There is no strict organisational social media policy, but moderation is advised.

Furthermore, the respondent experiments with an NGO staff list on Twitter: to enable easier following of each other and to enable others to follow all people who are working at his NGO. The respondent intends to extend this to their partner organisations. The communications professional also explained that he stimulated fellow staff to try blogging about events they were attending or when they are abroad for field-visits to increase online and personal visibility of staff and their NGO's activities.

The communications professional from the Confederated NGO argues that the approach of stimulating people to work together on an organisational platform is comparable with web 1.0 thinking (broadcasting, one-way communication). Her NGO is aware of the possibility of failure with these social media activities instead of achieving success, but sees this in the light of their organisation's ambition to develop towards being a platform-organisation. As an example of the early adoption of new social media, the respondent explained that when the social media platform Pinterest[7] was growing and attracting a wider audience, her NGO started using it. The respondent also explained that sometimes, social media campaigns are not as successful as expected:

> "Some *campaigns just do not catch on. That is very sad, that happens. Next time you apply that wisdom. It always has X number of reasons. What are those reasons? Was the message not appealing enough, the timing wrong? That can take you all along in these campaigns. However, there is always a luck factor involved and that you can never exclude."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

She elaborated that the role the NGO wants to take by *learning from mistakes* creates a particular risk of failure of its social media activities. For example, this NGO wanted to be a broker between the community and partner NGOs.

> *If you are talking about what failed this might be a nice one: we now have a kind of online collaboration portal. ..I noticed that it does not work as good as expected. It may cost too much time to open with a slow Internet connection, and people make little use of. ..We noticed that if we bring people together, they learn much more face-to-face. Online that is much slower. Does it mean the platform is not right, or people do not do much online? That is a puzzling question. However, it is trial and error."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

The respondent also explained that the NGO had set up special interest platforms (e.g. portal websites) for knowledge dissemination and exchange between organisations in the Global South, which act similar to a Facebook group, on topics like agriculture or education. That did not work well, and she thought the organisation was too early with those platforms.

Another example regarding *learning from mistakes* is this remark by the respondent from the Mobile Technology NGO:

> *"Regarding failures… The [ed. text message] code 666 does not work in a Christian country like Uganda"* (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)

The number 666 is regarded as The Number of the Beast and Christians in Uganda feel uncomfortable to be associated with this by texting that number. The text message code 666 was, after this initial mistake and much red tape, eventually changed to 777, the respondent explained.

[7] Pinterest is a social image bookmarking system. A recent definition I found is "Pinterest is a pinboard-style photo sharing website that allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections such as events, interests, hobbies, and more" (Wikipedia, 2013).

The respondent from the Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO highlighted the potential benefits (open code) *peer learning* brings in the way her NGO uses social media:

> *"We try to be less steering, less top-down, to say what young people need to do. Youngsters can learn from each other and social media provide the means for it."* (communications professional, Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO)

6.3.5 Key findings category Consequences of adapting/using social media in the development context

The key findings of the category **Consequences of adapting/using social media in the development context** are summarised as follows:

- NGOs have learnt to adapt the ***tone of voice*** of their social media communication to their target audiences. Examples of these are informal slang language use with youth or adding a personal touch to the communication, or a positive tone of voice (or imagery). These activities are intended to enhance bonding with the audience.
- Some NGOs have set guidelines for what ***language*** they use for social media communication, whether it will be English, French, Spanish, Portuguese or Dutch, if that is a national language in a country, or a native/indigenous language.
- Some NGOs identified the value of using ***locally created content*** for social media communication.
- The content was adapted to increase the ***acceptability*** to the ***target audience***.
- NGOs used a range of activities for user engagement, which included incentives such as prizes, participatory approaches, and creating more interactivity.
- NGOs carried out audience segmentation in their social media communication and distinguished target audience by age, language, geography (country, urban/rural), gender, literacy level, the potential for contribution by donors, individual or group communication.
- NGOs have identified the **p*otential of mobile phones in social media*** communication with their target audience. The prevalence of mobile phones and the growth rate of phone users make this an important factor to reckon with.
- NGOs argue that they face various issues or ***disadvantages*** when using social media for development. Amongst the issues that were mentioned are *language issues, (digital) illiteracy, online impostors, stigmatisation or privacy issues, connectivity and affordability issues, the difficulty of conveying complex messages via social media*.
- According to the NGOs, the use of social media in the context of development brings certain ***advantages***, such as *saving time and money, stimulating behavioural change, room for experimenting and bridging the gender divide*.
- Social media is considered a double-edged sword with both positive and negative aspects.

6.4 Key findings of the core category NGO's Use of Social Media

The theme of this chapter ***'Social Media Use in Development'*** was identified in the findings as a major theme encompassing the social media activities of the studied development NGOs. The data revealed two categories, namely **Social media for outward engagement**, and **Consequences of adapting/using social media in development**. A summary of the key findings of the theme ***NGO's Use of Social Media*** is presented in Table 6-1.

Key findings	Meaning	Category	Theme/ Core Category
Development NGOs show some typical development related activities with social media, such as raising awareness, crowdsourcing, digital activism, emergency aid, monitoring and evaluation; online collaboration; and knowledge dissemination. *For example: "It becomes more and more important to use social media in developing countries for our work. You have people who use social media in those countries, to denounce human rights violations of for lobbying for better education. The social media activists so to speak. There are all kinds of opportunities, and we want to support projects that are increasingly going to do this kind of things." (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)*	NGO's social media activities encountered in the context of development. Two subcategories were found in the data: Activities in Development, and Social media management.	Social media for outward engagement	NGO's Use of Social Media
NGOs are aware of the need to manage their social media communications. Most of the NGOs have set up a web care team for monitoring and responding on social media. *For example: "We can measure with Google analytics. We can exactly determine how many visitors there are and every day we measure how many members there are, how many donations, etc." (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)*			
NGOs used a range of activities to attune to the NGOs' target audience, such as incentives like prizes, participatory approaches, and creating more interactivity with social media. *For example, the respondent of the Health and Sex Education for Youth NGO explained that they noticed that celebrities are useful for conveying the message to youth on social media.*	The consequences of using social media in development. Four subcategories were identified: Content related adaptations, Target audience related adaptations, Perceived disadvantages, and Perceived advantages of social media use in the context of development.	Consequences of adapting/using social media in development	
NGOs carried out audience segmentation by age, language, geography, gender, literacy level, the potential for contribution by donors, individual or group communication. *For example: "Our target audience I have in my mind, that has become a person. She has a name, and age, a place of residence et cetera. We have 'personalised' her and everything we communicate we communicate to her". (communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)*			
NGOs have identified the growing potential of mobile phones in social media communication. *For example: "There is a great deal happening with mobile phones. Sometimes social networks are used in a unique way. In Africa, they have [ed. text-based] chat programs via mobile phones similar to what we do on the Internet." (communications professional, Health and Sex Education NGO)*			
NGOs have learnt to adapt the tone of voice in their social media communication to their target audiences, such as informal slang language use with youth, or adding a personal touch to the communication, or a positive tone of voice (or imagery). *For example: "On Facebook [red. in Kenya] you assume younger people are present, so I use typical youngster Kenyan language style, or for mobile games, we use English Swahili slang, that everybody in Nairobi speaks." (development practitioner, e-Learning NGO)*			
Some NGOs have set guidelines for what language they use for social media communication, whether a European language or a native/indigenous language.			
Some NGOs identified the value of using locally created content. *For example: "People who live in developing countries often have the best ideas on how they can solve problems, and, in fact, they must be able to present that simply online." (management professional, Mobile Technology NGO)*			

Table 6-1. A summary of the key findings related to NGO's Use of Social Media.

7 Discussion

This chapter elaborates on the analysis, interpretation and synthesis of the findings as presented in the last three chapters, in relation to the extant literature. The goal of this multiple case study was to explore, using a sample group of Dutch development NGOs frequently using social media, how Dutch development NGOs perceive and use social media for their development activities. The research used a qualitative design to collect data by conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews and collecting supportive (secondary) data by use of social media communication, NGO's websites and reports. Participants in the study included respondents from 14 NGOs. The data collection spanned the period from November 2010 to July 2017. The data were coded and analysed following a grounded theory method approach and then organised according to the following research sub-questions:

1) What organisational values steer the activities of the NGO?
2) How do NGOs view the concept of social media?
3) In what way do development NGOs apply social media for development purposes?

The core categories are directly linked with each of this study's research questions. The three core categories represent the findings described in the previous three chapters. The previous three chapters presented the findings of this study by organising the data into categories to produce a readable narrative.

In this chapter, we theorise the relationship between the core categories and, on a per core category basis, the relevant theory is tied in, while the core categories' findings are compared and contrasted with the literature. After the discussion of the three core categories, the discussion continues with theorising the relationship between them.

The purpose of this chapter is ultimately to provide a more integrated insight that encompasses all the findings in an attempt to create a more holistic picture with the created substantive theory.

The discussion takes into consideration the literature on social media use by organisations involved with development from disciplines such as information systems, ICT for development, development studies, and communication for development. Furthermore, additional literature is presented throughout the discussion chapter, as this is part of the grounded theory method where additional exploration of the extant literature is carried out during the integrative phase (see section 0 on page 70)

The chapter outlines the key findings of each core category in relation to existing literature. By relating the emergent concepts to the extant literature, we can see how these are discussed and how the extant literature can strengthen the key findings by confirming them. Furthermore, the key findings may extend or contradict the literature, leading to avenues for further research.

7.1 Discussion of key findings for theme NGO Enacting Values in Development

In this section, we discuss the key findings of the theme (core category) 'NGO Enacting Values in Development' in relation to the extant literature. The discussion of this theme relates to the findings for the research sub-question "What organisational values steer the development activities of the NGO"?

7.1.1 Dominant mind-sets and roles present in the development NGOs

Some of the key findings of this theme are captured in the category 'Changing the world', that is related to the NGO's organisational identity and internal strategy for achieving the goal of changing the world in the context of international development.

7.1.1.1 Organisations in the context of development

When we discuss the organisation's identity, we need to consider the prevalent mind-set of the studied NGOs as these shape their organisational vision and therefore, their behaviour. We can plot these on the five paradigms as previously presented in the literature review chapter. Table 2-1 in the literature review section presented a synthesis of ideas from Korten (1987); Korten (1990), De Senillosa (1998), Bendell and Murphy (1999), Fowler (2000a), Potter et al. (2008), Lewis and Kanji (2009), Willis (2011) and Schaaf (2013) on the various dominant mind-sets present within NGOs. As we saw in the findings, all development NGOs relate their organisation's strategy and operations to poverty reduction.

Whereas those scholars treated the dominant mind-sets as generations consecutively following each other, I would argue that these are mind-sets that can reside within the same NGO simultaneously. The argument is that NGOs have a range of activities that tackle different problem definitions and often are addressed by different departments or teams within the NGO. Still, those different mind-sets are collected under one single organisational strategy. Furthermore, while development NGOs change strategy during their existence, some activities still bear the imprint from a previous mind-set on development while new activities may introduce new mind-sets; in this way, an inherited mind-set from past activities can still exist within the NGO.

To illustrate the various mind-sets, the interview responses, reports, and social media data of the NGOs were analysed. The NGO's mind-set was visible in their communications as some NGOs asserted:

> *"In our strategic online plan, you can recognise our core values are as an organisation, how we want to profile ourselves on social media, for example. (…) Moreover, that trickles down to the [ed. online] content, so everything we post meets those conditions."* (communications professional, STD Awareness NGO)

I briefly discuss the mind-sets. Regarding emergency assistance, the respondent of the Confederated NGO explained that, as part of the NGO's strategy, for relief efforts, they were running fundraising activities, and they were operating logistics on the ground with partners. The 'development' mind-set is about small-scale self-reliant community development in the South and public awareness in the North. Some of the activities of the Crowdfunding NGO fit well into this mind-set. In recent years they have gradually shifted their focus more to the sustainability aspects of their projects. The 'development as a self-reliant political process' mind-set is, for example, present in the advocacy and mobilisation activities of the Confederated NGO or the Advocacy NGO. The 'Human and sustainable development' mind-set is observable in NGOs' activities that are related to achieving Sustainable Development Goals. A 'development beyond aid' mind-set is present in some NGOs who are exploring setting up income-generating activities (other than grants) like the Water Platform NGO.

Table 7-1 shows an overview of the mind-sets present at the NGOs examined for this study. Practically all development NGOs have at least two development mind-sets on board. The most abundant mind-sets are 'human and sustainable development' and 'development beyond aid'. Sustainable development was and still is at its height as a mind-set adopted by Dutch development NGOs. Servaes and Malikhao (2016b) define some of this mind-set's characteristics as follows.

> "Sustainable Development implies a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach to policymaking and implementation, mobilising public and private resources for development and making use of the knowledge, skills and energy of all social groups concerned with the future of the planet and its people." (Servaes & Malikhao, 2016b, p. 173)

Regarding the participatory and multi-stakeholder approach, many NGOs assert that they strive for empowerment and enable participatory development activities. The NGOs' development projects are often associated with their contribution to Sustainable Development Goals. As we will discuss in section 7.1.4, the NGOs collaborate with various stakeholders to achieve these.

The 'development beyond aid' mind-set involves development NGOs stimulating social and/or ecological sustainability responsibility of international and local businesses in the Global South (Bendell & Murphy, 1999), or taking up the role of social entrepreneurs themselves (Fowler, 2000b). Many NGOs in this study are now stimulating social and/or ecological sustainability responsibility by engaging with and collaborating with international and local businesses in the Global South, as shown in Table 7-1. Some of them even engage in their own social entrepreneurial activities, as will be discussed in the next sub-section.

Table 7-1. Overview of dominant mind-sets present in the development NGOs evaluated for this study; in addition overview of NGO's roles.

	Development NGO dominant mind-set					NGO roles		
NGO alias▼	Emergency assistance	Development	Development as a self-reliant political process	Human and sustainable development	Development beyond aid	Service delivery	Catalysis	Partnership
Crowdsourcing		X		X	X	✓		✓
Water platform				X	X	✓		✓
Mobile Technology				X	X	✓		✓
Confederated	X		X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Traumatised children	X			X		✓	✓	✓
Advocacy	X		X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Community knowledge management			X	X		✓		✓
Child development	X			X	X	✓		✓
Youth Health and sex education				X	X	✓	✓	✓
STD awareness			X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Crowdfunding		X		X	X	✓		✓
E-learning			X	X	X	✓		✓
Agriculture			X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Expertise sharing	X	X		X	X	✓		✓

With the older NGOs such as the Confederated NGO and the Advocacy NGO, we see their organisational goals for development cover multiple mind-sets. Emergency assistance is an activity mainly coordinated by the older NGOs who have more experience and established logistical networks for emergency aid delivery. Notably, the younger NGOs are exploring the 'development beyond aid' mind-set. The advocacy activities that are associated with a 'development as a self-reliant political process' mind-set are observed with the older NGOs that have a multi-issue agenda, plus some single-issue NGOs that are focusing on education, healthcare, or agriculture. The older NGOs (Confederated NGO and Advocacy NGO) have some activities in collaboration with their local partners in the field of empowerment and democratisation. Other NGOs are taking less of an activist role, engaging more with the corporate sector via public and private sector partnerships to drive change toward sustainable business. Their services are targeting those businesses as well as the local community. Examples of these are the Agriculture and Expertise Sharing NGOs.

One of the key findings is that some NGOs are wary of the profound implications social media may have on their organisation's reason for existence. NGOs enact values in development and their reason for existence is highly reliant on those values. What distinguishes NGOs from other types of organisations is that NGOs, as part of the civil society sector, "rely primarily on value-based commitment for their organisational or institutional impetus and existence, in a way that other sectors of society do not." (Atack, 1999, p. 860). These values are translated into the various roles that NGOs take on. The implications of ICT and, specifically, social media use in those roles are recognised in this study.

Lewis and Kanji (2009) and Yaziji and Doh (2009) identify three leading roles that development NGOs take in contemporary development practice. These roles are characterised as service delivery, catalysis (or advocacy), and partnership (sometimes referred to as a 'mutual support' role). These roles are also important when NGOs work on ICT4D projects (Haikin & Flatters, 2017). The roles the development NGOs from this study have taken are tabulated in the right-hand columns in Table 7-1.

Service delivery is about offering vital basic services that are unavailable or of poor quality in developing countries. The scholars argue that there is an increase of NGO (and corporate) service provisioning due to governmental or (Western) donor neoliberal policies emphasising a shrinking role for governments as service providers.

The umbrella association of the Dutch development NGOs conducted a study on future scenarios for the Dutch development NGOs and identified service provisioning as one of the possible opposing adaptation mechanisms for development NGOs in changing circumstances regarding socio-economic development and power and governance drivers (Partos & The Spindle, 2018). However, this role could bring the Dutch development NGOs into competition with local Southern NGOs and other organisations if the services they would offer are equivalent to the provisioning of the basic service by the Southern development organisations.

The second role NGOs take is that of a catalyst to advance change. The NGO aims to bring about change via advocacy and pursuing influence. Furthermore, NGOs develop and seek to implement new solutions to development problems Lewis and Kanji (2009) argue. Advocacy also seeks to address the root cause of poverty. Advocacy can be linked to the 'Development as a self-reliant political process' mind-set as presented in the table above (see also Table 2-1 in the literature review chapter for further background on this mind-set). This mind-set works

as a catalyst to promote sustainable development and activism. The advocacy role also incorporates NGOs acting as watchdogs by monitoring whether government policies remain unimplemented or are carried out poorly.

The third role involves the "creation of partnerships as a way of making more efficient use of scarce resources, increasing institutional sustainability and improving the quality of an NGO's interactions. (…) usually involving a division of roles and responsibilities, a sharing of risks and the pursuit of joint objectives" (Lewis & Kanji, 2009, p. 112). Haikin and Flatters (2017) argues Northern NGOs could do more in collaborating with partners in the Global South as equals.

The development NGOs are relying on funding from sources like (annual) grants from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These grants are awarded in multi-year agreements to consortia of NGOs. Lewis and Kanji (2009) assert that development NGOs often combine these roles.

From the table above, we observe that many NGOs are engaged with *service delivery*. The trend of service delivery by NGOs is confirmed by this observation, although this service delivery to the poor is mostly indirect via local NGOs and other involved parties. These Dutch development NGOs "tend not to be implementing but supporting NGOs (i.e., they generally work through providing funds to Southern partners to implement programmes and projects)", Schulpen (2016, p. 34) states. NGOs are providing, for example, intermediary platform services for crowdsourcing or crowdfunding, or they provide tools for data collection, aggregation, or monitoring and evaluation for reporting on project performance to NGOs and donors. Furthermore, almost all NGOs combine two or more roles, confirming the assertion of Lewis and Kanji (2009).

Banks and Hulme (2012b) argue that NGOs are too much concerned with service delivery and advocacy on behalf of the poor people, rather than committing to the empowerment of the poor. They state:

> "Increasingly focusing on service delivery, the adoption of technical and managerial solutions to poverty has depoliticised definitions of poverty. (…) Their increasingly professional and depoliticised nature and closeness to donors and governments limit their ability to promote long-term structural change." (Banks & Hulme, 2012a, p. 1)

Next, to the service delivery role, we see that partnership has been a common role for all of the studied NGOs. This will be further discussed in section 7.1.4. As seen in the table above, six of the fourteen studied NGOs have taken a catalyst role with their advocacy activities. This is in agreement with the observation of Schulpen et al. (2018) of the growing importance of advocacy.

Huyse and De Bruyn (2015), who conducted a comparative study of governmental development NGO funding in which they compared EU countries (including The Netherlands), observed four trends arising as a consequence of the way the NGOs are currently funded that might change the strategic role Northern development NGOs have. Marketisation: NGOs face more competition for funding and seek other sources of funding or adopt entrepreneurial activities. Managerialisation: the rise of managerial layers within NGOs that split control from operational work and ownership. Scientisation: increased focus on evidence-based ways of working. The fourth trend is standardisation: NGOs work is consistent with standardised

compliance guidelines, with the increased use of auditing, indicators, and standards for reporting.

Regarding these trends, marketisation and entrepreneurial activities leading to hybrid NGOs have been observed in this study (see section 7.1.2). Managerialisation was observed as the growth of staff size led to more management layers, especially at the younger NGOs. Scientisation is present in development as monitoring and evaluation cycles of development projects and more evidence-based advocacy. Regarding standardisation, the IATI-based open data reporting by the NGOs imposed by the Dutch Mistry of Foreign Affairs is an example of this.

Some scholars caution that the result of these trends could be a detachment of the NGOs' target groups in favour of imposed donor strategies, diverging from broad developmental goals of empowerment to measurable output (Banks & Hulme, 2012b; SIPU, 2014; Huyse & De Bruyn, 2015).

7.1.1.2 Institutional logics

We move to another overarching concept. The mind-sets and roles that development NGOs take in development practice can be related to their institutional logics. Institutional logics constitute organising principles that guide the behaviour of organisations that all work in the same field around a set of issues central to their interests and objectives (Hoffman, 1999; Elbers et al., 2014). The institutional logics consists of the organisation, processes and technologies as well as the ideas, values and discourses in that field (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012).

Elbers et al. (2014) argue that there is a range of institutional logics, but a dichotomous approach contrasts the relevant institutional logics within development NGOs: social transformation versus managerial.

"Social transformation logic sees development (cooperation) as a political process, aimed at changing unequal power relations" and suggests that development requires local ownership by a marginalised group" (Elbers et al., 2014, p. 5). An example of social transformation in the data:

> *"…by deploying social media suddenly, at least potentially, your vision comes true. You enable people, emancipation, that sort of things. You notice that things can be done. Alternatively, they surpass us; they come up with all kinds of initiatives where we had not thought of ourselves."* (development practitioner, Child Development NGO)

The focus of managerialism lies in a linear idea of development with top-down technical solutions and measurable performance indicators. It considers NGOs as implementers of predesigned (service delivery) plans – often dictated by state and donors, rather than as political actors (Kamstra, 2017).

In practice, these ideal types of institutional logics are not encountered; rather, a mix of these logics often occurs (Elbers et al., 2014). This is in agreement with the finding that often a combination of roles and various mind-sets are simultaneously identified within the same development NGO (Table 7-1). For example, the managerial institutional logic is present in the activities NGOs undertake for the governance of the development projects. All of the studied NGOs plan and control how funds are spent, and accountability requirements are met

(organisation-wide and per programme or project), in accordance with the requirements of their major donors. A more social transformation institutional logic is seen in projects around advocacy and activism where the autonomy of local NGOs is ensured by the Dutch development NGOs.

As the fundamental principles of the ideal types of institutional logics of development, NGOs are so different, but often both are present at the same NGO. Elbers et al. (2014) expect that tensions will arise when these two logics coexist within an NGO. Development NGOs eventually need to choose a single logic, either a social transformation or a managerial institutional logic, they argue. Other scholars contend coexistence of institutional logics is possible for a short while until a dominant logic prevails. New logic can even be a hybrid form of two previously competing logics (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Kandathil et al., 2011). Other scholars have encountered situations where institutional logics coexist over a more extended period (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Boch Waldorff et al., 2013; Tumbas et al., 2015). I concur with the latter, as this resembles the situation of the development NGOs who evolve along the timeline of various dominant development mind-sets while embedding in their development activities a variety of these mind-sets as shown in the table above. We explore this further in the analysis and discussion of the relationship between the core categories found in this study.

7.1.1.3 Democratisation & influx of staff with a non-humanitarian background

Another key finding for this category is that NGOs act differently in the way they incorporate political activities or activism in their development work. These activities fit in the 'Development as a self-reliant political process' mind-set. Some NGOs (older ones) have set up training courses and material to educate local NGOs and individuals on activism for social change. The approach of those NGOs in incorporating political activities or activism is similar to what Lewis and Kanji (2009, p. 205) refer to as '*democratisation'*, which means the activities of NGOs contribute to the increase of democracy "by strengthening processes of citizen participation and voice in policy". An illustrative quotation from the data is:

> *"Social media has increasingly become an enabler for citizens to express themselves on issues that affect their lives as well as participating in democratic processes and civil action. Civil society organisations in Southern Africa, therefore, need to focus their internal resources towards maximising the potential of social media and social networking as agents of participatory democracy and civic empowerment."* (report Advocacy NGO)

Some other NGOs from this study have taken a more covert approach to endorse or facilitate activism.

Furthermore, NGOs see an influx of people bringing in new skills rather than people from a traditional development background. For example, the NGO's use of new ICTs such as social media necessitated bringing in new skills. The new staff brings in new ideas and new ways of working and hence induce a change in the organisation. An illustrative quotation is the following.

> *"Different people have an awareness of different things. It can help each other. The different people inside, plus the local partners create success."* (development practitioner, e-Learning NGO)

This is in agreement with Schulpen et al. (2018) and Besharov et al. (2019), who notably stated that hiring staff from the corporate sector led to NGOs pursuing a more business-oriented direction. This is further discussed in section 7.1.2.

7.1.2 Business-like behaviour and 'transitioning' development NGOs.

When we look at the NGOs with a 'development beyond aid' mind-set, we notice that some of the younger and middle-aged NGOs of our sample have organised their operations in such a way that they run in some ways like a social enterprise (five NGOs as shown in Table 7-2), being less dependent on government grants, generating other sources of income. The other NGOs undertake activities to stimulate sustainable or social entrepreneurship among actors in the field but do not run their own social enterprise.

NGOs addressing social problems through market-based solutions are commonly referred to as social enterprises (Kerlin & Pollak, 2011). Maier et al. (2016) have conducted a systematic literature study on the notion that NGOs are becoming *business-like*. They conclude that this trend is a well-established global phenomenon that needs further research. The manifestation of business-like behaviour is apparent in either organisational structure, the organisation's goals, or the rhetoric.

The transformation of NGOs to behave more business-like is related to organisational rationalisation highlighting that transformation process (Hwang & Powell, 2009), or managerialisation, that assumes that organisations flourish when implementing corporate management knowledge and practices (Hvenmark, 2013).

NGOs that incorporate business-like activities are called 'transitioning NGOs' (Gómez-González, 2012; Helmsing et al., 2015). Transitioning NGOs have become less dependent on grants and donations.

When we assess the five NGOs from this study that run their own organisation in a business-like manner, we can make a few observations, which are tabulated in Table 7-2, in relation to the extant literature.

All of these NGOs hire staff that do not have a traditional development and humanitarian aid background. The use of new ICTs like the Internet, social media and mobile phone communication technologies necessitated the influx of skilled personnel. Furthermore, the need for communicating via those ICTs channels brought in experienced communication professionals. This could be identified as what Hwang and Powell (2009) consider *professionalism in substantive fields,* where experts in the subject matter are positioned in the organisation.

With the Water Platform NGO and the Mobile Technology NGO, staff with a business management background were recruited (also at the management level), Hwang and Powell (2009) call this *managerial professionalisation*. The use of these concepts of professionalisation should be treated with caution and not be conflated with acting business-like.

Table 7-2. Business-like behaviour among the studied development NGOs.

NGO Pseudonym *NGO age range; Single-issue vs Multi-issue; Focus area(s) description*	**Business-like behaviour**	**Related literature**
Crowdsourcing NGO • 1-5 years • Multi-issue Crowdfunding and wisdom of the crowd	• Starts with proving crowdsourcing platform services to other NGOs and even to companies for the corporate social responsibility activities • Created separate spin-off to offer business-focused platform services. • Business-like language in stakeholder segmentation (e.g. business-to-business) and financial and project performance expectations.	• Transition toward a focus on service delivery (Maier et al., 2016). • Marketisation of relationships (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Maier et al., 2016); however, the devaluation of volunteers is not observed. • Business-like rhetoric (Dart, 2004). • Channelling growth in philanthropy (Helmsing et al., 2015) • Hybridising towards the market sphere (Suykens et al., 2019).
Water platform NGO • 6-15 years • Single-issue • Initially in water projects and now data management in development projects	• Organisation's goals: a shift toward data management and monitoring & evaluation platform services for other development NGOs and their donors. • Organisational structure: board characteristics are atypical for a development NGO; half of the management consists of people with corporate experience lacking a humanitarian background. • Staff with a business management background (lacking a humanitarian background) was hired on management level • IT platform development based at offices in the Global South.	• Transition toward a focus on service delivery (Maier et al., 2016). • Managerial professionalisation (Hwang & Powell, 2009). • Hybridising towards the market sphere (Suykens et al., 2019). • Business-like rhetoric (Dart, 2004)
Mobile Technology NGO • 1-5 years • Multi-issue • Mobile communication and data collection for development	• Started offering services in social marketing campaigning, mobile surveys, or data collection to other organisations, development NGOs in the Global South. • Same as NGO above: staff with a business management background • IT platform development based at an office in the Global South	• Transition toward a focus on service delivery (Maier et al., 2016). • Managerial professionalisation (Hwang & Powell, 2009). • Hybridising towards the market sphere (Suykens et al., 2019).
Youth Health and Sex Education NGO • 1-5 years • Single-issue • Health education on promoting safe sexual choices to youth	• Combining offline entertainment/edutainment events targeted at youth with social media marketing, offering this as a social franchise concept. • Same as NGO above: staff with a business management background and (online) marketing background	• Transition toward a focus on service delivery (Maier et al., 2016). • Managerial professionalisation (Hwang & Powell, 2009). •
E-learning NGO • 1-5 years • Single-issue • Education	• Offering services to other Northern NGOs or development NGOs in the Global South. • Online services and app development outsourced to the Global South. Created spin-off startups.	• Transition toward a focus on service delivery (Maier et al., 2016). • Organisation structure; separating startups (Maier et al., 2016).
All of the above NGOs	• Shifted focus on (humanitarian) services delivery. • The use of new ICTs like the Internet, social media and mobile phone communication technologies necessitated the influx of skilled personnel. • The integrated nature of ICT like (mobile) social media in the activities/services of the NGO.	• Transition toward a focus on service delivery (Maier et al., 2016). • Professionalism in substantive fields, where experts in the subject matter are positioned (Hwang & Powell, 2009). • Entrepreneurial activities of development NGOs working in poverty reduction (Helmsing et al., 2015) • Digital technology embedded in offered services facilitating entrepreneurial agency (Nambisan, 2017). • Establishing themselves as hybrid NGO (Hoffman et al., 2012; Helmsing et al., 2015); digital social enterprise (Masiero & Ravishankar, 2019).

The Water Platform NGO has chosen a strategy of focussing on a service delivery role, more and more leaning toward inter-organisational services, providing fellow development NGOs with data management, and online monitoring and evaluation services. This tendency is also observed by Maier et al. (2016, p. 75), who noticed that "business-like approaches may instigate a drift away from community-building, and to some extent from advocacy, toward service delivery." Suykens et al. (2019) refer to this as NGOs *hybridising* towards the market sphere

A similar trend was observed at the Crowdsourcing NGO and the Mobile Technology NGO. The Crowdsourcing NGO now starts with proving crowdsourcing platform services to other NGOs and even to companies for corporate social responsibility activities in which the companies' staff can volunteer. The *marketisation of relationships* occurs when "volunteering becomes an instrumental exchange of work in return for personal gratification", Hwang and Powell (2009) contend. A possible effect could be the devaluation of the work of volunteers, Eikenberry and Kluver (2004) warn. Where an NGO's long-term continuity depends to some extent on its ability to sustain relationships with various stakeholders like private donors, community volunteers and other NGOs, creating a network of social trust around the NGO, the transition to entrepreneurial strategies may hamper those relationships, and the "focus of the organisation shifts from creating networks of trust to creating opportunities for selling more products or services", Eikenberry and Kluver (2004, p. 136) argue.

So far, this has not been observed at, for example, the Crowdsourcing NGO. The respondents clarified their strategy to maintain a strong bond with their volunteers. Another argument for mitigation of the risks of eroded relationships has been the branding of the services for other organisations under a different platform name (white labelling). Both branded platforms have dedicated community managers.

The Mobile Technology NGO has started offering their services in social marketing campaigns or data collection to other organisations, specifically development NGOs in the Global South. Similar approaches to offering services to fellow development NGOs or other organisations, firms, and local governments are observed with all five NGOs who have business-like behaviour.

Three of studied NGOs (the Water Platform, e-Learning and the Mobile Technology NGO) have their IT development department based outside the Netherlands, with most staff working at offices in the Global South, and some IT development is outsourced. The e-Learning NGO has even created some start-up offspring.

Some of the NGOs use business-like language when they speak about their activities and their stakeholders. This is similar to what Dart (2004) considers business-like rhetoric. For example, the communications professional at the Crowdfunding NGO stated: *"It is complicated to measure the value of a 'like' or involvement. The SROI, social return on investment, is hot!"*

Another illustrative quotation about the meaning of entrepreneurial behaviour is this:

> *"Being entrepreneurial means that we want to be proactive and accept taking calculated risks. Promoting an entrepreneurial culture does not mean that everybody should be an entrepreneur."* (report, STD awareness NGO)

This (social) business-like marketing jargon is also recognisable at some of the other NGOs of this study in their communications and marketing activities, terms like 'return on engagement' for the measured impact of their online social media advertisement spending. Another respondent likens the bonding people feel with the NGO to affiliation with a brand. *"I wonder if people really search for non-profits. Some people might feel that our organisation is really a part of their profile like with other brands.",* said the respondent of the Health and Sex Education NGO.

The Water platform stated they were targeting firms to sponsor water-related development projects, more business-to-business and less business-to-consumer because the revenue would increase impact on the projects.

Helmsing et al. (2015) and Gómez-González (2012) assert that the entrepreneurial activities of development NGOs working in poverty reduction cover five areas of action. Those five areas are: 1) acting as institution-builders where markets fail; 2) providing business development services, microfinance, or other enterprise development services; 3) provision of basic services, which are usually the responsibility of the government; 4) developing and legitimising their own standards and labels in areas like the environment, labour, CSR, etc.; 5) NGOs run business-like projects for charity donations. Some of these areas are relatable to the NGOs of this study with business-like behaviour as shown in Table 7-2.

Transitioning NGOs, because of their business-like activities, have become less dependent on grants and donations (Gómez-González, 2012; Helmsing et al., 2015). Less than 50% of their income comes from sources related to business-like activities. If more than 50% of their income is generated from business activities like consultancy services for other NGOs, governments or firms, social entrepreneurship, or cross-subsidisation (profit branch covers non-profit operations), the organisation is considered to be a so-called 'hybrid non-profit', falling in the domain of social enterprises. The studies conducted by Gómez-González (2012) and Helmsing et al. (2015) focused on Dutch transitioning NGOs and social entrepreneurs in development.

Other scholars are making this distinction at 75% of income-generating revenues, cf. OECD (2014) and Keizer et al. (2016). Irrespective of the actual financial amount, some characteristics distinguish the non-profit organisations like development NGOs, from hybrid non-profit organisations and social enterprises. Based on Alter (2007), Gómez-González (2012), Khieng and Dahles (2014), and OECD (2014) we can position NGOs, social enterprises, corporate social responsible (CSR) and traditional business on a continuum of organisations based on their core purpose (Table 7-3). Gómez-González (2012), Hoffman et al. (2012), Khieng and Dahles (2014), and Helmsing et al. (2015) in particular have looked at development NGOs undertaking commercial activities.

Five development NGOs from this study who are behaving like transitioning NGOs are developing into or have already developed into *hybrid NGOs* and possibly are developing into for-profit social business ventures, both of which are types of social enterprises. Social enterprises have *"as the main goal to address pressing social challenges and meet social needs in an innovative way while serving the general interest and common good for the benefit of the community. In a nutshell, social entrepreneurship targets social impact primarily rather than profit maximisation in their effort to reach the most vulnerable groups and to contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth"* (OECD, 2019).

This trend has been observed with the NGOs presented in Table 7-2. These hybrid NGOs have established new donors in the corporate sector and offer services and consultancy to other NGOs, local governments, and companies. These hybrid NGOs that have comprehensively incorporated social media and Internet technologies into their service delivery are considered a specific type of social enterprise.

Masiero and Ravishankar (2019) call these social entrepreneurs in the development sector whose social ventures are centred on digital technologies 'digital social entrepreneurs' (DSE). These organisations may face challenges in the way they combine their digital and non-digital skills and expertise in running the social venture, they argue. The findings are inconclusive with regard to tensions related to these challenges. The study conducted by Masiero and Ravishankar (2019) focused on digital social entrepreneurship in the Global South, whereas the situation here deals with northern development NGOs turning into digital social entrepreneurship in the field of international development.

Table 7-3. Positioning NGOs, social enterprises and traditional business in a continuum table of organisations based on their core purpose. Based on Alter (2007), Gómez-González (2012), Khieng and Dahles (2014), and OECD (2014).

Category	Traditional Non-profits		Social Enterprises		Traditional Business		
Type	**Traditional NGO**	**Transitioning NGO**	**Hybrid non-profits**	**For-profit social business ventures**	**Social Responsible Business**	**CSR Company**	**Traditional For-profit**
Funding	Purely philanthropic Grant and donations only	Non-profit dependent on grants and donations with additional income-generating activities (less than 50%)	Income mainly from income-generating activities (more than 50%), donations and grants important.	From breakeven to profitable social enterprise; all income from trading.	Commercial transactions; limit share of profits paid out.	Commercial transactions; CSR policies.	Pure financial profit orientation
Goals	Societal value – exclusively social impact	Blended social and economic value creation – social impact prioritised.			Financial value prioritised		
Motives	Mission motive	Mixed motives					Profit-making motive
Methods	Mission-driven	Balance between mission and market					Market-driven
Income distribution	Reinvested in social programmes or operational costs	Reinvested in mission-related activities or operational expenses, and/or retained for business growth and development (for-profit may distribute a portion)					Stakeholders and owners
Accountability	Stakeholders accountability (financially to donors)				Shareholders accountability		
Sustainability	Social sustainability	Sustainability strategy: commercial methods support social programmes			Sustainability strategy: 'doing well by doing good'.		Economic sustainability

Marchant (2017) conducted a study on hybrid NGOs and observed that studies in the USA and Europe found hybrid organisations operating in those geographic regions inherently unstable (primarily because of tensions between non-profit and profit values and goals). Her case study research on hybrid organisations in the Global South (particularly Kenya), who offer digital services, comparable with the service provisioning of the Dutch development NGOs in this study, found the opposite. "Such hybridity is a potentially more natural part of the development in the Global South", Marchant (2017, p. 323) argues.

From the findings in this study on cases of transitioning Dutch development NGOs potentially becoming hybrid NGOs, it remains inconclusive whether these organisations are stable or not. There are some similarities with her study because some of the studied Dutch development NGOs have located their IT development in their offices in various African countries. Or they

have outsourced IT development to partners in the Global South, which providing a cross-border multicultural work environment with a multicultural staff makeup. However, it may need further attention to determine if the cross-boundary aspect of hybrid (international or Northern) development NGOs operating in the development sphere with, by default, intercultural encounters, may lead to a more stable environment for hybrid organisations.

Furthermore, by establishing a local or regional office in the South and focusing on service delivery instead of political pressure and public advocacy activities, these Dutch Development NGOs might become future 'competitors' of local Southern NGOs or other local actors working on development (Bruning et al., 2019). Critics of Western aid or Western NGOs may argue this proves the counterproductivity and neocolonialism of Western aid for self-determination and development in the Global South, cf. Easterly (2006) or Escobar (2011) if indeed Northern development NGOs would take the space of local Southern NGOs or other stakeholders in the Global South.

7.1.2.1 Possible causes of business-like behaviour of NGOs

A possible explanation for this business-like behaviour may lie in the fact that younger NGOs are driven to specialise in a unique service offering ('value proposition') by increased competition for decreasing (in the Dutch setting driven by neoliberalism) government and international donor funding in the NGO landscape. They seek new sources of income and try to diversify their sources of income in order to be able to address their *self-formulated* mission while ensuring income via institutional customers (e.g. international development & local NGOs, governments, and companies).

The advent of new ICTs, like the (mobile) Internet and social media, have enabled the NGOs whose services are mainly developed and often offered via the Internet to transition to a hybrid public/market-funded NGO, and eventually become digital social entrepreneurs (DSE). The latter is suggested by Nambisan (2017, p. 1040), who argues: *"New entrepreneurial opportunities in the digital landscape are often created through a process of intertwining digital artefacts and the related practices, norms, and perspectives of people using (or interacting with) such artefact".*

In this context, I would argue, extending the original author's own explanation, that digital artefact includes everything, from the infrastructure to the platform, required for the digital service delivery. Furthermore, the NGOs hire staff with a non-development background which brings new ideas and skills and subsequently enhances the changes occurring at the NGO.

This theory is corroborated by the observations from some studies (Schulpen et al., 2018; Bruning et al., 2019). Changes in government funding (amount and funding system) have triggered organisational, strategic, and financial changes within Dutch NGOs, Schulpen et al. (2018) concluded after extensive research. The Dutch development sector saw a decrease in funding by the Dutch government during the period of data collection. The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), which acts as an independent advisory body for government policy, advised the ministry of foreign affairs on a major restructuring of the Dutch co-funding system for NGOs, requiring Dutch NGOs to professionalise and specialise (van Lieshout et al., 2010; Schulpen, 2016). This restructuring meant a reduction in partner countries eligible for Dutch foreign aid, more emphasis on economic development, and a reduction of focus sectors (Elbers & Schulpen, 2015).

Interestingly the umbrella association of the Dutch development NGOs recently conducted a study on future scenarios for Dutch development NGOs. They identified social entrepreneurship and service provisioning as possible opposing adaptation mechanisms for development NGOs in changing circumstances regarding socio-economic development and power and governance drivers (Partos & The Spindle, 2018). While, in their opinion, service provisioning as a role taken by NGOs was considered a market-based approach with a focus on profit, opposed to social entrepreneurship, I reason that social entrepreneurship or even hybrid NGOs can focus on service provisioning as a role in changing circumstances.

The areas in which the studied NGOs are active are aligned with the thematic cluster of Dutch government funding during the data collection period, namely sustainable livelihoods and economic justice, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and protection, human security and conflict prevention (Barrett et al., 2016).

Dutch NGOs managed to offset some of the reduced government budgets by finding other financial resources from other governments, international donors, and the corporate sector. The larger NGOs reduced staff at their headquarters but eventually, they increased their field office staff. Another change in staff was the replacement of existing staff by new staff with specific thematic knowledge or expertise, Elbers and Schulpen (2015) observed.

Schulpen (2016, p. 33) argued and warned that NGOs competing for scarce resources would lead to a situation that some "*NGOs make into entrepreneurs who adapt their programme and strategy for the sake of securing outside funding, funding that is likely to be increasingly project-based thus reducing the ability of an NGO to set its agenda"*. This study, possibly due to its different research focus, had limited findings on NGOs' agenda-setting to corroborate this assertion. Two out of the five NGOs with entrepreneurial activities show some advocacy and set their own agendas in development (see Table 7-1).

We do observe, though, that overall most NGOs in this study focus on a combination of service delivery and partnerships, whereas a third of them are active with advocacy in their catalysis role.

As we have seen in the literature review chapter, section 2.2, Fowler (2000b) argues that development NGOs are seeking alternative funding as it becomes harder to rely solely on donor aid as an income source. Therefore, in order to sustain their activities, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a possible viable solution.

Social entrepreneurship activities are gaining popularity among NGOs (Fowler, 2000a; Fowler, 2013; Defourny et al., 2014; Helmsing et al., 2015) and Dutch development NGOs are following that trend. Helmsing et al. (2015, p. 7) argue "the current pro-business 'zeitgeist' has made social entrepreneurship more fashionable."

7.1.3 Ideological trends in development

This section of the discussion deals with ideological trends, externally induced, that may influence or (re)shape an NGO's vision or strategy, as presented in the findings of the category paradigms of (international) development in section 4.2. Organisations play a vital role in the networked society, Castells (2005, p. 7) contends. So do development NGOs. From the findings, it can be seen that all development NGOs relate their organisation's strategy and operations to **poverty reduction**.

Banks and Hulme (2012b, p. 13) and Bebbington et al. (2013) argue that this is a result of the prioritisation by donors, who have steered NGOs in that direction with their funding strategies.“Donor priorities and funding have seen a strong shift to a poverty-focused agenda …turning NGOs into implementers or contractors of donor policy” Banks and Hulme (2012b, p. 13) assert.

The alleged need for incorporating poverty reduction in their policies is operationalised by all the studied NGOs. Even an NGO that has specialised in service provisioning toward other NGOs argues that its services in measuring, monitoring and sharing development project information support this goal.

> “Transparency has a significa*nt role to play in ending global poverty. Information is power, and greater openness can transform the relationship between citizens and governments.”* (document, Water Platform NGO)

The rather general formulation of poverty reduction provides the Dutch development NGOs sufficient room to relate it to their NGO’s goals and activities. The broad ‘multidimensional’ definition of poverty that is embraced includes (in addition to access to resources, work, and income) social vulnerability and political powerlessness (Hoebink, 2009).

The adoption of ‘poverty reduction’ by development NGOs is predominantly a discourse of ‘lack of’ the aspects above, primarily basic needs, but often does not deal with the structural causes of these, Makuwira (2013) argues. He argues that next to addressing this “lack of” by offering services directly or via their partners, NGOs have to advocate to solve the root cause. Some of the NGOs of this study have advocacy activities in their portfolio, as shown in Table 7-1, depicted by the catalysis role. Consequentially they might face a tension between servicing to diminish ‘lack of’, and at the same time advocating to solve the underlying structural issues (Makuwira, 2013).

Another encompassing concept found with all the studied NGOs is sustainability. Many Northern-based development NGOs have embraced the sustainability agenda (Bendell, 2017). Sustainability commonly refers to the so-called people-planet-profit aspects and are related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by all NGOs. The NGOs relate this to their specific organisational goals and activities under the ‘Human and sustainable development’ mind-set, as shown in Table 7-1. As discussed in the literature review, the SDGs aim to eradicate poverty, address climate change, and reduce inequality. The seventeen ‘Global Goals’ formulated from these SDGs are interrelated and require global action by actors both in the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

Spitz et al. (2015) identified four different approaches Dutch NGOs take concerning the SDGs: advocacy, carrying out development projects, working in partnerships, or communicating about the SDGs. All these four approaches are found in the studied NGOs. Furthermore, from the findings, it became clear that NGOs were linking their service provisioning to the SDGs.

Remarkably, the SDGs are sometimes associated with or used for legitimacy or self-promotion of the NGO’s activities.

For example, the Water Platform NGO is offering data collection, aggregation and analysis services to other NGOs and states the following that highlights the need for their services:

> "*With the definition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the development sector has embraced large scale and large volume data use. Too often, however, data is collected using inconsistent methodologies, which can lead to data that is not useable and/or comparable. (…) Lastly, data is not always shared, causing other organisations to collect the same data and waste resources."* (report, Water Platform NGO)

Some NGOs were reflecting on their organisational strategy and seeking a niche in which to operate. This is illustrated in this quotation:

> *"It is clear that under the [ed. SDG] goals for which high amounts of local and international finance are needed private aid organisations and NGOs have a smaller role to play and should look maybe for niche areas in which they might be innovative, like sustainable energy, or the creation of jobs to decrease youth unemployment."* (report Advocacy NGO)

A key finding is that many NGOs act according to some guiding principles when using social media for development purposes. One of the principles found in this study is 'development 2.0'. Development 2.0 refers to more online communication and collaboration between all actors in development, also referred to as networked development (Thompson, 2008; Kirstein Junge, 2012). The network of partners is extensive in development. Development 2.0 implies online collaboration, self-organisation, open knowledge flows, collective intelligence, and crowdsourcing (Jansen, 2009)

Another principle found in this study is the concept of 'Open Development' that refers to the openness the NGO takes in its activities and the use of other NGOs' or other organisations' knowledge and the willingness to freely share their own with others, in the context of the use of ICT for development. To re-iterate 'Open Development', is defined as the leveraging and reshaping of "information networked activities to alter how we (such as people, groups, organisations, or governments) mobilise and organise resources (information and people) to catalyse development outcomes that are both more inclusive and transformative" (Smith et al., 2011, p. iii).

There is a range of societal and technological developments that drive open development (Schwegmann, 2012; van den Broek et al., 2012). Societal drivers are current debates on development effectiveness, the increasing role local NGOs and governments take in overseeing development in their country, public concerns on development spending spurring NGOs to improve their transparency and accountability, and lastly the reduced government funding of international development projects pressuring NGOs to collaborate with other funding partners. Technological drivers are rapid developments in open data, social media, semantic technology and mobile and Internet technologies.

Regarding open development, an important concept found in this study is open data. "Open data is publicly available data that can be universally and readily accessed, used, and redistributed free of charge. It is structured for usability and computability" (Young & Verhulst, 2016, p. 5).

All studied development NGOs are active with open data for their project reporting, imposed by the policy of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Vice Versa, 2014).

The ministry's objective is to improve the transparency of the projects funded by them and increase aid effectiveness and therefore standardise the data format to conform to the IATI standard in development aid reporting (MinBuza, 2015). The NGOs, in turn, also see possibilities to improve the collaboration between NGOs by sharing data on development projects (van den Broek et al., 2012). Another benefit is that governments, NGOs, or citizens in countries in the Global South can access up-to-date information about aid and plan and manages those resources Linders (2012) contends.

The umbrella association of the Dutch development NGOs conducted an evaluation of the training it offered to the NGOs for the use of IATI standard-based open data. Interestingly the evaluation not only showed NGOs learned from each other because frontrunners were willing to share data and experiences, but also that there was more understanding at the larger and older NGOs, with established large international collaboration networks, of what data needed to be captured in projects to be useful in collaboration and evaluation of development projects (Partos, 2016). It also revealed that potential risks involved with the openness of certain data need attention.

> "Explicitly mentioned were concerns people had regarding the risks and implications of sharing data openly (…) The [ed. IATI open data awareness & training] programme served as a catalyst to address certain issues in the participating organisations; issues like openness, privacy and safety, but also on professional information management." (Partos, 2016, p. 21)

This relates the need for critical reflections on 'open development' and the possible downsides or risks of expanding openness, and how to mitigate them, cf. Raftree (2013), Roberts (2015) and Bentley (2017). The risks in the progress reporting of development projects to donors like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs may be minimal but using open data (and thus sharing with others and making it available online) in, for example, crisis information or monitoring and evaluation of peacebuilding initiatives (Költzow, 2013) needs further scrutiny to mitigate harm and create a realistic view on open data use, or as Young and Verhulst (2016) put it:

> "These risks are inherent to any open-data project—by its very nature, greater transparency exists in tension with privacy and security. When an initiative fails to take steps to mitigate this tension, it risks not only harming its own prospects but more broadly the reputation of open data in general." (2016, p. 22)

Regarding this, the NGOs in this study who are frontrunners in open data use seem to be aware of the security and privacy aspects that need to be considered, as illustrated by the following quotation.

> *"There are a lot of misconceptions around open data and privacy. If we say a system is built to support open data, then many incorrectly assume all data in the system is open. However, that is not the case, as this would create an unworkable system."* (report, Water Platform NGO)

The concept of openness was observed in the findings in the form of open-source software developed by one NGO and made available to others to use, as well as online toolkits and other learning and instructional material, for example for digital safety. The Crowdsourcing NGO has made its crowdsourcing platform source code available as open-source software.

The motives for this openness seem to be different, from a belief in improvement of software products by collective open source community development and eventually earning via offering services built on top of that software, to a rather advocacy-based attitude to raise awareness for and promote digital freedom or inclusiveness as illustrated by this quoation.

> *"Open Development is about a new paradigm, a change of top-down to bottom-up, from the wisdom of the experts to the wisdom of the crowd, of accountability to cooperation and transparency to open. From open data sets to an open, inclusive model of cooperation which the end-users."* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

Heeks (2016b) suggests that open development projects relate to open logic in terms of institutional logics, "and true 'open development' may be very difficult: there will always be pressure to hybridise" between open and closed institutional logics. See also the earlier discussion on social transformation versus managerial logic (section 7.1.1.2).

Openness contributes to development 2.0, Acevedo Ruiz et al. (2015) argue. The essence of development 2.0 is described as follows in a manifesto from one of the NGOs.

> *"If we can write an encyclopaedia together [ed. online], why should we not jointly solve poverty? Development cooperation 2.0 does not revolve around the grand masterplan. It all comes back to Humans."* (report Crowdsourcing NGO)

Openness improves broader access to information and knowledge, and it stimulates collaboration, some scholars argue (Smith & Elder, 2010; Girard & Perini, 2013), which will be discussed in the next subsection 7.1.4. Both development 2.0 and open development are related to a call for universal access to information and communication, and tapping into the pool of human knowledge aimed at promoting equity, bridging the digital divide, and promoting information in the public sphere (Iacono & Kling, 2001; Clement & Hurrell, 2008).

However, others are more critical about the alleged openness, arguing 'open to whom?' and 'open to what development ends?' (Jeet Singh & Gurumurthy, 2014; Roberts, 2015). Roberts (2015, p. 622) states "Openness [ed. in ICT for a development-related project] should enable disadvantaged groups themselves to appropriate technology within their own programmes to overcome structural deprivation, discrimination and (dis)advantage.*"* The approach by the studied NGOs seems to focus on 'openness' between organisations, sharing data. However, it seems from these findings, that decisions on what data to collect, and what data to share as 'open data' remain coordinated by the northern-based NGOs.

The kind of openness Jeet Singh and Gurumurthy (2014) and Roberts (2015) refer to is a step further in challenging the status quo in power. This has not been identified in any of the cases studied here. The farthest step is that the Dutch Development NGOs put some effort into understanding the data and information needs of their southern partners and seeing how this is facilitated in the sharing of data in their partnership. However, this still does not touch the actual disadvantaged groups. So in essence 'openness' is associated with transparency as seen in a donor-client relationship by many Dutch NGOs, whereas others associate openness with a radically different power-balance in the relationships and inclusive participation of development actors.

In the next section, we discuss the findings on strategic collaboration.

7.1.4 Strategic Collaboration

The discussion in this section deals with the findings from the Strategic Collaboration category, which is about the cooperation NGOs have with other stakeholders to achieve their developmental goals. All of the studied NGOs operate in various collaborative networks. This observation is not surprising. Partnerships between different organisations, whether for-profit, non-profit, public or private, are increasingly becoming the new standard for development cooperation (van Tulder et al., 2011).

7.1.4.1 Partners and partnership strategies

From the study, we identify that the Dutch development NGOs sometimes referred to as northern NGOs (or sometimes as International NGOs - INGOs), have an extensive network with both collaboration partners in the countries where they conduct their development activities and with other international development NGOs and donors. The collaboration partners are other international development NGOs, governments and other funding institutions, local NGOs, local policymakers/governments, (local and international) companies, educational and research institutions, volunteers, or the local community.

Some of the NGOs expect a further intensifying of contact between North- and South-based organisations.

> *"The trend is that there will be more direct contact between the South and the North. We can learn a lot from that."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

This is in agreement with Schaaf's argument: "The INGO will also have more vertical relationships to local NGO partners 'on the ground', which are involved in implementing the projects and distributing the funding. (...) The INGO will also be connected to other INGOs who may be competing for funding from the large range of private, national and multilateral donors. Adherence to global development strategy and priorities also forms another connection between the INGO and global governance organisations" (Schaaf, 2013, p. 8).

Some NGOs consider the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs a collaboration partner, although their role is that of donor and policymaker. This is in agreement with Van Wessel et al. (2017) who also observed this approach and language among some of the Dutch development NGOs.

Regarding partnerships, the focus of this study was on those partnerships with a social media collaboration component. This relates to the concept of ICT for development (ICT4D) partnerships. Ismail et al. (2018), citing UNGA (2016, p. 4), describes partnerships as: "Partnerships have been defined as voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits."

In the literature, various definitions and synonyms for (organisational) partnerships are found. Next, to the concept of a partnership, other scholars speak of coalitions or strategic alliances as "an inter-organisation cooperative arrangement aimed at achieving the strategic objectives of partners" (Das & Teng, 1998, p. 491). Among practitioners, especially working for development NGOs, the term partnership rather than collaboration is often used (AbouAssi et al., 2016).

An illustrative quotation for this is the following.

> *"There are various partnerships with other organisations. Two of them, [Crowdsourcing NGO] and [E-learning NGO] are picked for improving social media use in their own organisation; it's part of a five-year-strategy. Together with partner organisation [Crowdsourcing NGO] possibilities are explored how people can choose and follow the projects they want. The partnership helps [ed. name of Confederated NGO] to learn how to do this."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

In essence, partnerships can be understood as "relationships between different parties working towards a common goal", Geldof et al. (2011, p. 40) argued after a systematic analysis of the concept of ICT4D partnerships in poverty reduction.

ICT4D partnerships catalyse 'networked development', which occurs "through a mesh of actors and institutions that are connected and can act together through ICTs" (Heeks (2010a). Ismail et al. (2018, p. 3) distinguish four main focal areas in ICT4D-related partnerships that aim for these shared goals:

- Delivering foundational infrastructure and platforms.
- Seeking to apply ICTs within a particular development sector (health, education, government, small business, et cetera).
- Applying ICTs for enterprises within the digital economy.
- Goals of shared ICT4D learning and/or policy advocacy.

These focus areas were observed in this study. We will return to this when assessing some examples. In the findings, partnership strategy aspects were mentioned, such as the coalitions between NGOs resulting from the pursuit of common beneficial goals, grant applications, or partnerships in which NGOs sought to disseminate social media related innovation in their NGO by partnering with younger technology-experienced NGOs. Studies conducted by van Tulder et al. (2011) and Schulpen et al. (2018) show that Dutch development NGOs (similarly to Northern development NGOs elsewhere) have adopted three types of partnership strategy:

- **Donor-recipient partnerships**. Intrinsically motivated by the northern NGOs, involving a vertical relationship with Southern actors, and containing financial or other resource-related dependencies in the relationship.
- **Cross-sector partnerships.** A growing number of NGOs are exploring market-based approaches towards development. Often the motivation for cross-sector partnership with companies is driven by changing development mind-set goals or is influenced by declining government development aid funding or governmental incentives for cross-sector projects, notably including a business partner (Van Wessel et al., 2017).
- **Intra-sector partnerships**. An increasing number of development NGOs are cooperating horizontally (with other development NGOs). Development NGOs have always cooperated with other NGOs, but this process has been considerably incentivised by recent changes in government funding policy. This change occurred during the data collection period of this study. The Dutch government's 2010 co-financing system MFS II required Dutch development NGOs to partner with other Dutch development NGOs as a condition for further funding (Hoebink, 2009, p. 34; Schulpen, 2016). The government sought to reduce fragmentation in the NGO landscape and stimulate Dutch NGOs to cooperate with each other and to use each other's expertise,

while the total development budget was decreased (van Tulder et al., 2011). As a result, several alliances were created.

The findings show several examples of ICT4D-related (particularly social media) partnerships of all three types.

An example of donor-recipient partnership is the following. The Advocacy NGO is actively involved with training and creating teaching resources for their local partners in the Global South for social media management, realising that these local partners will be the ones directly in touch with the beneficiaries but lack the skills and knowledge.

> *"On the one hand, as citizens in Southern Africa increasingly get online, the successful use of social media can enable civil society organisations to stimulate long-lasting, in-depth engagement with citizens.*
>
> *On the other hand, strategic management of social media can facilitate [ed. local] civil society organisations to meet their stated missions and objectives. We have a long experience in working with civil society organisations in Southern Africa, and based on an analysis of their social media presence, we noticed that their social media management approaches were either patchy or lacking."* (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO)

Regarding cross-sector partnerships, development NGOs who are involved with, for example, agriculture and food production, traditionally seek cooperation with companies. As mentioned in section 7.1.2, various NGOs are becoming transitioning NGOs, thereby offering services to other NGOs, governments and companies, as income-generating activities. This also increases its partnerships with companies. The Water Platform NGO, one of these transitioning NGOs, explained that they are collaborating with one of the largest Dutch banks.

> *"We are cooperating with [ed. name of the] bank, because the international money flows are very complex. I will not talk too much about it, but you cannot just transfer money from, for example, from the U.S. directly to project in India. Then the Indian government says we are not a developing country anymore. Then you stumble over regulations et cetera. You need expert partners to manage complex financial flows for these projects."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

The findings also show intra-sector partnership strategies because of changes in the governmental funding policy. Strategic alliances were formed in order to obtain government funding.

When asked about the motives of mutual collaboration it became clear that the collaboration between the Confederated NGO and the two other much smaller NGOs, the Crowdsourcing NGO and E-learning NGO was not only about sharing innovation but also instigated by the coalition they had created to apply for funding for their development projects from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (effectively all NGOs participated in one these for their grant applications at the ministry). These coalitions provided more chance for the smaller NGOs to receive grants as a partner of a larger collaborative group. The subsidy policy of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs changed in 2010.

The new grants framework (MFS II) for Dutch development NGOs reduced the number of NGOs/NGO-consortia eligible for receiving funding by approximately half. The alleged motives

of the ministry were decreasing fragmentation of activities among NGOs and stimulating cooperation (MFA, 2009). Forming alliances with other NGOs became important, and this seems to have influenced NGOs' partnership strategy behaviour. The older NGOs acted as consortium leaders, whereas the younger NGOs joined one or more of these consortia.

The collaboration between NGOs on ICT knowledge transfer (specifically of social media), as observed in this study, can be considered another case of the intra-sector partnership strategy. Those younger NGOs do not only act out of altruistic motives but are also receiving funding in the consortia with the older and established NGOs and gain access to a broad network of partner organisations.

The findings showed collaboration between the younger NGOs that have their head offices near each other, similarities in staff demographics, and are more or less of the same age (see Figure 4-3). This would suggest institutional homophily playing a role in inter-organisational collaboration, as Atouba and Shumata (2014) argue. On the other hand, the networks between older and younger NGOs suggest the opposite. The alignment and collaboration on the use of open data suggest some institutional isomorphism, at least in the similarity of this particular process in the studied development NGOs (Kontinen & Onali, 2017). The following table (Table 7-4) summarises the discussed partnership strategies and ICT4D partnership focus areas.

Table 7-4. Partnership strategies & ICT4D partnership focus area examples of this study.

Partnership strategy	Example	ICT4D partnership focus area(s) in example
Donor-recipient partnerships.	Advocacy NGO: Training and creation of teaching resources for local partners in the Global South for social media management	• Shared ICT4D learning and/or policy advocacy.
Cross-sector partnerships.	Water Platform NGO: Collaboration with an internationally operating bank for complex financial services in cross-continental remittance for development projects; service delivery via its development project data platform.	• Delivering foundational infrastructure, platforms. • Seeking to apply ICTs within a particular development sector & • Applying ICTs for enterprises within the digital economy.
Intra-sector partnerships.	Younger –technology experienced- NGOs collaborating with older established development NGOs: collaboration between NGOs on ICT knowledge transfer (specifically of social media)	• Shared ICT4D learning.

This study's findings bear similarities to the observations of Van Wessel et al. (2017, p. VI) who state, in their study of the partnership strategies of Dutch development NGOs, that "collaboration is expected to happen in a range of areas: information exchange, brokering and facilitation, mutual influencing, and joint lobby and advocacy."

Two drivers for cross-sector partnerships stand out, van Tulder et al. (2011) argue, namely contributing to the development goal of the NGO, and secondly generating additional income. The formation of the cross-sector and intra-sector partnerships can be understood from a resource-based view of strategic alliances (Das & Teng, 2000). Resources such as knowledge and experience of use of technologies like social media, or a vast network of potential collaboration partners, or governmental donor-funding availability only after the fulfilment of

preconditions regarding cooperation and partnerships, have influenced the formation of alliances. The findings on intra-sector partnerships are in agreement with resource-based incentives for partnerships, as observed by AbouAssi et al. (2016).

7.1.4.2 Collaboration networks

The collaboration networks of NGOs on social media in development projects can be further analysed with the concept of action networks. To achieve their goals, development NGOs often set up action networks to gain leverage. These action networks consisting of various actors that are concerned with a particular (social) issue they want to address. Bennett and Segerberg (2012, p. 739) examined what they called "the organisational dynamics that emerge when communication becomes a prominent part of organisational structure." They argue that understanding variations in action networks require distinguishing between the logic of collective action and that of connective action.

Collective action is characterised by formal organisational control, high levels of organisational resources, stronger commitment, and collective identity formation (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). The logic of connective action is based on personalised content sharing across (social) media networks based on large-scale self-organised, fluid and weak-tied networks (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, p. 739).

Shumate and Dewitt (2008) noted that NGOs create online hyperlinked networks through their online/social media activities. The networks are seen as a type of connective public goods, they argue. They define connective public goods as "a set of inter-organisational links that enable members and non-members to reach a homogenous set of like-minded organisations in order to enhance the visibility of the network's goals" (Shumate & Dewitt, 2008, p. 179).

Moreover, the NGOs' joint contributions to the network are a type of collective action. Collective action, initially proposed by Olson (1965), is described as a theory that "elucidates the rational choice that individuals make to pursue a public good through NGOs or the choices that NGOs make to contribute to the public good through a coalition" (Shumate & Lipp, 2008). When communication costs decrease, it makes it easier for people and organisations to participate in action networks using social media (Lupia & Sin, 2003).

The networks of the NGOs in this study can be analysed using the typology of connective and collective action networks proposed by Bennett and Segerberg (2012). Figure 7-1 shows the elements of connective (to the left) and collective (to the right) action networks, as well as a hybrid version in between. The findings showed examples of all three typologies.

An example of a self-organising network pursuing connective action started as an informal group of young development practitioners from different development NGOs who informally worked together without official approval to address stereotyping in development communication. They gently criticised online examples of stereotype depiction of people or communities from the Global South in the communication of mainly Dutch development NGOs.

Gradually this group changed into an organisationally enabled network as the management of several NGOs accepted and invited the group for workshop presentations. This has led to the creation of a foundation – still consisting of development practitioners from different NGOs – that online and offline raises awareness against stereotyping in development communication with annual events and more formalised working relationships with the NGOs.

Figure 7-1 is also useful to discern the kind of action networks established by individual Dutch development NGOs. The network of the Community Knowledge Management bears resemblance with an organisationally enabled network pursuing connective action. This NGO facilitates its members, villages in the Global South, with some coordination activities, an online platform, and some moderation carried out by volunteers, while the members' villages are in charge of the content production.

A case of collective action in an organisationally brokered network was the activities of a group of mostly younger/middle-aged NGOs who were collaborating on formulating a development 2.0 manifesto that describes how development NGOs can embrace web 2.0 technologies and open data, and work together for more transparent and inclusive development (see also Figure 4-3). The management of some of these NGOs was involved from the onset. Regarding the communication content, the participants of the NGOs of this network had orchestrated their message revolving around specific personas in their story who were empowered by this development 2.0 vision (collective action frame). This is illustrated by their use of the fictional person 'Jessica' who reaps benefits from the development 2.0 vision in their examples:

> *"Imagine there is a platform, where a certain Jessica from, let's say, Uganda, can easily share her story and how she works to improve the conditions in her community."* (excerpt from the collective report of Crowdsourcing, Water Platform, Mobile Technology, and Community Knowledge Management NGOs)

This persona was part of the collective action frame around the vision of development 2.0 and open data. The expressions of social group identity, membership, or ideologies are considered a collective action frame in contrast to personal action frames that are individualised expressions "of personal hopes, lifestyles, and grievances" (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012)(Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, p. 743).

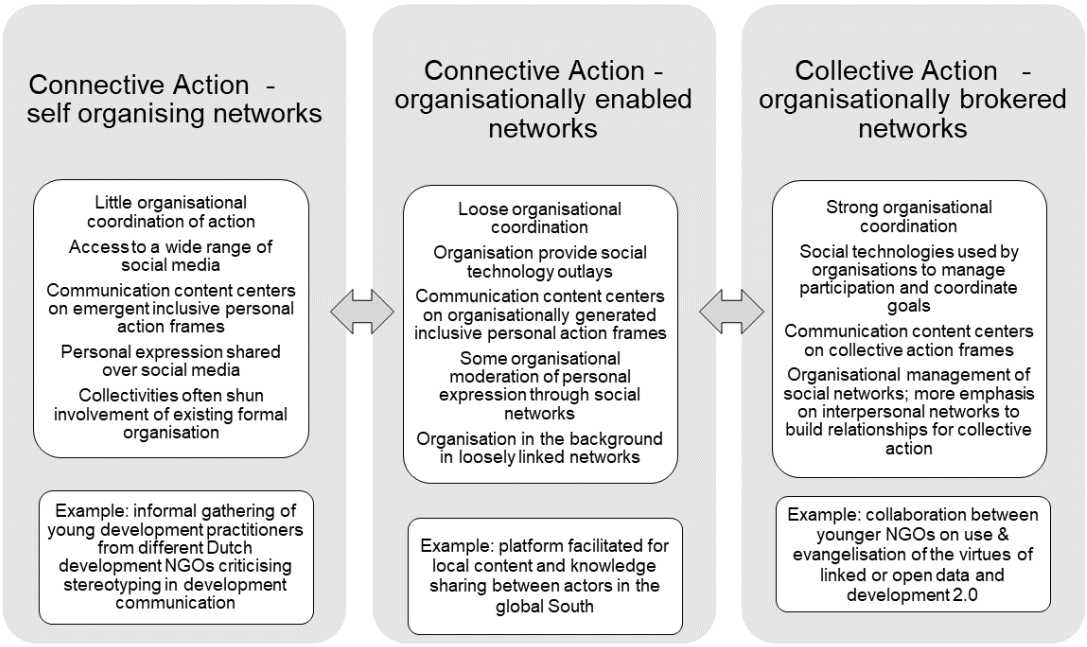


Figure 7-1. Typology of connective and collective action networks, including examples of this study. Adapted from Bennett and Segerberg (2012).

According to Shumate and Lipp (2008, p. 178) 'generalist NGOs' that are concerned with multiple issues (*called multi-issue NGOs in this study*) "promoted the most legitimate face of

the issue network, acting as brokers and authorities to other generalist NGOs, and initiators for both specialist (*called single-issue NGOs in this study*) and generalist NGOs".

From our findings (see Figure 4-3) we observe that some of the 'generalist NGOs' do have extensive networks, but next to the focus on various issues the age of the NGOs seems to be a factor associated with the size of their network. The older (multi-issue) development NGOs seem to act as the authoritative hub in their networks. Their role also seems relevant as the lead party for funding applications in which smaller Dutch development NGOs are collaborative partners.

7.1.5 Summary of discussion of theme/core category NGO Enacting Values in Development

The discussion of the core category NGO Enacting Values in Development makes clear that the organisational mixture of mind-sets influences the organisational activities in development. The ideological trends that are stimulated by societal and technological changes have an impact on the organisation's development strategy and the strategic collaboration network of the development NGOs. The discussion suggests a relationship between the three categories of this core category. The relationship is shown in Figure 7-2. The development mind-set influences which ideological trends are pursued. Vice versa the ideological trends like development 2.0, open development et cetera influence the development mind-set. Both development mind-set and the (adopted) ideological trends influence the choice of partner and activities for strategic collaboration. In turn, strategic collaboration influences the choice of focus on ideological trends and the development mind-set of the NGO.

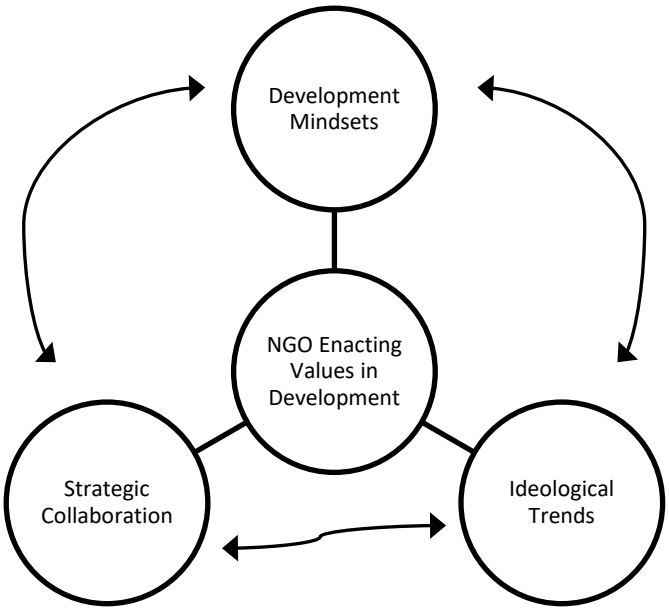


Figure 7-2. Diagrammatic depiction of the relationships between categories of the core category NGO Enacting Values in Development.

The following table (7-5) summarises the main points of the discussion of the core category NGO Enacting Values in Development in relationship with the discussed literature.

Table 7-5. Summary of main key points discussion core category NGO Enacting Values in Development.

Main key points discussion	Relation to literature
The prevalent development mind-set(s) of the NGOs shape their organisational vision and therefore, their behaviour. This study argues multiple mind-sets are simultaneously present within an NGO.	Closely related to a synthesis of ideas from Korten (1987); Korten (1990), De Senillosa (1998), Bendell and Murphy (1999), Fowler (2000a), Potter et al. (2008), Lewis and Kanji (2009), Willis (2011) and Schaaf (2013). Extends the views: whereas the scholars listed above treat the dominant mind-sets as generations consecutively following each other, I would argue that these are mind-sets that can reside within the same NGO simultaneously; while development NGOs change strategy during their existence, some activities still bear the imprint from a previous mind-set on development while new activities may introduce new mind-sets. Hence, an inherited mind-set from past activities still exists within the NGO. Concurs with the idea that institutional logics coexist in an NGO over an extended period (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Boch Waldorff et al., 2013; Tumbas et al., 2015).
Many NGOs are engaged with *service delivery*, although this service delivery to the poor most of the times is not directly but indirect via local NGOs and other parties involved.	The trend of service delivery by NGOs is confirmed by this observation Lewis and Kanji (2009) and Yaziji and Doh (2009) identify three leading roles development NGOs take in contemporary development practice. These roles are characterised as service delivery, catalysis and partnership (sometimes referred to as 'mutual support' role). Almost all NGOs combine two or more roles confirming the assertion of Lewis and Kanji (2009).
Some of the younger and middle-aged NGOs have organised their operations in such a way that they run in some ways like a social enterprise, being less dependent on government grants, generating other sources of income. Other NGOs undertake activities to stimulate sustainable or social entrepreneurship among actors in the field but do not run their own organisation like a social enterprise.	In agreement with Maier et al. (2016) who conducted a systematic literature study on the notion that NGOs are becoming *business-like*: the manifestation of business-like behaviour is apparent in either organisational structure, the organisation's goals, or the rhetoric. In agreement with the notion of 'Transitioning NGOs' (Gómez-González, 2012; Helmsing et al., 2015). Transitioning NGOs have become less dependent on grants and donations.
Some development NGO are behaving like transitioning NGOs and are developing into or already have developed into *hybrid NGOs* and will possibly develop to for-profit social business ventures, both of which are types of social enterprises. These NGOs act like digital social enterprises.	In agreement with: social entrepreneurship activities are gaining popularity among NGOs (Fowler, 2000a; Fowler, 2013; Defourny et al., 2014; Helmsing et al., 2015) The findings are inconclusive on tensions or challenges in the way the hybrid NGOs combine their digital and non-digital skills and expertise in running the social venture, in contrast with Masiero and Ravishankar (2019) study of social entrepreneurs in the development sector. The study conducted by Masiero and Ravishankar (2019) focused on digital social entrepreneurship in the Global South whereas the situation here deals with Northern development NGOs turning into digital social entrepreneurship in the field of international development.
Resources such as knowledge and experience of use of technologies like social media, or a vast network of potential collaboration partners, or governmental donor-funding availability only after the fulfilment of preconditions regarding cooperation and partnerships have influenced the forming of alliances.	Two drivers for cross-sector partnerships stand out van Tulder et al. (2011) argue, namely contributing to the development goal of the NGO, and secondly generating additional income. The forming of particularly the cross-sector and intra-sector partnerships can be understood from a resource-based view of strategic alliances (Das & Teng, 2000).

7.2 Discussion of key findings theme NGO's Views on Social Media Use

In this section, we discuss the key findings of the theme (core category) 'NGO's Views on Social Media Use' in relation to the extant literature. The discussion of this theme relates to the findings for the research sub-question "How do NGOs view the concept of social media?" This theme discusses the organisation's view on the meaning of social media. Four categories are identified under this theme: technological, individual, collective and contextual views attributed to organisational social media.

Reflecting on these findings in light of the literature, we suggest comparing these with the concepts of sociomateriality and affordances, specifically affordance clusters. This PhD study does not, a priori, assume a hierarchal relevance of various types of affordances when relating the findings that were identified through the grounded theory method to the body of literature on affordances, particular in organisational and development contexts.

Rather than focusing on the individual affordances, our approach is identifying compelling areas of values attributed to organisational media, thereby considering *affordance clustering* in four distinct areas (technological, individual, collective, e.g. group/organisational, and contextual), which sometimes have a pattern of interconnectedness. In this way, theorising about affordances creates a kind of middle-range theorising on the intricacies of sociomateriality.

Scholars who have studied affordance clusters, sometimes referred to as *affordance ecologies*, have, for example, highlighted the dimensions of affordance ecologies. Lindberg and Lyytinen (2013) introduced the concept of *affordance ecologies*, in which the association with ecology invokes thinking about the complexity and dynamics, which comprise of three domains: infrastructure, organisation and practice. There are comparisons with our approach, although they identified three dimensions. Lindberg et al. (2014) presented the following four dimensions of these ecologies when examining configurations of affordances in software development: clustering, spread, concentration, and alignment. These scholars argued that affordances need to be considered not only individually, but also as configurations of multiple affordances and that more research is needed to understand these clusters (Lindberg et al., 2014).

Looking at the four identified views attributed to social media, we compare their formulation with the literature on clusters of affordances, affordance ecologies, and configurations of affordances. Interestingly the four perspectives also constitute what is called the landscape of affordances, "the total ensemble of available affordances for a population in a given environment" (Ramstead et al., 2016, p. 3).

The Technological view encompasses affordances related to the functional affordances of social media. Functional affordances are potential uses rooted in material properties of information systems that identify what users may be able to use the system for, given the user's capabilities and goals (Markus & Silver, 2008). Stendal et al. (2016) conducted a literature review on the concept of affordances in Information Systems and concluded that the most reported affordances in the reviewed literature are functional affordances.

An illustrative quotation for the Technological view, where the fading distinction between the Internet, social media and mobile communication is:

> *"You see integration of Internet and mobile. I think that the difference between them gradually will disappear. (…) Twitter is just like text messaging"* (Community Knowledge Management, NGO).

The Technological values also closely relate to the concept of technological affordances, which "establishes material qualities of technologies and media as being constituted at least partly outside the communicative, mediate, and affective processes of the people who use them" (Nagy & Neff, 2015, p. 2). Treem and Leonardi (2012) defined four affordances on social media in organisations: visibility, persistence, editability, and association, that can be regarded as belonging to this same affordance cluster. The Technological view values are related to the list of social media affordances described by Wagner et al. (2014). They argue "social media afford various new behaviours that were not previously possible with prior forms of computer-mediated communication., e.g. authoring, reviewability, editability, combinability, association, and experimentation", while linking them to knowledge creation within organisations (Wagner et al., 2014, p. 41).

An illustrative quotation for the Individual view is where an individual's online (self-)expression is:

> *"With social media the actual person behind [ed. the online account] is more important. For example, LinkedIn: you do not have an account as an organisation. You need to be a person. You may create a group/organisation page. However, you have to identify yourself as a human being. It is about individuals."* (Expertise Sharing NGO)

This Individual view is closely related to the concept of an individualised affordance that "is actualized by one actor acting independently of others" (Volkoff & Strong, 2017, p. 6) or "that someone enacts when using a technology's features, but that affordance is not common to his or her workgroup or department" (Leonardi, 2013b, p. 752) or social affordances for networked individualism, that depict "how the Internet can influence everyday life" (Wellman et al., 2003).

The Collective view resembles the collective affordances, defined as "affordances that are collectively created by members of a group, in the aggregate, which allows the group to do something that it could not otherwise accomplish, and shared affordances, where these are shared by all members of a group" (Leonardi, 2013b, p. 752). Furthermore, the Collective values are closely related to the concept of structural affordances "for amplifying, recording, and spreading information and social acts where these affordances can shape publics and how people negotiate them" (boyd, 2010, p. 45). The concept of 'socialised affordances' by Zheng and Yu (2016) as the result of functional affordances of social media being 'socialised' through the processes of collective action bears some resemblance with the Collective view.

An illustrative quotation for the Collective view coded as *stimulating sharing* is:

> *"When you buy [ed. social media ads] you see actually that the return on engagement is much higher. So it turns out positively, the moment you create content that people find interesting and want to share with their constituencies."* (STD Awareness NGO)

Vaast et al. (2017) present collective-level affordances called collective, shared and connective affordances that vary in their interdependence typology, which in our study match with the

Collective view. This Collective view also encompasses Leonardi's shared and collective affordances, where a "shared affordance is the same affordance being actualised by many people in similar ways; while a collective affordance involves many people doing different things to accomplish a joint goal" (Leonardi, 2013b). Raja-Yusof et al. (2016) conclude in their study on cyber-volunteering that collective and individualised affordances are among the most relevant affordances to NGOs, which relates to the Collective and Individual views we identified.

The Contextual view is closely related to cultural affordances. Cultural affordances are defined as "the kind of affordances that humans encounter in the niches that they constitute. There are two kinds of cultural affordances: natural and conventional affordances." (Ramstead et al., 2016, p. 2).

An illustrative quotation for the Contextual view in which content produced in the Global South is highlighted is the following.

> *"The focus shifted from access in the South [ed. digital divide] to content from the South, and now shift to alliances with other content providers like local bloggers who provide relevant content. The latest focus is on training social media and ICT use."* (Advocacy NGO)

Hafezieh and Eshraghian (2017) found that navigability, association, information sharing, and ubiquitous communication were relevant affordances for NGOs aiming for social change as an outcome of their social media activities. These factors are also found in the technological, individual and collective views. They also argued for more research on the negative effects or outcomes of social media affordances. An example of negative effects from the findings is the *abundance of information* (or information overload). Also, the *abundance of social media platforms* was mentioned by NGOs deciding to choose the platforms to be active. Furthermore, the data showed factors such as the sensitivity of the discussed topics or for its audience (taboo) that inhibit organisational social media use because it could harm local stakeholders or stigmatise people.

The interrelationships between these four aforementioned perspectives, specifically in the realm of individual versus technological, and collective versus Technological views are closely related to and to some extent broaden (by examining the Contextual view) the concept of 'connective affordances', that "extend research on affordances as a relational concept by considering not only the relationships between technology and users but also the interdependence type among users and the effects of this interdependence onto what users can do with the technology" (Vaast et al., 2017, p. 1179).

Regarding the relationship between Technological & Individual views, one of the NGOs explains they do not, a priori, assume the relationship users have with technology such as social media, but conduct research to explore that relationship when dealing with the problem definition in their development projects.

> *"Whatever the tool, we look for first-hand information on the potential motivations of the users, their relationship to technology and the logistics of their everyday lives. (…) Technologies are depicted as actors, as they can exert agency on the problem."* (management professional, E-Learning NGO)

From the secondary data, it became clear that this NGO has experience with methods such as design thinking and actor-network maps and uses those tools and techniques in their approach to technology use for developmental purposes. Actor-network maps are visualisations of stakeholder clusters and networks and their interactions around a social issue, somewhat inspired by Actor-Network Theory from Bruno Latour and others.

Some NGOs are using design thinking methods to develop solutions to social problems (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). “Design thinking is a human-centred approach to innovation that draws from the designer’s toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success.” (IDEO, 2019).

This approach can also be related to (non-)human agency affording things to technology as posed by Bucher and Helmond (2017). They argue: “While affordance theory has mainly put emphasis on the question of what technology affords users, the socio-technical nature of social media platforms also begs the reverse question of what users afford to platforms?... we need to consider the multi directionality of agency and connectivity at play” (Bucher & Helmond, 2017, p. 29)

Relationship between Technological & Collective views

The Advocacy NGO sees social media and networking as a dynamic environment where NGOs should be prepared to adapt to a situation.

> *“The social media and social networking environment are dynamic and fluid. NGOs will need to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge of the space in order to employ it for participatory democracy and civic empowerment.”* (report Advocacy NGO)

Social media activities could suggest a paradigm shift in organisations’ operations.

Relationship between Technological & Contextual views

An illustrative quotation for the relationship between Technological & Contextual views is the following.

> *“Development 2.0 is an important trend, not only for fundraising and campaigning but also for use in the work in developing countries, for example, in countries where human rights are violated. There are many chances for NGOs in social media use.”* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

Relationship between Individual & Contextual view

An illustrative quotation for the relationship between Individual & Collective views is the following.

> *“We heavily focused on getting online followers; we are now above fifty thousand on Facebook. Then you can take it a step further. You need to be sure that people see what you do as an organisation, and you must take care that they feel ‘attached’ to the organisation to spread the word. The phase you see now is that they work for you, as donors, ‘time givers’. These are people from whom we notice that if they go sharing, they have two hundred people behind them, which means a kind of snowball effect occurs.”* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

Here, social media is regarded by some NGOs is as having value for creating community and collaboration.

Zheng and Yu (2016) identify the (one-directional) relationship between functional affordances (incorporated in our Technological perspective) via a collective action process into what they call affordances for practice (incorporated in our Collective view). We have extended the described one-directional view to bi-directional relationships. Examples of quotations of the relationships between the four views are shown in Figure 7-3.

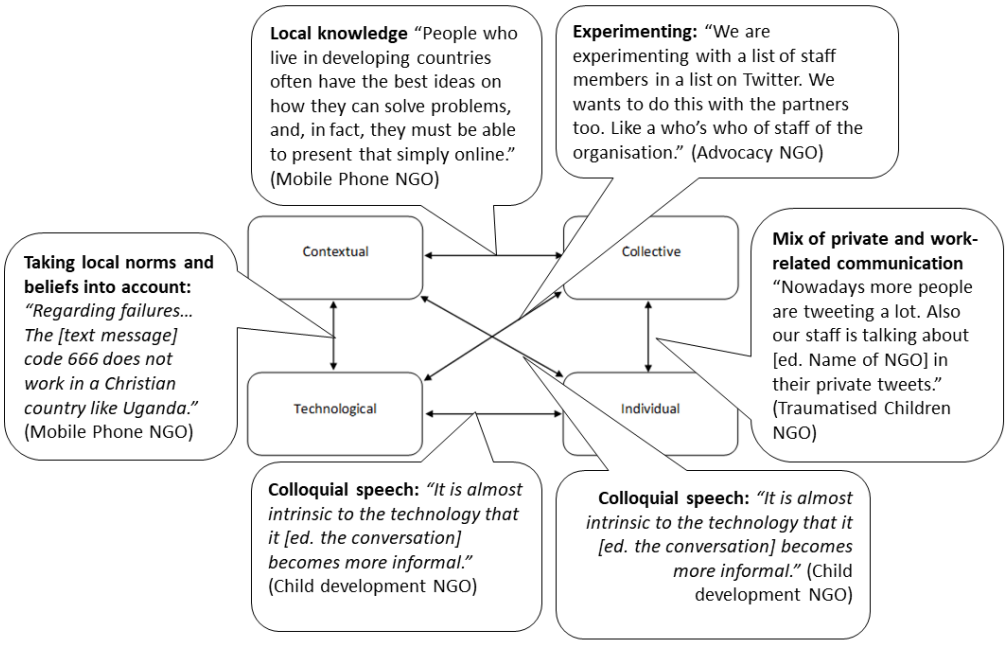


Figure 7-3. Relationship between the four views, including illustrative quotations.

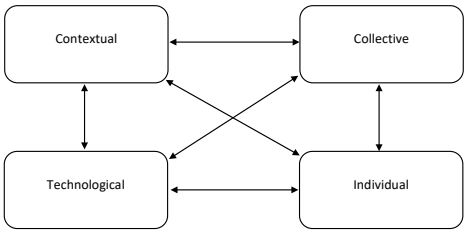
The ideas presented in this study outline a picture where one looks beyond the single affordances to clusters of affordances and the connections between those clusters.

The relationships between affordance clusters occur from the observation that one affordance in a particular affordance cluster is related to another affordance in another affordance cluster. Orlikowski and Scott (2008) press for theorising the fusion of technology and work in organisations into an additional research stream that they refer to under the umbrella term sociomateriality. The fusion aspect is, to some extent, reached by the study of the interactions and inter-relationships of the affordance clusters. Affordances can be an important element in developing a socio-material explanation of the human, organisation (including its context), and technology nexus and theorising on social media use by organisations such as development NGOs (Faraj & Azad, 2012; Leonardi & Vaast, 2016).

7.2.1 Summary of key findings: four emerging views in relation to the literature

In the literature, various configurations, groups, or clusters of affordances are described. However, less is known about the relationships between these affordance clusters or affordance ecologies. The examined literature on this subject is limited to Information Systems and communication research. We theorise that for a fundamental understanding of affordances in the domain of Information Systems, the interconnectedness may play a role in the existence of combinations of affordances with cross-cluster relationships. The following table (7-6) summarises the key findings regarding the identified value clusters in relation to the discussed literature. This empirically demonstrates the concepts of affordance clusters and the connections between them.

Table 7-6. Summary of key findings value clusters in relation to the literature on affordances clusters.

Key findings discussion	Relation to literature
Technological view ascribes to potentials created by technological features of social media technologies that may shape social media use by the organisation.	Closely related to functional affordances (Markus & Silver, 2008) and technological affordances (Nagy & Neff, 2015). Related to the list of social media affordances described by Treem and Leonardi (2012), and Wagner et al. (2014).
Individual view, that is related to the personal sphere of social media use, i.e. how is it related to an individual?	Related to an individualised affordance (Leonardi, 2013b), and the social affordances for networked individualism (Wellman et al., 2003).
Collective view is related to social media use between a group of people or in a formalised structure, such as an organisation.	Extends the views on social media affordances in the context of knowledge creation within organisations with an overarching concept (Wagner et al., 2014). Closely related to the combination of collective and shared affordances (Leonardi, 2013b). Closely related to concepts of structural affordances (boyd, 2010). Collective-level affordances called collective, shared, and connective affordances that vary in their interdependence typology (Vaast et al., 2017).
Contextual view is related to those views of the NGOs that take into account the 'context', the environment, with its social, political, cultural and geographical aspects, in which social media is being used by the organisation.	Somewhat related to cultural affordances (Ramstead et al., 2016) and even *extends those affordances with, for example, political and geographical aspects*.
Next to the Technological, Individual, Collective and Contextual views attributed to organisational social media use, we theorise that multiple relations between these four affordance clusters are possible.  	Closely related to the concept of affordances landscape (Ramstead et al., 2016), and configurations of affordances (Lindberg et al., 2014), and affordance ecologies (Lindberg & Lyytinen, 2013). The connective affordances are related to the interrelationship between Technological and Individual, or Technological and Collective views (Vaast et al., 2017). *Extends these concepts with the possible interrelationship between affordance clusters or affordance ecologies and the possible bi-directional aspect of those relationships.*

7.3 Discussion of key findings theme NGOs' Use of Social Media in Development

In this section, we discuss the key findings of the theme (core category) 'NGO's Use of Social Media' in relation to the extant literature. The discussion of this theme relates to the findings for the research sub-question: in what way do development NGOs apply social media for development purposes?

After discussing some of the general findings, the discussion of the associated core category has been developed by reflecting on the findings and transforming the presentation of the analysis by making use of a conceptualisation derived in the process of the grounded theory method of writing theoretical memos and identifying relationships between concepts in either the data or extant literature. The analysis of this theme 'NGOs' use of social media' is then presented in a narrative related to the NGOs' development strategies.

7.3.1 Discussion of general findings

The findings show that the respondents from all of the studied NGOs associated aspects like 'Collaboration', 'Connecting' and 'Interaction' with social media. These aspects are in agreement with definitions for social media like the ones from Mayfield (2008a) and Kaplan and Haenlein (2010). The interaction was found to be important if organisations were to develop relationships with their stakeholders (Jo & Kim, 2003).

Collaboration is important for the operation of international aid and development organisations (Woldhek & Kleef, 2009). The notion that mobile phones are included in the perception of what social media constitutes is corroborated by Yamamichi (2011) who speaks of mobile-enabled social media, and the role that mobile technology can have for social development. The idea that NGOs have of the workings of a network of people confirms O'Reilly's view on social media (O'Reilly, 2005). It also touches the concept that the role of non-profit organisations is changing from middleman to a platform facilitator in a networked organisation (Aitamurto, 2011). The respondents put more emphasis on the collaborative, connecting and interactive aspects of social media and didn't mention the finding and (re-)using of content as part of their definition of social media, cf. Zuniga and White (2009).

Most of the NGOs do seem to be aware of the use of social media for development purposes as advocated by Zuniga and White (2009) and do not merely utilise it only as a communication tool. Although the statement is slightly contradicted by the findings in which some NGOs consider social media just another communication tool (cf. Curtis et al. 2010), they are aware of its potential and monitor its effect. The aspect of 'attuned message' as mentioned in one of the cases underwrites Kaplan and Haenlein's (2010) suggestion to avoid contradictory messages across communication channels or social media and websites used. The deployment of the organisations' own developed social network platform is also suggested by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010).

The findings show that the studied NGOs are aware of using local knowledge in their social media activities. Grewal et al. (2012) have identified three major segments of data collection activities by NGOs: monitoring & evaluation, programme specific data collection based on thematic areas of intervention and data collection on behalf of external organisations (often for pay). The technology most used in data collection in Africa is SMS. That popularity is attributed

to the availability of SMS on all mobile phones and networks and the familiarity with it for many users (Boyera et al., 2012).

The concept of 'Development 2.0' (or International Cooperation 2.0) was mentioned by several organisations where international cooperation 2.0 is characterised by massive online collaboration, self-organisation, open-source marketing, collective intelligence and crowdsourcing (Jansen, 2009) and is aimed at achieving development goals (Kirstein Junge, 2012). The findings also reveal the use of crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing is used for creating and increasing collective knowledge, community building, collective creativity and innovation, crowdfunding, cloud labour, and civic engagement (Esposti, 2012). Berdou (2011); Bott and Young (2012) identify that crowdsourcing is not only limited to industrialised countries but already has a strong impact in developing countries. This is confirmed by the practice of the NGOs that have been analysed. Waters et al. (2009) argue that non-profit organisations lag behind others in social media adoption, waiting to see how others use this new technology. In general, that may be true, but the front runners of the development organisations do adopt the latest social media but are not always sure what to do with it, see for example the Advocacy NGO in the findings where there is room for experimenting. Intensive collaboration and knowledge sharing with regard to social media use were observed among some of the examined development organisations. This agrees with Ballantyne and Addison (2000) and Ferguson et al. (2013). The finding that room for experimenting with social media is present in the analysed cases agrees with the views of Kanter and Allison (2010).

When the five modes of usage of organisational social media as presented by Turban et al. (2011) are mapped onto the studied development NGOs, we can make the following observations: practically all NGOs use public online social networks like Facebook or Twitter for user engagement. The internal enterprise social networks such as Yammer or Slack were used for internal communication. The enterprise-owned publicly accessible platforms were used for activities such as crowdsourcing, crowdfunding, discussion and progress updates on development projects, or for knowledge sharing. Some NGOs also made use of closed Facebook groups (or similar networks like Ning, etc.) to perform similar activities. The Mobile Technology and Water Platform NGO developed their own mobile survey platform to interact with users (depicted with an asterisk in Table 7-7. Other NGOs made use of the services of local technology firms. The Confederated, Advocacy, and Agriculture NGOs used mobile surveys to receive feedback from citizens from the communities targeted with the development projects or send out to information like agricultural knowledge. The other NGOs used mobile phone interactions for leisure and educational activities, often targeted at youth. The findings did not show much use of tools that include capabilities to support social networking applications.

These uses are further unpacked in section 7.3.3, where the development activities of these NGOs and the relationship with social media are elaborated. For this, the next section first introduces the linking of social media to the specificities of NGOs and the uses for various development purposes.

Table 7-7. Modes of usage of organisational social media among the studied NGOs. Based on Turban et al. (2011)

		Modes of Usage of Organisational Social Media				
Development NGO pseudonym	**Focus area(s)**	**Public online social networks**	**Internal Enterprise Social Networks**	**Enterprise-owned publicly accessible social networks**	**Enhancing existing comm. applications**	**Tools with capabilities to support social networking**
Crowdsourcing	Crowdfunding and wisdom of the crowd	**X**	**X**	**X**		
Water Platform	Initially in water projects and now data management in development projects	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X(*)**	
Mobile Technology	Mobile communication and data collection for development	**X**		**X**	**X(*)**	**X**
Confederated	Emergency relief, poverty and inequality, women's rights, fair trade, climate change, refugees, microfinance and education.	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	
Traumatised Children	Youth (post-war) trauma care	**X**				
Advocacy	Transparency, women's rights, freedom of speech, sustainable development, sexual and reproductive rights	**X**	**X**		**X**	
Community Knowledge Management	Volunteering, knowledge management, a community of practitioners	**X**				
Child Development	Child rights and protection, emergency relief, education, children's health	**X**				
Youth Health and Sex Education	Health education on promoting safe sexual choices to youth, sexual and reproductive rights	**X**			**X**	
STD Awareness	Promoting awareness of and combating sexually transmitted diseases	**X**			**X**	
Crowdfunding	Crowdfunding			**X**		
E-learning	Education	**X**		**X**	**X**	
Agriculture	Agriculture and its production value chain	**X**	**X**		**X**	
Expertise Sharing	Expertise in agriculture, energy, water, sanitation and hygiene	**X**	**X**			

7.3.2 Cross-referencing NGO and social media characteristics- integrated with data from the study

The findings are compared with the conceptualisation derived from the literature (Table 2-6) in which NGO and social media characteristics were cross-referenced. Illustrative examples and their open codes are shown in Table 7-8.

Table 7-8. Cross-reference of NGO and social media characteristics- integrated with selective codes and examples of open codes from our study.

Characteristics of NGOs / Social Media Characteristics	Institutionalised organisation	Non-profit	Self-governing & Separate from the government	Voluntary participants
Openness	Knowing the local context: "People who live in developing countries often have the best ideas on how they can solve problems, and, in fact, they must be able to present that simply online."	Communication: "One of the interesting aspects with social media is that it fully opens up communication."	Positive message: *"People in developing countries see a picture of a poor person as a 'victim'. Therefore we use the image of 'local hero' instead... Image is important, and the message communicated should be positive. Not playing the moral or guilt card."*	A targeted approach: *"The message is adapted to the medium."* *Openness: "We are very active in blogging. Very open, we are an open-source [organisation]"*
Participation	'Online vs offline' dichotomy: *"You have two worlds; you have the old one, that's all large organisations. And then you have social media which is a very open network, but I do not believe that the one can do without the other…you can achieve the most success by joining the two worlds."*	Raising awareness: *"A large part of the work here is aimed at getting people to commit to us and to raise funds. Social media are an important channel for this."*	International cooperation 2.0: *"International cooperation 1.0 equals broadcasting. International cooperation 2.0 incorporates the use of social media and is about transmitting and receiving at the same time. It's like a network."*	Outreach to women: *"Mobile phones are not only for men but also for women [in Kenya]"* Goals: *"Sometimes it is raising awareness but also donations or signing a petition. We are not very active in fundraising online. It happens but mostly for emergency aid."*
Conversation	The tone of voice: "*We communicate differently to East-Africans than to Dutch people."* Oversimplifying the message: *"[Social media] is not useful for profound or comprehensive communication."*	Reputation damage: *"There is the risk of open communication. Everything can be exposed. It is hard to be open at the same time, as well as ensuring the quality of the information."*	Interaction with their audience: *"Interaction is important, and we always react when somebody poses questions to use on our social media platforms. We talk back and do that daily."*	Relationship building: *"Strategy from 'Trust me', via 'Tell me' and 'Show me' to 'Involve me'.*
Connectedness	Making the website social: *"We have brought together elements from various social media that we find important into one system what makes it more useful for our partners."*	Integral (communication) strategy: *"Social media is completely interwoven into the [ed. name of NGO]. For me, it is very difficult to separate them. For me, it is not a choice between social media or… [the rest]."*	Communication tool: *"Our social media strategy is a part of our communication strategy because we believe that social media is just another communication tool. Moreover, our communication strategy is based on connecting."*	Bonding: *"If I tell you that we have so many people to bind to us, then social media is a very promising channel, a medium. Because of the ability to communicate very quickly."*
Community	The tone of voice: *"…in our tone of voice the language we speak is less development jargon, but we try to appeal to our audience, who is not attracted by such jargon or language."*	Learning from mistakes: *"Regarding failures… The [text message] code 666 does not work in a Christian country like Uganda*[8]*."* Experimenting: *"There is room for experimenting, and if something doesn't work, it does not matter."*	Development 2.0 "*is an important trend, not only for fundraising and campaigning but also for use in the work in developing countries, for example, in countries where human rights are violated. There are many chances for NGOs in social media use."*	Outreach via mobile technology: *"Social media is a way to work together, mostly on the Internet but in principle, social media is all types of media which are meant to bring together people and have intelligent information exchange. This becomes more effective with mobile."*

[8] 666 is seen as The Number of the Beast, as mentioned in the Book of Revelation in the New Testament, and Christians in Uganda feel uncomfortable to be associated with this by dialling that number.

This cross-referencing of the NGO and social media characteristics resulted in a step in which the NGO mind-sets were cross-referenced with social media activity in development, and helped to present the discussion for this core category in a narrative that is related to the development strategies of the NGOs.

7.3.3 A synthesising assessment framework for a social media application in the context of international development

Considering the classification of the (generations of) development strategies used by NGOs as shown in Table 2-1, how social media supports those strategies can be explored, using both the literature and some case examples from an exploratory study. I argue that (the generations of) NGOs' development strategies are a classification of development activities which are not mutually exclusive and may co-occur within an NGO at the same time. These activities with different problem definitions, and often requiring distinct roles for the NGO, may lead to different uses of social media. In the following sections, we discuss the specific uses of social media for the various roles and accompanying dominant mind-sets that the development NGOs have.

7.3.3.1 Social Media Use in Relation to NGO's Activities for Emergency Assistance

As an example case for this scenario, a Dutch NGO developed an emergency app that mapped the needs of communities in a disaster-struck area. Local communities can relay information on what's needed via mobile phones (even via text messages), or via Internet-connected devices. Originally the app was developed for monitoring and evaluation purposes, but they quickly repurposed this after a major earthquake hit a region where the NGO and partner organisations were operating. People in need are included in the needs assessment, where the app acts as an empowerment tool. In another case, Instagram photos uploaded by locals were included in needs assessment by an NGO. The photos provided useful information for emergency and relief efforts.

NGOs have a role as 'doer' for emergency assistance, tackling the lack of goods (e.g. food, shelter) and services (e.g. healthcare). As a development strategy relief and welfare are mostly a temporary alleviation of the signs of underdevelopment. In this role, crowdsourcing is often used for gathering financial and material resources. Many NGOs see the potential of crowdsourcing for disaster relief activities (Crowley & Chan, 2011; Livingston & Walter-Drop, 2014; Meier, 2014). Social media have been used for organising community activism, and for coordinating emergency response (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012).

Social media provide an invaluable low-cost solution for engaging with and obtaining information from the public (Lutu, 2015). For emergency assistance, social media are suitable for creating and sharing content (Zuniga & White, 2009). NGOs have become effective infomediaries (Graham & Haarstad, 2011). Their use of social media is also effective for finding, using, organising and reusing reliable content regarding emergency assistance (Zuniga & White, 2009).

7.3.3.2 Social Media Use in Relation to Development Activities

An example of social media use for development activities is an NGO who created an online community mainly of villages in the Global South who share indigenous knowledge and experience, mainly on agricultural practices. The community connected villages from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Within this strategy, NGOs act more as 'mobiliser'. They aim to bring more attention to the small-scale and self-reliant local community development. In this role, development NGOs seek to connect with others for several reasons. Connecting via social networks is part of this role (Zuniga & White, 2009).

An important reason is to tap into the knowledge and voices of the South (Masetti-Zannini, 2007; Owiny et al., 2014). Social media may also contribute to poverty alleviation by facilitating the sharing of resources or information (Nicholson et al., 2016). Auger (2013) observes that non-profit organisations use different social media for different purposes. NGOs are primarily using Twitter to convey one-way messages as a means of sharing information instead of relationship-building (Waters & Jamal, 2011). Waters et al. (2009) conclude that NGOs often use social media for informing the public and communicating with stakeholders.

Interestingly, Holmén (2002) observes networking is often between individuals from NGOs and other individuals (of other organisations or communities) rather than a formal and institutionalised undertaking. At the same time, NGOs struggle to build effective participation mechanisms in the developing world (Masetti-Zannini, 2007). Part of this struggle is ascribed to the resistance of staff to change working habits which inhibit social media use (Mefalopulos, 2008; Kanter & Fine, 2010).

Waters et al. (2009) and van Alphen (2009) argue that the effects of organisational social media use on organisations and individuals should be further assessed. According to Alexander (2014, p. 723), social media can also be used to improve voluntarism "by increasing the profile and connectedness of organisations". One important collaboration activity is crowdsourcing. Bott and Young (2012) observed that crowdsourcing is not only limited to industrialised countries but has already had a strong impact on developing countries. Ballantyne and Addison (2000) identified the growing trend of online communities around shared interests and the potential this offers to development NGOs.

Regarding the content that is shared online, NGOs are likely to share content created by themselves (Lovejoy et al., 2012). There is also growing online collaboration and knowledge sharing between NGOs (Ballantyne & Addison, 2000; Ferguson et al., 2013). Some argue that NGOs will need to produce more high-quality content to attract and engage audiences (RockefellerFoundation, 2014). Owiny et al. (2014) are proponents of the embracing of traditional knowledge management practices and social Web 2.0 technology to tap into indigenous knowledge.

Arora and Rangaswamy (2014); Arora (2019) caution development NGOs not to solely (paternalistically) focus on the developmental aspects of social media use but to acknowledge the leisurely dimension of social media use for the targeted communities in the Global South and incorporate this in their development activities.

7.3.3.3 Social Media Use when Development Becomes a Self-reliant Political Process

An example case for this scenario is an NGO which has created online resources to inform citizens on digital activism. They have also established an emergency response capacity and support for bloggers, cyber activists, journalists, human rights defenders, and other civil society activists, that are under threat.

NGOs soon realised the limited impact of their earlier approaches in development, and this led to aiming at sustainable systems development, in local public and private organisations that are linked into a supportive national development system. These NGOs are moving to a 'catalyst' role, where they facilitate other organisations to create capacities, relationships and responsibilities required to address designated needs in a sustainable way (Korten, 1987, p. 187).

When it comes to connecting with others, NGOs active with activism or human rights should be aware of negative fallout when promoting transparency in general. "*One person's transparency is another's surveillance. One person's accountability is another's persecution*", Fox (2010, p. 663) argues. Social media also facilitates networked communication between NGOs and NGOs with political actors on a global stage (Fenton, 2009). Social media can also be seen as a tool for development because of the power to organise at scale or to speak, Hatem Ali (2009) asserts. Social media can be used to promote changes in politics and for civil society activism or social campaigning (Edwards et al., 1999; Nicholson et al., 2016). Social media may provide opportunities for low-cost experimentation to increase digital citizen engagement among those who already have the economic and political capacity to participate (World Bank, 2016).

By its ability to strengthen connectivity and information flows, social media can sometimes affect the balance of power in society (Edwards, 2011). Next to this power balance shift, one should not ignore the increasing trend of decentralisation in development and the advantages of social media in that perspective (Ballantyne & Addison, 2000). This may foster, digital activism and particularly community activism and citizens' empowerment (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Hutchinson, 2019).

Furthermore, Punie (2011) states that social media empower NGOs by enabling participation and knowledge aggregation. Others are more cautious and highlight some of the dystopian aspects. "Taking the idea of participatory democracy serious means that social media are today stratified, non-participatory spaces and an alternative, the non-corporate Internet is needed" Fuchs (2013a, p. 28) warns. Toyama (2011) cautions against seeing technology such as social media as a panacea and argues that technology merely is a magnifier of underlying human and institutional intent and capacity, which can themselves be positive or negative.

An interesting recent trend related to this study is Open Development, leading to positive change through open information-networked activities. Open Development is defined as the leveraging and reshaping of "information networked activities to alter how we (people, groups, organisations, governments, etc.) mobilise and organise resources (information and people) to catalyse development outcomes that are both more inclusive and transformative" (Smith et al., 2011).

Openness covers content, people, and process. According to Smith et al. (2014, p. 30) 'open' refers to "information-networked activities that have, relatively speaking, more information that is freely accessible and/or modifiable and more people who can actively participate and/or collaborate." They position 'open development' as similar to Amartya Sen's view on development (1999) by arguing that open models are processes that "constitute development (the ends) as they create the conditions for people to escape from the *unfreedom* of poverty, and they can result in development (the means) by permitting people to more effectively execute capabilities" (Smith et al., 2014, p. 31). Online development networks may contribute to knowledge sharing between development organisations (Cummings et al., 2006). Information-sharing and mutual learning are seen as strong motivations for networking among NGOs (Holmén, 2002).

7.3.3.4 ***Social Media Use for Human and Sustainable Development***

An example of this scenario is a network of young practitioners from various development NGOs who organised an online (and offline) community to address prejudices in international development and particularly reframing the message and perception of the Global South. They have set up an annual online contest to showcase good and bad examples from social media campaigns by Dutch development NGOs.

Korten (1990) and De Senillosa (1998) suggesting the need for another label where NGOs take the role of 'Activist' or 'Educator'. NGOs facilitate the coming together of loosely defined networks of people and organisations to transform the institutions of global society, Korten (1990, p. 123) argues.

NGOs can become a 'networked non-profit organisation' by interacting with their stakeholders and the community as a whole in real and transparent ways through the use of social media, reiterating the importance of relationship-building through social media (Kanter & Fine, 2010). Mefalopulos (2008) stresses the role of communication in trying to influence stakeholders' voluntary change. Langley and van den Broek (2010) and Lane and Dal Cin (2018) foresee the potential of social media as a driver of sustainable behaviour or slacktivism for organisations, whereby people take part in (leisurely) online initiatives such as watching a protest video.

Miller et al. (2016) observed in their global study that a result of social media is a concept they refer to as (online) 'scalable sociality'. This means that the plethora of various sorts of social media allows sharing or interaction in groups that are scaled from private to public, and group size is from the smallest group of two up to a large public broadcast. This creates new ways of creating various 'communities' in the development sector, cf. Ballantyne and Addison (2000). For example, the community is formed around shared ideals or technologies (Berdou, 2011). Waters et al. (2009) advise NGOs to carefully plan their social media activities as they try to develop social networking relationships with their stakeholders. Carlman (2010) argues social media may contribute to human-centred development. Edwards (2011, p. 12) cautions against this optimism, by saying that social media may be less successful in reducing "the structural problems that weaken participation, especially inequality".

7.3.3.5 Social Media Use when Development Goes Beyond Aid

An example for this situation is one NGO that is transforming from being a crowdsourcing platform for small-scale private initiatives for development projects, toward a social enterprise that will work increasingly with businesses and cities by offering them a 'do good' platform for their employees. This has also changed a North-South dichotomy as the projects are both in the global North as well as in the Global South.

Another scenario that has been observed is that development NGOs stimulate 'civic partnership' with states and markets. They promote the role of international and local businesses in the social sustainability of the South (Bendell & Murphy, 1999) or even take up that role themselves as social entrepreneurs using commercial undertakings to cross-subsidise social interventions (Fowler, 2000b). Social media may provide opportunities for capacity-building, for example, to start an enterprise (Nicholson et al., 2016).

7.3.3.6 An Applicability Framework for Development NGOs for Organisational Social Media Use

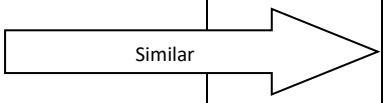
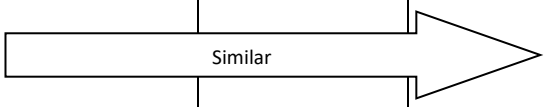
Following the principles of theoretical sensitivity, this idea was derived from theoretical coding on how theory is constructed by cross-referencing characteristics of concepts and a theoretical memo I wrote. If we take the five aforementioned NGO strategic activities as discussed in the previous sections, and cross-reference these with the four potential activity areas of social media use in the context of aid and development as stated by Zuniga and White (2009) and others, which are *connecting with others, collaborating with other people, creating and sharing content, and finding, using, organising and reusing content*, we are able to construct an applicability framework for development NGOs for organisational social media use conceptualised by the diagram in Figure 7-4.

Figure 7-4. Constructing an applicability framework for development NGOs for organisational social media use

When this diagram is filled, we arrive at an applicability framework for development NGOs for organisational social media use, as shown in Table 7-9. The social media activities are sorted along with the four areas for each NGO strategic developmental activity. This conceptual

framework provides NGOs with a practical instrument for assessing the use of social media for international development purposes. This construction contains both the positive and negative implications of organisational social media use related to development activities.

Table 7-9. Classification of social media activities related to the development objectives of NGOs into an applicability framework.

NGO development activities / Social media activity area in development	Emergency assistance	Development	Development as a self-reliant political process	Human and sustainable development	Development beyond aid
Connecting with others	Low-cost solution for engaging with and obtaining information from the public. Phone access/use: access to a phone through informal sharing.	Social media as a tool for development. Tapping into knowledge and voices of the South Use different social media for different purposes. Informing the public and communicating with stakeholders. Networking is often between individuals rather than a formal and institutionalised undertaking. Promotional use of social media instead of two-way communication	Social media facilitates networked communication between NGOs and also with political actors on a global stage. Social media strengthen connectivity and information flows and can affect the balance of power in society. Social media to promote changes in politics and civil society activism. Increase digital citizen engagement. Social media for peacebuilding.	The role of communication in trying to influence stakeholders' voluntary change. Potential of social media as a driver of the sustainable behaviour of slacktivism for organisations. 'Networked non-profit organisation. Attention to the notion of 'communities' in the development sector. Develop relationships with stakeholders.	Social media transforming patterns of work and interactions. The cautionary approach toward development outcome of ICT and social media.
Collaborating with other people	Potential of crowdsourcing for disaster relief activities. Mitigating information overload.	Collaborating The resistance of staff to change working habits inhibits social media use. To enhance voluntarism by increasing the profile and connectedness of organisations. Crowdsourcing has a strong impact on developing countries. The notion of 'communities' in the development sector.	Enabling participation and knowledge aggregation Increasing decentralisation. Citizens empowerment & community activism. Technology is merely a magnifier of underlying human and institutional intent and capacity, which can be positive or negative. Open development	Social media may contribute to human-centred development. Social media may be less successful in reducing "the structural problems that weaken participation, especially inequality". Community forming around shared ideals or technologies.	Opportunities for capacity-building
Creating and sharing content	Creating and sharing content. Digital literacy of staff and target communities.	Non-profits likely to share their own information. Need to produce more high-quality content, mitigating information overload. Growing online collaboration and knowledge sharing between NGOs.	Information-sharing and mutual learning as a strong motivation for networking among NGOs Online development networks may contribute to knowledge sharing between development organisations.		
Finding, using, organizing and reusing content	NGOs as infomediaries. Finding, using, organising and reusing content.	Embrace knowledge-management practices to tap into indigenous knowledge. Acknowledge the leisurely dimension of social media consumers.			

Social media have the potential of transforming patterns of work and interactions of organisations (Suarez, 2009). For the changing role, NGOs take when development goes beyond aid, this aspect of social media may prove to be very useful.

On the other hand, McLennan (2015) and is cautious about the development outcome of ICT and social media. “Social media for development is a contested process that might amplify rather than dissipate powerful voices, transform a fairly open online space as a proxy for mediated participation in support of the status quo”, she argues (Nicholson et al., 2016, p. 361). This table provides a useful and nuanced starting point for development NGOs to explore the organisational use of social media and align these to the NGO activities, as mentioned in the columns of Table 7-9.

Based on the NGO’s activities, one or more columns are relevant for assessing the use of social media. The cells in the table that are found when intersecting the column with the rows provide information on how social media acts for that specific development purpose (column) and social media activity (row) in the context of development. The arrows indicate that cells are similar to the cells on their left.

7.3.4 Summary of discussion of core category/theme NGO’s Use of Social Media in Development

The assessment framework for organisational social media use by development NGOs, constructed by cross-referencing the organisational goals of development NGOs to the social media activity areas in the context of development is a novel approach. Initially, a cross-reference matrix was made between the characteristics of social media and NGOs (Sheombar et al., 2015). However, to relate this the practice of NGOs’ use of social media, a framework attuned to the organisation's activities was constructed. Therefore the framework reflects the development NGOs’ (sometimes multiple) organisational goals and from there considers the applicability of social media for different goals in the context of international development Sheombar (2017).

7.4 Theorising relationship between emergent theme

Three main themes (core categories) have emerged from the data, as presented in the preceding chapters (Figure 7-5).

The theme ‘NGO Enacting Values in Development’ is about the organisation’s strategic intent in the context of international development. This theme consists of three categories.

The theme ‘NGO's views on social media’ encompasses the organisation’s view on the meaning of social media. This theme consists of four categories.

The theme “NGO’s Use of Social Media” represents the NGOs’ use of social media in the Development context. This theme consists of two categories.

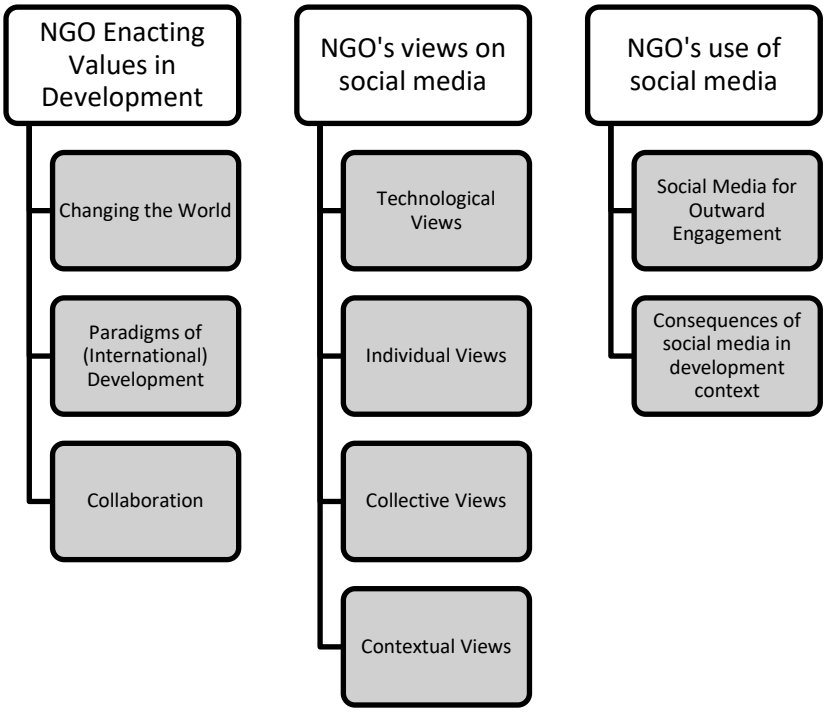


Figure 7-5. Three emergent themes and their categories.

The three themes have an emerging relationship that is discussed in the next section.

7.4.1 Relationships between themes

The three emergent themes (core categories) that are found after the data collection and analysis may be related to each other in the following way (Figure 7-6).

Figure 7-6. Relationships between the three themes.

Are the organisation's strategy, the goals (though changing over time), and even the organisational culture related to the organisational view on social media, in the sense that the former are shaping the latter? Furthermore, in return, does the NGO's use of social media relate to the view the organisation has on social media? Does the experience gained by using organisational social media foster the (dynamic) view on social media?

Evidence for this line of thought is found in the data (chain-of-evidence) and shown by exemplifying quotations in the following sections.

7.4.1.1 The relationship between NGO Enacting Values in Development and NGO's views on social media

The first relationship discussed is that between **NGO Enacting Values in Development** and **NGO's View of Social Media**. Some examples of this relationship are:

> *"Every action should aim at a long-term goal in addition to a short-term objective. That is why it is essential to frame social media within the context of an organisation's broader goals and to be able to diligently communicate the vision, mission and goals of the organisation using social media."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

> *"Before deploying a presence on social media, it is important to know your organisation's vision, mission, core values and programmatic goals. It is vital to approach using social media with care and forethought. In other words, digital activism components should point toward a larger picture that an NGO is pursuing." (Advocacy NGO)*

> *" In our strategic online plan, you can recognise our core values are as an organisation, how we want to profile ourselves on social media, for example. (…) Moreover, that trickles down to the [ed. online] content, so everything we post meets those conditions."* (communications professional, STD awareness NGO)

These examples illustrate the importance that these NGOs attribute to a clear relationship between the organisational vision and mission, and the social media (communications) plan the NGO has. Some NGOs, like this younger one, see a dichotomy between the organisation (large, often old) and the world of social media (open) and are trying to bridge the two.

> *"You have two worlds; you have the old one of the large organisations, and then you have social media which is a very open network, but I believe the one does not function without the other. There is the power, so to say; how can you combine those two things?"* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

The NGO's views on how to use social media should be aligned with its strategic goals, according to the respondents. This quotation suggests that the studied NGOs do not see social media as a separate concept or activity detached from the organisational goals, but consider social media activities positioned within the perimeters of their goals.

From most of the studied NGOs, it became apparent that understanding what social media could mean for their organisation was not a solitary undertaking. To shape the views on how the NGO's strategic goals could be transferred to the way social media could be working for the NGO, the NGOs often collaborated with fellow NGOs with more experience in social media use, to understand and learn how to incorporate social media. The more experienced NGOs, in this study, found to be mainly (but not limited to) the smaller and younger NGOs, also benefitted from these partnerships as they increased their reach and partner network, and brought additional funding because of an alliance with the larger NGOs in Dutch government-funded grant applications.

> *"There are various partnerships with other organisations. Two of them, the Crowdsourcing NGO and the E-learning NGO are picked for improving social media use in their own organisation; it is part of a five-year-strategy. Together with our partner*

organisation, Crowdsourcing NGO possibilities are explored on how people can choose and follow the projects they want. The collaboration helps the Confederated NGO to learn how to do this." (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

This so-called 'insourced experience' from partner NGOs is used for acquiring knowledge in those areas where the NGO has less experience than other NGOs. However, this is a relative difference as all the NGOs sampled for this study were active with social media and also kept an eye on each other's social media activities to garner insights, as illustrated in the following quotation.

> *"I think we are past the stage of should we do something with or how important is social media? That is not to say that it is apparent what you have to do with it. (…) My conclusion, for the time being, is that we all are still searching. We have all kinds of insights learned from each other*Stankovic-Rice (2011) *that we are trying to replicate from each other."* (communications professional, Traumatised Children NGO)

Various paradigms influence NGO's strategies. An interesting phenomenon is the advent of newcomers to the established development sector where NGOs are founded by people with experience in other areas like ICT, who in collaboration with already experienced development staff, introduce new ideas to use ICT for development objectives.

> *"The whole development sector has been built over the last 70 years, to raise money and to then tunnelled through development organisations to development projects and then they have to report what has been done with that money. They run so many projects and then one does not think of a smarter way to get the money from here to there. The same applies to information, isn't there a smarter way to inform each other?*
>
> *From that perspective, we started to think, how can it be improved? We said, let us forget everything that is already being done. Let us assume we have to start all over again. How would you then organise? Moreover, then it starts to roll…"* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

Of course, the potential of ICT for development is being explored by most of the studied NGOs, but the NGO above introduced management with experience from outside the development and aid sector. Regarding ICT for development, the concept of 'Development 2.0' (coded under the category Paradigms of International Development) was mentioned by several organisations.

> *"International cooperation 1.0 equals broadcasting. The 2.0 model really deploys social media so everyone can transmit and receive at the same time. So it is a kind of network. That is now happening within international cooperation. (…) Trust within development cooperation 2.0 is possible because through the new communication technology one can have direct conversations with someone on the other side of the world"* (management professional, Crowdsourcing NGO)

These examples illustrate how the NGOs are enacting certain values in development and how these shape their view on what social media can do for the development NGOs. Thus, the NGO values ***shape*** the organisational view on social media.

7.4.1.1.1 Theories of Changes

During the last years of the data collection period for this study, I noticed that many NGOs reported the use of Theories of Changes for their development programmes. Theory of Change (ToC) is an emerging methodology in the practice of international development programmes. The abundance of methods and tools applied in the field of international development may very well deserve a dedicated PhD study in its own right, but I will only consider the emerging use of ToCs and its relation to this research.

The predecessor of the Theory of Change (ToC) approach is the logframe. It has been gradually replaced by ToC use among Dutch development NGOs. The logframe as a single table report on development programmes was developed by USAID in the 1970s and became a standard requirement in the development sector for funding applications of most international development programmes (Prinsen & Nijhof, 2015, p. 235). However, criticism of the logframe, which was two-fold, has gradually led to the introduction of other methodologies like the Theory of Change. Firstly, logframes were perceived as reductionist or simplistic, suggesting linear cause-and-effect while changes in development projects occur in a complex environment. Secondly, the logframe is often misused as an instrument of control by donor agencies over aid recipients, concealing the root causes of inequality and poverty and marginalises alternative or indigenous perspectives (Prinsen & Nijhof, 2015).

One of the NGOs complained about the rigidness of the logframe used for reporting back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and how it was influenced by the reporting obligations from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs rather than the actual work on the ground.

> *"All of this [ed. logframe] detracts from actual aid"* (report, Confederated NGO)

To address the issues of the logframe and other methods in use, at least half of the studied NGOs adopted the Theory of Change approach that originated from higher education in the United States. There are various definitions of what a Theory of Change constitutes. In general, these definitions agree on the inclusion of at least the following elements (Vogel, 2012, p. 3):

- Context for the initiative, including social, political and environmental conditions, the current state of the problem the project is seeking to influence and other actors able to influence change
- Long-term change that the initiative seeks to support and for whose ultimate benefit
- Process/sequence of change anticipated leading to the desired long-term outcome
- Assumptions about how these changes might happen, as a check on whether the activities and outputs are appropriate for influencing change in the desired direction in this context.
- Diagram and narrative summary that captures the outcomes of the discussion.

Vogel (2012) and Bisits Bullen (2016) identified that reasons for Theory of Change use by development NGOs were:

- Clarifying the link between organisational values, vision, mission, strategy and development programmes;
- Linking and more in-depth understanding of changes at different levels: community, regional, national, international;
- Giving the big picture, including issues related to the environment or context.

- Showing the different pathways that might lead to change, even if those pathways are not related to the development programme.
- Foundation for monitoring and evaluation planning & results management;
- Identifying synergies between strategies, identifying trade-offs and negative or unintended consequences, and lastly,
- Development programme scoping and design.

This summary of reasons shows that there are often multiple (nested) Theories of Change applied within an NGO. There may be Theories of Change on a policy domain or thematic level, or at an organisational level, or even at (inter)national level. Valters (2014) cautions NGOs to be critical on the interpretation of Theories of Change: "there is a danger that this is an illusory process, with an inadequate reflection on how power dynamics change in practice and how local people see change happen."

Although this cautious approach is not conclusively observed in the data, a reflexive attitude toward theories of change is suggested by this quotation.

> *"As the name suggests, a Theory of Change is a hypothesis of how we think change occurs."* (development practitioner, Water Platform NGO).

Some of NGOs report that they promote the use of the method with their collaboration partners in the Global South.

> *"We revise our Theory of Change annually, together with our partners. In these annual reflections, we encourage them to rethink their concepts of how change happens"* (report, Confederated NGO)

The NGO's motive for using Theory of Change is illustrated in this description of what Theory of Change (ToC) enables.

> *"A theory of change approach entails that people and organisations involved in intentional change processes explore and make explicit their theories of change and the assumptions underlying their thinking. This exploration includes clarifying how they see cause-effect relations between their actions and the intended changes."* (report, Advocacy NGO)

This quotation illustrates that identifying underlying assumptions is part of the development strategy of NGOs using a Theory of Change. Tose assumptions on how social media is perceived as a means of communication for development may influence the actual use of social media in development activities.

Furthermore, those assumptions may ***shape*** the NGO's values. Related to this is the exploration of digital social entrepreneurship by some of the NGOs. Thus, the organisational views on social media ***shape*** the NGO values. The NGO's view on social media shape the organisational strategy to fulfil the development function(s) of the NGO.

A Theory of Change is, strictly speaking, not a theory in an academic sense, nor a general theory of changes, but an approach specific to interventions to elaborate possible pathways of change via various intermediate outcomes on the way to the final goals, and an overview of the bigger picture (Montague-Clouse & Taplin, 2011; Prinsen & Nijhof, 2015).

Theories of Change provide insight into development NGOs' intentions with their development programmes, while they are embedded in their strategy. They may also provide analytical value when analysing the use of (digital) technologies in general (social media, 3D-printing, big data, Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence et cetera) concerning the organisational values and strategy and the expected development contributions of the NGO. Theories of Change are used by NGOs to link their operational interventions to long-term development goals that are stipulated in their strategy and related to the NGO's development mind-set(s).

The notion of Theories of Change is also a familiar concept within Information Systems research, and specifically ICT for Development (Flor, 2015; Roberts, 2015; Zheng et al., 2018).

The second relationship to be discussed is between NGO's View of Social Media and NGO's Use of Social Media.

7.4.1.2 The relationship between NGO's View of Social Media and NGO's Use of Social Media

The relationship that was identified between the emerging themes **NGO's View of Social Media** and **NGO's Use of Social Media** is illustrated by the following quotation:

> *"Social media is not holy; it should be a part of your communication strategy. One cannot solely depend on social media, because what you are left with then is what Facebook, Twitter and the other platforms have to offer."* [communications professional, Crowdsourcing NGO]

This idea of the limitations of social media motivates his organisations' use of social media as part of a broader strategy. The respondent of the Confederated NGO explained:

> *"We work with organisations who cannot put everything online, such as human right organisations. Choices need to be made and discussed before the material is put online."* (development practitioner, professional, Confederated NGO)

The organisational mind-set was also reflected in the NGO's approach to the latest social media.

> *"And if there is a new medium/social media platform, we will claim the account and see later if it is useful."* (communications professional, Confederated NGO)

This excerpt exemplifies what I (open) coded as 'Experimenting' and early adopter behaviour, where new social media is typified as innovative and motivates the organisation to jump on board as they identify themselves as an innovative NGO.

Another quotation exemplifies how the view on social media shapes the use:

> *"There is the risk of open communication. Everything can be exposed. It is hard to be open at the same time, as well as ensuring the quality of the information."*

In this example, reputation damage is highlighted and how this may influence use. The barrier observed by the respondent is about material that, if published online, may harm its local stakeholders and influence the way the organisation uses social media. So these examples show how "NGO's View of Social Media" ***influences*** "NGO's Use of Social Media".

The converse has also been identified in the data. For example, the respondent from the Water Platform NGO explained his *scepticism about online fundraising* that has arisen from observing online fundraising activities from partner NGOs:

> "*Regarding online fundraising, I have become more sceptic. I previously thought that when you show the projects [ed. on the website,] people would push the pay button, and it was done. I am not sure whether this [Ed. fundraising] where [calls the name of another NGO] operates in will be quick on the uptake."* (management professional, Water Platform NGO)

The Advocacy NGO argues that because of the dynamic nature of social media, NGOs will need to adjust based on their experiences with using social media and this will contribute to their knowledge and perceptions on social media for development purposes.

> *"The social media and social networking environment are dynamic and fluid. NGOs will need to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge of the space to employ it for participatory democracy and civic empowerment."* (development practitioner, Advocacy NGO)

An example of learning from its knowledge management practices within its partner network is from the Confederated NGO who learnt from the problems they initially faced when setting up an online platform.

> *"It was meant for partner organisations, for sharing lessons learned and best practices from different regions each other and exchange information in virtual communities of practice. However, putting information on the portal turned out not to be the most effective way. Bringing together various parties in learning paths turned out to be more effective. Also, the platform was not user-friendly.*
>
> *Furthermore, the rapid development of web technology and social media have overhauled the technical infrastructure of the portal. A better alternative is being searched for."* (development practitioner, Confederated NGO)

This experience has both changed their view on social media for knowledge management and the strategic actions they have taken to create and adjust the knowledge-sharing platform that the NGO is using.

So there is a ***mutually influencing*** relationship identified between the themes "NGO's View of Social Media" and "NGO's Use of Social Media". The values, strategic goals, and principles of international development shape an NGO's view on the meaning of social media for organisational purposes. This view on social media mutually influences the actual use of social media by the NGO, and the use will lead to gained experiences and changing perspectives on the organisational social media use. Perception of social media shapes the actions undertaken with social media.

Strategic goals of the organisation are determined by NGO values, adopted paradigms in development thinking, and insights gained from the previous work experiences of the staff in their roles at other NGOs. All those ideas disseminate through the organisation and are reflected in the view the NGO has on the potential of social media in the context of international development.

7.4.1.1 Relating the relationship between core categories to the literature

Reflecting on the relationships between the core categories, similarities are observed with the development of a mid-range theory of electronic health care record information system-associated organisational change and its extensions to affordance theory by Strong et al. (2014). They addressed three gaps in the affordance literature, the lack of theory for (1) the process of actualising the potential of affordances, (2) affordances in the context of organisations, and (3) bundles of interrelated affordances. Interestingly their theory presents the process of "how individual-level immediate concrete outcomes aggregate to form organisational-level immediate concrete outcomes, which, in turn, may contribute to achieving organisational goals" (Strong et al., 2014, p. 71). This could be seen as analogous to theories of change.

The use of the information system led to feedback from the actions and outcomes toward the actors and goals and the IT artefact, Strong et al. (2014) argue. This feedback loop resembles the 'NGO's use of social media' ***influencing*** 'NGO's views of social media', and from there **shaping** 'NGO enacting values in development'.

7.5 Summary of the Discussion

The chapter presented the analysis of social media in the context of development. Specifically, Dutch development NGOs were studied to understand their motivation for using social media as well as their perceptions and practical uses of social media in their projects. Three core categories emerged from the analysis. These core categories show an inter-relationship. The discussion showed commonalities between the findings of the core categories with the extant literature and some extensions to the literature.

Table 7-10. Summary of the Discussion

Key contributions of the discussion	Relevant areas of the literature	Major areas of contributions (Expansions/enrichments)
The prevalent development mind-set(s) of the NGOs shape their organisational vision and therefore, their behaviour. This study argues NGO's development mind-sets are not only generational changes but multiple development mind-sets are simultaneously present within a development NGO (because of history or palette of activities).	Non-profit studies, Development studies, ICT for Development, Information Systems	Closely related to a synthesis of ideas from Korten (1987); Korten (1990), De Senillosa (1998), Bendell and Murphy (1999), Fowler (2000a), Potter et al. (2008), Lewis and Kanji (2009), Willis (2011) and Schaaf (2013). Enriches the views: where those scholars treat the dominant mind-sets as generations consecutively following up each other, I would argue these are mind-sets that can reside within the same NGO simultaneously. While development NGOs change strategy during their existence, some activities still bear the imprint from a previous mind-set on development while new activities may introduce new mind-sets. Hence, an inherited mind-set from past activities still exists within the NGO. Concurs with the idea that institutional logics coexist in an NGO over an extended period (Reay & Hinings,

		2009; Boch Waldorff et al., 2013; Tumbas et al., 2015).
Some development NGO are behaving like transitioning NGOs who are developing into or already have developed into hybrid NGOs and will possibly develop to for-profit social business ventures, which both are types of social enterprises. These –hybrid- development NGOs based in the North act like digital social enterprises. A possible explanation for this business-like behaviour may lie in that younger NGOs driven by increased competition on decreasing government and international donor funding in the NGO landscape seek to specialise in a unique service offering. They seek new sources of income and try to diversify their sources of income and this change among these Dutch development NGOs is following that trend.	Development studies, ICT for Development	Corroborated by the studies (Schulpen et al., 2018; Bruning et al., 2019). In agreement with: social entrepreneurship activities are gaining popularity among NGOs (Fowler, 2000a; Fowler, 2013; Defourny et al., 2014; Helmsing et al., 2015) The findings are inconclusive on tensions or challenges in the way the hybrid NGOs combine their digital and non-digital skills and expertise in running the social venture, in contrast with Masiero and Ravishankar (2019) study of social entrepreneurs in the development sector in the Global South. Changes in government funding (amount and funding system) have triggered organisational, strategic and financial changes within the Dutch NGOs (Schulpen et al., 2018) A study on future scenarios for the Dutch development NGOs identified (digital-enabled) social entrepreneurship and service provisioning as possible opposing adaptation mechanisms of development NGOs in changing circumstances (Partos & The Spindle, 2018).
Four clusters are identified: the Technological, Individual, Collective and Contextual views attributed to organisational social media use. We theorise that multiple relations between these four affordance clusters are possible.	Information Systems, Communication studies, ICT for Development	Closely related to the concept of affordances landscape (Ramstead et al., 2016), and configurations of affordances (Lindberg et al., 2014), and affordance ecologies (Lindberg & Lyytinen, 2013). The connective affordances are related to the interrelationship between Technological and Individual, or Technological and Collective views (Vaast et al., 2017). *Extends these concepts with the possible interrelationship between affordance clusters or affordance ecologies and the possible bi-directional aspect of that relationship*
The assessment framework of organisational social media use by development NGOs, constructed by cross-referencing the organisational goals of development NGOs to the social media activity areas in the context of international development is a novel approach.	Non-profit studies Development studies, ICT for Development, Information Systems	Extends concepts of organisational social media use.
A (feedback loop) relationship between NGO's values in	ICT for Development,	Closely related to Strong et al. (2014).

development, its views on social media and the actual uses of social media for development purposes has been discerned.	Information Systems (Affordance Theory)	Extends this with the inclusion of affordance clusters and contextual affordances.

To summarise, the substantive theory and concepts developed per core category as a result of this PhD research are shown in the following diagram.

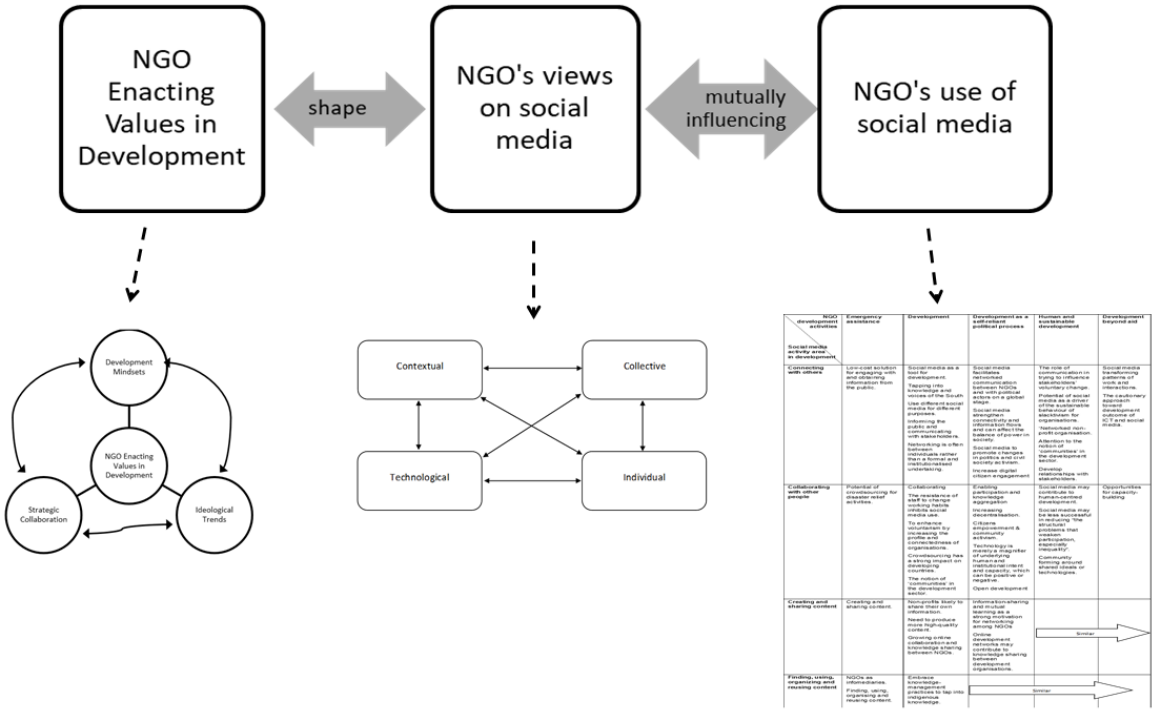


Figure 7-7. Diagram with the outcome of the PhD research, resulting in a substantive theory and theoretical concepts per theme (core category). The smaller diagrams underneath, showing the elaboration per theme, are for illustrative purposes only.

8 Conclusions, and Suggestions for Future Research

8.1 Introduction

The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore how Dutch development NGOs use social media to further the development activities of their organisation. The conclusions from this study follow the research questions and the findings and address three areas: 1) organisational values that steer the activities of the development NGO, 2) how development NGOs view the concept of social media, and 3) the way development NGOs apply social media for development purposes. Following is a discussion of the key findings and conclusions drawn from this research. This discussion is followed by some recommendations and a final reflection on this study.

The chapter concludes with a comparison of the substantive theory, created by a grounded theory method approach, with an analysis of the cases of this study with three theory lenses from different disciplines, namely structuration theory, affordance theory and evaluation of Communication for Development (C4D). This process of extending the analysis to 'rival' explanations provided rigour to the research process and works "toward greater coherency within the body of (ICT4D) knowledge" (Tibben, 2013, p. 649). Furthermore, the level of generality of the developed theory can be extended from the substantive theory developed in the "e*mpirical area of sociological inquiry*" toward a formal theory developed for a broader application in a *conceptual area of sociological inquiry"* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 32).

The research has tried to answer the main research question:

> **How do Dutch development NGOs use social media to further the development activities of their organisation?**

Via three research sub-questions that are discussed hereafter:

1) **What organisational values steer the activities of the development NGO?**

This study's first finding is captured in the theme *NGO Enacting Values in Development*. This theme is about the organisation's values enacted in the context of international development. Three categories were found in this theme: Changing the world, Paradigms of (international) development, and Collaboration. Changing the world refers to the NGO's organisational identity and internal strategy set forward for achieving the goal of changing the world in the context of international development. The findings reveal an organisational mixture of development-related mind-sets that influence the organisational activities in development. This study argues that multiple mind-sets are simultaneously present within NGOs. This study observed a trend of service delivery by NGOs, and some (younger) NGOs transitioning to hybrid NGOs or even social enterprises, being less dependent on government funding.

Paradigms of (international) development deal with ideological trends. Poverty reduction and sustainability were concepts found with all the studied NGOs, followed to a lesser extent by development 2.0 or open development. Collaboration is about the cooperation NGOs have with external stakeholders to achieve their development goals as an organisation. The collaboration networks of NGOs on social media in development projects can be analysed with the concept of action networks.

Both development mind-set and the ideological trends influence the choice of collaboration partners. The strategic collaboration influences the focus on ideological trends and the development mind-sets of the NGOs.

2) **How do development NGOs view the concept of social media?**

This study's second finding is about the organisation's view on the meaning of social media. Four categories were identified: technological, individual, collective and contextual views attributed to organisational social media, which are related to affordance clusters.

The Technological views are about the possibilities ascribed to a technological feature of social media that may shape social media use by the NGOs. These are related to functional affordances (Markus & Silver, 2008) and technological affordances (Nagy & Neff, 2015). Individual views on social media that NGOs have are related to the personal sphere of social media use. These are related to individualised affordances (Leonardi, 2013b), and the social affordances for networked individualism (Wellman et al., 2003). Collective views are related to social media use between a group of people or a formalised structure, such as an NGO. These are related to collective, shared, and connective affordances that vary in their interdependence typology (Vaast et al., 2017). The Contextual views on social media take into account the 'context', the environment, with its social, political, cultural and geographical aspects, in which social media is being used by the organisation. These are, to some extent related to cultural affordances (Ramstead et al., 2016) and extends those affordances with political and geographical aspects. We theorise that multiple relationships between these four affordance clusters are possible. This extends the concepts of affordance clusters or affordance ecologies with the possibility of interrelationship between clusters and the possible bi-directional aspect of those relationships.

By developing an affordance lens to explore organisational social media use, this study offers several contributions. The affordances landscape we constructed consists of four affordance value clusters, called Technological, Individual, Collective and Contextual views. We argue that our suggested extended look at affordance clusters or so-called affordance ecologies, and especially the identified relationships between those clusters, provides a richer and deeper understanding of the interplay of information systems and the organisational domain and the environment, thereby providing a useful lens to understand the socio-technical mechanism in an Information Systems context.

3) **In what way do development NGOs apply social media for development purposes?**

The study's third finding is about NGO's Use of Social Media in Development. Two categories were found, namely Social media, for outward engagement, and Consequences of adapting/using social media in development.

The assessment framework of organisational social media use by development NGOs, constructed by cross-referencing the organisational goals of development NGOs to the social media activity areas in the context of development, is a novel approach. It helps to present the analysis in a narrative that is related to the development strategies of the NGO.

The findings show that the respondents from all the studied NGOs associate social media with collaboration, connecting, and interaction.

The study also revealed a relationship between the three core categories that are associated with these three research sub-questions. This relationship has been compared with extant literature.

8.2 Contributions of the research

By following the grounded theory method, this research provides a theory that is grounded in the field of work and offers conceptualisations and relations with the extant literature from multiple sources (Eisenhardt, 1989; Glaser, 2002a).

As mentioned in the previous section, there is an ongoing discussion in the academic literature on the implications of social media use in society, and the use of ICT for development. This study considers those implications in the context of interventions using social media by NGOs in international development.

Walsham (2001) has pointed out the ethical significance of researching the way ICT may aid in improving the living conditions of the vast majority of people who are born in non-affluent regions of the contemporary world. This research is a modest attempt in that field. Theory building in the social media domain is required, and this study aims to build an initial theory of how NGOs might approach the use of social media in a development context. The design of the study is such that it explores what consequences the use of social media has on social and organisational dynamics of development NGOs. So, the focus is not on specific social media, but on the potential and issues of social media in the context of development NGOs.

I am using Walsham's (1995) framework for generalisations from Information Systems case studies to highlight the contributions of this study. Walsham argues that interpretive researchers can make four types of contributions: development of concepts, generation of theory, drawing of specific implications, and contribution of rich insight.

The research may also create a practical contribution to the studied development NGOs. Fernández (2004, p. 83) argues that *"to be relevant to the practitioner's concern, theory needs to provide meaningful accounts that could be used in [ed. their organisational] practices".* A follow-up of this research will be the exploration of the practical impact of the outcomes of this PhD study in collaboration with the association of Dutch development NGOs in the forthcoming year.

Table 8-1 presents an overview of the contributions of this study.

Table 8-1. Theoretical generalisations adapted from Walsham (1995)

Type of generalisation Interpretive IS case study	Type of generalisation in this Interpretive IS case study
Development of concepts	This qualitative study has produced some new concepts. These concepts are then related to extant theories. Four affordance clusters and interrelationships between them are identified. These concepts have been presented and discussed at the Special Interest Group on global development (SIG GlobDev 2018) at the International Conference on Information Systems.
Generation of theory	Grounded theory method is a method of theory development. Three themes (core categories) and their reciprocal relationships were identified. The NGOs organisational values are related to its perception of the potential social media has for development, and the actual use in development, which reciprocally influences each other. This grounded theory study aims to build an initial theory of how NGOs might approach the use of social media in a development context. There is still a gap in this area as few papers have yet built social media theory from case studies, cf. Urquhart and Vaast (2012b), particularly in the context of development, cf. Thompson (2008). How should social media for development be theorised was also a question raised by Nicholson et al. (2016). This PhD research is a modest attempt in that field. Most grounded theory studies are substantive, focused on a particular area of interest. Although the setting of this study was international development and the organisations were non-profit, we assume the ideas can be put forward into the context of for-profit firms and other environments. Further research should also examine the development NGOs that are not prolific users of or the early adopters of social media.
Specific implications	The possible transformation from some development NGOs to digital social enterprises have implications on the development sector. The NGOs' development paradigms are linked to the uses of social media in development.
Rich insight	The deeper relationship of different NGO mind-sets simultaneously governing the NGO's development activities and thereby requiring different approaches and use of social media for development. Furthermore, the identification of some, particularly younger, NGOs developing into transitioning NGOs and focusing on service provisioning in the development sector.

8.3 Evaluation, Reflections and Future Research

With the benefits of hindsight, there were missed opportunities for theoretical sampling as I was learning the intricacies of this technique as I went along. Some additional NGOs or other respondents could have been approached or interviewed. However, as a part-time PhD student, time was a limited resource next to continuing job duties. On the other hand, the fact that this study was conducted part-time provided an opportunity to sample primary data from a broad time-span, from November 2010 to July 2017.

Lincoln and Guba (2000) argue that qualitative research cannot be judged on the positivist notion of validity, but should instead be judged on alternative criteria of trustworthiness. Denzin and Lincoln (2017) suggest the following criteria to assess the qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Maxwell (2009, p. 245) explains that *"qualitative researchers often study only a single setting or a small number of individuals or sites, using theoretical or purposeful rather than probability sampling, and rarely make explicit claims about the generalizability of their accounts".*

Therefore, generalisability is not the aim of qualitative research, whereas the concept of transf*erability* is, Guba and Lincoln (1994) argue. Transferability is the ability to apply findings in similar contexts or settings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2015). In Grounded theory studies, the following criteria, as shown in Table 8-2, can be applied for assessing the quality and rigour in qualitative grounded theory research (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

When I reflect on the PhD research, certain areas for reflection come to my mind.

Interviewing: I learnt a lot by doing. It is a skill, but training is essential. One of the first interviews took twice as much time as forecasted, but on the bright side, those deviations in the conversation were insightful to me on a personal level to discover what really does resonate with me as a person regarding the use of ICT for development. That respondent is no longer with us. But I hope that the fact that the words that were spoken are still there and live forth as quotations in this manuscript will be something the relatives will find comforting.

Analysis and interpretation: as a novice to the method I did find grounded theory comforting in the sense that both the flexibility and the systematic approach are associated with personal traits and actually helped in further development as an 'apprentice' researcher under guidance from a very experienced, and even expert in the field, Director of Studies.

Conducting a grounded theory method study as a novice researcher means unlearning and learning at the same time. Preconceptions and theoretical background knowledge had to be put aside to have an open mind for engaging the data.

The learning curve, in the beginning, looked very steep, but as this coincided with the master of research, the development of the PhD research proposal at Manchester Metropolitan University, the rewards were a second master's degree and a good grip on the pilot data. Again here, learning by doing and reflecting upon it, proved worthwhile. I recall having recoded the first interviews more than six times, because additional data and intermediate reflections by memoing, helped me to adjust the coding. I would certainly recommend the grounded theory method to PhD students and do see benefits for master thesis students to encourage an open mind and interdisciplinary research attitude.

Table 8-2. Quality and rigour related to the stages of a theory-building research life-cycle (Gasson, 2004; Trochim, 2006).

Issue of Concern	Interpretive Worldview Principle	How Addressed in This study
Representativeness of findings	**Confirmability**: conclusions depend on subjects and conditions of the study, rather than the researcher. Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others.	Presenting chain of evidence form data to coding to theory, visualised by diagrams of (sub)categories to core categories supported with illustrative quotations. Case selection followed theoretical sampling.
Reproducibility of findings	**Dependability**/Auditability: the study process is consistent and reasonably stable over time and between researchers.	The coding scheme and supporting quotations were constantly updated and regularly presented to the supervisory team, and in particular the director of studies.
Rigour of method	**Credibility**/internal consistency: the research findings are credible and consistent, to the people we study and to our readers. For authenticity, our findings should be related to significant elements in the research context/situation. The credibility criteria involve establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research.	Rigour is sought by having gone through the coding cycle case by case and comparing coding within-case and between cases. Secondary data has been used to corroborate findings from primary data (interviews). A systematic approach for theoretical sampling of cases, and following an adaptation of Eisenhardt's (1989) framework to build theory from case study research was followed.
Generalisability of findings	**Transferability**: how far can the findings/conclusions be transferred to other contexts, and how do they help to derive useful theories?	This study has led to the development of substantive theory in the context of international development. Future research may expand the constructed theory to formal theory.

The open engagement led to a certain depth of analysis, but as prescribed in the GTM approach, a further level of depth is achieved by comparing with the extant literature. This led to a more in-depth analysis but also meant reading much new literature even in the last year of the PhD study.

The writing process: one of the important things I learnt is that the writing does not need to be perfect. The crafting afterwards improves it. The other thing is that my Director of Studies encouraged me to submit (conference) papers and have presentations at colloquia and conferences each year during the course of this PhD, as these occasions provided invaluable peer-review feedback to go back to the analysis, rewrite and refine the manuscript.

Especially for a part-time student, these conversations can be useful to keep focus and have reflections with peers on an academic level. Writing in English which is a second language, may have led to sometimes being hindered in conveying nuances. I have tried to express these in conversations with the supervisory team and used the feedback for improving the wording.

Furthermore, a proofreader has been consulted for improving the legibility of the manuscript, thereby abiding the guidelines of the university.

Personal and professional change: doing PhD research changed my perspective on the world. It sounds cliché, but maturing in academic thinking has helped me to develop my skills needed for work. Actually, by the end of this journey I am now working as researcher/lecturer at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, The Netherlands, and am eager to pursue an academic career with activities closely tied to projects with a digital transformation and ICT for development component.

Support: I owe a lot to many of you. I very well realise that this PhD could not have been done without the support of many people and organisations. A supportive network, from an understanding partner, to a dream team supervisory team covering all aspects from subject matter to PhD process coaching, as well as support by my Dutch donor institution and research group were helpful and much needed. The fellow PhD students, now new friends I made during this journey, have helped me to cope with the pressure of working and achieving both in work as well as research and trying to have some social time.

This study has limitations that are related to the boundaries of its research activities and that offer opportunities for future research. We recognise some empirical limitations associated with the analysis of social media use by development NGOs. The results of the study might be unique to the international development context.

Future research could focus on the uses of social media such as the role social media has as a leisure activity for individuals or communities in the Global South, and how development NGOs could leverage that for their activities, cf. Arora and Rangaswamy (2014).

Another future research approach could be related to the research field of Communication for Development by looking at the combined effect of different communication channels in the context of development. This could include a combination of different ICTs and non-ICT technologies, such as radio, TV, Internet (particularly social media), and also print media and theatre, or other offline methods of communications (cf. Slater (2014, p. 64)

Furthermore, the uses of social media by social movements driven by Northern-based NGOs is another possible avenue for further research, cf. the communication for development and social change (CDSC) research agenda formulated by Obregón and Tufte (2017).

Drawing on a recent decolonising research discourse in the field of ICT for Development (Urquhart, 2012b), the findings of this PhD study could be followed up by exploring paradigms and theories from the Global South on the concepts of development and application of these on the use of social media by Northern and especially Southern development NGOs.

Along these lines, this study did not address the online representation of the people or communities that are targeted with development projects by development NGOs. When it comes to communicating about them to a Northern audience, the development NGOs often produce an (online) visual representation to prompt compassion and care, cf. (Orgad, 2015) and Isharaza (2019). Further research in online representation and inclusion of people or communities of the Global South in content production and ownership in communication is needed, as well as the role some development NGOs take as digital news producers, cf. Wright (2019).

Also, a comparison between Southern-based development NGOs and Northern-based development NGOs in approaches and uses of social media may be fruitful follow-up research.

Development NGOs face various digital trends entering the development area. How these technologies influence development NGOs and their activities is a topic of ongoing research for which the substantive theory could be further developed into formal theory. Such a theory would extend studies that focused on factors influencing the adoption of social media, mobile technologies, analytics and cloud computing (SMAC), c.f. Raman (2016).

Conversations with scholars at an international conference on Information Systems also led to the idea of assessing the characteristics of social enterprises and for-profit firms in comparison with social media characteristics in a similar approach as the theme 'NGO's use of social media in development'.

8.4 **Applying Theory Lenses**

As earlier explained in the methodology chapter, the grounded theory method, by theoretical integration, relates and compares the generated substantive theory to other previously developed theories in a discipline (Urquhart et al., 2010).

Grounded theory process has allowed me to discover more and also be more critical of other theories. I would argue that some discoveries in this study may not have been made if an a priori theoretical lens had been applied, such as affordance theory or C4D.

To elaborate on this, we look at applying theory lenses. That means we compare and contrast the substantive theory developed from the data with theory lenses from the literature that are applied to the same collected data. As Strauss (1987, p. 282) points out, after the developed theory has begun to integrate and densify, one needs to look at alternative explanations and theories.

For this theory lenses are applied. This approach supports theoretical integration because by comparing and contrasting with other theories, it becomes more clear in what way the substantive theory from this PhD study is extending existing theories or introducing new concepts.

Applying theory lenses borrows from theory corroboration within an interpretivist paradigm or triangulation in other paradigms. That means applying different theoretical perspectives to a set of data in a case study to determine areas of agreement and disagreement (Denzin, 1970; Flick, 2004). "Areas in which theory resonates with case study accounts suggest strength in the relevant perspectives while contradictions between theory and research data provide the impetus for further analysis and theory building", Tibben (2013) argues.

Three approaches to social media for development provide alternative theories by which the case study accounts were compared. The three approaches bring three theories that are relevant in relation to one of the three themes from this study but are compared with the substantive theory encompassing all three themes of this study.

Structuration theory is somewhat linked to the theme 'NGO acting values in development'. Affordance theory is related to the theme 'NGOs' views on social media'. Communication for development associated with the theme 'NGO's use of social media'.

This approach is depicted in the following figure, where each of the approaches to social media for development is represented as a ‘lens’ through which cases are viewed and analysed.

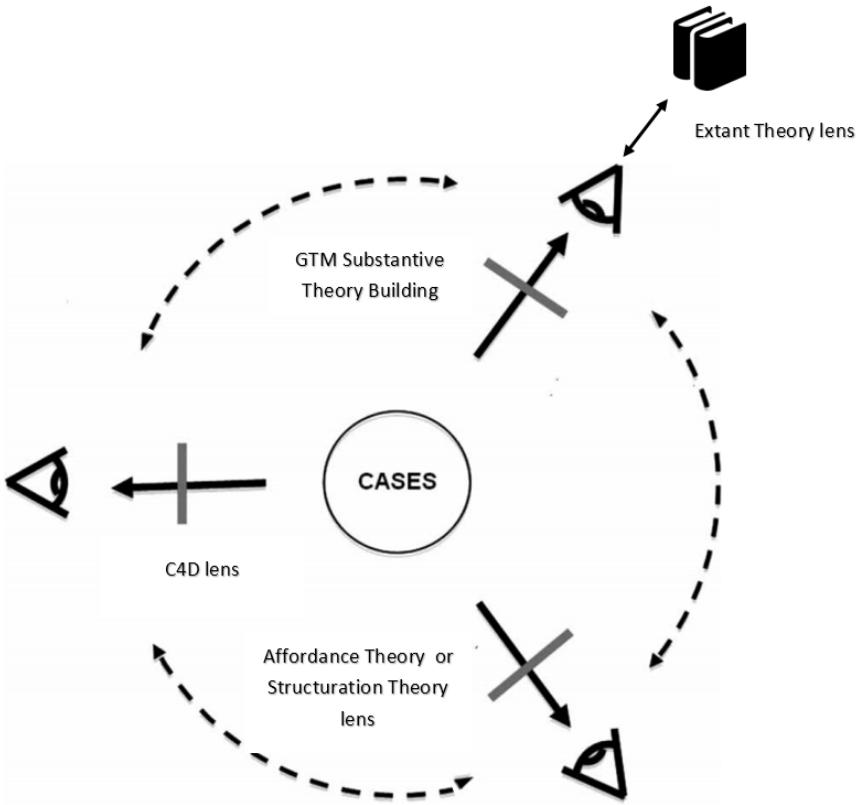


Figure 8-1. Theory lenses in this study. Based on Tibben (2013).

Figure 8-1 based on Tibben (2013) presents a diagram depicting the application of theory lenses using three approaches to social media for development.

The arrows in the diagram are now pointing outward to the observer's eye rather than inward as they were in the original diagram by (Tibben, 2013). This depicts the active posture one has by either applying a lens for analysis or using a data analysis approach like the grounded theory method. We shortly discuss three lenses for this theory corroboration, namely communication for development, structuration theory and affordance theory.

8.4.1 Theory Lens: Structuration Theory

Giddens developed the theory of structuration. “The core argument of structuration theory is that social structure exists in the actions of human agents as they use existing structures and create new ones in the course of everyday life”, Poole and DeSanctis (2004, p. 6) argue.

There are three fundamental sensitising devices that need to be taken into account when researching using structuration theory: the duality of structure, time/space, and actors’ knowledgeability (Pozzebon & Pinsonneault, 2005). Structuration theory is a theory of the social sciences (particularly organisation studies), and in its original formulation, there was not much attention to technology. However, given the pervasiveness of technology in organisations’ everyday operations, structuration theory has been extended to be applicable in Information Systems studies, including an IT dimension in social analysis (Walsham & Han, 1990).

“Since structuration theory does not incorporate consideration of the structuring properties of technology, numerous scholars in the IS field have formulated variants of structuration theory in order to apply some of its basic constructs to specific IT-related phenomena and contexts”, Poole and DeSanctis (2004, p. 5) argue. For example, Van Osch and Coursaris (2013) applied structuration theory in their research on organisational social media use by companies. Their theoretical model suggests an organisation-shaping influence of social media technologies Figure 8-2.

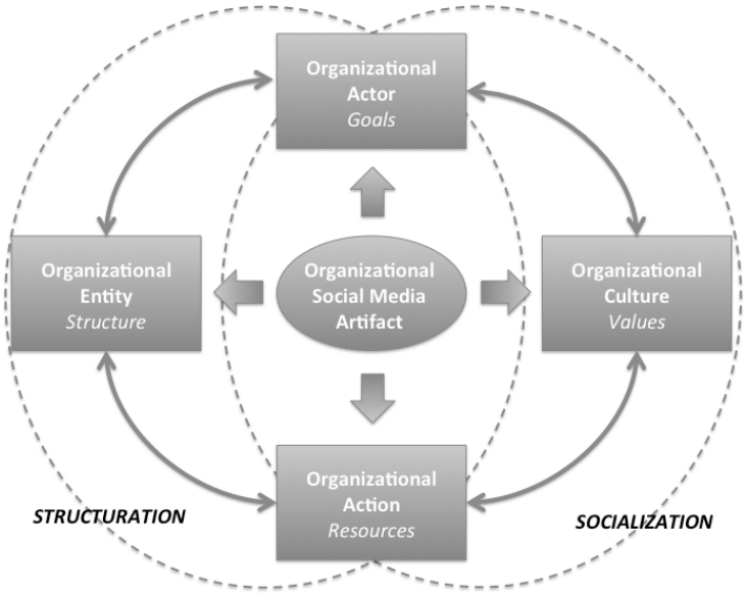


Figure 8-2. Structuration theory applied in organisational social media use by companies.Source: Van Osch and Coursaris (2013).

When applied as a lens on the data collected for this research:

- The data would possibly reveal a relationship between the core category NGO’s use of social media use and the core category NGO enacting values in development.
- The strategic collaboration between NGOs may have been deduced.

Potential advantages

- Incorporates the organisation's strategy, mission, vision and structure into the analysis. Resonating with concerns in Information Systems research about 'the structuring properties of technology' and structure as a property of organisations (Jones & Karsten, 2008).
- Ability to support the study of change (Poole & DeSanctis, 2004); "To understand how social practices are sustained over time, researchers need to study the particular setting in which they take place (rather than ignoring, or seeking to control, this setting)" (Jones & Karsten, 2008, p. 135).
- Analytic dimensions of the duality of structure (Jones & Karsten, 2008) can be useful for analysing the social media use by development NGOs, cf. Kaewkitipong et al. (2012) conducted a study on the use of social media for disaster communication after the 2011 Thailand flooding disaster.

Possible disadvantages

- The structuring properties of social media could have been observed and analysed by applying a Structuration Theory Lens, but the structuring properties of organisational culture, goals etc. on the actual use of social media could have been overlooked.
- Some features of Structuration Theory may cause issues in analysis. Structuration Theory assumes that "agents are knowledgeable about their actions and continuously reflect on their conduct", leading to the issue that "people, including researchers, should be considered as active, reflexive participants in the practices in which they engage" (Jones & Karsten, 2008, p. 137). Is that the case for social media use by the participants?
- It may not be evident when applying this lens how the funding policy changes would work through into the NGOs and some NGOs' strategic move toward becoming (digital-enabled) social entrepreneurs.
- There are many variants of Structuration Theory. It would be essential to have a variant that both considers the influence of technology on organisations and structure as well the influence of organisations' and individuals' behaviour on technology.

8.4.2 Another Lens: Affordance Theory

This section discusses the application of Affordance Theory as a theoretical lens on the findings of this study. As mentioned in section 2.9 of the literature review, Leonardi and Vaast (2016) suggest that affordance theory provides a useful lens for analysing the role of social media for organisations. Furthermore, Sein et al. (2018) promote Affordance Theory as an appropriate basis for understanding the role of ICT, such as social media in the context of development.

When applied as a lens on the data collected for this research:

- The data would possibly reveal a relationship between the core category NGO's Views on Social Media Use and NGO's use of social media in development.
- The affordance clusters may have been deduced.

Possible advantages

- The role of organisational social media affordances in enabling and triggering NGO's strategic shifts in organisational goals may be identified, cf. Henkel et al. (2017).
- Suitable for determining organisational potentials that social media may hold.
- Has been applied to identify the use of technologies such as social media (actualisation) in the context of development, cf. Hatakka et al. (2019).
- Trajectories of affordances may be identified, although contextual affordance cluster may be a novel concept, as well as the bi-directional nature of affordances in affordance ecologies. Cf. Lindberg et al. (2014) and Thapa and Sein (2017)

Possible disadvantages

- Caution must be taken when applying affordance theories which are rooted in a different paradigm. This study is based on an interpretive paradigm. Using affordance theory models based on, for example, a critical realist paradigm is incommensurable, cf. Strong et al. (2014) and their Affordance Actualisation theory. Caws and Hamel (2016) argue that mixing and matching of incommensurable approaches to affordances may impede the validity, reliability or trustworthiness of empirical studies. Pozzi et al. (2014) provide a literature overview of the concept of affordances in which one can identify which scholars assume an interpretive paradigm.
- Coalition forming between NGOs for knowledge transfer regarding social media may be overlooked.
- Affordances shaped by organisational strategy may be challenging to determine.

8.4.3 Communication for Development as a theory lens

This section discusses the application of a theoretical lens derived from the field of Communication for Development (C4D) on the findings of this study.

As mentioned earlier in the literature review, three approaches in Communication for Development theory and practise can be identified: 1) those with a focus on communication content, 2) those with a focus on media practices and structures, and 3) those with a focus on communication processes (Manyozo, 2017). Furthermore, diffusion and participatory models are considered antipodes on a continuum of possible approaches (Servaes, 2008).

For this PhD study, a C4D assessment framework that is suitable for the way data has been collected is preferred. To reiterate, respondents from NGOs were interviewed on their view of using social media for their development projects, supported by secondary material, whereas the 'recipients 'of the development projects were not interviewed, as the scope of this study was the organisational use of social media and the views within the NGOs. So the actual outcome of the communications activities has not been collected. Furthermore, the characteristics of social media, such as the possibilities for two-way communication or democratisation of communication, led to a framework selection that incorporated these in the assessment. Furthermore, the self-declared strategic policies of the NGOs suggested awareness and even use of participatory communication methods, implying that an assessment of those aspects of their communication for development activities via social media would be relevant for this study.

Unwin (2014c) argues that the C4D assessment model developed by Lennie and Tacchi (2013) is useful for both development practitioners and doctoral candidates as a framework for communication for development. However, some of his critique of Lennie and Tacchi's book, in which this model is proposed, focuses on the fact that the authors are mainly influenced by the literature of communications studies, and have not fully addressed the body of knowledge of various other disciplines, such as ICT for Development when defining some of the concepts. To overcome this, I am applying two approaches in this discussion where the concept of affordances from Information Systems and also ICT for Development are simultaneously used to interrogate the data, alongside the model developed by Lennie and Tacchi which is rooted in communications studies and accepted in the field of communications for development.

8.4.3.1 Participatory framework for evaluating Communication for Development

The framework proposed by Lennie and Tacchi (2013) consists of seven inter-related components: participatory, holistic, complex, critical, emergent (in adapted versions labelled as accountable), realistic, and learning-based, with a set of underlying principles for each component. The seven framework components are shown in the table below (Table 8-3). An interesting use of this lens is to analyse the tension that arises from trying to have a participatory communication for development approach while the development NGO has a strategy which is rooted in the modernisation paradigm or diffusion model, as in the discussions of Lennie and Tacchi (2015) and Paquette et al. (2015). They illustrate this by referring to an NGO that claims to empower individuals and communities to make their own decisions, yet report in a diffusion communication fashion on how (western) knowledge is transferred or 'exported' worldwide.

Table 8-3. The seven components of C4D Evaluation Framework from Lennie and Tacchi (2013); Lennie and Tacchi (2015) and Better Evaluation (2015).

Component C4D Evaluation Framework	Evaluation aspects of component	Possible findings when applied to this PhD study's data
Participatory	• Mutual trust, partnerships, dialogue, mutual learning • Inclusive processes • Continuous development and improvement • Long-term view of benefits	• Some NGOs claim to be participatory and supportive to empowerment but maintain in their strategic reporting a modernisation paradigm, where the transfer of knowledge from North/West to South is prevalent • Other NGOs have embedded participatory and inclusive methods in their operations and communication, such as content production in the Global South. • Partnerships between NGOs for their C4D activities may be identified. However, the motives or catalysts for these partnerships may nog have been identified.
Holistic	• Understanding social, cultural, economic and other systems and contexts • Analysis of inter-relationships and networks • Monitoring the communication environment • Holistic, learning-oriented approach to evaluation capacity development	• NGOs are aware of offline and online communication methods. This study focused on social media in development activities.
Complex	• Social systems: non-linear, unpredictable, emergent • Context: conflict, multiple perspectives & agendas • Outcomes unknowable in advance • Requires a flexible, creative, mixed-methods approach; analysis of social norms & contextual factors	• NGOs are aware of the complexity on the ground. In some cases, different social media are used for different ways of communicating a complex message by some NGOs.
Critical	• Including different perspectives highlights the critical importance of paying attention to power. • Assessing the inclusion of all relevant voices and perspectives. • Focus on: ▪ Gender, ethnicity and other differences; unequal power and voice Challenges and contradictions in the process of social change ▪ Awareness of strengths and limitations of different evaluation approaches and methods • Open to negative findings • Includes regular critical reflection and meta-evaluation	• Communication is adapted to, for example, the language used by youth, or religious background when communicating on health-related topics.
Emergent (in adapted versions labelled as Accountable)	• Social change and C4D outcomes as emergent • Aims to better understand the process of social change • Alert to critical incidents, tipping points • Use of processes such as self-organisation, continuous feedback loops Able to capture unexpected outcomes	• At last half of the NGOs use Theory of Change to plan and assess their strategy and communications for social change.
Realistic	• Focus on how systems behave • Need a more realistic, long-term view of C4D impacts and evaluation process • Evaluation needs to be practical, responsive, rigorous and grounded in local realities • Requires openness, freedom, flexibility and realism in planning evaluations	• Not all NGOs have a systemic evaluation of their C4D effort, mainly social media analytics.
Learning-based	• Action learning and participatory action research processes • Fosters continuous learning, evaluative thinking, better communication and trust • Evaluation integrated into organisations and program cycle • Develops a wide range of evaluation capacities and learning organisations	• The learning culture of the development NGOs is assessed and the ability to incorporate those insights into their communication activities.

This lens may have led to understanding the ways social media is used for communication of development but may obscure the catalysts for strategic coalitions or shifts in strategic goals of NGOs and how these will relate to their use of social media in development activities.

8.4.4 Summary of Comparing with Theory Lenses

A comparison of the substantive theory developed in this PhD research with theory lenses is presented in this summary. I evaluate the possible strengths and disadvantages of the theoretical lenses when applied on the data collected for this PhD research, in their ability to identify similar concepts as reached with the substantive theory following the grounded theory method. For this, the three core categories are taken as results from the substantive theory and a judgement (indeed arbitrarily but founded on previously-mentioned arguments) is given regarding the applicability of the lenses.

Table 8-4. Comparing Substantive Theory with the possible outcome of Theory Lenses

	Core categories of the substantive theory developed in this GTM study		
Suggested Theory Lens ⬇	**NGO enacting values in the development**	**NGO's views on social media use**	**NGO's use of social media in development**
Structuration Theory	(+) The lens may be useful for identifying the relationships between (changing) organisational values, goals, its structure and collaboration partnerships, and uses of social media. Cf. Jones and Karsten (2008)	(+) This lens may determine the organisational shaping influence of technologies such as social media. (-) It may not be clear what views NGOs ascribe to social media. Cf. Van Osch and Coursaris (2013)	(+) The lens may be useful for directly linking uses of social media to organisational values and goals. Analytic dimensions of the duality of a structure applicable to development NGOs' social media use. Cf. Kaewkitipong et al. (2012)
Affordance Theory	(+) It may identify the role of organisational social media affordances in enabling and triggering NGO's strategic shifts in organisational goals Cf. Henkel et al. (2017). (-) Vice versa, affordances shaped by organisational strategy may be more challenging to determine. (-) Potentially, coalition forming between NGOs for knowledge transfer regarding social media may be overlooked.	(+) This lens is suitable for determining organisational potentials that social media may hold. (+) Affordance clusters and trajectories of affordances can be identified, although contextual affordance cluster may be a novel concept, as well as the bi-directional nature of affordances in affordance ecologies. Cf. Lindberg et al. (2014); (Thapa & Sein, 2017)	(+) This lens has often been applied to identify the use of technologies such as social media (actualisation) for example, in the context of development. Cf. Hatakka et al. (2019),
Communication for Development (C4D) Theory	(+) It may identify partnerships & networks for C4D (-) It may not identify strategic shifts in organisational goals impacting NGO's activities (e.g. transitioning NGOs). Cf. Lennie and Tacchi (2015)	(-) Critical reflection on the meaning NGOs ascribe to ICTs as communication for development tools, and channels may be out-of-bound for this applicable theoretical lens; this could be overlooked by applying this lens.	(+) Framework for evaluating C4D useful for dissecting and analysis of the various uses of social media for development communication. Better Evaluation (2015); (Lie & Servaes, 2015; Servaes & Malikhao, 2016b)

This comparison is shown in Table 8-4. This table shows that the substantive theory exceeds the boundaries of the concepts that would have been identified if only one of these lenses would have been applied for this study form the onset. The nature of the study would have changed by imposing a pre-determined framework. This comparison of the substantive theory by applying theory lenses can be considered a modest methodological contribution to grounded theory.

So, all in all, a combination of two or more theory lenses are needed to cover the concepts that have been developed in the substantive theory, showing one of the potential benefits of the grounded theory method where theories in the extant literature from different disciplines are related to the substantive theory during the theoretical integration phase. Furthermore, the contribution from the substantive theory developed by this PhD study is clarified, by identifying the aspects that are not covered by the three theory lenses - in the table depicted by (-) aspects – and thus are extensions of or new concepts in theory.

8.5 Concluding Reflections

I conclude this chapter with some final reflections. The PhD research, although concluded, is not the end of my academic development and journey of discovery.

Together with my supervisory team, I plan to publish the results of this PhD study in a number of journals aimed at reaching different academic and practitioner audiences. During the PhD study, several papers were published, and presentations at conferences were held (see appendix D). The post-PhD preliminary publication plan consists of the following ideas (including some ideas on using social media for research communication):

- Management Information Systems Quarterly (MISQ) or New Media & Society: an article based on the developed substantive theory in a high ranking Information Systems journal, or article in a journal at the intersection of new media and societal implications.
- Information Technologies & International Development (ITID): a within ICT4D field high impact journal with a largely ICT for development, development studies scholars and practitioners audience. The focus of the article would be on further elaboration of the synthesising assessment framework of social media use for development in the theme NGO's use of social media in development.
- Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly (NVSQ) or VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations: an article based on the theme on the development NGO's values and perception and adoption of technologies such as social media.
- Optionally, Journal of Development Studies or World Development based on the theme NGO enacting values in development in relationship with the development-paradigms of the generations of Northern NGO development programme strategies.
- Additionally, an online article summarising the PhD study on the blog maintained by professor Heeks at the Centre for Development Informatics, University of Manchester; this blog will also be promoted to a Facebook group on social media for international development, mostly read by development practitioners and ICT for development researchers, for which I have been curating during the PhD study.
- Input regarding methodological contributions to grounded theory method (theoretical sampling and applying theory lenses to assess substantive theory) in the new edition of professor Urquhart's handbook on grounded theory: 'Grounded theory for Qualitative

Research: A Practical Guide'; additionally an article on a grounded theory methods blog like The Grounded Theorist or for novice researchers on the WriteThatPhD blog could be a possibility.

The encounters with new methods of academic research, the exploration of so many different concepts related to ICT and its effects on society anywhere on this planet, and the fruitful discussions with fellow scholars and practitioners, have inspired me to continue conducting applied research. Lifelong learning has been fostered by this PhD journey, a journey that has just started and hopefully will help me to keep on learning and being inquisitive.

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Appendices

A. Chain of Evidence Theme NGO Enacting Values in Development.

Open codes	Sub categories	Main categories	Theme/core category
Multi issue themes focus; Single development theme focus; Structure - (De)centralisation; Different areas of expertise in project teams – multidisciplinary; Learning culture in NGO; Inspiration or learning from other NGOs; Learning by doing; Network organisation; Confederated structure; Decentralised; NGO strategic aims; NGO's organisational development; NGO's staff mix stimulates soc med communication; New staff expected to have social media skills; NGO operations and structure; Organisation size; Large; Professional; Mid-size; Small; Keeping NGO size small; Non-profit;Social Enterprise; Business growth; Commercial and social opportunities; Financial autonomy	Organising for change	Changing the world	NGOs enacting values in international development
Add something positive to the world; Making a difference by connecting people; Ownership in the South; People helping people; Mobilise people; Participation by community; Trend of seeking identity and belonging	Empowerment		
Organisation politics; Politicising development and activism;Short-term acting; Trying not to be too political engaged	Degrees of activism and politics		
Poverty; Poverty reduction; Change welfare; Paradigm shift development thinking	Poverty reduction	Paradigms of (international) development context	
International development 1.0; International Development 2.0; International development 2.0 incorporates use of social media and is about transmitting and receiving at the same time; Improving NGOs' operations - information sharing; Need for more info on organisational social media use in developing countries; Potential of social media is beyond marketing and communication; Role of social media to broker information	2.0 in development		
Open (Development); Transparency; Open source	Open		
Sustainability aspects - People Planet Profit; Cultural appropriate; Freedom and dignity; SDG; Social innovation; Sustainable project; Focus on project delivery; Youth development	Sustainability		
Collaboration between NGOs; Combining of strength of organisations with the potential of openness of social media; International expansion and collaboration; Local ownership; Citizens solve their own problems; Involvement of diaspora; Locally organised aid and development; Movement; Partnering with companies; Corporate partnership; NGO expanding activities to companies; Volunteers; Short-term (voluntary) commitment; Partnership with others- key social media influencers Using influencers on social media with many followers; Celebrities on social media; Fanbase; Influencers; Collaboration with companies;	Collaboration Partners	Strategic Collaboration	
Partnership challenges; Competition - with other NGOs; Partnership strategies of development NGOs; Strength in partnering and connecting; In kind sponsorship; NGOs and companies to expand outreach, innovate and improve;Corporate Social Responsibility	Partnership strategies & challenges		

B. Chain of Evidence Theme: NGO's Views on Social Media Use

Open codes	Categories	Theme/core category
Building Online Relationships Leading to Collaboration; Attracting like-minded people; Building relationships; Online identity; People feeling 'attached' to NGO - relationship building; Personal communication; Personal 1-to-1 communication combined with broader communication; Personalisation trend on social media; Trust building; Communication and collaboration; Co-creation; Communicating with few words and with limited resources; Communication and marketing channel; Added value of social media; Exciting for communication professionals; Online Collaboration; Collaboration; Opens up communication; Let go control; Transparent and sincere communication; Participatory approach; Community building; Adding personal value; Approachable; From One-way communication to dialogue and engaging; Dialogue and engagement; Conversation instead of broadcasting; Return on engagement; From broadcasting towards online conversation; Network instead of sender-receiver; Network; Networking; Storytelling; Two-way communication; Increasing popularity; Reaching the mass; Organisational limitations; Risk of social media - removing the middle men; NGOs in development; Staff development related issues; Gatekeepers; Organisational barriers for social media uptake; Lack of staff's IT or social media skills and knowledge; Lack of collaboration between Dutch NGOs to train staff in IT and social media skills; Resistance of own (older) staff to adopts social media; Limited human resources for social media activities; Lack of capacity for social media management; Resistance when forcing staff to use own private social media to promote NGO campaign; Staff cooperation issues; Time consuming; Preference for Early or Later Adoption; Attitude to technological advances; Early adopter social media; Not lagging behind in social media adoption; No need to be trendsetter	Collective Views	NGO's Views on Social Media Use
Continuous visibility on social media as an NGO; Sharing; Up-to-date appearance; Dynamics and change; s Fading differentiation between internet, social media and mobile; Connectivity; Techno-driven hurdles; Abundance of information; Difficulty due to volatility of medium; Mitigating information overload; Too many platforms	Technological View	
Personal online identity; Online (self)expression; Personal one-to-one communication; Personal contact	Individual View	
Communication for development; Frame social media within the context of NGO's goals; Social media is no panacea; cultural norms and their impact on communications patterns.	Contextual View	

C. Chain of Evidence NGO's Use of Social Media in Development

Open codes	Sub categories	Categories	Theme/ core category
Adaptive learning; Attuned message on social media platforms; Diversifying message on social media channels; Social media used; Deceased social media platforms; Hyves social network; Facebook; Flickr; Homemade social media platform; LinkedIn; Pinterest; Pre-emptive claiming NGO name on new social media without direct use; Region specific social media; Selective use of social media; Twitter; Using platforms that are broadly used; Using video; Vlogging; WhatsApp; YouTube; Communication Language; English as communication language; Local language support; Tone of voice; Local hero; Business-like communication via organisation's social media account; Formal tone of voice; Informal personal communication; Lightweight communication; Positive message; Content driven; Re-purposing; Contextual content; Engaging and adapting to cultural context; Mobile information; Reframing development; Use of local knowledge and content; Content from the Global South; Content sharing; Demand-driven approach; Knowing the local context; Local content creation; Local sourcing; Need based development; Resharing partner content; Using local knowledge; Visual communication - video and photo	Content related adaptations	Consequences of adapting social media in development context	NGOs Use of Social Media in Development
Mobile phone use - Affordable communication; Mobile gaming; Mobile usage growth in developing countries; Phone sharing; Potential of mobile for NGOs; Segmentation in social media usage; Attracting new audience; Audience Segmentation; Informal tone of voice in social media adapted to target audience; Finding online supporters; Not targeting at general public; Targeting at development professionals and NGOs; People interested in development; Targeting communication specific to goals, audience, groups, geography; User engagement; Analysing user engagement; Being social; Using celebrities to gain attention; Combining offline and online; Communication also happens outside own platform; Donor engagement; Attached; Listening to criticism; Local communities' use of social media; Local stakeholder engagement; Meaningful contribution; Mix of private and work related communication on social media; Providing incentives; Usability; Young people media savvy	Audience related adaptations		
Bridging digital divide; Access; Bridging gender based digital divide; Direct North-South or South-South communication; Empowerment; Learning from mistakes Room for experimenting; Acceptable to make mistake; Project or campaign failure – Learning from mistakes; Peer learning; Room for discussion & different opinions; Stimulating behaviour change; Internet tools facilitating social behaviour on internet; Time and money saving; Cheaper and more effective or targeted than mass media; Innovation from constraints because of lack of resources; Innovation by individuals; User generated ideas; Wisdom of the crowd	Perceived Advantages		

Illiteracy or digital illiteracy; Low digital skills or literacy of staff; Different context; Digital or online safety; Fear of reputation damage; Claims that negative reactions demand a highly responsive attitude; Countering negative responses on social media; Dealing with negative social media communications; Not responding on negative reactions; Issue of reacting fast as a big organisation; Issues related to building deeper relationship; Limitations of social media for direct conversation on sensitive or taboo topics; Not all content can be put online - need to be cautious what to put online; Tension between reaching large audience vs effective relationship building with a few; Language issue (Dutch vs English or other language); Low-tech or non-tech problem solving - opposite of techno-solutionism; Not successful social media activities; Not enough interaction; Platform not really suitable for fundraising; Oversimplification (of complex development goal message); Translating and communicating abstract projects to concrete outcomes; Pace of technological development is overtaking NGO; Poor internet connectivity and not affordable for the poor; Competition of or overshadowed by viral campaigns of other organisations or companies; Stigmatisation and privacy issues; Need to be cautious what to put online; Privacy issue; Scepticism on online fundraising; imposters on social media; Traditional media more impact than social media	Perceived Disadvantages		
Crowdsourcing; Connecting people; Crowdfunding; Platform (management); Fundraising; Local crowdfunding; Non-monetary contribution; Not marketing metrics goals; Not only fundraising; Off-line and on-line events; Online fundraising campaign; Platform; Shift to including crowdfunding in developed countries; Willing to contribute for a short period of time; Emergency relief; Knowledge dissemination; Blogging; E-learning and mobile learning; Healthcare Communication; Information portal; Internal communication - intranet use of social media; Monitoring and evaluation with social media; Mobile reporting; Project Impact measurement; Collecting data via mobile; Online project management; Project reporting; Focus on project reporting; Qualitative impact; Quality assurance of projects; Online collaboration within NGO and with southern partners; Enterprise social media; Integrating social media activities in new configurations; Room for improvement social media use; Internal Communication; Inter-organisational social media use; Social media use with partner organisations in developing countries; Partnering with local organisations; Raising awareness; Campaigning; Lobbying; Marketing; Advocacy agenda; Awareness raising; Raising Public Support; Brand awareness; Digital activism; NGO operating discretely; Online campaign; Social marketing tool for local organisations – advocacy; Social media activities in development context; Stories of people in the field; Social media integrated in campaigns	Activities in Development	Social media for outward engagement	
Analysing social media; Creating social media strategy; Effect on Communication Policy; Centralised Or Decentralised Social Media Use; Dedicated social media team; Moderation bc otherwise not in control; NGO's regional branches own use of social media or decentralised social media use; Organisation-wide social media use; From let-it-go to communication guidelines; Integral communication strategy; Assess Sense for use; Communication plan and social media strategy; From traditional media to social media; Keeping focus; Decentralised goals; Online communication strategy; Repeating NGO's message Successful social media campaign; No experience with negative reactions on social media; No strict organisational social media policy but moderation; Fingerspitzengefühl, No organisational social media code of conduct; No monitoring of staff social media communications; Not relying on CSR of media companies volunteers for social media management; Online communication bypasses traditional communication dept.; Social media training; Stimulating NGO staff to blog; Fast response – web care; Improving social media analysis; Lack of social media strategy; Online and offline communication are not separate things; Integral communication; Social Media management tools; Social media is a tool	Social media management		

D. Publications & Presentations as a result of the PhD study

This is a list of peer-reviewed publications and presentations that are a direct result of this PhD research. The table provides an overview of how the feedback of those mainly academic knowledge dissemination activities have been used for the dissertation and personal academic development.

Publications	**Outcome and how used for PhD dissertation**
Sheombar, A., Urquhart, C., Kayas, O., Ndhlovu, T., Lewis, B., & Ravesteijn, P. (2020). *Business like Behaviour And Digital Social Entrepreneurship Among 'Transitioning' Northern based Development NGOs [submitted awaiting review]*. Paper submitted at the 11th International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development (ICTD 2020).	Conference paper under review. Feedback will be used in the further development of a journal paper.
Sheombar, A., Urquhart, C., Kayas, O., & Ndhlovu, T. (2018, December 13). *Social Media and Development: Understanding NGO practices and perceptions.* 11th Annual Pre-ICIS SIG GlobDev Workshop, San Francisco, USA.	Feedback on paper from Information Systems and ICT for Development scholars used for Literature on Affordance Theory, Findings chapter 5, Discussion section 7.2 and Chapter 8.
Sheombar, A. (2017). *Constructing an Applicability Framework for Organisational Social Media Use by Development NGOs*. Thirty Eighth International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS 2017), Seoul, South Korea.	Paper and Poster presented at an Information Systems conference. The feedback confirmed the artefact developed and presented in the Literature section 2.7.1 and Discussion section 7.3.3.
Sheombar, A., Urquhart, C., Ravesteijn, P., & Ndhlovu, T. (2015). *Social Media in the Context of Development: A Case Study of Dutch NGOs.* ECIS - European Conference on Information Systems, Münster, Germany.	Paper presented at this Information Systems conference. Feedback has been used for the three Findings chapters, as well as the Discussion chapter.
Selection of presentations, blogs & doctoral colloquia	
Sheombar, A. (2019). *An Exploration of Social Media Use By Dutch Development NGOs*. Paper presented at the Centre for Development Informatics seminar, University of Manchester, UK.	Presentation on complete PhD study at ICT for development colloquium. Feedback from ICT4D scholars used for Discussion and Conclusion chapters.
Sheombar, A. (2018). Organisational use of social media, a perspective on international development NGOs. *ICT4D Blog Centre for Development Informatics, University of Manchester, UK* Retrieved from https://ict4dblog.wordpress.com/2018/09/28/organisational-use-of-social-media-a-perspective-on-international-development-ngos/?fbclid=IwAR0%E2%80%A6	Blog post on cross-linking development NGOs' organisational goals and the use of social media. The blog post received much attention, including practitioners from a Canadian nature conservation NGO who saw its application for NGOs in general. This feedback has been used for chapter 8 on the contribution for practitioners, and reflections for future research.
Sheombar, A. (2018). *Discussing a Practical Assessment Framework for Organisational Social Media Use by Development NGOs*. DSA Annual Conference: The role of civil society in addressing inequalities in developing countries University of Manchester, UK.	Presentation at the annual Development Studies conference. Feedback from development studies scholars used for Literature review on development NGOs and concept of Development, Findings chapter 7 and Discussion section 7.3
Sheombar, A. (2016). *There is the Risk of Open Communication': Exploring International Development NGOs' Use of Social Media*. International Conference on Information Systems, Doctoral Consortium, Dublin, Ireland.	Paper presented at the doctoral consortium. The feedback of the Information Systems scholars was used to improve the Methodology chapter further.
Sheombar, A. (2014). *A Study of Social Media Use by Dutch Development Organisations: Perceptions, Applications and Barriers*. Voice & Matter, Glocal Conference on Communication for Development, Aarhus, Denmark & Malmö, Sweden.	Presentation of findings from the pilot study of social media use by development NGOs. This pilot study was part of the research proposal for this PhD study. The conference and feedback from communication from development scholars also helped to gain a better understanding of the concepts of the Communication for Development field.
Sheombar, A. (2013). *A Research Approach For Investigating Social Media Use By Dutch Development NGOs*. IFIP WG94, PhD track, 12th International Conference on Social Implications of Computers in Developing Countries, Ocho Rios, Jamaica.	Paper presented at the PhD track. Feedback used for further development of both Methodology chapter as well as Literature review and Introduction chapters.
Doctoral Colloquium ICTD 2012. Fifth International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development, Atlanta, USA	This conference gave the opportunity to interact with ICT for development academics and practitioners. The feedback on the initial categories has helped to further develop the ICT for development section of the literature review, as well as the findings, particularly chapter 6 on social media use by development NGOs.