

I: Abstract

This thesis project deals with social media platforms' contribution to the promotion and implementation of human rights, as well as contribution to activism related to social change. The focus is to investigate the limitations and possibilities with social media as a tool for these purposes. The project is based on the fact that human rights violations is a reality in many parts of the contemporary world in spite of the existing Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is based on the different problems in the implementation of human rights principles due to the sovereignty of nation states as well as the philosophical complexity of the universality that arises when dealing with human rights principles.

Through a specific case study of the training hub Plataforma Global which is administration of MS ActionAid and located in El Salvador, it is investigated how social media is being used and contributes in human rights education and capacity building for social change.

The investigation starts with an analysis of the teaching methods that are being used at Plataforma Global, as well as the learning processes. In this context different opportunities and challenges of the use of social media as a tool are being discussed, also in the light of local and global context. Furthermore, the influence of social media is being discussed in the perspective of power relations between states, human rights advocates and actors of social change and global civil society.

The results are showing how social media can contribute to organization and human rights advocacy by being especially useful to organizations for organizing and as an alternative communication channel. It also shows the limitations of social media for the spread of democratic values and implementation of human rights as well as creation of social change, which is highly dependent on capacity building and education for empowerment of the individual, knowledge sharing and physical non-virtual networking.

II: Conceptual Clarifications

In this section, I would like to clarify the different concepts that require further elaboration. I will use the concepts as explained below throughout this thesis, if nothing else is stated.

Social media: When I use this term I refer to digital media platforms, where it is possible to communicate a message to either a public audience or closed groups, and where the communication goes from many-to-many. It is many-to-many in the sense that all the audience can send and comment on a message, as well as each other's messages. A message is understood in the form of text, videos, pictures, links, etc. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are examples of such social media platforms.

Digital media: Several of the scholars used in this thesis use the term "digital media" (Castells, LaRiviere et al., Morozov etc.). The term covers "social media" as defined above, but it also covers other digital services that are not many-to-many, but can be one-to-one or one-to-many, such as is the case with classical text messaging on mobile phones, e-mail communication, pod-casts, etc.

Social media networks: This is to be understood as digital networks of people created via social media platforms. Groups of people are connected virtually through these networks.

Social networks: Networks of people who are connected through organizations, schools, workplaces or any other group formation of people understood in the physical, non virtual world.

Horizontal communication: When people can communicate in for instance a forum with equal possibilities to contribute to conversations or message-sharing.

Table of Contents

I: ABSTRACT	1
II: CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS	2
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	6
PROBLEM FORMULATION	8
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY	9
PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE	9
THE BASIC BELIEFS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM	9
METHOD	9
WHY CASE STUDY?	10
VALIDITY OF CASE STUDIES	10
CHOICE OF THEORY AND LITERATURE	10
CHOICE OF DATA	13
VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND GENERALIZABILITY OF THE INTERVIEW DESIGNS	15
ANALYTICAL METHOD	16
LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN	16
CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUND SECTION	17
UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS	17
HUMAN RIGHTS AND EL SALVADOR	18
RECORDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS	19
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY EL SALVADOR	20
OTHER PROBLEMS WITH HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS	23
CHAPTER 4: CASE PLATAFORMA GLOBAL, EL SALVADOR	24
MS ACTIONAid	24
FINANCE	24
MISSION AND VISION	24
TARGET GROUP	25
GOALS	25
THE GLOBAL PLATFORMS	26
THE TRAININGS	26

PLATAFORMA GLOBAL EL SALVADOR	26
COURSE: SOCIAL MEDIA	27
CHAPTER 5: THEORY	28
<hr/>	
CASTELLS AND DIGITAL NETWORKS OF POWER	28
THE COUNTER-POWER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATE AND SOCIAL ACTORS	28
COMMUNICATION NETWORKS	29
THE NETWORK SOCIETY	30
LOCAL AND GLOBAL NETWORKING	31
HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING	31
FREIRE AND “LIBERATION EDUCATION”	31
THREE APPROACHES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION	32
CRITIQUES OF DIGITAL MEDIA IN CAPACITY BUILDING	34
WEAKNESSES IN DIGITAL MEDIA FOR ACTIVISM	34
BARRIERS TO TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING	35
SIDE EFFECTS OF “INTERNET FREEDOM”	36
THE DOWNSIDE OF ONLINE COMMUNICATION	37
THE POWER OF NON-STATE ACTORS	37
RETHINKING “POWER”	38
POWER OF GLOBAL SOCIETY	38
ANTI-DEMOCRATIC VALUES	39
POWER RELATIONS AND IDEOLOGY	40
CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS	42
<hr/>	
HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION & CAPACITY BUILDING AT PLATAFORMA GLOBAL	42
METHODOLOGY AND TEACHING METHOD	42
HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH	49
SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL IN CAPACITY BUILDING	54
THE SOCIAL MEDIA COURSE AT PLATAFORMA GLOBAL	54
CHALLENGES USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN CAPACITY BUILDING	63
STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN CAPACITY BUILDING	71
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION	73
<hr/>	
THE “POWER” OF SOCIAL MEDIA	73
THE “POWER” OF CIVIL SOCIETY	75
EMPOWERMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL	76
FRAMEWORKS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION	76
HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH	78

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION	80
------------------------------	-----------

LIST OF REFERENCES	82
---------------------------	-----------

BIBLIOGRAPHY	82
CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS	83
ARTICLES / JOURNALS	83
WEBSITES	84
APPENDICES	86

Chapter 1: Introduction

With the emergence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) after World War II, inequality, poverty, racism, torture, etc. remain global problems. The UDHR is still only to be seen as guidelines due to states' sovereignty and the right of nonintervention (Donnelly 2013, p. 3). This is in spite of the fact that many might see these guidelines as the ultimate normative goal for human beings to live a life in dignity. The term 'a global human rights regime' has even been used about the world after World War II (Donnelly 2013, p. 14), and many countries have included human rights objectives in their foreign policy, but these are often included for more than just normative 'morale' reasons and often as a result of protecting a states' own national interests (Donnelly 2013, p. 140). States still have the right to interpret the meaning of their international human rights obligations and the responsibility to implement these in their own territories (Donnelly 2013, p. 140). The sanctions imposed against human rights violations within a state can have a material impact on the violating state, but the sanctions are still rather limited (Donnelly 2013, p. 143).

Furthermore, when a state is accused of human rights violations, it often answers back with the argument of its cultural-historical specificity, and with the claim that human rights talks are Western cultural imperialism and that any accusation is interference in another state's national affairs (Baumann 1999, p. 4). Nation state elites can reject the human rights or explain away violations whenever it suits them, exactly by pointing out their cultural-historical specificity (Baumann 1999, p. 4). In fact states are experts in denying human rights violations, and the disavowals are even embedded in popular culture, language codes and state encouraged legitimations, which encompasses both the perpetrators and the bystanders of public and political atrocities (Cohen 2001, p.76). Thus, human rights violations are still happening right now in many places of the world.

Yet, theorists like Ulrich Beck are arguing that the old nation state boundaries are moving due to globalization and new power dynamics. New social, political and economical transformations are at stake in the world to date, and national and international spheres are being dissolved in some power space of domestic politics. These politics go beyond the previously well known boundaries between national and international, named a meta-power game, in which the new basic rules and distinctions are being renegotiated, not only between national and international spheres, but also the spheres between global business and the state, transnational civil society

movements, supranational organizations and national governments and societies (Beck 2005, p. xi-xii). While democratic legitimating so far has been part of the nation state's parliamentary constitution, this meta-power game of global politics creates a new definition of politics and domination in a new global arena. In this arena, new collectively binding decisions are made, and this happens without the consent of the state. In this arena, a new force is growing and gaining power: The thinking and acting individual. A global civil society or global public space has emerged, and it is being argued that neither solitary individual states nor global businesses can ignore public opinion in this global civil society. This gives power to networks of actors such as environmental, women's, consumer and human rights movements that can work as a counter-power of global civil society advocates to the capital power of global business. Thus, they have the legitimacy and power of public awareness raising. They can reach out to the many actors of markets, corporations and consumers all over the world, and they have the possibility to strike anywhere at any time without being limited by state borders (Beck 2005, p. 237).

Taking this more positive aspect of the power of human rights advocacy in to consideration, there is hope for "the global human rights regime". Yet the road still seems extremely long from the individual who suffers from human right violations to the global power forces of civil society. How do people under repression reach public attention? When does this attention become large enough to create "social changes" and even change state politics in non-democratic regimes, or in places where authoritarian rule is dominating and other cultural-historical specificity is a reality? Can communication actually be a part of the solution to this social change and the end of human rights violations? James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer have studied the political dynamics in Latin America, and they claim that the only way to create a more just world in regards to class relation and poverty is through mass mobilization (Petras & Veltmeyer 2006, p. 87). They state that social transformation is more likely to occur from the direct action of the independent class based on social political movements (Petras & Veltmeyer p. 91).

Manuel Castells refers to a new "network society", where he, like Beck, also outlines new power relations in the post modern age. He claims that today we are witnessing a transformation of the sovereign nation-state into a new form of state – the network state, where the organizations of civil society play a big role in political decision-making (Castells 2009, p. 40). Their power is to come from the communication networks. Castells points out that social movements exercise counter-power by constructing themselves through communication free from

control of those in power of the institution. Digital social networks offer the possibility for coordination and action, and create a new public space for sharing opinions, experiences, fears and hopes etc. (Castells 2012, p. 9-11). In his evaluations of the Arab Spring, he also claims that original spaces of resistance were formed on the internet, and that Social media networks played an important role in the Egyptian revolution (Castells 2012, p. 56-57).

This makes me wonder how communication by social media contributes to the struggle for social change in places where the exercise of human rights is still to be questioned. Can social media as a tool actually spread the message of human rights and create social changes to avoid human rights violations? What is the connection between local and global networking for human rights advocates, and what are the challenges in this? Moreover, how can you do capacity building with social media and social networking and how inclusive or exclusive is this process? Are there any cons associated with the use of social media for social change and the spread of human rights?

These questions lead me to the following problem formulation:

Problem formulation

What are the limitations and possibilities with social media as a communication tool for the spread of human rights and “social change” in the contemporary world?

In my investigation of the above problem I would like to include the concrete example of the nation-state El Salvador, where human rights are far from being respected in the daily policy-making and where problems like poverty, gender inequality and freedom of expression continue to pose a lot of challenges after the civil war. I wish to include a case study of a human rights advocacy organization and NGO placed in El Salvador which includes social media as a capacity building tool for people’s mobilization for social change.

Chapter 2: Methodology

In this section, I will describe my choices in regards to philosophy of science, what method I am using, as well as the limitations of my research design.

Philosophy of science

As regards my philosophical approach, I have chosen to align myself with a specific paradigm, and through this, I will express the basic set of beliefs that guides my work on this thesis. I will first define the chosen paradigm and the set of beliefs it represents, as well as explain why I prefer this way of understanding the world.

The basic beliefs of constructivism

Unlike other paradigm-thinkers such as positivists and post-positivists, constructivists believe, that there is no “real reality” or way how things “really are”. Instead, reality only exists in the context of mental construction. These constructions can be multiple, and there is no specific way to choose between them (Guba 1990, p. 25). Objectivity, the constructivist argues, is not possible; the results of an inquiry are always shaped by the interaction between the inquirer and the one being inquired into. Knowledge is an outcome of human activity – and thereby a human construction. Reality exists only in peoples’ minds, and subjective interaction is the only way to access this reality (Guba 1990, p. 26).

This means that the constructivist sees reality as existing in the form of multiple and socially and experientially created mental constructions dependent on the locality and context for the persons who live within it. To explain the relationship between the “inquirer” and the “knowable”, findings are the “creation of the process of interaction between the two” (Guba 1990, p. 27). Inspired by constructivists, I aim to reconstruct the world, not to predict, control or reshape it (Guba 1990, p. 27).

Method

I would now like to describe my choices regarding my research design, and the tools I use in order to being able to answer my problem formulation. I will describe why I find exactly this design and these tools optimal for the quality of my results. I will also describe my theory and, the empirical data collected, why I chose it, and how I am going to analyze it.

Why case study?

As I am working within the broad context of communication and human rights, I decided that the most optimal method for answering my problem formulation would be to look at a specific case. The case of Plataforma Global, El Salvador (see Chapter 4) is chosen on the basis of its topic-related relevance, and as I believe I have gained a good insight into the specific case due to my four months trainee period within the chosen country and organization. Thus, I have conducted field research (Neuman 2007, p. 276) in the preliminary stages of my investigation (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 220). I have drawn upon my observations and insights in the daily life at the platform, my interaction with the participants and trainers, as well as the working procedures. My case study will not only be used for these preliminary stages, but will play an important part in the project as a subject of what I want to investigate. In the following part, I will justify this further whilst also arguing why I believe a case study to have status and value as a scientific method.

Validity of case studies

I believe a case study to be a valid scientific method. If every expert operates on the basis of intimate knowledge of several thousand concrete cases in his or her area of expertise, then context-dependent knowledge and experience must be at the heart of expert activity. Such knowledge and expertise must (also) lie in the center of case studies as a method of learning (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 222). Seeing a case study as a “method of learning” makes it possible for me to become an expert within a specific context-dependent knowledge area. Context-independent knowledge and rules might make me able to produce new knowledge, but presumably it would not give me knowledge about the process of learning (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 222). It is the case study that is central to human learning (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 222). In fact, the question has been raised whether predictive theory can exist at all within social science. On the contrary, what social science actually *can* offer is concrete context-dependent knowledge. The case study is especially well suited for producing this kind of knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 223). Drawing on Hans Eysenck, I would say that perhaps it is difficult to achieve hard proof of evidence with a case study, but “sometimes we have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases – not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something!” (Eysenck 1976, cited in Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 224).

Choice of theory and literature

In the following, I will present the theory and literature that I have chosen for carrying out this project. In my search for theory on the topic, I found that there is a rather limited range of theories

that link media and communication studies with political sociology and political science (Cammaerts et al. 2013, p. 3). This further inspired me to carry out this project. As will be revealed, I have chosen an interdisciplinary approach to the topic, as I mix the different fields of communication, political and social science and Latin American Studies.

I will now present the scholars I use, whilst clarifying their approaches, and why I find them relevant.

Primary literature

The project's primary literature which is presented and elaborated upon in my theoretical section (Chapter 5) is the following;

Manuel Castells

Castells is a sociologist known for his research on information society, communication and globalization. I have chosen to use him and his work *Communication Power* (2009) and *Networks of Outrage and Hope – Social Movements in the Internet Age* (2012) as I find his concept of the counter-power relationship interesting. Further, he links mechanisms behind the action of social movements with transformation of new communication technologies in our society.

Sasha Costanza-Chock

Costanza-Chock is Assistant Professor of Civic Media. He focuses on social movement media, community-based research and participatory design, media justice and communication rights and digital inclusion (Cammaerts et al. 2013, p. 272). In addition to Castells, I am using Costanza-Chock's work *Transmedia mobilization in the Popular Association of the Oaxacan Peoples* (2013). He argues for the opportunity of communication networks for the creation of local *and* global networking, which is useful in my analysis and discussion.

Kristin LaRiviere et al.

With the article *Protest: Critical Lessons of Using Digital Media for Social Change* (2012) LaRiviere and her colleagues give some critiques to how social media influence activism. They suggest strengths and weaknesses of digital media in the organization of student activism, and stress some considerations that higher educators must keep in mind when advising student activists. This research is useful as inspiration for my interview design, but also to my analysis.

Laura Stein et al.

In the article *Transnational Networking and Capacity Building for Communication Activism* (2012) Stein et al. point out a number of barriers to transnational communication capacity building. The study focuses on the processes and tensions involved in developing the communication capacity of social movement actors. I will use their points in my analysis and discussion of social media as a tool for social actors.

Paulo Freire

Freire is a prominent educational theorist from Latin America, and in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2009), he presents a critical pedagogy that is meant to help students challenge the domination, beliefs and practices of the society that is oppressing them. Due to my context of El Salvador, and the social group of my case, I find the “liberation theory” of Freire useful for my analysis of the methods of human rights education.

Felisa Tibbitts

In her article *Understanding what we do: Emerging models for Human Rights Education* (2002), Tibbitts argues that to bring about social change, human rights education must be strategically designed to reach and support individuals and groups who can work towards this in specific “social change frameworks”. She offers three models, which represent an idealized framework for understanding human rights education practice. I will use her models to elaborate the social change framework being used in my case study.

Evgeny Morozov

In *The Dark Side of Internet Freedom* (2011) Morozov questions the use of digital media for the promotion of democracy. He emphasizes what he calls the “downside of online communication” with a special focus on “the power of non-state actors”. I believe him to be a good contrast to Castells and his concept of network power for social movement, and the local and global spread of democratic values.

Ulrich Beck

Beck is Professor of Sociology, and focuses on topics related to modernization theory, sociology of risk, and especially globalization and its influence on human existence. In his work *Power in the Global Age* (2005), he argues for the concept of a meta-power game of global politics. I see a link between his theory and Castells' concepts of power of networks, and I find his theory useful for my final discussion.

Antonio Gramsci & Barry Burke

Gramsci was an Italian political thinker in the inter-war period. In his work *From the Prison Notebooks* (2002), he builds upon Marxist theories, by creating a theory of popular education based in critical thinking and ideologies related to power relationships in society. In *Antonio Gramsci, Schooling and Education* (1999, 2005) Burke offers an insight into Gramsci's concept of how education and ideology play a role to power relations in society. I find Gramsci's concepts of education, ideology and power relations relevant for my discussion.

Secondary literature

As supplement I will draw upon the works of Jack Donnelly (2012), Michael Freeman (1994, 2002) and Kirsten Hastrup (2002, 2001). This secondary literature will be used mainly for background sections (Chapter 3). However, I will also draw upon some of the authors in my final discussion.

Choice of data

My choice of data is based on my motive for looking at the case, how Plataforma Global teaches human rights, their methods and how they include social media in their curriculum.

In order to discover this, I will include the following data in my project:

- AADK Strategy 2012-2017 *Together Against Poverty* (appendix 2).

This strategy will inform me about the "mother-organization" MS ActionAid which administrates Plataforma Global, as well as ActionAid International. This document is important for background information about the organization in my case-description.

- ActionAid's Strategy 2012-2017 *People's Action To End Poverty*, leaflet edition (appendix 3)

This paper will give me a better insight into the agenda of MS ActionAid and its strategy, as it sets ActionAid International's overall goals and agenda.

- Global Platform Concept Paper (appendix 4)

This document will help me clarify the concept of the global platforms and what they do, their trainings, etc. This can help me describe Plataforma Global and its work in El Salvador, and it will be useful for me when analyzing the platform's human rights education.

- Course material from the course "Social Media" (appendix 10)

The course material will show me the topics used in classes for the Social Media course at Plataforma Global, how the platform and trainers present social media to the participants of the course, and how they relate it to social change.

- Qualitative interview with two different trainers (appendices 6 and 7)

I have decided to make qualitative interviews with two trainers from the platform. This will be used to get more information about the platform's methods for capacity building and human rights education, as well as how social media is included in this. I also want to find out how the trainers experience the use of the methods and the learning processes, plus how and with which implications the trainers talk about "human rights".

- Qualitative interview with a participant (appendix 8)

Apart from the trainers' perspectives, I believe it to be important to get the participants' perspective too. This might give a different picture of the above mentioned topics than those given by the trainers, and other interesting themes could arise. The participant was selected on the basis that he speaks English and is a "talkative" and outgoing person, which makes him a good subject for an interview.

- Quantitative interviews with participants (appendix 9)

I have chosen to make a questionnaire survey with all the participants present at the Social Media Course, as this will give me more participant perspectives. The questionnaires also allow me to do interviews in spite of the language barrier that I would face if doing Skype-interviews (due to my limited level of spoken Spanish).

Validity, Reliability and Generalizability of the Interview Designs

I choose to see the definition of the term “validation” as investigation, and I choose a “communicative pragmatic approach” to validity as done by other scholars (Cronback 1971, Miles and Huberman 1984, Polikingshorne 1980, cited in Kvale 1992, p. 22-24). I therefore believe the validity of qualitative interviews and qualitative interpretation to be very suitable for a valid investigation (Kvale 1992, p. 24). When interpreting my interview answers I will do so inspired by “hermeneutic principles of interpretation” (Kvale 1997, p. 58). I will not only start my interpretation in the analysis of the interviews, but the interpretation also happens during the interviews, which will affect the interview itself, as the actual interaction with the interview person gives me the opportunity to ask about the meaning in what they are saying (Kvale 1997, p. 58).

The reliability of my qualitative interviews might be questioned in regard to the nature of leading questions. I believe leading questions to be parts of the questioning procedure; I wish to lead the conversations into important directions where perhaps new knowledge is to be found (Kvale 1992, p. 11). I do believe it to be inappropriate and unreliable to ask leading questions for specific or most desirable answers, and I will try to avoid this kind of bias by making it explicit when making orienting questions (Kvale 1992, p. 11). I will also try to avoid biases in the interpretation of the interview subjects’ answers by adapting different perspectives with different interpretations of the meaning (Kvale 1992, p. 12). I do believe in finding reliable data in interpersonal relationships and in a conversation that is co-authored and co-produced by the interviewer, hence the complete neutral observation to an objective social world is not possible (Kvale 1992, p. 11). I justify this through constructivism as I believe reality is to be found in human interaction and social mental construction (Guba 1990, p. 25-26) and not through objective independent investigation of an “objective world”.

The generalizability of my interview designs will depend on my own deliberations on of whether or not my interpretations and findings from the interviews can be an indicative of the same meaning in other situations. I will be specific with my documentation and argumentation to make the reader able to evaluate the generalizability of my analytical findings (Kvale 1997, p. 227). At the same time I also believe that every situation is unique, every phenomena has its own logic and structure. Therefore I will also argue that one should see the interview results in the light of the context (Kvale 1997, p. 227).

In regard to my quantitative interview results, I will argue the same, although in some situations, having a certain quantitative amount of the same answers will make it easier to make a general statement about these answers, although I am not looking for statistical results as such. For further considerations in regard of making the interview designs, see appendix 11.

Analytical method

I wish to make a theme-based analysis, where I look for different themes in my data, which will guide me, when structuring my analysis. The themes derive primarily from my interviews. Then I wish to hold these themes up against my other data from the platform, like course material (appendix 10), the strategies (appendices 2 &3) and the concept paper (appendix 4). When looking for themes in my data, I will find inspiration in the hermeneutical principles of interpretation as (Kvale 1997, p. 58-59) (Guba 1990, p 26-27). This means that I intend to vary between looking at the parts in the interview and then the whole meaning, continually. When I find a certain pattern in the different meanings that is in line with the meaning as a whole, and not contradictory to each other, my “search for meaning will stop” (Kvale 1997, p. 58) (Guba 1990, p.27). At the same time, I will try to stay true to the “autonomy of the text” by taking the “frame of reference” into account, looking into the “life-world” of the interviewed (Kvale 1997, p. 58-59).

Limitations of the research design

Dealing with the topic of “social media” and how it might influence the contemporary world in regards to human rights, it might make sense to make a reception analysis of political posts in a range of social media platforms. In that case I could investigate what “effect” such messages could have on the receiver. I could examine if this could cause an “attitude change”, and lead to “change of behavior” of political activities. Perhaps such a study could have contributed to my discussion as well, but due to the limited time and quantity of the project I have chosen not to include this dimension. Furthermore, I have chosen to stay within the limitations of social media (see section II Conceptual Clarifications), whereas the inclusion of other media platforms might have been relevant.

Chapter 3: Background Section

In this background section I will introduce the reader to the topic ‘universal human rights’ to get a basic understanding its complexity. I also will present El Salvador as an example of a state where human rights are less implemented or little present.

For a short description of the UDHR, as well as a description of how the international system is working regarding the implementation of human rights, see appendix 12.

Universal Human Rights

As a starting point the question of what are actually ‘human rights’ is object of much discussion. Different approaches give different answers, as they get different meanings out of the term itself (Shestack 2000, p. 33). When we say ‘human rights’, and we understand ‘human’ as meaning ‘a human being’, then this means that certain rights are given to you because you are a human being. But what is then meant by ‘rights’? If human rights are identified as ‘important’, ‘moral’ and ‘universal’ as some scholars do (see Chapter 1), then on what basis are these rights measured as important enough to be human rights, and on which values will it be based? You can also ask what makes a right moral, or universal? Then you can discuss who or what can uphold the authority for human rights, and how can the rights be justified and established, or put in another way, what makes certain rights universal, moral and important and who decides this? (Shestack 2000, p. 33).

My intention here is not to get into a philosophical discussion of how to define the term human rights, but rather to show that its definition differs depending on the historical, religious and cultural background of the person asked. This is then where the complexity of the term “universal” arises. As Michael Freeman puts it, the limitation of human rights lies within the fact that human rights are not “compossible”, as implementing one human right may require the violation of another (Freeman 2002, p. 5). He exemplifies this with a religious dilemma: If all human beings are equal in rights, as stated in the UDHR, article 1 (Donnelly 2010, p. 262), but everyone also has the right to freedom of religion, as stated in article 18 (Donnelly 2010, p. 263), how can you then define the rights to freedom of religion of those whose religion denies that all human beings are equal in rights? (Freeman 2002, p. 4).

In her discussion about the cultural rights in the UDHR and the different conventions¹, Kirsten Hastrup identifies a cultural dilemma. She sees a paradox within the question whether cultural rights are collective or individual (Hastrup 2002, p. 158). Her text can be used as an example to show the dilemma between the individual and the collective that for instance would compromise with values in non-western societies (Hastrup 2002, 167). Michael Freeman also points to this cultural dilemma (1994), as he makes the distinction between “the standard liberal argument for human rights that is based upon individualism and universalism” and the argument for cultural relativism that “typically assigns moral status to some collective entity like culture or community” (Freeman 1994, p. 495). He sees the practical problems with human rights as resting on difficulties with their theoretical basis, and these difficulties may be rooted in fundamental philosophical differences (Freeman 1994, p. 495).

Thus, according to some critics of human rights, the UDHR is not universal at all, as it ignores the fact that human beings are different. They see it is an illusion produced by western states within the human rights discourse since World War II (Freeman 2002, p.102). According to Hastrup (2001), it makes no sense to discuss whether human rights are universal or not, but the starting point in the “quest for universality” should instead be what is shared by all human beings; equal worth (Hastrup 2001, p. 1-2).

As briefly shown above, so far there is no direct answer to the question whether human rights are universal or not, as religious, philosophical and ideological diversity creates disagreement on the topic. The topic is very big, and calls for much deeper reflections than described above, but the section can hopefully provide a basic understanding of the topic and its complexity, which can help to shed light on *some* of the implementation difficulties (see appendix 12).

Human Rights and El Salvador

In this section, I wish to introduce El Salvador as an example of a nation state where improvements are needed in regards to human rights. Later, I will draw upon the section, as the context of El Salvador will be relevant for my chosen case and analysis.

¹ Referring to Convention of Civil and Political Rights and Convention on Economical, Social and Cultural Rights.

El Salvador has been a UN member since 1945 (United Nations, 2014c). Hence, the state has accepted the obligations of the “United Nations Charter” which describes the organs and rules of the UN, and includes the obligations to respect for human rights (United Nations 2014d). Thus, as a member, El Salvador agrees to “keep in mind” the UDHR, as well as promoting the respect of human rights (Donnelly 2013, p. 261).

Records of Human Rights Violations

To understand the context of today’s El Salvador regarding human rights, one must go a bit back in history. The history of Latin America in general shows that in the 1960s and 70s most nations were ruled by authoritarian military regimes. Many of these regimes committed systematic human rights violations against their own citizens, and El Salvador was no exception (Ladutke 2010, p. 6). In the second half of the 19th century, half a century after the independence from Spain, economic reforms transferred one third of the country’s land to a coffee oligarchy. This resulted in the suppression and dispossession of peasants, as the oligarchs took over their lands. It also led to the systematic killings of many protesting peasants (Donnelly 2013, p. 116; Smith-Nonini 2010, p.26), and in 1932, the leader of a huge peasant rebellion, Farabundo Martí, was captured and killed, and the military took power.

The Salvadoran economy grew due to the cotton, sugar and coffee industry (partly due to the exploitation of underpaid workers), but the benefits were distributed very unequally. In the mid-1970s three-quarters of rural families were landless, and two-thirds of children under the age of five suffered from malnutrition, less than 40 percent had access to piped water, and only half could afford a minimum healthy diet (Donnelly 2013, p. 116). Allied with the military, the ruling oligarchy kept its power by the regularly used force against protesters who were calling for a different and more equal society. Elections were actually held regularly, but the ruling party used patronage, threats and fraud to ensure victory. In 1977, civil uprising emerged, and a row of demonstrations, sit-ins, and other non-violent protests were met with total press censorship, and the ban of public meetings.

Together with Salvadoran security forces, right-wing paramilitary groups also known as “death squads” (Smith-Nonini 2010, p. 26), became part of the leader General Romero’s apparatus in the following years. It became years of struggle between the uprising guerilla organization “Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front” (FMLN) and the military-led government. Opposition supporters, or even just people suspected to have connection with the

opposition, were systematically persecuted by the death squads. This resulted in around 30,000 “government sponsored murders” in 1980–1983, out of a population of less than 5 million (Donnelly 2010, pp. 116-117).

In 1992, the civil war ended, and the so-called Chapultepec Peace Accord (United States Institute of Peace, 2014a), was signed by the government and the guerilla group FMLN. Amongst other measures, it stated that all citizens can freely enjoy their political and civil rights (Ladutke 2010, p. 6). Unfortunately, the succeeding governments have only partially implemented these human rights provisions (Ladutke 2004, p. 5).

In light of this “stained” record of human rights violations several problems in regards to human rights still remain in the contemporary El Salvador, and they will briefly be introduced in the following section.

Human Rights Violations in Contemporary El Salvador

The Human Rights Bill recalls the obligation of UN member states to promote human rights, and to ensure that everyone can enjoy ones civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights (United Nations, 2014e). Especially the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expresses a minimum level of social protection and welfare, which each state must fulfill, no matter what (Felice 1996, p. 324). These are rights that call for social equality and the fulfillment of basic human needs² (Felice 1996, p. 324). In short these rights involve the rights of self-determination, the rights of minorities, the rights of the underprivileged people to an equal share of the world’s resources, the right to physical and mental health, women’s rights, the right to development, education, paid work, and the right to peace (United Nations, 2014e). El Salvador seems to lack behind regarding the fulfillment of these rights in many aspects.

Poverty

Very little has changed regarding poverty in especially rural areas, even after the peace accords were signed (Smith-Nonini 2010, p. 7). Today, El Salvador still belongs to the group of extremely poor countries. In 2011, the country’s foreign debt was measured to almost 12 billion US dollars (IndexMundi, 2014). A huge share of the population lives in extreme poverty, and the economy remains very unevenly distributed (Cosgrove 2010, p. 156). Social welfare programs have been

² Basic human needs understood as the needs minimally required to sustain life at a decent material level (adequate food, water, health care, shelter, and minimum education).

implemented during the latest left-wing government (FMLN), but they have only reached few (Smith-Nonini 2010, p. 236).

Gender inequality

Like in other Latin American countries, gender inequality is a big problem in El Salvador. This inequality conflicts with human rights *Article 1* and *2* of the UDHR (Donnelly 2013, p. 262). For instance the discrimination of women in regards to reproductive health is a very grave area due to the harsh restrictions on abortion rights. These restrictions yearly result in almost 4 million Latin American women looking for alternative abortion options, and over 4,000 die because of the unsafe alternatives (WHO, cited in Cosgrove 2010, p. 5). The abortion law in El Salvador was tightened in 1998, where a new penal code removed exceptions under which abortion had previously been allowed, so now every abortion is illegal regardless of the circumstances. The most recent UN Human Rights Committee periodic report from 2010 expresses its concern for the consequences of the abortion law due to women's lives, health and well-being (appendix 1, p. 3, graph 10). The law is officially backed up by prominent church representatives such as the arch bishop of San Salvador, who states that abortion is "against nature" (Provost 2014). The law is also officially supported by the second biggest political party, National Republic Alliance (ARENA). This signifies a religious conservatism and a cultural tradition that dominates both the political and the social sphere. It leads to stigmatizing and public pressure on people who protest the abortion law (Provost 2014).

Furthermore, many women suffer from domestic violence, and a lot of socially generated cultural codes seem to exist for the acceptable behavior of women (such as caretaking, nursing, education, etc.) (Gosgrove 2010, p. 7). The latest UN Periodic Report also expresses concerns about how women are perceived, the high rates of female murders, domestic violence and the low female representation in politics (appendix 1, p. 3, graph 9).

Crime, Violence and Corruption

The high crime rate is another problem in El Salvador which relates to especially *article 3* of the UDHR; the right to "life, liberty and security of the person" (Donnelly 2013, p. 262), and it seems to partly exist due to a lack of national security interaction. Gang-related homicides are particularly big problems (UNODC 2014), and much crime derives from the gang war between the Mara Salvatrucha (also known as "MS13") and the Barrio 18 (aka the "Pandillas"). These drug-related gangs control big areas of El Salvador, and the lack of national security interaction (as well as poverty and lack of education) has led these gangs to grow (Martínez, 2013, p. 1).

It is even stated, that the national police makes deals with the gangs (Martínez 2013, p.2; Bargent 2013), and the gangs allegedly have influence on governmental matters as well. Particularly the security sector benefits from the violence as more insecurity means more people buying security services. Moreover, many of the security industry owners or investors hold leadership positions within the government and security forces (Cosgrove 2010, p. 171). This kind of corruption has dominated the region for decades, and still continues to do so (Ávalos 2014).

Media and Freedom of Expression

After the peace accords were signed in 1992, Salvadoran citizens and social organizations continued to face serious risks, even death threats, when speaking out about earlier human rights violations, and some even argue that the death squads still exist (Ladutke 2004, pp. 59-60). Yet, it is very difficult to estimate the true impact of death-squad related violence (Ladutke 2004, p.59).

Another problem is media's freedom of expression (Ladutke 2004, p. 5). Media competition is problematic due to Boris Esersky's ownership of the whole television sector (Janus 1998, cited in Ladutke 2004, pp. 69-70, p. 75). The fact that advertising highly sponsors the media has also influenced the content of the press as private businesses' sponsorships and governmentally controlled advertising has led to the media's tendency to favor the government and enterprises that violate human rights (Ladutke 2004, p. 74, 76). Even though the media has opened up for more objectivity, dialogue and discussion, and allowed both the right and left wing more space since the civil war, the sponsors still set the media agenda (Rivas, cited in Ladutke 2004, p. 75) Any critique is dangerous, as a law dictates that any people "who offend the honor or decorum of a public official in the performance of his official duties or by reason of those duties" can be convicted with up to four years of jail (Ladutke 2004, p. 55).

This "control" of the media affects not only the media's freedom of expression but also the right to access to information for both the civilians, human rights advocates and social movement activists. Without access to data on human rights violations and abuses, it is impossible to hold officials accountable (Ladutke 2004, p. 57). It is also common that some types of events are covered, and others not. It has for example been argued that important human rights issues were not covered due to government officials and political parties not giving press conferences on these matters (Cantarero, cited in Ladutke 2004, p. 79).

Other Problems with Human Rights Violations

Together with impunity for previously committed human rights violations, discrimination of indigenous people and minorities, police involvement in violence and torture (appendix 1), and environmental problems like land grabbing, mining and pollution, are other big topics of concern regarding human rights violations in El Salvador, that I have not paid much attention to here.

Seen in the light of the UDHR, there is room for improvement in El Salvador, and anyone in favor of human rights advocacy will probably argue that in this country education and information on human rights and social change is quite needed if not urgent.

Chapter 4: Case Plataforma Global, El Salvador

I would now like to present my case, Plataforma Global, El Salvador. I will start by presenting the “mother-organization” MS ActionAid. Then I will explain what Plataforma Global is, what they do and how, and finally, I will introduce a specific course, “Medios Sociales”, held at the platform in 2013, which I find particularly interesting for this study.

MS ActionAid

Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke is a Danish NGO that works for the end of poverty and hunger. Founded in 1944, it consists of both private and organizational members. In 2010, it became a member of the international NGO ActionAid (Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke 2014a). Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke³ (MS ActionAid) chose to become a member of ActionAid International, because of their shared values and the possibility of reaching people on a more global scale. Yet, it is still an independent organization as well (appendix 2, p. 6).

Together with ActionAid International, MS ActionAid provides development aid in 45 countries worldwide, together with different actors such as NGO’s, networks, think-tanks, unions and companies (appendix 2, p. 9). It also works with local community based organizations and social movements located in the 45 different countries (appendix 2, p. 10).

Finance

MS ActionAid’s economy is based on fundraising, private and organizational donors, Danida support, café operations, consulting, and the sale of handbooks and textbooks (appendix 2, pp. 9, 19-20). It also gains money through its volunteer program Global Contact, where people mainly from Norway and Denmark can go and make local volunteer work, go on “højskole”, work camp or work as a trainee in different developing countries (Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke 2014b).

Mission and Vision

Their vision and mission is stated as the following in the MS ActionAid strategy:

AADK’s vision is a sustainable world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity. AADK’s mission is to work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice. We create democratic and sustainable development alternatives in partnership

³ In spite of its new membership, the organization chose to keep its name Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke. Internationally it is known as “ActionAid Denmark (AADK)”. When referring to the organization I will use the name MS ActionAid.

with organizations and movements in other parts of the world. We offer an opportunity for action to everybody who is ready to share the responsibility for global sustainable development.

(appendix 2, p. 5, line 1).

In short, the organization works for sustainability, end of poverty and injustice. The approach to make this reality has three dimensions: Empowerment, solidarity and policy/campaign work. This includes training poor and marginalized people to be able to analyze and address “unjust power relations”, to take joint action and to demand rights, and it covers campaign work addressed at decision makers and the population in general, to change attitudes and policies that create poverty or inequality (appendix 2, p. 8). MS ActionAid always takes a human rights based approach, as it sees poverty as being a human right violation arising from unequal power relations (appendix 2, p. 7).

Target Group

Besides “poor and excluded people” (see vision and mission above), the programs of MS Action Aid are primarily targeted at women and youth. As stated in its strategy, women often have less power than men, and poor women often have less access to land, education, transport, money and decision-making, and also less control over their own bodies. MS ActionAid works to fight these differences, as gender equality is a precondition for democratic development, and for fighting poverty and injustice. Men will sometimes be included in the specific work for gender equality though, but the primary focus is to empower and mobilize women (appendix 2, p.10). Moreover, the organization believes that young people often are excluded from decision-making processes, and that exactly the youth hold an “enormous potential as agents of change” (appendix 2, p. 10).

Goals

The concrete goals of MS ActionAid, is to contribute to ActionAid International’s expressed goals in the strategy “People’s Action To End Poverty” (appendix 3). In this strategy, five different goals are expressed on how to end poverty and injustice. These goals are shortly listed below⁴:

1. Promote sustainable agriculture and control natural resources for people living in poverty.
2. Advance the political influence of people living in poverty to hold governments and corporations accountable.
3. Improve the quality of public education for all children and support young people to become drivers of change towards a poverty-free planet.

⁴ For more specific strategic objectives of MS ActionAid, see AADK Strategy 2012-2017 *Together Against Poverty*, p. 22-25 (appendix 2).

4. Build the resilience of people living in poverty to conflicts and disasters and respond to disasters with people-centered, right-based alternatives.
5. Ensure that women and girls can break the cycle of poverty and violence, build economic alternatives and claim control over their bodies.

(appendix 3, pp. 1-6).

The Global Platforms

ActionAid has nine so-called “platforms” located around the world. These platforms act as training hubs, where the training or “capacity building” takes place for organizations and young people, who wish to learn about activism. As stated in the Global Platform Concept Paper, the trainings are for everyone no matter their background, although they are especially designed for young activists and leaders engaged in social movements and civil society organizations (appendix 4). Besides from that, the platforms are open for “everyone who works for social change” and who wants to cooperate with the platform or use it for activities (appendix 4, line 12).

The trainings

The platforms are known for their participatory methods and training tools for encouraging individuals to realize their potential as social change makers. This is done through involvement in campaigns, social movements and social business solutions, etc. (appendix 4). The idea is that the participants will get some tools to take with them to their local communities or organizations, and use and pass on this knowledge. The trainings offered at the platforms involve the four following categories: Campaign and Communication, Rights and Participation, Leadership and Facilitation, Global Citizenship and Volunteerism (appendix 4-5).

The platforms also train and provide facilities for the ActionAid volunteer youth network “Activista”. Activista is a social network, which members are youth, who want to be active parts in creating social change. The Activista network is present in many of the ActionAid countries such as Myanmar, Bangladesh, Jordan, Nicaragua and Greece (Mellefolkeligt Samvirke 2014d).

Plataforma Global El Salvador

The platform in El Salvador is administered from Denmark. At the time of my internship it had a Danish manager, a trainer from Chile and two trainers from El Salvador. Apart from the manager

and the trainers, there were a couple of other Salvadorans connected to the platform who performed household tasks.

Course: Social Media

Within the previously mentioned category of Campaign and Communication, a range of courses are offered at different times: Campaign, Social Media, Creative Activism and Communication & Storytelling. The course on Social Media, relevant for this project, was held in September 2013 (during my own internship period at the platform). The goal with the course was to give the participants practical experience and technical skills on using different social media such as facebook, Twitter, YouTube and various blogs. There were workshops on how to record videos, make photos, analyze different audiences and target groups, and get political contacts, write articles and blogs (Mellefolkeligt Samvirke 2014e). In September 2013, there were around 26 participants in this course from different regions of Central America. The participants learned how to use social media for campaigning, whilst working on a campaign with the overall topic “Safer Cities and Urban Spaces for Women and Girls” (based on ActionAid’s International campaign) (see “promise 9” in *“The 10 change promises in “People’s Action To End Poverty”*, appendix 2, p. 25). The outcome of the course was a campaign called “Aquí No Hay Brutas⁵” - a response to a chauvinistic radio show recently broadcasted on a national radio station. It aimed to put focus on the discrimination against women that especially media is performing through abusive language. The campaign was created by the participants based on the tools gained from the course, and it culminated in a one-day event at the University of El Salvador.

⁵ “There Are No Brutus Here” [my translation]. “Brutas” is a derogatory word for women.

Chapter 5: Theory

In this section I will represent different literature on chosen topics, which I find relevant for my analysis and discussion.

Castells and Digital Networks of Power

Manuell Castells (2012) is known for his concept of the counter-power relationship between social actors and institutions and nation states, a counter-power which he claims has been strengthened due to transformation of new communication technologies in our society (Castells 2012, p. 4). He explains how the action of social movements is related to communication networks, and he conceptualizes our society as a network society (Castells 2012, p. 4). Together with Sasha Costanza-Chock (2013), Castells also argues for the opportunity of communication networks for the creation of local and global networking.

The Counter-power Relationship Between State and Social Actors

Castells is basing his hypotheses on a theory of power relationship between state and social actors. The power of the state and institutions refers to the monopoly of violence by the control of the state, and the power of social actors is referring to the construction of meaning in people's minds (Castells 2012, p. 5). The counter-power to the power of the state is to be understood as the capacity of social actors to challenge this power for the claim of representation of their own values and interests (Castells 2012, p.5). Castells claims, that the construction of meaning in peoples' minds is a more decisive and a more stable source of power than the power of the state; hence the way people think determines the fate of the institutions, norms and values on which societies are organized. The will of those in control of the institutions of society, on the other hand, are being imposed by the state's monopoly and capacity to exercise violence. He backs up his argumentation stating that torturing bodies is less effective than shaping minds, hence system will change if the way people think is contradictive to laws and regulations (Castells 2012, p.5).

Communication Networks

Castells explains that the meaning in peoples' minds is constructed by the human interaction with their natural and social environment, by networking (Castells 2012, p. 6). He states that this networking is operated by the act of communication, since this is the process of sharing meaning through the exchange of information. Production of meaning happens through socialized communication, which exists in the public realm beyond interpersonal communication. Each individual human mind constructs its own meaning by interpreting the communicated materials on its own terms, but this mental processing is conditioned by the communication environment. The transformation of the communication environment then directly affects the forms of meaning construction and therefore the production of power relationships (Castells 2012, p. 6).

Castells then describes a fundamental change in the communication environment in recent years. He refers to the rise of what he calls "mass self-communication", which is the use of internet and wireless networks as platforms of digital communication (Castells 2012, p.6). It is this mass self-communication that provides the technological platform for the construction of the autonomy of the social actor. This mass self-communication is based on horizontal networks of interactive communication and is, according to Castells, difficult to control by governments and corporations (Castells 2012, p. 7).

It is "mass-communication" because of the possibility of processing messages from many-to-many, with the potential of reaching a multiplicity of receivers and of connecting to "endless" networks that transmit information locally or around the world. It is "Self-communication" because of the production of the message that is autonomously decided by the sender, the designation of the receiver is self-directed and the retrieval of messages from the networks of communication is self-selected (Castells 2012, p. 6).

Castells elaborates further on why social actors connect to each other and why this "connection" is important, as he explains the origin of social movements, based on a psychological explanation⁶: Social movements are emotional movements, which formations start with an emotion, that is transformed into action. For a social movement to form, Castells explains that the "emotional activation of individuals" must connect to other individuals, which requires a communication process where the individuals share their experiences with one another. For the communication process to operate, there are two requirements: Cognitive resonance between the senders and

⁶ Inspired by the theory of affective intelligence from Neuman, W.R. et. al. (2007).

receivers, and an effective communication channel. The empathy in the communication process is determined by experiences similar to those that motivated the original emotional outburst (Castells 2012, p.14). This means that if many individuals feel humiliated, ignored, exploited or misrepresented, they are ready to take action, as soon as they overcome their fear with anger. The latter as a result of learning about an incident suffered by someone with whom they identify (Castells 2012, p. 15). This identification is better achieved by sharing feelings and by creating some sort of “togetherness” which is created in the process of communication. Castells states further that the faster, and more interactive the process of communication is, the more likely the formation of a process of collective action becomes, and this is accumulated by enthusiasm and hope. Digital networks of horizontal communication are the fastest and most autonomous interactive reprogrammable and self-expanding means of communication. And the more interactive and self-configurable communication is, the less hierarchical is the organization and the more participatory is the movement (Castells 2012, p. 15). It creates a strong counter-power to the domination of institutions (Castells 2012, p. 229), and it is useful for coordination and organization, and horizontal communication (Castells 2012, p. 229).

It should probably be noted that Castells claims that the use of internet and mobile communication is essential for social movements’ networking, but it should also include other forms of networking online and offline, as well as pre-existing social networks and networks formed during the actions of the movement. The social movements also need to occupy urban spaces outside the virtual world due to the symbolic meanings of occupying meaningful spaces and buildings, and the symbolic meaning of reclaiming the city for its citizens (Castells 2012, p. 222).

The Network Society

According to Castells, global financial, and multimedia networks are intimately linked in a meta-network that holds extraordinary power. But this meta-network is itself dependent on other major networks, such as for instance the political network, the cultural production network, the military/security network, and the global network of production and application of science, technology and knowledge management. These networks engage in strategies of partnership and competition, and they all share a common interest, which is to control and define the rules and norms of society through a political system that primarily responds to their interests and values (Castells 2012, p. 8). Yet as mentioned earlier, Castells argue that the communication networks process the construction of meaning on which power relies. Actors of social change are able to get

decisive influence by using mechanisms of power-making that correspond to the forms and processes of power in the network society. They do this by engaging in the production of mass media messages, and by developing autonomous networks of horizontal communication. Social movements are the producers of new values and goals around which the institutions of society are transformed to represent by creating new norms to organize social life (Castells 2012, p. 9-10).

Local and Global Networking

Manuel Castells (2012) and Sasha Costanza-Chock (2013) both argue that it is possible to create local but also global networks, and affect the agenda of other media and actors worldwide. This is because of the “new media opportunity structure” that makes it possible to organize and create togetherness (Costanza-Chock 2013, p. 99). Social actors are local but they are also global, because they are connected throughout the world, where they learn and get inspired from others’ experiences. Seeing and listening to protests elsewhere, for instance by the means of image-sharing, inspires mobilization because it triggers hope for possible change (Castells 2012, p. 222).

Human Rights Education and Capacity Building

In relation to my chosen case, and the communication and teaching method of Human Rights at Plataforma Global in El Salvador, I see a link to the theory of Paulo Freire (2009) and his theory of “liberation education”. He presents a critical pedagogy which is meant to help students to challenge the domination, beliefs and practices of society that is oppressing them (Freire 2009, p. 164). I would also like to include Felisa Tibbitts (2002) as she introduces three approaches to contemporary human rights education practice, which can help me further to clarify the human rights education practice of Plataforma Global in El Salvador.

Freire and “Liberation Education”

Freire is argues that to empower an oppressed group out of oppression, we have to rethink the whole relationship between students and teachers. He is critical to the division of teacher and student, where the teacher is seen as an authority, and the one who holds knowledge, teaches, talks, uses discipline, makes the decisions. The students, on the other hand, are seen as the once who are taught, lack knowledge, have to listen, have to be disciplined, have to comply with the teachers’ decisions, and they are seen as objects of the learning process. This concept of education, which is

related to the traditional teaching method and student-teacher relationship, is what Freire calls “the banking concept of education” (Freire 2009, p. 164).

He argues that liberation education can only be successful if the old contradictory teaching method and polarization between teacher and student are being “reconciled” so that both persons are “simultaneously teachers and students” (Freire 2009, p. 164).

Freire argues that the old “banking method” reflects the oppressive society as a whole, and the more the students work at “storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world” (Freire 2009, p. 165), and that “the teacher’s thinking is authenticated only by the authenticity of the student’s thinking” (Freire 2009, p. 167). Problem-posing education, as an opposite of banking education, involves “a constant unveiling of reality”, and “strives for the *emergence* of consciousness and *critical intervention* in reality” (Freire 2009, p. 170). Students will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to challenge, if they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves and the world (Freire 2009, p. 170). It is exactly through this problem-posing education that people develop their power to perceive “*the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves” (Freire 2009, p. 171). Freire concludes that problem-posing education can never serve the oppressor, because this approach is permitting the oppressed to begin with the question “why?” (Freire 2009, p. 173).

Three Approaches for Human Rights Education

In her article *Understanding what we do: Emerging models for Human Rights Education* (2002) Felisa Tibbitts illustrates three models, which represent an idealized framework for understanding contemporary human rights education practice; the *Awareness and Value Model*, the *Accountability Model* and the *Transformational Model* (Tibbitts 2002, p. 158). Her three models can help me further, to clarify the human rights education of Plataforma Global in El Salvador.

Tibbitts argues that for a society to better embody human rights principles, education about human rights implies education leading towards advocacy. In terms of bringing about social change, human rights education needs to be strategically designed to reach and support individuals and groups, who can work towards these goals in specific social change frameworks.

Model 1: The Values and Awareness Model

Through this model, educators search to transmit the basic knowledge of human rights issues and to foster its integration into public values. This usually involves public education awareness campaigns, and is often found in school curricula that include human rights, meaning that the target group for this model would be school students. Often, this is linked up with fundamental democratic values and practices (Tibbitts 1994, cited in Tibbitts 2002, p. 163). The aim when using this model is to work towards a world that respects human rights through an awareness of, and commitment to, the normative goals laid out in the UDHR and other key documents (Tibbitts 2002, p. 163). The implicit strategy of using this model is that mass support for human rights will continue to put pressure upon authorities to protect human rights. This approach would typically foster what she calls “critical thinking” among learners and the ability to apply the human rights framework when analyzing policy issues (Tibbitts 2002, pp.163-164).

Model 2: The Accountability Model

The second model is the *Accountability Model*, where the target group is learners, who already directly or indirectly are associated with the “guarantee of human rights” through their professional roles (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165). Learners in this group will be involved in the protection of individual and group rights. The education for these target groups focus on the ways in which their professional responsibilities involves either the direct monitoring of human rights violations and advocating with the “necessary authorities”, or taking special care to protect the rights of people for whom they have some responsibility (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165). The focus on violation of rights is therefore seen as a part of their work. Programs that fall under this model or approach are trainings of community and human rights activists on techniques for monitoring and documenting human rights abuses and procedures for registration of complaints with the proper national and international bodies. Examples of these target groups could also be lawyers, prosecutors, judges, police officers and the military, social service workers, health workers, journalists “and other members of the media” (Tibbitts 2002, p. 163). By using this model, it is not a goal to make personal change, but it is given that social change is necessary. Yet this has to be realized by identifying community-based national and regional targets for reform.

Model 3: The Transformational Model

The third and last model, the *Transformational Model*, is meant for the empowerment of the individual to recognize human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention. The target group can

be individuals but also whole communities. With the use of “pedagogic techniques” it is the purpose to include self-reflection (Tibbitts, 2002, p.166). With this model, it is assumed that the learner has personal experience with human rights abuses (pre- or not pre-recognized), and therefore the target group is pre-disposed to be promoters of human rights. Apart from human rights, the focus may also include leadership development, conflict-resolution training, vocational training, work and informal fellowship (Tibbitts 2002, p.166). This model can be found in for instance refugee camps, in post-conflict societies, with victims of domestic abuse, in groups dealing with poor people and in some cases school settings (Tibbitts 2002, p. 166).

Critiques of Digital Media in Capacity Building

Recent time has shown that digital media has played an important role in the formation of groups dedicated to social change (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 11), but there has also been some critique of the use of digital media for activism. Two studies point out weaknesses, challenges and barriers with the use of digital media for social change, which I find interesting in regard to the context of my chosen case.

Weaknesses in Digital Media for Activism

In the article *Protest: Critical Lessons of Using Digital Media for Social Change*, Kristin LaRiviere and her colleagues point out critiques when considering strengths and weaknesses of digital media⁷ in the organization of student activism. They point out that digital networking can lead to passive activism, and cause loose and less collective movements. Their study is made with the purpose of creating better learning opportunities, and to improve educators for the advisement and assisting of students (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 11).

In their study, they acknowledge that digital media is an inexpensive, vast and instantaneous network to gather groups of peers (which previous generations had to work extremely hard to build). It is a low cost tool for organizing, but they see it as very likely that there will be a relatively low commitment of participation amongst the participants in such groups. The low commitment can be seen in digital media when “clicking your support⁸”, and this makes it likely that many participants will not learn the details of the issues they protest, or the nature of the

⁷ See the section II Conceptual Clarifications.

⁸ For instance on facebook, where you can click “like” to a given post in form of a statement, image, link etc.

organizational system they seek to change (LaRiviere, K. et al. 2012, p. 12). This passive activism is by some referred to as “clicktivism” (Morozov 2009, cited in Hepburn 2013). The study points out that the horizontal structure of communication⁹ leads to a poor long-term gathering point, and little guidance from those who might have been able to improve the movement (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 14). They argue that although this might be empowering for the individual, this easy entrance for members to join and leave a site lacks an opportunity for more formal involvement, and in the end, it causes internet-based movements to be loose and less collective (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 14).

In the conclusion they stress, that Social Media is no substitute for true knowledge building about the root causes of problems or sources of power, and that educators have the responsibility to help students “wield” social media as a tool that educates, strengthens commitments, and contributes to social change (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p.16).

Barriers to Transnational Communication and Capacity Building

In the journal article *Transnational Networking and Capacity Building for Communication Activism* (2012) Laura Stein and colleagues likewise point out a number of barriers to transnational communication and capacity building. They identify dimensions of Castells’ networking process, which they claim requires further development or elaboration with special focus on the critical role played by local agents in transnational networking. Their study focuses on the processes and tensions involved in developing the communication capacity of social movement actors.

They base their study on the film *10 tactics for turning information into action*¹⁰, which was designed by an NGO named Tactical Tech¹¹, that seeks to “advance the skills, tools and techniques” employed by rights advocates in the global south¹² (Stein et al. 2012). The study claims, that the film *10 tactics* offers an insight into the processes and challenges involved in attempts to increase communication capacity and counter-power¹³ of social movement actors through the strategic use of digital media networks. The film aims to frame information and communication technology-use as a mean to local “rights advocates” for activism (Stein et al. 2012).

⁹ See section II Conceptual Clarifications.

¹⁰ See Stein et al. (2012) for more information about the film.

¹¹ For more information on Tactical Tech, see Stein et al. 2012, footnote 4.

¹² Latin America and the Caribbean are included in this category (See Stein et al. 2012).

¹³ Stein et al. are refers to Castells concept of counter-power.

However, the film itself though, Stein et al. explain, also points out some challenges and barriers of digital network use for rights advocates, which is what I find interesting in regards to this project. The challenges include “lack of control, security, anonymity, and privacy on commercial platforms and the potential loss of access to the network” (Stein et al. 2012). The film illustrates the drawback on using facebook to mobilize. An example is given regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights advocates in Lebanon, who use facebook to advertise their website but not to build network, as a membership on facebook would expose members’ sexual orientations. The film also points out that while online communication can attract attention from mainstream media, it can also put both rights advocates and victims of rights abuses at greater risk of repression (Stein et al. 2012). It also warns those interested in recording and exposing rights abuses, as previous experience¹⁴ has shown that this can lead to arrest and jail sentences for those uploading, and it stresses that human rights victims should be consulted and offered that their voice or image can be disguised before they are interviewed and exposed in digital media. Moreover the film warns rights advocates that they are continually at risk of having their access to digital networks cut off by repressive governments (Stein et al. 2012).

Stein et al. also mention several barriers in the actual implementations of the tactics. The barriers mentioned show the challenges involved in developing communication capacity transitionally, and in connecting the local and the global. The barriers are related to lack of time, technical support, computer equipment and internet access. Further barriers was language, lack of local relevance, and doubts about local application.

Stein et al. thereby concludes in their study that gaining successful transnational communication may require multiple local agents, who can anticipate and respond to the different needs dependent on local contexts. This includes the differences in language, skills and knowledge, technological access as well as cultural, social and political realities (Stein et al. 2012).

Side Effects of “Internet Freedom”

Finally, I would like to include Evgeny Morozov, who is very skeptical about the use of digital media for the promotion of democracy. He emphasizes what he calls the “downside of online communication” (Morozov 2011, p. xiii) with a special focus on “the power of non-state actors”

¹⁴ Referring to the “Saffron Revolution” in Burma (Stein et al. 2012).

(Morozov 2011, p. 256). In *Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*, he is critical to those pointing out that information and communication technologies are crucial in the promotion of democracy, and “lethal” to repressive regimes (Morozov 2011, p. xii).

The Downside of Online Communication

The “downside” he refers to is what internet-optimists are neglecting: Social control by the use of surveillance and sophisticated internet censorship, the power of intermediaries such as Google and facebook and the threat of non-state actors, who has other agendas than that of promoting democracy (Morozov 2011, p. xiv-xvi).

Morozov stresses that internet is taking a greater role in the politics of both authoritarian *and* democratic states, and in many contexts, it actually empowers the strong and “disempowers” the weak (Morozov 2011, p. xvii). Furthermore, digital media might not dissolve our national, cultural and religious differences, but instead, accentuate them (Morozov 2011, p. 247). Different countries require different combinations of politics, and some of them are aimed at countering for instance the influence of religion or other cultural forces, and some of them at amplifying their influence, and also in this way the internet can set the agenda (Morozov 2011, p. 248). The empowerment gained from easy networking through the internet can also be reached by those who do not have a democratic point of view and have different aims. Militant and violent groups can for instance also use networking for their take-over plans (Morozov 2011, p. 252). The problem, he states, is that western society began its quest for internet freedom based on the cyber-utopian assumption that more connections and more networks lead to more freedom and democracy (Morozov 2011, p. 253). He reminds us that the mafia, prostitution and youth gangs are social networks too. He points out that engaged civic activity also gives capacity to harmful activities in the name of democracy, hence neo-Nazis, pedophiles and genocidal maniacs also have grown due to the internet (Morozov 2011, p. 254). Actually, civil involvement may also be linked to undemocratic outcomes in state and society (Morozov 2011, p. 255).

The Power of Non-state Actors

According to Morozov, one major problem with a networked society is that it also has given power to those who oppose the process of democratization (for example the church, former communists or political movements). Seen from a democratic perspective – or a “western perspective” - the new networked threats to democracy are now perhaps more dangerous than the once in the past, as it is no longer obvious what has to be done, since the degree of danger is not clear (Morozov 2011, p.

256). In fact, Morozov is very critical to the democracy promoting aspect of digital media, and he claims that many of the opportunities created in what he calls “free-for-all anonymous Internet culture” have been creatively exploited by people and networks that undermine democracy (Morozov 2011, p. 256). He gives an example of crime gangs in Mexico that also use the digital networks; they use YouTube as a tool to disseminate violent videos and to spread fear, and they go through social networking sites looking for personal details of people to kidnap (Morozov 2011, p. 257).

Futhermore, Morozov points out, that social networking can help the spread of fear, as exemplified by an event 2010, where a series of false-alarm facebook messages paralyzed life in Cuernavaca, a popular resort, as rumors spread of a gang-war that was going on outside the resort. Another example of 2010, regarding fights between Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian city of Jos, where hate-messages was spread leading to more than 300 people being killed (Morozov 2011, p. 258).

Rethinking “Power”

Important for the discussion of digital and social media for social change and the spread of human rights, is the different view-points on power-relationships between the public and state/institutional powers that should have emerged with the “new opportunity structure” or “new digital age” that the different authors refers to. Ulrich Beck (2005) and Manuel Castells (2009) are both emphasizing the “power of global society”, where democratic legitimacy is the base of power. Evgeny Morozov (2011), on the other hand, questions the democratic values in the process of globalized communication. Antonio Gramsci (2002) proposes another concept of ideological hegemony which explains power relations in society.

Power of Global Society

I would like go back to Ulrich Beck’s concept of the meta-power game of global politics, where he suggests a new concept of power transformations (Beck 2005, p. xi-xii). He argued that this meta-power game of global politics that goes beyond the state parliamentary constitution seems to have created a new global arena, where “the thinking and acting people worldwide” play a crucial role (Beck 2005, p. 237). A global civil society and a global public space have emerged by the force of public opinion, which forms the counter-power to the power of global business corporations and the

power of state politics. This global civil society and public space, is the power of networks of actors such as human rights movements and advocates, who enjoy the power of public awareness rising and democratic legitimacy (Beck 2005, p. 237). His concept of power, and especially the concept of counter-power that happens through this transformation of economical, social and national politics, is similar to the one of Castells' in *Communication Power* (2009). Castells claims that power relationships are framed by the domination of institutions, but this can be challenged by different "actors". These actors can be collective actors, organizations, institutions and networks or others, who express the action of human actors, which always have the possibilities to resist or question the current power relationships of these institutions (Castells 2009, p. 14-15). The state depends on three sources of power: the sovereign power to impose laws, issue commands and hold together people and territory. It concentrates this power to shape minds, recently through educational systems and communication (Mulgan 2007, cited in Castells 2009, p. 16). But the state's capacity to act depends on the social structures under which the state operates. The decisive source of power that makes knowledge and thoughts and creates human meaning is the rise of the network society that goes beyond the state borders in its global networks and communication (Castells 2009, p. 16).

Beck and Castells both refer to a "global society" (Beck 2005, p. 237) or "global networks society" (Castells 2009, p.19) or even "citizens of the world" (Castells 2009, p. 50), which in both concepts enjoy a great deal of counter-power to the state, based on democratic legitimacy.

Anti-democratic Values

Evgeny Morozov is agreeing on the fact that if the internet breaks down institutional barriers, it does not necessarily lead to increased democracy. Returning to *The Dark Side of Internet Freedom* (2011), he argues that especially with the moving borders of institutional power, we are in need of strong institutions and governments to preserve "freedom" (Morozov 2011, p. 261). He points out that antidemocratic forces including extremists, nationalists and former elites have gained a new platform to mobilize too. He is thereby argues that "the information revolution will weaken the nation state", but not necessarily with democratic consequences (Morozov 2011, p. 261). He explains that the internet empowers and amplifies so many forces "that impinge on citizen's rights and hurt various minorities", and this is likely to result in more aggressive public demands for a stronger state to protect citizens from the "lawlessness" of cyberspace (Morozov 2011, p. 264). He states that the excitement of the internet derives from the fact that people confuse the democratization of access to tools with the democratization of society (Morozov 2011, p. 264).

Morozov thereby also supports of the concept of “counter-power”, in regards to the internet and new communication platforms, but warns against thinking, that this power is based in democratic values and ideas.

Power Relations and Ideology

In Gramsci’s concept of power, ideology is closely related to the power relationships in society and to how the “ruling class” is ruling. Ideology refers to a system of ideas and beliefs¹⁵, and it legitimizes the different power relations that groups hold within a society and distorts the real situation that people find themselves in (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 3).

In society, a system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morals has the effect of supporting the status quo in power relations. This is called hegemony by Gramsci, and means an organizing principle that is diffused into every area of daily life. Through the population, this hegemony becomes a kind of “common sense”, so that the philosophy, culture and morality of the ruling elite come to appear as the natural order of things (Boggs 1976, cited in Burke 1999, 2005, p. 2). If hegemony results from an ideological bond between the rulers and the ruled, a strategy is needed to break this bond, to build up a “counter-hegemony” to that of the ruling class (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 2). A structural and ideological change is necessary if the masses of the people have to reach to a consciousness that allows them to question their political and economical masters’ right to rule. Popular consensus in civil society has to be challenged, and this should happen through informal education.

First of all, mass participation is needed for creating counter-hegemony in society. According to Gramsci “intellectuals” play a major role in this change. Intellectuals are not only meant as academics or people engaged in scientific research. According to Gramsci all men are intellectuals hence non-intellectuals do not exist (Gramsci & Buttigieg 2002, p. 82).

Gramsci differentiates between two kinds of intellectuals: The organic intellectual and the traditional intellectual. Traditional intellectuals are those who see themselves as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group, and are regarded as such by the population. They seem autonomous and independent, but in reality they are allied to and assisting the ruling group in society. The organic intellectuals are “produced” by the educational system to perform a function

¹⁵ Shared ideas or beliefs which serve to justify the interests of dominant groups (Giddens 1997, p. 583, cited in Burke 1999, 2005).

for the dominant social group in society, and “grows organically” with this group. It is through the organic intellectuals that the ruling class maintains its hegemony of common sense over the rest of society; the system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality has the effect of supporting the status quo in power relations (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 3).

To overthrow a system by the use of counter-hegemony, traditional intellectuals need to support the revolutionary cause, but the working class movement should also produce its own organic intellectuals. The ideological struggle to social change is not limited to consciousness rising but must aim at consciousness transformation. This cannot be imposed on people but must arise from their actual working lives (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 4).

The role of the educator links up with the role of the intellectual. The educators must work successfully with local community, and they have a commitment to that neighborhood, and must develop relationships with the people they work with (the intellectuals), and their purpose is not necessarily individual advancement, but human well-being as a whole (Smith 1994, cited in Burke 1999, 2005, p. 4).

Gramsci’s approach to education is inclusive in the way that no human activity from which ever form of intellectual can be excluded. Everyone carries out some form of intellectual activity and participates in a particular conception of the world, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world, or to modify it (Gramsci & Buttigieg 2002, p. 82). This means that everyone can contribute with a new way of thinking, and thereby create a new “common sense”, and finally contribute to the counter-hegemony that will overthrow the rulers and create a new ideology of how to run society.

Chapter 6: Analysis

In the following analysis, I wish to explain how human rights and social change is being communicated in my case study, and how social media plays a role in this. I will start with an analysis of the human rights education and the capacity building. Then I will see how social media is included in the curriculum, and the learning process of this. Finally I will point out where I see strengths and weaknesses in using social media as a tool in capacity building.

Human Rights Education & Capacity Building at Plataforma Global

In order to clarify the kind of human rights education performed at the platform, I will look at the teaching methods that the platform uses, as well as its human rights approach.

Methodology and Teaching method

At the platforms in general, the work aims to fulfill the five concrete goals mentioned in ActionAid International's strategy, "People's Action to End Poverty" (appendix 3, pp. 1-6). These goals are supposed to help ActionAid end poverty and injustice. Out of these five goals, number two, three and five are especially relevant in the case of Plataforma Global:

1. Promote sustainable agriculture and control natural resources for people living in poverty.
2. **Advance the political influence of people living in poverty to hold governments and corporations accountable.**
3. **Improve the quality of public education for all children and support young people to become drivers of change towards a poverty-free planet.**
4. Build the resilience of people living in poverty to conflicts and disasters and respond to disasters with people-centered, right-based alternatives.
5. **Ensure that women and girls can break the cycle of poverty and violence, build economic alternatives and claim control over their bodies.**

(appendix 3, pp. 1-6).

As also shown in the case description, the platforms are known for their participatory methods and tools in their trainings to encourage individuals to realize their potentials as social change makers. Using these participatory methods, the platform aims to enable people to engage in social and political change through involvement in campaigns, social movements and social business solutions, etc. (appendix 4). The approach to accomplish this mission is through the three dimensions previously mentioned: Empowerment, solidarity and policy/campaign work. This is supposed to include training of poor and marginalized people to get the capacity to analyze and address unjust power relations, to take joint action and to demand rights (appendix 2, p. 8).

Empowerment as an Important Dimension

One of the experienced trainers at Plataforma Global El Salvador, Araceli Argueta, explains;

They [the platforms] give tools to youth to empower themselves instead of being for the rest of the world to come and fix it. [...] the platform is not giving money, it is giving youth it's tools for getting the knowledge and attitude to understand what is going on in their reality, and [the problems] that are coming from the system and the structures [...].

(appendix 6, p. 2).

The tools Araceli is talking about is refer to for instance the ability to analyze human rights; “[...] like the tools we use, ehm we analyze rights, we see what is going on in deep in the right, we also argue what people can do, also [...] who is participating in this right and how we can include the vision in the world [...]” (appendix 6, p. 4). According to Araceli, most of the “human rights” dealt with at the platform come from the UDHR, but they also consider other rights that are not written in specific laws, such as the right to water (appendix 6, p. 4). About “reality” Araceli explains further, that many people do not understand the system in which they are living, and that the cause of the problems is often to be found in the system and its structures. As an example she refers to “educational problems”, assumable because not everybody in El Salvador has equal access to education. She explains that the platform is helping people to understand the system and to realize what they can do as individuals and as groups to fight for changes. Araceli does not elaborate further on “system and the structures”, but if considering goal number two, she might refer to “governments and corporations” as well as the political system. The latter is based on the description in the Concept Paper, where it is written “If we want to challenge today’s unequal power structures, we need to be conscious about our own role as citizens, we need to be able to analyze political realities [...]” (appendix 4, p. 4). When stating that many people do not understand the system in which they live, with “people” she assumingly means “poor and marginalized people” or “women and youth” who are “living in poverty and injustice” as the programs of ActionAid are targeted at these people, as previously stated.

When you realize that it's the system, the one around them, that is creating this kind of problems, you become to [...] aware at least about something and when you know that there are organizations and initiatives that are struggling with these things [...] that they are trying to make changes, they want to join. And that's the change. You get motivated to impose change [...].

(appendix 6, p. 2).

Taking Araceli's explanation into account, it is crucial to inform the target group (the participants) of the cause of the social problems that they are facing in their daily lives, of how the system works

and what initiatives you can take to change society, as well as giving them the “attitude” by motivating them to impose change. “I think that the platform is creating a change in people’s minds, like change to development,” Araceli explains (appendix 6, p. 2). Information and motivation for attitude change and giving tools to dealing with human rights must thereby lie within the “empowerment” that the platform points out as an important dimension in their mission.

Participatory Methods

Another important part of the training is the use of participatory methods to “encourage individuals to realize their potentials as social change makers” (appendix 4, p. 1). Araceli explains that the methodology they use is a mixture of different things, and one of them is what she calls “theory of change”. The main idea is that nobody has to wait “for things to happen” but should “go and change in reality by acting on the theory” (appendix 6, p. 2). She explains that this is based on the method called “the traditional way, where you learn” but also the idea of activism (appendix 6, p. 2). About participation, also as an important part of the methodology, Araceli explains;

[...] we don’t want people just to sit, we know that a lot of knowledge is going on in the mind of the people, we want people to participate and bring to the table this information that they have [...].

(appendix 6, p. 2).

These participatory methods that are an important dimension of the Platform’s methods, are to be in line with Freire and his principles of liberation education, as he suggests an alternative teaching method that includes a more equal teacher-student relationship, where both are “simultaneously teachers and students” (Freire 2009, p. 164). As Freire is states; “Yet, only through communication can human life hold meaning. The teacher’s thinking is authenticated only by the authenticity of the student’s thinking.” (Freire 2009, p. 167). This is not only to be seen as a way of making the participants pay attention by including them in the discussions, but more importantly to respect the students, and use their knowledge and life experience as valid knowledge and a part of the learning process. The trainers have to encourage critical thinking as well as the creative potential of the students. As Freire (2009, p. 166) states:

[...] her efforts must be coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization. His efforts must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this, they must be partners of the students in their relations with them.

This also aligns with those principles mentioned in the concept paper, which states why the platform is working with young people:

- The potential of young people is frequently ignored or undermined and young people's voices are often neglected.
- Young people are often at the forefront of social and political change.
- Young people have enormous capacity, energy and creativity.
- Young people will generate their own ideas, campaigns and movements to address needs in their community when given the space, tools and opportunity to do so.

(appendix 4, p. 2-3).

Leonardo Madriz from Costa Rica, who participated in the social media course held at Plataforma Global in September 2013, confirms that the teachers and students were working together in a partnership;

[...] they didn't call themselves teachers, we were friends, [...] we were not like in university you know, that the teacher knows more, and he's only putting knowledge into you, no, we were like sharing and shaping a new world [...].

(appendix 8, p. 5).

As previously shown, Freire is argues that the old "banking concept of education" where the teacher just gives information to the students is reflecting an oppressive society as a whole. The more the students work at "storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world" (Freire 2009, p. 165). Freire also stresses that the "oppressed" are not people living outside society, but have always been inside the structure, and that the solution is not to integrate them into this structure (of "oppression") but to transform the structure. Yet, you cannot do this by using the banking-method of education, as this method will never make students critically consider reality (Freire 2009, p. 165).

The participatory methods seem also to be a part of how the trainers speak about the student-teacher relationship. This can be seen through my interviews with Araceli and the other trainer Brenda (appendices 6 and 7), and through the material from MS ActionAid, ActionAid International and the global platforms (appendices 2, 3 and 4) on how the teachers are spoken of as "trainers" or "facilitators", the students as "participants" and the lectures as "workshops".

Theory, Practice and Problem-posing Education

Furthermore, the "change creation of people's minds", and the "motivation and attitude change" that lies within the mentioned definition of empowerment, are also in line with Freire's theory of liberation education and problem-posing education (Freire 2009, p. 170). As Freire states, students will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to challenges, if they are posed problems

relating to themselves and the world (Freire 2009, p. 170). He claims that it is exactly through this problem-posing education, that people develop their power to perceive “*the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves” (Freire 2009, p. 171). This can be related to the “creativity and social imagination” which also is an important part of the methods being used at the platform (appendix 4, p. 4). Araceli explains; “[...] you just imagine different solutions with different ways, and you start seeing the things from a new angle and start from different angles” (appendix 6, p. 3). It is stated in the platforms’ concept paper that “We will push your mind to go wandering, imagining alternative ways to make social change. Ways that will break the norms” (appendix 4, p. 4). “Alternative ways” must then refer to ways of social change that goes beyond traditional political channels, hence the platform’s strategy of activism, which includes “political change making by getting involved in campaigns, social movements, social business solutions etc.” (appendix 4, p. 1). This means that not only are the students shown different problems, they are also encouraged to come up with solutions of the alternative kind.

Brenda, who has been working at the platform for less than a year, explains;

[...] we don’t just give theory. We give a small piece of theory and then we give put them to practice that theory in the classroom or during the workshops. Also, we go outside the platform to put in practice what they have learned and also all the knowledge that they had from outside, that they bring with them.

(appendix 7, p. 2).

Brenda implies that the participatory methods lie within the whole methodology and the trainings which take place at the platform. Like Araceli, Brenda points out the mixture of theory and practice, and also the mixture of information from the trainers and knowledge gained through the students own experiences. This is also stated as one of the principles in the concept paper of the platforms called “Learning by Doing”:

By linking your real life experiences to the topics and by practicing what you learn in real life the concept of learning will take a whole new dimension.

(appendix 4, p. 4)

Brenda gives an example of a platform course about sexual harassment against women, where the participants went out and made a festival in the local town to show the problem to the people who live there. Here they both spoke about the problem but they also showed how to solve it:

So you put the participants to think about the problem and also to think about the solutions. [...] Its’ not just to go out and have a sign or to go and scream whatever they want, what they have in mind, so it’s like, okay you have show up a problem, but you also give solutions.

(appendix 7, p. 3).

This means that what the participants learn is also put into practice and they are encouraged to come up with their own solutions to problems. Also, as Aracli states, social media is not enough, you need to physically go and occupy space:

And then they were put together and use social media as a tool, but not the main thing for making changes. You also need to, to go... on the street and do advocacy and to [...] do the barriers to try to propose ideas and to open eyes I think.

(appendix 6, p. 8).

This is in line with Castells' point, when he claims that social movements also need to occupy urban spaces outside the virtual world. The combination of the two spaces, the urban and the virtual, is where the social movement finds its autonomy (Castells 2012, p. 222).

For the sake of overview I will place the main points in small models, which illustrate Freire's theory of what is "good" liberation education (Model A) versus education that reflects oppressive societies (Model B), and a model that illustrates the methodology of Plataforma Global El Salvador (Model C).

Model A

EDUCATION REFLECTING OPPRESSIVE SOCIETIES

Students

Sit still
Listen
Learn
See the teacher as an authority

Teachers

Create respect
Pass on knowledge

Education practice

Theory based

Model B

LIBERATION EDUCATION

Students

Speak out
Share experiences & knowledge

Teachers

Listen & Speak
Encourage students to share knowledge & experiences in a partnership of mutual respect
Encourage creativity & critical thinking

Education practice

Problem-posing education
Relation to student's reality

Model C

METHODOLOGY OF PLATAFORMA GLOBAL EL SALVADOR

Students

Speak out
Share knowledge and experiences
Critical & creative thinking
Suggest solutions

Teachers

Listen & speak
Respect students
Consider knowledge and experiences of students
Encourage creative & critical thinking
Relate to reality of students

Education practice

Class & field work
Mixture of theory & practice

Therefore the platform's methodology, or at least the idea of the training method that includes "empowerment", participatory methods, as well as problem-posing education, are all in line with Freire's liberation education. The question then remains how inclusive the work of the platform is, speaking of poor, marginalized, women and youth, and how "bottom-up" the methods are. I will get back to this later in my discussion section.

Human Rights Education and Human Rights Approach

I will now clarify what kind of human rights education are being performed at Plataforma Global in El Salvador. If believing Tibbitts' argument that in terms of bringing about social change, human rights education must be strategically designed to reach and support individuals and groups who can work towards this goals in specific frameworks (Tibbitts 2002, p. 158), then I am interested in looking at the framework Plataforma Global is working within with the purpose of getting a better understanding of the practice of the platform. To clarify in which kind of frame the platform is working, I will now take a look at some of the models presented by Tibbitts.

Model 3: The Transformational Model

The *Transformational Model* (Tibbitts 2002, p. 166) can be related the work of Plataforma Global. In the following, I will argue why I find this framework model to be most relevant. The model, as presented in Chapter 5, is written in italics¹⁶, and I will go through the most important points of the model:

The Transformational Model is meant for the empowerment of the individual to recognize human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention.

At the platform, they claim to always work with a human rights based approach. Araceli explains how they apply it in all of their trainings. They analyze rights, they see “what is going on in deep of the rights”, who does the right concern, and they discuss what people can do, as well as how they can include “the vision in the world [...] not only thinking about ourselves but empowering people by working together and doing changes” (appendix 6, p. 4).

Brenda similarly explains that;

[...] the human rights approach is to empower the people so they can be sufficient themselves to look out and say, and claim for the rights, to say, to be aware of that if there is a situation that is not so... good for their lives, it is not because they deserve it or it's not because they have to be like that because it is like that, life is like that. No it's like, you have rights. You have to be empowered and go out and claim for your rights.

(appendix 7, p. 3).

This means that at the platform, they inform the participants about the fact that they have human rights which they can act upon by “claiming them”. Thereby the training or education can be argued to be for the empowerment of individual to recognize human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention.

¹⁶ I am quoting the models as they are presented in Chapter 5. The italics are not indicating direct citations of the author.

The target group can be individuals but also whole communities.

In regard of the target group, the programs of programs of MS ActionAid and ActionAid International targets “poor and excluded people”, “women and youth” who are “living in poverty and injustice” (appendix 2, p. 10). Therefore the trainings and human rights education may very well be targeted at individuals. In the platform concept paper though, it is stated that the trainings are especially designed for youth activists and leaders engaged in social movements and civil society organizations (Appendix 4, p. 3). Additionally, decision makers such as politicians and the general population are target groups in campaigns (Mellefolkeligt Samvirke 2014c), but these must be seen as a secondary target group, although this is not clearly stated. As a concrete example, my questionnaire survey (appendix 9) which involved 15 participants of the social media course of 2013, shows that everybody except for two people¹⁷ actually are members of either a political organization, an organization that works with human rights or another NGO (appendix 9, p. 13). According to Araceli, the participants in this course were selected on the criteria that had to come from organizations and be working actively in these organizations, and also that these organizations wanted to include social media as a tool for change. The individual person was also selected on the basis of what the organization actually works with, what the motivation of the individual was, what the person think about activism etc. (appendix 6, p. 6). On the basis of this, the target group is only partly or indirectly in line with the target group of *Model 3*. The actual target group seems to be representatives from organizations, and this is more in line with *Model 2: Accountability Model* (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165). In *Model 2*, the target group should be learners, who through their professional roles already are directly or indirectly associated with the “guarantee of human rights” (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165). Looking at the survey, 12 out of the 13 people who were from organizations state, that their organizations are working with human rights. These organizations work in areas that the participants themselves describe as the “training of youth groups”, “training of vulnerable groups”, “environmental education to protect nature”, “to find dead people”, “to make participation visible for people including women and young”, and “working for a general water law, food sovereignty, anti-mining, which are things that violate the fundamental rights of human” [my translation] (appendix 9, p. 13-14). Some of the organizations also work on international levels and with other national and international organizations, as a participant explains:

¹⁷ Due to the fact that the course was held in September 2013, and the survey was launched from 19th of June to 3rd of July 2014, people might have left their organization in the meantime, which could explain the two people who stands out.

The Civil Coordinator Nicaragua is an organization that articulates 300 social organizations from Nicaragua annually elaborating with the Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights on the annual report of the situation and the progress Human Rights violations in Nicaragua. [My translation].

(appendix 9, p. 14).

In *Model 2 Accountability Model* (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165) the assumption is that the learners in this group will be involved in the protection of individual and group rights. The education with these target groups focuses on ways in which their professional responsibilities involve either the direct monitoring of human rights violations and advocating with the “necessary authorities”, or taking special care to protect the rights of people for whom they have some responsibility (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165). The focus on violation of rights is therefore seen as a part of their work. Programs that fall under this model are training of human rights and community activists on techniques for monitoring and documenting human rights abuses and procedures for registration of complaints with the proper national and international bodies (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165). Yet, by using this model, it is not a goal to make personal change. It is given that social change is necessary, but this has to be realized by identifying community-based national and regional targets for reform. Examples to these targets groups can, according to Tibbitts, be lawyers, prosecutors, judges, police officers and the military, social service workers, health workers, journalists “and other members of the media” (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165), who are not exactly the target groups of any of the strategies of ActionAid.

Going back to *Model 3, the Transformational Model*, the model sounds:

With the use of “pedagogic techniques” it is the purpose to involve self-reflection.

The pedagogic techniques and self-reflection is embedded in the participatory methods pointed out earlier, and the “liberation education method” described.

With this model, it is assumed that the learner has personal experience with human rights abuses (pre- or not pre-recognized), and therefore the target groups are pre-disposed to be promoters of human rights.

The nine Global Platforms are placed in some of the world’s poorest counties, where ActionAid is working for sustainability, end of poverty and injustice (appendix 2, p. 8). According to ActionAid’s strategy, poverty is a human right violation (appendix 2, p.7). In this sense the participants at the platforms must all be considered as having personal experiences with human rights abuses. In the survey 11 out of 15 answered “yes” to ever having experienced human rights abuses (appendix 9, p. 11). When asked what kind of human rights abuses, the answers varied from not having access to basic services, such as education and free healthcare, missing work

opportunities, or “to have a job that you can work in with dignity” [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 11) – some even call it slavery, especially related to youth workers, and sexual abuse was also mentioned. These explanations can all be related to violations in regards to economic, social and cultural rights, which all call for social equality and for the fulfillment of basic human needs. They address state intervention in the allocation of resources to solve collective problems (Felice 1996, p.324). As explained earlier (see Chapter 3), the economic, social and cultural rights more specifically express the rights of self-determination, the rights of minorities, the rights of the underprivileged people to an equal share of the world’s resources, the right to physical and mental health, women’s rights, the right to development, education, paid work, and the right to peace (United Nations, 2014e).

Some participants also mention the missing right to demonstrations or “the right to organize”, and “the police at demonstrations” [my translation] (appendix 9, p. 11) which are related to civil and political rights or more specifically *article 19* in the UDHR, which states that; “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression [...]” (Donnelly 2013, p. 263). Discrimination is also mentioned, which is related to *article 1*, stating that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” (Donnelly 2013, p. 262). One of the participants also mentions property loss:

I was expelled from my own home by criminal groups of my country at gunpoint, unable to take anything with me, I totally lost my belongings [My translation].

(appendix 9, p. 11).

This is related to *article 17, 2* “No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property” (Donnelly 2013, p. 263). Persecution for working for defending human rights is also mentioned. Others mention experiences which they consider as human rights violations, although these are not directly related to the UDHR or the International Bill. An example of this is one participant explaining that

When the government fails to consult society on constitutional reforms or the construction of a canal between oceans [the construction of a big infrastructure] these types of changes directly affect the economy and the country’s juridical system, which is meant for a referendum [My translation].

(appendix 9, p. 11).

The participant basically complains about the government’s authoritarian decision-making without consulting the people. Another mentions that:

For example in my community [...], we have a problem with a “porqueriza” (a place where the municipalities deposit the waste of the cities), I feel that one of the most important rights is the right to a healthy and pollution free environment [...]. [My translation].

(appendix 9, p. 11)

This participant is stressing “the right to a healthy and pollution free environment” as one of the most important human rights.

Based on especially the participants’ own statements, it can be argued that they have personal experiences with human rights abuses, at least in the light of the International Bill. In line with what was previously stated about the target group being from organizations that work with human rights, many of the participants have experience with pre-recognized human rights violations, and they have this knowledge of human rights mainly from their organizations (appendix 9, p. 10).

Finally *Model 3* say:

Apart from human rights, the focus may also include leadership development, conflict-resolution training, vocational training, work and informal fellowship.

As the platform offers the four categories of “Campaign and Communication”, “Rights and Participation”, “Leadership and Facilitation” and “Global Citizenship and Volunteerism” (appendix 4, p. 4-5), the training on the Global Platforms also fall under some of these categories mentioned in *Model 3*.

In regards the *Model 3*, Tibbitts stated that it can be found in for instance refugee camps, in post-conflict societies, with victims of domestic abuse, in groups dealing with poor people and in some cases school settings (Tibbitts 2002, p. 166). There is no doubt that El Salvador is a post-conflict society with many victims of human rights abuses (see Chapter 3). Looking at the actual participant profiles in the survey, the participants come from different Central American countries. In fact most participants were from Nicaragua (6 out of 15), El Salvador (6), Honduras (2) and one from Costa Rica, which are all countries where poverty is a reality.

In the light of Tibbit’s *Model 3* the human rights education of Plataforma Global is in fact strategically designed to reach and support individuals and groups who can work towards better implementation of human rights principles, due to the specific framework presented. I did find a notable point though, that makes the strategy stick out of this framework, namely the selection of

the target group of the trainings, which is not completely in line with the given framework of *Model 3*, but more suitable with the target group of *Model 2*. The question is then, whether this finding could be important to the methods being used, and whether the target group actually would be better served with other methods in line with the frameworks of *Model 2*.

According to Tibbitts, the Transformational Model 3 for human rights education focuses on the “micro” level, where social change is intended to influence the way people think about themselves as well as their role in families and personal relationships. The Accountability Model 2 for human rights education is preparing leadership for the “macro” level where the social change for instance could be a new legislation and changes in rules and social structures. At this point, it seems like the human rights education at Plataforma Global of the social media course, were aimed at both levels of “macro” and “micro” in their program. The problem with this is that human rights education within the different frameworks might reflect different degrees of difficulty of educational programs. As Tibbitts (2002, p. 167) states;

Mass public education programs are about dissemination of programming, whereas the creation and capacity-building of activists require more complex and reciprocal longer-term commitments from all involved.

Exactly for this reason it might be helpful for Plataforma Global to clarify their target group and link it with the education program itself and their overall goals of human rights development and social change.

Social Media as a Tool in Capacity Building

Seen in the light of the framework of human rights education as disclosed above, I would now like to look at how social media is part of the human rights education at Plataforma Global, and how they see and use social media as a tool for social change and the spread of human rights as well as the learning process in this. After this, I would like to point out strengths and weaknesses when using social media as a tool in human rights capacity building.

The Social Media Course at Plataforma Global

The goal with the social media course was to give the participants practical experience and technical skills on using different social media such as facebook, twitter and YouTube (See Chapter 4). There were workshops on how to record videos, how to make photos, how to analyze different

audiences and target groups, how to get political contacts, write articles, blogs and also the participants were taught about “how communication effect our lives”, and “how globalization and the media are closely linked” (Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke 2014e).

A tool for change

As already shown in the case description (see Chapter 4), the Social Media Course belongs under the category of Campaign and Communication out of the four categories in which the platform offer their trainings (appendix 4, p. 4-5). In the concept paper, it is stated that “the last three decades an increasingly more influential civil society has been established, with the ability of defining new structures, values and leaders” (appendix 4, p. 2). And further; “particularly on the basis of online medias, a new global coordinated activism has become the preferred way of creating social change and infusing political reforms” (appendix 4, p. 2). This can be related to Castells and his concept of counter-power relationships between social actors and institutions or nation states, which he claims have been strengthened due to transformation of new communication technologies in our society (Castells 2012, p. 4). Further, it can be related to the “increasingly more influential civil society” which has the ability of “defining new structures, values and leaders” (Castells 2012, p. 5). It can also be related to the counter-power to the power that is embedded in the institutions of society being the capacity of social actors to challenge this power for the purpose of representing their own values and interests (Castells 2012, p. 5). As a whole, this must mean that ActionAid and the global platforms believe in the power of social media for social change. Araceli explains:

[...] we think that social media have helped to a lot of organizations to organize and to start creating change. Ehm, social media is a really good space for communication in some alternative way to send a message. Eh, and it's a tool for change. Like if you don't have money to access to like regular communication media, to television, you can also spread a new[s] on facebook [...] it's [social media] just a tool for showing what the regular media are not showing. It's like a tool for giving you voice to make change and to send information to people that is not receiving it. And also it's because ehm most of the youth is connected to social media, it's connected to the internet, it's taking pictures in facebook, so why not to see a picture about the struggle that a country it's...yeah it's having. And also bring solidarity to that topic.”

(appendix 6, p. 7).

Araceli points out, that social media is a good tool for organizations to organize their activities and for communicating in an alternative way that goes beyond the traditional media, for “giving voice”. This is relevant in the case of El Salvador, as freedom of speech is a problem in the regular media, as previously shown (see Chapter 3). She also points out, that social media is a good way to connect to people, who otherwise would not get the message. Presumably, she is referring to the public, and

perhaps also human rights advocates. Furthermore, she states that it is a good way to reach youth since “most of the youth” are already connected to social networks and the internet (appendix 6, p. 7). Looking at the questionnaires, only a bit more than half of the participants have internet access at home (9 out of 17 stated “yes”, 8 out of 17 stated “no”, and 2 answered “sometimes”) (appendix 5). This is relevant because not everybody has mobile phones with permanent internet, actually only 8 out of 17 did. In fact, some people do not even have a mobile phone, at least not on a permanent basis (14 said “yes”, but 2 out of 17 is stated “sometimes” which for instance can be because they share a phone with relatives or friends or others). Even though the majority has mobile phones, only 10 out of 17 were able to connect to wireless internet with their mobile phones (appendix 9, p. 4). This does not mean that they cannot be connected to the internet, but it shows that the access is limited, and this may be the reason why only 5 of the participants connect to the internet on a daily basis (appendix 9, p. 5). It should also be taken into account that out of the 25 people I have contacted via facebook for the survey, only 18 participated in the survey (and only 15 fully). This could indicate that some people never received my message or received it too late. The survey also reveals that 11 out of 16 had tried social media platforms such facebook, YouTube, or Twitter before attending the course, whereas 3 stated never to have tried any social media, but that they had heard about it, and 2 had never heard about it. This means that even without having “easy access” to the internet, many (of the ones who answered the questionnaires) are already familiar with social media. When Araceli states that “youth is already connected” she could be referring to the youth of El Salvador in general, as well as youth in other countries.

Going back to Aracli’s explanation above, she most of all referred to organizations more than actual individuals, when stating “we think that social media have helped a lot of organizations to organize”. Looking at the questionnaires, it does seem like many have actually used their skills in social media within their organization after the course (appendix 9, p. 21). Leonardo Madriz explains how he used the skills from the social media course within the organization Central Amigos Para la Paz (The Central Friends for Peace), which is an organization that works with human rights;

I’m always using knowledge that I have acquired and learned from the Plataforma Global. And somehow for example the thing about the social media I have used it a lot. For this conference.

(appendix 8, p.3).

Leonardo explains how he is in charge of facebook for his organization, and for creating conferences. He uses facebook to organize conferences, for example for inviting people. Especially

one of the conferences, where a charismatic speaker was present, was a success according to Leonardo;

[...] we brought her to Costa Rica and she gave like four conferences and I had like the social media part in like making the conference to facebook and like that. [...] the audience it was really full [...] and I felt really proud of myself of knowing her and worked with her, and organizing that conference... and it was easy because I had the knowledge. I had like bah...ptcht.. [makes a sound with the mouth] And you know in five-ten minutes I had everything done, I had invited a lot of people. So you know, that not only helped me but helped all the cause here in Costa Rica, you know so...

(appendix 8, p. 11-12).

As Leonardo says, the organization itself was really easy, and he explains how he could reach out to a lot of people due to his own connections with organizations and university groups, but also *their* connections etc.;

[...] so I invite them, and they invited the people they had on facebook, so at the end it was like a tree, you know, a lot of connections, and those connections had a lot of connections, so... it was easy.

(appendix 8, p. 12)

Leonardo is also uses his skills with social media at his university, where he organizes flash mobs, and other performances in the cities (appendix 9, p. 3). In Leonardo's case, we see how social media networks like facebook can gather groups of people, work at a low cost, is an easy tool for organizing, and how you can reach out to many in relatively short time. This is confirming LaRiviere et al. who mention that digital media is an inexpensive, vast and instantaneous networks to gather groups of peers, and that social media works as a low cost tool for organizing (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 12). Another example is given by Araceli, when she tells about a participant from Nicaragua, who made a repetition of the social media course in his own organization that works for youth rights; "[...] so they could have not only the one that was at the course representing the organization, but a team working in the media and using it as a tool" (appendix 6, p. 10). She explains that they now have created a webpage where they are posting videos etc. where they share information, use facebook to show the work they are doing, and create awareness of "what is going on" to bring more people to join the cause. They also use it for sending invitations. As Araceli states;

And I think that that organization has used it as we were expecting them to, like they are using it as a tool, but they are working in reality. It is not someone just sending posts on facebook about changes, but its someone who are sending posts, but its also acting on those changes.

(appendix 6, p. 11).

This shows that the skills, the participants learn at Plataforma Global about social media, are useful in organizations. Another benefit to organizations apart from social media being a tool for organizing and for doing advocacy is that they can use social media for profiling themselves for marketing purposes like it is being done at Plataforma Global. Brenda explains;

[...] we use it a lot. We promote what we are doing, and if we want to have more participants in our courses, we have to tell them what we are doing, we have to show them what the former participants says, what they were experiencing, what we have been doing in the course and everything.

(appendix 7, p. 6).

It makes sense that organizations use social media for this purpose as well, due to the fact that many of them have to make a lot of effort for survival as well as legitimizing their work to get support from society and also to profile themselves in competition with the many other NGO's and organizations of human rights advocates. In the case of Plataforma Global, presumably, they also have to legitimize their work to the mother organization MS ActionAid due to financial support.

Perhaps the above point could be one of the reasons why Plataforma Global chose to make the selection criteria as they did, when prioritizing people from organizations to participate in the course on social media. They believe social media is a good tool for organizations, and therefore they select people from organizations to come and do the course on social media. Another reason could be the financial motives. It is doubtful that individuals have the resources to pay for the courses themselves, whereas organizations sometimes have financial means. Araceli says that sometimes ActionAid gives scholarships to organizations in Central America, so they can send people to participate at courses at Plataforma Global, and at other times the platform itself has to make fundraising to give the scholarships. She explains that they cannot give scholarships to people that do not come from organizations, as; “[...] the idea is provide the trainings to a group and not a single person so the idea of social change can work” (appendix 6, p. 14). With “group” she means people belonging to a group like an organization. Araceli is also confirms that sometimes the organizations pay for the courses themselves (appendix 6, p. 14).

Inline with Castells' concept of counter-power, during the social media course, the participants have been presented with different cases of social activism where social media networks allegedly “played a key role” [My translation] (appendix 10). In total, 10 cases are presented, including cases like *Chiapanescos digitales 1994*, *It Gets Better 2010*, *Egypt 2011*, *Occupy Movement 2011* (appendix 10). Each case has been rated with a result scale that ranges from “regular”, “in process”, “effective”, “somewhat effective”, “very effective”, and “wildly

effective” referring to how successful the movement was in using social media as a tool in social activism [My translation] (appendix 10). The case of *Egypt 2011* is for instance rated as “wildly effective” on the basis of this explanation:

In the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, to overthrow President Hosni Mubarak, held on the streets of Cairo, Alexandria and other Egyptian cities, online activism certainly played a crucial role in the protests. [My translation].

(appendix 10, p. 6).

In the material it is also stated that “It is much easier now to learn of abuse of any kind and call for the public with just a few clicks” and “without any doubt the internet and social networks are becoming a collective tool that can give movements possibilities that we cannot even imagine now” [My translation] (appendix 10, p. 7). Thus at Plataforma Global El Salvador they believe in social media as a tool for change related to “the digital networks of power”, as presented by Castells, where technological platforms constructs the autonomy of the social actor by the means of mass-self communication (Castells 2012, p. 7).

Global Identity Sharing

In regards to the relation between social media and human rights, Araceli explains that social media can raise awareness of human rights violations, and it allows you to join a cause that helps other people; “You kind of act in solidarity and you also can spread a message to protect and defend human rights” (appendix 6, p. 7). She explains further;

[...] and then you go to facebook [...] and you see a picture of a girl in Africa that is ehm being hit just because she is dating a man that is Christian and she is supposed to be Muslim and...yeah that kind of things is just bringing to your mind that it's not [just] here that it's wrong, things that are affecting many other countries. You kind of act in solidarity and you also can spread a message to protect and defend human rights.

(appendix 6, p. 7).

This also relates to Castells and the relation between social movement and the “emotional activation of individuals”, where individuals must connect to other individuals to share experiences (Castells 2012, p. 14). This can, in the end, lead to collective action, if there is cognitive resonance between the sender and the receiver, and if they have access to an effective communication channel (Castells 2012, p. 14). When Araceli argues that you can get access to information about human rights violations in other countries, as she does in the example of the Muslim girl, she confirms the points made by Castells and Costanza-Chock. They both argue that it is possible to create both local and global networks because of this “new media opportunity structure” that makes it possible to

organize and create togetherness (Costanza-Chock 2013, p. 99) (Castells 2012, p. 222-223). The questionnaires also show that 15 of the participants read news on social media which are related to activism published by friends in their networks, and 13 out of 15 read both local and international news on social media (although unfortunately it does not tell anything about the kind of news). This indicates interest in what is happening in other countries. Also 11 people state publish news related to activism on social media like facebook, YouTube or Twitter, 14 publish photos related to activism, and 9 publish videos. This shows that there is an interest in sharing experiences related to activism, both in written words (links etc.) but also by the means of image-sharing and videos. 8 further state that they also arrange political actions or protests, or other actions related to activism through social media like facebook, YouTube or Twitter.

The learning process

As previously stated, not everyone was familiar with social media networks before the course at Plataforma Global. This can be seen in the learning processes, where there is a great distinction between the learning levels when being taught how to use social media. This is in spite of the fact that participants were expected to have a basic knowledge in the use of social media as a part of the selection criteria for attending the course. Araceli explains;

[...] it [the ad for the course] says 'just basic knowledge on social media', but [...] sometimes there is people that doesn't know anything about it [...].

(appendix 6, p. 7).

Araceli thinks it was a challenge for some participants to be involved with media, when they had never touched a computer before (appendix 6, p. 8). Brenda is confirming this, as she had to split the group in two in some of her classes according to the individuals' level;

[...] also we had these kind of people who can come from like the country side or from an island, for instance from Nicaragua, they didn't have access to computer, so it was really hard for them. They didn't even have a facebook profile. So it was a different level from the ones that were using like the YouTube channel, Twitter, like promoting everything on their lives on Twitter and facebook [...] So it was hard because you have to, like separate. And give this kind of knowledge to the people that are in a higher level, and then you have to work on the basics with people that are in the lower level".

(appendix 7, p. 7).

Brenda links the level difference with the guidelines and manuals the platforms receive from ActionAid and other platforms for the lack of local adaption;

[...] we have these guidelines and if other platforms have been giving the course, we have the manuals, so we can look at it and have it as an example. And we can read it as it is in our reality, but in this case [...] it was in Kenya, they gave like such a basic level training, and in here most of the people they

knew beforehand how to use facebook, Twitter, YouTube, so it was quite a challenge to make it work with this level.

(appendix 7, p. 7).

In line with Stein et al and the challenge of local application (Stein et al. 2012), the material needed local adaption. This lack of local adaption could be a result of the selection criteria at Plataforma Global which is, as previously mentioned, targeted at active members of organizations. Also, together with the selection criteria, they had to have a “basic knowledge of how to use social media”. In the strategies, the target groups seem to be “poor and excluded people”, and “women and youth” who are “living in poverty and injustice” as previously stated (appendix 2, p. 10). This broad definition perhaps makes it hard to distinguish between what level of education and experience the participants have in general. Araceli tells about a situation where she was using a historical example in her class, which she thought all the participants knew about, which was not the case:

[...] yeah, there is people that it's that...like their places and the communities are a bit isolated, or they were not interested and the topic that they don't really know about what have happened during the history of the war, so using a name as Adolf Hitler that we believe that every knows who he was and what happened with the holocaust and everything ehm... sometimes can be helping but also create a bad environment because people in the communities think that we are using information they don't really know [...]

(appendix 6, p. 9-10).

Looking at the questionnaires, it can be confirmed that the educational backgrounds of the participants also varies a lot. Some have a university degree (9), some attended college, whereas others state to have finished primary school, and one to have made a professional career, being a teacher. This means that their background educations differ widely, which could indicate that the participants come from backgrounds of different economical means or possibilities. The level difference in regards to the social media course was overcome by the participants helping each other, encouraged by the trainers. As Brenda explains, it was only in the beginning that the participants were divided in two;

[...] but then I used the knowledge of the others, I mean, I told the others, hey, we are a group, we have to work as a group. So you can teach your partners or the rest of the group who don't know about, that much about everything and if you do, you can teach them as well, so you can share all that knowledge and they can be or know as you do.

(appendix 7, p. 8)

Araceli also used the method of knowledge-sharing in her class:

Yeah, I have a guy from Costa Rica who has always worked with ehm..or using medias, so it was really easy for him to bring and put all the knowledge in the medias and use technology, but we also had a girl from Nicaragua, in the north of Nicaragua, where they almost have no access to Internet, so...what they were doing is like sharing information together. She was really good at knowing radio things, how to use the community radio because she was working there [...].

(appendix 6, p. 9).

She also explains that in some cases it was hard, as not everybody could see “what it was worth” learning about social media, but the method was to share the perspectives;

Well, in some cases it was difficult to get what was kind of going on there, like what [it] was worth, but then it was really important that some participants were like, didn't have idea of what social media can do, and some other were activists just in social media. And I think that... that development was to make a change like, and to share the two perspectives, like the activist on the street sharing a lot with these activists on the medias.

(appendix 6, p. 8).

Leonardo Madriz, the guy from Costa Rica who Araceli refers to in the quote above, was one of the participants with a relatively high educational background. To him the level was good;

I think the level was perfect. And if somebody found that it was too hard, it was because they were lazy. You know, some people in the course were a little bit lazy. You know, they didn't want to think as much and to see the reality.

(appendix 8, p. 6).

Other students did not find it that easy, 5 found the level of the social media course challenging, 6 found the level to be medium hard, 3 found it easy and 2 stated that it depended much on the workshop (appendix 9, p. 15). One participant explains that it was difficult because he or she never made a campaign before, and therefore did not relate this specifically to social media, more to the campaign work. Another states that “each course demanded much dedication” [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 16), while a third complained that there was not sufficient equipment (appendix 9, p. 16). Perhaps because of this difference, it did not show in all cases to be fully successful with the knowledge-sharing between the participants. One episode created some tensions in regard to the level differences, experiences and the learning process during the social media. A guy from Nicaragua found it really hard to keep up in the workshops. He stated crying at one of the “family meetins”¹⁸ as the rest of the group did not agree with him on the fact that he needed more time for learning how to use the social media networks. As Leonardo explains;

No no, I don't agree. You know, he was, I don't know, he was, we say here pensando los lejos, you know, the guy he was thinking in things away from where he was. He was in other places and he was

¹⁸ The participants were divided into little groups, each with a trainer connected to the group. Every week the groups had meetings where they could talk about the courses and problems they might face and the life on the platform.

not focused. [...] when he had to study or work, he didn't work. You know, he was unorganized with his time so, it's like more of a personal organization thing, than of the school or the methods.

(appendix 8, p. 7).

Leonardo on the other hand was missing a higher philosophical level to the trainings (appendix 8, p. 5).

This shows that while some find the level challenging or perhaps, like in the case of the guy from Nicaragua, even too hard, others are asking for a higher level, that includes different philosophical aspects. The question is then to what extent the level difference is disturbing the actual learning and training process. Araceli reveals that sometimes the level differences have actually been frightening her;

[...] I have been afraid with the groups when it's a big group and... and like, not at the demonstrations, but... actually the most terrifying scenario can be the classroom or the space for learning. Because when you are in a course with all the people that have that many... background difference and the knowledge level, it's so different, you challenge yourself to found out how to create a common ground to these people. So I think I have been afraid many times that they do not get the real objective of the course, to not meet the expectations of the participants.

(appendix 6, p. 13).

Although both Leonardo and Brenda point out that in the end, it seemed like everybody was on the same level regarding the use of social media (appendix 8, p. 7) (appendix 7, p. 8), based on what Araceli says, it can be challenging and even frightening to be trainer. It can then be assumed that a lot of energy is spent on adjusting the classes to suit everybody, where some of the energy perhaps could have been used for ensuring the goal of the course. The fact that the participants are learning from each other might also seem like one of the goals – since knowledge-sharing is clearly in focus, but the question is how many you lose behind because they feel constrained by “others” who have “more knowledge”, like the guy from Nicaragua, who obviously felt frustrated.

Challenges Using Social Media in Capacity Building

I would now like to take up some of the critiques pointed out by LaRiviere et al. and Stein et al. when they point out challenges and barriers of digital network use for student activism and rights advocates. Using the insight from the analysis of the human rights approach, the methodology, teaching methods and the learning process, and how social media has been included in the case of Plataforma Global, I will consider some of the critiques in the context of Plataforma Global, when using social media in capacity building.

Lack of internet access and equipment

As stated above, not all the participants in the social media course had internet access, and this can be equated with some of the barriers found by Stein et al. (2012). Their study shows challenges involved in developing transnational communication capacity, and in connecting the local and the global. They mention the following barriers of digital network use for “rights advocates”: Lack of time, technical experience, support, computer equipment and internet access. Especially when the participants were asked, whether they experienced any problems either when using their skills in social media or when teaching others the skills in the use of social media *after* the course, some (4 out of 16) explained certain problems; “Yes, for the complete lack of internet and by limited computers” [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 22), “some couldn’t connect to the networks” [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 22) and another one states;

First because it was new, secondly because there was a need for concrete explanations, which I finally gave them, it was hard but it was successful because they learned it [My translation].

(appendix 9, p. 22).

Here it is clear that in some cases internet access, equipment and also lack of technical help worked as obstacles. Brenda states that not having internet is a challenge, but people can connect elsewhere, which actually is the case for many of the participants who normally also connect to the internet from cyber-café, work or organizations (appendix 9, p. 5). Brenda expands; “So I think there’s not an excuse to say that if you don’t have a computer, then you cannot learn how to use the media.” (appendix 7, p. 8). Brenda’s interesting selection of the words “no excuse” insinuates that some of the participants resisted learning how to use social media platforms, allegedly because they did not see the relevance in learning how to use social media, as they did not have internet connection where they live. This can also be related to the point made by Stein et al. when they point out some barriers, as for instance lack of local relevance, and doubts about local application (Stein et al. 2012). So here it is up to Plataforma Global to show the relevance and explain how to use the tools even if you do not have internet, as in the case of Brenda’s class.

“Clicktivism” and involvement

Other critique points mentioned by LaRiviere et al. was the following marked with italics¹⁹ (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 12);

¹⁹ The italics are meant to indicate my own sup-up of the critique points I found relevant for this section and are not indicating direct citations of the author’s words.

It is likely that there will be a relatively low commitment of participation amongst the participants in digital media groups of peers. This can be seen in digital media when “clicking your support” and this makes it likely that many participants will not learn the details of the issues they protest or the nature of the organizational system they seek to change.

In the case of Plataforma Global, the analysis of methodology and teaching methods showed us, that the participants learn to understand the system, political realities and to be “conscious about their role as citizens”, what they can do as individuals and as groups to fight for changes, as well as to be able to analyze political realities. In the questionnaires, the participants were asked about the purpose of the campaign they made at the end of the social media course, using the social media tools they were taught. In almost all answers (14 participants in total, where one participant claims not to remember) the participants explain that they were putting focus on the problem of discrimination of women, which was the actual purpose of the campaign (see Chapter 4). What also constantly was repeated in the explanations are the sexism and masochism that the traditional media is expressing, and that the purpose with the campaigns was to limit this by putting focus on the problem. One stated that the purpose was to mobilize 500 people to commit to the initiative, which was not the purpose or goal itself, but one of the milestones. The explanations show that almost everybody express the purpose of the campaign in line with its actual purpose (appendix 9, p. 22). In the case of Plataforma Global, the participants thereby learn how to use social media as a tool, and they also learn the details of the issues they protest, and the nature of the system they seek to change, underlining that this happens through capacity building.

As a further critique LaRiviere et al. points out that (2012, p. 14);

Easy entrance for members to join and leave a site lacks opportunity for more formal involvement, and it causes internet-based movements to be loose and less collective. Also the lack of physical presence, can lead to students joining a movement just to be able to say they are a part of one, instead of actually being a part of it.

The trainers at Plataforma Global believe in the social media in regards of experience sharing, communication and organization, but as they also believe in the mixture of theory and practice together with knowledge sharing, the lack of physical presence does not seem to be a risk. As Araceli stressed earlier “You also need to, to go... on the street and do advocacy and to [...] do the barriers to try to propose ideas and to open eyes [...]” (appendix 6, p. 8). In this sense, it can be argued that the participants at Plataforma Global will learn the importance of combining the physical and the virtual presence when using social media. Leonardo does not seem to be in doubt of the importance of the physical presence;

[...] you can not only rely on social media to change things but have to be a part of the whole thing, you have to study, you have to make, I mean there's a whole reality away from the computer and the internet.

(appendix 8, p.12).

LaRiviere's point of is clearly seen though at the end of the campaign "Aquí No Hay Brutás", on the actual day of the event, where only little support was shown in regards to physical presence of audience. This could be a result of bad planning due to students' time tables etc. as Araceli (appendix 6, p. 10) and Brenda state (appendix 7, p. 9). Yet, it could also be prove of "clicktivism", as the actual milestone of 500 "likes" to the campaign were reached with 761 likes (Aqui No Hay Brutás 2014). This perhaps more importantly proves the importance of the mixture of virtual and physical presence as the 761 likes did not mean that people were actively going to participate. I do also find it important that looking at the course material and the cases presented, where "online activism certainly played a crucial role in the protests" [My translation] (appendix 10, p. 6) as mentioned earlier, the significance of for instance already belonging to other non-virtual, but physically social networks is not mentioned. When the case of for instance *Egypt 2011* is rated "wildly effective" (appendix 10, p. 6), no significance is given to the physical networking that lies within belonging to already established groupings. Investigators looking into the communication cultures of the Arab world have pointed out exactly the importance played by for instance Friday mosque gatherings in Cairo 2011 in regards of political communication, and how this played an important role in the steps of the uprising (Postill 2013, p. 5).

Horizontal Communication

LaRiviere et al. further state that (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 14);

Horizontal structure leads to a poor long-term gathering point and little guidance from who might have been able to improve the movement.

The "horizontal communication" which LaRiviere et al. point out can lead to a poor long-term gathering point, and little guidance from who might have been able to improve the movement (LaRiviere et al. 2012, p. 14), seem to be in hard contrast to the whole methodology of Plataforma Global and the theories in line with it, where exactly horizontal-communication can lead to knowledge-sharing, which actually seem to benefit the individual as well as the shared goals of creating changes. Furthermore, as Castells argues identification and sharing of feelings, and a feeling of "togetherness" is created by horizontal communication, and the less hierarchical the organization is, the more participatory will the movement be (Castells 2012, p. 15). If the greatest

motivation lies within the empowerment and experience sharing, then it is doubtful whether the horizontal communication will lower the participation. Furthermore, horizontal communication does not mean that people cannot share their knowledge in a way that can guide a movement to improvement. Exactly horizontal communication might lead to finding personal expertise to solve different tasks where this is needed, as we saw in the case of the social media course, where the participants were using each other's knowledge and expertise for solving the tasks. This must also include expertise on how to guide a given movement to improvement.

Security and anonymity

Returning to Stein et al, they also point out some other important challenges and barriers including: "lack of control, security, anonymity, and privacy on commercial platforms and the potential loss of access to the network" (Stein et al. 2012). In the survey with the participants of the social media course, 2 out of 17 answered that they never use their real name in social media networks, one explaining "No never, because of the political persecution against human rights activists that exists in Nicaragua, I only use my first name." [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 7). 2 out of the 17 replied that "sometimes" they use their real name in social media networks. One of them stating that it is "To protect my identity" [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 7). 13 out of 17 answered that they always use their real name in social media networks. Furthermore, only 4 out of 17 answered that they made configurations to be anonymous in social media networks. When answering the question of what they thought might happen, if they did not make anonymous settings, one mentions that social media networks can also be used as a tool for kidnappers and stalkers, one mentions human trafficking, and several mention the fact that they can be identified in the network. A few also mention that people can see what they publish, like for instance the work they do with social activism. One states "the picture of you as an activist for human rights is very powerful and I believe that there are consequences" [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 8). Overall, these answers show that some of the participants are aware that not being anonymous on social media networks might have consequences, but perhaps did not think about it before they were asked in this survey, or did not consider the risk or danger to be serious enough to make anonymous settings or use a secret name. As the questionnaires reveal, one of the participants has already felt her human rights violated exactly because of information about her on facebook;

I have been rejected from job professions for having pictures of demonstrations and social struggles in my facebook account. I have been denied job employment for having political tendencies and for not having a home and a family etc. [My translation].

(appendix 9, p. 11).

Brenda reflects on the potential backsides of using social media as a way to create social changes. She seems to be aware that social media might not always be used for this kind of purpose;

[...] it depends on your intention or what do you want it for [...] for instance in political campaigns everybody starts fighting about that. When you have the elections. Everybody starts fighting and start ehm making people worried about what is going to happen. They create this tension. For instance for this past presidential election here in El Salvador, they were saying on the media that there was going to be a civil war, if FMLN was going to win. And suddenly you had all these stressed people thinking that there was going to be a war and they were not going to vote for the political party that they were going to vote, now they were going to change their minds. So you can manipulate also people to do what you want them to do.

(appendix 7, p. 10-11).

This is an exact proof of the point made by Morozov stating that social networking also can help spread a climate of fear (Morozov 2011, p. 257). Looking back at the analysis of the social media course at Plataforma Global and how social media was represented as a tool for change, we learned that the participants were presented with different cases of social activism, with the perspective, that social media networks “played a key role”. One of them was the case of *Egypt 2011* that was rated as “wildly effective” on the basis of online activism that “certainly played a crucial role in the protests” [My translation] (appendix 10, p. 6). What is notable here is that according to the course material, the students are not informed of some of the backsides in the case of *Egypt 2011*, including the killings of the founders of the movements, which happened because state authorities could trace and reveal the identities by the means of social media networks. Also, the material does not show how a repressive regime has the capability to shut down internet pages and access on a national basis, which was also the case in *Egypt 2011*. I should note that the participants might have been informed about these kind of challenges in class, or through other material not presented here (although I believe to have had access to all of the material and did not find any). Through the questionnaires it does not seem as if many of the participants are aware of the kind of consequences it can have to be exposed on the social media networks, or at least they do not consider the consequences to be of a serious risk. I believe this to be a critical point in the context of El Salvador, due to the status of human rights abuses and due to historical records here (see Chapter 3) as well as the high rate of crime violence. With the latter, I am especially thinking of the example given by Morozov about the crime gangs in Mexico, that also use the digital networks to spread fear and to look for personal details of people (Morozov 2011, p. 257). As one participant actually mentioned, human trafficking is also an issue in this part of the world, apart from kidnapping and blackmailing by criminal gangs.

Another point made by Stein et al. is that online communication can attract attention, and it can also put both rights advocates and victims of rights abuses at greater risk for repression (Stein et al. 2012). Those interested in recording and exposing rights abuses should be warned, since previous experience²⁰ has shown that this can lead to arrest and jail sentences for those uploading. Also rights advocates that are continually at risk of having their access to digital networks cut off by repressive governments (Stein et al. 2012). As Morozov concludes; “Promoting Internet freedom must include measures to mitigate the negative side effects of increased interconnectedness” (Morozov 2011, p. 261). I do not see any of these points presented to the participants in the social media course at Plataforma Global.

Cultural Obstacles

What is also pointed out by Stein et al. in regard to gaining successful transnational communication is that this must include the ability to anticipate and respond to the different needs dependent on local contexts. Here they mention the differences in not only political, but also cultural and social realities (Stein et al. 2012). In the case of Plataforma Global and El Salvador, exactly cultural and social realities embedded in the way of how people think, seem to be an “obstacle” to the activities at the courses and in the streets. For instance, on occasions it happens that participants must leave the platform, as their parents do not approve of the platform’s work, or feel scared of the fact that their children go and make demonstrations and do activities in the streets related to activism. Brenda explains that it is partly related to the fact that a lot of the activism going on right now in El Salvador is very violent - especially when anarchists or other groups mix with student demonstrations. And partly because the generation of parents are from the ages of the civil war;

So every time they listen [hear] about the demonstrations, they remind themselves about what happened during the war, so they are really afraid that maybe the army can come and shoot everybody. Or kill everybody. Or the police they can take their children to jail and torture them and I mean, there is a lot of psychological things in their heads. So they are really worried.

(appendix 7, p. 13).

Brenda further states that the parents simply do not want their children to be involved with it. She also explains that parents in many cases need their children to work and earn money or to help at home, and therefore find it difficult to understand why their children are spending time participating in demonstrations (appendix 7, p. 14).

²⁰ Referring to the “Saffron Revolution” in Burma (Stein et al. 2012).

Also, local society does not always approve the work at the platform. Araceli explains young people are seen as being incompetent for making social changes to society;

[...] they don't believe in the ideas of youth, they think that youth is mostly having fun, and enjoying life and that the ideas are too crazy to applied in reality.

(appendix 6, p. 12).

She explains that these people are mostly “really conservative old people from Suchitoto²¹” (appendix 6, p. 13), who believe that the ideas for change only can happen in the minds of adults, who are the ones to propose ideas about this: “Youth is there for listening and learning but never acting and proposing and bringing new ideas to the table” (appendix 6, p. 13). But the question is whether this is not an overall view in line with “the banking method”, and actually embedded in the whole culture and the way people think. This is probably how people of Suchitoto were raised and educated, in line with what Freire would call education reflecting oppressive societies. Araceli is mentions this as well; “This country has been really orthodox in the way of teaching in the ways of making change [...] (appendix 6, p. 13). Brenda also thinks that this mistrust in young people is embedded in the culture; “So I think that it's more of a cultural thing, that touches their confidence to youth. They don't believe that much in what young people can do” (appendix 7, p. 15).

“Conservatism” is also something the participants feel from their families and surroundings. When the participants had to explain if they met any problems or obstacles in regards to the campaign “Aquí No Hay Brutos”, a participant stated “First of all from the side of my family, they are very conservative on this theme” [My translation] (appendix 9, p. 24). The conservatism does not only reflect the parent's generation or only “old people from Suchitoto” though. During the social media course at Plataforma Global, there was a girl who was feeling uncomfortable because some of the other participants were getting together as couples while staying at the platform. At a “family meeting” at the platform, she explained her considerations about the kind of reputation she would get in her organization, if they were to hear about the participants' activities. She did not want her organization to think that she was doing “improper” things at the platform. About the episode, Leonardo tells:

I think she was unsatisfied and things like that, what was that, that the platform was a kind of libertine place, [...] but you know, I think that idea comes from a really moral Christianity, you know, that it is bad to love each other, and bodies are bad and things like that but, yeah.

(appendix 8, p. 9)

²¹ Small town where Plataforma Global is located.

Leonardo's statement shows the difference in the views upon what is conservative and what is the "norm". Here church and religion are playing a big role. This is also reflected in the answer from one of the participants, who explains that she was rejected from a job position because of not having a home and a family etc. She was actually referring to this as a violation of her human rights. This shows the exact dilemma between human rights ideologies and culture and religion, and how they often seem to clash. I will get back to this in the discussion in Chapter 7.

Strengths and Weaknesses in Using Social Media in Capacity Building

I will now sum up the strengths and weaknesses I found in using social media in capacity building, based on my analysis and the case of Plataforma Global.

Social media is a good tool for organizing activities such as conferences and events, as it is simple and great for reaching people exponentially through you own network and other people's networks. It is a low cost tool and you can reach many in relatively short time. It is a good way to communicate in an alternative way, as you can go beyond traditional media. Thus, you can give "voice" to people who otherwise might not be represented, which is an advantage for people in societies where freedom of speech is limited. This is especially an advantage because you are able to send the message to people who might not otherwise receive the message, like the public or human rights advocates, or to set the agenda for other news media. Social media is a good way to reach out to young people, who could be potential "change-makers". Furthermore, by sharing information you can create awareness and bring solidarity to both local and global topics. Also, the horizontal communication form in social media networks makes it possible to take advantage of expertise within a group. Finally, social media can be a great tool for organizations to do profiling and for recruitment.

On the other hand, I found that in developing countries like El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras, some people have limited internet access, and might not have all the equipment required for accessing social media networks. This poses some challenges in local application in getting the skills for using social media as a tool. Furthermore, technology experience, computer skills and a great distinction in educational level makes it difficult to pass on the skills on how to use social media as a tool. There is also no doubt that local actors and capacity building play major roles in support of technical expertise, making sure the users of social media for social change are learning about the details of the issues they are fighting for or protesting against, as well as ensuring

the potential change-makers are aware of the importance of physical presence for gaining high participation of a cause.

Finally, through capacity building, it is the important job of local actors or educators to include information about the risks related with the use of social media networks such as the risk of losing social media network groups because of control and censorship by oppressive societies, the visual personal information and identity, which can be misused by criminals or by governments with the motives of for instance, surveillance and social control. It is also the educators' job to warn against other kinds of social media networks' use that can lead to the spread of an atmosphere of fear and false realities. In this way, it would be up to the individual to evaluate the significance of such risks for oneself and at the same time he or she could consider anonymity and other precautions when using social media with the purpose of making social change.

Overall, this confirms the conclusion made by LaRiviere et al, where they state that social media is no substitute for true knowledge building about the root causes of problems or sources of power. Educators have a responsibility to help students wield social media as a tool that educates, strengthens commitments and contributes to social change. It also stresses the great significance of local actors, who play a major role in networking between the local and global by adapting, customizing and modifying material for local viewers and addressing local obstacles as mentioned by Stein et al.

Chapter 7: Discussion

To answer my problem formulation, the following section will be a discussion of the actual power of social media, the power of civil society and the relation to human rights education. I will also discuss these topics in the light of human rights and the complexity of this topic.

The “Power” of Social Media

In the discussion of social media as a contribution to the spread of human rights and social change, I find great importance in Morozov’s arguments, when he points out the “downside” of online communication and what he calls the “power of non-state actors”. If we, for the sake of this discussion, allow ourselves to equate the appeal of making human rights more universal with the promotion of a more democratic world (although I am aware of the problematic of this), where “the free individual is in focus”, then the argumentation of Morozov is more clear: As we saw earlier, Morozov stresses the idea of digital media (which must include social media) as favoring the oppressed as a naive illusion. It is “cyber utopianism”, as digital media networks can also be used by oppressive regimes and non-state actors, who have other agendas than promoting democracy (Morozov 2011, p. xiv-xvi). Different countries require different combinations of politics, and some of them aim at countering for instance the influence of religion or other cultural forces. Some of these forces also use internet to amplify their influence and to set the agenda (Morozov 2011, p. 248). As an example related to El Salvador, this could for instance be supporters of the relatively new abortion law (see Chapter 3), which consequences is a matter of concern for the UN in regards to civil and political rights. As previously mentioned, this law is backed by prominent church officials, the arch bishop of El Salvador and the second biggest political party ARENA. Similar to the campaigns in 1997 where church and catholic right-wing groups of El Salvador tried to mobilize students from catholic schools with the purpose of pushing for the passage of the new penal code and complete ban of abortion (Jacobson 2012), today, social media could easily be used for such campaign. Brenda gives another example when she explains that prior to the elections, political forces, who opposed the FMLN party, tried to affect people by creating a false atmosphere of fear by the means of reminding people of incidents and conditions from the past civil war. Here, social media is used with the purpose of affecting people psychologically via historical, traumatic events that are deeply rooted in those who experienced it. This example proves the exact point made by Morozov. It has become easier for individuals to connect, yes, but the empowerment of the internet

can also be reached by anti-democratic forces, who have different aims and values. Militant and violent groups can for instance use networking for their take-over plans, as Morozov suggests. Regarding the high crime rate in El Salvador mainly caused by gang crime, a potential reality could be that gangs gain even more control in the Salvadoran society via social media by identifying and tracking people, spreading fear etc, just as the case of Mexico. Using an example from other parts of the world, we are in fact seeing this influence of other anti-democratic, religious forces right now: The jihad group The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is both spreading its message via social media, and also recruiting members via social media networks (ABC News 2014).

In regards to the use of digital or social media by oppressive regimes, as Morozov warns against, the threat of social control through social media should not be ignored. Such a threat should be taken seriously, especially in a place like El Salvador that has a rather “stained” record in regards to human rights violations, where death squads acted on behalf of the government during the civil war. The case of the US’ extensive internet and phone surveillance program is a more up-to-date example of social control being reality. Tens of millions of Americans became subjects to surveillance by their own government, via the means of social and digital media in general, as the US National Security Agency allegedly tapped into servers of internet firms including facebook, google, Microsoft and Yahoo to track online communication (BBC News 2014).

As pointed out earlier, the possibility for horizontal communication that social media contributes with, makes it easier to share knowledge and locate people with expertise, and this is a strength of social media in capacity building. Yet, in relation to Morozov’s point of “cyber utopianism”, this knowledge-sharing and expertise can be used in any movements with other agendas than those favoring democracy and human rights values, to make a group or movement stronger and more professional. This can also be seen in the case of ISIS, where it seems like the group is already taking advantage of the possibility of getting different expert knowledge, for instance on how to make professional videos to promote its cause and recruit people. Thus, antidemocratic forces, including religious extremists, have also gained new platforms to mobilize. Furthermore, Morozov’s point about the “lawlessness” of cyberspace (Morozov 2011, p. 264) seems extremely relevant, as the social media networks have become so big (and globalized) that the contents become difficult to control, as is argued in the case of ISIS (DR 2014).

In the light of the above discussion of social media as a contribution to the spread of human rights and social change, I believe Morozov’s point to be important when he questions

democratic values in the process of globalized communication, and this must be taken into account when thinking of the “power” of social media. This aspect should be included when evaluating social media as a tool for spreading human rights and creation of social change.

At the same time, however, it is sensible for human rights advocates and social change-makers to be present on these media platforms as “voice” and counter-power to not only nation state’s politics (or lack of), but also as a counter-power to the forces with other agendas than the spread of human rights values. This is due to the strengths of social media being both local and global, and the opportunities it gives for networking, monitoring, identity sharing, organization, etc. As Brenda is points out; “we are in the technology era [...] and it’s not good to be behind”, and “if you are not promoting to the world what you are doing, nobody will know about it” (appendix 7, p. 5). After all, there is no doubt that social media is an integral part of the news media landscape of today (Fundación Telefónica 2013, cited in Postill 2013, p. 12). Thus, it makes sense for social actors and human rights advocates to be present in this landscape, *especially* since other forces with other ideas and values also seek to gain space and power.

The “Power” of Civil Society

As Beck argues with his concept of the meta-power game, the thinking and acting people worldwide play a crucial role in the counter-power of global business corporates and the power of state politics. This global civil society and public space is the power of networks of actors, such as human rights movements and advocates, who enjoy the power of public awareness rising and democratic legitimacy (Beck 2005, p. 237). These different actors can resist or question the power of relationships of institutions, as Castells argued (Castells 2009, p. 14-15). Castells further claimed that the state recently concentrates its power to shape minds via educational systems and communication, but with the rise of the “network society”, the rise of the decisive source of power has emerged as well, with global networks and communication (Castells 2009, p. 18). If we believe Beck’s and Castells’ arguments to be true, then the actual education of the social actors, must go beyond state’s educational system and communication when “shaping people’s minds”. This is where the empowerment of the individual and groups becomes relevant in the process of changing social realities and politics within a state. And in this case, this is where human rights educators might become of significant importance.

Empowerment of the Individual

In the previous chapter, I found that one of the most important dimensions in human rights education is “empowerment” of the individual. As we have seen, this can be reached by the use of participatory methods, critical thinking based on the individual’s own reality, mixed theory and practice, and knowledge sharing (see Model B & C in my analysis, Chapter 6). Thus, empowerment of the individual can lead to change in people’s minds, which again can lead to social change. At least according to Freire’s concept of liberation education, and Castells’ concept of power, where exactly this kind of education can lead to the questioning of power relations and to resistance to these relations. The approach to social change of Plataforma Global, and ActionAid in general, seems to be in line with Freire’s theory of liberation education, and the idea of social change coming from “below”, from the people as potential actors for making change and creation of counter-power forces. Yet, how bottom-up can such an education actually be? As soon as “educators” are coming from one place and go to another place, to teach “learners” about something? Particularly, if the education or the educator, has to “stand outside” states’ educational systems and communication, as these systems are controlling people’s minds, as argued by Castells. The question then becomes *what* communication and educational system, and performed *by who* for the true empowerment of oppressed and potential social actors? And *which group* of oppressed should then be included? This leads me back to the framework for human rights education.

Frameworks for Human Rights Education

For the support of individuals and groups to work towards a society that better embodies human rights principles, Tibbitts suggested three models that represent different idealized frameworks for human rights education to achieve this goal. In the analysis, we saw that *Model 3: The Transformational Model* seemed to fit with the framework of the human rights education practice at Plataforma Global. The target group was the only exception, as it did not seem to fit into this framework, but belonged better into the framework of *Model 2: The Accountability Model*. Tibbitts stated, that *Model 3* focuses on the “micro” level, where social change is intended to influence the way people think about themselves as well as their role in families and personal relationships. *The Model 2* prepares leadership for the “macro” level, where the social change for instance could be a new legislation or changes in rules and social structures (Tibbitts 2002, p. 168). The ideological struggle to social change, though is not limited to consciousness raising, but must aim at

consciousness transformation – in line with *Model 3* – yet this cannot, according to Gramsci, be imposed on people, but must arise from their actual working lives (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 4). This means that Tibbitts' *Model 3*, which allegedly is a framework focusing on changes to happen on a “micro-level” in reality is a framework focusing on creating change on the “macro-level”. It is not the social change that is intended to influence the way people think about themselves, as well as their roles in families and personal relationships etc. It is the way people think about themselves and their roles, that has to create social change.

The target group of Plataforma Global is selected on the criteria that the participants must belong to certain organizations, (and in this particular case must have certain knowledge of social media) and must be open to the idea of activism (appendix 6, p. 6). This is where the “inclusiveness” could be questioned, thinking of Gramsci's approach, where the counter-hegemony that leads to change has to be build by the “organic intellectuals”, who in fact are an important, if not crucial group. Thus, only through this group *together* with the “traditional intellectual” can the ideology in society change. By overthrowing a system by the use of counter-hegemony, to counter the common sense view of society, traditional intellectuals need to support the revolutionary cause. Yet, the working class movement should also produce its own organic intellectuals, who should be encouraged to consciously work out their own conception of their world (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 4).

When all the participants come from organizations working with human rights, the question is whether they in fact belong to the so-called group of traditional intellectuals, who in reality are allied to and assisting the ruling group in society (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 3). I do not strictly believe that *all* the selected participants belong to this group of traditional intellectuals, as organic intellectuals presumably also can form and be parts of organizations, and as not all the organizations work *directly* with the promotion or implementation of human rights. Yet, a great part of the participants might actually represent the group of traditional intellectuals, like my interview person Leonardo, who I dare to say belong to this group, due to his academic occupation in philosophy at the University of Costa Rica (appendix 8, p. 1). The survey also revealed that many (9 out of 18) have, or is currently obtaining a university degree. My point is that with the selection criteria, it could be argued, that a big part of group that Gramsci calls the organic intellectuals is excluded. Thereby might the idea get lost about consciousness transformation that has to arise from the organic intellectuals and their actual working lives (Burke 1999, 2005, p. 4). *Model 3* seems to be in line with Gramsci's idea of counter-hegemony and change of consciousness by the mass.

Model 2 does not aim to make personal change, it is given that social change is necessary, and as Tibbitts explains, this has to be realized by identifying community-based national and regional targets for reform, and the target group has to advocate the “necessary authorities”. Furthermore, programs that would fall under this model 2 train human rights and community activists on techniques for monitoring and documenting human rights abuses and procedures for registration of complaints with the proper national and international bodies (Tibbitts 2002, p. 165). Thereby it can be argued that this group has to work within the frames of a system, with a pre-set hegemony and ideology of how the system is ruled or is supposed to be ruled. Based on this it can be argued, with the risk of being a bit stringent, that ActionAid’s intended target group - the poor, excluded marginals - are in fact actually excluded.

Human Rights Approach

Looking at the human rights approach, again I can ask: How “bottom-up” is this approach really? If the concept of human rights in fact is biased, ignore human differences, and is far from universal, as stated by critics of the universal declaration (see Chapter 3), how can “a human rights approach” that rests on the guarantee for implementation of these principles in itself create basis for empowerment, and a bottom-up change in people’s minds for social change? Thinking back on Freeman’s argument about the difficulties of human rights that might be rooted in fundamental philosophical differences, would the implementations of human rights principles not be exactly to impose an ideology on people, as Gramsci is arguing against?

The cultural obstacles mentioned in the case of El Salvador is an expression of two things; correctly enough social change in El Salvador requires a change in people’s ways of thinking, which is embedded in the religious, cultural and historical conscience of civil society, a change of the “common sense” and how to see opportunities and new ways of ruling society. It is also an expression of the fact that the concept of human rights principles contradicts certain cultural-historical specificities, which to some might seem to be conservative ideologies, but to others are the correct way of living. The cultural-historical context do play a big role, and cannot be ignored. Plataforma Global seems to be aware of the cultural constraints, and their importance as they evaluate on the “reaction of the surroundings” after each course (appendix 7, p. 11). This exactly proves the significance of these surroundings. Yet, if a human rights approach is to be questioned, then how do human rights advocates or educators know whether they are doing the right

thing at all in the promotion of human rights and the implementation of human rights principles? Inspired by Freeman, I believe that the answer must be that human rights activists, human rights advocates and human rights educators must rely on their own sentiments and the courage of their own convictions (Freeman 1994, p. 514). They should continue doing what they believe in, as in the case of Araceli, who really believes in the platform's work (appendix 6, p. 2). What you can do is to look at the needs in a specific local context and then modify the starting point, as actually also is seen in the case of Plataforma Global, where rights that do not have their origin in the Human Rights Bill also are considered (the right to water, a healthy environment, etc). As Hastrup argues, the point should be what is shared by all human beings; equal worth (Hastrup 2001, p. 1-2), or as Freeman puts it, the motive should be related to equal concern and respect for human persons (Freeman 1994, p. 514). However, the means to gain this should be in accordance with respect for the importance of human differences.

Thinking of the methodology and teaching methods of Plataforma Global and MS ActionAid, especially with an eye at the participatory methods and empowerment as an important dimension, it is clear that the platform and thereby MS ActionAid, works for the creation of change. In fact, the creation of change seems to be more in focus than human rights, their violations and the direct implementation, as the use of especially the participatory methods indicate. As argued above, the mission actually focuses on creating changes on a macro-level, which then means that ActionAid's vision of "a sustainable world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity" (appendix 2, p. 5, line 1) must derive from a vision of an alternative of how the given society is ruled. This alternative has undeniable roots in another part of the world with a different agenda based on different realities and values related to democracy. In some perspectives, it could then be questioned if ActionAid's alternative is in accordance with respect for human differences.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

In my analysis, I found certain possibilities with the use of social media as a tool for organizations and human rights advocates. It is a low cost and useful tool for organizing activities and events, it creates possibilities to send messages exponentially, and it permits reaching out to many in relatively short time. It is useful for alternative communication, which gives opportunity to give “voice” to people in societies where freedom of speech is limited. In this way, it is possible to spread messages to human rights advocates and civil society, and to set the agenda for other news media. It is also possible to reach young people as potential change-makers. By sharing information you can create awareness and bring solidarity to both local and global topics, and this can lead to identity-sharing and motivation for the support of human rights and creation of social change. Also, social media allows for horizontal communication, which can lead to the use of expertise within a group. Finally, social media is also a useful tool for recruitment, promotion and profiling.

However, I also found certain challenges of using social media as a tool. In some developing countries, the lack of internet connection or the lack of equipment can be a challenge and lead to limited access to social media. Local application and relevance is also a challenge, as well as the experience with technology for passing on the skills in using social media as a tool. The great distinction of education and experience of young people in some developing countries can be an obstacle to the learning process.

In my analysis I also found that local actors and capacity building play a major role in support of technical expertise, making sure the users of social media for activism are learning about the details and issues they are fighting for or protesting against, as well as they have to make sure the potential change-makers are aware of the importance of physical presence for gaining high participation of a cause. They are also important in the networking between local and global by adapting, customizing and modifying material for local viewers and addressing local obstacles. Educators must also inform about the risks related with the use of social media networks, including the loss of the networks, control and censure by oppressive governments, as well as the risk of surveillance and social control. Educators should also warn against the danger of criminal forces, and the spread of fear and “fake realities”.

In the case of Plataforma Global, I found that improvements could be made in regards to the above mentioned importance of information of the risks related to the use of social media as a tool for activism. Plataforma Global could also consider the target group of their courses, and how desirable the exclusion of a particular group is regarding their vision and mission. With this adjustment, the training methods of Plataforma Global, MS ActionAid and ActionAid International, are highly suitable for the creation of social change. These changes are related to human rights principles, but moreover, the practice of the work of the platform is supporting youth activism in general and aiming for social changes in a macro level. The overall mission of MS ActionAid and ActionAid International derives from a different part of the world, where social changes on a macro level are related to politics of democracy in a western context, and therefore based on different values and realities than what is the case in El Salvador and other development countries. In some perspectives, this might be controversial.

Furthermore, in my discussion I found that the power of social media as a tool for the spread of human rights and the creation of social change is limited, taken into account that other forces with different agendas also take advantage of the possibilities of social media networks. On the other hand, it creates some possibilities of global communication and promotion of human rights. Moreover, as a tool for implementing of human rights and social change, the empowerment of the individual seems to be crucial, and here human rights capacity building plays an important role.

It can then be concluded that social media is an excellent tool for the promotion of human rights in the contemporary world, especially for human rights advocates and organizations. Yet, it has limitations as a tool for implementation of human rights, social mobilization and the creation of social change. Other factors related to capacity building concerning empowerment of the individual, education and knowledge building about the root causes of problems and power relations, as well as non-virtual physical networks, play an important role in this regard.

List of references

Bibliography

- BAUMANN, G. (1999) *The Multicultural Riddle. Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities*. New York, United States: Routledge
- BECK, U. (2005) *Power in the Global Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press
- CASTELLS, M. (2009) *Communication Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- CASTELLS, M. (2012) *Networks of Outrage and Hope – Social Movements in the Internet Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press
- COHEN, S. (2001) *States of Denial*. Cornwall, Great Britain: Polity Press
- COSGROVE, S. (2010) *Leadership from the Margins, Women and Civil Society Organizations in Argentina, Chile, and El Salvador*. The United States: Rutgers University Press
- DONNELLY, J. (2010) *International Human Rights*. 4th Ed. United States: Westview Press
- FREEMAN, M. (2002) *Human Rights – An interdisciplinary approach*. Cornwall, Great Britain: Polity Press
- HASTRUP, K. (2001) *Human Rights on Common Grounds. The quest for Universality*. The Hague, The Netherlands: Kluwer Law International
- KVALE, S. (1997) *INTERVIEW. En introduction til det kvalitative forskningsinterview*. 1st Ed. Copenhagen, Denmark: Hans Reitzels Forlag.
- LADUTKE, M. L. (2004) *Freedom of Expression in El Salvador, The Struggle for Human Rights and Democracy*. USA: McFarland & company, Inc., Publishers
- MOROZOV, E. (2011) *Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*. 1st Ed. United States: Public Affairs. Chapter 9, pp. XX.
- NEUMAN, W.L. (2007) *Basics of Social Research. Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 2nd Ed. United States: Pearson Education, Inc.
- SHESTACK, J. J. (2000) *The Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights* in SYMONIDES, J. (ed.). *Human Rights: Cencept and Standards*. UNESCO. Cornwall, Great Britain: MPG Books
- SMITH-NONINI, S. (2010) *Healing the Body Politic, El Salvador's Popular Struggle for Health Rights from Civil War to Neoliberal Peace*. The United States: Rutgers University Press

Chapters in edited books

Charlesworth, H. (1994), What are Women's International Human Rights, in Falk, R. et al. (eds.). *Human Rights – Critical Concepts in Political Science*. Oxon, UK: Routledge, Vol. II, pp. 350-374

Costanza-Chock, S. (2013), Transmedia mobilization in the Popular Association of the Oaxacan Peoples, Los Angeles, in Cammaerts, B. et al. (eds.). *Mediation and Protest Movements*. Bristol, UK: Hobbs. Chapter 5, pp. 95-115.

Felice, W. F. (1996), The Case for Collective Human Rights, in Falk, R. et al. (eds.). *Human Rights – Critical Concepts in Political Science*. Oxon, UK: Routledge, Vol. II, pp. 319-332.

Hepburn, K. (2013), Introduction, in Cammaerts, B. et al. (eds.). *Mediation and Protest Movements*. Bristol, UK: Hobbs. pp. 3-19.

Articles / Journals

Burke, B. (1999, 2005). Antonio Gramsci, Schooling and Education. *The Encyclopedia of Informal Education*. [Online]. Available from:
<http://infed.org/mobi/antonio-gramsci-schooling-and-education/>
[Accessed 28th July 2014].

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006) Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*. VOL. 12. No. 2 219-245 DOI: 10.1177/1077800405284363. Sage Publications. [Online] Available from:
<http://qix.sagepub.com/content/12/2/219.short?rss=1&ssource=mfr>
[Accessed 19th February 2014]

Freeman, M. (1994). The Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*. VOL 16, No.3. The John Hopkins University Press. [Online] Available from:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/762434>
[Accessed 17th March 2014].

Freire, P, & Ramos, B. M. (2009). Chapter 2 from Pedagogy of the Oppressed. *Multidisciplinary Global Contexts*. VOL. 2, No.2 pp. 163-174. Jstor. [Online] Available from:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25595010>
[Accessed: 13th May 2014].

Gramsci, A. & Buttigieg, J. (2002). From the Prison Notebooks. *Daedalus*. VOL. 131, No. 3, pp. 71-83. The MIT Press & American Academy of Arts & Science. [Online]. Available from:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20027790?origin=JSTOR-pdf&>
[Accessed 28th July 2014]

Guba, E. G., (1990). The Alternative Paradigm Dialogue. In: Guba, Egon G., The Paradigm Dialogue. Newbury Park, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, pp.17-27.

Hastrup, K. (2002). Menneskerettens udfordring – ideology eller videnskab? Academisk Forlag. ISBN: 87-500-3691-2. pp 152-170.

LaRiviere, K. et al. (2012). Protest: Critical Lessons of Using Digital Media for Social Change. *About Campus*. DOI: 10.1002/abc.21081. VOL 17, No. 3. pp. 10-17. Wiley Online Library. [Online] Available from: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/abc.21081/pdf> [Accessed 9th May 2014].

Petras, J., Veltmeyer, H. (2006). Social Movements and the State: Political Power Dynamics in Latin America. *Critical Sociology*. 2006 32:83. DOI: 10.1163/156916306776150278. pp. 83-104.

Postill, J. 2013. (2013). The multilinearity of protest: Understanding new social movements through their events, trends and routines. Melbourne: RMIT University. [Online] Available from: <http://johnpostill.com/2013/10/19/the-multilinearity-of-protest/> [Accessed 29th July 2014].

Tibbitts, F. (2002). Understanding What We Do: Emerging Models for Human Rights Education. *International Review of Education*. VOL. 48, Issue 3-4, pp. 159-171. Kluwer Academic Publishers. [Online] Available from: <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1020338300881> [Accessed 13th May 2014].

Websites

ABC NEWS. (2014)
The Twitter jihad: ISIS insurgents in Iraq, Syria using social media to recruit fighters, promote violence. *ABC net.au*. [Online] 21st of June. Available from: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-20/isis-using-social-media-to-recruit-fighters-promote-violence/5540474> [Accessed 26th of July 2014].

BBC NEWS. (2014).
Edward Snowden: Leaks that exposed US spy program. *US and Canada*. [Online] 17th of January 2014. Available from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-23123964> [Accessed 29th July 2014].

ÁVALOS, H. S. (2014)
Mr. Abrams, Let me explain drug trafficking in Central America. *Center for Democracy in the Americas*. [Online] 26th of January. Available from: <http://www.democracyinamericas.org/around-the-region-blog/hector-silva-avalos-mr-abrams-let-me-explain-drug-trafficking-in-central-america/> [Accessed 4th March 2014].

AQUI NO HAY BRUTAS. (2014)
Facebook. [Online] Available from: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Aqui-No-Hay-Brutas/484276951671192> [Accessed 23rd July 2014].

BARGENT, J. (2013)

El Salvador Gangs 'At War' as Truce Hits the Rocks. *Insight Crime*. [Online] 21st of November. Available from:

<http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/el-salvador-gangs-at-war-as-truce-hits-the-rocks>

[Accessed 4th March 2014].

DR (2014).

ISIS udnytter frit spillerum på de sociale medier. *Nyheder*. [Online] 9th of July. Available from:

<http://www.dr.dk/Nyheder/Udland/2014/07/09/143917.htm>

[Accessed 26th of July 2014].

INDEXMUNDI. (2014)

External Dept Stocks. [Online] Available from:

<http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/indicators/DT.DOD.DECT.CD/compare?country=sv>

[Accessed 2nd March 2014].

JACOBSON, J. (2012).

Tragedy in El Salvador: Church-Supported Laws Lead to Death of Mother Jailed After Miscarriage. *RH Reality Check*. [Online] 21st of March 2012. Available from:

<http://rhrealitycheck.org/article/2012/03/21/tragedy-in-el-salvador-church-supported-laws-lead-to-death-mother-two-jailed-afte/>

[Accessed 29th July 2014].

MARTÍNEZ, Ó. (2013)

Making a Deal With Murderers. *The New York Times*. [Online] 5th of October p. 1-2. Available from:

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/06/opinion/sunday/making-a-deal-with-murderers.html?_r=0

[Accessed 5th March 2014].

MELLEMFOLKELIGT SAMVIRKE. (2014)

a) *Forside*. [Online] Available from:

<http://www.ms.dk/>

[Accessed 9th March 2014], *Global Contact*. [Online] Available from:

<http://www.globalcontact.dk/>

[Accessed on 10th March 2014],

b) *Politiske Campagner*. [Online] Available from:

c) <http://www.ms.dk/arbejde/kampagner>

[Accessed 10th March 2014],

d) *Activista – who we are*. Available from:

<http://www.actionaid.org/activista/who-we-are>

[Accessed 11th March 2014],

e) *Social MediaCourse*. [Online] Available from:

<http://www.globalplatforms.org/nepal/social-media-course>

[Accessed 18th July 2014].

PROVOST, C. (2014)

El Salvador: Meet the women who dare to challenge the anti-abortion state. *The Guardian*. [Online] 17th of April. Available from:

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/apr/17/beatriz-case-resistance-el-salvador-abortion-law>

[Accessed 29th April 2014].

UNITED NATIONS. (2014)

- a) *General Assembly of the United Nations*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/> [Accessed 30th April 2014],
- b) *The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/2013/about.shtml> [Accessed 30th April 2014],
- c) *Member States*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.un.org/en/members/index.shtml> [Accessed 2nd March 2014],
- d) *Charter of the United Nations*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml> [Accessed 30th April 2014],
- e) *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* [Online] Available from: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx> [Accessed 23th April 2014],
- f) *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* [Online] Available from: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/> [Accessed 28th April 2014].

UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE. (2014)

- a) *Peace Agreements: El Salvador, Peace Agreement (Chapultepec), Agreement on Human Rights* [Online] Available from: <http://www.usip.org/publications/peace-agreements-el-salvador> [Accessed 28th April 2014],
- b) *El Salvador: Implementation of the Peace Accords* [Online] Available from: <http://www.usip.org/publications/el-salvador-implementation-the-peace-accords> [Accessed 28th April 2014].

UNODC. (2014)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: Homicide Statistics 1995-2011. *Intentional Homicide , count and rate per 100,000 population*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/homicide.html> [Accessed 3rd March 2014].

Appendices

Appendix 1: United Nations Human Rights Committee Periodic Report on El Salvador 2010 (pdf). Available from: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/LACRegion/Pages/SVIndex.aspx> [Accessed 3rd March 2014].

Appendix 2: AADK Strategy 2012-2017 *Together Against Poverty* (pdf). Available from: <http://www.ms.dk/sites/files/actionaid/aadkstrategy2012-2017.pdf> 9 march 2014 [Accessed 3rd March 2014].

Appendix 3: ActionAid's Strategy 2012-2017 *People's Action To End Poverty* (leaflet edition) (pdf). Available from: [http://www.ms.dk/sites/files/actionaid/leaflet - dl 0.pdf](http://www.ms.dk/sites/files/actionaid/leaflet_-_dl_0.pdf) [Accessed 10th March 2014].

Appendix 4: Concept Paper of Global Platforms (pdf).

Appendix 5: Survey Design Questions (pdf).

Appendix 6: Interview Transcription 1, *Araceli Argueta* (pdf).

Appendix 7: Interview Transcription 2, *Brenda Rosales* (pdf).

Appendix 8: Interview Transcription 3, *Leonardo Madriz* (pdf).

Appendix 9: Survey Answers Overview (pdf).

Appendix 10: Course Material *10 casos de activismo social en la que el internet tuvo un papel clave* (pdf).

Appendix 11: Procedure of Interview Designs (pdf).

Appendix 12: The Human Rights Declaration and Implementation (pdf).