

Significance of Christian faith-based organizations in the Danish development sector: A case study of Danmission



(Danmission)



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February 2020
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1. Introduction

Since early ages religions have made efforts to contribute to public welfare. Therefore many so-called Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have a long history of engagement in developmental issues;

from health and education, financial aid and disaster relief, to advocacy for human rights and social justice, FBOs have been at the forefront of developmental activities and service delivery (James, 2011, p. 110; Sustania, 2019, p. 4; Oxfam, 2011). Despite their efforts FBOs have suffered from decades of neglect and exclusion in development circles (James, 2011, p. 110; Rakodi, 2012, p. 634; Sustania, 2019, p. 5).

In 2000 Kurt Allan ver Beek found that religion and religious actors were a 'development taboo' that neither scientists or practitioners had paid attention to. Not only did they not give the subject any attention, they seemed to deliberately avoid it (Thomsen, 2015, p. 14). This trend is further described by Rakodi who states that "in mainstream development thinking, policy, and practice, religion has generally been neglected, despite its pervasiveness and importance" (2012, p. 634). Others have pointed to the same problem and referred to religion and the work of religious actors a 'blind spot' in development (Fountain, 2012, p. 143).

The exclusion derived from two fundamental assumptions regarding religion which shaped the outset of official development assistance; In line with modernization theorists it was believed that the influence of religion in society would grow smaller when societies modernized and achieved economic growth. And secondly, that the political space and religious space could and should be kept clearly separated (Lauterbach, 2015, p. 47; Rakodi & Deneulin, 2011, p. 46). ; an idea which has been pervasive in northern Europe. According to Thomsen, the ten years before and after the turn of the millennium religion was sidelined in the public and political space (2015, p. 17). This was evident in a comment from the advisor of the English Premier minister Tony Blair, who interfered and proclaimed that "*we don't do God*" in a response to a question regarding religion addressed to the minister (Thomsen, 2015, p. 17). That state-affairs and religion was an unwanted cocktail at the time was also expressed by the Danish Prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen during the so-called Muhammed crisis as he stated that religion should be removed from the public space (Thomsen, 2015, p. 17)

At the same time as religion was cast away, changes began to happen and in the last decade there has been a newfound interest in the role of religion in development (Thomsen, 2015, p. 18).

The international debate about religion and development was initiated in 1998 when the world's largest development actor, the World Bank founded the interreligious World Faiths Development

Dialogue (Torm, 2015, p. 3; Thomsen, 2015, p. 18). In the beginning, the primary focal point was the role played by religion in development work/aid but later the interest in the subject has come to include the role played by faith based institutions (FBOs) in development work (Mogensen, 2012, p. 5).

Gradually the interest has reached state aid agencies and there has been a growing willingness from secular organizations to move from 'estrangement to engagement' and cooperate with FBOs (Mogensen, 2012, p. 5; James, 2016, p. 1). The state development agencies of other Northern European countries, previously identified as particularly secularist, have made efforts to contribute to the dialogue regarding the role played by religion and religious actors including FBOs in development and the way it impacts their own work and policies, such as Norwegian NORAD, Swedish SIDA, DFID in Great Britain and governmental aid-agencies in Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany (Le Moigne & Juul Petersen, 2016, pp. 15-16).

Interestingly, in contrast to the other Northern European countries, Danish initiatives have been lacking and the contributions to the debate regarding religion and development have been few and scattered (Torm, 2015, p. 3; Thomsen, 2015, p. 18). In a Danish context the studies on religion and development as a joint field of study has not been strongly represented and the work of Danish FBOs in the Danish development sector an overlooked factor (Lauterbach, 2015, p. 50; Globalnyt, 2014).

Denmark is internationally recognized as an effective development actor. Previously the Danish state followed the same pattern of resistance towards FBOs which has been detected internationally, in the belief that development aid should be neutral and non-religious. Today this view has changed and in Danida's framework agreements from 2018-2021 6 out of 18 organizations chosen as strategic partners can be characterized as Christian FBOs.

Because of this lack and because most research regarding FBOs has concerned American FBOs and come from donors and development agencies (Jones & Juul Petersen, 2011, p. 1291) as well as other European countries this thesis seeks to contribute to filling the identified gap by exploring the role and contribution of Christian FBOs in the Danish (official) development sector.

Based on a historical development from neglect to cooperation between Danida and the Danish Christian FBOs one may wonder if the Christian FBOs has a special advantage or 'added value of faith' in their work? According to scholars, a comparative advantage of FBOs compared to secular organizations has often been assumed without research to support the claim (Tomalin, 2012, p. 696; Le Moigne & Juul Petersen, 2016, p. 14). Rakodi and Tomalin suggests that a direct comparison between secular organizations and FBO is neither desirable, nor possible (Tomalin, 2012, p. 698; Rakodi, 2012). Therefore, she suggests that in studying the role of FBOs one focuses on significant contributions.

Therefore ,this thesis seeks to explore the following:

Do Christian faith-based organizations provide a distinctive contribution to the Danish development sector and if yes, how ? (in the work performed and in the sector itself)

According to Rakodi there is no theory to explain the links between religion and development as their interplay is immensely complex, and our understanding too fragmented and incomplete for such a theory to be developed (Rakodi, 2012, p. 635). Especially the fluidity of concepts related to both religion and development makes the development of an over-arching theory impossible and undesirable (Rakodi, 2012, p. 635). Instead she suggests the use of frameworks to understand issues of religion and religious actors in development. In answering my research question, I will be drawing on this framework, while adjusting it to fit my area of research (see methodology section).

1.1. Limitations

In my thesis I am focusing on Danida and the organizations that have been chosen as Danida's strategic partner in the current framework agreement. Hence, they constitute my understanding of a Danish development sector. While I acknowledge the contributions of Christian FBOs excluded by this limitation, the strategic partnership with Danida signifies a certain size and level of professionalism.

2. Methodology

In order to answer my research question, I have used qualitative methods in the form of a case study and a qualitative interview. My thesis is based on interpretivist methods as the foundational concepts of religious and development studies are social constructions whose meanings are reinterpreted through time and in different contexts, and produced through human imagination and practice (Barnett & Stein, 2012, p. 9+11). I have worked inductively, starting with general literature about Development, religion and FBOs, and moving towards literature on Christian development culture and Christian FBOs, and then literature that was specific to my Danish context, ending with a narrow view on Danmission.

2.1 Methods

2.1.1 Using frameworks

In answering the research question I am applying the analytical framework presented by Rakodi. Rakodi's framework entails an exploration of religious traditions, origins and ideas which constitute a culture of aid. Thus, I will include a chapter on the religious traditions which establishes boundaries for what is legitimate in relation to provision of development aid within the Christian aid culture (Juul Petersen, 2015, p. 10). Moreover, the framework entails identification and clarifications of key concepts (Rakodi, 2012, p. 635). Additionally, I will include a section outlining the Danish development aid culture. This is relevant because the understanding and practice of religion and development are strongly influenced by their historical, political and social context (Rakodi, 2012, p. 648)

In Rakodi's framework she suggests questions that may be helpful to guide the analysis. In relation to distinctive contributions of FBOs she suggests an investigation of inputs (The choice of activities, design of programs, sources of funding), ways of operating (employees, volunteers, use of religious teachings, beneficiaries, symbols and practices), outcome (results, and impact (contribution to development objectives) (Rakodi, 2012, p. 646). The questions in Rakodi's framework for analysis are meant as starting points and are not relevant to every situation. Which are the most relevant depends on the context in which they are applied, the level of knowledge and the concerns of the analyst involved (Rakodi, 2012, p. 645). Therefore, Rakodi's framework will form the basis of my

interview and research but is not necessarily dictating the form of the analysis or structure, depending on its relevance in regard to findings.

2.1.2 Using case studies

My choice of case was based on two criteria: First, in order to secure a certain size and professionalism I focused on Christian FBOs chosen as a strategic partner by Danmission. Moreover, I chose to look at organizations with a visible use of Christianity in their work, to ensure enough relevant data for analysis. While case studies are not suitable for generalization, they are relevant in the investigation of Christian FBOs as they are not a homogenous group thus ruling out most general claims regarding FBOs as a group, even within a specific context. This is supported by Tomalin who suggest that rather than avoiding the topic all together due to its complexity one should approach the issue in a context-specific case-by-case approach (Tomalin, 2012, p. 700). Moreover, my aim of the study is to look at the distinctiveness of one FBO. Thus my thesis should be perceived as a contribution to the debate regarding the potential of Christian FBOs in the Danish development sector and does not make claims to convey the full picture.

2.1.3 Semi structured interviews and data collection

In order to collect data useful to my research question I have conducted a thorough interview lasting and 1 hour and 20 minutes. I chose to interview the Head of the programs department as I assessed that her knowledge would be the most relevant to answer my question, compared to her colleagues. The interview was conducted via phone and the recording is available via the link supplied in the reference to Kirsten Auken. The interview was semi-structured, meaning that I had some overall topics and questions, based on Rakodi's framework, but the interviewee was able to steer the interview in a more interesting direction. The semi structured interview allows space for the interviewee's own opinions and rather than assumptions made by the interviewer. Moreover, I have collected materials produced by Danmission including result and strategy reports that are not publicly available but provided by Danmission, and information on the website, and limited secondary literature about the organization. Moreover, I have attempted to find literature produced by Danida regarding their cooperation with Danmission and Christian FBOs. However, as previously addressed, there is very limited data to find on this matter.

3. Analytical framework

3.1. Development and Christian aid culture

When dealing with issues regarding the relationship between religion and development, and in this case more specifically the contribution of Christian FBOs to development, it is important to identify the meaning ascribed to the concept of development (Mogensen, Kirkerne i Mission og udvikling, 2008, p. 1). What is the motivation behind and what is the vision and what traditions have shaped these? To answer these questions, the next sections will elaborate on the understanding of development and give a more thorough insight into Christian religious traditions and Christian development culture which should establish a foundation for understanding the actions of current FBOs in the Danish development sector.

3.1.1 Development

There is no agreed definition of development (Rakodi, 2012, p. 640); Development' is not one uniform idea with one universally accepted definition (Rakodi, 2012, p. 638). Instead ideas about development are socially constructed by citizens, governments and development agencies from developed or developing countries. Moreover, there may be different opinions within each of these groups. Additionally, ideas about what constitutes development have changed over time and has been shaped by experiences and as a response to specific challenges, dominant ideas or policies (Rakodi, 2012, p. 638).

At a minimum development entails a movement from a worse state to something better and the development of a society must include relevant improvements (Rakodi, 2012, p. 637)

According to Rakodi *"the most widely accepted concept of human development incorporates both economic growth and the creation of an enabling environment for people to live long, healthy and creative lives"* (2012, p. 638). However, while there seems to be a general agreement on these aims there is less agreement on how they should be achieved (Rakodi, 2012, p. 638).

3.1.2 Humanitarianism

The concept of development aid arguably falls under the category of humanitarianism. As with the concept of development, the concept of humanitarianism is fluid and its meanings and practices have changed over time (Barnett & Weiss, 2011, p. 8). If humanitarianism is equated with attempt

to relieve the sufferings of other people, humanitarianism is as old as human history, but many consider the creation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1864 as the birth of modern humanitarianism (Barnett & Stein, 2012, p. 12; Barnett & Weiss, 2011, p. 35). In the beginning humanitarianism was perceived in line with the the definition set forth by the International Committee of the Red Cross which limits humanitarianism to life saving aid in cases of emergencies (sometimes labelled humanitarian aid). However, due to the perception that human suffering does not only apply to emergencies, such as natural disaster or conflict, and that helping people today makes little sense if they are exposed to risk again tomorrow, the concept of humanitarianism has been widened. Today the concept includes efforts to transform underlying structural conditions which exposes people to danger, and includes development work, promotion of democracy and human rights, peace building, public health etc. (Barnett & Weiss, 2011, p. 11; Barnett & Stein, 2012, p. 12).

Although the idea of aiding people to relieve human suffering is not exclusive to any religion as they all contain elements of humanitarianism, modern humanitarianism is rooted in Western history and Christian thought, and it is argued that Christianity and Christian FBOs until now has had the most significant influence on contemporary humanitarian action (Barnett & Weiss, 2011, pp. 16, 22). The next section will elaborate upon the Christian motivation for helping others in need and how this thought has fostered a Christian aid culture.

3.2 Christian humanitarian aid and development culture

Despite obvious differences between the multiple strands of Christianity they are all grounded in the biblical tradition which views God as an active influence in this world, who wishes to uphold peace and justice. Therefore, most Christian traditions are actively trying to improve human conditions (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 76).

While there are differences between the theology of the many denominations of Christianity, this thesis will argue that in relation development it is in most cases reasonable to deal with all of the denominations as one common entity.

This view is based on the fact that almost all of the denominations are cooperation in large Christian associations that are fully or partly concerned with development work and humanitarian aid and the role of Christian actors in social issues. The largest and widest embracing umbrella organization is the World Council of Churches which was founded after world war 2 in 1948. This organization has 349 member churches dispersed across 110 countries and represents 560 million Christians and has a great emphasis on the relationship between the church and social issues. The World Council of Churches is a product of a larger ecumenical movement where churches of different denominations attempt to bridge differences through a closer relationships and understanding (Nørhøj A, 2018) Another important association is the ACT Alliance which is the world's largest coalition of Protestant and Orthodox Churches and church-related organizations engaged in humanitarian, development and advocacy work (ACT Alliance, n.d.) That these two organizations represent standardised views on Christianity and development is evident in several declarations, policies and strategies accepted by all members and to which all members are held accountable (ACT Alliance , 2019)

Based on its extensive membership of churches from different denominations and countries one can argue that the development definition set forth by the ACT alliance expresses the current Christian view on development:

“ACT Alliance’s understanding of transformational development draws from its theological affirmation that all persons are created in the image of God with the right and potential to live just, humane and dignified lives in sustainable communities. Profession of faith requires the rejection of those conditions, structures and systems which perpetuate poverty, injustice, the abuse of human rights and the destruction of the environment” (ACT Alliance, 2008)

3.2.2 Christian teachings

In Christianity there is a strong incentive to do good and further human conditions (Mortensen, 2012, p. 133). One of the main reasons why Christianity and a Christian lifestyle places significance in the concern for others is based on the double commandment of love which is a central demand in the bible (also known as the Great command and the second greatest love command) (Mortensen, 2012, p. 133; Stanglin, 2005, p. 358):

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matt 22,36-40)¹

This scripture clearly places love for others as a central value of the Christian faith; so central that Jesus equates and connects the love of God with the love of others (Kjærgaard, 2005); Meaning that one cannot truly love God without showing love to ones neighbor.

Another central scripture that express desirable human behavior is the golden rule: *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets* (Matt 22, 12)

In the Christian tradition the golden rule and the double commandment of love have been connected and used as instructions and a fundamental guideline for morale behavior (Stanglin, 2005, p. 357).

The commands to love God and Love others and treat them properly were already introduced in the first books old testament, listed among other laws that describes how God wanted people to behave towards ones neighbor. In the Old testament the word/concept ‘neighbor’ referred to people in the vicinity such as friends, relatives or fellow countrymen. In the new testament Jesus radically expands the concept of “Neighbor” to the degree that it now encompasses everyone, including people belonging to other religions or countries and even one’s enemies (Kjærgaard, 2005).

According to the bible “faith without works is dead” and from the very beginning of Christianity the command to love others has been translated into actions by the first church (Kjærgaard, 2005). The traditions that were established in the first church have been defining in the relationship between the church and its engagement in social development through time. One of the these traditions is the understanding of ‘diakonia’ as an important part of the church’s role in society in relation to social development . (Mogensen, 2008, p. 1). Therefore, the next section will elaborate on the concept of ‘diakonia’

¹ Scriptures are retrieved from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version

3.2.2 Diakonia

The deepest motive for Diakonia, understood as charity and care for others, is based on the fundamental theology of love described in the previous section; In the bible love is described as an essential character of God, made visible for believers in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. When that love is received by his Church it motivates action; Hence the love received from God is reflected in the love and care for ones neighbor and extended to everyday life (Brodd, 2000, p. 33+40). Moreover, Diakonia belongs to the essence of the life of Christ, which guides desirable behavior of his followers. In the Bible Jesus is portrayed as one who serves and gives life and devoted his attention to people at the bottom of society (Chung, 2010, p. 142). Additionally Diakonia is based on Christian beliefs in the undeniable value of all human beings (Ferris, 2005, p. 313).

In the New testament God demanded his disciples to feed the hungry and heal the sick and Diakonia was an integral part of the deeds of the first church (Torm, 2012, p. 11; Mogensen, 2008, p. 1) In the Christian tradition rooted in the bible a special lay ministry was established by the first church to carry out service to the poor and the needy. This kind of service performed by the Christians was called Diakonia (Greek word for service) (Ferris, 2005, p. 313). While Diakonia in its first form can be ascribed several meanings based on the stories of the bible, the church has used it to describe social ministry which continues to be viewed as central to its mission (Nordstokke, 2013, p. 287; Ferris, 2005, p. 313). The concept of Diakonia denotes the practical implications of being a Christian, namely a call to action as a response to human suffering and injustice (Latvus, 2017, p. 15). Therefore, Diakonia was and continues to be viewed as a collective responsibility of the church, creating an inherent connection between the mission of the church and Diakonia (Chung, 2010, p. 141; Latvus, 2017, p. 67).

The understanding of the concept of Diakonia has changed over time both in terms of the meaning of the word and the actions connected to it. From being conceived as humble service involving actions of care and relief of suffering through practical services, the theological roots of Diakonia have opened to a deeper understanding. and now goes further to address the root causes of suffering and injustice, embedded in oppressive systems and structures. (Nordstokke, 2013, p. 95+97) Moreover, the theological importance granted to Diakonia, as one among other elements of

the mission of the church, has been varying due to internal and external factors (Nordstokke, 2013, p. 286).

To study the relationship between Christianity and development, it is relevant to investigate the understanding and role Diakonia has played in the church (also interpreted in a wider sense as Christian society) and among Christian actors (Mogensen, 2008, p. 1). Therefore, the next section will give a historical account of Christian aid culture

3.2.3 Historical account of Christian development traditions

The history of Christian involvement in socially transformative initiatives, such as the ones described by the ACT Alliance definition of development, dates back two millennia (Mitchell, 2017, p. 12). In that sense the development sector has been pioneered by religiously motivated people's response to social needs, with secular organizations and governments entering the field later on (Mitchell, 2017, p. 12).

The bible provides the first descriptions of organized care for the vulnerable and distribution of food and to a large extent initiatives equivalent to soup kitchens, care for the homeless and abused women and children, counseling for families affected by war, international disaster and hunger relief was initiated by people belonging to the church (Mitchell, 2017, p. 12). At this time the aid had no direct influence on the development of society because the Christians belonged to a minority society (Mogensen, 2008, p. 1)

Considerable contributions of Christianity to social issues and development can be detected in Roman times, especially after the Christian Faith became the official religion in the 4th-century, and included establishment of public healthcare, abolishment of infanticide and gladiator sports, improvement of women's rights, promotion of better treatment of slaves, and burial of the paupers (Mitchell, 2017, p. 12; Latvus, 2017, p. 75). As an example, an ecumenical council of bishops (The First Council of Nicaea) in Year 325 arranged for hospitals to be built in every cathedral town and requested churches to take care of the poor, sick, widows and strangers (Mitchell, 2017, pp. 12-13). In this age the Christians were able to impact society with its values to a much higher degree, due to a unification of church, people and state which legitimized the church as an authority. However, the Diakonate was degraded in the hierarchy of the church, where it used to be an independent position of equal rank as the Bishop, and it lost its central position in the church. Due to the

unification, the church and the state worked together to transform the heathen society to a society which followed Christian ethics (Mogensen, 2008, p. 2). In this transformation the monastic orders were important instruments of change.

The monastic orders became hotbeds for both mission, Diakonia and development and had a pioneering role in providing care for the weak, establishing teaching institutions and providing a refuge for the persecuted (Mitchell, 2012, p. 4; Mogensen, 2008, p. 2). Additionally, the monks built bridges and roads, ploughed and drained new lands, made animal enclosures and cleared forested areas. When the Roman empire was brought down by raging savages, the monks were pivotal in restoring the farming sector in Western Europe by cultivating lands that had been rampaged or abandoned. The monastic orders fostered an integration of spiritual and manual development through the so-called Rule of Saint Benedict which identified manual labor as a religious service that gave glory to God in the same way as spiritual service, such as prayer. Hence, the monasteries expressed an understanding of a connection between spiritual life and practical work (Mogensen, 2008, pp. 2-3)

The reformation

With the reformation in the beginning of the 16th-century the understanding of Diakonia as part of the mission of the church is radically changed. In teachings of two kingdoms, Luther assigns the responsibility of social welfare and development to the Crown (the state) and claims that the emphasis of the church should be spiritual welfare. As a consequence, an alliance between Luther and the Crown was formed and the king took over the service of the poor which had been a part of the church Diakonia. The teaching of two kingdoms has contributed to the development of a dichotomy between spiritual and social issues. The reformation shaped an understanding of the role of the church in society where the church was considered irrelevant in regards to social and political development. Luther, however, made a connection between the spiritual work of the church and social work of the crown through the argument that God was the ruler of both things, however in different ways (Mogensen, 2008, p. 3)

The movement of pietism reclaimed Diakonia as a Christian responsibility and criticized the church for not practicing what it preached regarding care for the poor and weak (Mogensen, 2008, p. 4). Thus, debate regarding social reforms and Diakonia were initiated in Germany where pietism is

founded, and received great emphasis (Nørhøj B, 2013). The pietist movement was significant because it claimed that the mission of God should not be carried out by the established church, which was marked by dead rituals, but small communities of committed believers should be moved from the church and into private gatherings in homes (Campbell & Plake, 2004, p. 21). This idea is important for the development of current development organizations, because it meant that the Diakonia was moved into separate Christian agencies with the establishment of diaconal institutions and thus separated from the church (Mogensen, 2008, p. 4). In line with this thinking the first missionary agencies were established, to carry out Gods mission in other continents.

The Christian missionary movement has had a great involvement in development activities, and is believed to be the frontrunners of current Christian development FBOs. While the main focus of the missionaries was spiritual development which was believed to be commenced through the preaching of the gospel, the missionaries also focused on social and political development (Mortensen, 2012, p. 133). The development aid carried out by missionaries was inspired by a holistic approach to mission, namely that the “service of the soul” was inseparable from “service of the body” (Campbell & Plake, 2004, p. 12). The missionaries engaged in projects concerning health, education and infrastructure. (Mortensen, 2012, p. 133). From the end of the 18-th century missionaries started their work in Africa(Kastfelt, 2015, p. 34). The missionaries’ idea of development was based on western social and cultural norms and a ‘civilization’ of Africa (Kastfelt, 2015, p. 34). Through the 19-th and 20-th century the work of the missionaries was divided into three sections: evangelization, education and medical help, which translated into tangible results with the development of churches, schools and hospitals (Kastfelt, 2015, p. 35)

In the second half of the 19-th century missionaries embraced the thought of ‘industrial-mission’ which aimed to provide Africans with practical, technical and commercial skills which would enable them to sustain themselves and contribute to the development of African societies. A famous quote from Livingstone declared that the missionaries aimed to promote “Christianity, commerce and civilization” (Kastfelt, 2015, p. 35). The work of the missionaries in Afrika had significant results not just in relation to health and education but also in terms of bringing western technology to farming and the craft trade (Kastfelt, 2015, p. 36)

Holism, dualism and polarization

The missionary movements, influenced by new theologies in the late pietism and later the Enlightenment, has been characterized by a fluctuating battle between ideas of holism and dualism, resulting in ongoing discussions regarding the balance of power between evangelization and issues of development and social services. This led to a variation of models of the relationship and understanding of Diakonia as part of the missionary work (Mogensen, 2008, pp. 4-5).

In the 20th-century a polarization occurred between evangelical and liberal streams within Christianity in Europe and USA. The Liberals understood Gods Kingdom as something which first of all would be realized in this world. Therefore, the Christian message should entail a development of society and contribute to new societal structures built upon social and economic justice (Mogensen, 2008, p. 5). This meant a new understanding of salvation mainly as a social event, where improved relations would translate into a relationship between people characterized by Christian values. In the 1960s this perception changed the view on the role of the church in in the relationship between God and the world. Instead of viewing the church as Gods instrument, the emphasis shifted towards Gods direct influence in social change. Thus the world should set the agenda for the actions of the church, and the goal of the mission is no longer Christianization of the world but humanization. This view was expressed in the World Council of Churches which in 1973 expressed an understanding of salvation devoid of spirituality which entailed “a battle against exploitation, oppression, exclusion and despair and for justice, human dignity, solidarity and hope (Mogensen, 2008, p. 5; Sørensen, 2003, p. 67).

Contrary to this perception the evangelical Lausanne movement emphasized the importance of preaching the gospel to achieve personal conversion and faith in God, promoting an understanding of salvation as a relationship with Christ which saves the individual from sin and death (Sørensen, 2003, p. 67; Mogensen, 2008, p. 5). The evangelicals understood evangelization and Diakonia as two different mandates that should be kept separate and declared that the preaching the gospel should have the higher priority. Hence, the liberalists and the World Council of Churches focused their attention on social injustice and the world’s poor and repressed, evangelicals in the Lausanne movement focused on bringing the gospel to the unreached and planting churches (Mogensen, 2008, pp. 5-6).

In the end of the 20th-century a convergence between the liberalist and evangelicals developed which has meant that going into the 21st century there is a high degree of agreement of the role of Diakonia in the mission of the church between different denominations. The dualism which had shaped discussions in Europe and USA made little sense in the churches in the developing countries due to urgent social needs and a lack of secularization was prevailing with a great influence of religion in peoples lives and society at large. An evangelical conference in 1983 became a milestone in the rediscovery of a holistic approach to development and the recognition that evil was not exclusive to human hearts but existed in social structures, thus urging for a mixture of evangelization, respond to immediate human needs and social development (Mogensen, 2008, p. 6; Campbell & Plake, 2004, p. 2).

In parallel with developments regarding the understanding of the mission of the church in the last half of the 20th-century, the entrance of the states in the development sector impacted the organizational structure of Christian development aid. Official donors such as states offered a new way of funding for Christian actors in the development field in most western countries. Cooperation between religious actors led to an 'NGO-nization' where the religious actors divided their work into two sections; one concerned with developmental activities and one for religious activities. With the establishment of an NGO the religious actors hoped to become more legitimized in the civil society and in that way increase ones' potential for cooperation with donors (Lauterbach, 2015, p. 47).

3.2.3 The understanding of mission

The previous section has showed how issues of social development has been a trademark of the Cristian church from the very beginning. Moreover, it reveals obvious differences in how churches have viewed their mission, also in relation to Diakonia (Latvus, 2017, p. 11). The varying understanding of the mission of the church underlines Christianity as a social construction.

As the body of Christ, the church (sometimes understood in a wider sense as the people of God), has a special mandate to perform Gods mission. (Chung, 2010, p. 142). The mission of the church arises from the mission of God and should be a transformative tool with the aim of moving from the current reality towards Gods vision (see next section) (Mogensen, 2008, p. 9). Thus, the mission describes everything the church is sent into the world to do (Campbell & Plake, 2004, p. 15)

The investigation of Gods Mission (Missio Dei) is a theological science. The Bible is not meant to be read alone, and Gods self-communication through Jesus requires human witness. The human witness must be questioned and reinterpreted when it enters into a new context (Latvus, 2017, p. 51; Chung, 2010, p. 144). The interpretation is explained through the hermeneutic circle. Discovering the mission of the church is a discipline which requires a hermeneutical reflection on the Word of God (The bible), which is revealed and grounded in Jesus under the guidance of the holy spirit. In that way there is a hermeneutical circle between the Word of God (the bible) and the missional calling of the church seen in light of the context (Chung, 2010, p. 142).

To sum it up the Christian mission is an interpretation of the word of God (the Bible) which shaped by context takes a bodily form (action) which is then projected unto human suffering and injustice as a form of prophetic resistance (Chung, 2010, pp. 144-145). Thus, it makes no sense to search for an eternal definitive theology in regard to the role of Christian actors in development aid, because there simply is non. Instead it is relevant to work with contextual missional hermeneutics which, instead of only looking at the views of the bible and the traditions inspired by it, takes into account the current context and the experiences we draw from our social and cultural context (Mogensen, 2008, p. 8). One might think that the constant reinterpretation of the teachings of the Christianity undermines its legitimacy as an authority. It is however argued that hermeneutical configuration does not need to contradict trinitarian theology but simply points toward a living God who changes everything in a new way (Chung, 2010, p. 145)

3.2.4 The understanding of vision

As established in the previous section the mission of the Church, and other Christian actors such as Christian FBOS, guides its actions as a tool to work toward the vision of God. If we understand Diakonia as part of the mission of Christians actors, it should find its motivation in the Vision of Christianity. Therefore, the next section will provide a short overview of this vision.

The ultimate vision of Christianity is founded in the kingdom of God, which is not only a future transcendent reality at the end of times, but the kingdom of God is brought into the world through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God is sometimes referred to as 'The

Upside-down Kingdom' because its values because it challenges established earthly values such as riches and fame (Mogensen, 2008, p. 11; Mitchell, 2012, p. 15).

The vision established by the kingdom of God is at times summed up by the three words: Transformation, reconciliation and empowerment (Mogensen, 2008, p. 11). Transformation signifies a transformation of people, societies and relations towards values and structures which established peace and justice. Reconciliation does not just refer to reconciliation in the relationship between God and Humans but extends to a reconciliation between humans, tribes and nations. Lastly, empowerment entails an empowerment of people to carry out the work of God through his holy spirit. Empowerment, however, also entails empowerment of people through assistance to the poor and repressed to support human dignity and ability to better ones conditions (Mogensen, 2008, p. 11).

3.3 Religion, Christianity, FBOs, secularism

3.3.1 Religion and Christianity

As with many other concepts within social science and development studies, there is no generally agreed definition of Religion. Some attempts to define religion have been substantive and placed an emphasis on what religion is; a belief in a transcendental reality or spiritual being, religiosity (compliance with a set of beliefs and practices) and affiliation with a religious organization. Other definitions have been more functional and has placed an emphasis on what religion does; how it constructs worldviews and relationships and how it influences wider patterns of socio-political organization. Yet again other agree that a definition of religion should contain a combination of substantive and functional elements. (Rakodi, 2012, p. 640). Differences between religious traditions moreover complicates a common definition because the concepts and ideas associated with one religious tradition may not be possible to transfer to others. An example is the element of faith, that while being an important element of Christianity translates poorly into the religious traditions of Buddhism and Hinduism where the aspect of faith is absent.

Rakodi, on the basis of the different definitions and understandings, argues that religion essentially is:

“a set of core beliefs and teachings that among other things specify (or suggests) how to live in accordance with the principles of the faith tradition and how society should be ordered. Religious teachings are thus promoted religious organizations, embodied in people’s lives, and constantly reinterpreted and acted upon in the context in which they live” (2012, p. 640)

The element of contextual reinterpretation underlines religion as a social construction which is expressed in different ways not just between religious traditions but also within (Stubkjær, 2015) . So, while a religious tradition, such as Christianity, refers to a broad religious movement that to some extent shares a history, culture and common body it is expressed differently around the world but also within countries and communities. Therefore, religious traditions are generally comprised of more than one sect or denomination with their own more or less distinctive teachings, practices and organizational forms (Rakodi, 2012, pp. 640-641).

The aspect of contextual reinterpretation complicates the use of religion as a concept and variable, even when studying a single religious tradition because adherents belonging to the same religion often disagree about its discourse and/or how to best embody it in concrete social practices (Rakodi & Deneulin, 2011, pp. 50-51). Thus, disagreements regarding the nature and content of religion is a characteristic of both religious practice and religious studies (Rakodi & Deneulin, 2011, p. 51).

Based on the previous, the question is how you study religion, in this case in relation to development, when the element of contextual reinterpretation and a lack of homogeneity complicates its use as a concept or variable? Because of the heterogeneity even within single religious traditions, such as Christianity, Juul Petersen suggests an interpretivist approach were the researcher avoids presumptions about the way a religious tradition shapes the identity and work of an organization but instead leaves it as a topic for analysis (Juul Petersen, 2015, p. 6). This is supported by Rakodi and Deneulin who also suggests this interpretivist method when studying issues of religion in development studies because it allows for a portrayal of religious values and beliefs held by adherents, such as FBOs, as well as the meaning of practices and symbols they use, seen from their own point of view (Rakodi & Deneulin, 2011, p. 52).

Moreover, Juul Petersen sets forth an approach to identify something as religion which forms the basis for defining and understanding what can be identified as Christian in this thesis, which is relevant in regard to the research question. In her study Juul Petersen uses the approach to identify something as Islamic, but the approach is equally applicable to the research of other religious traditions.

In Juul Petersens definition/understanding, which is inspired by Lincoln, something becomes religion not primarily by virtue of its specific content but through its claims to transcendent authority and truth. In this definition things, phenomena, activities, people and ideas are not religious per se, but become so when they are given religious meaning through religious discourse, practice, communities and institutions. In this view, something becomes religion when by being 'religionized' or 'sacralized' as others have termed it (Juul Petersen, 2015, p. 7). Therefore, something can be identified as Christian when it is constituted as such through discourses and practices that are concerned with matters of Christianity (Traditions, concepts, rules, stories etc.) and claim a transcendent authority by reference to the trinitarian God or the Bible (Juul Petersen, 2015, p. 7). In line with this perception anything can be identified as 'religion' or 'religious'. Moreover, one can identify religion in other places than its conventional settings because religious discourses and symbols have migrated. Thereby it makes sense to constitute things such as NGOs and aid provision as religious or Christian even though this space is not formally constituted as religious (Juul Petersen, 2015, p. 7). Nonetheless, it is argued that there are limits to what counts as Christian, because actors build upon and are restricted by the history of Christian discourses and practices, that in spite of variations, has a relatively stable core that connects Christians (Juul Petersen, 2015, p. 7).

According to Mitchell a part of that core includes the belief in some bedrock truths; namely, the existence of a triune God, that God has intervened in human history in the person of Jesus Christ, that evil exists, and that history as we know it will cease with the final consummation of all things in Gods coming Kingdom (Mitchell, 2012, p. 3).

3.4 Faith-Based Organizations

The vast majority of development activities which are motivated by values grounded in religious beliefs are carried out by so-called Faith-based organizations (FBOs). While the term could refer to all kinds of faith-based actors it is primarily belongs to the development sector and is widely used by donors to describe their interaction with religious organizations in civil society (Le Moigne & Juul Petersen, 2016, p. 12; DFID, 2012, p. 6)

In common with many secular NGOs, most faith based organizations are involved in an array of activities both within the fields of long-term development aid and humanitarian assistance (Ferris, 2005, p. 312; Perchoc, 2017, p. 2). Such activities include provision of services, mission work, advocacy for justice and human rights, promotion of dialogue, playing a political role, promoting a religious agenda etc. (Perchoc, 2017, p. 2; Ferris, 2005, p. 312)

The group of Faith Based organizations is numerous and diverse thus making generalization impossible (Ferris, 2005, p. 312). Hence, the concept of Faith based organizations, as with many other concepts in development, is difficult to capture in one clear definition. But while there is no fixed or generally accepted definition of an FBO they can be identified by having one or more of the following characteristics:

- Affiliation with a religious body
- Mission statement with explicit reference to religious values
- Funding/financial support from religious sources
- Hiring and/or decision making processes based on religious values or affiliation (Ferris, 2005, p. 312; Perchoc, 2017, p. 2)

As FBOs are very diverse and also very complex their religious identity is translated into action in different ways, leading to different strengths, different partnerships, different degrees of visibility and ultimately different results (James, 2011, p. 109)

The differences exists across different spheres. First of all, and perhaps most obviously, there are clear differences between FBOs belonging to different religions. However, there is also significant theological and cultural differences between FBOs belonging to the same religion. For example, different theological denominations such as Christian Catholics and Baptists or Muslim Sunnis and Shias, may have significantly different opinions on what development means; and obvious cultural differences have been evident between Christian FBOs from USA and Europe and also between

Islamic FBOs from regions such as Africa, Asia and the Middle East. (James, 2011, p. 115; Ferris, 2005, p. 312)

Due to this variety, defining and identifying FBOs has posed conceptual and methodological challenges (Tomalin, 2012, p. 696) and scholars have argued that “the single label ‘FBO’ may conceal more than it reveals” (Ferris, 2005, p. 312). Moreover, the term FBO is not devoid of problems and some scholars and organizations have been reluctant to use it in their work (Le Moigne & Juul Petersen, 2016, p. 12). In order to avoid misunderstandings and misjudgment based on simplifications it is important to recognize varieties through a development of new typologies that differentiate FBOs (James, 2011, p. 115)

A contested concept

One of the conceptual problems derive from the implied distinction between ‘faith-based’ and ‘secular’ which in some contexts is un-useful in understanding organized religiously motivated activities of development aid and provision of social services (Tomalin, 2012, p. 696). The divide between secular and faith based is a Western construction and an understanding of the relationship between religion and the secular that does not have the same meaning in other places. In contexts where religion permeates nearly every aspect of life, such as in many Muslim societies, it would not be relevant and perhaps impossible to distinguish between what is faith-based and what is not (Le Moigne & Juul Petersen, 2016, p. 12; Tomalin, 2012, p. 694). This lack of relevance is especially evident in developing countries where the usage of the term “Faith-based” is uncommon or sometimes deliberately rejected (Tomalin, 2012, p. 696). Additionally, the term could be problematic because the element of ‘faith’ is unfamiliar to some religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism (Tomalin, 2012, p. 694).

Another aspect of the debate concerns the type of organizations which should be considered FBOs. The concept is sometimes criticized for not capturing the diversity of the organizational landscape of the international development sector, because it reflects a “Western Christian NGO-like model of an ‘FBO’, which may be difficult to find elsewhere or at the most only captures part of the picture” (Tomalin, 2012, p. 696). The fear is that a definition of FBOs that is limited to formally registered organizations that resemble NGOs would exclude other forms of religiously motivated development

work that could be beneficial for donor engagement. Organizations which could justify a wider definition includes congregations and places of worship, religious apex bodies (the top of the hierarchy) or religious socio-political groups. Hence, some scholars argue that a definition of FBOs should include any organization whose development work is guided and motivated by faith (Tomalin, 2012, p. 693). Others believe that this kind of definition would be too broad to be meaningful and thereby impossible to operationalize (Le Moigne & Juul Petersen, 2016, p. 12).

Despite criticism of the term FBO and conceptual difficulties, the term is widely used and has gained acceptance among organizations and donors (Tomalin, 2012, p. 694; Le Moigne & Juul Petersen, 2016, p. 12). In this thesis I will also apply the term FBO or faith-based organization .

Despite the previously detected problems regarding the term and concept I will argue that the term fits well within a Danish context of Christian development organizations. First of all, the term is accepted within the Danish development sector and is being used by both Danida and the Christian organizations. Secondly the Danish development sector is profoundly secular whereby the distinction between secular and faith based has been characteristic for Danish development culture, which will be elaborated later in the thesis. The Christian Danish development organizations which cooperates with Danida, and are the topic of research in this thesis, all resemble the general notion of FBOs, namely western NGO-like FBOs and the “faith” element is essential in the Christian faith. The Danish Christian development organizations investigated in this thesis falls within the more narrow description of FBOs and therefore I will apply the definition set forth by Le Moigne and Juul Petersen who define FBOs as: “non-governmental organisations that constitute themselves with reference to religious discourses, i.e. organisations that define themselves as religious, either by simply referring to religion in their name, or by referring to religious principles, traditions, practices, authorities, figures or concepts in relation to their rationale, activities, staff, funding sources, or target groups” (2016, p. 12). However, the religious organizations in developing countries with whom the Danish FBOs cooperate may fall within a wider definition of FBOs or correspond with the criticism. However, until more complex typologies are developed the term FBO is arguably still relevant. As previously described the term FBO primarily belongs to the development sector. Therefore, the term FBO will be applied in this thesis to refer to an organization within this sector.

Secondly the divide between secular and faith-based Secondly the Danish Christian organizations do not contradict the common notion of FBOs as western Moreover, the organizations researched in this thesis fits within the western model of NGO-like FBO which

3.5 The term secular

According to Tomalin the term secular is used in two different but linked ways: a separation of religion from the state and public sphere, however still allowing for a private practice of religion, or as a reference to the a more broad absence of religion or where one religion is prioritized over where one religious tradition is not prioritized over others (Tomalin, 2012, p. 701). When the term secular is used in regard to development organizations it refers to settings in which activities and structures are not outlines by religious traditions, and religion does not have a direct or formal influence on the organization, even though employees may consider themselves religious (Tomalin, 2012, p. 701).

4. The Danish context

4.1 The Danish development culture (Secularized)

Denmark is a country which has received international recognition for its effective development aid. Historically the Danish state has been a among the biggest contributors of development aid in relation to National Income and is one of the few countries that allocate 0,7% percent of GNI to development aid, which is the amount recommended by UN for rich countries. The development aid carried out by the Danish state has mainly been targeted at the most fragile groups in society and the primary recipients have been de poorest developing countries (Brunbech, 2012).

The state funded development aid in Denmark was inspired by international trends of development aid from rich to poor countries after WW2. The idea of development aid was in many ways a response to the political situation during the cold war and was used as a means of influence. It was however not until 1960 that the idea of economic support as a tool to facilitate development gained widespread acceptance internationally (Brunbech, 2012)

The first examples of development aid from the Danish state consisted of limited contributions in the 1950's. At this time almost all the assistance was channeled through the UN which had started its first development program in 1949 (Brunbech, 2012). At that time, development aid did not receive much attention/was not off high priority

In 1962 Danish development assistance received heightened attention when the first law of development assistance was passed and the first bilateral development assistance programs for developing countries were established. At this time the efforts were characterized by testing approaches and building up an administration.

The entrance of the Danish state into the Danish development sector was initiated when the government launched a grand private fundraising campaign and founded the fund "Landsindsamlingens Fond for Udviklingslande". The government (Sørensen, 2003, p. 61). The government pledged to make yearly contributions to the fund and the fundraising campaign was led by an executive committee (Sørensen, 2003, p. 61). In 1963 the Danish International Development Agency was founded, and the actual development work commenced (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.; Brunbech, 2012).

Initially, the financial development assistance from Denmark was lagging behind, especially compared to the former colonial. In 1965 a report from OECD ranked Denmark at the at the very bottom in terms of development contribution among rich nations, which caused domestic political pressure to increase funds.

In 1970 the Danish contribution had risen to an average (Brunbech, 2012). In 1971 the Danish International Development Agency changed its name to Danida (deriving from a contraction of the former name). The 70s were characterized by a growing emphasis on poverty and following international trends the development assistance focused on bettering the living conditions of the weakest groups in society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.; Brunbech, 2012). Denmark however distinguished itself from most other countries by increasing its financial allocation for development aid in a time where several other countries did the opposite (Brunbech, 2012).

The goal of reaching a contribution of 0,7% of GNI, proposed by the UN, has been defining for Danish development efforts. In 1978 Denmark became one out of a few countries to reach this goal, only accompanied by the other Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands (Brunbech, 2012).

In the 80s issues regarding human rights, gender equality and environment became central to the work and activities of Danida (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.). Opposite a continued international trend to decrease development assistance, further spurred by the end of the cold war, Denmark continued to increase its development assistance through the 90s until Denmark became the largest contributor of development assistance, measured by the share of development assistance compared to GNI (0,1%) (Nielsen, 2012). During the 90s a growing emphasis on good governance and internal structures in recipient countries was introduced, including measures to further democracy and anti-corruption (Nielsen, 2012). The 90s also signifies a time when development assistance to a higher degree became a tool of Danish foreign policy. This was evident in an administrative restructuring that cancelled Danidas status as an independent unit. Instead it was incorporated as a unit in the Danish Foreign Ministry (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.).

Due to a new government and international political events such as the terrorist attack of 9/11, the Danish development aid in the new millennium became an active instrument of foreign policy. The scope of development activities expanded with interventions in conflict zones in the Balkans and Middle East and new areas of activities such as conflict resolution and promotion of good governance as a means to counter terrorism (Nielsen, 2012; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.).

From 2010 and onwards the focus of Danida has again shifted more towards social issues, especially health and education, and while the focus on poverty reduction prevailed through the years of a more security oriented development assistance, the balance of attention has been different (Nielsen, 2012; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.).

In 2012 the Danish parliament unanimously adopted a new strategy called "The right to a better life". The strategy identified 4 main objectives of Danish development aid; human rights and democracy, green growth, social progress and stability and protection (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.).

In 2017 the Danish parliament made an amendment to its act on development aid cooperation, to incorporate the Sustainable development goals, which were adopted by the UN in 2015 and establishes a framework for global development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark A, n.d.)

Historically, Danish state based development has shown varying trends with emphasis on different activities that both follows and distinguishes itself from international trends. According to Brunbech, the sense of a morale obligation towards those of less fortune has been a significant source of motivation among politicians and the general population (Brunbech, 2012). This also explains the prevailing focus on poverty reduction and activities aimed at the poorest groups in recipient countries. Some people explain this characteristic of Danish development aid on the basis of its political system, where the welfare state is obligated to sustain the weakest groups of society. Moreover, development aid has been used as a tool to further political goals, both in terms of security policy but also as a means to achieve a good reputation in the international system and further Danish key issues (Brunbech, 2012)

4.2 Christian Danish development aid culture

As shown in the previous section, the Danish state has been involved in development assistance since the end of WW2. However, the diakonial engagement of Danish FBOs in developing countries has by far pre-descended the development efforts of the state (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 62)

Missionaries

The origin of Danish Christian FBOs is rooted in the history of Danish missionary societies. While the Danish church traditionally had carried out domestic social assistance in different forms the missionaries were the first to embark upon international diakonia (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 55).

The modern missionary movement came to Denmark in the beginning of the 19-th century. Those who supported the movement gathered and organized missionary agencies. The idea of missioning was however controversial which caused the state-church to try and end its operations e.g. through a ban on fundraising, and other denominations questioned if the missioning was theologically correct. The Missionary agencies were founded by private people, and had weak links to the authorities, both governmental and the church-related (Sørensen, 2003, p. 57) which places missionary agencies in sphere of civil society.

What we know today as development aid has always been a part of the work of the Danish missionary agencies, who perceived physical and material aid as a natural part of their service to the countries in which they operated (Nilsson, 2003, p. 9); however with a changing degree of attention in relation to evangelization, which continued to be a topic of controversy (Sørensen, 2003, p. 58). Examples of aid from the missionaries includes distribution of food during a famines and education and establishment of schools, however with biblical teachings as a main subject (Sørensen, 2003, pp. 58-59).

In 1888 the first Danish female missionary started a school that taught women how to lace, and provided a way in which widows could earn their own money to provide for themselves and their children. Later this endeavor expanded into a crafts-school for young men (Sørensen, 2003, p. 59). In 1907 the first medical-missionary was sent to India motivated by Jesus' example of healing the sick and his command to the disciples to do the same (Sørensen, 2003, pp. 60-61).

The Danish Christian development FBO Mission Afrika originates from the work started by missionaries in Nigeria in 1913 and the conviction that sharing spiritual and practical knowledge was of equal importance (Kastfelt, 2015, p. 36). In a development perspective the efforts made by missionaries to further the farming sector with new methods and technology was especially significant (Kastfelt, 2015, p. 36).

The study of Mission Afrika (at the time known as Sudan-missionen) reveals another interesting thing in relation to the current development sector, namely that the organization made great efforts to spread knowledge about the challenges of Nigeria to the Danish population. This caused extensive debate regarding development policies in the local Danish missionary agencies in the 20s and 30s, long before development was on the national agenda (Kastfelt, 2015, p. 37). Thereby the missionaries laid the foundation for the civil engagement in development aid which still prevails today and is an important value of the Danish development sector.

In the wake of WW1 the Christian youth organization KFUM were strongly committed to helping foreign prisoners of war and in 1922 the Agency for Aid to The European Angelical Churches was established, which later developed into the Organization Danish Church Aid (Folkekirkens nødhjælp), which today is a large Christian humanitarian and development FBO and one of the biggest private recipients of Danida funds (Nilsson, 2003, p. 9; Stubkjær, 2015, p. 62). Since then many initiatives to

help people in need in foreign countries have grown out of the Danish churches and Christian society (Nilsson, 2003, p. 9).

Second world war prevented contact between missionary agencies and their former fields of operation in other continents (Sørensen, 2003, p. 61). When the operational lines re-opened the world in which Danish FBOs had to navigate was different and with the entrance of the Danish state to the development sector, FBOs had to reconsider their role and the question of state funding in return of demands (Sørensen, 2003, p. 61).

The new role of Christian aid workers

In the 70s the churches with whom Danish missionary agencies cooperated became more independent and wanted more self-determination. Consequently, the missionary agencies no longer decided on their own who should work in recipient countries. Instead the churches defined their needs, and after negotiations the missionary agencies tried to provide the needed staff. This development has been a defining factor for the staff of FBOS and a transformation from missionaries to more conventional development workers. Because the churches mainly requested people with technical skills such as farming-experts, health professionals or accountants, the missionaries started to view themselves as experts equivalent to other aid workers. Moreover, the pattern of their work became more project oriented and consisted of shorter stays after which the responsibility was handed over to the locals, meaning that long-term missionaries disappeared from the field. Another outcome of this transformation was a growing emphasis on development aid instead of evangelization (Sørensen, 2003, p. 66).

The Christian FBOs have strong popular roots and it only exists because it is carried by the support and commitment from volunteers from the Danish population. An example is Folkekirkens Nødhjælps annual fundraising campaign where 20.000 volunteers went from door to door to collect funds in 2015 and collected 14 mio dkk (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 63). Moreover, all of the FBOs have a great commitment from young people and volunteers who carry out many different activities to raise funds and, spread awareness of projects and organizations etc. (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 63)

From its tentative beginning and until today the work of Danish Christian Faith-based organizations has developed significantly (Nilsson, 2003, p. 9). The development and transformation of the Danish

Christian should be understood as an outcome of a changing international environment as well as a changing domestic environment which will be elaborated in the next section.

4.3 Dichotomy of Christian aid and secular aid in Denmark

According to Nilsson it is impossible to understand the character of Danish Christian Faith-based development aid in Denmark if the wider context /surrounding environment is not taken into consideration. In this regard it is important to investigate the relationship between the Danish Christian FBOs and the state (Danida) (Nilsson, 2003, p. 9). It is important to note that since the foundation of missionary agencies several other non-religious/secular NGOs have entered the scene of the Danish development sector. However, the entrance of the Danish state into the development sector and the interplay between the FBOs and Danida has been determined as a crucial influence in regards to the development and transformation of Christian FBOs, due to a constant reciprocal relationship which has been a source of inspiration as well as opposition (Nilsson, 2003, p. 9).

The Danish context in which Danish Christian FBOs are operating is according to Rick James profoundly secular (James, 2012, p. 46). In the Danish tradition, the Lutheran teachings about 'Two Regiments' that assigns societal responsibility to the state and establish that the church should be concerned with evangelization, has been interpreted so strictly that church related development assistance and diaconal work has been accused of overstepping the mandate of the church (Nilsson, 2003, p. 173).

For many years the opinion of Danida was that religion should be kept separate from development assistance and there was a reluctance to deal with issues of diakonia (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 62). Moreover, there was a striking ignorance from politicians, government officers and businessmen regarding church related contributions to social development in developing countries, and the belief Lutheran division of responsibility prevailed even in the work outside of Denmark (Sørensen, 2003, p. 62).

Representatives from the Christian FBOs however pointed to the fact that the missionary agencies already had carried out development aid for a long time and that they could not overlook the needs in their countries of operation just because the government did not think it was their responsibility. (Sørensen, 2003, pp. 62-63)

Nonetheless, Danida was reluctant towards development carried out by FBOs and when the government in 1962 constituted the executive committee of the fundraising campaign they did not include representatives from the missionary agencies even though they were the ones with experience in the field (Sørensen, 2003, p. 61). The missionary agencies felt wrongfully neglected but at the same time they were skeptical about being consumed by the larger operation and feared for their independence (Sørensen, 2003, p. 62; Stubkjær, 2015, p. 62). To make a comparison, the government goal in 1963 was to assign 1% of national income to Development aid which was equivalent to 400 Million dkk while the missionary agencies had a yearly combined budget of 7-8 million dkk (Sørensen, 2003, p. 62). Despite the mutual hesitance there were some form of cooperation and Several FBOs including Danmission and Folkekirkens nødhjælp received single donations from in the 60s. However, the cooperation was very much on Danidas terms (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 62)

In spite of mutual cautiousness Danida and the FBOs have influenced each other in various ways. When it was revealed by OECD in 1965 that Denmark contributed less than other countries of similar wealth, NGOs, including FBOs, were at the forefront of demanding a higher funds allocated to development assistance (Brunbech, 2012).

Moreover, the Christian FBOs have entered into discussions regarding Danidas approach to development. From its outset the Danish government planned for its development assistance to be neutral in regard to religion and spirituality; An opinion which was heavily disputed by members of the Christian development society who argued that development assistance neither could or should be neutral because development assistance entails a transformation of political and cultural patterns which renders neutrality impossible (Sørensen, 2003, p. 63).

In the 70s the FBOs received less funds from their support base due to decreasing wealth in the Danish society. In these years Danida became a more attractive source of funding. If an FBO needed money to sustain or launch projects they became more likely to apply for Danida funding instead of initiating a fundraising campaign which was the standard procedure. Danida generally showed willingness to grant the requests, but only if the projects corresponded with Danidas own areas of focus (Sørensen, 2003, pp. 66-67). A newfound human rights approach to development adopted by the Christian FBOs in the 70s also contributed to a higher sense of common grounds which made

cooperation easier (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 58). The higher degree of cooperation also benefitted Danida as it expanded their reach without having to increase the number of staff (Sørensen, 2003, pp. 66-67). In turn the funding processes necessary to receive Danida funds resulted in a higher degree of professionalization of FBOs during the 70s and 80s. In order to obtain the required standards, a sufficient amount of domestic staff was necessary to balance the books, write reports and stay updated on Danish development policies (Sørensen, 2003, p. 68).

After the events of 9/11 the focus of the Danish Foreign ministry, the higher authority of Danida, shifted from development towards safety policies. As a consequence, the foreign ministry established the Arabian Initiative in 2003 with the aim of promoting democracy in the region. The Initiative saw religion as a and underlying cause for the problems in the region. Hence it was decided that no FBOs could participate in the project, neither Danish or foreign (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 63).

This attitude shifted in 2005 during the crisis following the Muhammed-drawings, when Danida took great use of several Christian FBOs including Danmission as mediators to calm anger and resentment in the middle eastern countries. Hereafter Danmission was also invited to talk part in the Arabian Initiative (Stubkjær, 2015, p. 63). Hence the Muhammed crisis has been a significant contributing factor to an increasing focus on religion and FBOs in the Danish development sector.

Nonetheless, Denmark is still lacking faith literacy and an understanding of the significance of religion in their development work. The literature mainly comes from the FBOs themselves and there has been and is a lack of references to religion in reports and academic literature (Torm, 2012, p. 12). Additionally, in spite of cooperation between Danida and FBOs, historically there has been little explicit focus on religion. According to a study by Le Moigne and Juul, religion is not mentioned in Danida strategies, programmes or policy papers and there are no guidelines for cooperation with religious actors such as FBOs (2016, p. 10).

Current cooperation with FBOs

As a part of Danida's strategy called "The World 2030" Danida has entered into strategic partnerships with 17 organizations through a framework agreement running from 2018-2021. The partner organizations were chosen on the basis of an open application process where applicants were assessed in relation to their capacity and ability to deliver results within the prioritized areas specified in Danida's 2030 strategy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark D). Out of the 17 strategic

partners there are 5 Christian FBOs. With the framework agreement Danida is starting to recognize that these FBOs may have something unique to add to their development efforts, and has encouraged Danish Christian faith based organizations to emphasize their Christian value-base and the advantages their identity as a FBO may give them in their work (Globalnyt , 2015). The next chapter will provide an analysis to investigate if and how Christian FBOs make distinctive contributions to the Danish development sector, through a case study of the Christian FBO, Danmission.

5. Case study of Danmission

5.1 introduction

In line with the increasing attention of government and development agencies to the work of FBOs in the development sector, it has been implied that FBOs should have comparative advantages compared to secular counterparts in achieving development objectives. According to Rakodi, the complexity of development organizations and outcomes makes it impossible to answer if this is the case (Rakodi, 2012, p. 642). Therefore, the following analysis will focus on whether or how Danish Christian FBOs make distinctive contributions, through a case study of the FBO Danmission. In doing so I have applied Rakodis framework which suggests an investigation of the organization's inputs, ways of operating, and outcome and impact of activities (Rakodi, 2012, p. 642). In the investigation of impact I have broadened Rakodis framework to include impact on the wider Danish development sector and not just development goals, as suggested. The analysis may not contain all areas suggested in Rakodis framework, but only those that are considered relevant on the basis of my research. Additionally, while the approach to the investigation has followed Rakodis division into four areas, the findings may be too complex for such a structurally strict division, which could simplify findings at the expense of thorough understanding. The case study will be initiated by a short introduction to Danmission.

5.2 Introduction to Danmission

Danmission is a Danish Christian FBO with a long tradition for development aid. Danmission is the result of a merge between Denmark's two oldest missionary agencies in 2000 (Det Danske Missionselskab and Dansk Santalmision and therefore has its roots in the missionary movement which has pioneered the Danish development sector (Danmission A, n.d.) (ekstra kilde). Danmission is a multilateral development organization and its experience with working in developing countries traces far back with engagement in Africa starting in 1828 and its engagement in Asia in 1842. Today Danmission is still working in these regions, including the Middle-east and North Africa (MENA) with engagement in 12 different countries. Danmission has developed into a middle-sized professional organization with both employed workers and a supporting base of volunteers (Danmission B, n.d.).

In 2013 Danmission entered into a framework agreement with Danida, as the first missionary organization. While Danmission had received funds and cooperated with Danida beforehand, Danmission saw the agreement as a recognition of its approach to development which is deeply rooted in Christianity (Danmission, 2014).

Although Danmission is an independent organization it has an affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark which is the national church, supported by the state (Danmission, 2015). Additional to its affiliation with a religious body, Danmission has all of the other characteristics which is used to identify an FBO (see chapter x). Scholars have suggested that development agencies, such as Danida, has shown a preference for working with FBOs that express their faith in a passive way (Tomalin, 2012, p. 695). Other have argued that FBOs have found it necessary to 'leave their faith 'at the door' when entering into cooperation with secular agencies (DFID, 2012, p. 6). This is, however, not the case with Danmission who in many ways is 'faithpermeated', meaning that religion is influencing the organizations across all dimensions (mission statement, founding, staff, sources of support etc.) (Tomalin, 2012, p. 695).

5.3 Mission and vision

According to Danmission, their Christian foundation is and continues to be a distinguishing feature of the organization (Danmission, 2014). The work of Danmission is based on its understanding of its mission. In their mission statement they express that their aim is to participate in Gods mission through two main tasks: To strengthen the Church's service so that the Gospel is heard and people are rooted in the Christian faith and secondly, to serve fellow man and society so that everyone can

live a dignified life in peace, in a just society (Danmission C, n.d.). Danmission's mission is rooted in the love commandment whereby their work always relates to both God and people, and therefore the two tasks cannot replace one another. The aim of the mission is to work towards the vision of: "a world open to Gods life-giving, saving and creating activity, as we know it in Jesus Christ" (Danmission C, n.d.). The vision and mission of Danmission is rooted in the Christian calling to establish the Kingdom of God here on earth, which is a significant driving force of current Christian development culture (see previous chapter on Christian development aid culture). Moreover, Danmission express that their mission was never their own but a response to the calling of Christians to participate in Gods mission which was started by Jesus (Danmission C, n.d.; Danmission D, pp. 1-2).

Based on the understanding of their mission as a Christian FBO, Danmission are working within three main areas

- **Church development**
- **Dialogue**
- **Poverty reduction**

While all working areas are considered important, Kirsten Auken, Head of Danmission's program department, explains that it is especially the work regarding dialogue and church development that is characteristic for Danmission (Auken, 2020). Moreover, both of these areas, entail an emphasis on religion and religious actors which is another characterizing feature of Danmissions approach to development aid and a dominating topic in their operations.

Based on their own religious background, Danmission has in-depth understanding of the role religion and religious actors play in the communities (Auken, 2020). According to studies 80% of the population in development countries are religious and religion as a fundamental value is a strong influence on people's practices and attitudes (Danmission, 2017; James, 2011, p. 110). In most of Danmission mission countries religion continues to play an important role in current conflicts and is at times a source of hatred, extremism and radicalization (Danmission, 2017, p. 5). This points to a common negative association of religion in the field of development aid, as something decisive and regressive (James, 2011, p. 110). While the negative connotations to religion previously, and to some degree still, has caused Danida to dismiss issues of religion and religious actors in their

development work, Kirsten Auken explains how Danmission has the slogan “if religion is a part of the problem, it has to be a part of the solution”. This understanding has inspired Danmission to work actively with an area which is distinctive to the work of Danmission; namely inter-religious dialogue (Auken, 2020).

5.4 Dialogue

One of Danmission’s core competencies in the use of dialogue (Auken, 2020). First of all, Danmission uses dialogue in their work with religious groups as a means of conflict prevention, transformation and resolution. This dialogue-approach to conflict has e.g. been applied in Zanzibar where Danmission has established dialogue between the Muslim majority and the Christian minority as a way of easing tension (Auken, 2020). Through interreligious dialogue Danmission works to establish a sense of fellowship between all human beings including those belonging to another religion or no religion at all. Danmission works with interreligious as well as intrareligious dialogues and through this approach to religious conflict Danmission is the organization most “hands on” in regard to religious issues due to their on the ground activities (Auken, 2020; Danmission, 2017, p. 8). The Dialogue-approach is however not exclusive to religious conflicts and the dialogue-based approach. Danmission is using dialogue in a distinctive way in the sense that it is both considered a means and an end, meaning that it is a goal in itself and at other times a path to other goals (Danmission, 2017, p. 2). The dialogue-based approach permeates their work and therefore exists in many different forms. In Cambodia, their Christian partner, Peace Bridges works with conflict transformation at every level from solving issues of violence in families to high level conflicts and everything in between. They support forest activists who confront illegal forestry and teach them how to handle this situation in the right way, and give them tools to avoid conflict intensification, and try to enter into dialogue regarding why they do it and why it is wrong. In that way they have managed to keep conflicts at a minimum in a situation that is highly liable to conflict. Here dialogue is applied as a useful tool in a setting where its use may well be overlooked, because the primary concern is to stop deforestation. (Auken, 2020). Through the application of dialogue to the situation Danmission not only prevent a conflict in the situation, but by entering into dialogue they promote a mutual understanding that in turn foster common solutions. In that way the use of dialogue efforts is more future oriented and a sustainable way of developing communities.

The main aim of Dialogue processes is to establish peaceful societies which allows people and communities to thrive. The approach is grounded in Christian theology and a holistic value set (Auken, 2020). In Danida's strategy "the world 2030" the number one priority of the Danish foreign ministry is to promote peace, security and protection (Danida , 2017, pp. 17-18). In this strategy they point out that peace-building takes place on several levels from national to local community level. In this regard Danmission makes distinctive contributions to the Danish development efforts. Kirsten Argues that while dialogue projects and interreligious dialogue is a niche within development aid in the Danish development sector, Danmission experiences great interest and recognition for their work also politically (Auken, 2020). In their preliminary strategic partnership results report to Danida, Danmission states that it is their " profound conviction and experience that, by influencing societies to create a conducive space for religion, religious actors and institutions, with all that this implies with regard to serious challenges and opportunities, we and our partners can positively influence the development of a peaceful and just society in our programme countries, as well as across borders" (Danmission , 2019, p. 1). With their strong emphasis on conflict resolution and religious actors Danmission has obtained knowledge and skills which they gladly share with others in the sector (Danmission, 2018, p. 1). This was the case in 2005 when the the Danish government, surprised by the strong reaction to the Muhammed drawings, invited Danmission to Egypt to help facilitate dialogue with the ministry of foreign affairs (Auken, 2020)

5.5 Church development

According to Danmission another distinguishing feature related to their programs is their work with Christian institutions and especially churches. As a part of Danmission's mission they believe in supporting the global church, a big part of their programs relating to church development consists of different kinds of education, such as education of priests, administrative education, support for establishing Sunday schools for kids, or education which supports the general administration of the church. The development of the churches is a goal in itself and a way for Danmission to fulfill its mission regarding the spread of Christianity (Danmission, 2015).

At the same time Danmission uses their work with churches as a means for positive transformation in their communities. As a Christian FBO Danmission believes that churches have favorable assets (Auken, 2020). A distinguishing feature of Danmission is the way they work with theology as a

development tool. In their work with churches they teach contextual theology, meaning that they teach the churches how to interpret their mission in a way that is relevant to their communities, as a source of good. Here the aspect of Diakonia as a part of the church's mission is significant because it encourages churches to be active in their societies and help those in need in the best way they can. The work with churches also allows Danmission to try to influence the teaching of theology that may be harmful to people or communities. This is not an easy task because religion is a fundamental value in people's lives, based on long traditions. However if you are able to transform opinions of religious leaders you are able to achieve significant contributions to societies, because religious leaders have a lot of authority in developing countries (Auken, 2020). The focus on conflict resolution is also a present in the work with churches and Danmission try to encourage interreligious dialogue between Christians and other religions, or perhaps between different churches or denominations. The aspect of conflict resolution is also based in theology that promotes reconciliation in the world to achieve gods vision (see chapter on Gods vision).

The churches supported by Danmission are evangelizing in different ways but Danmission themselves are not evangelizing (Auken, 2020). Even though the support of Christianity is a fundamental value in Danmission, Kirsten Auken argues that they understand mission more broadly as being present in the world as Gods servants to speak up against injustice and support diaconal work and be relevant to the world. The goal is not to convert people to Christianity. Even though Danmission supports churches who evangelize it is important for them to secure that it is done in an ethically responsible way.

5.6 Partnerships

Danmission do not only help churches but the majority of their work in developing countries is carried out by local religious institutions and organizations. Due to their history and long engagement in developing countries Danmission draw on very long-lasting partnerships and rarely have to find new partners. Currently Danmission has approximately 50 different partners in their portfolio (Danmission , 2019, p. 2). The partner organizations not only include Christians but entails partners with other religious backgrounds or multi- or nonreligious organizations. However, the main part of their partners are churches or other actors with a Christian background (Auken, 2020).in their partner approach to development aid Danmission is Danmission is able to make sustainable projects because they work with partners that are already there and do not leave again,

as opposed to other more project oriented approaches. Furthermore Kirsten adds that Danmission do not have to send many development workers to postings in the developing countries because the churches are well capable of doing the job themselves. First of all, this saves a lot of money and saves the job of having to obtain difficult work permits. But most of all the low need of Danmission employees in the developing countries is based on the fact that there are plenty of 'local people in the partner churches and institutions who are well capable of performing the job themselves (Auken, 2020). In their partner approach to development Danmission has access to many volunteers. They are able to access local knowledge and at the same time this way of working is arguably a form of capacity building, where you support and train locals instead of doing the job yourself. By way of using local partners Danmission is able to foster development aid through diakonia and conflict resolution carried out by local churches, and through supporting the presence of the Christian church which is perceived to have a positive impact on communities. The churches are important actors in civil society and their theological viewpoint and connections in society is a useful point of departure to achieve peaceful coexistence and peaceful coexistence creates a breeding ground for development. Moreover, Kirsten points out that if you look at the missionary agencies in a historical perspective it may be questionable how many have been converted to Christianity through times, but what is not questionable is that the missionaries have built hospitals, schools, farming schools among other things and have contributed to social development in their postings around the world (Auken, 2020). Arguably Christian FBOs make distinctive contributions because they support churches in making distinctive contributions. The same time it is beneficial for the local Christians to engage in a partnership with Danmission both in terms of support such as funds or training but also just as companionship with other Christians (Auken, 2020).

5.7 Trust

In the investigation of Danmission another distinguishing feature of their work is a high level of trust. According to Danmission it is partly the high level of trust which enables them to be effective in establishing dialogue (Auken, 2020). A part of this is based on their long lasting relationship with their partners but also the way in which they cooperate with them. In Tanzania Danmission has been working with the same churches in 70 years. Religious actors with a very long tradition can be hard to influence such as changing the view on homosexuality, which, according to Kirsten, is definitely

not achieved over night (Auken, 2020). Danmission do not go directly into these issues, but they are able to talk about the issue with the partner because they share confidentiality due to their long-term relationship.

Due to their long-term engagement with partners Danmission has personal relationships with locals who are able to establish connections to other relevant actors in society. Even when Danmission are not cooperating on programs with their partners they maintains a relationship with their partners and make efforts to remains in contact, by checking in from time to time. This approach to partnerships establishes a further level of trust, because they know that Danmission does not just disappear when programs end (Auken, 2020). Besides from following partners closely, an important part of Danmission's approach to partnerships is their respectful and equal relationship with their partners. This is an approach to partners originates from the Christian faith and values (Danmission D). And even though Christians are the only ones who are able to work in this way it seems that it is a characteristic of Danmission, and they have receive great acknowledgement for this specific way of working. (Auken, 2020) Because of their close equal relationships with partners they are happy to work with them even though they are not able to provide the same amount of funds as some of the larger organizations. The close and long-lasting relationships with churches creates a trust which is useful and allows Danmission to challenge their partners to do things in a new way to change their societies for the better, such as engaging in dialogue with people considered as enemies (Auken, 2020)

It is also Danmission's experience they have higher trust also in Muslim societies than secular organizations because they themselves are religious actors. Sometimes they are able to act as catalysts of dialogue between religious leaders and leaders of civil society organizations that are skeptical towards religion in their own countries. This has been the case in Syria and other middle eastern countries where Danmission has established contact between civil society actors such as gender or youth activists and religious leaders, and has created a space where they have discovered that they were wanted some of the same things and were able to cooperate (Auken, 2020). Moreover, Danmission has been able to establish dialogues between Sunni and Shia Muslims. In this regard Kirsten believes that they have a distinctive contribution in their capacity as a religious organization (Auken, 2020). This has also been the case in Zanzibar where Danmission as a foreign Christian organization has been trusted because they are not under suspicion for wanting to gain

power advantages for themselves. In Zanzibar Danmission has had success in establishing interreligious councils where religious leader have been able to discuss possible solutions to problems such as violence during elections (Auken, 2020) In this regard Danmission as a Christian organization can act as a trustworthy mediator, not just in terms of what they do, but because of who they are and their organizational identity.

5.8 Dynamic approach

An important distinguishing feature of the work of Danmission as a Christian development organization is found in the way Danmission works with their main areas. Again based on a holistic understanding of their mission Danmission has been pioneering in developing an integrated and coherent model where their three main areas (Church development, dialogue and poverty reduction) is solved in combination with each other. This coherent approach to development has not previously been used by in the Danish development sector and means that Danmission has developed a stronger link between their Christian background and development aid (Auken, 2020).

As previously addressed the view from Danida has been that issues of religion would pass and therefore were irrelevant to their work and to development. Previously Christian organizations, including Danmission, but more outspoken in other organizations, have toned down their religious aspects to accommodate the views of Danida. However, in many ways the world has changed in a direction where issues regarding religion are inevitable, e.g. due to new waves of refugees which makes communities more religiously diverse (Auken, 2020). Danida has had to face the fact that that religion is an important source of influence, whereby the space in the Danish development sector has become more “open” to religious approaches to development aid (Auken, 2020).

Previously Danmission had separated their work areas into two departments to avoid suspicion from Danida; One called church and dialogue and and a poverty department. At this time religious aspects, while still concerning some cooperation with churches, was separated from Danmissions development work. Because off the new openness from Danida, combined with internal processes in Danmission, the two departments have merged. Now Danmission is actively working to create synergy and coherence in their work areas (Auken, 2020). A case in Myanmar illustrates how the new approach affects Danmissions work contributes positively to all areas of their work.

In Myanmar Danmission had two to very separate types of activities; They had a poverty program which supported so-called “fellows” programs where young people were sent to villages to improve the organization of the village while the fellows received training in how to perform their duties. The program was fine and, and according to Kirsten pretty standard without any references to religion or religious issue (Auken, 2020). At the same time Danmission had other programs supporting theological organizations in the capital, Yangon, working with contextual theology (previously addressed in this thesis) to teach churches how to become more outgoing and involved in their communities. This was very relevant in the context of Myanmar where the Christians previously had been persecuted and thereby had to hide their religious activities. However, an opening presented itself for churches to become more involved, due to changes in the political landscape. When Danmission entered into the current framework agreement with Danida they reorganized the programs to see if they could apply the theological groundwork already carried out in Myanmar.

Building upon the previous structures of the fellows-program Danmission tried to combine the two programs, in the Katcin state where the fellows program had been situated. Instead of using fellows. Danmission made efforts to support some of the bigger Baptist and catholic churches already in the area and churches that were already engaged in development aid, which was greatly needed in the area due to conflicts and streams of refugees, and internally displaced. While the partnering churches had experience in development aid and humanitarian aid, they had very little experience in engaging with other religions to obtain peaceful coexistence. Based on their training churches used their Christian identity to make workshops and bring actors together who previously never had been in dialogue, or even in the same room before. Hence Danmission was able to apply the methods of contextual theology from the previous project to establish dialogue which in turn fostered development in a pressured region.

Their theological background (and working with churches) and work contributes positively to their work with building civil society and peaceful coexistence which is in turn the foundation for solving other development issues. In that way Danmission is able to contribute with a coherence in their work which contributes to development results

5.9 Results and impact

While the previous chapters have pointed to many different ways in which Danmission as a Christian FBO, with their values and way of working, makes distinctive contributions to different aspects relevant to development aid, it is mostly within the areas of peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution Danmission has a unique contribution to the Danish development sector. Kirsten argues that this is a contribution which is specific to Danmission in the sector, not just as a Christian FBO, but because of their special emphasis on the issues and something they are good at. Moreover, Danmission has a distinctive contribution in building active civil societies and supporting churches in being active in their own communities, not just in relation to conflict, but in regard to tending to the needs of the weakest in society (Auken, 2020).

Based on their work areas and approach Danmission are good at stepping into the humanitarian, development and peace nexus which is a popular tool to achieve a more far reaching development by focusing on the importance of peace (Auken, 2020). In regard, to result it is hard to measure results on peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution. However Danmission has examples of programs regarding dialogue and conflict resolution has resulted in tangible results such as a common religious teaching material for schools in Lebanon which promotes peaceful coexistence between the 18 religious tribes (Auken, 2020).

In regards to impact on development goals such as the one specified by the sustainable development goals, the work of Danmission is especially impacting the goals of peace, justice and strong institutions and partnership for development (goal 16 and 17) (United Nations , n.d.). The goal number 16 which is a strong priority of Danmission is very important in regards to development aid because peace is the foundation for all types of development. Thereby Danmission are working with some of the root causes for fostering development in the world. In regards to the Danish development sector the contribution within this area is highly relevant because the same goals is the highest priority for Denmark's development strategy "the world 2030" and is the only goal on which Danida works in all of their program areas (Danida , 2017).

Moreover, Danmission is continuously lobbying for Danida to include the aspect of religion and religious actors in their work. While Danida is becoming more aware of the need to incorporate religion in their work, Danmission is still experiencing a lack of attention to the issue. One of the

cases in which Danmission and others Christian actors were able to contribute to the overall agenda of Danish development aid was in the making of the 2030 strategy where Christian FBOs have succeeded in making Danida add that it is important to focus on the religious actors and their contribution (The world 2030) (Danida , 2017; Auken, 2020). Moreover, Denmark has become a member of Pard (Partnership on religion and sustainable development) which is global network, founded by the German government who have been promoters of the religion and development agenda on a state level. Part members include states, UN organizations, and NGOs including FBOs and larger FBO cooperatives such as ACT Alliance. The membership is a result of the lobby work by Danmission and Folkekirkens nødhjælp who convince the Danish government to become a member (Auken, 2020).

Additionally it is It is characterizing for the Danish context that civil society is invited into the foreign ministry to participate on many different matters. This is also the case in high profile political matters with participation of UN delegations such as the high political forum on sustainable development goals where where the official Danish delegation always includes representatives from civil society organizations. This is unusual in the global society where organizations in other countries mostly are kept outside the doors. Therefore, it is easier for FBOs to have an impact on National development priorities and strategies in Denmark than it is in other countries (Auken, 2020).

6. Conclusion

In this thesis I have attempted to investigate if the Christian FBOS provide a distinctive contribution to development in the Danish development sector. Through an outline of the Danish development context it is clear that Christian FBOS have been pioneering in the Danish development sector through the work of missionaries. Today the mission agencies have developed into professional NGOS and while some of the Christian FBOs have become more passive in their way of using their Christian background Danmission actively engages its Christian foundation throughout its operations. Because of its history in the development sector, its Christian values such as equality and reconciliation, and its focus on engagement with religious actors, both through partnership and

through dialogue, Danmission makes distinctive contributions to the Danish development sector in the areas of conflict prevention and reconciliation. Moreover, based on its extensive experience with working with religious actors Danmission contributes with a knowledge to understanding religiously related conflicts, which is key in solving developmental issues and laying the groundwork for thriving communities. As Danida highly prioritizes peace and stability in their strategy Danmission is a useful strategic partner to achieve the goals set out by the strategy. Moreover, peace a pivotal condition for all other development goals. Thus by providing unique knowledge and activities within this area Danmission makes a distinctive contribution to the Danish development sector.

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8. Framework

Religious traditions

Christian development
aid culture

Clarifying key concepts

Religion
Christianity
Faith based organizations
development
secularism

Danish context

Danida
Christian FBOs
The dichotomy between
secular and Christian
development aid

Methodology

Qualitative methods:
Interviews
Research
Case studies of single
organization: Danmission

Do Christian faith-based organizations provide a distinctive contribution to the Danish development sector and if yes, how ?

Input

Ways of operating

Results

Impact