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THOSE WHO BRIDGE THE GAPS

BROKERS AND TRANSLATORS WITHIN DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

Since the outburst of James Ferguson on the development policy in Lesotho in 1994 - the starting point of the post-development school of thought, the imposition of Western development models on Third World countries has been heavily criticized by post-development thinkers. The purposes of what is called "development" are in serious doubt. "What do aid programmes do besides fail to help poor people?" (Ferguson, 1994: 180). Post-developmentalists, however, did not stop at castigating the reality they have witnessed on the ground; they also proposed solutions. They advocate for *alternatives to development* as a new development paradigm rather than *alternative development* (Escobar, 2000). As the concept of "alternatives to development" is still under construction, my argument is that the role of those whom David Mosse calls the "development brokers and translators" (Mosse and Lewis, 2006) is the most crucial when considering this new development paradigm. The work of constant translation "of policy goals into practical interests, practical interests back into policy goals" is devotedly and wisely conducted by the "skilled brokers" (projects managers, local staff, field workers etc.) who "read the meaning of policies in different institutional languages" (Mosse, 2005: 9). While Mosse and other post-development thinkers focus on the policies translation process at the grass-root level which is considered the most important transition during the implementation of development projects, the brokerage is also occurring at other levels as well. In the thesis, using actor-oriented approach coined by Norman Long, I examine development intervention projects' documents and practices to see the translation and brokerage from national level through the grass-root level in Nepal. The results show that brokerage does occur in many encounters in various interfaces of development intervention. Moreover, the context has a great impact on the conduct of brokerage due to the complexity of Nepali society as well. This thesis is an effort to bring "development brokers and translators" to the attention of the post-development scholars. Once they are recognized, hopefully their role will be more seriously investigated and theorized during the construction of "alternatives to development". If "alternatives to development" were to become the new development paradigm, these "brokers and translators" had to be recognized as the driving force.

Key words: brokerage, post- development, alternatives to development.

LIST OF ABBRIVIATIONS

NGO - Non-governmental Organization

IMF – International Monetary Fund

INGO - International Non-governmental Organization

Oxfam GB – Oxfam Great Britain

VDCs - Village Development Committees

TYIP - Three Year Interim Plan

SDA – Sustainable Development Agenda

SWC - Social Welfare Council

SWNCC - Social Welfare National Coordination Council

UN – United Nations

WTO – World Trade Organization

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Once, while reading what Oliver de Sardan (2005) had to say about development agents as mediators and brokers, I was brought back to the scene of a meeting between local authority and a delegation from Oxfam China visiting the project area at Dak Rong district of Quang Tri province sometime in 2011. This province is one of the most mountainous and poorest areas in Vietnam, heavily loaded with bombs residue after the war. Among the Chinese development workers from Oxfam China, those who were working in Beijing office could understand and speak English, but those who were field staff in rural areas of China could not speak English at all. Therefore, they had to have an interpreter with them. I was first assigned to translate from Vietnamese into English and the delegation's interpreter would translate it into Chinese. However, due to my weak competence in instant interpretation, my task was transferred to another Vietnamese development worker of Oxfam later on. I could not have any comments on the content of the translation by the Chinese interpreter because I did not speak Chinese; however, I was certain that the Vietnamese one did not interpret the exact content of what the local government's officials said to the Chinese delegation and vice versa. He twisted the ideas here and there during the translation. Only those who were involved in implementing the project at the time could understand the reason and read between the lines.[1]

Nevertheless, as I was watching two professional interpreters translating almost in sync with each other at the same time back and forth among Vietnamese, English and Chinese, I was absolutely astonished. I thought to myself: "The amazing intellectual process I am witnessing here must have some meaning to it other than what meets the eyes." The irony is only in a place 8500 kilometers away from that remote area of Vietnam, I finally came to understand and be able to explain the meaning of what I witnessed years ago. This must be the perfect example on how development agents broker knowledge and action among the social logics of development projects. Thinking about this phenomenon triggered my interests in the brokerage works of development staff in the field.

My interests in the concept of brokerage happen to connect with, in my opinion, the most compelling and revolutionary school of thoughts I have encountered during my study:

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[1] This was also a common occurrence when I and my direct supervisor, who was Vietnamese, had meetings with local government's officials and donors coming from Hong Kong. My supervisor would take the role of the interpreter in those meetings and the content of her translation did not always reflect the same ideas expressed by parties involved. However, as an assistant of the project, I personally understood what she did and why she did it.

post-development. In the early 90s, one of the approaches to conceptualizing "development" institutions radically came from neo-Marxism and dependency theory. The conceptualization of "development" was conducted with a critical manner within "the context of a political denunciation":

> "If (and this is the first postulate of neo-Marxism) capitalism is not a progressive force but a reactionary one in the Third-World - not the cause of development but the obstacle to it, not the cure for poverty but the cause of it - then a capitalist-run development project is a fundamentally contradictory endeavor. If it is meant to promote imperial capitalism (and why else would capitalist institutions like the World Banks, USAID, etc. do it?) then it cannot at the same time be an instrument for development, at least not for "real" development."

(Ferguson, 1990: 11)

Ferguson's critical analysis of the failure of an aid project in Lesotho opened up a contradictory discussion about whether or not development aid was still worth pursuing. Many scholars who had been involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development projects in Third World countries raised the same concerns with Ferguson's based on their experiences on the ground. From this discussion, the Post-Development School of Thoughts, which is a school of scholars advocating for "alternatives to development", gradually formed itself on the margin of other main-stream development theories.

There have been countless debates on the matter of "alternatives to development" since most of post-development thinkers deny completely the "alternative development", the paradigm that has become mainstream in global development aid for decades. However, the question of achieving "alternatives to development" and what they really are still remains implicit.

In this context, with the attempt to explore the possibilities of "alternatives to development", it would be critical to revise some key factors which are responsible for the success or failure of development intervention in general; so that the search for and the construction of "alternatives to development" would not be in vain. At this point, it is surprising to realize that development workers (addressed in this thesis as "brokers and translators") have received extremely scarce attention in development scholarship, considering their vital role in the general process of development aid.

If there have been any authors who paid attention to development workers in the role of "brokers and translators", that would be David Mosse. While discussing whether "good policy is unimplementable", Mosse believes that the task of 'unifying' development policies or project designs "requires the constant work of translation (of policy goals into practical interests; practical interests back into policy goals), which is the task of skilled brokers (managers, consultants, fieldworkers, community leaders) who read the meaning of a project into the different institutional languages of its stakeholders" (Mosse, 2004: 9). In addition to that, there is also Olivier de Sardan, who also confirmed that the development process can be analyzed and understood from the anthropological (or indeed sociological) approach. Since the *development agents' vital task of brokerage is embedded deeply into society and the interaction among social actors*, anthropologists can have substantial contribution in training development agents in the field (Olivier de Sardan, 2005).

The main aim of this thesis, therefore, is to analyze the role of development workers as "brokers and translators" through numerous encounters on interfaces of development. Due to the intangible nature of this role, the embeddedness of brokerage into levels of development projects will be examined to serve the purpose of analyzing it: national development policy and development project levels. As the nature of development practices has its own political agenda rather than technical one, negotiations have high frequency of occurrence in different forms. Therefore, I embark on the search for findings that can answer the following research questions:

- How is the phenomenon of brokerage embedded into the translation at national development policy level in Nepal?
- How is the phenomenon of brokerage embedded into the translation in the context of a particular project implemented in Nepal?

The first part of the thesis is an introduction to Nepal, a landlocked country surrounded by ranges of mountain, well-known for being "flooded" with INGOs and NGO. In the second part, the theoretical framework of the thesis is set up to situate the research questions in the literature of development. The third part of the thesis lays out the methodology used to analyze the data and find out answers to research questions. The main method used in this thesis is the "actor-oriented approach" developed by Norman Long (1977, 1992, and 2001). The main concept tools are also listed together with the types of data available for the research.

In the next part, two sets of findings are presented. The first set demonstrates the policy brokerage in the encounters at the interfaces of national level from Nepal's Sustainable Development Agenda to a climate change adaptation project by Oxfam Great Britain. The context of foreign aid in Nepal is also briefly discussed. The second set of findings is an analysis of a particular energy project implemented by a local Nepali NGO. This analysis aims to show the brokerage in encounters happening on the many interfaces of the project.

Finally, the conclusion discusses the meaning of recognizing the roles of development workers as brokers and translators to the search for "alternatives to development".

2. NEPAL - THE UNFORTUNATE HINDU NATION

In this part, a big picture of Nepal is drawn to portrait the struggles of the country on their path to development. Since the context of Nepal (politics, economy, culture and society, etc.) is as complicated as it can possibly get, it is critical to have a general idea about how the nation has come to where it is standing and challenges it is facing in the front of development. This introduction goes through some basic facts about geography, population, religions and history of Nepal's political economy. It is also helpful to keep in mind that this is also the context in which development workers perform their roles as brokers and translators.

Despite the name "non-government organizations", like in many other developing countries, the works of civil society in Nepal deeply involve with the government from the national level all the way down to villages. It is necessary to remember that no matter whether it is an international or a local NGO and no matter what development programs they implement; this is the context within which development agencies have to operate. This is the ground where the translators and brokers conduct their missions. Laying out the context in details helps with painting the general picture of development in Nepal and sketching out rough ideas of which interfaces translation and brokerage might be called upon. Acknowledging the context also helps situate and align the country's development status within the arguments of post-development school of thoughts – the theoretical frame work of this thesis. Nepal has presented itself as a prime example for the claim of post-development thinkers that development, the way in which it has been conducted does not work and it is time to dig deeper and search for alternatives.

Looking at literature written by Nepali authors (anthropologists, sociologists, historians, economists, professors and researchers of development, etc.) available in English (Pyakuryal 2013; Shrestha 1997, 2000; Karan and Ishii 1994; Gautam and Pokhrel, 2011; etc.) one would have a strong impression that Nepali scholars are certainly pessimistic about the development of their own country despite the fact that an enormous amount of foreign aid pours into developing Nepal annually. Among rare exceptions might be Dor Bahadur Bista, who is considered as the first ever anthropologist of Nepali academia, and the most well-known one as well. His most famous publication, Fatalism and Development: Nepal's Struggle for Modernization, 1990, while highlighted the barriers keeping Nepal from development, also surprisingly shared the same perspective on

development with the post-development school of thoughts. He embraced the strength of ethnic groups and preservation of local culture; and very much took the same point of view with Escobar (1995) on the negative change development practices had brought to Nepal. He does not appear to blame the country itself for the failure in development; he is sympathetic with the nation but more critical on the misleading portrait of many aspects of Nepali society in development literature. But then again, he is a rare exception.

However, once facts about only the basic context of Nepal such as geography, history and political economy have been thoroughly studied, the reason as to why most Nepali authors have little confidence in the improvement of their own country unraveled itself.

2.1. Geography and Population

Almost every literature providing the context and background information of Nepal starts with "Nepal is a mountainous landlocked country". This must come from the fact that this geographic feature of Nepal has so far presented countless challenging obstacles on the way of its development. "Topography of nation is one of important factors when considering overall development efforts. Development of Nepal has been affecting due to the unfavorable geographical setting" (Bala Ram Acharya, 2008: 182). Sharing the North border with China; West, South and East borders with India, Nepal cannot help but heavily influenced by these two "big brothers" in every aspect of society; especially India. "Nepal's landlocked geographical position has made its economy irrevocably tied to India." (Sharma, Upreti and Pyakuryal, 2012: 2)

Nepal's area is 147,181 km^2 75% of which is covered with mountains; and the rest is shared between Hill and Tarai (plain) areas.

Jeffrey Sachs (2014), in the attempt of attacking the issues of sustainable development, dedicates a whole part of his book to provide differential diagnoses to the causes of the slow and difficult process of development of landlocked countries. While trading through low-cost transport condition (through rivers systems or sea) plays a vital role in the economic growth of a nation, landlocked countries are certainly deprived from this advantage as the ability to participate in the international trading through ports. This is not new as over 200 years ago, Adam Smith (1977, original 1796) already pointed out that the inland parts of Africa and Asia were the least economically developed areas in the world. High cost transportation certainly positions landlocked countries in distinct disadvantage in comparison to their neighbors with coastal lines when competing in global market.

In the case of Nepal, aside from the dependence on its enormous neighbors in the front of goods supply and transit routes for access to oversea markets due to the landlockedness, the extremely mountainous geographic condition adds on to the difficulties and cost of transportation from capital Kathmandu to other parts of the country. Due to the political instability (that will be discussed in the following section) lasting for decades, even though the flow of foreign aid was almost never interrupted, transportation infrastructure such as roads or public means of transportation have not been invested and developed as they should have been in a country with special geographic conditions like Nepal. With the distance of a little more than 150km from one district to another, it takes a 50-seat bus more or less 10 hours to reach the destination. Since the majority of the roads connecting districts and regions have been under constructions for such a long period, they are either still dirt roads or damaged with countless pot holes; hence it is extremely dangerous to drive on these roads running alongside hills and mountains with one side being always an open cliff; especially during monsoon season. This factor of transportation will be discussed further as one of the major obstacles that the "translators and brokers" who have to visit project sites frequently often encounter.

The country has the population of 27.8 million[2] (World Bank, 2013) with an annual rate of 2.3%. Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita income of $730 per annum. The population density is 181/sq. km and an average family size is 4.7. The share of female population is 51% and 48% of the people are children and youth under 18 years. Around 83% of the population lives in rural areas and the remaining 17% reside in urban areas. In addition, some two million Nepali have migrated to live outside the country mostly as labor migrants.[3] The country is characterized as small landholdings, rapid population growth, and a fragile economy resulting in chronic poverty in many regions. There is tremendously inadequate distribution of income between the capital Kathmandu and other parts of the country.

2.2. Brief history of Nepal's political economy

It is a common occurrence that the briefed political economy of Nepal in term of development agenda starts with the Rana Regime of the period of 1846 to 1950. This might be due to the fact that this 104-year regime was the last pure monarchy before Nepal

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[2] http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nepal
[3] Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Nepal 2013-2016, Ministry for Foreign Affair of Finland

witnessed its first sight of democracy practice (Pyakuryal, 2013: 9). Besides, even though the Ranas was known to exploit the power for their personal gain rather than the people's, during their reign, there were a few notable developing activities that paved ways to initiatives on economic policy-making in future Nepal. For instance, in 1861, King Jung Bahadur started tea plantation in Illam, a municipality in a hilly region of Nepal. The construction of irrigation canals during King Chandra Sumsher's reign was also groundbreaking. In 1911, the Pharping Hydroelectric Company was established, which was rather astonishing. During 1930s, a match factory, cotton mills and clinic for public health were also set up to serve the citizens. These were all great initiatives at the time; however, isolated and lack of sustainable planning strategy (Pyakuryal, 2013: 9-10).

From 1950, the anti-Rana movement became stronger when Nepali National Congress and Nepal Democratic Congress integrated into Nepali Congress (NC) party which has remained to this modern day. During the 50s, much effort was invested in promoting democracy and pushing the country through the tough transition. NC secured the majority of seats in the first multi-party election on May 27, 1959. The NC led by Bineshwar Prasad Koirala (often referred as BP) formed the government. Under his leadership, democratic socialism was promoted. The general idea was based on Lenin's ideology of socialism; however, with a more effective twist on addressing the issues of poverty; specifically in the case of Nepal.

This period of Nepal's history saw drastic changes in the nation's development policy with what seemed to be the potentially better direction for Nepal at the time. Before BP, Nepal "remained almost in isolation from outside world both economically and politically" (Shrestha, 2010: 1). BP was the one who led Nepal to securing a place in the United Nations and being known to the outside world. Notable programs under BP's leadership were: economic program to better utilize and conserve natural resources; establishment of national Planning Board; construction of irrigation, drinking water, transport and communication facilities; village and local development programs; establishment of Nepal Industrial Development Corporation to initiate small, medium and bigger sized industries; and use of army in development work especially in road construction, etc. (Pyakuryal, 2013: 11-14).

During this short period of Nepal's history, unemployment and poverty were top priorities for the government to tackle. BP believed that when there were not enough jobs, a massive outflow of human resource and political instability would follow. He was reported to have

announced the preparation of the first Second Five Year Plan with "an aim to create 500,000 new jobs and increasing the national income by 30 percent" (Pyakuryal, 2013: 13). Nowadays, Nepal is facing both mentioned problems but the current ruling government still seems to undermine BP's philosophy. He was among rare, if not the only one, Nepal's leaders that were uneasy with the idea of depending on external foreign aid which subjects the nation to unsustainability.

However, such good fortune of a rational, progressive and fair leader did not last long for Nepal. His progressive reform which benefited poor people obviously upset the elite class who had long dominated the army, including king Mahendra. After only 18 months in office, BP was imprisoned by the king's order. The parliament and the cabinet were dismissed; political parties became unstable and the king once again took the power to become the absolute ruler. Monarchy came back on the political stage.

From this point until 1990, Nepal continued to be run by Panchayat partyless system with the king being the superior ruler. The country continued receiving enormous and uninterrupted flow of external assistance. Nepal's first Five Year Plan (1956-1961) was introduced and implemented in 1956. This plan was drafted with the assistance of UN advisor Harry B. Price because Nepal was brand new to the outside world and completely lack of information and statistics to finish the plan (Gautam and Pokhrel, 2011: 5). The plan however missed most of priority sectors such as transportation, communication, agriculture and irrigation. For the following decades of Panchayat regime, the achievement of the Five Year Plans remained unsatisfactory and incomplete since king Mahendra's ultimate goal was to maintain the viability of the monarchy ruling system.

One notable improvement in the Five Year Plan was the one of 1975-1980, under the ruling of king Mahendra's son – king Birendra, who did realize that his country was in needs for a political and economic reform but, for some reason, did not pursue it to the end. Therefore, his succession did not differ from his father's reign in term of socio-economic and political governance. However, for the first time in the nation's development planning history, under king Birendra's reign, the problem of poverty reduction was addressed properly. The top priorities were agricultural development, population control and increased industrial production. This Five Year Plan was successful in raising the awareness toward poverty reduction; however, the achievements remained modest.

In the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990), basic needs program was introduced and prioritized providing food and clothing for everyone. The initiatives were good; however the implementation was disastrous because of poorly-considered budget allocation and failed policy of establishing linkages between the program and other sectors.

Until the end of Panchayat regime, the government remained completely dependent on external aid due to the encouragement of international institutions such as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB). According to their records at the time, apparently, Nepal's debt had not reached the critical point yet in comparison with other least developed countries (Pyakuryan, 2013). This later on had led to the serious lack of the nation's self-sufficiency and practices of mobilization of internal resources.

The year 1990 came to see yet another significant transition in Nepal's political system. Under the pressure of the people, king Birendra had to agree to a constitutional monarchy with party system. The first election of this system was held in 1991. During three years when Nepali Congress was in power (1991-1994), the economy showed sign of slight improvement: GDP increased and inflation decreased. However, misfortune once again cast its spell on Nepal; this period of improvement did not last long due to the political instability that was caused by internal conflicts within the parties themselves. A mid-term election was held in 1994 but no parties were able to secure majority seats. Then, an attempt to establish multi-party government was made and eventually failed shortly after. This incident brought the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to power and they remained the ruling government until 2006.

During this period, reforms took place in all areas. The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997) is still now remembered as a historic document in which Nepal made concrete commitment to apply "liberalization, globalization and privatization" (Pyakyrual, 2013: 20); of course, following IMF's and WB's structural adjustment program which was mandatory condition for their loans.

The Ninth Five Year Plan stayed on the same path with the continuation of economic liberalization and privatization. Some successful policies were visible during this period. This plan focused on the investments in agriculture and hydroelectric power to deal with the serious lack of electricity, which has been a major problem for Nepal, even at the present. Progress was seen in health, education, information technology, telecommunications and aviation sectors.

The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) was introduced as a poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP); the deep involvement of UN was very much visible in this document; even in the wording. It is this plan that the integration into MDGs started and marked even deeper involvement of international policy in Nepal's development planning. The documents stated the four pillars of development such as broad-based high and sustainable growth; social sector development with emphasis on human development; targeted programs with emphasis on social inclusion (indigenous groups, neglected low-caste communities); and good governance. It was compiled almost with the structure of an NGO's development program with the inclusion of a logical framework, sub-projects and identification of monitoring indicators; only instead of a logical framework for one project in one site, it was a gigantic logical framework for a wide range of projects in the whole nation. Although this Tenth Plan did sound promising, the curse of failure had not been lifted yet for Nepal and its people. Decade after decade of dependence on external assistance did take a toll on the capability of the nation's government in addressing the root of their problems. Instead of economic growth and poverty reduction, the gap between the rich and the poor continued to widen.

Early 2000s, Maoist party raised the scale of their war against the monarchy and consequently put the nation in depression. GDP growth decreased to negative point. In 2001, the royal family was murdered and the brother of the late king came to power and dissolved the parliament to assume absolute power. The armed conflicts lasted for a decade until a peace accord was achieved between Nepal's government and Maoist party in 2006. Under a lot of public pressure, the king eventually agreed to reestablish the already dissolved parliament, after which a series of significant events happened rapidly in Nepal. The reinstated government soon voted to curtail the political power of the king and started the peace negotiation with Maoist party. In 2007, the Maoist rebels joined in a transitional government and placed their weapons under UN supervision (Shrestha, 2010). Eventually, all political parties at the time decided to abolish monarchy completely and declare Nepal a Federal Democratic Republic on May 28, 2008.

With an aim to recover the country in term of poverty reduction and increasing employment, the first Three Year Interim Plan (TYIP) (2007/08-2009/10) was compiled immediately after the peace accord with Maoist party. However, the implementation of this plan failed miserably. Maoist party took on the government after winning the majority of seats during the first election after the peace agreement. However, their economic policy

did not win the trust of perspective investors. Therefore, accomplishment was scarce during the implementation of the first TYIP.

The second TYIP of 2010-2013 saw even deeper integration of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) such as "creating dignified and gainful employment opportunities, reducing economic inequality, ensuring regional balances, improving living standard of the common Nepali by eliminating social exclusion" (Pyakuryal, 2013: 26). The main aim of this plan was to lift Nepal up from the status of Least Developed Country (LDC) to developing country. However, Nepal is forecast to have a long path ahead of them to graduate from LDCs. "… calculating IMF's forecasts for the period 2011-2016, the UNCTAD projects that Nepal can achieve income threshold of US$1086 in 28.8 years." (Pyakyryal, 2013: 27).

2.2.1. Nepal's development plans in touch with MDGs

Nepal started its commitment with MDGs from the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-2007) which was characterized as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Even though the international influence on the development planning of the nation had been visible since the early 1990s, international policy started entering into Nepal's national scheme more strongly from the Tenth Plan onward which started to incorporate MDGs into its strategy framework. It was focused on reducing poverty through private sector-led economic growth. The Three-Year Interim Plan (TYIP) (2006/07-2009/10) did the same thing but emphasized more on rural development and inclusion of socially marginalized groups. The next TYIP of 2010/11-2013/14 continued to call for greater focus on necessary areas if MDGs of Nepal are to be achieved in 2015. In 2010, Nepal adopted a national plan, sector-based strategies, and targeted programmes and carried out a resource needs assessment to ensure that it would stay on track to meet those targets. (UN Nepal, 2013)

According to Nepal MDGs Progress Report of 2013, Nepal "has made significant progress in achieving its MDGs."[4] However, the report also points out that many other goals concerning health, environment and global partnership are not likely to be achieved. It proposes suggestions of priorities that the next TYIP should include in sectors of poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality and women empowerment, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environment sustainability and global partnership for development.

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[4] Nepal's Millennium Development Goals Progress Report 2013, United Nations Country Team Nepal and Government of Nepal National Planning Commission

2.3. Political instability

"Slow development in Nepal is always linked to political instability."

(Pyakyrual, 2013: 34).

Over the course of twelve years from 1990 to 2002, Nepal suffered from a high degree of political instability. More than fourteen governments were formed; parliaments and cabinets were dissolved, and then reinstated for numerous times but improvements were nowhere to be seen. This instability is by no mean restricted to the post-monarchy period but even goes back to 1975. From 1975 up to 1990, even though the king remained in his throne, the government was reshuffled "approximately 0.56 and 1.18 times per year" (Koirala, Gyanwaly and Shrestha, 2005: 1).

From 1990 to 2008, fourteen prime ministers took the office. The shortest tenure was 190 days and the longest one lasted for 1284 days. Even after Nepal was declared the Federal Democratic Republic in 2008, there have been five prime ministers who came from three different parties. The cabinets were also stirred up several times due to the changes of the party in power. This prolonged high degree of political instability has seriously damaged Nepal's economic growth due to the constant switch of policies. "The extent of political instability in Nepal can be assessed by the number of major cabinet changes (including the prime minister's post) that has happened after singing of Comprehensive Peace Accord" (Pyakuryal, 2013: 34).

The constitution which was expected to be completed in May 2010 is still under making at the moment. In other words, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal has been without a constitution since 2008 when the abolishment of monarchy was made official; and elected local government and Village Development Committee (VDC) have also been absent since 2002. In May 2012, the 2008 elected Constituent Assembly, whose mission was to compile and finalize the constitution, announced its dissolution due to its failure in delivering the constitution after four years of working. Since then, the deadline of completing the constitution has been missed and reset numerous of times until now.

By the end of November 2014, the Constitutional-Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee failed to forward their report to the Constituent Assembly (CA) full House (the second CA established after the dissolve of the first one) after continuously extending the deadline from September of the same year. This has seriously deadlocked the process of drafting the constitution for Nepal. The politics seems to have polarized in two groups in

the CA of 31 parties with their well-defined stands. One group, which is led by the parties in power which have nearly two-thirds majority in the House, want to adopt the constitution which does not take notice of any ethnic identities of the indigenous communities while carving out provinces in the process of state restructuring. Another group, which is led by Maoist Party, wants Caste identities to be reflected in forming provinces.

2.4. Religions and Caste system

"Within Nepal, religion is a very important aspect of human life."

(Bista, 1990: 29)

In this part, religions and caste system in Nepal will be introduced together since these are two intertwined concepts. Speaking of religion in Nepal, one should clear their mind off of the common Western concept of religion which is the belief in a supreme, transcendent and supernatural realm or being. In Nepal, religion is never the question of whether or not one believes in the existence of a certain supernatural being and practices the religion accordingly. Religion, to Nepali, is a philosophy by which people live and an absolute ritual that they follow on daily basis. It has always been a central feature of life in Nepal, regardless which regions people come from. Religion in Nepali language is *Dharma* which also means duty, ethics, morality, rule, merit and pious act. "In Nepali usage, *Dharma* encompasses the performance of specified rites and ceremonies and obedience to ritual prescriptions appropriate to one's place in the social structure, as well as general ethical behavior covering individual actions of compassion, honesty, etc." (Bennett, 1983, cited in Pyakulryal and Suvedi, 2000: 8)

Nepal is constitutionally a Hindu country even though Nepali adheres to many religions. Hinduism and Buddhism are two major religions practiced by the majority of Nepali. "The state automatically assumes that everyone is Hindu unless they specifically declare themselves otherwise" (Bista, 1990: 30). However, the majority of Nepali is Hindu since the liberal form of Hinduism incorporates Buddhism as a branch within it as Buddha is seen as the incarnation of Vishnu – one of the Hindu trinity which includes Shiva (The Destroyer), Vishnu (The Preserver) and Brahman (The Creator).

Hinduism was imported to Nepal from India. It has an approximate number of 330 million Gods and Goddesses and is the most ancient religion in the world. Native Nepali are born

and die with it. They do not distinguish practicing Hinduism with daily activities as something special or outstanding; it belongs to their daily routine. Every action they take and the morality guiding their actions can be extensively interpreted by Hinduism due to the enormous variety of Gods and Goddesses.

In Kathmandu, temples can be seen in every corner of the streets, both Hindu and Buddhist ones. Some of the most important Hindu temples and Buddhist stupas are found in the country's capital. Many families have an altar inside their house for worshiping Gods and Goddesses of their choices. The women of the family often take the responsibility of carrying out religious rituals.

Myths are a significant part of Hinduism in term of educating its devotees. It is necessary to emphasize that myths are not folk tales or fairy tales (even if a Nepali would insist so). Myths are religious stories which are used to explain the existence of certain Gods or Goddesses, rituals, festivals and practices. They are not necessarily required to entail any moral lessons or messages; even though they often do due to the modification of the myths every time they are passed on orally from one individual to another. In these modern days, aside from their grandparents or parents, children learn about these myths through televised dramas. It is worth noticing that the generation which has grown up and chosen the path of becoming development workers mostly belongs to those of modern days (born during late 80s and grew up during 90s and 2000s) and has been more or less exposed to oversea influence (through education, television or internet, etc.).

Hinduism plays a much greater role than just being a religion in Nepal. For thousands of years up till now, it has been the foundation of the hierarchy of the society, known as caste (or *varna*) system.

In Vedas, the most ancient document in Sanskrit on which Hinduism was based on, it is said that when the body of Purusha – the universe-parading spirit, was divided to form humans, his mouth became the Brahmin, his two arms were made into the Kshatrya, his two thighs the Vaisyas; and from his two feet the Shudra was born. Therefore, the "social roles division" is that the Brahmins can talk to Gods so they are the priests; Kshatryas are warriors; the Vasisyas are merchants and artisans who provide money for the priests and the warriors; the Shudras are at the bottom of the caste ladder who are laborers and farmers and also the foundation of the whole society. Throughout history of thousands of years,

this system has developed to be much more complicated with different names of caste emerging from particular regions and communities.

The caste system is actually the foundation of the very important concept in Hinduism which has been mentioned above: *Dharma*. Dharma or the social role and duties of a person is determined primarily by birth and caste. Once one is categorized into their own dharma, they have no other choices than fulfilling their pre-determined duties. A good example can be taken from one of the most ancient and important scriptures of Hinduism called Baghavad Gita which depicts a long and complex war (called Mahabaratha) between two kingdoms. In this scripture, Krishna (an incarnation of Vishnu, one of the Hindu trinity), told a warrior named Arjun: "Having regard to your own duty also, you ought not to falter, for there is nothing better for a Kshatrya than a righteous battle." It means that once one is born into Kshatrya caste, one has already had no other options than to become a warrior because it is their dharma which is determined since their birth. Then, by fulfilling one's dharma in life no matter what caste one belongs to, one hopes to be reborn into a higher being in the next life. This belief is called *Samsara* or better known as reincarnation which means once one dies, one's soul is transferred to another living being as it is being born. The ultimate goal is not to be reborn into a Brahmin but to be released from this cycle of rebirth and transformed into a transcendent being.

The law that binds all of this together is *karma* which can be simply described as: "The doer of good becomes good. The doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action." The belief in the concept of *Karma* can also be used to analyze ethics of development translators and brokers through the process of brokerage.

In 1854, Muluki Ain (Old Civil Code) for the very first time codified law governing civil matters in Nepal. It recognized the caste system as a legal social order in the attempt of the elite class to raise their social status to even higher. "The Civil Code had four-fold caste hierarchy: (1) Tagaddhari (Sacred thread wearing or Twice-born), including the Bahun-Chhetris; (2) Matawali (Liquor drinking, i.e. indigenous peoples); (3) Pani nachalne choi chhito halnu naparne (Castes from whom water is not acceptable and contact with whom does not require purification by sprinkling of water); and (4) Pani nachlne choi chito halnu parne (Castes from whom water is not acceptable and contact with whom requires purification by sprinkling of water), including Sarki, Damai, Kami, Gaine, Sunar, Badibhad, Cunara, Pode, Hurke and Cyamakhalak" (Krishna B. Bhattachan, Tej B. Sunar and Yasso Kanti Bhattachan, 2009: 2). There were rules about which caste was supposed

to dress in which costumes and ornaments to distinguish among different castes. Violators would be severely punished.

Most of papers discussing caste system in Nepal nowadays focus on the discrimination against the "untouchables" or *Dalits* (UNRC 2013, World Bank 2006, ActionAid 2004, etc.) which is the lowest caste in Nepal (coming from Shudra caste). In 1963, the caste-based discrimination was abolished by king Mahendra, or so it was commonly believed. Some skeptic Nepali scholars, however, claimed that king Mahendra did not abolish caste-based discrimination but only neutralized the wording when he amended the Civil Code so that the caste system would continue without criticism (Krishna B. Bhattachan, Tej B. Sunar and Yasso Kanti Bhattachan, 2009).

Another important legal milestone of caste system in Nepal was the Constitution drafted in 1990. It described the country as "multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and democratic" and stated that all citizens are "equal irrespective of religion, race, gender, caste, tribe or ideology" (Bennett, 2005: 7). The Constitution also gave all communities the right to preserve and promote their language, script and culture, to educate children in their mother tongue, and to practice their own religion (World Bank, 2006). However, due to some other major conservative restraints, this Constitution still spared spaces for race, caste and especially gender discrimination. Eventually, in 1991, caste-based discrimination was announced to be criminal offense by an amendment of the Civil Code. However, this legal frame work has not proven effective so far despite the many international treaties that Nepal has signed on this issue. (UNRC, 2013)

The caste-based discrimination now in urban areas is less serious than in rural areas. Even though the concept of caste is still engraved in the mind of most Nepali, even young people, the exposure to oversea education and culture has been loosing up the tight knot of caste-based perception. However, in remote areas, the existence of caste-based discrimination is still very visible. In a case study of caste-based discrimination in Nepal conducted by UNRC in 2013 in one particular rural district, it was reported that the discrimination against communities of low-caste Dalits manifested in many forms of public, political, social, private and employment spheres. Dalits were deprived from the water supply because they were "untouchable". The high caste villagers did not want to touch the water that Dalits touched because it was supposedly impure. The participation of Dalits in political activities was generally low. Those who had become members of certain political parties felt that they were provided access to the parties only because of the

binding laws of reserving membership for women, Dalits and Janajatis (another low-caste community). When a member of Dalit community attempts to or pursues marriage with a non-Dalit community member, he/she will expose themselves to the vulnerability of being harassed by the upper caste community in their local residence (UNRC, 2013).

> "We don't accept food from a Dalit neither do we allow them to enter our homes. We can show respect to our departed ancestors by following these practices, we can't afford to displease them." A Brahmin does not eat plain rice and curry cooked by middle class people; the rice necessarily should have little butter added to it. At the same, a Brahmin should not be offered half a cup of milk; the cup needs to be filled to the maximum.[5]

Besides, as mentioned above, the issue of the caste system is now the main barrier preventing the Constituent Assembly to come to consensus on the nation's constitution. Clearly, even though the caste system was technically abolished more than 50 years ago, it still remains significant in today's Nepal.

2.5. Civil society organizations in Nepal

Acknowledging the density of NGOs population in Nepal, one would be surprised to find out that the history of civil society organizations in the nation is rather short in comparison with other South Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka or India.

During the period of Payanchat (partyless) regime, activities of international NGOs in Nepal was under very strict management by the government. "The Social Services National Coordination Council regulated and supervised the NGOs, while the Social Welfare National Coordination Council (SWNCC) handled majority of the funding agencies. The Queen was the chairperson, and the presence of international NGOs (INGOs) in Nepal was regulated from the Royal Palace. During this period, it was illegal for anyone to engage in development activities in Nepal without the Government's permission. Under the Panchayat regime, the number of NGOs grew slowly from 10 in 1960 to 37 in 1987 (ADB, 2005).

In 1990, Nepal's political scheme entered a new chapter of constitutional system and there were drastic changes in policy. The regulation of civil society organizations management therefore also changed. The SWNCC was reorganized to Social Welfare Council which

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[5] A part of an interview with a 59-year-old Majhi, Khotang district, published in *Listening to people living in poverty in Nepal – analysis of life history cases*, New Era and Action Aid Nepal, 2004, p. 127.

has been in charge of managing civil society organizations until today. The Social Welfare Act of 1992 is still in force at the present regarding NGOs and INGOs regulations.

The second significant change after the release of the 1991 constitution was the funding regulations. 40 years during Payanchat regime, foreign aid had to go through the government's management, which obviously raised the questions of corruption. However, since 1991, foreign assistance funding has flowed straight to NGOs and resulted in the number of NGOs skyrocketing to more than 30,000[6] NGOs as of December 2014.

Any NGOs that want to operate in Nepal have to register with the District Administration Office of the district where their office is based and renew their registration annually. NGOs receiving funds directly from foreign donors have to register with SWC and renew it yearly with audited accounts by government-authorized auditors. If they cannot fulfill these requirements, the registration will be revoked. Aside from that, a project proposal and application along with other details shall also be submitted to the SWC so that their programs or projects are approved by the government as well to be implemented (SW act 1992).

International NGOs, however, have been put under stricter regulations since 2003 due to the government's concern of Maoist rebels at the time receiving financial support from outside the country. INGO's staff used to enjoy free visa application and extension. However, after 2003, this practice was no longer available. Aside from registering, they also have to sign an agreement with SWC and many other reports have to be submitted to SWC as well during the implementation of their programs or projects. As of December 2014, SWC's document lists 189 INGOs[7] working under agreement with SWC. During the period of Maoist insurgency, many NGOS were believed to align with this party and support them financially. Some NGOs were also threatened by this party. "In August 2003, rebels posted notices in three central districts of Nepal warning citizens about working for Save the Children (United States)" (ADB, 2005).

However, all the regulations applied to NGOs will be eventually subject to change in line with the completion of the new constitution in the near future.

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[6] The official 1126-page document published on the website of Social Welfare Council (SWC) provides the list of 30,284 registered NGOs in Nepal. However, in an article published by Kathmandu Insider in 2011, then Deputy Director of SWC Uma Paudyal also provided her estimation of the total number of roughly 50,000 NGOs in Nepal including both registered and unregistered. The reason for this unofficial number is that for Nepali NGOs, registering with SWC is not mandatory; they are only obligated to register with District Administration Office of the district where they base their head office.

[7] http://www.swc.org.np/SWC%20rel%20Doc/List%20of%20INGOs%20071%20Shrawan.zip

The relationship between Nepal's government and NGOs has been intense since they technically compete for the funding. The growing trend now is that donors would rather channel their funding through NGOs than government-run development programs. There have been discussions about tightening even more measures to maintain transparency and accountability of national and international NGOs.

Along with the delay in the process of composing the new constitution, National newspapers in Nepal in December 2014 have been circulating updates on these new measures concerning civil society organizations among which requires all financial transactions of all INGOs to be brought under government banking system. Meanwhile, Nepali NGOs shall have to make their transactions through the banks as fixed by the Office of the Auditor General.[8] This development came after INGOs and NGOs in Nepal have been widely criticized for their failure to maintain accountability, which, according to SWC, resulted in billions of rupees going uncounted for. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare has also drafted its ten-year strategic plan emphasizing the need to ensure INGOs and NGOs governance in the country.

2.6. Conclusion

Needless to say, Nepal is evidently among the world's most unfortunate countries in all aspects possible. Despite the heavy presence of more than 30,000 NGOs in the countries, the existence of the wide varieties of development programs, Nepal still has a long journey ahead until they can escape the status of Least Developed Country. That only puts more weight on the roles of development brokers and translators who are working to develop the troublesome nation. The constant change of leadership, hence policy, certainly gives the translation and brokerage process some serious obstacles.

Given the increasing complexity of the political and economic spheres and the tightened regulations against NGOs' activities in Nepal, the roles of development brokers and translators in the process of policies translation have become increasingly significant in Nepal at the local, national and even international level. They can be found wherever aid projects are present in Nepal. When asked "how important do you think your work is?" a grass-root facilitator of a biofuel project in Okhaldhunga district, Nepal, with confidence, said: "If my work were not important, they (his employment organization) would have kicked me out a long time ago."

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[8] The Himalayan Times, Vol. XIV, Kathmandu, Friday, December 5, 2014, front page.

In this current setting of Nepal, it might be the right time for its government to consider the proposal of post-development thinkers for *alternatives to development*. If the heavy presence of NGOs, INGOs and their programs in Nepal has not been effective in improving the livelihood of its people and economy, a consideration of changing this situation ought to be in order.

In the context where the state only concerns about controlling over the funding instead of implementing effectively their three-year development plans so that the economy grows and the people's lives are improved, development brokers and translators with the righteous work ethics are the hope for bringing positive changes to Nepal. The complex and close-knit society of stratification in Nepal makes the acceptance of outside forces almost impossible without mediators at every level of interfaces among any actors. This is the reason for the studies of development brokers in the particular social context of Nepal as the studies "have tended to impose a particular kind of social analysis in which brokers are seen as intermediaries between development institutions and peasant society. Brokers are, as it were, by-products of the situation …" (Mosse and Lewis, 2005:13)

In the next chapter, I will proceed to present the theoretical framework of the thesis.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: POST-DEVELOPMENT, ALTERNATIVES TO DEVELOPMENT AND BROKERAGE

This part discusses the common misperception of post-development school of thoughts, how it should be understood for the progress of development work and how the research questions relate to the search that post-development thinkers call for. Besides, since some of the key words and phrases used in the thesis bear meanings which are easy to be misunderstood, uncommon and specific to the topic; such as "broker", "translator", "alternative development" or "alternatives to development". The explanation of terminology is also provided for clarification; here, the intangible nature of "brokers and translators" as a role is also discussed.

As pointed out in the conclusion of the Context chapter, the heavy presence of international institutions, INGOs or NGOs, etc. in Nepal has not been beneficial for the development of Nepal in general. More than 30,000 officially registered NGOs and another approximately 20,000 unregistered working in Nepal, presumably with the ultimate objective of developing Nepal, have apparently not brought about changes that they hoped for but the flow of foreign aid is uninterrupted. Poverty persists for the vast majority of Nepali despite more than 40 years of development effort. This is not an unpopular opinion on the development of Nepal. Several other scholars from Nepal themselves and other parts of the world also agree to this sentiment (Bista 1991; Panday 1999, 2011, 2012; Leve 2004; Khadka 1991; Karan and Ishii 1994, etc.).

Nevertheless, in the complicated context of Nepal, it would be unfair to blame the failure solely on the civil society. A major part of it comes from the insufficiency of Nepali government as well. Nepal's failed development could be resulted from the misdirected government's motivation which is rarely at the nation's best interests. The characteristic of the politic economy is defined by the patronage practices in order to exploit resources: the sale of offices and political favors, bribery, unproductive donor programs, etc. Some resources such as national airline or the electricity board which could be utilized for economic growth are instead exploited for the benefit of an elite minority, which costs Nepal its development (Bell, 2014).

This is a vicious circle. Since the beginning of development aid era roughly 40 years ago, Nepal has become massively dependent on external aid. "Although its objectives have rarely met, foreign aid continues to shape Nepal's development's priorities, modalities and

outcomes. Currently, around 70 percent of the country's development expenditure is financed by external aid and this has remained more or less constant for the last four decades." (Sharma, 2011: 1) The country itself has also become incompetent in mobilizing internal resources for its sustainable development. This includes both public and private sectors. The popularity of NGOs is poorly interpreted as "they bring money and do charity" among the working class, which results in the mindset of dependence on external help instead of self-help.

There is no denial that there have been successful development projects like those implemented by the organization in question in this thesis. But positive results like this remain modest.

Then the question comes naturally: What should be done?

Nepal's current situation is eminently similar to those that have long been discussed among scholars of post-development who have observed the failure of post-second-world-war development all over the Third World countries. Reading Ferguson's article on Lesotho (1994), one would feel as if he were talking about Nepal. It is essential to position my study in the theoretical framework of post-development since they call for "alternatives to development", a concept which is still under construction, but could very well be a suggestion for the escape of Nepal from its foreign aid trap. By analyzing the key role of broker and translators in development works, particularly in the complexity of Nepal's society, I hope to contribute to the on-going construction of "alternatives to development" the consideration and recognition of the human resource – the driving force in achieving the ultimate goals of supporting poor countries. As we will see shortly in the next part, for the past decades, development as a concept has been through major changes in ideologies and methodology; priorities have been shifting back and forth; but what remains unchanged is the development workers who, despite uncertainty and transitions, hold the key role in transforming whichever type of "development paradigm" into reality. In the present, "alternative development" is the mainstream paradigm, but no one is certain if it is going to change in the near future. The point is that whatever type of development might be operated for the sake of the Third World countries, the role of development workers remains vital because they are the brokers and translators who turn words on papers into reality.

Moreover, it appears that post-development thinkers have a consensus on advocating social grass-root movements for alternatives to development; these movements need actors who have "one foot in both camps" at least to coordinate them. These brokers and translators can easily adapt knowledge from local peoples due to the advantage of being locals themselves; and they can also combine the local knowledge with the knowledge gained from their encounters with the outside world to produce new knowledge that is useful for the transition to the post-development paradigm.

3.1. "Alternative Development" vs. "Alternatives to Development"

Even though the classical Western idea of development which paired development with modernization has been said to be dead several times for the past few decades, it still persists (Gudynas, 2011). The early response to this death was the proposal of alternative development which redefined the purposes of development. Those who are involved in development field must have heard quite an earful of participatory and people-centered approach. The mainstream development "has been moving away from the focus on economic growth toward human development" (Pieterse, 1998: 343). And this has been claimed to be the base for sustainable development. Pieterse also points out that it has been more widely accepted that development is successful when communities are involved (ibid.).

Hettne (1990) provides a somewhat explicit definition of what he calls "another development" or "alternative development":

- Need-oriented (being geared to meeting human needs, both materials and nonmaterial).

- Endogenous (stemming from the heart of each society, which defines on sovereignty its values and the vision of its future).

- Self-reliant (implying that each society relies primarily on its own strength and resources in terms of its members' energies and its natural and cultural environment).

- Ecologically sound (utilizing rationally the resources of the biosphere in full awareness of the potential of local ecosystems as well as the global and local outer limits imposed on present and future generations).

- Based on structural transformation (so as to realize the conditions of self-management and participation in decision-making by all those affected by it, from the rural or urban community to the world as a whole, without which the goals above could not be achieved)

(Hettne, 1990: 153-154)

Perhaps thanks to somewhat utopian definitions like those of Hettne, alternative development has made its way to become "the other mainstream development" acknowledged by major civil society organizations. This was not a difficult task since alternative development shares the same goals with those of the mainstream development, using different means: people-centered and participatory. For a long time now, the term "bottom-up" might have become familiar with those working in development field since this seems to be the key point of alternative development which is "development from below and 'below' refers both to community and to NGOs" (Pieterse, 2001: 75).

There are many ways of understanding alternative development. And as mentioned above, alternative development has been built as the opposition to the mainstream development; so opposite that it created the influential motion: if the mainstream development shifts, it will also have to shift (Pieterse, 1998). Hettne (1990) had tried to establish a sharp boundary between mainstream development and alternative development at the time but failed to do so. Due to the dependent characteristics of alternative, "whichever aspect of mainstream development the spotlight is on, alternative development is held up as its counterpoint." (Pieterse, 2001: 89) For example, if mainstream development is viewed as state-led, alternative development is associated with independent actors such as NGOs or social movements. If the mainstream development is said to be often accompanied with modernization, alternative development advocates for demodernization. Meanwhile, others consider it as a paradigm that ignites a complete break with mainstream development. Also, some see alternative development as "a loosely interconnected series of alternative proposals and methodologies" (Pieterse, 1998: 345). Or it can be understood as concerned with local development and alternative practices on the ground. There has been no universal consensus on the view of alternative development.

Oddly enough, even though the claim to an alternative development paradigm has been growing strongly among major NGOs and gradually becoming mainstream, there have

been few efforts to systematically theorizing this paradigm.[9] Pieterse (2001) thinks that there might be several reasons for this. First, alternative development is prone to be "practice-oriented" then "theoretically-inclined" (2001: 91). Among important arguments of alternative development is the logic that development ought to be people-centered; hence genuine development knowledge should come from the people instead of experts. In the early stage of literature dedicated to alternative development, Wolfe already found himself in "the world of peoples being incorporated into the real process of economic growth and societal change with little or no control over the terms of their incorporation; of their organized efforts to participate in 'development' or, more often, defend themselves against it; and of the ideologists and activists aspiring to guide, mobilize, or 'conscientize' them" (Wolfe, 1981: 6). This logic has become the central argument of alternative development as the concept was developing later. Secondly, alternative development stretches its arm to quite a wide range of elements such as participatory development, people-centered development, human development, grassroots movements, empowerment, human rights, ecofeminism, etc. This characteristic of alternative development in fact does not facilitate achieving a coherent body of theory. "Many alternative development sources do not refer to one another but keep on generating alternatives from the ground up, reinventing the wheel without outlining fundamentals or generating 'expert' debate." (ibid.)

Alternative development, despite the attractive features it has presented so far, according to some other post-development thinkers (such as Escobar or Pieterse), has not proven to be a paradigm that offers stable ground for the operation of development. Therefore, it might be a fair time to consider "alternatives to development" as Escobar (1995) proposed.

Alternative development, even though contributed greatly in redirecting mainstream development to a people-centered and sustainable perspective, still operates based on external aid. Alternatives to development, on the other hand, seek for endogenous development that gives people and communities the autonomy to their own changes.

"Alternatives to development" are "the abandonment of the whole epistemological and political field of postwar development" (Escobar 1991: 675). Escobar sees "alternatives to

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[9] Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (1975), Nerfin (1977), Wolfe (1981), Klauss and Korten (1984), Drabek (1987), Hettne (1990), Max-Neef (1991), Friedmann (1992), Rahman (1993), Carmen (1996) and journals such as International Foundation for Development Alternatives or Alternatives.

development" as "social movements"[10] from grassroots level. To think about "alternatives to development", there is a need for "a theoretical-practical transformation of the notions of development, modernity and the economy" (ibid.). And this transformation can be achieved based on the practices of social movements, especially those which have already been emerging in developing countries in resistance to "post-World War II hegemonic social orders" (ibid.).

Alternatives to development are often misunderstood as the rejection or abandonment of development because they were rooted from the post-development school of thought which calls for the "end to development". This shall be examined more carefully in the next part of this chapter where post-development school of thoughts is discussed. Nonetheless, Rahnema and Bawtree concluded one of the most popular books on post-development with an inspiring insight:

> "The contributors [to The Post-Development Reader] generally agree that the people whose lives have often been traumatized by development changes do not refuse to accept change. Yet what they seek is of a quite different nature. They want change that would enable them to blossom 'like a flower from the bud' (a good definition in Webster's dictionary for what development should be!); that could leave them free to change the rules and the contents of change, according to their own culturally defined ethics and aspiration."

> (Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997: 385)

It means that the project of bettering people's lives must not be disregarded. The call for alternatives to development is "a call for a new way of changing, of developing, of improving" (Matthews, 2004: 376-377). It must not be read as a disbelief in the possibility for changing the society for the better, nor the contempt of the desire of those who suffer in poverty to see the improvement in their situations. The search for alternatives to development is the search for "less material notions of prosperity that make room for the dimensions of self-reliance, community, art or spirituality" (Sachs, 2010: xiii). These alternatives, if achieved, will help people and communities become more resistant to economic crises or shortage of resources.

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[10] Imagining a Post-Development Era? Critical Thought, Development and Social Movements, presented at the International Seminar: "Inter-Regional Dialogue on Development, Democracy and Critical Thought", held at the Center for Development Studies (CENDES) of the Universidad Central de Venezuela (Caracas, October 1-6, 1990)

3.2. Post-development school of thoughts

The Environment Project Manager from the organization of my internship once told me a story of the village where he was born and raised. Back when the village was still isolated and the majority of villagers were farmers, money was never a significant concern because they sufficiently self-supplied. They grew vegetables, planted rice and farmed cattle for milk and poultry for meat. From his perspective, the community was consolidating, happy and satisfied with their lives. Since a new road was open nearby and products started to pour in, NGOs also came in to announce that the villagers were poor and needed to be developed. Then there were households which were doing better than others; the villagers were exposed to products that they had not known before and wanted to purchase them. Money suddenly became the most significant concern; people grew miserable worrying about not earning enough money and started to leave the village looking for jobs elsewhere. This demonstrates the core concern of post-development thinkers: changing what should not be changed, as Vandana Shiva points out:

> "Culturally perceived poverty need not be real material poverty: subsistence economies which serve basic needs through self-provisioning are not poor in the sense of being deprived. Yet the ideology of development declares them so because they don't participate overwhelmingly in the market economy, and do not consume commodities provided for and distributed through the market."

(Shiva, 1988: 10)

When post-development is put on the table for discussion, there is a common misunderstanding that authors of this school of thought are completely against the very idea of development itself as in bettering lives of those in needs. This might lead to mistaking post-development initiatives as destructive, inhumane and backward. This is not the case even though post-development thinkers should take a part of the blame for it because of the ambiguities in their literature. Therefore, it is essential to clarify that the concept of "development" opposed by these authors refers to theories and practices which are commonly associated with "development" of post-World War II era (Matthews, 2004). The "development" that President Truman started in 1949 with his inaugural address:

"We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.[11]"

(Cited in Sachs ed., 1992: 1)

By using the word "underdeveloped" in such context, Truman changed the meaning of development and created a euphemism "used ever since to allude either discreetly or advertently to the era of American hegemony" (Esteva, in Sachs ed., 1992: 2) as this new understanding of development obviously rooted in capitalist ideology. The post-World War II development hence refers to a wide range of practices and theories based on the premise that some areas of the world are developed and some are underdeveloped; and areas which are not developed should go about accomplishing "development". Esteva writes in agony:

"On that day, 2 billion people became underdeveloped. In a real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were, in all their diversity, and were transmogrified into an inverted mirror of others' reality: a mirror that belittles them and sends them off to the end of the queue, a mirror that defines their identity, which is really that of a heterogeneous and diverse majority, simply in the terms of a homogenizing and narrow minority."

(Esteva, in Sachs ed., 1992: 2)

Therefore, the post-development rejects this very body of knowledge. They are not against the idea that a society can be subjected to a process of transformation, which will bring a better life for its population. That is the reason why Escobar wants to "unmake the Third World" (1995), meaning it is no use in reforming the post-World Word II development and the division of First World and Third World should be abolished.

"Development was – and continues to be for the most part – a top-down ethnocentric, and technocratic approach, which treat people and cultures as abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of "progress". Development was conceived not as a cultural process (culture was a residual variable, to disappear with the advance of modernization) but instead a system of more or less universally applicable technical interventions intended to deliver some "badly needed" goods to

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[11] Harry S. Truman, Inaugural Address, 20 January 1949, in *Document on American Foreign Relations*, Connecticut: Princeton University Press, 1967

a "target" population. It comes to no surprise that development became a force so destructive to Third World cultures, ironically in the name of people's interests."

(Escobar, 1995: 44)

During the 1980s, some scholars and activists already expressed their dissatisfaction and disagreement with the concept and practices of development. They did not call for a reform of development or an alternative version of it but the dismissal of it all (Escobar 1985, 1987, 1988; Esteva 1985, 1987; Rahnema 1985; Latouche 1986; Rist and Sabelli 1986). The perspectives of post-development then took shape in the 90s with first the criticism of treating development as an equivalency of modernization as Latouche once said: "I have, in fact, been at pains to emphasize how attempts to universalize Western styles and standards of living have failed" (1993: 23). This group of theorists feels that the concept of development is absolutely corrupt and call for total abandonment of development paradigm.

James Ferguson, one of the leading authors in post-development school of thought, says "it [development] is a machine for reinforcing and expanding the exercise of bureaucratic state power, which incidentally takes 'poverty' as its point of entry" (1990: 255). Later, in 1992, a collection of critiques toward development edited by Wolfgang Sachs started to make strongly controversial claims: "The last forty years can be called the age of development. This epoch is coming to an end. The time is ripe to write its obituary." (Sachs ed., 1992: 1) This statement, supported by 17 authors contributing to the book The Development Dictionary many of whom come from the South, certainly struck the development community like lightning. "This debate has brought together practitioners and academics from many social science disciplines and fields." (Escobar, 2006: 18)

In 1995, Escobar, one of the pioneers of post-development, called for the unmaking of the Third World. In his book Encountering Development, which is among some major works of post-development, Escobar points out the characteristics of development practice as being cultural bias, misunderstanding and failed promises. Escobar insists on the belief that Third World countries are misleadingly grouped and named so. He believes that there is no absolute universal model of economic and social development that could be applied to all so-called Third World countries in the same manner due to the extreme diversity of these societies. Serious concerns are raised on traditional and cultural values being destroyed by the concept of modernity which is, according to Escobar, mistakenly considered as the

measurement of development. Therefore, post-development advocates celebrate the grass-root level, the subaltern groups, if you will, "that continue to enact a cultural polities of difference as they struggle to defend their places, ecologies and cultures" (Escobar, 2000: 15). They reject development paradigm because they believe the populations are turned into "object" of development, legitimizing intervention in the "Third World" by "developed nations".

Through the use of Michel Foucault's theory of power, Escobar believes that power is not only for the rich or the powerful to hold over others but it is also produced through everything we do. *Either development projects fail or succeed, they still establish a strong terms over the way in which people in poor countries live.* Escobar once again confirms Esteva's claim of the discreet agenda of "American hegemony" (Esteva, in Sachs ed., 1992: 6-25). Based on these observations, Escobar provides rather explicit references of post-development as following:

> "The possibility of creating different discourses and representations that are not so mediated by the construct (ideologies, metaphors, language, premises, etc.) of development.
>
> Therefore, the need to change the practices of knowing and doing and the 'political economy of truth' that defines the development regime.
>
> Therefore, the need to multiply the centres and agents of knowledge production – in particular, to give salience to the forms of knowledge produced by those who are supposed to be the 'objects' of development so that they can become subjects of their own right.
>
> Two particularly useful ways to do this are, first, by focusing on the adaptations, subversions and resistance that local peoples effect in relation to development interventions (…) and, second, by highlighting the alternative strategies produced by social movements as they encounter development projects."
>
> (Escobar, in Ziai ed., 2007: 20-21)

The interpretation of "the death of development" is varied. It might simply mean development is not working anymore; not reducing poverty any longer but contributing to increasing it (Stiglitz, 2006). Development might have turned into something else that is taken advantages by those with the "will to govern" (Duffield, 2002). It might be the end of an era in which development is still growing strong but not solely "under Western eyes" anymore (Mohanty, 1991). This could also mean that development needs to happen with

less reliability on the knowledge of experts and more on local's attempts at "constructing more humane and culturally and ecologically sustainable worlds, and the important point of taking seriously social movements and grass-root mobilizations as the basis for moving towards the new era" (Shiva, 1993; Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997; Rist, 1997; Esteva and Prakash, 1999; cited in Escobar, 2006). "The concept of intervention, then needs deconstructing so that it is seen for what it is – an ongoing, socially constructed, negotiated, experiential and meaning-creating process, not simply the execution of an already-specified plan of action with expected behavioural outcome." (Long, 2001: 25)

Post-development and anti-development are not to be merged into one school of thought. "Post-development theory and practice is different from anti-development sentiments in that it does not deny globalization or modernity, but wants to find some ways of living with it and imaginatively transcending it" (Hoogvelt, 2001: 172). As clarified above, post-development thinkers are not against development in the sense of a progress or improvement of the economic and social status of a nation. They oppose the reality that development is used as a shield to cover the desire of colonization (in a different form) and destroy the local settings, which leads to the call for abandoning development.

Nonetheless, in this framework of post-development thinking that calls for a complete break from development and establishing alternatives to it, a need of a transition to this new paradigm is inevitable. It is essential to acknowledge the actors that could potentially contribute to this major transition. And in this setting, development agents who act as brokers and translators, even though still under the old development paradigm, rise as an actor holding extremely crucial role. As the central claim of post-development is "knowledge deployed in development is a product of epistemic perspective of the West" (Jakimow, 2008: 312), they tend to critique modernization-as-development for over-generalizing in terms of implementing policies, which leads to ignoring and even destroying the local culture (Müller, 2006). This raises the need for a mediatory actor who has a sound understanding of how the concept of development could be appropriately interpreted in the local setting in order to "bracket" (Shrestha, 2006) the knowledge differences.

3.3. Brokerage: Brokers and Translators

Brokerage is a phenomenon that includes brokers and translators as actors. In other words, brokers and translators are the agents of brokerage; without these actors, the phenomenon

of brokerage would not exist. Consequently, these concepts emerged and developed together as we are about to see in their development through the course of history since the 50s until now.

First and foremost, in order to avoid any ambiguity in the use of the terms "brokers and translators" in this thesis, it ought to be explicitly understood that these terms do not refer to an actually existing or tangible status, to neither any official nor informal position in any institution, or to an "emic notion calling on conceptions which exist at a conscious level" (Bierschenk et al, 2002: 19). Neither are they of the awareness of the persons involved. No one is promoted to the position of broker; nobody identifies herself as a broker. The functions of "brokers and translators" are embedded into their literal and tangible jobs (particularly development agents), positions or status. In other words, brokers and translators have "a *de facto* existence" (ibid., original emphasis). In the context presented in this thesis, these terms carry meanings which are not commonly interpreted in daily normative uses. For example, brokers are not the commercial brokers in the stock market and translators are not simply those of natural languages. As they are spoken of with various other identifications such as mediators or intermediaries, it does not in any way refer to those who are out to manipulate and make profit for themselves by taking advantages of their position as a middleman, even though for the sake of explaining and comprehending the terminology, some of the examples used to explain in the following might seem to imply it.

"Functions and activities of mediation or 'brokerage' are to be found in all societies. They are more or less prevalent, more or less specialized, more or less institutionalized." (Bierschenk, Chauveau and Olivier de Sardan, 2002: 2). Most generally, brokers are defined as those "who take advantage of the position at the interface between two social and cultural configurations" (ibid.).

In 1949, Gluckman and colleagues published a paper on the 'village chief in central British Africa' which deemed to be possibly one of the founding texts of the political anthropology of brokerage despite the fact that the authors did not use the terms such as broker, mediator or intermediary to identify the village chief. In the paper, the authors described an empirical research in central Africa during colonial period, focusing on the positions of the chiefs from two villages. These chiefs played the role of brokers on the interfaces between the domestic kinships in their own villages and the colonial political system. Gluckman especially emphasized the ambivalence position that the chiefs were

forced into. This ambivalence was intensified by the fact that they must enforce the rules set out by the colonial administration, even if they were contradictory with the chiefs' principles himself. Inevitably, they often found themselves caught between two value systems: the local traditional system and the modern colonial administration.

The concept of broker and brokerage then emerged as a classic figure of anthropological literature during the 50s and 60s; however soon vanished from the academic stage in the 70s. This literature fundamentally fell under the wing of political anthropology which was the major field of British socio-anthropology up to the 60s. Therefore, it mostly focused on political brokers. However, later on, Eric Wolf (1956) and Clifford Geertz (1960) unambiguously cultivated the ideas of the cultural broker in order to explain social and political transformation following decolonization in Mexico and Indonesia respectively. Wolf defined brokers as "group of people who mediate between community-oriented groups in communities and nation-oriented groups which operate through national institutions" (1956: 1075).

F.G. Bailey in the presentation of his ethnographic research in Orissa, India, identified brokers as "agents of social changes" (1959: 101). In the attempt to identify the brokers of a specific village in question, he presented a definition of the broker that was much closer to that of development:

> "The broker is a person with special knowledge and special contacts who can help the villager to get in touch with or manipulate the Administration or who can perform the same service in the other direction for an official."
>
> (ibid.)

Then came the rise of transactionalism, Boissevain recognized the broker as "a professional manipulator of people and information who brings about communication for a profit" (1974: 148). He claimed that in order to gain success as a broker, one ought to ensure her central location in networks, be able to manage the time to deal with social relations, and control over first order resources. These were critical elements of the process of brokerage. The broker's capital depended on the communication channels she controlled, while her credit would be what others believed to be her capital (ibid.: 159).

Toward the end to the 60s and early 70s, due to the rise of modernization theory, the new developmental framework considered brokers necessary but a temporary actor that would disappear soon when the new rational organizational forms were established (Lindquist,

2015). This is part of the reason why the concept of brokerage gradually lost its visibility as a focal of concern for anthropology at the end of the 70s. Besides, when the Third World entered the postcolonial era, structuralism (mainly Marxism) became dominant and the attention of anthropology subtly shifted from the concern with particular persons such as brokers to more particular circumstances that facilitated new forms of relations and brokerage (Vincent, 1978: 186). The 90s followed with post-structuralism in full swing. Questions concerning agency were efficiently marginalized when the emphasis now had been turned largely to the efficiency of power in disciplining and shaping individual subjectivities. "In this world, the local-level broker appeared increasingly insignificant in both empirical and analytic terms." (Lindquist, 2015: 6)

During the past decade, nonetheless, the concept of broker and brokerage has been reemerging more strongly in the scene of anthropology and become seemingly visible in more sites than it was before. Tourism, transnational migration, media and obviously development are among popular areas that have drawn the attention of anthropologists. The tour guide has become the key interest as an actor who does not simply mediate between already existing cultures anymore but also produces and encapsulates cultural authenticity. In the current context of Asia, licensed recruitment agencies have gained popularity among transnational migrant workers. These agencies are seen as brokers who mediate between migrants and host state bureaucracy. In the age of media and technology, journalists have also attracted the attention of anthropologists: how they broker news and images of subjects in question. Lastly, with the strong waves of INGOs and NGOs rising in the Third World countries, development aid has somewhat become an industry (Haan, 2009; Rooy, 2009, Holmen, 2010 and Duffield, 2012, etc.) which urges anthropologists to consider the roles of brokers in this process. In the book *Development Brokers and Translators* (Mosse and Lewis, 2006), the phenomenon of brokers is not only examined as actors participating the mediation between donors and potential beneficiaries, but also on other varieties of interfaces of the unpredictable implementation of development projects.

3.3.1. Brokers and translators in development

As I was searching for definitions of the concepts of brokers and translators in development previously established by scholars in the field, I already had a specific image of them in mind. This is because while conducting the research for this thesis, I also reflected on my working experiences with Oxfam, regarding both office works and field visits. I then connected them with the observation I recorded in Nepal and also relating

literature on development brokers and translators. As a result, the definitions and image of development brokers and translators were gradually built up to match with the concept of brokerage which is analyzed in this thesis, essentially in the context of Nepal. Among literature found, the scholars quoted below provided the definitions which were the closest to the image of the development brokers and translators recorded in Nepal. This is predictable and comprehendible because these scholars' own experiences and observation in the field have been accumulated over the years to a great extent; their literature reflects the reality of development in the countries of the South. Therefore, as I analyze the brokerage either at national policy level or project level in Nepal, I correlate my observation and research materials to the concept of brokers and translators illustrated by these scholars.

> "The fact that development agents are not trained to be mediators does not mean that this role does not exist, nor does it render the role inessential: it simply means that the role is not assumed, or only inadequately, notwithstanding its incorporation, its embeddedness into the concrete role played by the development agent in the field."

> (Olivier de Sardan, 2005: 169-170)

There is no complete and explicit definition of who is the broker and exactly what it is that she does during the process that is called "brokerage" in development. It can be simply understood that brokers are development agents in general. The development agents' vital task of brokerage is embedded deeply into society and the interaction among social actors. Olivier de Sardan, discussing development agents, thinks that they often assume "double function" as mediators between different types of knowledge.

> "He or she (development agents) is the spokesperson on behalf of technical-scientific knowledge and the mediator between technical-scientific knowledge and popular knowledge."

> (ibid. 169)

Under specific situations, development agents are "expected to be an extension worker, a missionary, a propagandist, a supervisor, a technician or a relay agent, or sometimes all of these in one" (ibid.). Languages translator, policies interpreter and middleman might be also added to the list. The work of constant translation "of policy goals into practical interests, practical interests back into policy goals" is devotedly and wisely conducted by the "skilled brokers" (projects managers, local staff, field workers etc.) who "read the

meaning of policies in different institutional languages" (Mosse, 2005: 9). During the brokerage process, development agents also need to ensure the "levels of project coherence": technical coherence, suitability of the project with national economic policy, donors' policies and the "internal dynamics" of the project itself (Olivier de Sardan, 2005: 140-142).

In addition to that, Bierschenk and colleagues, who dedicated an entire research on "local development brokers" in Africa, also give a narrow definition particularly for the case they were researching while stating that these "brokers" are the key actors in carrying out projects around African villages.

> "Local development brokers are the social actors implanted in a local arena (in whose politics they are directly or indirectly involved) and who serve as intermediaries who drain off (in direction of the social space corresponding to this arena) external resources in the form of development aid. (...) brokers represent the project's local social carriers, at the interface between the people (the 'targeted group') aimed at by the project and the development institutions."

> (Bierschenk et al, 2002).

Hypothetically, if development projects are considered the ideal manner of the development operation and the identity of the operator is disregarded, brokers stand as an equivalent of the local social bearers of the project. They are positioned in the interface between the target population and the development institution. They play the roles of both the represent of the local beneficiaries and the middleman of support and financial aid structures.

Escobar, in his book that claimed the downward of development: Encountering Development (1995) proposes some solutions for the puzzle of "alternatives" he himself pointed out. "A first approach (to these questions) is to look for alternative practices in the resistance grass-root groups present to dominant interventions." (ibid.: 222) He called this "local ethnographies" which, together with the deconstruction of development, "can be important elements for a new type of visibility and audibility of forms of cultural difference and hybridization". (ibid.: 223) Escobar saw the need of a translation process based on existing cultural differences. The brokers and translators (Mosse and Lewis, 2006) or the mediators (Olivier de Sardan, 2005) or the intermediaries are those who hold the responsibilities for this brokerage and translation process. They are also those who take

the leading part in the search for "alternatives to development" by facilitating the harmony of communication on the interface between actors within development practices.

4. METHODOLOGY: ACTOR-ORIENTED APPROACH

In this thesis, actor-oriented approach is used as a tool to identify key actors of encounters in many interfaces of development intervention at different levels and mapping the flow of information among them. The methodological principles of actor-oriented approach provide a useful entry to investigate the brokerage process at different levels of development intervention because "the concern of this work has been to understand how meanings associated with development are produced, contested and reworked in practice – and thus to illuminate the multiple significances that the term holds for actors involved in the development process." (Lewis et al., 1998: 8) Brokerage, in my argument, is among the most significant factors that lead to the success or failure of development intervention, especially in the complex setting of Nepali society. More importantly, brokers and translators are the key actors in this phenomenon of brokerage. Norman Long, one of the best-known representatives of actor-oriented approach, believes that the whole process of development intervention should be actor-driven and each actor is given a definite role (2001: 16). In my study, development workers, among actors of development intervention, are given the role of brokers and translators who mediate among other actors involved such as donors, partners, beneficiaries and Nepali government.

The role of brokers and translators is an intangible one, which means it cannot be spotted in their job descriptions or anywhere else physically. Brokerage is not an apparent process but embedded into daily tasks that development workers have to fulfill. Therefore, in order to analyze the role of development brokers and translators, I shall analyze the social spider web in which they play the key role of brokering and consequently have significant influence on the operation of development intervention. This analysis will be conducted with the general aim of actor-oriented approach which is "an ethnographic understanding of 'social life' of development project – from conceptualization to realization – as well as the responses and lived experiences of the variously located and affected social actors." (Long, 2001:14-15)

4.1. Interface Analysis

In order to analyze this social spider web, "interface encounters", the most important tool developed by Long for the actor-oriented approach, will be employed to a great extent.

In my thesis, the process of development intervention is seen to be deployed at many levels from national to grass-root and from policies to projects. In every level, there are many "interfaces" where "encounters" take place between many actors involved such as donors, beneficiaries, central government, local authority, partner NGOs, etc. In these encounters, due to the potential gaps and differences between actors, an intermediary actor is essential for a smooth transaction. The position of this actor can shift from the project officer to the grass-root facilitator depending on the interfaces and other actors involved. Thus, analyzing interfaces will allow the understanding of cultural diversity, social difference and conflict inherence in process of development intervention (Long, 1989). Long defines explicitly what "interface" means in the context of development:

> "Interfaces typically occur at points where different, and often conflicting, lifeworlds or social fields intersect, or more correctly, in social situations or arenas in which interactions become oriented around problems of bridging, accommodating, segregating or contesting social, evaluative and cognitive standpoints."

> (Long, 2001: 65).

Long's definition of "interface" is also the definition of brokers and translators' working arena. Due to the complexity of society of many countries categorized as Third World, especially in Nepal where there are unspoken protocols to a wide range of traditional customs practiced in communities and the constant political instability (see Context chapter), the job of brokers and translators becomes more challenging at every social field intersect. They have to constantly shift positions, thinking process, language and knowledge according to which interactions they are dealing with.

During the translation process, brokers are not only under the influence of numerous factors but also prone to changes – internal changes. Throughout the struggles of the translation process, not only that brokers bring changes to actors in needs, but they themselves might also transform internally as well.

> "Interface conveys the idea of some kind of face-to-face encounter between individuals with differing interests, resources and power. Studies of interface encounters aim to bring out the types of discontinuities that exist and the dynamic and emergent character of the struggles and interactions that take place, showing how actors' goals, perceptions, values, interests and relationships are reinforced or reshaped by this process. For instance, in rural development interface situations, a

central issue is the way in which policy is implemented and, often at the same time, transformed."

<div align="right">(Long, 2001: 191)</div>

Moreover, the reality of development projects is that there are seemingly no absolute methods of implementation that guarantee definite success. The influences on failure or success could come from a variety of sources depending on the unique conditions of the arena where the projects are implemented. Constant changes should be expected: "unpredictable climate, pricing system, structures of securing and commercializing stocks, and other intervention occurring in the same milieu, opportunities existing outside the local system of production" (Sardan, 2005: 139). Since the actor-oriented approach begins with "the simple idea that different social forms develop under the same or similar structural circumstances"; these differences will result in the multifarious ways in which "actors attempt to come to grips, cognitively, emotionally and organizationally, with the situations they face" (Long, 2001: 20). Hence, the approach helps with analyzing how the brokers adjust themselves to the variation of circumstances that they might encounter based on each particular interface where brokerage is performed. As a result, by analyzing "the process by which particular individuals and groups evolve ways of dealing with their changing environment" (Long, 1976: 187-188), we will see how the brokers could achieve effective brokerage without being heavily influenced by uncertainty.

At the national level interfaces, actor-oriented approach facilitates understanding of the ways government bureaucracies and development organizations operate and the differences between their formal objectives and goals and those that emerge through the practices and strategies pursued by actors at different organization levels (Lewis 1998, Lewis et al. 2003). Regarding this point, Mosse (2004) did pose a legitimate question: "Is good policy unimplementable?"; and the role of brokers and translators is a reasonable answer for Mosse's concerns. During the process of policy translation at the national level, brokers, possessing knowledge on both sides of the government and its citizens, transform the national development agenda into specific projects catered to the needs of the beneficiaries.

Benefactors
(civil society
organizations)

Brokers

Brokers

Project
level

Government's
policies on the
state's
development

Brokers

Community
level
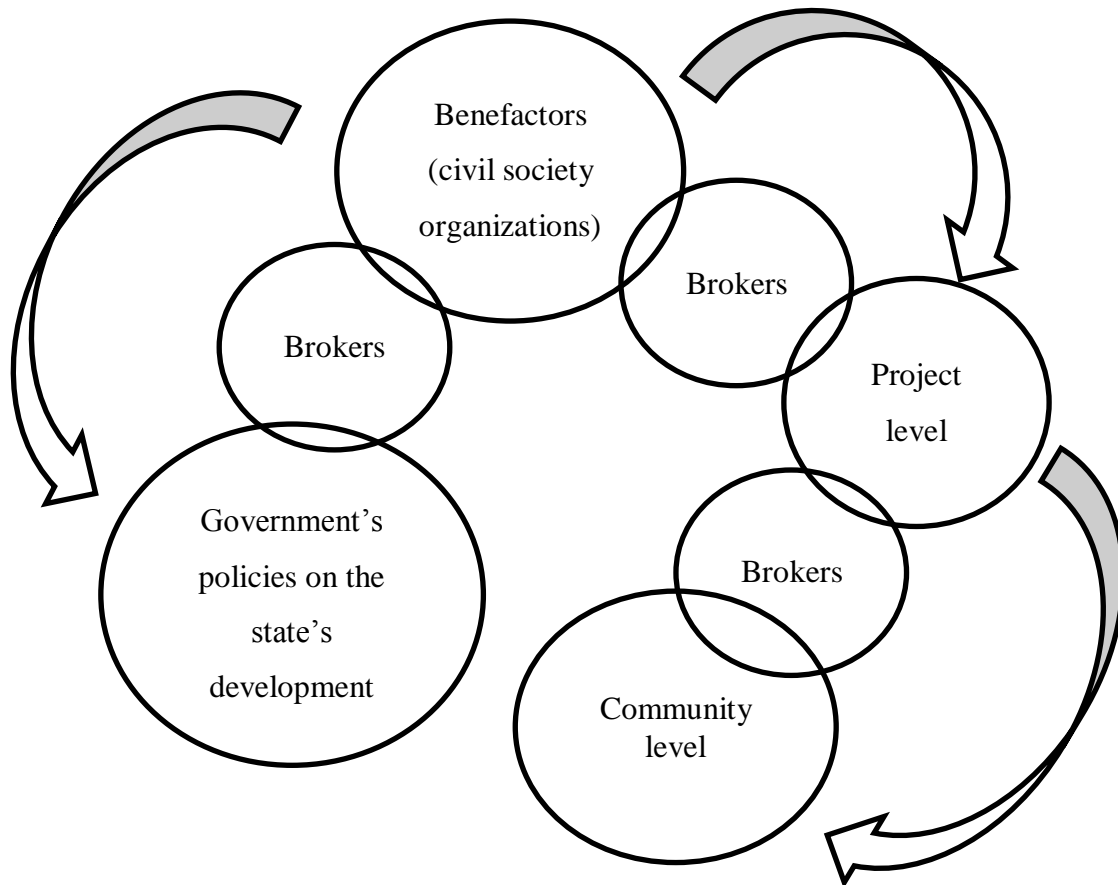
Fig. 1 Interfaces and encounters in development intervention. Constructed by
the author.

The chart in figure 1 identifies the relationship (possibly the influence) and the flow of
information through the key actors in development intervention. The chart illustrates
interfaces where the process of translation and brokerage takes place among parties
involved. There are different levels of translation and also complicated layers inserted into
each level.

Brokers and translators have the tendency to cross the border and to have involvement with
all key actors of a development project. That is how they obtain first-hand information and
process it to reproduce the knowledge in the appropriate languages of each stakeholder.

From the general policies of the state government on its development, the intervention
organizations need to translate these policies into projects which meet their own policies

and objectives. This level, in this thesis, will be addressed as the national level of translation and brokerage.

When the projects are brought to the community, the projects' objectives might again be interpreted to meet the practical needs of the potential beneficiaries through trainings, communication and negotiations. After that, the ideas might be perceived differently by the beneficiaries themselves depending on their own understanding, pursued interests and interpretation. This level will be addressed as project (or grass-root) level in the thesis.

In the process of brokerage, each level contains complicated layers of factors crossing over each other with different interests, values, perceptions or agendas, etc. coming from concerned stakeholders. Brokers who themselves are not only embedded in these merging layers but also contribute into building them. The more actors are involved in this process, the more complicated it becomes. Therefore, looking at the results of their work is simply not enough to understand the brokerage process. It is essential to examine what is actually happening in the encounters themselves.

> "In order to examine these interrelations it is useful to work with the concept of 'social interface' which explores how discrepancies of social interest, cultural interpretation, knowledge and power are mediated and perpetuated or transformed at critical points of linkage or confrontation. These interfaces need to be identified ethnographically, not presumed on the basis of predetermined categories."
>
> (Long, 2001: 50)

As brokers are "social actors", their translation process is a "social action" which is certainly contextual. Long reminds us that "social action and interpretation are context-specific and contextually generated" (2001: 13). Therefore, while analyzing the brokerage at all levels of development intervention, I constantly review the context to which the interfaces belong.

The brokers, while doing their job, are binding to the social protocols of all the concerned parties among which they broker the knowledge. Brokerage "takes place within networks of relations (involving human and non-human components), is shaped by both routine and explorative 48rganizing practices, and is bounded by certain social conventions, values and power relations." (Long, 2001: 49). For example, at the national level, the brokers obey the state's policies. Meanwhile, they also have to thoroughly follow the objectives and policies of the benefactor organization. At the grass-roots level, it is even a more difficult task since

from the side of the community, there are often no explicit protocols to obey or follow; their agendas are, most of the time, hidden. During this level of translation, the brokers, at the same time, have to assure the needs of the beneficiaries are met and the general objectives set by the organization should not change drastically during the negotiation. This is by no mean "an individual ego-centred pursuit" (Long, 2001: 49).

4.2. Research materials

There are two sets of research materials used in my thesis. The first set includes the Three Year Interim Plan 2007/08-2009/10; Three Year Interim Plan 2010/11-2012/13; Sustainable Development Agenda (SDA) for Nepal 2003 and a project document "Climate Change Adaptation and Advocacy Project in Nepal – Project Effectiveness Review", issued in 2013, by Oxfam Great Britain. This set of materials is analyzed to demonstrate the brokerage conducted by Oxfam Great Britain, an international actor of development intervention in Nepal, at the national policy level.

There is a gap in the time frame of the SDA and the rest of the documents, considering that all activities of Oxfam GB's projects were implemented from 2009 to 2011. From 2003 to 2012, many significant and major changes occurred in Nepal, especially on the policy stage. The SDA was compiled and issued under the old government under the King while both TYIPs were from the new regime which was formed after 2006. However, issues regarding climate change and food security remained relatively the same. And as it was stated in the SDA, this development agenda was supposed to "guide and influence national-level planning and policies up to 2017", the later TYIPs did adopt initiatives concerning climate change from the policies issued by the former regime as well.

The second set of research materials was collected in Nepal. The initial attention of collecting this set of materials focused on one particular biofuel project of the local Nepali NGO with which I conducted my internship during the last quarter of 2014. This NGO focuses on the development of people, energy and environment. Originally, it was a joint association among local Nepali organizations working on similar hydropower projects since 1997. However, along with researching and developing hydropower technologies particularly in the context of Nepal, this organization has been implementing other projects concerning energy in general. At the present, it works on projects relating to renewable and green energy, through which they aim to improve livelihood of people in the remote and

mountainous areas of Nepal. For the time being, they are running two projects: Pro-poor Hydropower Pilot Project and Bio-fuel Project.

Pro-poor Hydropower aims to give ownership of the hydropower plant to the locals in order to secure sustainability. The hydropower plant was built with the financial support from the organization and labor from the locals.

Bio-fuel project focuses on renewable energy which aims to replace conventional fossil fuel. And this is the project that will be analyzed to see the dynamics of "development brokers and translators" in development practice at project level in Nepal.

The ideal research materials I had planned to collect from the organization would be a set of project documents including: the proposal, final reports through the years of implementation, and interviews with development workers directly involved in the project (project officers and grass-root facilitators). However, for unknown reasons, the organization failed to provide several important documents dated back in 2008 when the project started. The field visit in which I participated with the goal of interviewing four grass-root facilitators of the project was shortened and we did not have enough time to mobilize and meet up with all four of them. Instead, I was only able to conduct one interview with one grass-root facilitator.

Nonetheless, in the end, the following is the collected research materials concerning the bio fuel project:

- Progress report of the period from early 2008 up to July 2008, compiled by the partner organization.

- Progress report of the period from May 2008 to December 2009, compiled by the partner organization.

- Semi-annual report of the period from July 2013 to January 2014, reported to donor.

- Final report of the period from Jan 2014 to July 2014, reported to donor.

- Report from the meeting of biofuel concern group in May 2014 – one of the advocacy activities of the project.

- Interviews in written forms from the project officer and the community development officer of the biofuel project.

- Transcript of one oral interview with one of the grass-root facilitators of the project.

-   Field notes from field visit.

-   Informal typed conversation through Facebook with the project officer.

-   Personal observation at the office of the organization

Through the materials, I shall proceed to search for encounters among actors involved on possible interfaces where brokerage is performed and in which way the brokerage becomes important to the success of the biofuel project.

4.3. Research materials analysis

4.3.1. Identifying interfaces emerging from research materials

"Interface analysis focuses on the linkages and networks that develop between individuals or parties rather than on individual or group strategies." (Long, 1999: 1) While reading through the research materials, I filter information through the lenses of "interface analysis" to discover the potential linkages and networks that require brokerage hidden in the government's policies papers, project documents or information provided by the project staff through interviews. I strictly follow Long's definition of interfaces to identify them: "... at points where different, and often conflicting, lifeworlds or social fields intersect" (Long, 1999: 1). I look for arenas where different standpoints of all possible perspectives might exist such as interests, religions, technical consideration or political agendas.

4.3.2. Identifying actors and their encounters in identified interfaces

Since the brokerage process takes place in interfaces where there are encounters of at least two actors, when analyzing the research materials, after identifying interfaces, I proceed to look for actors and the type of encounters they have. I have the materials concerning involved actors in a particular interface laid out. Then, looking at the materials consistently from the perspective of brokerage, I determine the key actor(s) in an interface and analyze the brokerage they conduct with other actor(s).

Long, discussing actor-oriented approach, strongly emphasizes the contextual factors and the diversity of interpretations of actors while conducting social actions. "Meanings, values and interpretations are culturally constructed but they are differentially applied and reinterpreted in accordance with existing behavioral possibilities or changed circumstances, sometimes generating 'new' cultural 'standards'" (2001: 50). Brokers are bounded and influenced by different standards and protocols enforced by other actors

involved in a certain interface. In other words, brokerage is extremely contextual. Therefore, while analyzing the conduct of brokerage, I constantly correlate it with contextual elements in order to rationalize reasons and motivation behind the act of brokering.

4.4. Reflection on the researcher's position, limitation and ethical questions

4.4.1. The office dynamics

The impression drawn at the first moment I entered the office was that the working environment seemed to be quite formal and in place. Even though the infrastructure of the office was different from what I had imagined, I was soon able to make sense of it considering the nature of local Nepali NGOs that I had been made aware of through some before-hand reading. The office was located on one of the newer streets of Kathmandu even though it was far from the concentrated area of INGOs and NGOs in Lalitpur district which was 10 km to the South of Kathmandu center. It was a three-story house transformed into an office. The administration area on the ground floor where there was a reception desk and sofa for visitors appeared to be neat and tidy. Next to it was the office of the head of administration and accounting. A narrow stairs down the hall from the main door led to the first floor where there were offices of the organization's executive director, project officers and a meeting room. On the top floor, a kitchen was utilized to serve lunch to the office staff. Aside from the kitchen, there was also a large open space on this floor for staff to socialize.

There were nine employees who were officially employed by the organization at the time I was there; however, one project coordinator was on a 4-month leave for a fellowship program in the U.S.A. Among these official staff, there were three women who were assigned the positions of project assistant, office helper (didi) and project officer. Aside from that, the organization was also hosting one Nepali intern and three participants of a professional exchange program funded by a Norwegian NGO, of which it was a partner. They were from Bangladesh and Bhutan.

Contrary to my first impression, the working environment had a slow pace and was rather relaxing. The relationship among the director and the staff was informal, yet remained respectful for those of one's senior. The male staff would have tea breaks from time to time during the working day in the open space on the top floor. The female staff never

joined the tea breaks while I was at the office even though everyone had lunch together on the same table every day. Through conversations with the director, I learned that during these tea breaks, these male staff often discussed news arising on that day or throughout the week. Those who were interacting with me personally also provided their thoughts and feedbacks about me to the director during these tea breaks.

During three and a half months working in the organization's office, I joined everyone else for lunch every working day regardless if it was a normal lunch or a birthday treat. Lunch was an interesting time to observe the interaction among the office staff and the vivid existence of hierarchy and caste consciousness in their culture. Except for those exchange participants who were often absent at the lunch table due to their own preferences, all other staff had lunch at the office including myself. When the clock hit one o'clock, we would go up to the kitchen, sit down around the lunch table and wait for didi (meaning "sister" in Nepali, used to address female housekeepers) to serve us food. Then, after lunch, didi would also prepare tea for us. The administration and accounting officer usually came late for lunch. According to my colleague (also my personal friend), she thought that he did that on purpose in order to appear to be a busy person who could never seem to make it on time for lunch and she knew for a fact that he had as much to do as the rest of the employees there.

As I used to work for Oxfam Hong Kong whose office was located in the same building with other Oxfam organizations, we also had the culture of having lunch together in the kitchen and each Oxfam organization had its own lunch lady. However, lunch was partly self-service. The lunch ladies prepared the food, laid the tables but when we gathered enough people for a table and wanted to start the meal, we had to go to the kitchen to collect the rice ourselves. If we needed anything else from utensils to personally preferred seasoning, we would have to go into the kitchen and help ourselves. No one would even think of asking the lunch ladies to bring them anything. They were highly respected and considered equal employees of the organization. Not a single one employee in all Oxfam organizations, regardless interns or country directors, would dare to look down or offend the lunch ladies.

This is why I was uncomfortable with the fact that someone had to serve food to me and also the general regards the staff had toward didi. The attitude of most staff toward didi showed that they did see her as a low caste person who was socially submissive to them. No respect was paid to didi. However, didi appeared to be a peaceful person who accepted

her place; except for one instance when one of the exchange participants went overboard and treated her as if she were a maid. Even when this happened, she kept silent and only complained about it later with another female staff who was close to her. As frustrating as it could be to witness this scene, it would be inappropriate and disrespectful if one tried to interfere with the routine that other employees had long considered as the norms. Therefore, I could only try my best to show didi my appreciation and was always the only one who would say "thank you" when served food and ask if she needed help on a busy day.

The topics of discussion during lunch time varied from the holidays to breaking news. The atmosphere, on the other hand, remained the same where everyone was respectfully silent whenever the director talked. Most of the conversations were conducted in Nepali; however, when the director thought that I might be interested in the topic, he would explain to me in English what they were talking about. The administration and accounting officer was often the target of jokes made by either the director or the community development officer. This man was known to be a boaster who invented untrue stories for entertaining purposes.

The organization's executive director was a highly educated Nepali man. He obtained his bachelor's degree in engineering in Kathmandu and went abroad to Germany for his master's degree in technology management with a full scholarship granted by Germany's government; hence, his way of rationalizing was somewhat westernized compared to others'. He appeared to be a knowledgeable and reasonable person who earned respect from his employees not only because of his caste status but also his management philosophy.

The mutual regards to most personnel remained respectful, even though through informal chatting with two of the female employers, I was made aware of their regular disagreement with the administration and accounting officer. I also witnessed the tension between this officer and one of the Bangladeshi participants due to miscommunication, cultural differences and finance relating issues. However, as it is the nature of Nepali to avoid confrontation in public and to maintain one's consciousness of hierarchies, disagreements were kept discrete, arguments were best avoided and compromises were made in order to ease the tension.

As I went to the office every day and read materials about Nepal's context and the current situation of civil society in Nepal, I had the tendency to ask the staff numerous questions about these issues. The answers were not always clear primarily due to language barrier and also cultural differences. I shared an office with the community development officer and the other intern. This officer obtained his bachelor's degree and master's degree in Rural Development from Kathmandu University. He read books in English and was able to understand them well. However, he had difficulties in speaking and writing English, which resulted in our short and limited conversations, even though he was the most experienced staff of the organization in term of working with communities which resided at the project sites.

The bio fuel project officer, on the other hand, spoke efficient English. He held a bachelor's degree in engineering and a master's degree in business. He had traveled to Europe to attend conferences on green energy and had sound knowledge about development issues on global scale. However, when asked specifically about the project he was running, he appeared to only provide simple answers at the surface of the questions and avoid elaborating his answers with in-depth information no matter how many times I asked and how many different ways I changed the questions around. This brought me the impression that he did not know the project well even though I had mixed feeling about this. As I was also interacting with him quite often even after my return to Finland, I learned that he was generally a decent and genuine person, and a responsible and sufficient employee. He also informed me that he had read my blogs about the experiences in Nepal. Therefore, I find it irrational to conclude that he did not know the project well enough to answer my questions. Thus, the other possibility might be that he was intentionally avoiding providing in-depth information, to which the reasons were unknown to me.

4.4.2. Limitations and ethical questions

Limitations and ethical consideration are two intertwined issues upon the completion of this thesis. As a researcher in a complex setting in Nepal, I aimed to conduct my research in respect to my subjects and their culture, which also brought about limitation to the information that I had planned to acquire from them.

Upon my arrival in Kathmandu, at Tribhuvan Airport, I had to secure a 90-day tourist visa, which immediately defined myself as an outsider to the country itself. Starting working at the NGO's office a few days after that as an "international intern", I was again made aware

of my foreign status in this Nepali office environment. Every single working day, when I had lunch with others and they communicated in Nepali, I was constantly reminded of my being seen as a non-native Nepali, a foreigner. This obvious fact already put me at a disadvantage in collecting essential information. The reason is that people naturally behaved and rationalized differently when they communicated with a person from a different country about whom they knew little to nothing, in a language that was not their mother tongue.

Even though ethnography is absolutely not a dominant method in my research, its characteristics emerge in certain arenas due to the necessity of utilizing my own observation and experiences recorded in Nepal for my analysis. Being biased in the process of perceiving information and analyzing recorded personal observation is unavoidable. LeCompte (1987) pointed out that there were two sources of bias – personal experience and professional training. I perceived and analyzed the research materials solely within the mindset established and academic knowledge gained throughout my study in the Master's degree program with University of Jyväskylä over the course of only one year prior to my internship. During my internship, I had planned to merge myself very aggressively into Nepali culture to comprehend their norms and learn as much as I could about their current political situations and how development intervention worked. I arrived in Nepal knowing that without comprehending extremely well these factors, the analysis of brokerage would fail to make sense as brokerage is exceedingly contextual. In order to achieve this goal, I looked for and read books written in English by Nepali authors; I constantly cross-checked facts with my Nepali friends; I scanned through the Himalayan Times every day; and I asked as many questions as I could. However, as an outsider, without speaking the language, there was always a border that I was not supposed to cross. Therefore, there might be perspectives and literature exceeding my knowledge, which results in the imperfection of my arguments.

Aside from that, since brokerage is an intangible concept and process, based on the research materials presented in the thesis, there might be other interpretations of brokerage which conflict with mine and exploit the materials in different angles whose results are unpredictable.

Even though the director of the organization knew perfectly the reason I was there, aside from my two personal friends, in the early stage of my internship, other staff were not so clear as to what exactly I was doing in the office. My motivation and intention were in the

shadow of their knowledge. Therefore, when they talked to me, I could see clearly that they were practicing extreme caution. A month after my arrival, the project officer of the biofuel project casually asked me: "So, Phuong, what exactly are you doing here?"; and shortly after that, during lunch, one of the exchange participants from Bangladesh also asked me about the topic of my thesis. Only then that I had the chance to explain clearly to all the staff exactly what I aimed to achieve during my internship and the topic I was pursuing for my thesis.

However, even after this, it was still difficult to obtain the essential information through oral communication with the staff due to the language barrier and differences in our ways of rationalization. This is the reason why I decided to send the interview questions to the project officer and the community officer in written form.

Asking questions was a tricky task during my time in Nepal. When someone provided answers that had no relevance to the questions I had asked, my first guess would be their incomprehension of the questions. Therefore, I would change the questions around and simplify them as best as I could. If this did not work, I would assume that they simply did not want to discuss the topic and move on. It was in the nature of Nepali to not directly refuse to comply with a request or offer, which I only learned after an incident I had encountered with a Nepali friend. I had offered to cook for her family some Vietnamese food with ingredients that were unfamiliar to them, so she was skeptical about it. However, she had never expressed that thought to me but kept postponing the cooking session. When I eventually cooked the food for her and she and her husband ended up liking it, she admitted that she initially had not wanted me to cook the food because she thought they would not be able to eat it and consequently hurt my feelings. It was a mind game every time I had to ask questions. However, acknowledging this fact about Nepali characteristics, in order to avoid putting my respondents in a difficult position, I came up with the principle that if the person showed any sign at all that she or he was avoiding answering the question; I would just simply drop it and stop pursuing. This also resulted in the lacking of certain information that I had planned to collect. However, this is among cultural elements that I had no other choice but to compromise.

5. BROKERAGE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

In this part, first, a brief introduction into the scene of foreign aid in Nepal hopefully conveys a general idea on the dependence of Nepal as a nation on external assistance, which reflects the heavy influence of international institutions on the development of Nepal. Acknowledging this influence, one could recognize the significance of development workers as brokers and translators in the process of transforming development policy into reality. Then, I will examine one climate change adaptation project by Oxfam Great Britain in Nepal to see the coherence between this particular project and some of the objectives of the national development plan of Nepal that fall into the same category. According to Olivier de Sardan (2005), all projects are connected at some levels of coherence; there are technical coherence, suitability of the project with national economic policy, donors' policies and the "internal dynamics" of the project itself. It is the job of the brokers to at least exhibit these coherences even though in practices, because of numerous levels of coherence the projects have to commit to, the job might be impossible. This analysis reveals the translation process from national policy to development project applicable to communities and the brokerage between technical knowledge of the issue in question and knowledge of the local settings.

5.1. Foreign aid in Nepal

Nepal is among countries which are heavily dependent on foreign aid for their development budget. In the 1950s, foreign aid was the main financial source for development agenda. During 1990s, foreign aid constituted 60-80% of Nepal's annual development budget (Gautam and Pokhrel, 2011).

According to Foreign Aid in Nepal report for the years of 2011-2012 by Nepal's Ministry of Finance, foreign aid contributes 26% of national budget for development. The supported sectors include education, local development, health, roads, drinking water, energy, agriculture and peace and rehabilitation.[12] As of 2012, the total volume of foreign aid disbursement was 1.04 million USD which included 60% grants, 25% loan and 15% technical assistance. Nepal receives foreign aid from about 40 donors with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UN, EU and Global Fund in top 5.

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[12] http://www.mof.gov.np/uploads/document/file/second%281%29_20130715031659_20130813114805.pdf

However, due to the political instability and more importantly, poor governance, Nepal has not been able to "effectively coordinate a large flow of foreign aid and ensure alignment of their priorities with the country's priorities and interests." (Gautam and Pokhrel, 2011: 3) And international institutions are to be blamed because of the heavily conditioned grants and loans. The big donors also demand great impact in the country's development agenda and Nepal's government accommodates their demands in return for their generosity.

The deep involvement of international institutions' will in the development scene of Nepal can be easily spotted through the drafting of the nation's development plan. As mentioned in the section of political economy of Nepal, the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997) was heavily focused on the liberalization of the market and democratic politics. This was the result of the Structural Adjustment Lending by IMF. In 1990, a Nepal Aid Group Meeting was held in Paris. During this meeting, IMF together with other sole donors kept insisting on Nepal's conducting liberal economic reforms. This left Nepal with literally no options but to oblige due to the country's high dependency on foreign aid. This was during the 1900s when 60-80% of Nepal's development budget depended on external assistance. In the Foreword to "Approach to The Eighth Plan", Vice Chairman of National Planning Commission, Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat said: "the challenge of formulating the Eight Plan is both high expectations of people when resources are limited and the new international economic realities that compel us to reorient our thinking and policies" (Gautam and Pokhrel, 2011: 5).

5.2. Justification

70-year-old Oxfam Great Britain is one of the most reliable international NGOs in development aid which has the prestige for many of their sustainable development projects in Global South, especially in Nepal. They have been working for the development of Nepal since 1980s. For the past two decades, they have been focusing on climate change adaptation and women's rights in Nepal in general, especially in rural areas. Aside from projects which directly support the beneficiaries in terms of livelihood, health, rights, environment, etc., Oxfam also has the priority of advocating for changes in governance and policies. Therefore, it is safe to say that the "brokers and translators" of Oxfam Great Britain have the concrete understanding about the policies of development and its general picture in Nepal. And by examining the coherence between their project and the policies, the brokerage process will reveal itself. The particular project review I will be examining

here is called: "Climate Change Adaptation and Advocacy Project in Nepal" issued in April 2013. This report documents the findings of a project effectiveness review, focusing on outcomes related to risk reduction and adaptation to climate change.

By the justification I proposed, there might be questions why I did not choose a project by United Nations (UN) instead because which non-governmental and non-profit organization has better reputation than UN? In the case of Nepal, the role of UN in the development front is greatly different from its normal roles in other developing countries.

Nepal had not been politically stable until 2006 when it had its elected government for the first time. But UN, together with World Bank and International Monetary Fund, had been involved in the scene of development aid in Nepal a long time before that and they have had magnificent influences on Nepal's policies being established at the time and even now. The sustainable development agenda for Nepal that I will be examining in this analysis also has initiatives contributed and guided by UN. Therefore, it would not be fair to claim that some project by UN in Nepal requires significantly the role of "translators and brokers" because technically, they are implementing their own initiatives in Nepal.

The project's document which I am using to analyze is originally from the effectiveness review conducted by Oxfam GB itself; therefore the question of one-sided and biased judgment certainly remains. However, in this analysis, the results of the project are not the most important matter. The findings I am seeking here are how Oxfam GB addressed the problems of development in coherence with the national development agenda of Nepal, by which, I mean the "translation" of Oxfam GB from the national policies into their particular projects. In this set-up, Oxfam GB is the key actor of the analysis. And this analysis also acts as a demonstration for the policies translation at the national level.

5.3. Oxfam GB's interpretation of Nepal's policy on climate change adaptation

At the national level, the arena where there are potential conflicting encounters is the process of interpretation from the government's policy into its application through development projects. The objectives of climate change adaptation in the SDA and TYI plans are always eminently general; therefore, Oxfam GB needed to conduct brokerage to transform those objectives into development intervention projects with practical expected outcome. Examining the effectiveness review of the climate change adaptation project by

Oxfam, the SDA and the TYI plans of 2007-2010 and 2010-2013, I embark on the quest to figure out how this brokerage process could have been conducted.

Objectives

The overall objective of Oxfam GB's project was to enhance the resilience to climate change among some targeted groups in Dadeldhura district – one of the most vulnerable rural areas in western Nepal in terms of the exposure to the risk of floods, drought, water scarcity, erosion, landslides and crop failure. They aimed to achieve this objective through "the creation of livelihood options" (Oxfam GB, 2013: 2). And in order to assure the sustainability of the project's results, they also advocated "incorporation of climate change adaptation practices in district and national level plans and programmes." (Oxfam GB, 2013: 2). All the activities were implemented between 2009 and 2012. Hence, I picked out the national policies covering this period.

TYIP 2007-2010 was issued after the formation of the new democratic government in 2006 after a long civil conflict. It emphasized more on relief, rehabilitation and reintegration, and of course, the ultimate goal of every development agenda: poverty reduction. Even though climate change was not the focus at the time, the plan acknowledged the challenges and problems the nation had to deal with in terms of climate change and natural disaster management.

TYIP 2010-2013 shifted its focus to economic growth and increasing employment rate in order to achieve the status of developing country instead of least developed country in the following two decades. This plan, however, also recognized climate change as one of the major challenges that they needed to tackle. "The Government has given high importance on generating employment opportunities, poverty alleviation, food security and the climate change through a three-year strategy." (p. 13)

SDA was a simple guiding document which included many ambitious development goals for Nepal in the following 20 years. The initial purpose of this agenda was to produce a statement on the stand of Nepal as a nation in the field of sustainable development. In other to be compatible with the objectives of attaining the MDGs, it had to address the issue of climate change adaptation.

Problems

The government of Nepal acknowledged the vulnerability of their population to the damage of climate change. "Temperatures are likely to increase more in high mountain

areas than elsewhere. Glaciers and snowfields will recede and may even disappear, reducing Nepal's dry season river water source. This will impact irrigation and drinking water supply as well as the reliability of hydroelectricity. In addition, receding glaciers often leave behind growing glacier lakes that can break through terminal moraines causing catastrophic floods. Global climate change will also likely shift monsoon precipitation patterns in ways that will threaten Nepal's current agricultural practices, as well as threaten infrastructure." (SDA 2003: 23).

Oxfam GB addressed the same problems with the effects of climate change in Nepal with further statistics on the issue: "As glacier melt accelerates, increased run-off can be expected initially followed by a steady decline. With a 2°C increase in temperatures by 2050, 35% of the present Himalayan glaciers are predicted to disappear. Runoff will increase peaking at 150 to 170% of initial flows between 2030 and 2050 before declining until the glaciers disappear between 2086 and 2109." (Oxfam GB, 2009: 1-2)

Approaches

First of all, even though the government of Nepal recognized the vulnerability of its citizens to the damage of climate change, in their plans and agenda, they did not emphasize on how the nation will address this issue of vulnerability from the perspective of its people. They focused more on emphasizing the fact that Nepal, as a country, shares an extremely small blame for the climate change, and "only vigorous economic growth can provide Nepal with the means to withstand and mitigate some of the effects of a changing climate change that Nepal did not choose and did not cause" (SDA, 2003: 23). In the two TYIPs, the same claim was repeated:

> "The problems generated by climate change for which the country is not responsible but has to face it and it could even be dangerous in the future." (TYIP, 07-10: 92).

> "Nepal is highly vulnerable to the risks of climate change. Nepal's contribution to GHG is very low, and has no or little role in global warming." (TYIP, 2010-13: 12).

They also claimed that the one way to achieve this "vigorous economic growth" was to exploit its "hydroelectricity potential" without "restriction on cost effective energy" like other countries which had high share of greenhouse gas emissions. The mention of climate change adaptation in these plans and agenda mainly appears to be in honor of international commitments. In a paragraph, if the phrase "climate change" appears, phrases such as "in

the world", "international convention", "international resources" or "international commitments", "MDGs", "worldwide problems" will be easily detected.

Oxfam GB approached the issue differently than it was by Nepali government. They addressed the vulnerability of the people instead of the nation. Addressing the issue of climate change, the project focused on enhancing the capacity of the targeted communities in reducing and managing risk related to climate shocks without complete dependence on the support of their government. This way, rural residents whose location was far from central government could become more self-reliant and proactive in coping with natural disasters. This approach came from a more people-centered point of view embedded in Oxfam GB's intervention philosophy and strategies.

Oxfam GB, like many other civil society organizations, sets up and runs intervention projects based on their basic guiding visions and principles, while complying with the national law and policies. The organization principles are among major influences on guiding development brokers and translators during brokerage process. Oxfam GB has six ultimate goals which dictate the objective of their projects: Help people claim their rights to a better life; champion equal rights for women; save lives, now and in the future; safeguard global food supplies; help people claim fairer shares of natural resources; and increase money for basic services. Every six years, they compile a new strategy plan with different focus; however, stays intact with their six overall goals. One of the areas of their strategy plan of 2007-2012 was "Economic justice" which included the goal: "Reduce the impact of climate change and energy shocks by supporting vulnerable people and communities, particularly in agriculture, to adapt to climate change." (Oxfam GB, 2007: 4). Oxfam GB's interpretation of Nepali government's policy on climate change and food security into this specific project complied with this particular goal.

Oxfam GB's response to the earthquakes that happened in Nepal in 2015 is a solid example for the loyalty to their own policy. The goal "Save lives, now and in the future" says: "When natural disasters strike – or in times of war – we'll be there to save lives, providing clean water, food, sanitation and other fundamental needs." When the earthquakes shook Kathmandu valley to the ground and caused thousands of people homeless, Oxfam GB did just that. They mobilized materials and human resources and

operated emergency response directly on the field. Within a couple of days after the earthquake, they immediately had a team building water tanks and toilets and providing sanitary kits for survivors in Tundikhel camp in Kathmandu.

Secondly, under the topic of Peace and Security in the SDA, food security is addressed. Nepali government realized that "food security cannot be ensured through external supplies alone" and emphasized on the regional food supply which should be sufficient for the whole population under normal circumstances. The same emphasis was detected in TYIP 2007-10: "To maintain a balance between the issue of self-reliance and dependency with regard to the import of food products." (p. 88). It was also recognized in this plan that the government should "enhance capacity of managing food insecurity that arises due to crisis situations like famines, droughts, floods, landslides, fires, etc." and "improve access to food of the people/groups at risk of food insecurity" (p. 88).

These objectives were fully taken into account by Oxfam GB's project. Then again, as Nepali planning commission worded the objectives to mean that they were the responsibilities of the government in ensuring food security, Oxfam GB approached the issues in line with the principles of sustainability and self-reliance.

In Oxfam GB's project, based on researches on the agricultural conditions of the area, they introduced to the communities "high yielding variety seeds of major cereal crops suitable to the local climatic conditions". They also introduced and provided vegetable seed such as peas, tomatoes and cauliflower to the supported communities who mainly relied on subsistence crops such as wheat, corn and paddy which required longer cultivation time and were easily destroyed by natural disasters.

While Nepali government claimed to "set utmost priority to food security by ensuring that the regional agro-ecological and economic systems supply enough food for the whole population"; and establish "a fund that allows making food available to people in need at prices that they can afford". Oxfam GB went about that by introducing the people to resources (crop or vegetable seeds) which support the people in producing food for themselves and generating extra income. The seeds can be revolved sustainably in cultivation for years to come. The people can ensure their own food security.

By this analysis, I by no means deny the role of Nepali government in the national issues

such as food security or disasters management. Their accountability strongly remains. This analysis does not imply that civil society could take over the responsibility of a state and do a better job at it. At the end of the day, this was only one district where the project was implemented. Judging the efficiency of the government is not the purpose here but the focal point is the differentiation in addressing these issues between Nepali government and Oxfam GB; and the causes of this difference, which is the nature of brokerage.

Thirdly, the concept of ownership was also interpreted very differently between Nepali government and Oxfam GB. While the government emphasized the ownership of the whole nation in which the government plays the central role in achieving sustainable development, Oxfam GB's translation of the policies in their project implied that it was not the government but the citizens who played the most vital role in accomplishing the objectives of sustainable development. It was the responsibility of the government in securing its citizens' lives. However, obstacles remained with the government in reaching far lung areas where local authorities did not always act effectively in time.

Applying the concept tool of actor-defined issues and problematic situations here, one could see that both Oxfam GB and Nepali government defined the issues that they would address through their action plans. Even though the problematic situations were acknowledged by both parties similarly (the climate change and its effects on people's livelihood), the interpretations on addressing these defined issues were different due to numerous contextual factors: Oxfam GB's intervention is dictated by their own policies, priorities and strategies; the government was evidently committed to certain international conventions while constructing their development plan; the national plans were obviously more general for the whole nation; and Oxfam GB's project was designed particularly for one or two districts. Apparently, Oxfam GB's interpretation was influenced by its own perceptions on sustainable development. They clearly applied the principles of alternative development in implementing this project: people-centered and participatory approach.

Every NGO like Oxfam GB has its own agendas and objectives that they aim to follow through. In the case of Oxfam GB, together with Oxfam International, they have their own global performance framework with which they need to comply. The effectiveness of the climate change project analyzed in this part of the thesis was also evaluated based on this

performance framework. In this particular case, the indicator for evaluating this project was the Adaptation and Risk Reduction Outcome Indicator: "% of households demonstrating greater ability to minimize risk from shocks and adapt to emerging trends and uncertainty." (Please refer to annex 1 for Oxfam GB's global outcome indicators). This is a fixed model which they use in every of their project effectiveness review.
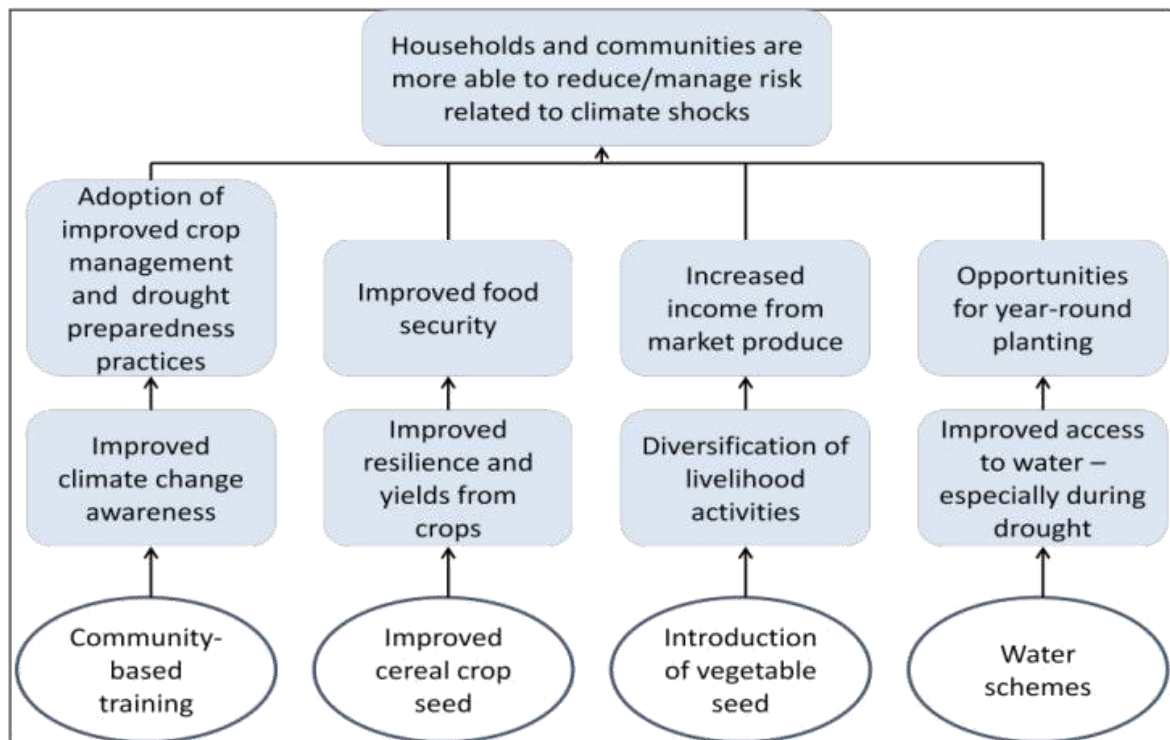
Fig. 2 Oxfam GB's simplified project theory of change

Oxfam GB used a variety of tools in their translation of national development policy into their climate change project; among these tools is the project theory of change (ToC) (figure 2). ToC is a common conceptual tool in development intervention. It is an articulation that shows how and why certain intervention brings about certain changes. Figure 2, however, is only a simplified version of the project ToC. This articulation helps the organization keep track and focus over the course of the project implementation. For example, in this particular project, even though there was a wide range of activities run in the project sites such as training, improving crop seed, introducing new vegetable seed or irrigation, they all needed to assure the result of enhancing the resistance of the communities to climate change. At the end of the project period, looking at the ToC, the organization can draw an overview of their contribution to the changes in the community.

This is also an efficient tool for NGOs to communicate with their donors and partners. It facilitates the understanding of a particular project without much engagement in the whole process.

The brokerage at the national policy level as demonstrated above can be considered as the easiest stage of development intervention to conduct. At this level, protocols, principles and regulations are more or less well documented and explicit in the policy. Ideas remain logical, coherent and easy to comprehend. Even though hidden political agenda still exist, they are relatively rare. The brokers, most of the time, do not have to deal with confusion; especially when Nepal's development policy is heavily influenced by international institutions. They only need to apply the correct tools to translate the national policy into appropriate projects that satisfy these protocols. However, from the next level, the circumstances are no longer in favor of the brokers. In the next chapter, I will continue to analyze brokerage in much more complicated and diverse interfaces where no explicit protocols exist as to what kinds of tools are appropriate to apply to broker the encounters: brokerage in a particular development project.

6. BROKERAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BIO FUEL PROJECT

In this part, brokerage is exposed through the analysis of interfaces of a biofuel project implemented by the NGO introduced earlier in the thesis. This shall be followed by the introduction of the NGO's project in question. After that, using the concept tool of "interface encounters", I will look at all the materials with the perspective of brokerage and find out how it was conducted and in which way it was significant throughout the implementation of the project. Along the way, when the question of how religions and caste system were perceived in Nepal becomes relevant, these matters will be introduced as well to provide an easier understanding to why the project staff had to proceed the way they did.

6.1. Introduction to the bio fuel project

In the spirit of introducing the potential benefit of Jatropha oil as environment-friendly alternative energy resource, Biofuel Consolidation project started in 2008 in cooperation between the organization and a local partner with the objective of improving the livelihood of the rural poor by producing biofuel from Jatropha plants which were already locally grown at the time.

In order to help poor villagers develop alternative livelihood, Bio-Fuel project has been implemented in seven VDCs (Jyamire, Kuntadevi, Madhavpur, Manebhanjyang, Rangadeep, Thakle and Toksel) of Okhaldhunga Disitrict from the year 2008. Then the number of VDCs dropped to 4 starting from the third phase of the project. Two phases of this project were completed from 2008 to 2012. The third phase started in 2013 and was anticipated to last for three years until the end of 2015. The main objective of the project is to harvest seeds from existing Jatropha plants and process them to extract the oil. The Jatropha oil will then be used as a replacement for diesel and will hence reduce the need to transport expensive fossil fuel into the hills of Nepal.

Since the project started in 2008, its name has changed after every phase according to the main focus of the phase.

Phase 1: Improving Livelihoods by realizing the Potential of inedible oil-bearing seeds in Nepal (Bio-fuel project)

Phase 2: Consolidation and Further Developing Jatropha Bio-fuel Usage for the benefit of the Rural Poor (Bio-fuel Consolidation Project)

Phase 3: Convergence of Self-sustaining Jatropha Based Alternative Livelihood for Sustainable Livelihood Development of Local Poor in Okhaldhunga, Nepal

The project is implemented through various Jatropha cultivation-related skills development, activities and support, such as training on agricultural methods and technologies for Jatropha cultivation, Jatropha composting training, Jatropha seeds harvesting and seeds storage training, cutting of cultivation, technical/management backstopping for small-scale nursery, training on new cultivation system and Jatropha seeds support, training of trainers, and extension service packages to individual farmers/farmers' groups who are willing to plant in larger scale in marginal land.

The organization is currently conducting research on methods to produce soap from the oil extracted from Jatropha seeds, which has shown promising results. The making of briquette from the residue after extracting oil from the seeds has also been under research. Aside from that, the project also provides seeds of other varieties of vegetables as well to farmers who have done exceptionally well in Jatropha plantation.

Alongside with running activities in the project sites together with its partner, the organization is also lobbying for concrete policy on biofuel. The project staffs are advocating the drafting of biofuel policy by Nepali government as soon as possible; so that this legal base could encourage organizations and institutions to launch more programs promoting biofuel; and investors and donors to confidently contribute to such programs.

6.2. Justification of the project's success

I started off with the assumption that the bio-fuel project was successfully implemented. The fact that the project is closing in the end of 2015 after seven years of implementation allows the evaluation of the project's success based on the latest report to be relatively fair and objective.

General objectives	Achievements
Progress report of period from May 2008 to Dec 2009	Final report of the period from Jan 2014 to July 2014
• To introduce Jatropha for improving livelihoods by realizing the potential of inedible oil bearing seed in Nepal.	• Locals are aware of the importance of Jatropha plants/seeds/products and have shown more interests towards establishing Jatropha nurseries.

	• 50,000 Jatropha plants have been planted by the end of this phase in barren, unused, marginalized and degraded lands.
• To undertake community mobilization and raising awareness.	• Plantation along landslide prone areas has improved water holding capacity of the soil in project VDCs. Landslide prone areas constitute of 60% of total plantation. • Marginalized and degraded lands were rehabilitated after plantation. Such lands constitute 40% of total plantation.
• To undertake agricultural aspects such as creating a seed nursery, bringing and distributing high yielding seedlings/ cuttings of Jatropha varieties to farmers and advising on cultivation.	• Ten nurseries have been established in 4 project VDCs namely Thakle, Toksel, Maneybhanjyang and Madhavpur. Among them, 5 are operated by rural women. • Suitable intercropping systems promoted viz. ginger and turmeric with Jatropha and brought in practice by nursery owners in project VDCs to earn additional money. *(Note: the intercropping system was actually initiated by farmers who were already participating in planting Jatropha and harvesting seeds. They actively asked for support from the organization when they came up with this idea.)*
• Set up co-operative to buy, process, and sell the bio-fuel for sustainability.	• Jatropha seeds expelling Mill was established in the second phase of the project at Maneybhanjyang. Farmers from 7 VDCs of Okhaldhunga visit the mill and sometimes from the

	neighboring Khotang district as well. It has been expelling Jatropha seeds, mustard, wheat grains, millet, etc. Till the mid of February 2014, it has made a profit of Rs. 73,000. The operator of the mill makes a steady income of five thousand rupees per month which has helped him support his family better. The revenue has enabled the mill operating committee to ass an extra expelling machine within the same premise. *(Note: During the field visit to Okhaldhunga, the researcher also visited this mill and observed its operation)*
• Co-ordination and co-operation with other project and report on program.	• PEEDA has conducted a research on biofuels cook stoves with the support of RenewableNepal Programme, a programme funded by Norway (NORAD) and implemented jointly by Kathmandu University, Nepal and SINTEF Energy, Norway. The key deliverables of the project have been the manufacturing of Wick Stove and Pressure Stove which are useable with crude Jatropha oil. The project concluded in August 2014 and the stoves have been successfully demonstrated and tested in the Okhaldhunga community.

The ideal evaluation of a project should involve the indicators established at the early stage of planning and implementation; however, since the organization failed to provide the documents containing this information, and the indicators stated in the available reports

were only set for a particular period; I opted to use the general objectives instead to compare with the achievement up to the second quarter of the seventh year of the project. The comparison shows that the project has achieved its general objectives even though along the way, seven project sites dropped to four. According to the project officer, this was due to the high altitude of these VDCs.

6.3. Interfaces of brokerage and translation process

"I define a social interface as a critical point of intersection or linkage between social systems, fields or levels of social order where structural discontinuities, based upon differences of normative value and social interest, are most likely to be found."

(Long, 1989: 2)

In order to see the interactions among key actors involved in this project, the project's interfaces where "structural discontinuities" might exist are identified as levels of policy brokerage and translation from the national level to institutional level and to grass-root level.

Examining the research materials on the biofuel program, I have identified five interfaces which function as the ground for numerous encounters among actors involved in this project.

Encounters at Interface #1 – The organization, its partner, donors and other NGOs in the same field

The first interface here is the transformation from the government's policy into a project that potentially benefits grass-rot communities. The alternative energy was only first officially introduced in the TYIP (2007/08-2009/10); there could have been a variety of interpretation and initiatives to take advantage of the government's recognition of bio fuel; as Long said: "Different social forms develop under the same or similar structural circumstances" (2001: 20). But the organization, particularly its executive director and project officers, considering the pre-existing relationship with their partner organization, took the opportunity to initiate and develop a livelihood and renewable energy project from Jatropha plantation. They selected their local partner in this project because this partner had implemented other projects from the same donor in Okhaldhunga; they had been conducting researches on Jatropha plants at the time and the 72rganization had collaborated previously with this partner as well. "We selected this partner to leverage their

experience with community mobilization." – said the bio fuel project officer. The choice that the organization made shows the "attempt to come to grips, cognitively, emotionally and organizationally, with the situations they face" (ibid.).

This was considered the pilot project of renewable energy concerning Jatropha in Nepal since alternative energy was only first introduced in the TYIP (2007/08-2009/10), even though the process of building up to the subsidy policy was occurring under the period of Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007). This was confirmed by the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC), the official institution established by the government to conduct research on renewable energy.

In the TYIP (2007/08-2009/10), the government of Nepal acknowledged the urgent need for a new source of energy to meet the need of rural residents. They were mainly using fuel wood, agricultural residues and dung cake as the main source of their energy consumption. "Though rural sector accounts 86 percent of the energy demand of the country, this is met largely from bio-energy sources. To date, only 5.1 percent of the population in the rural areas has been served with alternative energy sources." (p. 434) The government also recognized the potential of environmental friendly alternative energy sources which can be developed at affordable costs for the rural population, which can contribute greatly to the rural development in many aspects: improving livelihood, creating employment, preserving the environment, and especially health because the traditional source for energy consumption is known to cause heavily polluted air and respiratory diseases. Women and children are among the most vulnerable objects of such diseases.

The brokerage at this stage was conducted based on the rationalization of their circumstances:

(1) *The government started recognizing the need for renewable energy by including it in the national development plan.* Even though an official policy on bio fuel energy has not been issued, this recognition of renewable energy might very well pave the way for the birth of a bio fuel policy. This is also the reason why the project also included advocacy as one of its long term activities. Political activities themselves within Nepali government are already at a high level of complexity due to the instability and conflicts of interests (see Context). Therefore, advocacy has always been a challenging activity for development projects in Nepal and often takes a long period of time.

The organization conducts Jatropha Concern Group Meeting twice a year wherein they invite major stakeholders involved in the bio-fuel sector. In addition to this, they create network with government professionals, private sectors, other NGOs and INGOs to instigate a collaborative effort towards the promotion of bio-fuel. Also, they are currently assisting the formation of a Nepal Biomass Society so that they can give a legal status to their cause.

(2) *The relationship the organization has with the partner they elected also plays an important role.* They had successful association in the past. The most important element was that this partner had established a trusting foundation in the relationship with the local community in Okhaldhunga. Mosse said it himself: "Development interventions are driven not by policy but by the exigencies of organization and the need to maintain relationships." (2004: 651).

(3) *The willingness of their donors*: the partner organization had implemented projects with the same donor prior to this project as well and gained their trust. Consequently, it would be easier to mobilize funds for the new project.

(4) *The project officers' knowledge about the potential of Jatropha*: Prior to the formation of this bio-fuel project, the staff in charge of this project studied other bio-fuel researches and projects which were implemented successfully in other parts of the world. The project officer himself attended a conference in Budapest, Hungary about green energy and gained more valuable information about Jatropha plants and their potential benefits to improving the livelihood of farmers.

Encounters at Interface #2 – Project staff (from Kathmandu office) and the communities

The next interface to be examined is the process of personnel selection at the beginning of the project. However, in order to comprehend the dynamics of some social protocols which are unspoken of and crucial to the success of a development project in rural Nepal; especially the recruitment of the local committee, one should keep in mind the powerful influence of religions and caste system. These are two intertwined phenomena that determine the social status of certain groups of communities. (See Religion and Caste system in the Context chapter)

Even though caste discrimination is a criminal offense by law, in contemporary Nepal, caste still plays a rather dominant role, determines many aspects of people's life such as birth, death, marriage and social, economic, cultural and political engagement. "Nepal's

predominantly rural and traditional social structures have maintained caste as a dominant marker in day-to-day life of its citizens, which has led to discrimination, domination, inequality and disparity, primarily because of lack of access to resources by the lower castes" (UNRC, 2013: 1). This manifestation of caste system is certainly still visible in rural areas of Nepal. The existing significance of caste system consequently poses many obstacles to the implementation of the project, especially when it concerns recruitment.

The partner organization was in charge of recruiting a coordinator with agriculture background to take care of technical works at the grass-root level. The number of staff for this position later went up to four due to the increasing workload as the project was running; and the long distances between the VDCs, which took a considerable amount of time for transportation. Monitoring field visits were also challenging. It took 11 hours by jeeps to travel from Kathmandu to the closest VDC in Okhalhdunga called Maneybhyang. From there, it easily took from a few hours to a whole day to hike from one VDC to another because some VDCs were located quite deep in the mountain where vehicles could not access.[13]

According to the community development officer, prior to when the project was planned to launch at a certain timeframe, they needed to set up an executive committee involving the locals who were addressed in the official report as "VDCs motivators". These locals would be responsible in mobilizing the community and many other tasks acquired by the project at the grass-root level. This committee was established by the locals themselves after they had several meetings with the project staff, agreed to participate in the project and were informed about the need to formulate the executive committee. Due to the fact that the partner organization had been running several projects prior to this bio-fuel project in Okhaldhunga, they did not encounter major difficulties in mobilizing the communities. This was also the reason why the grass-root facilitator whom I interviewed during my field visit was confused when asked to describe in details what he had done to mobilize the

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[13] The day of our field visit to Okhalhdunga started at 3 a.m. My colleague picked me up in a taxi that took us to the jeep station near a highway. It was not much of a station like one would imagine. As it was still dark, the light could be seen coming out of a tiny office which was already packed with people trying to secure the tickets. While waiting for the colleague to buy the tickets, I found myself surrounded by women guarding their belongings. Most of them had a large amount of luggage which was later on tied up on the roof of the jeep. We boarded a 9-seat jeep which was packed with 10 people to Okhaldhunga, an extremely mountainous area locating 125 km South East of Kathmandu. The 11 hour ride was not by any mean pleasant due to the bad conditions of 75% of the road. After approximately 6 hours into the journey, we arrived at the transit point where we got off, walked across a gigantic bridge and changed the vehicle on the other side of the river. From there, it took more or less 5 hours to reach Maneybhanjyang.

communities at the early stage of the project. However, this shall be discussed later on in another interface.

During the set-up of a new executive committee, according to the community development officer, there were always cases where people of higher castes would try to dominate the committee by recruiting only their relatives and depriving lower caste people the opportunities to become the committee's members. Therefore, in the meetings with the communities about the issue of establishing the committee, the project staff needed to address this issue carefully and wisely so that the conflicts between low castes and high castes would not be stirred up and high caste people would not be upset. The officer also mentioned that they would make an agreement with the communities to select at least two members of low castes representing in the committee.

This is tricky, yet easy at the same time. This is where social protocols start to become slightly complicated, but still remain comprehendible. Caste system might be or might not be an important matter here. The project staff, at some level, are perceived by the communities as people with authority. Thus, the communities or the beneficiaries pay respect to them with or without the consideration of caste system. Caste could be important in the sense that in reality, most Nepali development workers are well educated and usually, only people of high castes could afford high education for their children. Hence, the project staff already belong to higher castes in comparison with the beneficiaries. They automatically earn respect from the beneficiaries simply by belonging to higher castes. However, caste might not be as important as it normally is if the beneficiaries have already perceived the project staff as people with authority; so that when they decide to participate in the project, they will be under the management of the "accepted authority". The project staff, therefore, need to understand which of these is their situation in order to make the best out of it. No development workers are taught how to go about this sensitive issue. They all have to broker this by themselves based on experiences on the field, learning on the job and the understanding of local culture.

The phrase "the understanding of local culture" might be questioned here as to why the project staff and the beneficiaries are all Nepali and the staff might not understand the local culture. The answer to this question has to concern the cultural differences among regions and communities in Nepal. Since brokerage is considered a "social action", its "interpretation are context-specific and contextually generated" (Long, 2001: 13). As castes and communities (as in social groups) exist simultaneously with each other, they

might have completely different cultures. In one community, members could be divided into many castes which are not necessarily equivalent with the same castes in other communities. In other case, one community could be considered as a caste and possess a completely different set of culture and social protocols. For example, the Newari community who claims to be among the first settlers in Kathmandu valley has their unique hierarchy system internally within their community; but they also consider themselves to be in higher caste compared to other communities in the valley, in which case Newari is not considered a community but a caste. They have entirely distinctive religious rituals and cultures from the traditional caste system imported from North India (Brahmin, Kshatrya, Vaisyas and Shudra). Therefore, two employees working together in the same office might not know about each other's culture, for example, how the other person celebrates their New Year or Tihar (among the most important Hindu holidays which is equivalent to Diwali in India).

The same goes for communities residing in mountainous areas as well. Thus, it is understandable when a project staff who was born and raised in Kathmandu does not comprehend the culture of a farmer who has been living in Okhaldhunga his whole life.

Encounters at Interface #3 – The grass-root facilitator and the communities

During my field visit in Okhaldhunga, I interviewed one grass-root facilitator who was originally recruited by the partner organization. He had been working for the partner NGO for 9 years up to the time of the interview. For bio-fuel project, he was entitled the community officer and he was also assigned the position of agriculture technician for other projects by the partner NGO. Even before working with the partner NGO, he had had experiences working with another Swiss NGO, which helped him greatly in the job with the later organization. He enjoyed working with the communities through training, interacting and empowering them. However, he was not satisfied with the salary he was receiving; the inflation had increased living expenses but his salary had not been improved for quite some time.

The grass-root facilitator did not live in one of the project sites in Okhaldhunga but 40 minute walk from the headquarter of the district. He was the breadwinner of his family and belonged to Rai community and Tirat caste which was in the middle of the caste system. In this community, everyone shared the same family name. Since this community took up the

majority of the population in Okhaldhunga, he said that the caste discrimination did not occur to him while on the job. Aside from his experiences in the field, the fact that he belonged to a community that was dominant in the area might have been an important factor in the partner organization's decision to hire him.

During the community meeting among the project's beneficiaries, the project officer from the organization and the project officer from the partner organization, this grass-root facilitator acted as a secretary who was recording the minute of the meeting. Prior to this meeting, he had mobilized the farmers by urging them on the phone. In this interface, the grass-root facilitator acted as a liaison between the organizations and the communities.

During the whole 40-minute interview, the grass-root facilitator appeared to be surprisingly calm and composed. Even though there was a translator between us, he was still very fluent and straightforward while answering most of the questions except for a few. When he did not understand the question, he would not say anything until my colleague (also the translator) explained to him once again. One of the questions was: "If you had the power to decide what to do and what not to do, is there anything that you would do differently from what you are doing now?" He obviously had a hard time grasping the idea of having the power to decide because perhaps this hypothesis had never crossed his mind. I then rephrased the question a couple of times and he was consistent with the answer that he would only stick to the objectives of the project and the regulations of the institution. He might have decided that this answer was a "safe" one to my question. As I did not want to put him in a difficult position, I proceeded onto another question.

When asked to describe in details exactly what he would have to do when he was asked to mobilize the community, he started off by saying that they had organized a team meeting in the communities and they mentioned everything in that meeting. I asked the question again clarifying that in order to have the meeting, each household should have been informed in advance, so who would inform them? He then explained that every group of farmers had their meetings scheduled every three months or six months, so they would automatically gather without the facilitators calling them on the phones. And I again emphasized that there must have been a first time he came to talk to the communities about the project. Only then, he said that if he came to any village for the first time, he would

look for the most powerful and influential people of the village who held important positions in their communities. If he had their phone numbers, he would call. Otherwise, he would go directly to their houses. Once these selected important people agreed to participate in the project, they would then also mobilize their communities to also take part in it by helping to form team groups and scheduling meetings. His confusion toward my question resulted from the fact that the partner organization had been working in the area for an extended period of time; therefore, they had already been able to establish an efficient network among VDCs; when there is a need for communication, telephoning would already be enough.

The grass-root facilitator evidently created his own network of brokers at the community level for more convenient mobilization. As explained above, these brokers were normally those who had an important position in the community, which facilitated easier mobilization. Nepali society is similar to those of other South Asian countries where trust, integrity and respect are more important than signed contracts. This required the grass-root facilitator to first establish a trusting relationship with the communities' leaders and then maintain this relationship in the long term as the project was running. As Boissevain said the broker's capital depended on the communication channels he controlled, while his credit would be what others believed to be his capital (1974: 159). Trust, along with many other factors, was this grass-root facilitator's capital while performing brokerage. There were beneficiaries who decided to join the project after a brief talk over a cup of tea with this grass-root facilitator because he had already established a trustworthy reputation in the community. A farmer who was asked if she and her husband found it hard to decide to join the project said that they had not hesitated but immediately determined that they would participate after a brief talk between the husband and the grass-root facilitator.

Encounters in interface #4: The project staff from the organization and its partner, and the community

The organization did not work directly with the community. Their partner organization took charge in operating all the activities in Okhaldhunga. The organization's staff would go on monitoring field visits every one and a half month to the project sites. Mostly, they would have a meeting with the beneficiaries to learn if they needed more support and also visit the plantations and nurseries. The organization however takes full charge in policy advocacy at national level and cooperation with other organizations of the same field for

researches. This labor division was due to the fact that the partner organization had been working with the communities in Okhaldhunga for an extended period of time prior to this project; hence their staff had readily sound knowledge of the characteristics of the areas and the communities. This gave them a significant advantage during the implementation of the project. As they had already gained the trust from the communities, the task of mobilizing was much simpler.

The project officer from the partner organization was originally from Kathmandu. He was designated to base permanently in Okhaldhunga headquarter. Every two months, however, he would go back to work at their office in Kathmandu. Because he kept having to go back and forth between two places, he had built up a coping mechanism to the 11-hour bumpy jeep ride. When the project officer and I were completely exhausted from the ride and just glad that we were still alive, this man remained as solid as a rock. He appeared to enjoy his work and life in this far lung area, which he described as "liberating". He was home staying with a local family who would shut their door at 10 o'clock, which caused him to rush through his dinner with us in order to make it home before the door was locked. As we arrived in Okhaldhunga at the end of the week, he expressed his excitement for the weekend market where he would find fresh organic vegetables brought by farmers from close-by areas. He also told us stories about many of his field visits to villages that were located deep in the mountain and that it often took him and his colleagues about two days to reach these villages. To my impression, this was not to complain that the job was hard work but to show that he was proud of his job and genuinely believed that he was contributing to positive changes in the areas.

In the regular meeting with farmers that I attended in Maneybhanjyang VDC, there were the project officer from the organization and its partner, the grass-root facilitator and nine farmers. Six out of nine farmers were women. The meeting was held in a small room of about 12 square meters which was always used as 'an office" whenever an official activity or event was to occur. Inside the room, a few chairs and benches were arranged to form a U shape so that everyone could see each other. This arrangement also created an equal feeling among the beneficiaries and the project staff. It was intended so that no one would appear to be more important than others. The women naturally grouped together on two sides of the room and the men (including the project staff) were on the other side. There is still such thing as gender sensitivity in Nepali society regardless rural or urban areas; except for being on a packed jeep where they have no other choice, women and men of

almost the same age who are not related should not stay close to each other or have body contact.

It was surprising and fascinating at the same time to observe the women being vocal during the meeting as they were also the majority of the participants. Their ages ranged from mid-20s to mid-40. They came to the meeting dressed in their daily kurtas (the younger ones) or saree (the older ones). Even though they were rather shy at the beginning, regardless of their age, they became more and more enthusiastic in raising their voice and expressing their opinions as the meeting proceeded. The fact that they were confident and vocal during an official meeting proved that they felt empowered by their achievement with the project; that they were aware that they were equal, safe and comfortable in expressing their opinions in front of the project staff. With this observation alone, I could already conclude that the project had succeeded on the subject of women empowerment regardless whether or not this was intended.

One of the women took over the Jatropha plantation and nursery from her husband who had migrated to work in Abu Dhabi. She had been participating in the project for five years (up to November 2014) and able to make steady earning from selling Jatropha seeds. She and her husband used to grow vegetables in monsoon season with the income of 2,000 – 2,500 NRs per month by selling the vegetables. That means that their land was left barren and uncultivated during dry period (five months per year). After attending agricultural trainings on Jatropha cultivation, since 2010, they have been generating additional source of income from Jatropha plantation after establishing a Jatropha nursery. They grew 2,500 – 3000 plants annually during dry season in the nursery from which they earned 7,500 – 9,000 NRs.

During the meeting, the project officer from the organization remained a humbled listener who constantly took notes as the farmers were expressing their opinions. He suggested to start the meeting with a brief introduction from everyone so that I would also have a chance to introduce myself. I spoke in English and he translated my introduction into Nepali. His friendly and humbled appeal might have been the reason why the farmers felt empowered, relaxed and comfortable when sharing their obstacles and opinions. In the end of the meeting, he distributed the seeds he brought from Kathmandu to farmers who reached a certain stage of the project. The existence of caste hierarchy was absolutely absent throughout the meeting.

On the other hand, the project officer from the partner organization was more active in exchanging discussions with the farmers. He asked them more questions and also took notes. The farmers were also at ease when they were talking to him. As he, together with the grass-root facilitator, had been directly operating the activities with the communities, he had better knowledge about the status of the on-going activities, hence had more questions to find out the conditions of the Jatropha plantations and nurseries.

"Brokers are not only products, but also producers, of the kind of society in which they re-emerge." (Deborah, 2011: 319). It was apparent that the project staff purposely made a great effort to suppress the influence of caste system and the hierarchy obligation in the communities by showing it did not matter that the farmers came from lower castes, their opinions mattered and they were listened to. They managed to have the farmers open up to them about their concerns and obstacles during the implementation of the project. Thanks to this, the farmers did not hesitate to ask the organization for help when they had the initiatives to integrate other plants into the cultivation of Jatropha, which eventually generated more income for them and their families. Even though this was not in the original plan, the organization managed to provide support for the farmers in turning their initiatives into reality because the project staff believed this was important to boost their empowerment.

Encounters at interface #5: The NGO, other NGOs of the same field, and the government of Nepal

A successful advocacy of a policy, hence influence on the nation's public policy, is the ultimate goal of most development projects by the civil society. This practice in development intervention aims to ensure the sustainability of the output after the project is completed and the organization withdraws from the project sites. However, taking into account the status of public governance in Nepal for the moment, advocacy is an extremely difficult task because the policy making process is not linear or logical.

Despite this fact, advocacy remains one of the most important activities of the bio fuel project. Without regular support from the government, no matter how well the project was implemented in Okhaldhunga, the potential of Jatropha will not be made known nation-wide, especially when the project eventually ends. The organization collaborates with Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC), a state energy research institution in advocating for a renewable energy policy particularly focusing on bio fuel. Since this

institution is a state establishment, their assurance contributes more credits to the project when it is presented to the policy makers.

The organization and its partners conduct Jatropha Concern Group Meeting twice a year wherein they invite major stakeholders involved in the bio fuel sector. According to the report of the latest meeting on March 26th, 2014, the primary purpose of the meeting was to focus on how the organization, together with its partner SAHAS, could assist and provide technical support to AEPC for the formulation of policies to govern the bio fuel sector. It included presentations about the achievements, lessons learned and challenges of a community-based bio fuel development project, latest developments in the field of cultivation and bio fuel technologies in Nepal, and discussion on guidelines and policies needed for effective implementation of a national bio fuel program. Among forty agencies attending the meeting, the National Planning Commission of the Government of Nepal, the most important targeted agency of the advocacy activities, also sent in a representative.

From the national general development policy, the organization and its partners sorted out main problems, established objectives, planned and implemented the pilot Jatropha bio fuel project in Nepal. Then, they came back to the government to advocate for a more specific and effective policy on bio fuel energy for sustainable and national-wide practices.

Renewable energy, even though repeatedly appearing in many of the government's development plans and agenda, remains a fairly new concept to Nepali in general due to lack of research on practical applications. As every good theory, it is essential to put in a demonstration for it to be standing and people to believe in. The successful implementation of the Jatropha bio fuel project in Okhaldhunga has proven that the possibility of energy independence for a landlocked country like Nepal remains strong. However, in order for the project to become implementable in other regions of Nepal, a lot of research effort is required, which is why the organization became partner with other research institutions such as AEPC or Nepal Academy of Science and Technology to provide the legitimate technical perspectives on their proposal.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1. Brokerage in development intervention in Nepal

Development brokers and translators definitely hold eminently important role in development intervention in Nepal. And brokerage has to occur in many interface encounters in development intervention, especially in the complex setting of Nepal. In this thesis, however, I was only able to present and analyze a few of them at national policy level and project level.

At the national policy level, it is important for civil society's development projects to follow through with the nation's development policies and to comply with its rules and regulations. This is to ensure that the civil society does not overstep the government's agenda, which means they also respect the nation's authority. However, while complying with the nation's agenda, it is also vital for the civil society organizations to stay loyal with their own objectives and policies in order to keep up the reputation with their donors. This juggling game is by no mean an easy one.

At the project level (from policy to grass-root implementation), brokerage is even more challenging since there are no established protocols for development brokers to follow when working with the communities, they all have to learn as they go and apply their knowledge sensitively and skillfully. As a part of Nepali culture, people do not speak their mind in order to avoid confrontation; working with the community is a mind game. This game is no piece of cake either.

In these games where all concerned actors have their own roles, development brokers and translators emerge as crucial actors who ease the tension among players and help them participate in the games in peace and harmony.

This role of brokers and translators, however, is neither mentioned in any job description, nor consciously recognized by development scholars and practitioners. It is much of an intangible role embedded into the development workers' jobs. No one can teach them exactly the skills they need to become a good broker. Even the brokers and translators themselves are often clueless as they are also unaware of the intermediary role they play in these games.

Aside from that, context has also proven to be among the most important factor that has crucial influences on choices that brokers make during brokerage because "development brokers do not appear out of thin air. They are the by-products of local histories and operate within networks." (Olivier de Sardan, 2005: 174). In a society constructed with layers of traditions and customs that even the natives are not fully aware of, it is impossible for development intervention projects to be executed properly and successfully without skilled brokers who have the capacity to learn, adapt and adjust to new and emerging situations, to shift positions and "languages" constantly in order to execute successful brokerage. They are like water that takes the shape of the environment in which they are situated.

Mosse says project formulation is an art which is technically expressed (as project designs) but politically shaped (by interests and priorities of agencies) (2004: 14). Civil society organizations need to situate themselves in the context of Nepal's society and government's policies when they plan and implement development intervention projects; especially during the brokerage at national level, the nation's political sphere is an important factor. All factors of general social aspects and particular differences in the project sites have to be considered and properly translated into their strategies and activities while the organization's own principles and objectives have to be preserved at the same time.

As the interfaces are without explicit protocols to follow, at the grass-root level, for example, the context only becomes more complicated. At this stage, brokers have no other options than to learn on the job and adapt themselves to the local settings as the brokerage proceeds. The knowledge of local culture must not be taken for granted during this process.

Religion and caste system have shown to be influential in decision making process of brokers in brokerage at interfaces of the bio fuel project examined in this thesis. The existing hierarchy system in present-day Nepal facilitates caste discrimination that leads to the oppression of people belonging to lower caste. Particularly in the bio fuel project, lower caste people were often deprived from opportunities to become members of the project executive committee at the community level. Consequently, the project staff had to negotiate with the community to assign at least two members from lower castes into the executive committee. The negotiation had to be conducted with caution and sensitivity in

order to avoid sparkling conflicts.

However, when it is said that caste discrimination is more apparent and harsh in rural areas than in urban areas, it does not mean that it is hard to detect it in a place like Kathmandu. Since caste discrimination is more criticized in this part of the country, it seems that people have developed a more discreet way to go about it. Please refer to annex 2 for further observations.

The findings also show a blend of traditional mediators and development brokers during the process of brokerage in development intervention in the setting of Nepal. As discussed in the theory chapter, the concept of "broker" was originally from the discipline of anthropology in researches on patron-client relationships during the colonial period. In most cases, those representing local powers such as village chiefs or district chiefs would play the role of brokers between their own communities and the colonizing government. It is a well-known fact that the traditional roles of these indigenous intermediaries were institutionalized by the colonizers for many administrative purposes and political representation. These traditional mediators can also be found in villages of Okhaldhunga; however in a much different setting in present days. They were those that the grass-root facilitator had to first communicate with during the process of community mobilization; those that he had to first build a trusting relationship with before he would be able to win their agreement in participating in development projects. These actors naturally formed a network of brokers at the grass-root level of development intervention which is the most important level in development intervention. Unlike the village chiefs or district chiefs of the colonial period, the current traditional mediators are no longer the puppet of a top-down order political system; neither do they have to go against their own value systems to please the modern colonial administration. These local actors have a much more liberal role now in the success of the community development.

Then, whether or not can the roles of these traditional mediators and the development brokers be interchanged? The answer I propose would be no, they are not interchangeable. Even though these traditional mediators can perfectly communicate with the project staff and mobilize their own communities, they do not master the languages spoken in the world of development, neither are they able to comprehend the necessity of switching positions according to particular circumstances. From their perspective, they always remain in the

position of a village chief or a district chief because for them, this position means they are holding the power. The communication the project staff is not an issue because the project staff themselves are brokers who can switch to suitable languages and positions when they communicate with the village or district chiefs.

Internal changes are also an interesting phenomenon which, unfortunately, I did not manage to investigate more deeply for this thesis. As briefly mentioned in the methodology chapter, while conducting brokerage, brokers not only influence actors involved but are also prone to internal changes. Brokers themselves have their own struggles and their "lifeworld" is also reinforced or reshaped during the process of brokerage. I asked the officer of the bio fuel project about how the job had changed him over the year and his answer was: "My job at (the organization) has instilled in me a passion and dedication to work for the betterment of (the) poorest of the poor residing in rural villages of Nepal. I now am more confident to perform my tasks as well." This is a common sentiment among development workers in general, not only in the organization. Stepping into the field of development, most people do believe that they have joined in for a good common cause and contributing to positive changes. Naturally, over their years of working in the field, there will be cases where their belief in the mission of bettering people's lives becomes stronger like in this case. However, there will also be cases where they unfortunately have to witness the failure of the development intervention they have brought about like the post-development thinkers. Consequently, they turn to be skeptical about their own involvement in the development machine.

Nonetheless, despite its shortcomings and research limitation, this analysis has showcased the picture of development intervention in Nepal now with a more explicit trace of brokerage. It leads us to a broader reflection on and realization of the relationships among actors in development intervention in Nepal, and other countries in the South with more or less similar settings.

7.2. Towards post-development as a paradigm

Brokers and translators are important to the search for "alternatives to development" as long as post-development thinkers promote social movements and local culture. As the bio-fuel project demonstrated: the farmers initiated the integration of other seasonal plants into the Jatropha plantation in order to generate more income and they asked for the

facilitation from the organization, this is the "people's autonomy" that post-development is all about. That being said, however, it is apparent that even if post-development were to become a paradigm, a sort of mediating agents would still be crucial in empowering and supporting the communities. The success of a Nepali NGO with 100% of local staff shows that Nepali, in their own "order-in-chaos" way, can manage their own development with the right force of brokers.

While discussing "alternatives to development", Escobar stated "cultural difference is also at the root of postdevelopment" (1995: 225). He believed that cultural differences carry in themselves the possibilities for transforming social life: "Out of hybrid or minority cultural situations might emerge other ways of building economies, of dealing with basic needs, of coming together into social group" (ibid.). Then, situated in this logic, brokers emerge as an absolutely essential actor to bridge the gaps of cultural differences. The emergence of the "other ways" from cultural situations is brokerage in itself that needs to be conducted by brokers and translators.

As post-development scholars insist on their interests in local cultures, local knowledge and pluralistic grass-root movements as the foundation for the post-development paradigm, they might have overlooked several other important factors in development. Even though local cultures and indigenous knowledge are crucial, the communities still need a helping hand to realize and reach their potential. Although grass-root movements are radical and essential, a system of human resource ought to be put in place to intrigue those movements to happen. The absolute abandonment of the current alternative development paradigm might not be necessary. It would be a waste of a paradigm that has been running for an extended period of time; and whether we want to admit it or not, even though the paradigm has, over time, become corrupted, it has produced an extraordinary human resource joining in for good causes. However, this driving force of development intervention needs to relearn what they have known about development through the lens of post-development ideologies, which means respecting local culture and the communities' autonomy in their own changes, taking it as the leading cause while conducting development intervention and learning from local knowledge instead of criticizing it as "conservative" and "backward". The implementation of projects is only the tip of the iceberg; the perception of development of this driving force has to change as well; they need to "unmake and unlearn

development" and adapt a new meaning of this concept. The production of knowledge is no longer Western-centric. This is why Escobar (1995) insisted on the conceptualization of alternatives to development and reconceptualization of development in the Third World.

> "The crisis in the regimes of representation of the Third World thus calls for new theories and research strategies; the crisis is a real conjunctional moment in the reconstruction of the connection between truth and reality, between words and things, one that demands new practices of seeing, knowing and being."

> (Escobar, 1995: 223)

As mentioned in interface #2, it is inevitable for development brokers and translators to make mistakes during the process of figuring out their situations and making sense of them. These mistakes can very well cost them the success of the project. Therefore, it has become essential to recognize the embedded role of brokers and translators in development intervention in order to take action toward promoting and improving it. The neglect of the matter might have been one of the factors that led to the massive failure of post-second-world-war development for the past several decades, but post-development scholars have not yet discussed this issue. While criticizing the ignorance of the community of international NGOs about the local culture and customs, hence bring the "one-size-fit-all tool kit" to apply in countries of the South, post-development scholars have not realized that if only these development workers had conducted their role of brokers and translators more sophisticatedly and properly, they might not have failed.

During my internship at the local NGO in Kathmandu, I learned that the Community Development Officer was the one with the most experiences in working with communities in the organization. I talked to other staff about their opinions on this person's performance while working with communities. The common sentiments were that this officer had very good communication skills, understood precisely the needs of the community and was able to make decisions while managing conflicts arising among the communities. One said that he was impressed with "the ease at which he handles a community and leads them to work for a common objective". I then proceeded to ask the officer how he managed to learn these skills. He said that his education played an important part in his current works, both from school and his parents. He completed his Master's Degree in Rural Development,

which equipped him with theoretical and technical skills in working with communities. His parents are local politicians from a province in the Middle West part of Nepal where it is still much less developed than other regions. As he was living with his parents in the village, the villagers often came to consult with his parents when conflicts arose. Observing how his parents worked with the villagers to solve their problems also taught him a great deal in working with communities in project sites.

This development worker is a great example for the selection for the driving force of post-development if it is to be developed into a paradigm whose core is local social movements. These are locals who understand the local settings exceedingly, possess sound knowledge in working with communities at grass-root level and are able to predict possible rising circumstances in development. In brief, they need to be "skilled brokers". Bierschenk and others (2002) discussed these qualities of brokers at length:

> "The future broker also needs to call on experience acquired elsewhere, that is outside the village, whether in the educational circuit, in the urban universe of salary earners or as activists in associations. […] These different universes have obviously one thing in common: they familiarize the future broker with context other than those found in the village, thus providing him the know-how, appropriate jargon and behavior which enable him to adjust to partly heterogeneous cultures, and which can be reinvested or recycled in brokerage. […] the broker thus learns how to change roles, or how to go from one universe to another. […] he learns to play the game according a variety of rules, […].

(Bierschenk et al, 2002: 20-21)

What I hope to draw out from this thesis is that while constructing "alternatives to development" for a new development paradigm, post-development scholars should recognize, theorize and emphasize the importance of this role. If actors involved in development intervention (or whatever the new development paradigm might be) are well trained and aware of their role of brokers and translators, the chances that they would make mistakes would be much slimmer and the success of the intervention could be secured.

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ANNEX 1: Oxfam GB's global outcome indicators

Thematic Area	Outcome Indicator
Humanitarian Support	% of people who received humanitarian support from responses meeting established standards for excellence disaggregated by sex
Disaster Risk Reduction/ Climate Change Adaptation	% of targeted households indicating positive ability to minimize risk from shocks and adapt to emerging trends & uncertainty
Livelihoods Support	% of targeted households living on more than £1.00 per day per capita
Women's empowerment	% of supported women meaningfully involved in household decision-making and influencing affairs at the community level
Popular Mobilization (Citizen's Voice)	% of targeted state institutions and other actors that have modified their practices in response to engagement with supported citizens, community based organizations/civil society organizations
Policy Influencing	% of policy objectives/outcomes successfully achieved, disaggregated by thematic area

It is worth acknowledging here that the humanitarian support indicator is technically not an outcome indicator, as it is focused on adherence to quality standards. While the aim of providing humanitarian support is arguably to reduce morbidity, mortality and other forms of suffering, estimating the extent that Oxfam GB supported responses have done or even contributed to this would be considerably challenging, given the inherent limitations of identifying suitable counterfactuals. This does not mean that possibilities do not exist, e.g. exploiting "natural experiments" where people are not supported for quasi-random reasons or regression discontinuity designs where people who just fall within or outside of official targeting criteria are compared (Angrist and Pischke 2009). However, taking a critical look

at the extent to which targeted populations are provided with support that meets recognised standards, e.g. Sphere guidelines, was considered good enough to serve as a pseudo outcome indicator for this thematic area of work. A few additional points on the other indicators are worth mentioning. First, one may question how reliable data can be accessed on the second indicator pertaining to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

There is, however, an approach that underlies the apparent madness. In particular, following John Twigg (2009), we hypothesize that households possess particular context specific characteristics – e.g. the degree of reliance on climate dependent livelihood activities and access to climate prediction information – that influence their vulnerability to hazards and/or ability to adapt to climate change. The approach scores household's in relation to these characteristics. The fourth indicator, on women's empowerment, may also appear confounded by intrinsic measurement challenges. The associated instrument involves asking women questions pertaining to both the breadth and depth of their involvement in household decision-making. Several Likert scales are further employed to measure their perceived ability to influence affairs outside the home. Finally, perhaps to the horror of some, the final two indicators involve the quantification of qualitative information. In particular, external evaluators will be asked to assign "contribution scores," the value of which will depend on the extent there is evidence that links the popular mobilization and policy influencing interventions in question to any expected and/or unexpected policy-related outcomes.

ANNEX 2: Observed cases of the existence of caste hierarchy in urban Nepal

Case #1: In the organization of my internship, I had two personal friends with whom I had been friends for a couple of years prior to the time of my internship. One was the project assistant and one was the project officer of a different project than the bio fuel one. The project assistant used to belong to a lower caste than everyone else in the office; however, since she was married to a Brahmin (the highest caste), her status technically had also been boosted to Brahmin. The project officer belonged to Newari community which was partly separated from the orthodox caste system. As they were among the early settlers in Kathmandu valley, they set themselves above others. I was told by the project assistant that at the beginning, the project officer never greeted others first when she arrived at the office because it was mutually understood that the lower caste should greet the higher caste first when facing each other even though age wise, she was the youngest. Considering the person's exposure to Western culture that I know of, this information came as a shock for me. This attitude, however, faded over time since she noticed that the director always greeted others first when he arrived at the office in the morning despite his superior status in the organization.

Case #2: As my accommodation was homestay, I lived with a Nepali family who happened to be Brahmin. There were parents in their 50s and 60s and a daughter in her 30s. The father was a retired geologist who used to work for the government. The mother was a chemistry professor at a private and renowned university in Kathmandu. Aside from teaching, she was also an expert consultant for several development projects in Nepal funded by Finnish NGOs. She herself has been to Finland for conferences and meeting during the course of her consulting works. The daughter obtained her Master's Degree in Germany. They also had a son who was working in the U.S.A. When I accompanied the mother to a local market near the house, I also observed her attitude toward the sellers and vice versa. The consciousness of hierarchy was much apparent in their transaction. The lady's tone and the way she looked at the sellers were ones of someone from high above. The sellers, however, did not appear to mind her attitude. They appeared to be submissive and accepting it.

The same observation was recorded when the daughter's wedding was approaching and they had to hire more people to help with the chores. The women started their day by

gathering, preparing food and drinking tea on the cold floor in the kitchen despite the living room was empty and a few steps away. There was one particular didi (meaning "sister" in Nepali, used to address female housekeepers) who always cooked and prepared tea for the guests. As I was asked to have dinner with my landlords during this particular period, the didi never ate at the same table at the same time with us.

Therefore, my hypothesis is that in urban areas, cast discrimination appears to be less harsh than that in rural areas neither because the nature of their mindset about caste system has changed nor it is different from that in rural areas. Those who belong to higher caste apparently still see themselves above others; however, in urban setting, they are more discreet about it