

ÖREBRO UNIVERSITY  
School of Law, Psychology and Social Work  
Social Work program  
Social Work 61-90 ECTS  
C-thesis, 15 ECTS  
Autumn 2015

## **“Sometimes good intentions aren’t good enough”**

A Qualitative Study on Voluntourism in Cambodia, Within NGO’s Working With Disability

Authors: Isabella Liebgott  
Victoria L Tselikis

Supervisor: Sara Thunberg

”Sometimes good intentions aren’t good enough”  
Liebgott Isabella, Tselikis L Victoria  
Örebro universitet  
Institutionen för juridik, psykologi och socialt arbete  
Socionomprogrammet  
Socialt arbete, C  
C-uppsats, 15 högskolepoäng  
Ht 2015

## Sammanfattning

Kambodja har en hög andel rörelsehindrade och en stor del av dem behöver vända sig till lokala icke-statliga organisationer för att få den hjälp de behöver. Lokala icke-statliga organisationer är i sin tur ofta beroende av den hjälp som kommer från väst i form av frivillig-arbetare, så kallade volontärer. Volontär-arbete betraktas ofta som ett ytterst osjälviskt sätt att bidra till de som har det sämre ställt. Syftet med studien är att ta reda på hur välkänt volontärturism är och hur det påverkar icke-statliga organisationer ur ett maktperspektiv samt vad som motiverar volontärer och professionella till sitt arbete inom icke-statliga organisationer. För att besvara syftet har en kvalitativ metod används bestående av elva semi-strukturerade intervjuer. Intervjuerna genomfördes hos icke-statliga organisationer som på ett eller annat vis arbetar med personer med rörelsehinder i antingen huvudstaden Phnom penh eller Sihanoukville. Studiens slutsatser visar att det finns skilda uppfattningar om vad volunturism är och hur det påverkar organisationen. De kambodjanska professionella har mindre kunskap i ämnet än de västerländska professionella och volontärerna. Vidare visar studien på att den inre motivationen hos västerländska professionella främst härleds till deras utbildning, då den är av relevans för det arbete de har samt att de själva känner glädje av sitt jobb. Både volontärerna och de kambodjanska professionella hänvisar till en altruistisk känsla inför att hjälpa människor och hos de kambodjanska professionella fanns även ekonomiska fördelar med arbetet. Slutligen påvisar informanterna en komplex maktsituation med kopplingar till vithet (whiteness) där dess strukturer påverkar arbetet, bland annat genom att i vissa fall förstärka kulturella olikheter mellan Kambodja och västvärlden.

Nyckelord: Volontärturism, volunturism, Kambodja, rörelsehinder, motivation, makt, vithet, NGO

"Sometimes good intentions aren't good enough"  
Liebgott Isabella, Tselikis L Victoria  
ÖREBRO UNIVERSITY  
School of Law, Psychology and Social work  
Social work program  
Social Work 61-90 ECTS  
C-thesis, 15 ECTS  
Autumn 2015

### Abstract

Cambodia has a high population of people with disabilities and a majority of them need to turn to local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to receive help. The local NGOs, in their turn, often depend on the help coming from the West in terms of unpaid volunteers. Volunteer work is often viewed as the most unselfish way to help people in need. The purpose of this study is to find out how well known voluntourism is, how it affects NGOs from a power perspective, and what motivates volunteers and professionals to work in NGOs. A qualitative method consisting of eleven semi-structured interviews were used to answer the aim of the study. The interviews were conducted with NGOs which in worked with people with disabilities, either in the capital, Phnom Penh or in Sihanoukville. The conclusions of the study show that there are different views on what voluntourism is and how it affects the organization, the Cambodian professionals have less knowledgeable in the subject than the western professionals and volunteers. The study also shows that the inner motivation of western professional mainly concerned their education, since it is of relevance to their work, together with feeling joy in their work. Both the volunteers and Cambodian professionals refers to an altruistic feeling towards helping people, with the Cambodian professional there were also economic benefits of the work. At last the informant's express complex power situations which are linked to whiteness, where its structures influence the work, by in some cases strengthen the cultural differences between Cambodia and the West.

Keywords: Voluntourism, volunteering, Cambodia, disability, motivation, power, whiteness, Non-Governmental Organization

## Acknowledgement

First of all we would like to thank all the informants for participating in this study, making it possible. Your thoughts, and the interesting discussions following them, was a big motivation and very important to our thesis.

Secondly we would like to thank all the people who have helped us prior to, and during the exciting trip to Cambodia, and a especial thank you to our tutor in Cambodia, Lars-Åke Svensson. Your support and commitment that you gave us during this study has been beyond all we expected. You are a huge inspiration to both of us and words cannot describe how grateful we are that you have chosen to accompany us in this journey.

And last but definitely not the least, we would like to thank you, Sara Thunberg for being the best supervisor we could ever wish for. Your advice and never ending encouragement have been essential to us finishing this study. The fact that you always stood by us and trusted that we were up to the challenge is worth more than anything. We could not be happier to have you by our side during this amazing experience. Everyone should have a supervisor as supportive as you!

We will forever be grateful!  
Thank you!

Isabella Liebgott  
Victoria L Tselikis  
December 2015

## Table of content

Introduction .....	1
Problem.....	2
Aim of Study and Research Questions .....	3
Theoretical Concepts .....	3
Voluntourism .....	3
Power .....	4
Whiteness .....	5
Motivation .....	5
Previous research.....	7
NGO and disability .....	7
Volunteering, voluntourism and motivation.....	8
Voluntourism as a selling activity .....	9
Volunteering and power .....	9
Volunteering and intercultural knowledge .....	10
Method .....	11
Literature .....	12
Data collection .....	12
Sampling.....	12
Interview procedure .....	13
Thematic analysis .....	13
Generalization, Reliability and Validity .....	14
Ethical considerations.....	15
Result.....	16
The perception of voluntourism .....	16
The motivation of working with disability .....	19
Power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs .....	20
Analysis .....	22
The perception of voluntourism .....	22
The motivation of working with disability .....	24
Power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs .....	25
Discussion .....	26
The perception of voluntourism .....	27

The motivation of working with disability .....	28
Power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs .....	29
Limitations .....	30
Practical implication and future research .....	31
References .....	32

## Introduction

In Cambodia, more than a half million people are living with a physical disability and one fifth of the population is amputated, which makes Cambodia one of the developing countries with the highest proportion of disabled people (CBM, 2015). Cambodia is a developing country in Asia that still suffers from the aftereffects of the civil war, with unexploded landmines still costing the lives and limbs of the locals. The landmines are causing major injuries to adults and children, sometimes even killing them. As the mines mainly are found in the rural areas of the country the poor who unknowingly step on the mines are victimized (Unicef, 2013). Increased traffic accidents, that take place in the country daily (Road Traffic Accident & Victim Information System, 2004), also contribute to a higher proportion of population with disabilities. Traffic accidents could be considered the second greatest catastrophe in Cambodia after AIDS, as it, during 2004, was killing three people every day and injuring many more. In some hospitals more than 50 percent of the patients are victims of a traffic accidents, which put much pressure on the health system in the country (ibid).

Disabled in Cambodia are affected not only by the disability as such, but are also affected by poverty to a greater extent than non-disabled people and discrimination and stigmatization is nothing unusual for people with disabilities worldwide. Many disabled people stated that they become poor or very poor after becoming disabled, partly as much of the income goes to paying for health care, partly as being disabled reduces the opportunities to work drastically. The majority of Cambodia's population is working in agriculture which means that even lighter forms of disability limits the individuals ability to work, which also affects the household income and social status significantly (Thomas, 2005).

People with disabilities often turn to local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to receive the help they need, as even though Cambodia receive extensive aid to reduce poverty, only small measures are done within the social services. This is also the effects of low tax revenue, corruption and slow improvements in welfare (CDC, 2011). The local NGOs therefore play an essential role for the people with disability by complementing the social services in all the ways they lack ability. The NGOs in their turn are in many cases dependent on the influx of international donations and funding, as well as volunteers. Volunteers help by bringing transparency to the organizations and are part of the NGOs effort to reach high accountability and transparency in their work (ibid). NGOs often work together with communities and other partners, such as health centers to, through collaboration, develop the services in the village (Heng, Ui, Yatsuya, Kawaguichi, Akashi, Aoyana 2010).

Volunteers get in contact with the organizations and make plans for the duration of their stay in many different ways, some stay only a short period of time and do not have the appropriate education while some stay several years and truly wish to develop the skills of the professionals in the host organization. Volunteering occurs in many different ways and there is no specific guide to what is the best way or when volunteering becomes voluntourism (volunteer tourism). The voluntourism is often viewed as a volunteer who does not have any specific skills that are needed by the organizations, are motivated by the experience and adventure of volunteering and only stay for a short period of time (Bjerneld, Lindmark, McSpadden, Garrett 2006; Fairley 2014). Often the volunteer is motivated by the altruistic way of wanting to help and make a difference where they think the difference will matter the most. The good volunteering is when the differences they make are sustainable and performed in a way that is compatible with the wishes of the host organizations, not overpowering the organization (ibid).

The risk of overpowering the organization is connected to the power perspective of western volunteering in developing countries as a phenomenon. Hierarchies, built after positions in an organization or informal positions that are developed through centuries of

discrimination are formed with a few people having power over the greater crowd (Alvesson, 1996; Levine-Rasky, 2013). Voluntourism is highly affected by structures of power, partly in the way they ascend to the organizations and are placed within the already existing hierarchy as well as the fact that they are white people coming with knowledge to the locals in the developing country. There is an imbalance between the white volunteers and the host organizations due to a dependency relationship that in some cases has showed having connections to a colonial past. The view that Cambodians have regarding volunteers and contrariwise is altering the relationship between them and affecting the work (Perold, Graham, Mavungu, Cronin, Muchemwa, Lough, 2013).

The many dependency relationships; the disabled who are dependent on NGOs, NGOs who are dependent on international funding and volunteers who depend on NGOs to get experience, are leading to an exploitation of volunteering that could be viewed as voluntourism. The volunteers inner motivation is often referred to as altruistic but on the other hand, as many wish to get experience and adventure to bring back home, how is the motivation affecting their contributions, can it still be called altruistic (Bjernerled et al., 2006; Fairley 2014)? The voluntourism affects the NGOs in many levels, both in the way they contribute and in the way they influence the hierarchy and affect through their whiteness. Some is known about the problems voluntourism causes to the orphanages in Cambodia but little is known about what they bring to the social structures of the NGOs within the disability sector (ibid). The knowledge gap about voluntourism in different sectors of the social services may lead to a poor way of dealing with the aftereffects. The whiteness perspective of volunteering is discussed within similar settings, yet it is difficult to know if the organizations and the work within them are changing because of imbalance in power caused by ascending volunteers.

## **Problem**

Disabled people in Cambodia are a very vulnerable and marginalized group that cannot easily profit from social services, because of Cambodia's limited ability to help these citizens, and also as they often are too poor to pay for the help they need. Not only are disabled people often considered on the basis of their disability, they are also more likely to be unemployed than non-disabled people (Zook, 2010; Gartell, 2010, CDC, 2011) and therefore more likely to experience poverty (Gartell & Hoban, 2013; Saunders, 2007). These factors result in disabled people in Cambodia being dependent on help from NGOs, which in turn depend on voluntary international assistance, for example, volunteers from the west. Previous research show that volunteers travel to developing countries with very diverse knowledge, experience and motivation, but little is known about how the work in Cambodian host organizations get affected by accepting international volunteers (Bjernerled et al., 2006). The motivation of both volunteers and professionals can, according to previous research, be explained by an altruistic feeling of wanting to help other people, but what they strive towards in order to fulfill themselves in a profession may speak against that (Bradley, Maschi, O'Brien, Morgen, Ward 2012, Bjernerled et al., 2006). Whether it is the longing to have good recommendations to a coming job, adventure or longing for a career and earning money, it might be challenging the altruism. Research conducted in Tanzania and Mozambique concerning volunteerism from northern countries and the contribution they make to development of host organizations show that there is similarities to the colonial past which can be hard to overcome. However, the research is conducted in two countries in Africa, and even though some similarities do exist between these countries and Cambodia, as they are developing countries, it is not known if this is transferable to a Cambodian context (Perold et al., 2013). Volunteering has become a popular form of tourism both in Africa and Asia and to some it is equal to a modern type of colonization. Based on the limited research on the subject, the question is what this popular

trend called voluntourism really is driven by and how it affects the host organizations. This study aims to bridge some of the knowledge gaps concerning the power perspective in international volunteering and voluntourism, regarding the motivations of professionals and volunteers when working with people with disabilities, and how this affect the work environment in the organizations.

### **Aim of Study and Research Questions**

The aim of this study is to examine professionals and volunteer's understanding of voluntourism and how it affects the hosting organizations social structures, as well as what the inner motivation of the volunteers and professionals are. Further the study will investigate how the "volontourism" affects the work in the help-organizations from a power perspective, in NGOs working with disability in Cambodia.

The aim of the study will be answered through these research questions:

- What are volunteers and professionals understanding of “volontourism” and what does the phenomenon bring to the organizations social structure?
- What is volunteers and professionals inner motivation for helping people with disabilities?
- How is the work within the host organizations affected by help coming from acceding volunteers, from a power and whiteness-perspective?

### **Theoretical Concepts**

This section contains a description of three different terms volunteer, power and motivation which sets the theoretical basis of this study. The terms will be explained and problematized and will be used during the analysis to achieve a form of understanding of the collected data.

#### **Voluntourism**

The amount of active volunteers has increased over the past decade and mostly so in European countries. The European Union did a study on volunteering which exposed that approximately 94 million adults are involved in volunteering in some kind of way. These numbers show that about 22-23% of the European population engages in volunteering. Volunteering not only brings a lot of great impact and benefits to local communities, it also brings a lot of joy to the volunteers (Ostlander, Güntert, van Schiel & Wehner, 2014). The most common form of volunteering is the arrangement of one-on-one help or when a group of people work together to accomplish a mutual goal. This can manifest such as, for example, maintaining an organization or putting time out because of a desire and a will for social modification and justice for minorities. Although it is quite often hard to define whether a movement is volunteer work or not, the term volunteer is a big part of the western culture and its language. Volunteer actions is often acknowledged as something that is not performed for an economic gain, instead, it is performed of one's free will and carries value to both the people who volunteer as well as to a third party (Musick & Wilson, 2008).

The normalization of volunteering in the west leads to questions of what it brings and whom it benefits. Volunteer-tourism applies to those who visit a country, often a developing one, as a tourist with the aim to volunteer in an organized way by, for example, helping material poverty of some vulnerable groups, help restoring certain environments or research into different aspects of civilization. The volunteers that are named volunteer-tourists are

those seeking a tourist experience that is equally helpful and that will not only add to their individual improvement but also to the social and economic surroundings in which they contribute. Even though a volunteer tourist may have done some kind of difference to others, the biggest difference that occurs is the personal one, where the tourist receives a greater awareness of self, feeling empowered knowing they have made a difference. Voluntourism therefore offers a chance for an individual to explore 'self' and by the belief that by helping others and learning about other people's lives and cultures, is one able to this development of self (Wearing, 2001; Musick & Wilson, 2008). An interesting aspect of the voluntourism though, is that they almost always will pay in some way to participate in these volunteer-activities and the total is often much more than a regular tourist would pay on an average vacation (Wearing, 2001).

## **Power**

The classic definition of power is when one person makes another person act in a certain way, either on purpose or unintentionally, but the term power can also be much more complex than that. The problem with this classical definition is its common conception that power is directly connected with competition and conflict. Another problem is that the definition neglects and ignores the complexity of power and instead, it tends to focus on behavioral and individual factors (Alvesson, 1996). A different view on power is when reality is the product of negotiations between operators that are involved in asymmetrical power relationships were different possibilities, regarding making decisions about their own reality, is based on the access to different recourses. Here it is the structural and systemic nature of power that is highlighted, instead of supposing power to be intended and an instrument held by the authoritative over the defenseless, as in the classical definition. Ideologies may say that power is beyond the control of the manager and that the managers may be pledged to cultural ideas and values, which they take for granted (ibid). Therefore, this means that power can be conducted without the managers or the authorities own knowledge about it, as can be seen in different hierarchies. It can also be understood as they having different preconditions to gain or get education or knowledge regarding where they live (Alvesson, 1996).

For centuries hierarchy has taken a huge part in human society, with the idea that some are superiors and others are subordinates. Almost all human societies and cultures are organized hierarchically, as well as organizations and groups, where only a few of the members, as being part of the superiors, hold a large amount of positive social significance including power and social status where the subordinate group, containing more members than the superior, holds a bigger share of negative social values (Diefenbach, 2013). Furthermore, as hierarchical structures has existed throughout time, with generations maintaining and occupying these structures for the pursuit of their own personal interests, the structures remains, as well as the power within them (ibid).

Although power is a multifaceted concept meaning that there are many different theories about what power actually is, there are some different perceptions on it. Some say that power is demonstrated particularly in expressions, in manner of speaking, through different laws, through assertiveness techniques and so on, all being made in silence, which therefore means that power as a concept is quite difficult to explain. One way of explaining it though, can be that power is the ability to induce some kind of social change. Another perception, as power seems to be impossible to define, is the suggestion to create a sense of understanding of how power *makes us feel* instead (Engelstad, 2006; Alvesson, 1996). Guinote and Vescio (2010) explains this phenomena further by clarifying that by studying the experience of power, the importance lies in recognizing the fact that social power is a relational construct which means that there would be no power without someone to be subordinate, which is fundamental in all kind of power-relations. This view on power creates some challenges for those who believe

that power only is created by one single person. The relational concept of power is, according to Ariail Reed (2013), the impact social structures has over relations which directly puts people in two positions, the advantaged and the disadvantaged. These structures decide in which position a person belongs to, according to your social status, where in society you are positioned and therefore how much power you are considered having. Some might explain social power through "genetic dispositions or psychological traits" (Ariail Reed, 2013) as a result from natural selection, individual rationality and so on. Others say that these methodologies miss out on an important aspect of "what makes the world work" and therefore also miss out on a crucial part of power, the one where an understanding of the relations between the superior and subordinate has established. How one, or many, individuals can possess power over others and by doing so, being able to control others (ibid).

### **Whiteness**

Whiteness as a term has taken on a specific meaning in everyday culture, relationships and social institutions. As history has shown, there has been an undesirable racial difference between humans, constructed by mankind, where white people are seen as the superior. Whiteness is a normalized term and as it is classified as "normal", anything that differs from whiteness becomes the "abnormal" (Levine-Rasky, 2013). Levine-Rasky (2013) explains that whiteness is categorized as the ordinary, what is right and sets the basis for how a human being should live. This normalization of whiteness is what sustains it and what makes the power it brings kept alive. While being white, you do not have to think about white privilege as a factor in obtaining a good job or higher education. It is something you take for granted, which is a part of the problem. Whiteness can also be explained as a location of structural gain or advantage, a position from which white people grasp themselves in relation to racialized others. Racialized difference is social control in its purest form, where social control of whiteness is unthinkable. Whiteness is about much more than an individual's skin color or a group of people. It is primarily about the exercise of power, often practiced subtly or implicitly. Therefore, social constructions of "race" and of whiteness are not detached from social processes, they are involved in power relations where the constructions consecutively arise from these social processes and produce them (Levine-Rasky, 2013).

Some effects from the socially constructed ideas about "race" and whiteness have been seen throughout history events. America, for example, have a history of slavery where segregation and discrimination of people who were considered non-white had to live through, all because being non-white (Guess, 2006). These different events can be named as "racism by intent", which is displayed as racial prejudice and discrimination to non-white people, founded upon a long time of custom and tradition. One other type of racism that is "racism by consequence" (ibid) which represents discrimination and racial prejudice taken place almost subconsciously as a result of historical evolution, as in the example above. Guess (2006) means that "*the result of racism by intent has overtime informed institutional cultures and practices that rest on assumptions of white superiority over non-white ethnic groups*" and continues by claiming that racism by consequence is not often recognized by "white" people and is reflected by different opportunities on an educational and economical level which also includes unlike access to health-care.

### **Motivation**

An individual's motivation why they are joining a voluntary movement is an important factor where the motive determines whether the unpaid work is volunteering at all, from a social perspective. If people who volunteer do so only because of the own gain or to improve their work skills, then it is measured too selfish to be considered as a sympathetic way of giving your time. The important element for something to be able to be called 'volunteering' is self-

sacrifice and generosity, where the work is totally and only for other purposes than your own (Musick & Wilson, 2008).

There are several psychosocial theories that have been spoken that explain the different factors that motivate human behavior and Maslow's study about the hierarchy of needs is one of them. Maslow formulated a theory of motivation where the basic human needs are organized in a hierarchical way to demonstrate how human beings different needs emerge when one need is being satisfied. This implies that the human motivation is driven by achieving a fulfillment of all the basic needs, where fulfilling one lower need makes it able to get to a higher one (Maslow, 1970). In the top of the hierarchy is the need of self-actualization followed by self-esteem, love and belonging, safety and lastly, physiological needs (Figure 1).

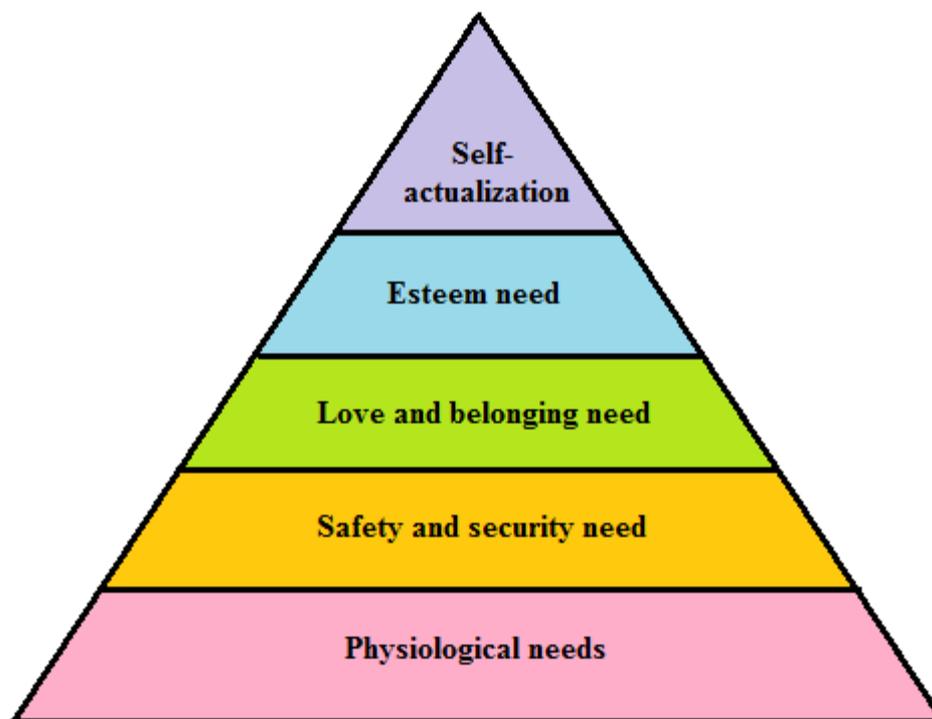


Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The physiological needs include the physical requirements were elements such as food, oxygen, water, sleep and so on is vital for survival. The safety need, which as the physiological need also is essential, covers the personal and financial security, as well as it covers the importance of a good health and well-being. When these needs are fulfilled the next need is the feeling of belonging were being loved by a group such as a family, work, a religious and so on is important for an individual's ability to maintain relationships with others. Next level is the self-esteem need, where the approval from others has a huge role as the individual's desire is to be accepted. This need can explain why people often seek attention or validation from others by getting involved in hobbies or in some kind of professions. The last and highest need is the self-actualization, where the individual has reached the highest possible self, with the individual's full potential being achieved (Maslow, 1970). To understand how these needs is related to motivation, Maslow (1970) explains that when studying motivation, these ultimate human goals or desires must be a part of the study, and since these needs often goes by unconsciously, the explanation of what motivates individuals could do as well (ibid).

## **Previous research**

This section presents a compilation of the extensive search for previous research. The studies are presented under different headlines and paired with studies that came to similar conclusions. The procedures and conclusions are presented in short as well as other relevant information. The structure of the section is a result of the findings in the studies as well as a match to the aim of this study. The purpose of the section is to give a broad picture of what is already known and where any knowledge gaps may be in order to discuss in relation to the findings of this study.

### **NGO and disability**

Previous research show that disabled people in Cambodia often is considered as their disability, instead of the human being they actually are, and disabled people in Cambodia are discriminated on a daily basis by the society (Zook, 2010). Research also show that disabled people is systematically marginalized by the labor market and are unemployed in a much greater extent than non-disabled people, which also causes a higher risk of getting exposed to poverty. Life in Cambodia is characterized by a hierarchical system in which status is defined based on age and gender, yet disabled people is consider having a lower status than non-disabled regardless of gender or age (Gartell, 2010; Saunders, 2007). Gartell and Hoban (2013) provide valuable insight into how people with disabilities are experiencing the collaboration with NGOs designed to provide assistance to them. Unfortunately these collaborations do not seem to work. The study suggests that the social and cultural norms need to be addressed for it to be a change. The conclusion of this is that disabled people in Cambodia are struggling and that they are dependent on the NGO's, as a great part of the support and service comes from those organizations. Disabled people are dependent on NGO's which in turn are dependent on the help from volunteers working for free, both national and international. The NGO's often need the help from international volunteers, often traveling from the western parts of the world. Volunteering has become a phenomenon that engages many and occurs in many shapes. From the research made on the subject of volunteerism and "voluntourism" (volunteer tourism) it is found that there is a limited access to relevant research about how it affects the organizations in which they work (ibid) which is presented further in this study.

The host organizations, which are the NGOs in Cambodia, are often the major provider of social services, and complement where the official social service lacks assets. The NGOs are providing help to the communities but are themselves dependent on international help from volunteers and international funding (CDC, 2011). According to Heng et al. (2010), local NGOs need to work with communities and health centers to build capacity and help the community to see the advantages of managing their own health services and get experience through that. The study aimed to focus on the roles of local NGOs in rural Cambodia and how they facilitate community participation in health center management. Through questionnaires and interviews with both local NGOs and their partner health centers the study could examine to which extent a community participation within health centers took place. Professionals from all the eight NGOs that was interviewed and all NGOs was involved with some sort of capacity building and community work in their village, though the reasons and motivations for it differed (ibid). The NGOs started with letting the community express what the most urgent needs consisted of and then worked towards the other priority issues. Through this, the community learned problem-solving together with the NGO and gained confidence in leading participation in activities of health centers. One of the conclusions is that long term commitment, from the NGO to a special village or geographic area, has higher likelihood of being able to facilitate positive processes. The local NGOs are in the majority of cases, very

knowledgeable about local power structures and can therefore plan the processes with limited financial resources. It is safe to say that local NGOs play an important part to the communities and villages development as well as implementing new processes that are of benefit for the inhabitants (Heng et al., 2010). The NGOs and volunteers create opportunities for poor people and people in rural areas to get the help they need and the volunteers bring transparency to the organizations, in collaboration they can develop each other (Heng et al., 2010; CDC, 2011).

### **Volunteering, voluntourism and motivation**

Bjerneld et al. (2006) mean that there are different constellations in which volunteering occurs, some get in contact with the host organization personally, have the right education and get interviewed; the same as for a paid job. Others travel through travel agencies, pay a lot of money to do so and have no education, suiting experiences or do not even know beforehand what kind of organization they will be stationed. Naturally every constellation between these extremes exists as well. These different ways of sending volunteers result in a very different view on whether volunteers are helping or making things worse. The 19 Scandinavian healthcare workers who were interviewed are hereby referred to as the volunteers. The result show that it is a lot of different things that motivates volunteers and according to the volunteers a lot is in the hands of the organization in terms of motivating them. The volunteers stated that the host organization should appreciate their work and show them that they were wished to have them there; this would have a positive effect to the personal self-esteem (Bjerneld et al., 2006). When it comes to the inner motivation of the volunteers prior to the travel a majority of the volunteers answered that they had a wish to assist in the society through volunteering in healthcare and make a difference. A few stated that the work they would do for free, for people who they had the understanding was very poor, would make up for the privileged life they lived in Sweden. The volunteers shared an altruistic way of wanting to help other people; something they felt would also give them personal satisfaction. They expressed it was almost like a calling and that whatever assignment they got they wanted it to make a difference and be sustainable.

In addition to the contribution they would make in the organization, they were also prepared for sacrifices. The sacrifices would make the value of the contribution greater. For many, the voluntary work would be a new experience and something exciting in their life that they had a longing to do, both on a personal and professional level. The overall experience of volunteering was thought to be an eye-opener and a chance to widen the perspectives of Swedish healthcare get an experience. Further Bjerneld et al. (2006) concluded that the inner motivation of the volunteers is confirming the theory of the hierarchy of needs by Maslow. Their inner motivations indicate that they felt boredom in their daily life, and since they had fulfilled their needs they wanted to achieve something greater, the coming step of the hierarchy of needs. Self-actualization, which is in the top of the hierarchy of needs, often featured as openness to new experiences, was observed in all the volunteers' motivation.

The longing for an experience was one of the motivations found by Fairley (2014) when interviewing 100 people in Siem Reap, Cambodia, which had considered volunteering within some orphanages. The research aims to identify the perceptions of international tourists coming to Cambodia with a thought of maybe volunteer short term within children's residential care. The vast majority of the interviewees came from Europe, the US or Australia/New Zealand. The research found that there were big knowledge gaps about what the volunteers actually understood about the many orphanages in Cambodia and what they may encourage if they choose to volunteer in one of them. For example 75 percent of potential volunteers did not know that the majority of children in orphanages are not actually orphans. The volunteers' job could often be to play with the children or teach English to them. Yet the vast majority of the volunteers who was teaching English did not have the proper

education to do so. The majority of volunteers does not speak Khmer and stay only a short period in the orphanage, which can make the value and sustainability of their efforts deeply questionable (ibid). According to Fairley (2014) and Bjerneld et al. (2006) motivation is not the problem with volunteers; these researches indicate that volunteers often come well motivated, even though the reasons for motivation may differ. Often the aspiration of the volunteers is to help and make a difference, but unfortunately they do not plan their volunteering in the best way which causes bad voluntourism. Fairley (2014) mean that there need to be more information to the volunteers so to enlighten them about how their good will and money can be at best use in the country in which they are traveling. The information need to be more complex and engage with the “grey areas” and difficulties of volunteering. This will give the volunteers insight and a fairer picture to which they can make informed choices in their volunteering.

Bradley et al. (2012) aim to find out what motivates people who chose to become social workers. The result show that the main motivations are to be of service to others, a feeling that their work is important due to it being a strive towards social justice, dignity and equality for all people. The other motivation is the interest for helping people who are unable to help themselves and use problem solving to do so. The individual meeting is important and a part of the job as a social worker. In common for the majority of social workers interviewed is that they speak about ways to increase human well-being and social justice through good social work, values and ethical principles. In other words both the volunteers and the social work professionals state that making a difference to others people's well-being and helping in general is an important motivation for social work, it does not seem to matter if the work it payed or not, the altruistic spirit can be found in both cases (Bradley et al., 2012; Bjerneld et al., 2006).

### **Voluntourism as a selling activity**

Vodopivec and Jaffe (2011) mean that positive effects of voluntourism have often been taken for granted, such as development for the community, host organization and volunteer. The one who is meant to initiate and make those changes happen is the volunteers. The whole idea of voluntourism is based on the willingness and wallets of young western volunteers who come from the outside to achieve something during a limited time and then go back. The volunteer's motivation to help other people is articulated by all volunteers interviewed. The volunteers need to adapt to the sending organization which may try to commercialize the volunteering and fit it into a perfect box that will sell over and over. This to the risk of losing both the host organizations need and desires for what kind of skills they need and the volunteers possibility to investigate and plan the trip with their own input (ibid).

A research study by D. Lyons and Wearing (2008) also state that the commercialization of volunteering is done with the hypothesis that volunteering will create openness between cultures as well as an acceptance and empathy towards foreign cultures. However, not much implicate that the sending organizations and volunteer programs address the whiteness and western privileged power positions that they become a part of. Instead they often advertise by using simple means like “us and them” when referring to the volunteers and the locals. The advertising for volunteering is therefore built on the opposite hypothesis than what the result of volunteering is aimed to be. Further Lyons and Wearing (2008) state that little is known about how volunteers short or long term stay at host organizations really affect the social, cultural and economic benefits as well as what they bring to the organizations.

### **Volunteering and power**

Perold et al. (2013) look into how northern volunteerism in Tanzania and Mozambique affect the development of host organizations. There were a majority of positive effects but some of

the challenges were to have a deeper understanding concerning the imbalance between northern sending countries and the countries in Africa who take on the volunteers. The imbalance in addition to northern volunteers coming to work in Africa can be related to a colonial past. The colonial past has left marks; countries in Africa have been colonized by countries in the west. Later that dependency relationship has been broken but now arises as a result of the dependency relations a volunteer sending country can have to a developing country in Africa. This can be strengthened by the fact that the populations of some African countries still treat “white” people in a modified way due to them being seen as superior (ibid). The western volunteers travel to countries in Africa and bring their education and skills, in order to be of use within local NGOs. The purpose of the volunteers is to build capacity and develop the effectiveness and function (ibid). If this is the case depends on the volunteer but also how well the NGO has planned the work for the volunteer. It is important that there is structure and a need which match the skills of the volunteer. There are five components which describe how volunteers are affecting the host organizations and they are, to bring new ideas and propose new thinking ways to take advantage of the capacity of the organization, see problems from new angles and come up with solutions as well as create and establish technical and cultural innovations. If the hosting organizations carefully match the skills of the volunteer to the skills needed to be developed in their organization is it less likely those frustrations in the volunteer’s placement will occur. The dependency relationship between northern sending countries and countries in Africa where organizations host them is affected both by the way the skills are brought to them, from whom they are brought and the fact that the western people bringing them are treated differently (ibid).

Findings indicate that the view that people of Tanzania and Mozambique have of white people included seeing them as having economic higher status than themselves, seeing them as an access to money, seeing them as the carrier of special skills and seeing them as a superior “race” (Perold et al., 2013). This stereotypic way of perceiving “white” people have its roots in a colonial past. The views on white people create an opportunity for the host organizations to take advantage of. For instance the western volunteers could be places to that they had responsibility for contact with donors or other beneficiaries since the professionals in Tanzania and Mozambique mean that it is then more likely that someone buy into the programs. According to them a white person makes the organization seem more serious and successful, it was also more likely that the donors trusted the views of the western volunteers. In this way the whiteness of the volunteers could be used to advantage of the organization and the general perceptions of white people is maintained. Further, Perold et al. (2013) concluded that as the host organizations are in some ways dependent on the sending organizations in the northern countries they take on all the volunteers they are handed without properly knowing how to use their skills in the best way or if their skills is even needed in their organization. The host organizations are outmaneuvered by the sending organizations and this may lead to bad volunteer placements which create frustrations with both the volunteer and host organizations. All taken together, Perold et al. (2013) state that the organizations does not develop a positively change to the extent that could be expected. The volunteers also lack intercultural knowledge which can lead to misunderstandings; which could be avoided if the volunteers were better prepared. Further it is crucial that the structures of whiteness, superior and inferior as well as developed and undeveloped are not challenged and discussed openly to be reduced, it is not likely that the international volunteering in the end will produce so much positive change at all.

## **Volunteering and intercultural knowledge**

Raymond and Hall (2008) present a study where intercultural knowledge and cross-cultural understanding through voluntourism is discussed. Raymond and Hall (2008) used appreciative

into several volunteer programs to find out how the sending organizations can ensure that a cross-cultural understanding is taking place through voluntourism. The conclusion of the study is that the cross-cultural understandings that initially are viewed as a uncommitted result from volunteering instead should be the goal of it. If a cross-cultural understanding is not taking place or developing between the volunteer and the host organization it can result in misunderstandings and a reinforcement of cultural stereotypes. However,

Voluntourism is often spoken about as a form of tourism that will create a place and time for people from different cultures to meet and stereotypes and prejudices to be challenged. In the extension voluntourism would become an activity that through spreading international understanding would establish tolerance, peace and reduce the risk of conflict. However, the findings by Raymond and Hall (2008) indicate that a meeting between two people does not have to lead to a more open minded approach. Information from the interviews possibly shows that the new experiences with persons from another culture are seen as positive exceptions from how they perceive people from that culture in general. In other words it is not the stereotypes or prejudices that have been eliminated but only disproven by one or a few examples, the individuals they got to know. Both Perold et al. (2013) and Raymond and Hall (2008) conveys a complex situation to volunteering in relation to voluntourism, which could be solved through better preparation and a longer stay at the host organization.

Sossou and Dubus (2013) examine how a development program which meet the needs of the host organization and community first, within international social work. The international work performed by social work students it viewed as a great opportunity to gain skills and personal development for the student. It will also give the students a new perspective of other cultures and other social welfare systems which can result in a deeper cross-cultural understanding and acceptance for people who are living different lives from themselves. However, these personal gains have been met by opposition since the self-actualization does not need to be combined with development of the host organization, which should instead be the main focus volunteering. For positive effects of volunteering to occur long term sustainability should be the goals of all host organizations, this is also important because of ethical principles of social work volunteering. The work should be of the same ethical standards as if it was performed in the home country. The best chances to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings is to provide education courses prior to the trip and plan the volunteering together with the host organization.

## **Method**

The choice to do a qualitative study emerged as a suitable possibility when it was decided that the focus would be the subjective experiences of volunteers and professionals. To conduct a lesser number of interviews in Cambodia was also the most viable option as it would be easier to get in contact with a few organizations than having many people answer a questionnaire. The qualitative research is based on words rather than digits and often consists of interviews or questionnaires with open-ended questions (Bryman 2011). The epistemological base for the study is critical realism. The critical realism is a philosophical perception with an explanation about how social reality is created. For example, the belief is that people are born with some sort of identity but also that the identity is created in social interaction. The critical realism thinks that the social reality is created in the interaction between natural and social worlds (Bryman, 2011). In this study it is interesting both to understand and explain the social world and to do so a critical realistic approach is necessary. We will use the approach to explain the social world both as created by nature and social interactions.

## Literature

When searching for relevant information and earlier research four different databases were used. The databases that were used are DiVA, Social Services Abstract, Google scholar and Libris. Google scholar, Libris and DiVA can be used by the public, but Social Services Abstract can be accessible through Örebro University Library. These databases were chosen because they came recommended from Örebro University and together they cover much material relating to this study. The search for literature and information was done in a systematic way with clear criteria for inclusion and exclusion. The criteria are that all research must be conducted after year 1990 and must be able to view in full text. The material could be about men, women and children in all ages. Scientific articles and dissertations that were peer-reviewed were preferred. Because of voluntourism being a relatively new area of research there is no wide selection of dissertations or articles to choose from. Every research used for this study is carefully chosen, peer-reviewed or not. The suitability and seriousness has been discussed and assessed prior to use. The keywords used in the search are *understanding volunteerism, voluntourism, humanitarian aid, development aid, volunteer tourism, international social work/service, non-profit and culture, help-organizations, disability, power-relations, power in cultures, hierarchy in Cambodia*. The search was conducted 12th-19th October 2015. The keywords were chosen either because they had a direct connection to the aim of the study or as an operationalization of them. For example the keyword *volunteer* could be operationalized to *unpaid work, voluntary work* etc. The search was done in both Swedish and English.

## Data collection

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) a qualitative semi-structured interview does not have much structure or procedures to follow, when conducting an interview. This demands a well-prepared interviewer, who needs to be updated on the subject and aware of different possible scenarios during the interview. The interviewer has a responsibility to create an environment where the interviewee can feel safe and calm so that he/she feels able to express and speak freely. It is a balance between integrity of the interviewee and the interviewer's interest to get information. When conducting a semi-structured interview the interviewee's opinions, experiences and stories is of interest, the freedom in the method does not limit the stories and leaves space to ask supplementary questions. This can also be confirmed by Bryman (2011) who states that qualitative interviews often are defined by its differences from quantitative ones. In quantitative interviews answers, that is easy and quick to code, is interesting but in qualitative interviews answers that are in depth and detailed are wanted. As the interviewee's subjective opinions are wanted there need to be space for him/her to speak freely and change the subject a little toward what of them is considered interesting. This gives a hint about the sub-motives that are close to heart for the interviewee. The interview is done in seven steps (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014). In the first and second step the interview is planned and interview guide is prepared. As explained above the guide needs to have a little space for the turn that may be taken by the interviewee. The questions should be open-ended and be connected to the different themes or subjects of the research. There is no demand that the guide should be done in a certain way, though it should be more likened to a conversation than a formal interview.

## Sampling

To find suitable people to interview a combined sampling type were used, snowball sampling and targeted selection. The snowball sampling is based on the selection that is, at the moment, available to the researcher and the targeted selection means that the researcher makes its

selection based on the desire to interview people relevant to the forthcoming study. As it does not represent the population in which it is researched it can never be statistically generalized. When a snowball is set in motion it grows, the same way a network grows as you get to know more people. The growing network is built through contacts. At a starting point the first relevant contact needs to be established and through that contact yet another one and so on until all interviews that are needed are booked (Bryman, 2011). The first contact taken when looking for interviewees was found through an extensive Google search and many e-mails were sent to different NGOs within the disability sector. One of the first contacts established then helped by adding us to a social work network in Phnom Penh. Through this gesture a network could take form, as every new possible interviewee was asked about if they knew someone else who could be relevant to the study we presented. More and more people in the social work network got in contact with us. This type of combined sampling, to choose the interviewees in a strategic way as well as letting one interviewee lead on to another, creates the best possible chance to find interviewees relevant to the study. After a while, when there still was a need of more interviewees, we filmed a short video to introduce ourselves and the study we were about to conduct in Cambodia. The short video was shared through a Google Drive link to the interviewees we already had scheduled and other relevant people we had already been in contact with. The video may have been the reason why all the necessary interviews were booked shortly after. As confirmed by Bryman (2011) it is not rare that all participants in a study are gathered thanks to them being recommended by someone, which is the case for this study. The method is suitable as it is hard to get in contact with people and organizations in other countries without taking advantage of the first contacts that are established. The first contacts established were asked to recommend relevant people and later they were also asked to share the Google Drive link as much as they could. This was both convenient and effective hence the snowball was indeed set into motion by the video.

## **Interview procedure**

In order to answer the research questions of this study, a total of eleven interviews were conducted, one of which was made over e-mail. The interviews were done with people who understand and speak English, in line with the ethical implications. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The settings of the ten interviews conducted in person were up to the interviewees to decide, but in most cases the interviews were carried out in offices at the organization. When there was no room to meet at the organizations, some interviews were conducted in different coffee shops. Often was the place chosen with some demands in mind, a calm coffee shop with not much people, in a private corner where the interview could take place without others guests hearing what was said.

Before the interviews, all the interviewees were obligated to sign a consent-letter which provided them with the information needed about the ethical principles the study is guided by as well as information about the aim of the study. During the interview one of us was asking the questions and the other one was taking notes. The notes that were taken were a compliment to the recordings, so that thoughts that came to mind were not forgotten. There was never an attempt to write down everything the interviewee said as it would take too much attention from the interviewee. It was important to collect all the impression from the situation since the sound could be listened to thanks to the recordings.

## **Thematic analysis**

According to Bryman (2011) thematic analysis is a common technique used to analyze qualitative data. The thematic analysis does not have clear techniques but can be done in different ways. To some researchers a theme is the same as a code and to some a theme is like a cluster of several codes. The themes are created by finding central motives and sub-motives

through reading the transcribed interviews carefully repeated times. The themes can then be compared to each other to find patterns in motives and themes. According to Smith (2011) thematic analysis is an interpretive process that can be used on a range of theoretical and epistemological research giving new insights, which makes the method flexible, but critics mean that it may lack depth. The risk is that the interpretations made to theme up may instead of giving insight fragment the information causing it to get misinterpreted and lose its depth. When managing the data from interviews there is strategies to keep close to the original, for starters the transcription is printed and the themes are formed by carefully reading each phrase, line or paragraph and highlighting the key motives as well as writing down thoughts in the margins. To stay close to the original data the themes should be formed by using the interviewees own words or expressions as much as possible, this is called “in-vivo” coding. In-vivo coding minimizes the risk of misinterpretations and that is also a reason why it will be used when the data is analyzed. The flow goes from the original transcript to the in-vivo codes to the preliminary thoughts and then to the themes created. As the analysis goes on the themes can be grouped together creating broader themes that are the primary ones. Throughout the process of analyzing the primary themes will develop, as new insights occur. The development is caught in the database where the matrices are saved, for instance as a spreadsheet. After the analysis is done is it good to let the data “rest” for a while and then get back to it since time has a function of clearing the mind and this may help to new insights when the material is checked again.

### **Generalization, Reliability and Validity**

The question about generalization is whether the result from the study can give information about a context beyond the one in which it was conducted. So, if the study for example shows that voluntourism is bad for the help-organizations that we interviewed, is it possible to say that it is bad for all help-organizations (Bryman, 2011; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003)? The answer to this question is in this case, no. The reason for this is because the populations in which the sample of interviewees was not chosen with a probability procedure. Since it is a snowball sampling it can never be generalized to another context. That is not the point with this study, the point is to look deeper into a phenomenon and through analyze in relation to several definitions get new knowledge and understanding about it.

The reliability depend on if the study is replicable and if then, the result would be the same. In qualitative studies, giving it high reliability is not often desired. The reasons for this are, among others, that a qualitative study is very steered by its current context and the capricious state of it. It is impossible to freeze a social environment. For example a qualitative interview could have many different results depending on the context in which it is made, the connection between the researcher and the interviewee and so on. A semi-structured interview can never be identical as the very reason for it is to follow the flow of the interviewee (Bryman, 2011; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). As for this study, it aims to freeze a “picture” of the current experiences and feeling of the participants and situation which makes it have a low reliability.

The internal validity explains whether the study is investigating what it claims to investigate. To be surer about this, Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) mean that the credibility and skill of the researcher is of importance, it is the researcher's obligation to try to validate all sequences of the study. It's important to have validation in mind continually throughout the process and not only in the end. For example, the interview-design and methods should be adequate and reflect the aim of the study as well as the theoretical implications. To validate is for the researcher to critically screen the methods and analysis of its own study to counteract methods that generate untrue result. Lewis and Ritchie (2003) also mean that it is important to continually reflect about whether the phenomena studied is identified and “named” in the

right way, the way it is perceived by the informants and if the environment is encouraging participants to express themselves fully. To strengthen the internal validity the procedures are carefully accounted for and the evaluation of the internal validity is up to the external reader to assess.

## **Ethical considerations**

Before and during the trip to Cambodia it is important to be aware of the ethical implications of the study and the interviews. There are several ethical principles a serious researcher should have in mind (Bryman, 2011). The four ethical principles that the Swedish Research Council ([Vetenskapsrådet], 2002) is writing about are the *requirement to give information*, *the requirement of consent*, *confidentiality obligations* and *utilization requirement*. These principles will be discussed and considered throughout the study and in preparation for the interviews. Every interviewee will receive a document, the consent-letter, to inform them about our ethical principles and how it concerns them. The interviewee will sign two copies of the consent-letter, where one of the copies is theirs and the other is the authors. The interviewee will read the consent letter before conducting the interview and will have time to ask questions about the information in the document as well as any other questions that may arise before the interview. The aim of the study will be presented both in the consent-letter as well as in the conversations that are taken with the interviewee before the meeting.

An ethical dilemma could occur in the use of a translator, for example the presence of a translator can have a negative effect on the interviewee, making the interviewee feel uncomfortable to reveal information to a third party. Also there is a dilemma with important information being lost in the translation from Khmer to English and then in our heads, to Swedish. Because of these ethical implications a choice was made to avoid doing interviews with people who do not speak English. It is also very important to, in line with the requirement of information, give participant the chance to read the finished product. The study will be written in English and for that reason it is important that the interviewees are able to understand that language properly.

Action will be taken to protect the material gathered during the travel. All devices which contain recordings from interviews will be locked in the safe provided by the hotel or resort during the nights. This is done to minimize the risk of devices being stolen. The devices will be carefully handled and not brought out on the streets more than necessary for the interviews. Both mobile and computers will be protected by a password that only is known by the user. As the professional audio recorder used during the interviews does not have the possibility to be password protected it will be locked in a safe at all times, when it is not being used. The written material such as transcriptions and the study will be saved on computers and the shared document service provided by Google, called Google Drive. To the documents which contain sensitive material only the authors to this study and the supervisor Sara Thunberg will have access. Google Drive allows several authors to write in the same document at the same time, which is one of the reasons why it is a helpful service. The other reason is the safety aspect of using a document which every time needs to be logged into to start using; it will also be saved automatically when connected to the internet. The audio files from interviews, as well as the transcriptions of them, will not be named after the person or organization where they take place, this is also in protections of the interviewee and to anonymize, instead the initials will be used.

It is inevitable that the study will have the angle of a western view because it is written by two Swedish students. The study's aim is to look into western voluntourism and the approach strives toward being as free from the writer's own perceptions as possible. It is also the biggest challenge to put the own perceptions aside and understand social reality from the view of the interviewee's. To minimize the influence of the writer's perceptions the Swedish

Research Councils (2002) ethical principles will be kept in mind throughout the whole process. When analyzing the transcript interviews, there will be a dialog about the impact of the author's own role as to keep the interviewee's subjective expressions and perceptions intact. Every person creates meaningfulness in their days in their own way and the goal is to learn how the interviewee's do that without affecting them. The big cultural differences between Cambodia and Sweden are important to keep in mind when interpreting the gathered material, through knowledge and discussion a cross-cultural understanding will aim to be achieved.

An ethical dilemma in relation to cultural differences is the whiteness perspective, which is also one of theoretical concepts used in the study. Before coming to Cambodia a discussion with the tutor living in Cambodia about cultural differences was taken place. We also had a meeting with the local tutor during the second day in Cambodia to ask questions and have a discussion about possible difficulties. It came to our knowledge that white people are often considered superior, and that we therefore will be treated differently. With this in mind, the interviews with Cambodian personnel were conducted with knowledge and understanding about that the manners of the interviewees could be affected by this way of viewing people from the west. As a reaction against this some tricks were learned, such as receiving a thing given to you with two hands to show equality. In every interview it was also explained that the interview was for a study, and not research, as well as that we were still students in Sweden. Between the authors there was always an ongoing discussion about how to in least way influence the persons that we interview as well as understanding that whatever we did the interviews with Cambodian personnel may be stained from a cultural difference that cannot be overcome by us learning some cultural codes.

## Result

This section is a compilation of the conducted interviews with eleven people working within different NGO's focusing on disabilities, of which three were volunteers and eight were professionals. All of the volunteers were from developed countries in the west, four of the professionals where Cambodians and the four of the remaining professionals were from developed countries in the west. The result is presented in three themes, the perception of voluntourism, and the motivation of working with disability and the power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs. Each theme is further divided into answers from Cambodian professionals, western professionals and answers from volunteers. The interviews are named A-K and will be quoted in smaller text and in indentations. The data is presented by summarizing the essentials from the interviews and presenting it in the structure explained above.

### The perception of voluntourism

About the understanding of voluntourism, the Cambodian professionals were not that familiar with the topic and its importance. All Cambodian professionals showed and expressed that they did not understand what voluntourism meant, as a result of never hearing the term before. If the Cambodian professionals did not understand the term at all they were read a short explanation so that the term could be dissected making the interview deepen in order to gain understanding about their perception of how the term has affected them in their work.

IP: Volunteerism, you mean...?

I: Voluntourism, yeah... volunteer-tourism... tourists...

IP: Aaaah voluntourism! Wow... \*laughter\*. That is new to me. I used to heard, eh to hear...

volunteer, but here tourism! It's mean... they come... part, there are two things, one for a tour and

one for helping, as a volunteer for a short time... Is that right?  
-Interview A, Cambodian professional

The lack of knowledge about voluntourism hampered further questioning and forced us to simplify some of the following questions. A majority of the Cambodian professionals did not consider themselves having any contact with the voluntourist-side of volunteering as they claimed to host only long term and educated western volunteers. There was no specific timeframe in which a volunteer would be considered a long term stay, although, it did appear from the interviews that the general understanding was that every volunteer who stayed less than three months would be considered short term work. Further, all the Cambodian professionals states that all the people who they were going to host had to have an adequate education, in line with their needs.

I: Do the volunteers need to have education? It is important?  
IP: Maybe some of the volunteers eh... maybe in the... university... year four, or year three [...]  
I: So they need to have started a university study at least? Or...? Do the volunteers need to study at university to come here?  
IP: Yeah to come... to [...] with us, yeah.”  
-Interview K, Cambodian professional

The Cambodian professionals were asked to explain how voluntourism is affecting their organization and from the answers it appears the majority do not comprehend the impact voluntourist could have on the host organization.

I: Have you heard about voluntourism? Volunteer and tourism, together?  
IP: From...?  
I: Have you heard about it before?  
IP: I just heard from volunteer from... eh... [names two organizations that are having volunteers] I just heard two of them.  
I: Okay! So you never heard the.. the term volunteer-tourism?  
IP: The term?  
I: Yeah, like, volunteer-tourism, voluntourism, have you heard it before?  
IP: I... eh... actually in [...] we signed a... agreement with [...] eh... [...] they used a... a... tourism... VISA... and then you can expend. Yeah..  
I: Okay...  
IP: For them to stay, to support... yes.  
-Interview D, Cambodian professional

The western professionals understanding of voluntourism and its effects differ from the Cambodian professionals. The difference lies in two themes, one is the knowledge about the phenomenon as a whole and the other is its impact on NGOs. The western professionals were well acquainted with the term and did not need further explanation which was clear during the interviews since the questions could promptly advance into deeper discussions. Some of the views were characterized by the “white savior”-phenomenon and some focused more on voluntourism as a fun and different experience. The majority could agree upon that voluntourism is characterized by a short period of time and often an accurate education is not needed.

[...] So if someone was staying for a year or two, than they could still be doing voluntary work but voluntourist is probably down to do three months at the most.  
-Interview H, Western professional

Voluntourism to me means unskilled volunteers, doing short term stints overseas for NGOs as an adjunct to a holiday. Often voluntourists have to pay for their time volunteering but not always.  
-Interview C, Western professional

Overall, it was very clear that the western professionals had insight in some of the effects voluntourism could bring. A common view were the one regarding young western volunteers lack of knowledge about the consequences voluntary work, done without proper planning and preparatory work, could have on the involved, even though the willing to help is genuine.

I think they (young volunteers from the west) do it as a part of an adventure. I think they do it because they don't realize that it's not always helpful. I think they do it, I think most of them, I think 99% of people do it with really genuine motivation, that they think they can help by coming and play with children for two days. And it's part of an adventure. I don't think that, I really don't think that they know the consequences of that [...]

-Interview J, Western professional

Some of the western professionals also expressed awareness about the work performed by voluntourists that would not have been done if they were not there to do it. All the western professionals could easily problematize concerning the positive and negative outcomes of the voluntourists. They expressed a split feeling about on the one hand the high risk of causing more damage than good and on the other hand the respect for the genuine feeling of wanting to help that they felt that a majority of the voluntourists had.

The biggest job, of social work, where you should be working with a kid who's having problems, and with the family there are having problems has inevitably got to be done by Cambodians, so a large number of foreign volunteers coming in is difficult to know how that can really push that on. Saying that, I've been into some centers, ehm, and some centers with a lot of sick kids, a lot of children with disabilities that, you know, they [volunteers] are providing the only care currently available for that group of kids, and the center couldn't function without goodhearted young western volunteers coming in and doing basic care of these kids [...] that work is solely done by volunteers.

- Interview H, Western professional

The volunteers' perception of voluntourism was all together informed and problematizing as they easily expressed both positive and negative effects from the short term work. The general mindset was that voluntourism was the bad version of volunteering and that the outcome in the end rarely would be of sustainable nature nor would it be beneficial to the host organization.

[...] you need to have a skill that the organization actually wants, you can't just... If you are going there for your own gain, it's [...] so if you can't offer anything that the organization needs then it is purely your gain and it becomes tourism. Ehm... you share it on Facebook, share it on social media it's part of your... yeah... then I think it's... again that's not for the organizations gain, it's for your own gain. To feel good about yourself. So it's... A fine line...

-Interview G, Western volunteer

The actual impact on the host organization would, according to the volunteers, not be sustainable or there would not be any impact at all as the regular staff would not keep implementing the input from the short term volunteers after they have left. To develop a positive sustainable change the volunteer need to stay for a longer period of time and possess skills and education that are of advantage and a great match to the needs of the host organization. In case the volunteer does not possess the expertise needed, it would create a situation where the volunteer could be viewed as arrogant and as a form of colonization.

Any volunteering that is not provided with the needs of the host country in mind and is based on arrogance on the part of the volunteer who's is really just wishing to [...] information and thinks

that they have skills that they wish to give to someone else, without actually first, ehm, insuring that that is appropriate. [...] And I think that is, that is a form of colonization. Enforcing one's own beliefs on other people [...]

- Interview E, Western volunteer

## **The motivation of working with disability**

The inner motivation of the Cambodian professionals differs slightly from each other, as a result of them having different previous experiences and personalities. The main reason though, was to become independent at the same time as they could work with something that resonated with a feeling of wanting to help. Some of the Cambodian professionals stated that they came from poor families, had a personal connection to disabilities or in other ways was pushed towards social work in a natural way as it spoke to them on an emotional level. There are clear traits of emotional and economic reasons for starting to work with disability, either by getting employed or start the business themselves, as seen in following quote:

You know I am from very poor family, my family cannot support me for my study, but I try to help myself [...] I think it made me motivated. [...] I just came to interview, I feel like want to cry because when I saw many children [with] handicap... children and disability [...] I should do because I can help them [the children] I can work with children.

-Interview F, Cambodian professional

The quote clarifies what was the mixture between emotional and economical drive to start working within disability NGOs, which was identified as the motivation behind the majority of the Cambodian professionals. No one of the Cambodian professionals mentioned education or previous professionals skills as a motivation to their work with disabled. Common for all the Cambodian professionals was that they lacked relevant university education from prior to starting the work with disability. The majority had a learn-by-doing approach. This is the main difference from the western professionals.

The majority of western professionals claim that the motivation mainly is based on the previous education and work experiences they have, which are relevant to their current work. In opposite of the Cambodian professionals, no one from the west mentioned an economical aspect connected to their choice of work. The motivation was purely in line with their education and skills, which left the emotional drive on second place.

I'm a social worker, so that's what I do, I'm 45 so it's very unlikely that I'd do anything else now, so this is my work, this is what I do.

-Interview H, Western professional

I needed a change, needed a change after 10 years. I think the motivat..., I like working with children I like the medical aspect of it.[...] And so, I think there is a lot of social work involved in, it's just working with a lot of, I actually always gravitated toward working with disability.

-Interview J, Western professional

The emotions mentioned was mainly directed against their own joy of the work and the apparent fitting to the studies they have conducted in their home countries. The broad nature of social work is also mentioned by some of the interviewees, as another reason why working in the same field as their education could be possible. While answering the questions, the interviewees stepped into the role of being professional and the responds were based on their perceptions as professionals in their field.

I have previously done a lot of work with capacity building local staff in disability which I have really enjoyed in the past, and I wanted to find a similar role here.

-Interview C, Western professional

I think what's interest me is that when you work with disability you have to work with all different aspects of life, of the person. In the medical sector also [...] it is very very very broad. That's what's interest me.

-Interview I, Western professional

The volunteers had a more emotional way of interpreting their own interests for working as volunteers in Cambodia, where the general feeling to help others is the most common one. By travelling to a developing country, from a developed one, the mutual feeling was that the help makes more difference in Cambodia than at home. This because the majority of the citizens in Cambodia are very poor and deal with much more complex and extensive difficulties on a daily basis. These difficulties, which were mentioned by the interviewees, were on a whole new level than of the one's they had to work with in their home countries.

I guess in general, like, I was... I wanted to help people and when I... came here and... the top of the population is kids who have never seen a doctor or... are starving or... And so then when I went back home it was really, really hard to... It was just hard because people came in with, one out of ten pain in the shoulder for... going to the gym too much and it just wasn't the same... motivation. So... Yeah that's how I decided that I wanted to come back to Cambodia or similar country where I could help people who really, really need it.

-Interview G, Western volunteer

One of the volunteer interviewees expressed that he had learned to handle the emotional connection to the work, so that it should not have an effect of his work:

If the motivation is emotion-driven I do not, mainly that, [...] that, I do not personally see that that is the ideal starting point, in order to contribute to, in a developing country. Emotions get in the way, I mean, [...] I've learned to moderate that [...] I have changed my way of, sort of way, of interacting with people here, largely, because of that, not wanting to fall into that trap, you know, of becoming too emotionally involved.

-Interview E, Western volunteer

Another major theme that was coming up during the interviews was the motivation by adventure and new experiences, where one of the interviewees expressed his longing for travels after feeling restless at his previous work, whereupon he decided to become a volunteer. All the volunteers had previous experience of travels, although to a various extent, and all wished to be able to go abroad someday.

## **Power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs**

As to whether the Cambodian professionals see a future without volunteers, two of the informants expressed that they always will have a need for volunteers as the Cambodian professionals do not have the education or the technical skills needed. Another interpretation on the reason for volunteers in the future is because Cambodia is a poor country.

I feel that we still need people from developed country, to assist and build capacity to... to us. [...] we still need volunteers. For me, at least another ten years [...].

-Interview A, Cambodian professional

All the Cambodian professionals talk about the volunteers as a resource to new knowledge and skills, and this is what they bring and main reason why they are welcome to work in the local NGO's. They are aware of the low education amongst the Cambodian people and one of the Cambodian professionals stated that the first school with study in social work opened in Phnom Penh recently. The division of labor at the organizations is affected by ascending

volunteers in different ways, some of the Cambodian professionals mentioned that the volunteers still were at the bottom of the spoken hierarchy and the division of labor is formed after both that and their skills.

I think... eh... volunteers should have a... like a profes... professional, specific skill...when you come... you just don't come to say [...] dear [name] I want to help you for three day or for doing whatever you want me to do. I dont know \*laughter\* [...] so come with professional skill, you have and get result... by it, by the end of it.

-Interview A, Cambodian professional

The western professionals state that overall the power is with the regular staff rather than the volunteers. However, the volunteers have a chance to make an impact through the skills that they teach the staff. The goal is that the skills they teach will build capacity of the regular staff and be sustainable. The main impact of volunteers is their skills and education and the difficulties lies within passing on these skills without doing it with whiteness and power as a tool. A trend amongst the professionals is described in situations where they were assigned power that was above what they felt appropriate.

[...] As a white guy, doing my job, when I go places I'm often treated as some kind of an international expert which I don't feel I am. I'm just a social worker from [a country] [...].

-Interview H, Western professional

Often I find that I do have a lot of 'power' in that the organizations really listen to my recommendations and knowledge, and then will often implement what is recommended. This to me feels like a lot of power and often it is just because I am 'white' and have knowledge.

-Interview C, Western professional

This view on western foreigners were also discussed with some of the western professionals who claimed that Cambodian staff tend to listen to western foreigners and not tell if they do not agree or understand, but in the other hand some say that there is no given place for the volunteers in the hierarchical system of the organization or that they are in the bottom of it. There is a split view on whether there is a future where volunteers is not needed in the organization, some say that there will always be a need for volunteers even if it may be decreased, and some say that the need will be saturated when enough skills is transferred from the volunteers to the local staff.

Mentioned by all the volunteers is that they all have experienced to be the face forward of the host organization, for what they understood the reason to make the organization and/or director of the organization look good. The volunteers also explained that it is generally known that the Cambodian organizations accept volunteers partly because they, as to being white, make the organization look good. The volunteers were also used to tasks other than the ones they came to do, and had knowledge of. Some also stated that they often had to answer all kinds of questions, even if it was far removed from their area of expertise.

[...] what generally happen is the organization will focus on their needs or they will actually use the volunteer as they wish. Ehm, yes, which may not be in a particularly appropriate way or in the way that the volunteer had intended to provide input. So that's why there does tent, there seems to be a lot of frustration by people who come here, they think they are going to be able to contribute in a certain way but the host has a different agenda. A lot of it has to do with power, just by having the person there, the foreigner there.

-Interview E, Western volunteer

I found that the organizations didn't really want, for example, management trainer, they wanted someone to do to make the Cambodian director look good [...] westerner [...] with him, to translate to you know, write things in English, tidy up reports, even send of applications to get

rewards,  
-Interview B, Western volunteer

The other aspect that was observed from the interviews is the difference between western volunteers and Cambodian professionals, where they are treated differently, based on their origin. One of the western volunteers expressed that the Cambodian professional with the same education as her is seen as a regular employee at the same time as the volunteer is seen as a self-employee with a lot of influence within the management, and is seen as a consultant. This is also connected to the some of the interviewees' opinions about Cambodians treating western people with superiority, as mentioned below:

Yeah, the main problem is even today, they still tend to treat you with superiority, you know it is a [...] from colonial past. And it's quite hard to break that down [...]  
-Interview B

Ehm... I think automatically... this is really bad but there is... you are put in a position of power because they... you're white. That's that, straight away. [...] I was straight out of uni... going for the lowest power basically, to suddenly making all the decisions [...] it is a weird transition... ehm... so... yeah I dont know, its... it is what it is...  
-Interview G

## Analysis

This section will analyze and problematize the result from the interviews by putting it in relation to the theoretical framework. The section is structured with the same three themes as in the result, the perception of voluntourism, the motivation of working with disability and the power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs.

### **The perception of voluntourism**

The Cambodian professionals state that they are not in any direct contact with the voluntourist part of volunteering, and this is one of the reasons they do not have a comprehension about how it would affect the host organization. One of the reasons why the Cambodian professionals showed that they never had heard the term voluntourism before can be explained by the fact that the term is often discussed in a western culture, by western researchers, and something we bring into the interviews. However, the term was explained and operationalized to the Cambodian professionals in order to conduct the interviews. Since the term is a compilation of "volunteer" and "tourism" it is two words that the Cambodians professionals had good understanding about. Our interpretation is that bringing in the theoretical concept of voluntourism did not constrain us from conducting theoretical generalizations from the results of the interviews. The theoretical concept of voluntourism was in that sense not enforced on to the Cambodian professionals, nor was the gist of the interview dependent on the term in a theoretical sense.

The Cambodian professional's belief is that as the volunteers, who are helping them, are staying for more than three months and come with needed skills; they are not considered volunteer-tourists. Both the Cambodian and western professionals as well as the volunteers agreed that the work done by volunteers should be of a sustainable nature, in line with the education and skills they bring to the host organizations. However, both Wearing (2001) and Musick and Wilson (2008) mean that the biggest impact of voluntourism is aimed back at the volunteer and not the host-organizations. The impact consists of a greater awareness of self, meaning and power thanks to the belief that they have helped people in their voluntary work. The wish of all the interviewees was that the volunteers would have a positive and sustainable

impact on the work in the organization, but this may not always be the case. The Cambodian professional's perception of not having any voluntourists can arise from the fact that they require specific skills and they also stated that they have good experiences with the volunteers that they have hosted. The regular staff at the hosting organization only perceives the apparent changes that the volunteer has brought, not knowing how the work actually affects the volunteer. If the volunteers believe they are helping, and the organization as well can see a clear difference from before, it can be interpreted as reasonable for them to believe that the volunteers really are doing the work with an altruistic spirit. Although, the biggest difference may still be within the volunteer and his/her own personal development rather than the development of the organization, which is hard for the host-organization to know before letting the volunteer in.

Our interpretations is that the lack of information from the Cambodian professionals about voluntourism as a phenomenon may cause them to be inattentive on whether a volunteer is doing their volunteering for their own personal development instead of the greater good of the organization. From what is concluded by Wearing (2001) and Musick and Wilson (2008), the conclusions of the Cambodian professionals statements it can be interpreted that, the only person really knowing if volunteering is for the greater good of the volunteers or the host organizations is the volunteers themselves. The outcome of the volunteering may not be dependent on whether the volunteers are working in an altruistic spirit or not. However, the volunteer can do good or bad but this can, according to both western and Cambodian professionals, be strongly correlated to the how long time they spend at the organization and the match between skills and need. The lack of knowledge of voluntourism could cause the professionals to not recognize a voluntourist and get a limited perception about the volunteers who come to join them, as well as not paying attention to what kind of volunteers they should welcome to their organization. The westerners might be able to talk about voluntourism because of their knowledge about the concept and the purpose of the theoretical term, while the Cambodian professionals knowledge about voluntourism is limited. It might also be the case that the Cambodian professionals cannot discuss wider about voluntourism as a result of not having any experiences within the area. The Cambodian professionals understanding of voluntourism is by an understanding of the term separated in the two words "volunteer" and "tourist", which make our interpretation that they would have been able to discuss this matter with us if it was an issue. Therefore this could be understood as voluntourism not being a big problem in NGOs within the disability sector.

All the professionals had previous experiences with volunteers, yet very uneven knowledge about what a voluntourist is. According to Wearing, (2001) and Musick and Wilson, (2008) a voluntourists are "*those seeking a tourist experience that is equally helpful and that will not only add to their individual improvement but also to the social and economic surroundings in which they contribute*". This would indicate that the description could still be applicable on the volunteers coming to host organizations, which demand suiting skills and education, as the description only refers to the inner motivation of the volunteer which is something neither of the professionals can know about. The question arising is to what extent the inner motivations of a volunteer affect the work and if it matters, as long as they push the development of the host organization forward with relevant skills. If the altruistic way of helping does not come first with a volunteer it, according to Wearing, (2001) and Musick and Wilson, (2008) does not matter if the volunteer stay short term or long term, they are still to be considered voluntourists. All the interviewees referred to the time limit when concluding the distinction between a volunteer and a voluntourist, something that is not to be found in the theoretical conceptions of this study. This can be interpreted as a gap in perceptions of the theoretical conceptions and the interviewee's perception of what voluntourism actually is.

## **The motivation of working with disability**

The Cambodian professionals and western professionals differed in their way of explaining what motivated them to work with people with disability. Whilst the Cambodian professionals felt a strong emotional engagement to the people they were to help, the western professionals more often referred to an educational engagement. The emotional engagements mentioned by western professionals were often referred back to their own joy of their work rather than the Cambodian professionals who expressed an emotional connection to the client. According to Maslow (1970) and the hierarchy of needs, people in general have similar needs which they are trying to satisfy, as different factors of what motivates behaviors. One of the levels on the hierarchy of needs is self-esteem, where being accepted, appreciated and respected by others is the important factor (ibid). In this case, both the Cambodian and western professional's motivation can be explained through Maslow's hierarchy of needs as they all are working within an area that causes great respect and acknowledgments for them, when their job is proceeding. The hierarchy of needs is also applicable on the volunteer's inner motivation to work with people with disability. The volunteers showed, in general, a very altruistic way of motivating themselves. This interpretation is done as a result of the volunteers expressing a feeling of wanting to help others. The volunteers all had in common a longing for travels and a feeling that their help made more difference in Cambodia than in their home country, and their motivation grew accordingly to the desperation of help. One volunteer said that he/she felt like the things that people was seeking help for in the home country was so far removed from the acute help he/she could give, and really make a difference by providing, in Cambodia. The statements of the volunteers could be explained by placing them in the top of Maslow's pyramid. Since the top two stages of the hierarchy is concerned with esteem and self-actualization it is, from the statements of the volunteers, accurate to consider that the volunteers wish to reach a higher level of achievement, self-esteem or fulfilling themselves by helping others. Through unpaid social work in a developing country it is also safe to assume that the accomplishment will be recognized by others as to it being something out of the normal, which also match the step for esteem in Maslow's hierarchy. One interpretation for the volunteers trying to achieve the highest platform of Maslow's needs self-actualization, is that they, just like the professionals, get involved in work, yet they also do it in a developing country and most important, they do it for free (Maslow, 1970).

Another view is Alvessons (1996), who explains a type of power where different possibilities are based on the access to different resources. This means that your conditions can be more or less limited, depending on where you live and the access to information in that country (ibid). From this conclusions can be drawn regarding the difference that was spoken concerning the motivation. The fact that the Cambodian and western professionals have been raised and lived in two different countries, with different cultures and economical status, can be a reason that explains these differing views on motivation. While the western, as mentioned previously in this study, mainly referred to their education as a motivation of working with disabilities, the Cambodians referred to a personal connection and emotional reasons. The volunteer's willingness of going to another country to help can also be connected to Alvessons (1996) way of interpreting it, as the volunteers from birth have more access to resources than someone from a developing country might have. Another motivation from the volunteers was their longing for travels, which once again can be derived to the fact that the volunteers were born with more and wider resources. The different reasons for motivation can, according to Alvesson (1996) be explained by the different resources, which were dividing the Cambodian professionals from the western professionals. The statements of the western and Cambodian professionals, we interpret as a difference in how the upbringing reflects the structures in the countries were they were raised and shows what has been important. Further, the Cambodian ways of expressing their emotional involvement can be

understood as an indication of a strong collective society. The western way of answering from a professional point of view indicates a life with different norms and where resources were more easily accessible, such as education. The different upbringings in relation to their motivations of working within NGOs with focus on helping people with disabilities can be interpreted as being correlated with each other. This interpretation shows how people from different parts of the world, doing the same job, can find motivation in ways incomprehensibly to one another. The gist of this being that if professionals are finding their motivation in different ways, then the volunteers should be able to do so as well, as long as the needs of the client stays in focus.

### **Power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs**

In common for all the interviewees, both professionals and volunteers, is their description of the hierarchical system within the NGOs, in which they have been active. The hierarchical system is both spoken and written, with the directors in the top and the volunteers in the bottom. The majority of the interviewees agreed upon that the volunteers were in the bottom in the hierarchy yet made an impact through their work. All the western professionals considered themselves having a major impact regarding the decisions taken at the organization, which was also the opinion from the majority of the Cambodian professionals since they were often in a formal power position, such as director or CEO. No one of the western professionals had the director-role but still expressed that their latitude were extensive, within their work frame. The western professionals also had formal positions, such as Technical Advisor, which would make it natural for them to have the power of making decisions in the organization. Diefenbach (2013) describes a hierarchy as part of the human society where some are superiors and some are subordinates, depending on their place in the hierarchical system. The system can be explained as a pyramid shape where the subordinates are in the bottom of the pyramid and the superior are at the top of the pyramid. This view resonates with the hierarchical system described by all the interviewees, which in summary can be interpreted as the interviewees having an informed and clear understanding of how their NGO holds up and what their place and function is in this system. The superior group are often keepers of the majority of positive labels such as social status (Diefenbach, 2013), which resonates with the majority of the Cambodian professionals, and can be understood as them being well-known in their field and respected for their great accomplishments within the disability sector. So this would, in line with Diefenbach (2013), be explained as an effect of Cambodian professionals being the superior group, and gaining the positive labeling from people around them.

The power of ability to induce a social change is discussed by Engelstad (2006) and Alvesson (1996) who claims that one explanation of power is the ability to implement some kind of social change to a bigger context, which affects a group of people. The western professionals spoke about their power as a result of education and skills but stated that a problem they have noticed is that they, due to their whiteness, often get positions of power that does not go in line with their actual ability and knowledge. However, even though the western professionals also stated to be in the top of hierarchy they agreed that the Cambodian professionals in their organization always should have the last say. On the other hand, the general view was that they always seemed to be attributed more knowledge than they actually had, which did show when a social worker from Europe said that he always seemed to be treated as an international expert. One explanation to this could be that there is an imbalance between how the Cambodian professionals cope with their superiority and power positions and how the western professionals are dealing with it. The power structure in the NGOs is clearly perceived in different ways depending on from which position it is seen. In common for all the western interviewees is that they experience an imbalance in power between

Cambodian professionals and western people, often this is addressed to as connected to whiteness. The volunteers stated that they sometimes felt like they were used to make a Cambodian director look good and strengthen his/hers power position, which also can be understood by the whiteness of the volunteers and difficulties they stand before in their work. Where the difficulties can be explained by the imbalance they experience when coming from their home country and being placed within the complex hierarchy of the Cambodian host organization. In relation to Engelstad (2006) and Alvesson (1996) this can be understood as white volunteers being used to create the power to implement a social change.

Ariail Reed (2013) addresses the influence that social structures has over people as the social structures directly places people in two different positions, the advantaged ones and the disadvantaged. In which the position a person belongs to, is depending on the social status where the amount of power is measured by your position in society. This is also addressed by Levine-Rasky (2013) who speaks about whiteness and its impact on society. The author explains that whiteness is seen as the superior, which it has done for generations, and as it is categorized as the “normal”, it sets the foundation for how individuals should live. Guess (2006) explains that the discrimination of non-white people often is taken place subconsciously as well as the superior-view on white people. This normalization of whiteness is what withstands it, making the power being kept alive. The interviews showed that whiteness is clearly affecting the work in the organizations in ways explained by the western volunteers and professionals, they are treated differently, asked questions beyond their field of expertise and used to different purposes other than they were planned in the first place. Colonialism was discussed during the interviews and one interviewee described the different treatment between western foreigners and Cambodians by referring to a colonial past. In different ways the western interviewees expressed how the way they were treated by Cambodians withheld a whiteness-structure that made them feel uncomfortable. One interpretation of this is that the structures of the organization subconsciously, or consciously, is withholding a whiteness structure that, according to Ariail Reed (2013), Levine-Rasky (2013) and Guess (2006) has a negative impact on the collaboration between westerns volunteers and professionals and the Cambodian professionals and clients. The Cambodian professionals described a future where western volunteers would always be needed since they would always need education and skills which they did not think would be available in Cambodia. In line with the Levine-Rasky (2013) this could be interpreted as a dependency to, and normalization of, the western way of working with people with disability. However, the western volunteers and professionals had a split view on whether they would always be needed, the majority agreed to the Cambodians vision of the future. The conclusion being that whiteness and power is still having a major impact in the NGOs in Cambodia who take on volunteers from the west and the structures of the imbalance is withheld by the hierarchy in the host organizations and by the Cambodians themselves. Whether or not it is done consciously or subconsciously, it is expressed by the Cambodian professionals and experienced by western volunteers and professionals. As long as the western volunteers keep coming to a developing country as Cambodia and the issue is not addressed, the structures will hold as a result to their mere presence.

## **Discussion**

The conclusions of this study are that the understanding about voluntourism differs, where the western professionals and volunteers have more knowledge than the Cambodian professionals. This may indicate that the westerners bring an understanding as a result of having different resources from their home-countries, where proper education in the field is required. Voluntourism do not seem to be a big problem within the disability sector as both

volunteers, western- and Cambodian professionals stated that there are thorough matching processes and a requirement of education and skills of relevance for the host organizations and that they only are hosting volunteers for a longer period of time. The understanding of voluntourism was mainly related to time, that is how long time the volunteer did stay and work with the host organization, rather than what motivated them to come. If the volunteer stayed more than three months it was not to be viewed as voluntourism.

On the other hand, the majority of the interviewees expressed a concern about what motivated the volunteer saying that it mattered for the work. Research about voluntourism (see Musick & Wilson, 2008) state that it is the motivations of volunteering that decide whether it should be called volunteering or voluntourism. As the professionals say that they care about what motivates the volunteers, the conclusion is that there could still be voluntourism in their organizations. The question is if, and in what ways, the inner motivation of the volunteer is evident in their work. The inner motivation is expressed in different ways were the Cambodian professionals expressed a strong emotional engagement to the people they were helping, whilst the westerners described it more as an educational engagement, and the emotional part of the job was in a self-accomplished way. The volunteers expressed an altruistic way when describing their motivation, with them wanting to help others at the same time as they were longing for travels. Some of the volunteers also stated that they felt that they made much more impact and difference in a developing country such as Cambodia, than in their home countries. These different motivational factors can be understood by Maslow hierarchy of needs (1970), where helping others is a way of fulfilling the “esteem”-level and the volunteer’s motivation is fulfilling the self-actualization.

The informants were all well aware of how the organizations in which they worked were structured, all testified about a written and spoken hierarchy where everyone knew their place. The power was concentrated to the top of the hierarchy and the volunteers place was in the bottom. In the other hand the majority agreed that volunteers had great chances of making an impact through their work and that the regular staff respected their advice, because they had the right education and skills. The western volunteers and professionals expressed a more ambiguous relation to power, they were often put in situation where they had to answer questions or take decisions outside of their area of expertise which they felt was uncomfortable. The Cambodian professionals in the other hand often lacked accurate education but had a “learn by doing”-approach and expressed that they were often well respected due to their position in the organizations. They did not feel that western people had a special power position in relation to them unless they were a donor or in the board of the organization. The volunteers stated that they felt used to being a face forward for the organization because of their whiteness and also the western professionals made conclusions about themselves and their experience of being treated different due to whiteness. The conclusion being that there is a split view on how both power and whiteness affects the work in the organization depending on if the question is aimed against a western or a Cambodian.

### **The perception of voluntourism**

One interesting question that arose during the interviews, as well as during the analysis, is why the Cambodian professionals did not understand the term and phenomena voluntourism, while the western professionals did? There could be plenty of reasons that would explain this further, but one reason could be that the NGOs in Cambodia within the disability sector is not having any problems with volunteer-tourists. Another reason could be that they might have volunteer-tourists visiting their NGO; but that the professionals do not comprehend the reality of their visit nor do they think about it as being tourism. One explanation for the Cambodian professionals perception of not having voluntourism could, according to Bjerned et al. (2006), be the split view on what volunteering is due to the many different constellations in which it

can occur. This led to people having different opinions concerning what volunteering and voluntourism is and since the Cambodian professionals only host educated volunteers for longer term, their perception may be that it can never be voluntourism. The Cambodian professionals argued against having voluntourists by referring to the time they spend there and the skills they needed to have. According to all the interviewees a short term volunteer only stayed three months or less, something that they stated was not often the case within the disability sector. As the work at the NGOs is being aimed towards people with disabilities, it might be that the volunteers who join are there only to contribute with their educational skills regarding disability-questions in a wider sense than within the orphanage-sector. Farley (2015) show that many volunteers in orphanages are not qualified teachers yet working with teaching English, and only stay for a short period of time. By some unexplained reason, the importance of education has reached the disability sector and influenced the professionals to only host volunteers with adequate education and skills as they were agreed on education is important when working with people with disabilities.

In common for all the western professionals were that they themselves had accurate education and previous skills to do their job, which was not the case with the Cambodian professionals. The Cambodian professionals had a “learn by doing”-approach and some stated to have participated in shorter courses and being taught by western volunteers. No one of the Cambodian professionals expressed a feeling of being unfit of doing their job as opposed to some of the western professionals. So, for what reason has the Cambodian professionals become aware of the need for education prior to working with people with disability? One explanation is that this view is something brought to Cambodia by western foreigners and implemented in the Cambodian culture. During a discussion with a high-educated person, working within the disability sector in Cambodia, it came to our knowledge that volunteers after all have contributed with a changed view on persons with disabilities. When volunteers arrive to Cambodia with their vision on persons with disabilities as being worth as much as everyone else, it may have affected the Cambodian people as well, as it is getting more and more acceptable to have a disability in Cambodia. This can be confirmed by Perold et al. (2013) who claim that international volunteers bring much desired skills and capacity which can make the host-organizations develop their performance and effectiveness. The volunteers also bring a change in cultural innovation, new ideas and the ability to perceive situations with new eyes. Although Cambodia still has a long way left on getting people equal, this is surely a great start. In the same way the Cambodian professional’s perception of voluntourism and the need of education is developing towards the western way. In a few years, maybe the general knowledge about voluntourism and how it can affect the host organizations have grown and the same interview questions would get a more informed and nuanced answer thanks to the ascending volunteers.

### **The motivation of working with disability**

Whether the volunteers’ altruistic way of wanting to help can be hard to question because of them not earning any income from their work, the Cambodian professional’s motivation did in several cases concern earning money or become economically independent. This was not observed with the western professionals. There are multiple ways to interpret this, though as the difference upbringing of Cambodian and western professionals could be one of them. We think that striving towards being economically independent and at the same time try to do well, should be seen as positive. The western volunteers and professionals may have the favor of possibilities to give without receiving or work without the need to earn lots of money which can explain their opinions of motivation. The informants expressed that an experience of working abroad could give the westerners the career leap they needed, which were not accessible before working in Cambodia. In this way of seeing it all of the

interviewee's motivation is in altruistic spirit but will in the other hand in the end profit them. The altruistic approach to volunteering was also seen in Bjerned et al. (2006) where health professionals also expressed an altruistic calling, which was related to personal satisfaction towards their volunteering-experience.

But, does it even matter what motivates the professionals and the volunteers who are working with social work? As long as they are helping, it is for a good cause, right? This could be discussed back and forth and the answer is impossible to generalize. Either way, the most important of all is whether the work getting implemented is really helping in a lasting and effective way, a way that would make the NGO develop into a stronger and more sustainable one. All the NGOs work really hard to make an impact in people's lives, and by doing so, they make lives better each day. Our opinion is that a volunteer's job is to help the NGOs fulfill their dreams with appropriate knowledge and skills in the right area, which is confirmed by Sossou and Dubus (2013) who claims that a long term sustainability need to be an essential part of international volunteering.

### **Power perspective of the volunteer work in NGOs**

The power perspective of ascending volunteers is tricky due to the complexity of the term power as well as the struggle to put together the broad material gathered from the interviews. The common opinion was that the volunteer was in the bottom of the hierarchical system of the organization. However, it was expressed by all that the volunteers often had extensive influence through their work. All the volunteers stated that they often were put in positions where they had to answer questions or take decisions which were not in their field of expertise. They also expressed being treated different due to being white, and were put in positions to be the face forward of the organization. Also the western professionals had experience of similar sort. Perold et al. (2013) stated in his research that the view of white people as superior was used to host-organization's advantage by hosting white volunteers to bring credibility to their organization. The presence of white international volunteers could, according to Perold et al. (2013), likely be more trustworthy than local professionals would, in the eyes of other people. This corresponds to the feelings expressed by both volunteers and western professionals in our interviews. The Cambodian professionals stated that the only time they felt dependent on the western people was when they were either donating or in the board of the organization. This clearly shows a difference in how the Cambodians and the westerners perceive their roles and their attitudes against each other. Power does seem to be a phenomenon that the westerners were more conscious about and had to manage in their daily life. If these differences in attitudes against westerners are conducted unintentionally from the Cambodians, it reconnects to the very heavy but important topic, if whiteness has an impact on countries where the interviewees state that colonialism has been a part of their history. Levine-Rasky (2013) expresses that being white has been normalized and that while being white you do not have to think about whiteness as being a factor in having a good job or a education. If you turn this stating around, it could be understood as since white people do not have to think about these kinds of things, the non-whites *have to*. Unconsciously, the power within the whiteness structures withholds by Cambodians who have lived in a world where these structures is set as the normal, although it is really not.

Respect is very present in the Cambodian culture, which was expressed by the majority of the interviewees. One volunteer stated that he/she was trying to implement new guidelines of the work with disabled and often the regular staff seemed to understand, but later he/she found that no changes had been made. To understand why there was problems with implementing important changes that would benefit the clients; a longer time of experiencing the Cambodian culture was/is needed. The first hardship was to know if the staff had understood the changes that were to be done, because according to many of the western

interviewees, the Cambodian staff would never say if they did not. The other hardship was to know if the staff agreed to the changes, because according to the interviewees, they would not say if they did not, out of shame. These hardships might be connected to the Cambodian culture, since the westerners spoke about this as different from what they were used to. Raymond and Hall (2008) mean that if the volunteering is not thoroughly planned and executed it might result in cross-cultural misunderstandings, which will reinforce cultural stereotypes, in the way that was declared previously.

So, the bottom line is that what could appear as a sign of respect in fact is hiding something else, and the frustration of changes not being made as implemented by the professional or volunteers has its root in a much more complex diversity between Cambodians way of communicating and the western way of communicating. The Cambodian culture may very much work between the Cambodians but since it is not a part of a western culture there can be difficulties when they are combined (Raymond & Hall, 2008). In relation to a whiteness discussion, the culture can work reinforcing to the imbalanced structure that whiteness is. When the western experience being treated with unconditional respect they seize to notice all the underlying nuances in their communication due to poor in-depth understanding of the Cambodian culture and norms. When the westerners later act on that power position and respect they feel they have been pushed into, an imbalance has occurred that may generate enforcement of the negative power- and whiteness structures. The deeply engraved misunderstandings that may arise from cross-cultural communication will in the end work enforcing to the whiteness structures, structures that all involved work so insistently to reduce.

## **Limitations**

During the interviews with the Cambodian professionals some language difficulties arose as some of the informants did not understand all the questions and the purpose behind them. Prior to the interviews the information from us was that we only agreed to interview English-speaking personnel, but the estimation concerning when you are English-speaking differ, and that may be the reason why the English-speaking Cambodian professionals still did not speak as good English as we would have preferred. This created some episodes during interviewing where questions had to be rephrased or repeated a few times until understanding was reached, and in some cases some of the questions had to be skipped. This might have affected the result of the study as some questions were not answered or was answered even though the interviewee did not understand the question fully. The fact that some of the Cambodian informants did not always express when they did not understand a question could be related to the “save face” mentality that was mentioned by all of the informants. The “save face” culture was explained by both Cambodian and western informants as an important part of their daily life, where it is important to not make someone look bad or be ashamed in any way. The informants also explained that Cambodians, because of the “save-face”, will smile and answer questions or explain road-directions, without knowing the answer to the questions or the direction at all. Although we got this information at an early stage in the process, it still caused some difficulties, due to culture-differences, differences that are discussed further previously in section “ethical considerations”.

Furthermore, the goal was to freeze a picture of the feelings and thoughts of the informants at the moment they were interviewed. This was accomplished through semi-structured interviews, as the social context is always changing it is not likely that the results would be the same if the study was repeated. The reliability and validity is affected by the choice of semi-structured interviews but to reduce this, identical interview guides were used at all interviews. The semi-structured interviews are also affecting the possibility of generalization to a context beyond the given one. However, the spread of interviews among ten different

organizations can give strong indications of trends in which can suggest that a theoretical generalization can be made.

### **Practical implication and future research**

This study can be used as a guideline in further discussions about voluntourism in developing countries. Although the study showed that voluntourism was not a significant problem within the disability sector, it clearly shows a lack of knowledge about voluntourism in Cambodia, which is something that should be taken seriously. As voluntourism might be a quite new phenomenon to professionals in developing countries such as Cambodia, further research regarding voluntourism and its impact is crucial. As mentioned, this study show that voluntourism might not be a huge part in disability-sector, but the interviewees mentioned that voluntourism has taken a huge part in orphanages. Although there already are studies about voluntourism in orphanages, the knowledge about the impacts voluntourism can bring must get highlighted.

It would be interesting reading more studies about the cultural differences between westerners and Cambodian people since it were clear that the differences were many. Studies about the “save face”-culture that is broad in Cambodia as well as studies about the underlying reasons of why whiteness has taken such a huge part in the Cambodian society would not only be important but it would also increase the knowledge about the problem this causes and as a result the power-structures could, hopefully, change for the better. Guess (2006) talks about "racism by consequence" which involves discrimination that are taken place almost unconsciously as a result of a long history of colonialism and whiteness being seen as the superior.

There is a slight difference in what previous research view as voluntourism and how the informants described voluntourism, the inner motivation was not mentioned by the informants when asked what a voluntourism was. However, it was later stated that the majority of the interviewees thought it matters what motivates a volunteer to work. Whether the motivations is affecting the volunteers work is hard to tell, and here it would be helpful with more research. For who is volunteering most beneficial and why? When does volunteering turn into being voluntourism? A more in depth research would help to raise awareness which in the end would benefit the clients. If the professionals at host organizations care about what motivates volunteers, it is important that they, during the matching process, address this as an important part of the work. They also need to think about how it would affect their organizations if an ascending volunteer is badly motivated, since this is something to be observant for.

## References

- Alvesson, M. (1996). *Communication, Power and Organization [Elektronisk resurs]*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Ariail Reed, I. (2013). *Power: Relational, Discursive and Performative Dimensions*. *Sociological Theory*, 31(3), 193-218. doi: 10.1177/0735275113501792
- Bjerneld, M., Lindmark, G., McSpadden, LA., Garrett, MJ. (2006). Motivations, Concerns, and Expectations of Scandinavian Health Professionals Volunteering for Humanitarian Assignments. *Disaster Management & Response*, 4(2), 49-58.
- Bradley, C., Masclii, T., O'Brien, H., Morgen, K., Ward, K. (2012). Faithful but different: Clinical social workers speak out about career motivation and professional values. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 48(3), 459-477.
- Bryman, A. (2011). *Samhällsvetenskapliga metoder*. (2., [rev.] uppl.) Malmö: Liber.
- Cambodia Road Traffic Accident & Victim Information System (2004). *Annual report 2004*. Executive summary.
- CBM. (2015). *Programme: Cambodian Development Mission for Disability*. Downloaded 2015-09-03.
- CDC. (2011). *Cambodia development effectiveness report 2011*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Council for Development of Cambodia.
- Devlin, R. Pothier, D. (2005). *Introduction: Towards a Critical Theory of Dis-Citizenship*. In Pothier, D. (Red.), *Critical Disability Theory : Essays in Philosophy, Politics, Policy and Law*. (1-22). University of British Columbia Press.
- Diefenbach, T. (2013). *Routledge Studies in Management, Organizations and Society: Hierarchy in Organization*. Florence, KY, USA: Taylor and Francis.
- Engelstad, F. (2006). *Vad är makt? [What is power?]*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur.
- Gartell, A. (2010). 'A frog in a well': the exclusion of disabled people from work in Cambodia. *Disability & Society*, 25(3), 289-301. doi: 10.1080/09687591003701207
- Gartell, A. Hoban, E. (2013). Structural Vulnerability, Disability, and Access to Nongovernmental Organization Services in Rural Cambodia. *Journal of Social Work in Disability & Rehabilitation*, 12(3), 194-212. doi: 10.1080/1536710X.2013.810100
- Guess, T. (2006). Whiteness: Racism by Intent, Racism by Consequence. *Critical Sociology*. 32(4), 649-673. Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden. doi: 10.1163/156916306779155199
- Heng, L., Ui, S., Yatsuya, H., Kawaguichi, L., Akashi, H., Aoayana, A. (2010). Strengthening community participation at health centers in rural Cambodia: role of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). *Critical Public Health* 2010, 20(1), 97-115. doi: 10.1080/09581590902829173

- J, Ostlander., S, T. Güntert., S, van Schie1., T, Wehner. (2014). Leadership and Volunteer Motivation: A Study Using Self-Determination Theory. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 43(5), 869-889.
- Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2014). *Qualitative research. [Den kvalitative forskningsintervjun]*. (3. [rev.] uppl.) Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Levine-Rasky, C. (2013). *Whiteness fractured [Elektronisk resurs]*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Lewis, D. (2001). *The management of non-governmental development organizations an introduction [Elektronisk resurs]*. London: Routledge.
- Lewis, J. & Ritchie, J. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice - A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. SAGE Publications.
- Lyons, K, Hanley, J., Wearing, S., Neil, J. (2008). Gap year volunteer tourism - Myths of Global Citizenship? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(1), 361–378. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2011.04.016
- Sossou MA. & Dubus N. (2013). *International Social Work Field Placement or Volunteer Tourism? Developing an Asset-Based Justice-Learning Field Experience*. *Journal of learning design*, 6( 1), 10-19. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5204/jld.v6i1.113>
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*. Harper & Row, Publishers 1954
- Michaell, Hall & Eliza, Raymond (2008). The Development of Cross-Cultural (Mis)Understanding Through Volunteer Tourism. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, 16(5), 530-543. doi: 10.1080/09669580802159610
- Milligan, C. & Conradson, D. (red.) (2006). *Landscapes of voluntarism: new spaces of health, welfare and governance*. Bristol: Policy Press
- Musick, M.A. & Wilson, J. (2008). *Volunteers: A Social Profile (Philanthropic and nonprofit studies) [Elektronisk resurs]*. Indiana University Press.
- Perold, H., Graham, L., Cronin, K., Muchemwa, L., Lough, JB., Mavangu, EM. (2013). The colonial legacy of international voluntary service. *Community Development Journal*, 48(2), 179-196. doi: 10.1093/cdj/bss037
- Reibaldi, G. Grimard, M. (2015). Non-Governmental Organizations importance and future role in Space Exploration. *Acta Astronautica*, 114, 130-137. doi:10.1016/j.actaastro.2015.04.023
- Saunders, P. (2007). The Costs of Disability and the Incidence of Poverty. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 42(4), 461-480.
- Smith, J & Firth, J. (2011). Qualitative data analysis: the framework approach. *Royal College of Nursing Publishing Company (RCN)*, 18(2) 52-62. doi: [org/10.7748/nr2011.01.18.2.52.c8284](http://dx.doi.org/10.7748/nr2011.01.18.2.52.c8284)

- Social Security Advisory Board. (2003). *The Social Security definition of disability [Elektronisk resurs]*. Washington D.C
- Sossou MA. & Dubus N. (2013). International Social Work Field Placement or Volunteer Tourism? Developing an Asset-Based Justice-Learning Field Experience. *Journal of learning design*, 6( 1), 10-19. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5204/jld.v6i1.113>
- Swedish Research Council. (2002). *Forskningsetiska principer inom humanistisk-samhällsvetenskaplig forskning*. Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet.
- Thomas, P. (2005). *Poverty reduction and development in Cambodia: Enabling disabled people to play a role*. Disability Kar- Knowledge and Research.
- Unicef. (2013). *Vad vi gör: Fakta- Barn och minor*. Downloaded 2015-10-19.
- Vodopivveca, B. & Jaffe, R. (2011). Save the World in a Week: Volunteer Tourism, Development and Difference. *European Journal of Development Research*, 23(1), 111-128. doi: 10.1057/ejdr.2010.55
- Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer tourism: experiences that make a difference*. Wallingford, Oxon: CABI.
- Zook, D. (2010). Disability and democracy in Cambodia: an integrative approach to community building and civic engagement. *Disability & Society*, 25(2), 149-161. doi: 10.1080/09687590903534304

## Interview-guide

1. Can you shortly describe, in a few sentences, your previous work experiences?
2. If volunteer, which country do you come from?

*“In what ways do volunteers and professionals work with implementing their own personal experiences and social skills when helping disabled?”*

3. Can you tell us a little about yourself and your role in this organization?  
-How long have you been working here?
4. Why did you choose to work in Cambodia?
5. What motivated you to this job?
6. In what ways have you been working with disability or other types of social work before?
7. Which general social skills do you think are important to have when working with people with disabilities?  
-How are these implemented in the work?
8. How do you use your experiences and skills in your work in this organization?
9. In which ways do you think education and professional skills is needed in your work?

*“What are volunteers and professionals understanding of “volontourism” and what does the phenomenon bring to the organization?”*

10. What does the term “volontourism” mean to you?
11. What, in your opinion, is the difference between voluntary work and volontourism?
12. When you think about volunteers, what comes to mind?
13. Is there a difference between volunteers who travel with agencies or those who travel alone?
14. Does it matter what motivates volunteers to do a good job?  
-If so, in which way?
15. Why do you think young western people become volunteers in developing countries?
16. What are some pros and cons of volunteering?

17. How do you perceive the work that is done here, is it a result of volunteers, professionals or both?
18. Who do you think is most benefited from volunteers and why?
19. Can you see a future where volunteers are not needed in this organization?
20. -If so, for what reason?
21. One research that we have read in this area call voluntourism a modern version of colonialism, what do you think about that way of seeing it? What speak against it?

*“How are the professionals, organization and work affected by the help coming from acceding volunteers, from a power perspective?”*

22. Can you shortly describe what the term power means to you?
23. In which way do the volunteer affect the work in the organization, from a power-perspective? -and what is the most important thing the volunteers bring to the organization?
24. Is there any difference between what a volunteer is allowed to do and what professionals are allowed to do, at your organization?
25. Is there a expressed hierarchy in the organization? (is it spoken)  
...and if so; how does that affect the work-environment?
26. How much influence do you consider yourself having with the decisions that are taken at the organization?
27. What is the biggest difference between Cambodian people and western foreigners?

**Lexicon:**

*Volontourism*= Volunteer-tourists are those who are seeking a tourist experience that will add to their individual improvement by helping organizations (often in a developing country) with the social and economic surroundings, although they might not have any expertise in the matter in which they contribute.