PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY OLOMOUC

Faculty of Science

Department of Development and Environmental Studies

FUNCTIONING OF A FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION

ICF CAMBODIA

IN THE CONTEXT OF

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

MASTER´S THESIS

Author:

Bc. Barbora KNÍŽKOVÁ

Supervisor:

Mgr. Lenka DUŠKOVÁ, Ph.D.

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to describe the functioning of a Faith-based organization called ICF Cambodia in the context of International Development assistance. The paper is based on author´s own qualitative research, which was implemented during her volunteer stay with the researched organization. This organization is a Christian church organization with a strong emphasis on evangelization of the local people, but also on the support of the local development, poverty reduction, humanitarian aid, support of the education of the local people, etc. Its activities are described from the perspective of International Development Studies and Cultural Anthropology.

In the conceptual framework of this thesis Cambodia is introduced as a developing country. Furthermore the theoretical concept of Faith-based organizations and the concept of Christian missions are analyzed. In the empirical part the author´s field research and its results are introduced.

Key words: Faith-based organization, development and social services, International Development assistance, Cultural Anthropology, ethics, Cambodia, Christian mission, evangelization, local culture

Abstrakt

Cílem této práce je popsat fungování náboženské organizace ICF Cambodia v kontextu mezinárodní rozvojové spolupráce. Práce je založena na autorčině vlastním kvalitativním výzkumu, který byl proveden během jejího dobrovolnického pobytu u zkoumané organizace. Organizace je křesťanská církevní organizace kladoucí silný důraz na evangelizace místního obyvatelstva, ale také na podporu místního rozvoje, snižování chudoby, humanitární pomoc, podporu vzdělávání místního obyvatelstva, atd. Aktivity organizace jsou popsány z pohledu mezinárodních rozvojových studií a kulturní antropologie.

V teoretické části této práce je představena Kambodža jako rozvojová země. Dále je analyzován koncept náboženských organizací a křesťanské misie. V empirické části je představen terénní výzkum a jeho výsledky.

Klíčová slova: náboženská organizace, rozvojové a sociální služby, mezinárodní rozvojová spolupráce, kulturní antropologie, etika, Kambodža, křesťanská misie, evangelizace, místní kultura

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Jméno a příjmení:	**Bc. Barbora KNÍŽKOVÁ**
Osobní číslo:	**R160065**
Studijní program:	**N1301 Geografie**
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Zásady pro vypracování

The aim of this thesis is to describe the functioning of a faith-based organization called ICF Cambodia in the context of International Development Cooperation. The paper will be based on my own qualitative research, which I will conduct during my volunteer stay at the previously mentioned organization. This organization is a Christian church with a strong emphasis on evangelization of the local people, but also on the support of the local development, poverty reduction, humanitarian aid, support of the educating of the local people, etc. Their activities will be described from the perspective of International Development Studies as well as from the anthropological perspective, all in all I want to observe their activities in the context of the local culture. Throughout my research I will focus on the following topics: evangelistic activities, contextualization of the gospel, social act of the Christian missions, development projects, financing, volunteerism, etc. In my thesis I want to follow the conclusions of my bachelor thesis called The Evangelistic activities of Christian Missionaries in non-Euroamerican countries in the context of the local culture, and thus develop my understanding of current Christian missions. In the theoretical part I will analyze the theoretical concept of Faith-Based Organizations in the context of the International Development Cooperation. I also want to analyze the Christian missions from the theoretical perspective. I will briefly introduce the ICF Cambodia organization, its history and ideological standpoint and I will also talk about the situation of Christianity in Cambodia and Cambodia's current development opportunities. In the analytical part I will introduce my field research and its conclusions.

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Vedoucí diplomové práce:	**Mgr. Lenka Dušková, PhD.**
	Katedra rozvojových a environmentálních studií

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L.S.

V Olomouci dne 12. března 2019

_____   L.S.   _____

doc. RNDr. Martin Kubala, Ph.D.   **doc. RNDr. Pavel Nováček, CSc.**
děkan   vedoucí katedry

Declaration

I honestly declare that I wrote the Master's thesis Functioning of a Faith-based organization ICF Cambodia in the context of International Development assistance myself under the guidance of Mgr. Lenka Dušková, Ph.D. All used sources cited in any form have been acknowledged in the text and in the list of sources.

In Olomouc, May 6 2019 ……………………………………….

Bc. Barbora Knížková

The thesis is printed on recycled paper in order to save the environment.

Acknowledgment

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List of Abbreviations

AD	anno domini
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BMI	body-mass index
CA	Campus activities
CDHS	Cambodian Demographic and Health Survey
CNRP	Cambodian National Rescue Party
CPP	Cambodia´s People Party
EP	Education program
FBO	Faith-based organization
FUNCINPEC	Front uni national pour un Cambodge indépendant, neutre, pacifique et coopératif (in English: National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia)
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICF	International Christian Fellowship
IFSW	International Foundation of Social Work
ISW	International Social Work
KSP	Kids Sponsorship program
NASW	National Association of Social work
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ODA	Official development aid
p.c.	per capita
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
STDs	Sexually transmitted diseases
UNICEF	United Nations International Children´s Emergency Fund

Introduction

The aim of this Master´s thesis is to describe the functioning of a Faith-based organization *International Christian Fellowship Cambodia* (ICF Cambodia) in the context of International Development Assistance.

ICF Cambodia is a Christian church organization which has functioned in Cambodia since 2014. It was founded by a Swiss pastor couple ND and Sophal Strupler. ICF Cambodia operates as a Christian church with a strong emphasis on religious activities and providing spiritual services. However, it is not only a religious organization understood as a house of worship where religious ceremonies take place. ICF Cambodia also functions as a Faith-based organization (FBO) delivering social services and implementing social projects which support local development, help to alleviate poverty, provide humanitarian aid, support the education of local people, etc.

The official mission statement of the organization is "to spread the gospel and break the cycle of poverty by empowering people to achieve their God-given potential." (ICF Cambodia, 2019)

By reading this mission statement it can be understood that ICF Cambodia is a Faith-based organization integrating delivery of social services with evangelism.

Motivation for choosing the topic

My Master´s thesis builds on the results of my Bachelor´s thesis titled *The Evangelistic activities of Christian missionaries in non-Euroamerican countries in the context of the local culture* (Knížková, 2016). In my paper I analyzed evangelistic strategies, experience and opinions of currently active Christian missionaries from the perspective of Cultural Anthropology. I interviewed a small sample of missionaries, specifically focusing on the activities of Catholic and Protestant Mission. One of the aims of my research was to find out whether and how missionaries include development and social services in their missionary activities. While there were significant differences between the practice of the informants in my research, the results showed that all of the interviewed missionaries were dedicating at least part of their activities to providing development and social services.

I want to extend my understanding of Christian mission and its role in International Development Assistance. For this reason, I decided to dedicate my Master´s thesis to a Faith-based organization (FBO) with an evangelical vision that included development and social

activities which would be possible to analyze from the perspective of International Development Studies. ICF Cambodia appealed to me as a very interesting case of such an organization, and I considered it suitable for the purpose of my research.

I have been interested in the topic of Christian mission because I am myself a Christian actively involved in a reformed Christian church, and I have personally met Christians involved in missionary activities. The controversy of this topic combined with my personal experience from meeting these people aroused my desire to understand Christian mission more in depth and help myself as well as to the academic community define its opinion on this issue.

My research is significant in that it allows for greater understanding of the relationship and role between current Christian mission and International Development Assistance. Christian mission is a relevant up-to-date topic, yet it is very ethically controversial and significantly under-researched. Christian mission organizations often operate in developing countries where they provide unofficial development aid and social services. This is happening completely outside of the system of ODA. For this reason, I believe it is necessary to research these organizations from the perspective of International Development Studies.

Generally, my research carries potential to open certain social and academic taboos and in the future help to establish clearer and stimulating communication between academics and these types of organizations.

The Aim of the Research and Research Questions

The aim of my research is to analyze the functioning of ICF Cambodia and describe it from the perspective of International Development Studies. For analysis of some features of the organization´s functioning, I will also utilize the perspective of Cultural Anthropology. Reasons for choosing these two perspectives will be further explained in the conceptual framework of this thesis.

From the analysis of the data, I want to define what type of FBO ICF Cambodia is, how it functions, how it is financed and how it plans and implements its development projects. From the perspective of Cultural Anthropology, I want to describe the organization through the lens of evangelistic strategies and intercultural interaction.

For my research I set up the following Main and Subsidiary Research Questions:

<u>Main Research Question</u>: What is the functioning of a Faith-based organization ICF Cambodia in the context of International Development Assistance?

<u>Subsidiary Research Questions:</u>
1) What is the organizational structure of ICF Cambodia? (management, decision making processes, financing, cooperation with other NGOs and the government, cooperation with other churches, etc.)
2) How is ICF Cambodia planning and implementing its social project? (selection of the social services and beneficiaries, financing, project activities, selection of the employees, results and evaluation of projects)
3) How is ICF Cambodia manifesting its religiosity and missionary focus? (vision, religiosity of the members and employees, evangelistic strategies, activities, contextualization of the gospel, potential ideological conflict between Christianity and the local culture)

The Subsidiary Research Questions were formulated according to a recommendation of W. Bielefeld a W.S. Cleveland (2013), who summarized previous research papers written about FBOs. They consider these three chosen topics to be aspects through which it is possible to research and classify FBOs. Their findings will be further introduced in the conceptual framework of this thesis.

I will further focus on the following topics: development projects, volunteerism, cooperation of the Cambodian and non-Cambodian members of the organization, evangelistic activities and contextualization of the gospel[1], potential ideological conflict between Christianity and local culture, and the context of the local culture.

In this thesis, I have concentrated only on Christian FBOs. By using the abbreviation *FBO*, unless specified differently, I always mean a Christian Faith-based organization. While many aspects of my research and the theories and researches of other authors could be just as well applied to FBOs of different religious affiliations, I have decided to narrow my view and

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[1] Term will be explained in the conceptual framework of this thesis

focus only on the Christian ones. This is mainly because the researched FBO is of a Christian confession. Secondly, it narrows the scope of my thesis.

Conceptual framework

1. CAMBODIA: country profile

The first chapter of this work is dedicated to understanding the reality and current situation of Cambodia, which is crucial for analyzing the functioning of ICF Cambodia. I will briefly summarize the history of Cambodia in the 20th century and how this historical development affects the current situation. I will also analyze the current situation and needs of human development in Cambodia.

In the empirical part of this paper I will show how ICF Cambodia is responding to these needs.

1.1. Cambodia in recent history

Cambodia was a French colony from 1863 to 1953 when independence from France was gained under the rule of King Sihanouk. The newly independent Cambodia was born into the era of the Cold War which strongly influenced the country´s political and economic development.

In the years following the independence of Cambodia, the country was mostly oriented towards the global West. It accepted ODA and collaborated with the United States. However, with the escalation and start of the Vietnam War, King Sihanouk turned away from his support of the United States. He refused other foreign development aid and started collaborating with China and Viet Minh[2]. During the Vietnam War he allowed the existence of the so called Ho Chi Minh trail - a trail leading through Cambodia which was used by the soldiers of Viet Minh to get from North Vietnam to South Vietnam and attack the U.S. armies. (Zelenda, 2009)

The result of Sihanouk´s step was a massive bombing of Northeast Cambodia executed by U.S. President Nixon. A Cambodian communist party led by a man named Saloth Sar was active in this area, specifically in the provinces of Ratanakiri and Mondulkiri in the mountainous part of Northeast Cambodia. Bombing of these provinces led to extreme radicalization of Saloth Sar´s party. This in turn, started developing into a revolutionary movement later known as the Khmer Rouge. Saloth Sar himself would soon enter the history of Cambodia as no one else than Pol Pot, his warrior nickname. (Zelenda, 2009)

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[2] *League for the Independence of Vietnam* which opposed South Vietnam and United States during the Vietnam War.

In 1970, King Sihanouk was deposed by his premier Lon Nol. This led Sihanouk to explicitly express support for the revolutionary movement of Khmer Rouge. He also invited them to start a guerilla war against Lon Nol´s government, and thus, help him to regain his power. This was followed by five years of fighting, ending when Khmer Rouge entered the capital city of Phnom Penh, overthrowing Lon Nol´s government and starting 4 years of dictatorship and horror. (Brinkley, 2012)

During the Khmer Rouge era, Cambodia was completely isolated from the rest of the world. Schools, hospitals, factories and banks were closed. Currency was abolished and agriculture was collectivized. Cambodia was transformed into an agrarian country functioning in supposedly self-sustaining agrarian communes where people were gathered and forced to labor. However, this system did not function well, and the nation suffered from severe hunger and diseases. (Zelenda, 2009)

The goal of the regime was to establish the so called *Year Zero* – to start anew and erase everything cultural which had been present in Cambodia before the reign of Khmer Rouge. In order to ensure this, the Khmer Rouge regime imposed high restrictions on all the intelligence in the country, expression of religion, as well as traditional kinship system. Khmer Rouge broke up families and artificially created new communes. The regime also publicly punished people who did not align with the new system, executing educated and "disobedient" and using extreme violence and torture in order to force Cambodians to submit to the new system. The regime caused many people to flee the country and seek asylum and safety in the neighbouring countries. (Brinkley, 2012)

The Khmer Rouge era ended in 1979 due to a Vietnamese invasion. Final estimates of the deaths caused by the regime vary between 740 thousand and 3 million, but most researches agree it was between 1.4 and 2.2 million. Approximately half of the dead were considered to have been executed; the other half probably died from starvation or diseases. (Sharp, 2005)

After the Vietnamese invasion, Cambodia was governed by Vietnam for 10 years. During this time a man named Hun Sen was assigned to the position of prime minister – a person full of controversies with a history of involvement in the Khmer Rouge regime. (Brinkley, 2012)

In order to reestablish Cambodia as an independent country, the United Nations started preparing a peace plan for Cambodia and new democratic elections which were finally held in 1993. The winner of these elections was the *FUNCINPEC* party led by prince Ranariddh (son

of King Sihanouk). However, the party did not win a majority of votes, and Hun Sen´s *Cambodia´s People Party (CPP)* ended just a few votes behind *FUNCINPEC*. Because of these results it was suggested to name two prime ministers and create a triangle government which would consist of King Sihanouk, prime minister Hun Sen and prime minister prince Ranariddh. (Brinkley, 2012)

This system lasted until 1997 when Hun Sen used prince Ranariddh´s travel out of the country for a *coup d´etat* and named himself the only prime minister. This act was followed by two months of fighting which were silently tolerated by the rest of the world. (Zelenda, 2009)

Hun Sen has been in power since then. Other general election were held in 2003, 2008, 2013 and 2018, each of them being won by Hun Sen´s *CPP*.

When preparing for the general election of 2018, another party called *Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP)* gained the majority of the voters´ preferences. However, the party was pronounced non-constitutional and dissolved in November 2017 by the Supreme Court of Cambodia. (Holmes, 2017)

Since then, Cambodia has been officially a one party state with prime minister Hun Sen still in power.

1.2. PTSD as a consequence of the Khmer Rouge genocide

The four years of Khmer Rouge regime had many consequences crucially affecting the following development of the country. Many of them (e.g. destroyed infrastructure, humanitarian catastrophe, closed schools, absence of teachers and doctors, etc.) started being addressed immediately after the Khmer Rouge fall with the help of United Nations and foreign aid. However, other consequences were much harder to address and their presence still limits Cambodia in complete recovery.

One of them is the fact that up to one half of the people who lived through the Khmer Rouge era are diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Brinkley, 2012, p. 13). PTSD is a mental condition afflicting people who experienced severe trauma. Its symptoms are insomnia, depression, dull passivity interrupted by unexpected violent outbursts of anger, nightmares, vivid visions and hallucinations of the traumatizing experiences, etc. PTSD can significantly affect an individual´s functioning and is particularly severe among poor and uneducated. Suffering from PTSD can lead to negative behaviors such as alcoholism and other addictions, domestic violence, sexual abuse, etc. (Brinkley, 2012)

PTSD is directly connected to a traumatizing experience, but once it develops as a condition, its symptoms do not disappear easily even after the traumatizing experience is over. A clinical study of Cambodian refugees now living in the U.S. done 25 years after the end of the Khmer Rouge era, diagnosed 62 percent of them with PTSD (Brinkley, 2012, p. 13). The condition can also be transmitted intergenerationally. In Cambodia it was proven that PTSD is being passed from one generation to another. As a result of this even young people who did not experience the Khmer Rouge trauma suffer from the same mental problems as their parents. (Brinkley, 2012, pp. 13-14)

PTSD is an issue which directly or indirectly affects the whole population and has been (among other factors) influencing the development of the country.

1.3.Current situation and needs of human development in Cambodia

Cambodia is currently (according to its GDP p.c. which is 1,384 USD) a developing lower-middle-income country (World Bank, 2017). It is situated in Southeast Asia with access to the South China Sea, sharing borders with Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. It has a tropical climate dominated by monsoons. The area of Cambodia exceeds 180 000 kms^2; 2.5% of this area is formed by water (mainly the Tonle Sap Lake). Cambodia has a population of more than 16 million people (World Bank, 2017). The population density is 81.8 people/km^2.

The official language in Cambodia is Khmer. Khmer is also the most represented ethnic group (more than 97% of the population). Next to Khmers, Cambodia is inhabited by Chams (the most populous ethnic minority), Vietnamese, Chinese and small ethnic groups mostly living in the northern mountainous areas (CIA, 2019).

The official religion is Theravada Buddhism, practiced by almost 97% of the population. Cambodia was originally a Hindu country that accepted Buddhism between the 11th and 13th century AD. The form of local Buddhism is a mixture of Buddhist, Hindu and pre-Hindu tribal animistic traditions. Other religions practiced in Cambodia are Islam (1.9 %), tribal religions (0.8 %) and Christianity (0.4 %). (CIA, 2019)

Currently, Cambodia is experiencing a fast economic growth. From 2004 to 2011 its GDP grew by 54.5%, ranking Cambodia as the fifteenth fastest growing economy among 174 other countries. This growth was relatively pro-poor which means that the poor households were benefiting from the growth more than the rich households in relative numbers (World

Bank, 2014). In 2015 the country reached the status of a lower-middle-income country (World Bank, 2019).

The poverty headcount ratio (at national poverty line) fell during these years from 52.2% to 20.5% and the house consumption grew by 40% (World Bank, 2014). From 2011 until now the poverty rate has continued to decrease but at a slower pace. The latest data from 2017 show the poverty headcount ratio to be 17.7% (World Bank, 2017).

The biggest poverty reduction occurred in the urban centers. Therefore almost 90% of the poor now live in the rural areas (World Bank, 2014). The strategical documents of the Government of Cambodia state that it is necessary to target primarily the rural areas in other development work. Improvements have to reach rural Cambodia to further reduce poverty (Royal Government of Cambodia, 2014).

While poverty reduction in recent years has been impressive, the households which have moved above the national poverty line still require attention. The reality is that they moved from being extremely poor to being nearly poor. This means that even though their consumption is above the Cambodian national poverty line (circa 1 USD/day) they are extremely vulnerable to any kind of unexpected shocks. Some of these shocks include a member of the household becoming ill or some of their property (e.g. house, field, motorbike) getting damaged. The slightest shocks can cause them to fall bellow the poverty line again very easily. (World Bank, 2014)

Focusing on child poverty in Cambodia, a report created by UNICEF (2018) using the data from CDHS 2014 shows that children (and especially children in rural areas) suffer from multi-dimensional poverty and face multiple deprivations. Children aged 0-4 are mostly deprived in the area of early childhood development and nutrition requirements. Children aged 5-14 most suffer from bad housing and bad sanitation. Youth aged 15-17 are mostly deprived in education and housing. There is always a higher overlapping of deprivations (i.e. children are more likely to be deprived in more than one area) in rural areas. (UNICEF, 2018)

In the area of health, the use of any health treatment in Cambodia remains strongly pro-rich as wealthy and educated people are more likely to realize their health state would necessitate professional treatment. The majority of the poor do not seek medical help because they lack awareness in assessing their health status and are discouraged by the cost of Out-of-pocket expenditures. The Out-of-pocket expenditures remain very high in Cambodia and have an impoverishing effect on many households. They remain an important source of debt to poor families. (Asian Development Bank, 2012)

Indicators pointing to quality of nutrition, sanitation and hygiene practices have been stagnating. Even though the overall consumption of food has risen (in regards to the amount of food spending per household), the quality of the food remains low and there is a lack of micronutrient fortified food. The common occurrence of open defecation and other bad hygiene practices remain very high, especially in the rural areas. These bad practices lead to a higher prevalence of water related diseases which again leads to malnutrition. Another cause of this problem is insufficient education of the public and insufficient health services. (World Bank, 2014)

Malnutrition is viewed as an intergenerational problem. Babies of malnourished women with low BMI index tend to have very low birth weight. Many women suffer from maternal anemia which also causes low birth weight and poor early development of the child. Maternal anemia is most common for women who have more than four children, no or very little education or live in poor households. Women from these groups should be especially targeted with nutrition fortified food and awareness raising programs. (World Vision International, 2018)

The rates of maternal and child mortality are still some of the highest in Asia and the Pacific and are also highly correlated with wealth (World Bank, 2014).

Education indicators have been showing progress throughout recent years. Literacy has increased regardless of age, gender and location and the net school enrollment is rising also. However, still 30% of children do not enter the first grade at the appropriate age and there is a high rate of drop-outs and repetitions which results in many enrolled children being overage. Enrollment in grade 7 is very low due to entrance exams and higher costs of secondary education. (World Bank, 2014)

There is a strong relationship between education and poverty. The poor kids are being left behind with higher rates of drop-outs, repetitions and lower rates of enrollment. (World Bank, 2014)

The reasons for not sending children to school are usually economic as are the reasons for dropping out. Only a small percentage of students drop out due to low grades or lack of motivation. Repetitions and drop-outs further worsen the issue of many children being overage. At the same time the overage itself can cause other repetitions and drop-outs as the later the children start to go to school, the harder it is for them to learn and develop cognitively. (World Bank, 2014)

In this chapter I have introduced Cambodia, its recent history and the current situation and needs of its human development. I did so in order to gain a better understanding of the researched organization´s functioning.

2. CHRISTIAN FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

In this chapter I present the theoretical concept of Faith-based organizations (FBOs). For analyzing the functioning of ICF Cambodia it is important to understand how FBOs formed and how they contributed to the establishment of International Development Assistance. I will also present what separates them from their secular counterparts and how we can research them.

2.1. The history of Christian FBOs and their role in International Development Assistance

Christian religious organizations have a long tradition of delivering social services and relief. For the believers, to be a Christian implies a duty to respond to the needs of the poor and marginalized. The religion itself is a powerful motivation for humanitarian action, which is based not only on the values of charity and mercy but also on the Christian belief in absolute value of human being. (Ferris, 2005)

Long before humanitarian law was formalized, religious organizations and congregations were the main providers of social services (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013). In Medieval and Early Modern Times monasteries served as hospitals and centers of refuge for those who were persecuted or afflicted by poverty, diseases, etc. Specialized Catholic orders were established in order to provide charity and take care of the poor and sick. Among these orders we can name as an example the Sisters of Mercy of St. Borromeo established in 1652 (Sisters of Mercy of St. Borromeo, n.d.).

In the Orthodox and Protestant church we can find similar tendencies in establishing so called *diaconates* – special ministries supposed to deliver social services (Ferris, 2005, p. 313).

In the 18th and 19th century, social services were still being delivered primarily by religious organizations. In this era, they were mostly represented by flourishing missionary societies. While the history of Christian mission can be traced back to the first century AD, it is in this era that we notice the highest increase of Christian missionary activities both of the Catholic and Protestant church. (Robert, 2009)

Christian missionaries of the 18th and 19th century traveled to distant areas to evangelize local people while also connecting their activities with providing development and social services. Many institutions, such as primary and secondary schools, colleges and health centers were established in the mission fields alongside the new churches. (McLeigh, 2011)

The number of secular organizations involved in development and social services started increasing much later in the early 20th century. For a while it seemed that these secular NGOs overtook the role of their religious predecessors which were less active in this period. However, right after the World War II, there was a dramatic increase in both secular and religious organizations involved in development, humanitarian aid and relief. (Ferris 2005; McLeigh 2011)

At this point an important fact needs to be mentioned. The FBOs which started emerging after the end of World War II were no longer churches, mission societies or other religious organizations functioning as congregations or "houses of worship". This was a new model of FBOs with a more explicit goal and focus on providing development and social services rather than the spiritual ones (Ferris, 2005). It was actually found that churches and congregations provide social services only marginally (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013, p. 444).

The existence of these FBOs, which are not primarily churches and focus on development and social services, opened a new debate with many questions arising. How do FBOs differ from secular NGOs? What do FBOs actually do and how? Are their activities ethical? Should they be eligible for governmental funding?

In the following sections I will describe different approaches in answering all these questions.

2.2. What is a Faith-based organization?

There are many ways to define and analyze FBOs, and researches generally do not agree on one simple definition. E. Ferris says in her work *Faith-based and secular humanitarian organization* (2005) that FBOs should be characterized by one or more of the following features: affiliation with a religious body, a mission statement with explicit reference to religious values, financial support from religious sources, and a governance structure or decision-making processes based on religious values. She also adds that another feature could be selecting board members or staff according to their beliefs (2005, p. 312).

While all these features can be also applied to churches and religious congregations, I would like to stress again that in this case we are discussing non-governmental organizations

based on faith which are primarily involved in delivering social services or development assistance.

Most of the theoretical works and research about FBOs are written by authors from United States of America and describe the reality of FBOs in the American sphere. The reason for this is that in the U.S. there has been much debate on how FBOs can contribute to delivering social services and whether they should be eligible for governmental funding.

Authors W. Bielefield and V.S. Cleveland (2013) conducted a scan of literature on U.S. non-congregational faith-based service providers. This scan identified more than 600 papers. Most of them were published after 1996 – the year a governmental program called *Charitable Choice* financing FBOs was launched. Their interpretation of such a trend is that the *Charitable Choice* program caused rising concerns about the functioning of FBOs (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013, pp. 443-444).

The launching of the *Charitable Choice* program was a trigger point for increased interest by various authors around this under researched topic. Researches following this point and other papers about FBOs discovered there are strong differences between FBOs themselves, especially when it comes to the expression of religion, beliefs and motivation of the organizations (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013). I will describe these differences in the following section.

2.3. Classification of Faith-based Organizations

While in my thesis I am by no means focusing on the U.S. sphere (the researched organization is not from the U.S. nor is it functioning in the U.S.), most of the theoretical literature comes from American authors for reasons explained in the previous section. For this reason, I decided to use this literature as it is still the greatest source of information and methodological theory on researching FBOs.

The discussion of my case study will be slightly different as I will not focus on the problematics of governmental funding. Also, my motivation to conduct this research (as described in the introduction to this thesis) is different from the motivation of many authors researching FBOs in the U.S. However, I am dedicating my research to the same issues connected with the functioning of FBOs. Due to these reasons, I believe I can apply the findings and theoretical approaches of these authors to the case of ICF Cambodia.

When asking the principal questions of how FBOs are distinguished from secular NGOs, the answer would be that the difference is in their religious foundation. Their activities may be in many ways similar to those of secular NGOs. However, the religious foundation and ways of its expression are a crucial distinction from secular NGOs. (McLeigh, 2011)

In the area of religious expression, two different approaches to analyzing FBOs can be used. One way is to compare the religious expression across both the faith-based and secular organizations providing development and social services. The second approach is to focus only on FBOs and analyze the spectrum of religious emphasis in order to discover how much religion defines the functioning of the organization and what role it plays. (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013)

Various typologies were created using both of these approaches. Each of these typologies uses its own indicators in order to classify the organizations into categories as low-, medium- or high-religious organization. Some authors decided to define the categories in a more detailed way, for example, R.J. Sider and H.R. Unruh (2004) whose typology has the following categories: faith-permeated, faith-centered, faith-affiliated, faith background, faith–secular partnership, and secular organization.

What is mainly important in this debate are the criteria by which we can analyze the FBOs´ functioning. Most of the typologies agree on the following three main criteria of examination: *organizational structure* (examining FBOs through funding resources, power exercised within the organization, and decision-making processes), *expression of religion* (examining through the self-identity of the organization, religiosity of participants, and definition of outcome measures), and *program implementation* (examining through the selection of services provided, the integration of religious elements in service delivery, and the voluntary or mandatory participation in specific religious activities). (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013, pp. 446-447)[3]

While this classification through categories is a useful approach for planning the research and deciding how FBO´s functioning can be analyzed, it faces a lot of criticism from authors like T.H. Jeavons (2004), F.E. Netting (2004) or H. Cameron (2004). They say that this systemic categorization has difficulties and is not helpful for gaining better understanding of

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[3] These three criteria were defined on the basis of a scan of more than 600 articles and papers about FBOs conducted by author W. Bielefield and S.V. Cleveland (2013). For this reason, I decided to apply these criteria to formulating the Subsidiary Research Question of my research. The Subsidiary Research Questions are presented in the Introduction to this thesis on page 19.

FBOs because systemic categorization is not able to discover the motivations behind the FBO´s functioning.

H. Cameron (2004) says it is important to understand what FBOs believe and what is their motivation because it will show us whether they provide the services as an expression of their faith or as means of attracting individuals for converting them to Christian faith.

We can understand this issue better through research of B. Hugen and R. Venema (2009) who analyzed a group of 1100 FBOs´ programs. They focused on how these FBOs present the religion to their clients, whether and how the religion is integrated into the organization´s change model and whether and how religion is included as an outcome measure.

In their sample, 40% of the analyzed programs included religion as a critical or necessary element of the clients´ change. One third of the programs included religious outcomes into their change model and one quarter of them measured religious outcomes for clients such as personal growth in religion, spirituality or belief, change in the client´s behavior or lifestyle or having a salvation experience. (Hugen & Venema, 2009)

When the organization is considering faith-related change as part of the change model (or even measures religious outcomes), we can imply that the general objective of this FBO (the motivation behind their activities) is to convert individuals to Christianity (i.e. Evangelism[4]). It does not always necessarily mean that the social services provided are used as means of attracting individuals to Christian faith. However, such a fact would not change the reality that the FBO is involved in evangelistic activities. For the purpose of this thesis I decided to call such an organization an evangelical FBO, or in other words, an FBO with a missionary focus.

The concept of Christian mission and Evangelism will be described in the following chapter, but before I do it, I want to open the topic of ethics in development and social work and explain why researching the FBO´s motivation is important for ethical reasons.

2.4. Ethics of International Social Work and possible ethical dilemmas of Faith-based organizations

Due to the fact that some FBOs could be using their social services as an evangelistic strategy many important ethical and policy questions arise. Is FBOs´ functioning ethical towards their clients and what does it actually mean to function ethically? Should governments

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[4] The term will be defined in chapter three of this thesis.

support FBOs in their activities? Should governments allow FBOs to function in their countries at all?

In this section I present the topic of ethical behavior in development assistance and social work. For this purpose, I am discussing the concept of ethics in International Social Work (ISW). ISW is defined as "international professional practice and the capacity for international action by the social work profession and its members. International action has four dimensions: internationally related domestic practice and advocacy, professional exchange, international practice, and international policy development and advocacy." (Healy, 2001, p. 7)

The concept of ISW has been defined in order to globally professionalize and unite the practice of social work (Cox & Pawar, 2006). It could be viewed as highly relevant for the topic of my thesis as in this concept we find important discussion about the problems of ethics in social work, values, cross-cultural social work, indigenization, etc. Functioning of ICF Cambodia could be as well generally analyzed from the perspective of ISW. However, in order to narrow the scope of my thesis I will only utilize the model of ethics in ISW.

According to K. Kopřiva (2011), in any helping activity or Aid-giver - Client relationship, there is a power imbalance created. The client is in the position of the powerless because he or she needs help. The aid-giver is in the position of the powerful because he or she is able to help. This power imbalance is generally higher in the area of social work, especially when the clients are poor, marginalized, uneducated, handicapped or very young people (children). (Kopřiva, 2011)

Being aware of this power imbalance is the main reason behind the existence of codes of ethics used by organizations delivering social services no matter if they are faith-based or secular. In these codes of ethics, the organizations are publicly declaring that they will not abuse the power they have over their clients.

For example the *Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles* of the *International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)* (2018) states in article 9.4 that "Social workers must act with integrity. This includes not abusing their positions of power and relationships of trust with people that they engage with; they recognize the boundaries between personal and professional life and do not abuse their positions for personal material benefit or gain."[5]

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[5] The ethical statement of IFSW was chosen as an example in this work because IFSW is one of the main global organizations of ISW, internationally connecting social workers. Their ethical statement serves for the particular social workers and their organizations as a foundation for creating their own codes of ethics.

The codes of ethics of social work define the ethical "guidelines" on the basis of core values or principles of social work. The ethical statement of *IFSW* defines the nine following principles: Recognition of the Inherent Dignity of Humanity, Promoting Human Rights, Promoting Social Justice, Promoting the Right to Self-Determination, Promoting the Right to Participation, Respect for Confidentiality and Privacy, Treating People as Whole Persons, Ethical Use of Technology and Social Media and Professional Integrity (IFSW, 2018).

The *Code of Ethics* of *National Association of Social Workers (NASW)*[6] (2017) simplifies these principles into the six following values: Service, Social Justice, Dignity and Worth of the Person, Importance of Human Relationships, Integrity and Competence.

A potential ethical dilemma arises from situations in which two or more core values are in conflict (Sherwood, 2012). A typical example of such situation can be a client entrusting the social worker an information of being abused. The social worker has the obligation to report the crime but he or she should also respect the client´s confidentiality and privacy. The social worker can also worry about the consequences of reporting the crime which could harm the client even more. In this case two core values of the code of ethics (*respect for confidentiality and privacy* and *professional integrity*) are in conflict with one other. However, sometimes a situation can occur when one core value from the code of ethics is in conflict with a personal value or belief of the social worker. The social worker is than faced with the same ethical dilemma and has to decide which value is more important.

In each of these dilemmas there is a probability that the power of the social worker over the client may be abused. In the case of the previously mentioned example, abusing the power would mean to disrespect the client´s confidentiality and privacy and report the abuse. (Sherwood, 2012)

Through the core values, functioning of any FBO or secular NGO can be analyzed and tested but only once we know the motivation of the organization behind its activities can we fully understand the faced ethical dilemmas.

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[6] Another commonly cited and used code of ethics. NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world with U.S. governance.

3. CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND EVANGELIZATION

In this chapter I will describe the phenomenon of Christian mission and evangelization. As was explained in the previous chapter, evangelism can be one of the religious expression of an FBO. However, what is of primary importance is the motivation of the FBO and the questions of what the FBO believes. Answering these questions can show us whether the researched FBO is or is not an evangelical FBO.

From what has been mentioned in the introduction of this thesis (and will be described in the presentation of the results of my research), we know that the researched organization ICF Cambodia can be called an evangelical FBO. For this reason we need to first understand what is evangelization and what is its role in Christian mission.

Christian mission is according to the definition of Encyclopedia Britannica *an organized effort for the propagation of the Christian Faith* (Missions, n.d.). Propagation of the Christian faith can be sometimes called *sharing* or *preaching the gospel* (i.e. *evangelium, "good news"*) which is understood as any kind of sharing the principles of Christian faith with other people.

The word *mission* itself comes from a latin verb *mittere*, which means *to send*. It is used in the context of the Biblical *Great Commission* - a theological term derived from the Biblical verse found in the book of Mark, chapter 16, verse 15: "*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*," (The Holy Bible, 1982) or similarly in the book of Matthew, chapter 28, verse 19: "*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations*." (The Holy Bible, 1982). The term *Great Commission* was first used in the 17th century by a Dutch missionary Justinian von Weltzl. Later it was popularized by missionary Hudson Taylor (Castleman, 2007). By this term, theology understands the mission of the Christian church to go and preach the gospel to all the nations including all the forms of the fulfilling of this mission (Bosch, 2009).

The terms *evangelization* and *mission* are very often being confused with each other but it should not be so. According to theologians, *evangelization* is only a part of the whole *mission* and the *mission* itself contains more than that (Bosch 2009; Planner 1976). The *mission* should not only take into account the spiritual needs of the people but also all other needs. That is the reason why the *evangelization* part is accompanied by a *social act*, or assistance. The *mission* should always have a holistic approach because it is not possible to separate the spiritual sphere of the human life from the material and social one (Bosch, 2009).

The social act (assistance) in this context can be understood as any non-religious activity which is supposed to lead to the social development of an individual. The evangelization is than any activity which contains presenting the principles of Christianity to non-Christian individuals.

While theologians agree that in Christian mission the social and evangelistic activities should be viewed as equal (Bosch 2009; Planner 1976), the practice shows that many missionaries or evangelical FBOs tend to emphasize one over the another. These differences come up from the different religious tradition of the specific missionaries or evangelical FBOs.

E. Ferris adds to this issue: "Within the world of Christian organizations, there are sharp differences between those — primarily with Catholic and mainstream Protestant traditions — which separate assistance and evangelization, and those which, as primarily evangelical groups, see their humanitarian work as an integral part of their missionary activities." (Ferris, 2005, p. 317)

The words of E. Ferris support also the findings of my Bachelor´s thesis where I found essential difference between the practice of mission of Catholic missionaries and Protestant missionaries. The Catholic missionaries in my sample held to delivering assistance or spiritually ministering only to local Christian communities, i.e. they were not evangelizing non-Christian individuals. The Protestant missionaries on the other hand focused mainly on evangelization and were involved in social activities in a marginal way. (Knížková, 2016)

It is important to note that in my Bachelor thesis I was not researching FBOs as I defined them in this work. This means the missionaries in my sample where not part of *non-governmental organizations based on faith which are primarily involved in delivering social services or development assistance.*[7] However, speaking generally about Christian mission, this can be helpful in understanding how Christian mission looks in practice, what are the differences between specific Christian traditions and how can we analyze this phenomenon.

3.1. Christian Mission and its relationship with International Development and Cultural Anthropology

I already explained in the chapter two of this thesis why authors research FBOs and what kind of important ethical and policy questions arise from the FBOs´ activity. In the scan of literature presented by authors W. Bielefield and W.S. Cleveland (2013)[8], many of the papers

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[7] See page 28 of this work.
[8] See page 29 of this work.

about FBOs were asking the question whether such organizations should be eligible for governmental funding. While this is an important question, it is more important to realize that evangelical FBOs rarely operate without close connection to some evangelical church or religious congregation. In evangelical churches there is a widespread practice of tithing (donating 10% of member´s income to the church or to church-sponsored charity). This practice makes evangelical churches powerful donors of private relief and development funding. (Stoddard, 2003)

It means that with a good connection to evangelical churches, an evangelical FBO can be completely independent of governmental funding. For this reason, the development institutions like OECD are basically losing any control over their activities. I believe this is the moment when authors should start focusing on evangelical FBOs from the International Development Studies perspective in order to find out how these organizations act and whether their activities are ethically acceptable.

Next to International Development Studies there is one more academic discipline which could be interested in researching evangelical FBOs – Cultural Anthropology.

The relationship between Cultural Anthropology and Christian mission can be traced back to the establishment of Cultural Anthropology as a scientific discipline at the end of 19th century. This is because the knowledge gathered by missionaries served as a source for the first anthropologists who were formulating the first theories of human and culture (Soukup, 2005).

By this time, missionaries had already had a long tradition of meeting with distant non-European cultures and their understanding of those cultures was on a very high level. The reason for this was that in order to evangelize the local people (i.e. explain to them the principles of Christian faith and convert them to Christianity) they needed to understand their culture. Evangelization can also be understood as bringing a new culture and incorporating it into the original one (Ambros, 2002). This process leads to a practice theologians call *contextualization of the gospel*. By this term we understand "adjusting" the Christian message to the specifics of the original local culture, so that the individuals who "speak" the original culture can understand and internalize the new message (Ambros 2002; Černý 2006).

We can see this contextualization for example in the activities of the medieval church during the Christianization of Europe (e.g. adjusting Christian festivals to the original pagan festivals, incorporating some pagan traditions into the church traditions) (Gurevič, 1996) or in the early modern times in the activities of Jesuit missionaries in China or South America (Kubíková, 2001).

The Contextualization of the gospel has been a long-known concept of Christian missionaries. At the same time, the practice is still alive as a practice of current missionaries and evangelical FBOs, and this meeting and interaction of different cultures make these organizations a very interesting subject of research for Cultural Anthropology.

We find this practice in the functioning of ICF Cambodia as well. ICF Cambodia is part of the ICF Movement which was established in Zurich, Switzerland in 1996 with a vision "to build a dynamic, tangible church that is right at the heartbeat of time" (ICF Church, n.d.).

ICF Cambodia is one of the very few churches of this movement operating outside of Europe (another one is ICF Tel Aviv and ICF Brazil).

The vision of the ICF Movement churches is to bring the gospel and Christian values into this world in a way which would be attractive and easy to understand for contemporary local culture. This idea is exactly the principle defined as cultural contextualization of the gospel.

It is important to realize that when any ICF church is committing to the vision of the whole ICF Movement, it is also committing to learn about the local culture and adjust its activities according to the local specifics. This practice of ICF churches is then very interesting from the perspective of Cultural Anthropology, especially in a country like Cambodia, where Christianity is not a predominant or traditional religion.

Mainly for this reason, I decided to incorporate the anthropological perspective in my research and analyze the activities of ICF Cambodia within the frame of two diverse cultures meeting.

In this chapter I analyzed the theoretical concept of Christian mission and evangelization and its role in International Development Assistance. Such analysis is crucial for our understanding of the motivations standing behind the activities of evangelical FBOs.

Empirical part

In this part of the thesis I introduce my research and its findings. In order to understand better, I find it important to repeat the aim of the research and the research questions. Afterwards I will describe the research methods I used. I will also dedicate one section to describing the risks of the research implementation, the ways of mitigating them and ethical questions arising from my research activity.

The main space in this section is given to presentation of the results and findings of the research and final discussion.

4. METHODOLOGY

The aim of my research is to analyze the functioning of ICF Cambodia and describe it from the perspective of International Development Studies and Cultural Anthropology.

The Main Research Questions is: What is the functioning of a Faith-based organization ICF Cambodia in the context of International Development Assistance?

The three Subsidiary Research Questions are:
1) What is the organizational structure of ICF Cambodia? (management, decision making processes, financing, cooperation with other NGOs and the government, cooperation with other churches, etc.)
2) How is ICF Cambodia planning and implementing its social project? (selection of the social services and beneficiaries, financing, project activities, selection of the employees, results and evaluation of the projects)
3) How is ICF Cambodia manifesting its religiosity and missionary focus? (vision, religiosity of the members and employees, evangelistic strategies, activities, contextualization of the gospel, potential ideological conflict between Christianity and the local culture)

4.1. Research Design and Methods of Data Collection

For my research I decided to use case study research design.

Case study design is suitable for researching and understanding one specific case representing a certain social phenomenon. The *case* must be an integrated system clearly defined in time and space, it must be researched in its natural environment and real context and for the purpose of analyzing it all the available methods of data collection should be used (Švaříček & Šeďová, 2007, pp. 97-98). I found case study appropriate for my situation because I was researching one specific evangelical FBO on the basis of my theoretical understanding of FBOs in general. Using a case study allows us to study the *case* in detail and helps us understand how different elements work together and how the whole functions as a complex unit.

This is beneficial in order to understand the processes and principles of the organization´s functioning, such as information flow, delegation of responsibilities, etc. It is not only helpful for the researcher´s understanding but it can also help the members of the organization itself. Such research carries the potential to discover existing dysfunctional processes and help to optimize the management.

Communication with the Organization and Implementation of the Research

I started communicating with ICF Cambodia in January 2017. I explained the aim of the research and my motivation to conduct it to the management of the organization and started preparing for my visit of ICF Cambodia as a volunteer.

My volunteer stay with the organization took place from September 12th to December 11th 2017, lasting three months in total. During this time, I was volunteering for ICF Cambodia in the financial team and at the same time, conducting my field research. I had the approval of the organization´s leadership to conduct my field research concurrently with my volunteer activities.

Below, follows the description of the selected methods of data collection.

Participant Observation

The main research method of data collection I used was participant observation. Participant observation can be defined as a long-term, systematic and reflexive observation of the ongoing activities in the field of the research. The aim of the observation is to discover and represent the processes and social interactions functioning in the researched reality. The observer is representing two roles at the same time. He or she is an active participant of the interactions and also an observer and researcher staying aside and aiming to understand the ongoing interactions. (Švaříček & Šeďová, 2007, p. 143)

Participant observation was my main research activity especially during the first half of my field research. It consisted mainly of my volunteer activities, participation on the organization´s events and everyday happenings, observing the interaction among the organization´s members and having many informal conversations with the organization´s members. These informal conversations were short talks during the working days. Sometimes I intentionally started them and asked specific questions about various topics I needed to understand in more depth. However, most of the time these conversations arose unintentionally.

At the end of each day, I wrote down notes in my field diary. These notes included observed information about the functioning of ICF Cambodia, description of the everyday happenings or events as well as pieces of informal interviews. I included in these notes additional questions that arose, initial possible interpretations of the observed reality and my thoughts and ideas on how the observed information connected to the theory and my preunderstanding of the issue of evangelical FBOs.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The first six weeks in Cambodia I only gathered observed data and pieces of informal interviews. After this initial part, I started to interview certain key informants to ask them in more detail about issues I needed to understand for my work. Outside of the organization´s working hours I scheduled formal interviews with key informants in order to understand various issues in more depth. I managed to interview seven people from different areas of the whole organization.

For these formal interviews I chose representatives of the organization from various areas of its functioning. The choice was made based on the previously gathered observed data

– through continuous analysis of my field notes I identified which members of the organization were potentially able to give me further information relevant for my research.

My aim was to utilize these interviews to consolidate my understanding of the observed reality and the observed processes as well as to ask for official statements and standpoints of the organization towards the topics relevant for my work. For this reason I decided to interview mainly members of the organization at leadership and managerial position, who were in charge of some important area of the organization´s functioning and were most qualified to present to me the processes and functioning of this area.

At the same time I wanted to create a diverse sample of key informants. In order to do so I included in the sample both the members of the FBO part and the Church part of the organization, members of the organization´s leadership, program and project managers and employees, both men and women, etc. Out of the seven key informants, three were Khmer natives (two women and one man) and four were non-Khmer natives (two women and two men).[9]

For interviewing the key informants, I used the method of a semi-structured interview. This method enables the researcher to cover all the important topics during the interview but it also allows the informant to naturally tell his or her story. The method does not ask leading questions, it only directs the informant to the topics which are relevant for the research, so that the researcher can get the needed answers. (Hendl, 1999, p. 111)

All of the informants agreed with our interview being recorded. At the beginning of each interview, I informed the key informants about the purpose of my research and the interview itself, about the ways their answer will be processed and analyzed and about the fact that all of their statements will be anonymized.

After this informed consent I started each of the interviews with a very broad question, asking the informant for self-introduction and a story of his or her role in the organization. Following this narrative part, I directed the interview into various areas which I had prepared in the interview guide, asking more specific questions.

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[9] The final list of the interviewed key informants is presented in a table on page 78.

Another research method used was a thorough analysis of the organization´s documents and administration; specifically the founding documents, vision and mission statements, codes of conduct, program and project documents, organization´s policies and regulations, etc.[10]

As I mentioned earlier, I was volunteering for the organization in the financial area, cooperating strongly with a local team of accountants. My volunteer task was to create a simple method of financial coordination which could be used by the organization in future. Part of my work was a thorough analysis of the organization´s accounting throughout the previous two years. As a result of this role, I gained a very detailed understanding of the organization´s financial management, cashflow and ways of budget spending which was very helpful.

Data Analysis and Members´ Checking

After my return from Cambodia I analyzed all the collected data by the method of open coding in Atlas.ti software. Through this analysis I created various categories which I organized into a system most suitable for describing the functioning of ICF Cambodia and actually answering my research questions.

Bellow, follows the list of the codes organized into four created categories:

1) **Organization´s inner practical functioning:** Volunteers, Evaluation of the employees, Financing, Legal registration of the organization, Selection of employees, Decision making processes, Cooperation with other churches, Cooperation with other NGOs or the government, Inner practical functioning, Expats – stories, Clash of cultures

2) **Social projects:** CA: activities, CA: vision and planning, General activities, Projects´ impact, Education program: financing, Education program: vision, Education program: selection, Education program: activities, Evaluation of the employees, Evangelization in the social projects, Evangelization vs. Social act, Khmer members – stories, KSP: Activities, KSP: financing, KSP: need assessment, KSP: selection, KSP: vision and planning, Citing legal documents, Beneficiaries participating on the religious activities, Job description, Continuous evaluation of progress, Reflection of the local culture,

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[10] Throughout the chapter *Research results* of this thesis, I cite these documents using the short citation inserted in the text. However, because all of these documents where either created in 2017 or they are non-dated, many of them have the same short citation. For the purpose of easier orientation in the researched sources I also present the name of the source in the short citation.

Selection of employees, Training of employees, Contacts creation, Education and experience of employees, Ensuring sustainability

3) **Christian mission and the Church:** Adults: activities, General activities, Evangelization in the social projects, Evangelization vs. Social act, Evangelistic strategies, Kids Church: activities, Kids Church: vision, Khmer members – stories, Conflict between Christianity and local culture, Contextualization of the gospel, Consulting Khmer leaders, Criticism, Mission teams, Oneighty: activities, Oneighty: vision, Beneficiaries participating on the religious activities, Beginnings of ICF Cambodia, Job description, Adjusting to local standarts, Reflection of the local culture, Religiosity of the members, Selection of employees, Training of employees, Contacts creation

4) **Vision of ICF Cambodia:** Dignity of the families, Expats – tasks, Khmer helping Khmer, Khmer leaders, Vision of ICF Cambodia, Ensuring sustainability

At the beginning of the coding process I created a list of codes deducted from the theory of FBOs and Christian mission. I expected these codes to be found in the gathered field data. These codes were for example Financing, Projects´ implementation, Projects´ impact, Selection of the employees, Volunteers, Cooperation with other churches, Beneficiaries participating on the religious activities, Evangelistic strategies, Conflict between Christianity and local culture, Contextualization of the gospel, etc. These codes form the majority of the final set of codes created and listed above.

During the coding process I was adding new inductively created codes to the list. These were for example Dignity of the families, Ensuring sustainability, Khmer helping Khmer, Legal registration of the organization, Expats – stories, etc.

At the end of the coding process I had to revise some of the codes. For example the originally created code Projects´ implementation had to be split into more specific codes describing the individual social projects and their functioning (e.g. Education program: financing, Education program: vision, Education program: selection, Education program: activities).

Following the coding process, I briefly summarized all the findings of my research and opened a discussion of certain chosen topics in a text output. I sent this text output to all the key informants of my research as well as to one more member of the organization´s leadership and provided them with the opportunity to react to my interpretations. The output was sent to eight

representatives of the organization and four of them reacted to it. Their reactions will be discussed in the discussion part of this thesis.

4.2. Ethical Aspects and Risks

An important fact which needs to be mentioned in order to ensure the validity of my research is my personal engagement in a Christian church. This is an important advantage which enabled me to step into the field of the researched FBO and communicate with its leadership. At the same time it can be very problematic because it can affect the quality of my research in the area of interpreting the religious expressions and motivations of the FBO. I believe it is important to be aware of any kind of bias the researcher could have and reflect on it. For these reasons I decided to avoid normative judgments of the organization´s functioning. My aim is to describe ICF Cambodia in detail, analyze its functioning and motivations from various perspectives and open the discussion about this type of organizations.

I also want my thesis to serve ICF Cambodia itself as an outsider´s reflection of their functioning. I believe such reflection has the potential to help them evaluate their own functioning from a new perspective.

I already mentioned that I was in communication with the organization´s leadership before I started my research. In January 2017, I managed to meet with one of the leaders and discuss my interest to volunteer for the organization and at the same time conduct my research. I explained my motivations to do it, purpose of the research and I briefly introduced the methods I would use. The organization agreed with my proposal, the only worry was that my research activity would be time consuming for other members of the organization. I assured the leader that the main research method used would be participant observation which is a time-consuming method primarily for the researcher. The informants would be burdened by the method only marginally.

The organization allowed me to use its real name in all the research outputs, we only agreed on anonymizing names of their staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.

One of the ethical dilemmas I faced was how open to be with the organization´s staff and volunteers about my research activity. I primarily asked the organization´s leadership to introduce me only as another volunteer. I did this because I wanted to minimize the negative effect of my research activity. I wanted other people in the organization to consider me a

volunteer, not a researcher, in order to minimize the distortion of what they tell me and how they approach me.

At the same time it would have been unethical to keep my research activity completely under cover. After a few weeks, I started being very open about my research with everybody I talked to in the organization. I prepared a few very simple sentences briefly explaining what I do and why and what will be the output of the work. I have never felt that this new information would somehow discredit my agency or damage the trust which had been already established between me and other members of the organization.

When communicating with the key informants, I explained in even more detail the principles of my research, methods used, etc. I also promised to provide the key informants with the first output and give them the opportunity to react to it before the actual thesis is finalized. This was accomplished shortly after I left Cambodia.

The last aspect I would like to cover is distribution of the research results to the organization. This has already been partially realized through the initial output I created directly after my return from Cambodia. The organization will also be provided with access to the final thesis which is originally written in English mainly for the purpose of easier result dissemination.

5. RESEARCH RESULTS

In this chapter I will present the results of my research. In sections 5.1., 5.2. and 5.3. I describe the researched reality without further analyzing or discussing it. In section 5.4. (Discussion) I utilize a more analytical approach. I do so in order to build the discussion on the previously gained understanding of the researched reality as it is.

At this point there is a need to stress that throughout this chapter I am describing the reality of ICF Cambodia´s functioning as it was during my field research in 2017. ICF Cambodia is a fast growing and rapidly changing young organization, and some features described in this thesis are currently no longer valid. After finalizing my research, I was informed about some major changes in the organization´s policies which are relevant for my work. I will describe these changes in the section 5.5. of this thesis.

5.1. About ICF Cambodia in general

As it was already stated in the introduction of this thesis, ICF Cambodia functions both as a church and as an FBO providing development and social services. In this section I will further describe the relationship and practical functioning of the church part and the FBO part.

Structure

ICF Cambodia operates as two separate organizations: ICF Cambodia Church[11] (registered as a religious Christian organization holding religious services and events) and ICF Cambodia Campus[12] (registered as an international FBO implementing social and development projects). These two organizations have separate registration documentation, accounting and employees, however, in reality they work as one, with the same leadership, management, residency and vision. The structure of the organization is shown on the following organigram:

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        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │     ICF CAMBODIA        │
        │     MANAGEMENT          │
        └─────────────────────────┘
           /                   \
┌──────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────┐
│  ICF CAMBODIA    │    │  ICF CAMBODIA    │
│  CHURCH          │    │  CAMPUS          │
│  (CHURCH)        │    │  (FBO)           │
└──────────────────┘    └──────────────────┘
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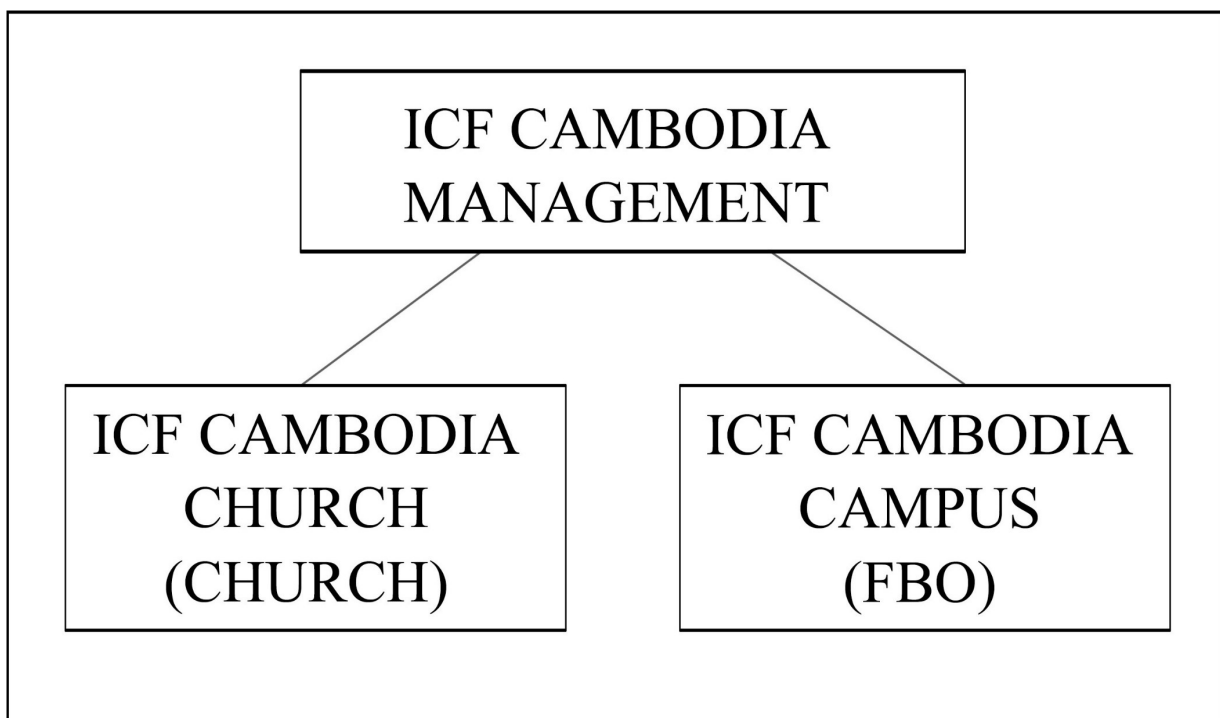
Figure 1: Structure of ICF Cambodia (made by the author)

This organigram implies that people who are officially employed in the management department work both for the Church and the FBO. These are mainly employees in the HR

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[11] Will be called the Church only in this paper
[12] Will be called the FBO only in this paper

department, financial department, management and development of the facilities, etc. (Knížková, 2017)

ICF Cambodia is also accepting volunteers[13] from all around the world. These volunteers are coming for periods of time ranging from a few weeks up to a couple of years and they work in many different areas corresponding with their skills and experience (Knížková, 2017). As a result of this it is also very often quite impossible to distinguish whether the volunteer is working for the Church or for the FBO (Knížková, 2017).

The merge of these two "arms" of ICF Cambodia is evident not only on the personal level but also in the activities and projects. There are a couple of activities going on which can be considered both as a Church activity and as an FBO activity. One of the best examples of this is the Kids Church activity (church service for children taking place every Sunday morning) which I will have a deeper look at later. (Knížková, 2017)

Finances

The two main sources of ICF Cambodia finances are donations from partner churches all over the world and individual donors. None of its project or activities is funded from governmental funds or development agencies. (Knížková, 2017; ICF Cambodia, Bookkeeping, 2017)

The Church is mostly funded by general donations from its partner churches. The Church uses them for financing its Church activities and also to sponsor some of the FBO´s activities. This funding process never happens in the opposite direction. Funds donated directly to the FBO are never used for financing the Church activities. (Knížková, 2017; ICF Cambodia, Bookkeeping, 2017)

The FBO can be funded either from the Church general donations or from donations from other partner churches or organizations. However, the main resources are provided by individual donors. Individual donors support either short-term projects (e.g. building a soccer field) or are part of long-term social projects like Kids Sponsorship program and Education program which will be described in the following section. (Knížková, 2017; ICF Cambodia, Bookkeeping, 2017)

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[13] I will discuss the process of accepting volunteers as well as selection of employees in the chapter 5.4.

At this point it would be legitimate to ask whether ICF Cambodia fulfills the criteria of an FBO as was defined in the conceptual framework of this thesis. In chapter two of this thesis it was stated that FBOs are not understood as churches or religious congregations. They are defined as non-governmental organizations based on faith which are primarily involved in delivering social services or development assistance.[14]

The FBO part of ICF Cambodia surely meets these criteria. However, it operates in such a close connection to the Church part, that this connection itself (together with all the aspects in which the activity and functioning of the two parts overlap) can be understood as the FBO´s expression of religion. For this reason, I cannot simply focus on the FBO part and analyze only its functioning. Without analyzing the Church part and describing its activities, our understanding of the *case* as a whole would be incomplete.

5.2. Development projects of ICF Cambodia – the FBO

In this part I describe all the social and development projects of the FBO. The FBO has currently the following three long-term social projects: *Kids Sponsorship program*, *Education program* and *Campus Activities*. For each project I will describe the vision of the project, the planning phase + selection of the beneficiaries (if applicable), ways of financing, project activities and other important topics.

Kids Sponsorship Program

Kids Sponsorship program (KSP) is the biggest long-term project of the FBO. It was started in 2015 by two volunteers who came to ICF Cambodia and were asked by the leadership of the organization to develop this kind of project. One of these volunteers stayed in ICF Cambodia even after the planning phase and is now the head manager of this program.

The aim of the program is to individually support children and their families living in villages around Siem Reap. The support is designed to be holistic, covering the following four main areas: education, health care, community life and spiritual development. The aim of the KSP is not to take care or every need of the family but to be their partners and help them find solution to their problems.

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[14] See page 28 of this paper.

"Mission is not to solve the problems of the clients but to find a solution together with them and encourage them to enforce the change." (ICF Cambodia, Kids Sponsorhip Program Factsheet, version 2, 2017)

The decision to start this project was made by the leadership of ICF Cambodia as a response to local visible needs. After starting the Church activities (especially the Kids Church[15]), the leaders of ICF Cambodia started to get more in touch with the local people and their life situation.

"...and through the Kids Church, they saw the needs of the kids. Like they were neglected, they had wounds and so on, and I think out of this they got a vision of having a Kids Sponsorship, to take care of these kids, who are coming to Kids Church." (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

The project did not start as a response to any kind of governmental program or call for proposals coming from funds or development agencies.

The planning phase done by the two volunteers mainly consisted of research among other NGOs which were implementing similar projects. After establishing how the project should look like, ICF Cambodia hired first caseworkers who were trained and sent out into the villages to make contacts with the officials and village chiefs and to also start assessing the needs of the families.

The KSP is currently managed by a program manager under whom are two supervisors. The supervisors oversee a group of thirteen caseworkers and two trainees. Each caseworker cares for approximately 20 children. Some of these children are siblings meaning that the final amount of registered families per caseworker is lower. (Knížková, 2017)

At the beginning of the project, the selection of the beneficiaries was done as an outreach to the villages. During this outreach, the caseworkers assessed the needs of the families and together with the program manager decided whether the family should be registered in the program or not. However, this process has changed and currently the selection works much more in connection to the Church services for children and youths. Kids in the villages are primarily invited to join the Church services. Once they start coming regularly, one of the caseworkers visits their family and introduces ICF Cambodia as a church to the parents. During

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[15] Regular church service for children, will be described in the following section 5.3.

this visit the caseworker observes the family situation. If they see the family could be a candidate for the Kids Sponsorship program they come for another visit. On this visit the caseworker introduces the program and if the family is interested in it, the caseworker does a proper need assessment. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

This need assessment consists of a detailed form which is filled out together with the family. It contains information about the family´s material situation (income, job, state of their house, possessions), education of the kids, health status, signs of alcohol or drug use in the family, signs of domestic violence or abuse (if visible) but also information about the religious affiliation or willingness to cooperate with a Christian church and send their kids to the church. (ICF Cambodia, Assessment from for new families - version 2, 2017)

Currently the family can be registered into the program no matter what their religion is but the willingness of the family to be open and collaborate with ICF Cambodia and send their kids to the Church services are very important in the decision whether to register them or not (Key informant no. 2, 2017).

After this need assessment, the final decision is made by the project manager. A partnership agreement between ICF Cambodia and the registered family is then signed. In this agreement ICF Cambodia commits to seek a sponsor for the family and after that to provide the support. The family commits to work with their caseworker, send their kids to school, be open about their situation and ensure their children go to the Church service for kids or teens (ICF Cambodia, Partnership agreement, n.d.). As the Church services are considered one of the project activities and spiritual development one of the goals of the program, the families which are not willing to send their kids to the Church services cannot be registered into the program (Key informant no. 2, 2017).

The whole program is financed by individual donors who primarily come from European countries. These donors "adopt" a child and commit themselves to send monthly finances to ICF Cambodia until the child graduates from school and get employed (ICF Cambodia, FAQs ICF Kids Sponsorship, n.d.). The program does not function as a package sponsorship in which all the money from one donor would be monthly directed to one specific child. The monthly individual donations are transferred to a fund from which the whole program implementation is financed, including salaries of the caseworkers, management costs and individual needs of the families (Key informant no. 2, 2017; ICF Cambodia, Bookkeeping, 2017).

The donors can decide whether they want to pay a Standard sponsorship or Standard plus. In case they choose the latter option, the remaining part of their donation goes to a special emergency fund which is used for emergent costly cases (e.g. the house of a family is flooded, or a child needs special medical care or a transfer to hospital in another city, etc.). (ICF Cambodia, FAQs ICF Kids Sponsorship, n.d.; ICF Cambodia, Bookkeeping, 2017)

Each family which is registered in the program has its own caseworker who visits the family usually once a week or once in two weeks (depending on the individual needs of the family). After registering the family, a three months plan is developed by its caseworker in collaboration with the family itself and the caseworker´s supervisor. In this plan the KSP focuses on a specific problem the family is facing. During these three months they are together trying to find a way how to tackle the problem. If needed ICF Cambodia asks other NGOs or experts working in Cambodia to help them tackle the problem. This is especially needed when facing a problem like domestic violence or sexual abuse. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

After the three months, the progress of the family in the specific area targeted by the plan is evaluated. The caseworker with his or her supervisor and the family itself decide what should be the next step for the family. For this evaluation, the KSP does not use any internal standardized method and it is not based on any updated need assessment or research in the family. The evaluation is based solely on the perception of the caseworker, supervisor and the family. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

The activities of the KSP range in many different areas. The program provides financial support in areas of education (tuition, providing school uniforms and material), health care (visits at the doctor, vaccination, deworming), training for kids and parents about hygiene, nutrition, health prevention, STDs, helping parents to manage their finances or to start their own business, etc. Some of the activities are connected to the support of community life, for example so called Friday Kids Camp - free time community activities in the villages (games, trainings, community cleaning, etc.). (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

Also, as it was stated above, one of the pillars of the KSP is spiritual development. For this reason the Church services for kids and teens are considered to be one of the project activities. During their visits in the families, caseworkers also talk about Christian faith, share the gospel with the parents and pray with them, if the parents agree. Details about such evangelistic activities and some of their implications will be discussed later.

The KSP has never been externally evaluated (Key informant no. 2, 2017). As it was stated earlier, the KSP team also does not use any internal standardized method of evaluating the progress of the families. While the needs of the families are thoroughly assessed through the initial Assessment Form, this assessment is never done again in order to compare the situation of the family in time. The KSP as a whole also does not have a logical framework and does not use any set of quantifiable indicators which could be used for evaluating the impact of the program. For these reasons the organization is not currently able to measure the progress of the beneficiaries and the results of the program. (Key informant no. 2, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

Education Program

The *Education program (EP)* is a long-term project which developed from the KSP. The purpose of the program is to support talented and exceptional students and enable them to study at prestigious private schools in Cambodia. The vision behind the program is to invest in young ambitious people and help them to achieve their goals with the belief that in the future they will be able to "bring back the investment" and help the society in another way (Key informant no. 1, 2017).

The EP as well as the KSP did not start as a response to any kind of governmental program or call for proposals coming from institutional funds or development agencies.

The students selected for the EP are mostly recruited from the KSP. A potentially talented child in the KSP can be suggested for the EP by his or her caseworker or other members of ICF Cambodia who know the child personally. As sponsored children in the KSP are coming to the Church services for children or youth, the members of ICF Cambodia can easily notice individuals who are active among other children; they are involved in the activities, they want to learn more, they want to help with something, etc. After a kid is suggested for the program, the leaders of the EP discuss whether to accept them or not. They interview the child, ask about his or her life goals, dreams and motivations. The selected children finally have to pass an admission exam at their future private school. (Key informant no. 1, 2017)

The children and youths supported through the EP are excluded from the original KSP. The reason for this is that the support of these students is very similar, just with a stronger emphasis on the education part. (Key informant no. 2, 2017).

The program is also financed from a special education fund; the resources are donated by individuals. These donors do not support this program on a regular basis (with a commitment

to support an individual child as in the KSP), but through an ongoing fundraising to keep this program functioning. (Key informant no. 1, 2017; ICF Cambodia, Bookkeeping, 2017)

The students in the EP have two obligations towards ICF Cambodia. The first is to have regular meetings with the program manager who is coaching them individually, discussing their progress with them, etc. The program manager is also in direct contact with their schools and knows whether the students are coming to classes and performing well. In case the student has problems at school, the program manager tries to find a solution for them (e.g. extra classes, tutoring, etc.). (Key informant no. 1, 2017)

The second obligation of the students is to volunteer for ICF Cambodia in some area of their activities. These volunteer activities could be support in the administration, translation work, participation in preparing the program of the Church services, etc. (Key informant no. 1, 2017)

Under the EP functions a smaller *Rescue Project*. This project is for youths in the KSP whose parents want them to drop out of school and start employment to raise money for the family. These teenagers are motivated to continue in their studies. However, their parents do not realize the importance of education, and it is not possible to persuade them to let their children finish at least primary education. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

In such cases, the Rescue Project is helping to provide these teens with vocational training or small part time jobs, which would be compatible with their studies. The jobs for the teens are provided either through different NGOs in Siem Reap focusing on vocational training or right in the facilities of ICF Cambodia (e.g. kitchen, maintenance, housekeeping, etc.). (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

"Normally school in Cambodia is only for half a day and the goal for them is to keep them in school as long as possible, so they go to the public school for half a day and then they work for half a day, so they can earn some working experience but they also get the small salary, which keeps the family quiet and satisfied." (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

The long-term goal of the Rescue Project is to help the families become financially stable, so that these students can later focus fully on their studies (Key informant no. 2, 2017).

ICF Cambodia owns a facility not far away from the city center called Campus. Campus functions as a community center, a place where people from the city and nearby villages can meet and spend their free time. This Campus provides a place for many of the organization´s projects and activities. The weekend Church services for children, teens and adults take place here as well as other evangelistic events which will be discussed later. During the week days Campus serves for another social project called *Campus Activities (CA)*.

The vision of the CA is to operate an entertaining, low threshold community center which would offer safe free time activities for children and teens and thus prevent them from alcoholism, drug use, sex trafficking or other negative social phenomena.

The decision to start this project was made based on commonly observed problems in the families from the Kids Sponsorship program.

"This actually was invented to bring kids away from drugs and from the street and give them a good thing to do in their free time. And this original thought actually sticked to us that somehow there is nothing to do for young kids and adults and especially between I think age of 14 to 20. Lot of parents are drinking and gambling in the villages, we know that from our Sponsorship and we see now also especially through the Sponsorship that the kids are doing the same, they follow their parents, especially teens in the villages they are already gambling and this. So the whole activity like the soccer training we do and the cycling and I hope many more to come are to give them something to look forward to, to spend their free time for, that they don´t just slip into prostitution and gambling too." (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

The Campus is equipped with a soccer field, basketball court, playground, pool with climbing ropes and a place for jogging. The place is open at all times but there are specific times at which organized trainings or activities with trainers and supervisors are taking place. These activities are soccer trainings (for different teams and age categories), cycling, basketball trainings, water activities, English classes, movie nights, etc. In some of the activities, for example basketball training for physically disabled people, ICF Cambodia collaborates with other NGOs. (Knížková, 2017)

All of these activities are free of charge and anybody can join them. The project is partially financed from the Kids Sponsorship fund. The rest of the expenses are covered from general donations directed to the Church. (ICF Cambodia, Bookkeeping, 2017)

5.3. Religiosity of ICF Cambodia – the Church

While I started my description of the ICF Cambodia functioning by focusing on the FBO and its social projects, it is necessary to dedicate some space to the activities of the Church as well. As I have already explained, the FBO part operates in such a close connection to the Church part, that this connection itself (together with all the aspects in which the activities and functioning of the two parts overlap) can be understood as the FBO´s expression of religion. For this reason our understanding of the *case* as a whole would be incomplete without analyzing the Church part.

Celebrations

The main activities of the Church are so called *celebrations*. Celebrations are Church services which take place regularly every weekend on the facility of the organization´s community center (the Campus).

On Saturday night a celebration called *Oneighty* takes place. It is a service for teenagers from 13 – 18 years of age. Around 400 teenagers attend this service each Saturday (ICF Cambodia, ICF Attendance overview, n.d.). They are picked up in their villages and brought to the Campus on small trucks. After their arrival, there is a free time for eating dinner (free of charge), playing sports, games, etc. This is followed by the actual service which consists of little games and competitions, worship time (singing religious songs) and a preaching. The whole program is in Khmer language (sometimes the preaching is translated from English to Khmer). The style of the service is very lively, fast, intense, loud and funny, so that the attendees do not lose their focus and do not get bored. After the service the trucks drive all the teenagers home again. (Knížková, 2017)

The vision of the Oneighty celebrations is to share the gospel with teenagers and teach them about Christian faith with the focus on their personal conversion (Knížková, 2017). This is evident from the fact that baptisms for teenagers are organized and the preaching often addresses differences between Christianity and Buddhism and the necessity of choosing between one or the other. The teenagers who decide to convert to Christianity and get baptized are supported and strengthened by their leaders to stand for their decisions even when they come across resistance in their families (Key informant no. 5, 2017; Knížková, 2017). I will discuss this topic in more depth later.

Every Sunday morning a celebration called *Kids Church* takes place. It is a Church service for children from 0 – 12 years of age. The structure of the service is very similar to Oneighty celebration. Approximately 400 kids (ICF Cambodia, ICF Attendance overview, n.d.) are brought by trucks from their homes (the smallest ones coming with their older siblings or with their parents). Their arrival is followed by a small breakfast (free of charge) and a one hour long playtime. During this playtime there is a large variety of toys and activities for the children (e.g. jumping ropes, plastic horses, swings, colouring, face painting, etc.). (Knížková, 2017)

The program of the actual service consists of singing short and simple Christian songs, playing a couple of organized competitions and telling Bible stories usually with a help of creative and interactive dramas or videos. After the program, the kids separate into small groups (around ten kids in each group). They sit together with one leader, eat a free lunch together and talk more deeply about the Bible story which has been told. The kids are led to share their thoughts and opinions about the program and also talk about themselves (their struggles, fears, etc.). At the end of the small group time, the kids are led to pray for each other. The whole program of the Kids Church is in Khmer language. (Knížková, 2017)

The vision of the Kids Church is also to share the gospel with children and teach them about Christian faith, but the focus on their personal conversion is not so strong here. ICF Cambodia is not leading small children to conversion and is not addressing differences between Christianity and Buddhism during the Bible teachings. The reason for this is that ICF Cambodia wants to prevent conflicts and tensions in the families of the youngest kids. ICF Cambodia also does not baptize children coming to the Kids Church. (Key informant no. 5, 2017)

Besides the evangelistic vision of Oneighty and Kids Church celebrations, there is another important topic which needs to be mentioned: the education and socialization purpose of these Church activities. During the free playtime (both on Saturday night and Sunday morning) there are small trainings and workshops taking place. The leaders usually take aside one group of teens/children (according to what village they come from) and give them teachings about body hygiene, dental hygiene, sexuality and STDs, etc. Also, all the programming of the celebrations is prepared to support and teach the attendees soft skills, team work, creativity, sharing opinions, etc. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

This is one of the aspects in which the activities of the Church and the FBO overlap. For this reason the Oneighty and Kids Church can be understood both as a Church activity and an FBO activity.

Finally on Sunday night an *Adult* celebration takes place. It is a Church service for adults and is usually attended by approximately 150 people (ICF Cambodia, ICF Attendance overview, n.d.). The program consists of worship time, preaching and a community dinner for the price of 1 USD. The whole program of the Adult celebration is in English and Khmer languages. (Knížková, 2017)

The vision of these services is once again evangelization and discipleship, attendees are led to their personal conversion and baptisms are taking place. People are invited to these celebrations on the basis of personal contact. ICF Cambodia does not use flyers, advertisements or phone calls in order to invite them to church. (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

Evangelistic events

Besides the Church celebrations, ICF Cambodia Church holds a couple of events each year which are prepared for people who normally do not attend the services. Members of the Church are encouraged to invite their non-Christian friends. Inviting also takes place through the KSP caseworkers in the villages, and in a minor way through the distribution of flyers. (Key informant no. 3, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

The vision for these events is mainly to bring more people into the Church, start building relationships with them, introduce what ICF Cambodia is doing and why and preach to them a very simple Gospel message. This all done with the hope that these people will one day start going to the Church regularly and convert to Christianity. (Key informant no. 3, 2017)

During these events there is also a big emphasis on a community time and "having fun". People eat together, play games, listen to live music, etc. Not all of these events are for free, but they are usually for a symbolic entrance fee which covers the costs of the refreshment. (Key informant no. 3, 2017)

Small Groups and Discovery Courses

For people who want to know more about Christianity or who are regular attendees of the Church celebrations and want to understand more about Christian theology, the Church offers so called *Small Groups* or *Discovery Courses* (Knížková, 2017).

Small Groups are meetings of a few people (usually no more than 10 persons) with the purpose of building relationships, sharing, praying for each other and learning more about

Christianity. The program of each individual Small Group is not directed by the leadership of ICF Cambodia and depends on the leader of the Small Group and its members. (Key informant no. 3, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

Discovery Courses are teachings classes which take place regularly on the Campus facility. They are taught in Khmer language by various leaders of the Church. There is teaching followed by discussion. The teachers very often address cultural "conflicts" between Christianity and Buddhism (will be discussed later). (Key informant no. 3, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

5.4. Discussion

The previous three sections were only a description of the activities of the FBO and the Church. In this section I will undertake a more analytical approach. I discuss the areas of the organization´s functioning in which the activities of the FBO and the Church overlap and the implications which arise from such overlapping. I also connect my analysis to the conceptual framework presented in the first part of my thesis.

Selection of employees and volunteers

Knowing everything which has been already written in this work about ICF Cambodia, it is very natural to ask what kind of people actually form the organization and how they are selected. It is important to ask what are the organization´s criteria to select its employees and volunteers, and whether an evangelistic FBO requires its members to be Christians.

ICF Cambodia (both the FBO and the Church) currently does not have a strict policy which would specify that all employees have to be Christians. All the leaders of ICF Cambodia are Christians and the organization wants the managers and team leaders to be Christians. However, for the other positions, people are not recruited based on their faith and currently there is a couple of non-Christians working for the organization. (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

When hiring new people, the HR managers are looking for people who are open to what ICF Cambodia is doing and are willing to work among Christians. Being Christian is considered to be an advantage but not a condition. (Knížková, 2017)

ICF Cambodia is not employing people who would be active Buddhists (in means of teaching, spreading Buddhist thoughts, etc.) because such people would have a conflict of

interests. ICF Cambodia is also currently hiring only Cambodian citizens. All the expats in the organization work as volunteers, including all of the long-term expats at the managerial positions. (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

There is nowhere stated in the policies of ICF Cambodia that an employee has to be Christian or has to participate on the religious activities of the organization. At the same time most of the employees are Christians and do participate voluntarily (Knížková, 2017). This, I believe, is very natural as primarily Christians apply for positions in an evangelistic FBO.

This principle determines as well the way volunteers are accepted to ICF Cambodia. The volunteers do not have to be Christians to be accepted, but most of them are because non-Christians rarely apply for being a volunteer (Key informant no. 6, 2017).

Each person applying for being a volunteer has to fill a volunteer application which has eight pages and needs to be submitted together with a reference from an applicant´s leader. In this application we find questions about the applicant´s faith life but they form a small part of the information provided. The majority of the questions are about mental and physical health of the applicant, family situation and relationships, experience with leadership, experience from working with people from different cultures, education and professional experience. (ICF Cambodia, Volunteer application, n.d.)

ICF Cambodia does not accept everybody who applies but selects professionals who carry the potential to leave a significant footprint in its functioning. The organization also prefers volunteers who are able and willing to stay and work with the organization for a longer period of time, preferably three months and more. The faith of the volunteer is never crucial in the selection process. (Key informant no. 6, 2017; Key informant no. 5, 2017)

Evangelization in the social projects

Evangelization is a part of every social project of ICF Cambodia. This fact is most visible in the Kids Sponsorship program, where evangelization is explicitly one of the project activities.

In the conceptual framework of this thesis it was explained that the Christian mission itself should always consist of two aspects: evangelization and social act.[16] Most of the theologians (no matter what their denomination is) agree on this point and say that missionaries should not separate the spiritual sphere of human life from the material sphere.[17]

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[16] See pages 34 - 35 of this paper.
[17] Ibid.

The model of Christian mission introduced by ICF Cambodia is very interesting in the fact that when analyzing its activities, it is absolutely impossible to fully distinguish evangelization from the social act. These two aspects of Christian mission are merged together, one is considered to be a way to another and the other way around. A social project can be considered an evangelization strategy the same as a spiritual activity (church service, spiritual consultation, praying for somebody) can be considered a social act which is helping the overall development of the person. In this situation, it does not make sense to ask which aspect of the mission is more important, because one cannot exist without the other.

"I would even say if you are really doing it right than you are doing the work in a way that people will see God. In what you do. So helping in a way or doing real hands-on work in a way that people see the love you have for God is the best way to be on mission." (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

From the theologian point of view, ICF Cambodia embodies a very coherent holistic mission. However, from International Development Studies perspective, or from the ethical perspective of International Social Work, as was discussed earlier, this can be very problematic. In order to understand this challenge we need to first look at the actual motivation of the FBO and to find out whether the FBO provides the services as an expression of its faith or as means of attracting individuals for converting them to Christian faith.[18]

The founders of ICF Cambodia came from Switzerland with a clear vision to start a Christian church which would be focused on evangelism and discipleship and which would also have a social outreach. Moreover, the social work was originally considered one of the strategies how to connect with local people and bring them to church.

"And the church we thought we would start actually after we started our social projects because through the social projects we gain trust and then we can share the gospel. It happened the other way around, we started making disciples more easy than we expected and those people were actually the ones that carried the social work from the beginning. So the church first started and then the NGO part." (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

From this statement we can understand that evangelization is one of the motivations of the organization. The social projects are not implemented only for the reason of providing help to those in need but also as means of connecting with people in order to share the gospel with

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[18] See page 31 of this paper.

them. In this manner, the social projects of the FBO can be viewed also as an evangelistic strategy of the Church.

This understanding is further developed by the following statement of the FBO about the principles of the KSP: "Caseworker´s primary mission is to share the gospel and make disciples as well as to help people in need and to address social problems." (ICF Cambodia, Kids Sponsorhip Program Factsheet, version 2, 2017)

These statements only support the previously conceived classification of the FBO as an evangelical FBO.

How could we assess this organization´s practice from the perspective of the ethics of International Social Work? The ethics of International Social Work were discussed in detail in chapter two of this thesis. I introduced two examples of the code of ethics of social workers and explained the principles and core values of ethical social work.[19]

On the basis of this understanding we can now ask whether the connection of social work and evangelization could be considered ethical.

D. Sherwood, in his essay called *Ethical integration of faith and social work in practice: Evangelism* (2012), states that the actions of a Christian evangelical social worker are defined by the following core values: Biblical Great Commission[20], his or her personal life calling and role (i.e. to be a social worker in this case), client´s right to self-determination and client´s right to informed consent and integrity of the social worker (i.e. avoiding conflict of interests or abusing the social worker´s power over the client in order to achieve another social worker´s goals) (Sherwood, 2012, pp. 305-307).

These core values can easily come into conflict with one other. If the client is not participating in the religious activities of the FBO voluntarily, his right to self-determination has been violated. In the same manner if the social worker is motivated not only by the urge to help those in need but also by the vision of spreading the gospel, the principle of integrity is violated.

Integration of evangelization into the social work is possible but needs to be done ethically while not violating any of the core values and principles of the Code of Ethics (Sherwood, 2012).

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[19] See pages 32 – 33 of this paper.
[20] See page 34 of this paper.

ICF Cambodia currently does not have its own code of ethics, nor is it adopting another organization´s code of ethics. The only attention given to ethics is written in their mission statement which is in accordance with the mission statement of the whole ICF Movement. In this statement the organization is very clear about its evangelistic focus.

However, ICF Cambodia is still involved in providing development and social work and the issue of a power imbalanced Aid-giver – Client relationship is existent here. For this reason, the principles of the ISW Code of Ethics should be valid for ICF Cambodia as well as for any other organization providing social services.

From the behavior of ICF Cambodia it can be understood that the organization has been aware of this issue and is facing an internal ethical dilemma. This dilemma was one of the reasons the organization originally started implementing all of its social projects as a completely secular NGO with no objective connected to spiritual development. This NGO was called *Elevate,* and its main project was KSP. However, the spiritual development of the children and the families was not one of the pillars of the project. Also, the Church services for children and youths were not considered to be a KSP activity, and the children were not required to attend them. The beneficiaries were not selected through the Church services attendance but through independent outreaches and need assessments in the villages. (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

The main reason for implementing the social projects this way was that ICF Cambodia wanted to be able to attract donors who normally would not like to support a Christian organization. However, they soon realized the system was not working very well as the Church and Elevate NGO still consisted of the same people with the same vision. For this reason, they decided to change the system.

"So, the reason actually was that we worked on Sunday and we had the ICF t-shirts on and on Monday we took the Elevate t-shirt and went to the village and it´s just not… that´s the first thing that popped to my head when I came here. We had different identities but it´s the same people. And this is not, just from a branding perspective, it´s not wise, I mean the original thought was to build an NGO that is only charitable because we didn´t want to lose sponsors who don´t want to pay a Christian NGO, Christian organization. And then we had a huge process... But broader perspective, you know when looking back, it was a very good decision, … it was absolutely more honest, because when people came here, not Christians, seeing what we do on Sunday, it just doesn´t match." (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

By ending Elevate NGO and merging all ICF Cambodia´s activities together (while creating a new FBO called ICF Cambodia Campus with an evangelism oriented vision), the

organization adopted a more honest attitude towards its donors. At the same time ICF Cambodia changed some of the rules and direction of the KSP, which means that spiritual development became one of the objectives.

The current reality is that children registered in the KSP have to first be regular attendees of the Church services for children or youths in order to be eligible for the Kids Sponsorship. They do not have to convert to Christianity, but they do have to attend the services. Also, the parents of the sponsored children commit to ensure their children go to the Church services. (Key informant no. 2 2017; Key informant no. 1, 2017; Key informant no. 6, 2017; Knížková, 2017; ICF Cambodia, Partnership agreement, n.d.) The reason for this is mainly to prevent the parents hindering their kids from coming to the Church. The final decision then can be made by the children and youths.

"We wouldn´t say it´s required, it is yes, of course, we say in the agreement that we want, that we don´t want the parents to hinder them to come to the Kids Church. It´s a nuance, but for me it´s different. If we say you have to come, you must come, otherwise we take away the help, I would say it´s required. If we say to the parents, you cannot hinder them, if they cannot come, so be it, but if you cannot just send it away." (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

From all these statements it can be understood that the FBO is conscious about the faced ethical dilemma. However, the principle of the Biblical Great Commission and evangelistic vision is stronger than the principal of the client´s right to self-determination. From the perspective of ISW, this fundamental client´s right is violated in the activities of ICF Cambodia because the client´s participation on the religious activities is not voluntary.

Contextualization of the Gospel

As it was already introduced, the vision of the ICF Movement itself is about contextualization of the gospel.[21] In this chapter I would like to focus on how ICF Cambodia is implementing this vision in a Buddhist country.

In ICF Cambodia there is an ongoing discussion between the members who come from outside of Cambodia (expats) and the Cambodian members (Khmers). The expats realize that

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[21] See page 36 of this thesis.

the Khmers know the culture very well and that they should collaborate together in preparing every Church service and event.

For this reason, a preachers´ team has been created. There is about eight people on this team, both men and women, Khmers and expats. The team meets once a week to discuss the program for the following weekend Church services. The person who is supposed to preach the following weekend gives a presentation in which he or she introduces the prepared preaching. The whole team then discusses whether something has to be changed, whether the examples, points, stories and Christian lessons will be understandable for Cambodians, etc. (Key informant no. 3, 2017)

The expat preachers in ICF Cambodia acknowledge that they had to change their ways of preaching after they came to Cambodia.

"And in the beginning I was preaching like I used to preach in Europe. And that was really clear that that was not working. In Europe you have point one, point two, a quote, Bible verse, point three, very logical, preaching that makes sense. And I completely changed it to story telling. We don´t have any points. We take people in a message on a journey and we tell the story... just telling one story and taking out one or two lessons." (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

Similarly, the expats in ICF Cambodia gradually found out that the proclamation of the Biblical Gospel itself (be it in a preaching or in a personal conversation with Cambodians) needs to be done differently than in their home countries. According to them, there are "different open doors" for sharing the gospel. The difference between sharing the gospel to a European atheist and a Cambodian buddhist comes from the basic fact that most Cambodians come from an already religious lifestyle and already believe in a supernatural world, gods, spirits, etc. The way of sharing the gospel is not about a logical explanation, polemics or proving of God´s existence but more about explaining the difference between Christianity and Buddhism. (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

We can also discuss this topic connected to preparing the Church services for the children. The expats involved in this process also have large amounts of previous experience with leading Sunday church programs for children in western countries. After coming to Cambodia, they realized they could not use most of their European teaching material because it contained stories, words or topics which Cambodian children would not understand. Moreover, most of the visual material created in Europe (videos or pictures used for the

teaching) was naturally portraying only European people which is again hard for the local children to relate to. (Key informant no. 5, 2017)

For this reason, the team preparing the Church services for children started to create new materials which are adjusted specifically for the local needs (Key informant no. 5, 2017). This team (similarly as the preachers´ team) consists of both expats and locals. Together they discuss all the topics and try to create a program which is as sensitive to the culture as possible. (Key informant no. 5, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

The team produces adjusted Bible stories (e.g. instead of olive trees or donkeys the stories are about mango trees and water buffalos), new videos shot right in the Cambodian villages, movies with Khmer dubbing, etc. (Knížková, 2017)

Noteworthy is also the topic of celebrating Christmas in a country where this festival has no cultural tradition. ICF Cambodia has a vision to introduce the Christmas festival to Cambodians because of its original Christian meaning (i.e. the birth of Jesus) but without the western cultural way of celebrating it (e.g. Christmas tree, snow flakes, reindeers, etc.) (Key informant no. 6, 2017). Because of this the Christmas celebration for children is a very well thought through event where the contextualization of the Christian message happens on every level. The decoration is completely different than it would be on a European Christmas party ("*The kids don´t have it connected with Christmas tree and red color, they actually don´t like red color, so we put balloons everywhere because it´s a birthday celebration of Jesus Christ*" (Knížková, 2017)), the Christmas story is being told through a drama and a video which is filmed in a local village with Cambodians starring, etc. (Knížková, 2017)

Ideological conflicts between Cambodian culture and Christian theology

This topic is connected to the previous topic of contextualization of the gospel. While ICF Cambodia is adjusting the Christian message to the needs of the local culture to make it very sensitive and easily understandable for Cambodians, the vision of evangelizing people and leading them to a final conversion to Christianity is very present in their activities. This also means that the organization believes that a person who converts to Christianity should sooner or later stop practicing Buddhism and leave some of their previous habits and beliefs which are in contradiction with Christianity or Biblical principles. (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

My interest in this topic was centered around how the leaders explain this principle to the new converts, how they direct them and what aspects of the Buddhist belief are unacceptable from the Christian viewpoint.

According to the experience of some of the expats, the process of becoming a Christian in Cambodia is completely different when compared to their experience from Europe. There are different steps which the converting person takes. The first step is accepting the Christian belief as an addition to what they already believe. Because Buddhism is already a multiple gods belief system, it is usually no problem for the local people to believe in Buddha as well as in Jesus. The second step is to realize that according to the Christian theology the person should get rid of their old practices. (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

Some of these practices could be going to pagoda, bringing sacrifices to the monks, wearing Buddhist red bands around their wrists, etc. In these issues, ICF Cambodia is not articulating clear statements in which they would direct the new believers.

"In general I´ve never said to people that are in the process of getting to know Jesus, throw out your altar. You know, destroy your Buddha, I have not told them that." (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

These topics, as it was described earlier, are addressed in the preaching for teenagers and adults as well as during the Discovery Courses of ICF Cambodia. In these contexts the manner of addressing them is more in the sense of encouraging the new believers to stand against pressure from their families and friends once they decide to stop practicing Buddhism (Key informant no. 3, 2017). This is actually considered the final step in the new believer´s journey – the decision to separate from their old belief, explain it to people around them and stay firm in their decisions. The new believer is left to find his or her own way to this final step, no matter how long it should take.

"This can be a month, it can be a year when they actually throw out the other gods... I address it in my preachings but I also leave it... My job, our job as Christians is to love people, to witness what God has done in our lives and not to make people, force people to eat the truth, but to share a testimony... my preaching is not repent, repent... I can be relaxed and just let this process." (Key informant no. 7, 2017)

The final step, i.e. leaving "old" religion and "old" habits, is connected to another issue: the emergence of conflicts in families and relationship. ICF Cambodia has repeatedly recorded cases of conflict situations in families where one of the members converted to Christianity. Most of these cases happened when a teenager decided to convert to Christianity and get baptized. (Key informant no. 3, 2017)

Parents of the children and teenagers attending the Church services do not usually mind their children going to a Christian church, but they are very opposed to the decision of their children to get baptized or to stop participating on the Buddhist rituals with the family (Key informant no. 5, 2017). ICF Cambodia is trying to prevent these cases by communicating with the families, visiting them, explaining their standpoints and reasons why they should allow their kids to make their own decisions (Key informant no. 3, 2017). For example, if a teenager decides to get baptized, the leader of the Church services for the youths repeatedly visits them in their homes, talks to the parents, settles disputes, etc (Knížková, 2017). At the same time the leaders encourage the converts to stay strong and follow their decisions.

These conflicts are also prevented in the case of children attending the Kids Church by not leading them to conversion or baptism and by not addressing the differences between Buddhism and Christianity or "talking bad" about Buddhism (Key informant no. 5, 2017).

However, creating conflicts in the families can be considered a negative consequence of ICF Cambodia´s activities. ICF Cambodia is aware of not being able to eliminate them completely but considers them as something which naturally happens when people stand against their culture. (Key informant no. 5, 2017)

Sustainability of ICF Cambodia´s activities and projects

The sustainability of projects and development work is a very discussed topic among development experts and people who plan and implement social and development projects. It is also one of the OECD/DAC criteria through which development projects are evaluated (OECD, 1991). It is therefore important to briefly introduce the sustainability model of ICF Cambodia and discuss their views on this issue.

ICF Cambodia has two main ways of ensuring the sustainability of its projects and activities which I observed during my research. The first one I call the principle of "Khmer helping Khmer."[22] Behind this principle is a vision of equipping local leaders who know the Cambodian culture and language very well and who are thus able to bring help and assistance

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[22] The formulation was used by a member of ICF Cambodia in an informal interview on September 17th 2017. After this interview I was encountering the same principle in many other interviews or observed activities of the organization. It led me to starting using the formulation as an *in vivo* code during the analysis of the collected data and finally I decided to use the formulation as my own label of the principle. It is not an official term used by ICF Cambodia.

in a very effective and culturally sensitive way. This principle is seen in all the activities of ICF Cambodia.

In the KSP we observe this principle in action in that only native Cambodians are employed as caseworkers. The caseworkers very often come from similar life conditions as those of most of the families in the program. This makes it easy for them to understand the struggles and problems of the poor families. It is also much easier for the families to relate to them, talk openly about their problems and accept the caseworker as their partner who helps them to find a solution. (Knížková, 2017)

The principle of Khmer helping Khmer can also be seen during the Church activities. Most of the people preparing the program and then finally standing on the stage during the Church services (musicians, singers, ushers, some of the preachers) are Cambodians. The expat leaders stay mostly in the background and support the locals to do the actual job. (Knížková, 2017)

From this principle arises a vision of ICF Cambodia to equip the local leaders and gradually hand over the responsibilities to them, so that the work can be continued even if the expats are not present in the future. This can be seen both in the activities of the FBO and the Church. The managers´ positions are gradually being handed over to Khmers and the expats are investing more of their time into coaching and equipping them to be independent. (Key informant no. 7, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

In the opinion of ICF Cambodia, the local people have to accept the work and the project as their own. This is not just the case for their employees and leaders but also for their beneficiaries. The organization believes that only buying necessary things or giving money to the people is not sustainable.

"I see all around that the NGOs are just buying stuff and leaving it there and I believe it´s not sustainable. I don´t want to do it like that, the people need to own it, maybe contribute to it, accept it, because if you just buy it and leave it there, they will leave it to rot." (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

One of the cornerstones of the KSP program is the belief that all the beneficiaries already have the resources they need to tackle their problems. The main task of ICF Cambodia and the caseworkers is only to help them find such resources and stand by the beneficiaries´ side while they are in the development process. (ICF Cambodia, Kids Sponsorhip Program Factsheet, version 2, 2017)

The other method of ensuring sustainability is their holistic approach. The principle of holism is connected to the topic of evangelization in the social projects. It is one of the reasons why the FBO integrates evangelism and social work.

"We say if we just bring them food and clothes and bring them to school we cannot change the future, we believe that the Christian faith, values and relationship to Jesus is crucial for changing their future, about their habits, about everything they do, so this is something that we say, we want to help in a holistic way and if we don´t do this including Christian faith, we will fail. So the Kids Church is a big part. That´s the reason." (Key informant no. 6, 2017)

The leadership of ICF Cambodia believes that it is necessary to work with the client as a whole including his or her spiritual needs, otherwise the help and the projects will be in vain.

While this is a view based on the organization´s religiosity and its belief that the human is also a spiritual being, the vision of holistic social work is not manifested only through the evangelistic activities.

ICF Cambodia is aware of the fact that Khmers are a traumatized nation. In their work they repeatedly encounter clients with the symptoms of PTSD, clients with various types of addictions or victims of domestic violence or abuse. For these reasons, the KSP does not provide only material help but a strong emphasis is placed on providing psychosocial help. One of the aims of KSP is to build strong relationships between the clients and their caseworkers. This relationship should be beneficial to both sides and should help the clients go through difficult seasons in their lives. (ICF Cambodia, Kids Sponsorhip Program Factsheet, version 2, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

The caseworkers are constantly building trust relationships with their families. The beneficiaries are never treated as a "number" to fulfill project indicators. Through that, ICF Cambodia hopes to ensure sustainability of their projects and have real long-term impacts in the lives of the beneficiaries.

While this can be a very effective way how to tackle psychosocial problems of the beneficiaries, it can be dangerous for the caseworkers as they are exposed to the risk of burn out syndrome. ICF Cambodia should also be aware of the risk that a friendly relationship between the caseworker and the family could develop into an unhealthy relationship which would be no longer professional and ethical.

On the basis of the current situation and needs of human development in Cambodia presented in the first chapter of this thesis, I will now analyze how the development projects of the FBO are reacting to those needs and whether the projects are relevant in the Cambodian context.

ICF Cambodia operates in the city of Siem Reap which is the most visited city by tourists in Cambodia. However, through KSP, inhabitants of the rural communes and villages around Siem Reap are targeted. By this practice, ICF Cambodia is following the poverty reduction strategy of the Government of Cambodia which defined the need to primarily target rural areas.

On the basis of the need assessments done by the KSP, only extremely or nearly poor households are registered into the program (ICF Cambodia, Child registration process - version 2, 2017). Through the existence of the Emergency fund, KSP is able to protect its beneficiaries from any kind of external shocks. As was stated in the first chapter of this thesis, the nearly poor households are extremely vulnerable to external shocks which cause them to fall back to extreme poverty. KSP is reacting to this problem and protecting the registered families.

In the area of health, KSP helps the poorest families with covering the Out-of-pocket expenditures of medical care (ICF Cambodia, Kids Sponsorhip Program Factsheet, version 2, 2017). There is also a strong emphasis put on health awareness raising and prevention. KSP employs its own nurse who regularly conducts medical checks in the registered families. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

In the area of nutrition, KSP does not implement a program which would specifically target nutrition of pregnant women, nursing mothers and newborns. Under KSP exists the Food Emergency Project which occasionally provides food help for a registered family which is in need. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

In the area of sanitation, funds coming through KSP provide resources for toilets and water filters to be built in the villages. KSP also organizes community cleaning events. (Key informant no. 2, 2017)

The area of education is one of the most important areas of KSP. A lot of emphasis is placed on efforts to minimize late starts, drop-outs and repetitions. KSP provides the registered children and families with everything they need in order to continue their studies. The caseworkers regularly encourage the children to study, provide tutoring for the weaker students and educate the parents on the importance of education. Attending school is also the strongest

obligation of the registered children. The family can be dismissed from the sponsorship program if the children do not attend school. (Key informant no. 2, 2017; Knížková, 2017)

Generally, in my consideration, the FBO is implementing highly relevant development projects which react to the most urgent needs of human development in Cambodia.

5.5. Members´ checking reactions

At the end of my field research I recommended to the management of the FBO to reevaluate their practice of integrating evangelism and social services. I specifically proposed to them creating an organizational code of ethics in which they would clearly specify the relevant core values and principles of their functioning. I encouraged the manager of KSP to open this debate with the leadership of ICF Cambodia (both the FBO and the Church).

Generally I advised the representatives of the FBO to be ready to answer suspicions or doubts coming from governmental institutions or other NGOs asking whether ICF Cambodia is manipulating or discriminating its clients.

The representatives of the FBO reacted to my recommendation by stating they were aware of this ethically controversial aspect of their work and of the possibility of receiving criticism. However, they were not planning to change anything about the system of functioning at the moment.

As I stated earlier, one of the research methods I used was members´ checking. After my departure from Cambodia I summarized the findings of my research and created a text output in which I described the functioning of ICF Cambodia and discussed the implications and ethical controversies arising. I sent this text output to all my key informants and one more representative of the leadership of ICF Cambodia and provided them with the possibility of reacting to my findings and interpretations.

Four of these people reacted to the text output. All of them confirmed my findings and interpretations, none of them disagreed with any of my statements. However, from one of the key informants I received information that shortly after my departure from ICF Cambodia two major changes were done in the policies of KSP. These changes are directly related to the ethically controversial aspects of KSP.

The first change was done in the form of the KSP Partnership Agreement. The management of the FBO decided to remove the part of the agreement in which the parents

commit to ensure their children will attend the Church services. This part was replaced with a commitment of the parent to have "a supporting heart towards the activities of ICF Cambodia". By this formulation it is meant that KSP would not register a family which is strongly opposed to the activities of the organization. (Key informant no. 2, 2018; ICF Cambodia, Partnership agreement – NEW, n.d.)

The second change is related to the registration process of families to KSP. Before the change (as described in the results of my research) the children had to be first of all regular attendants of the Church services in order to be eligible for the Kids Sponsorship.[23] After the change, contacts of potential sponsored children and families are still generated by attendance at the Church services, but also families in need with no connection to the Church can now be registered. KSP started intentionally assessing the needs of the families who live in the organization´s area of influence but do not attend the Church services in order to register them in the program. (Key informant no. 2, 2018; ICF Cambodia, Child registration process - version 3, 2018)

The reason for making these changes was not communicated with me. However, the process points to the assumption that ICF Cambodia is an organization open to reevaluate its functioning and principles and change them in order to implement its activities for the best of its clients.

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[23] See page 63 of this paper.

Conclusion

This thesis was dedicated to the analysis of the functioning of the Faith-based organization ICF Cambodia in the context of International Development Assistance.

In the conceptual framework of the thesis, the following topics were presented: recent history of Cambodia, current situation and needs of human development in Cambodia, theoretical concept of FBOs and ethics of development assistance and social work, theoretical concept of Christian mission and evangelization and its role in International Development Assistance.

In the empirical part of this thesis the functioning of ICF Cambodia was analyzed. I described the organization´s structure, financing, the development projects of the FBO and the religious activities of the Church. One of the findings of the research was that ICF Cambodia functions as two separate organization. One of them (the FBO) can be considered an evangelical FBO according to the definition presented in the conceptual framework of this thesis. The other one (the Church) cannot be considered an FBO because it functions as a church. However, the two parts of ICF Cambodia are so interconnected that the activities of the Church can be considered a religious expression of the FBO. For this reason, I presented and analyzed the activities of the Church as well.

Furthermore, I analyzed and discussed the following topics of the organization´s functioning: Evangelization in the development projects, Contextualization of the gospel, Ideological conflict between Christian theology and the local culture, Sustainability and Relevance. In these topics I connected the observed functioning of the organization to the theoretical concepts presented in the beginning of the thesis. I dedicated a significant space to the topic of ethics in development assistance and social work and analysis of the organization´s functioning from an ethical perspective. From this analysis I concluded that from the perspective of International Social Work and its Code of Ethics, some of the activities of ICF Cambodia cannot be considered ethical.

In the last section of the discussion I presented my communication with the key informants following my field research. I introduced their reactions to the first summary of the research results and the fact that the organization decided to change some of the policies of the Kids Sponsorship program after I concluded my field research. These changes significantly modified the functioning of the KSP concerning the ethically controversial aspects of selection of beneficiaries and involuntary participation of beneficiaries in religious activities.

This presented development of the organization´s functioning points to the fact that it is a fast growing organization. Some of the features described as the results of my research are no longer valid. However, I believe this does not make my research irrelevant to the topic of evangelical FBOs. My research is a case study of a specific FBO in a specific time and space. It is presenting the functioning and activities of this FBO, its beliefs and motivations and also a way of researching this type of FBOs.

It was my pleasure to work with ICF Cambodia and conduct this research. The reality I observed during the whole time of my field research was very inspirational and the willingness of each of the organization´s members to cooperate with me was highly motivational. I would like to conclude my thesis with expressing one more time my deepest gratitude to the whole ICF Cambodia.

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List of interviews

Label of the interview:	Date of the interview:	Representative of the:
Key informant no. 1	October 24th 2017	FBO
Key informant no. 2	October 31st 2017 + email communication on April 12th 2018	FBO
Key informant no. 3	November 1st 2017	Church
Key informant no. 4	November 21st 2017	FBO
Key informant no. 5	November 31st 2017	Church
Key informant no. 6	December 1st 2017	FBO
Key informant no. 7	December 7th 2017	Church

Figure 2: Key informants (made by the author)