

“We give back”

A structuration perspective on the contribution of Corporate Social Responsibility to positive peace: the case of Belize Natural Energy Ltd.

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Master's Programme for Peace and Conflict Transformation

June 2015



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank, first and foremost, my supervisor Elin Merethe Oftedal, for being the professor, and the woman, she is. This thesis wouldn't have been possible without her constant support, her passion, dedication, and firm guidance. She has been an invaluable source of ideas and inspiration, and her insights have been crucial to me both as a researcher and as a person.

I would like to thank all the staff at the Center of Peace Study for making me fall in love with the program, and for always finding the time to advise me and the right words to motivate me.

My most sincere gratitude goes to the directors of Belize Natural Energy Ltd., the management and all the employees, especially to Daniel Gutierrez and his office, Erin Ryan and Melanie Escalante. This thesis would have literally remained a dream had it not been for them and their collaboration.

I can't find the words to express my gratitude to all my informants, for sharing with me their thoughts, perspectives and experiences, for letting me observe Belize through their eyes, learn about it from their stories, and find it, always and in whatever way, immensely beautiful.

A special mention to James Hyde, thanks to whom I had the opportunity to live my experiences in Belize feeling safe and sound. With him, I found a place where to stay and someone to rely on, a companion of long walks and even longer conversations: a true spirit of a different kind.

On a personal note, I would also like to thank Liza and Paul: the best housemates one could dream of. We have been through this together and if I am still sane, it is thanks to you!

To Josuè and Magdalena, thanks for being my friends and for making me laugh and smile all at once, every time, even this one. I owe you the preservation of my good mood, thanks!

To Christina: a good friend and this time also a good proofreader. Thank you for the time I forced you to spend reading and correcting this thesis, it is really appreciated!

To my family for continuing to believe in me, and in particular to my aunt Giusi and my grandmother Lola, for loving me exactly as they do, which is exactly what I need. You are the best!

Last but not least, to my better half, my fellow world traveler, my anchor to the ground, a man gifted with infinite patience: Francesco. I love you!

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the potential contribution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to the achievement of a positive peace in societies where violence has penetrated the social structure.

The objective of the research is to explore how CSR can be designed to enable companies embracing a peace-oriented approach in conducting their businesses. CSR, in fact, is a well-established business practice, which is evolving along with the growing public demand for ethical, sustainable and responsible business performances. The research investigates how CSR can be functional to a shift from a business paradigm traditionally focused on profit maximization, to a peace business paradigm that considers social needs, equity and respect for the environment, values to be integrated at the core of business strategies and operations. CSR potential contribution to positive peace is investigated using structuration theory as a framework. Such perspective sets the premises for creating a model according to which companies are agents embedded in a social structure and able to interact with it through their CSR initiatives. The concept of positive peace has been chosen as the lens from where to look at the highlighted process ongoing in countries affected by structural violence.

To meet the objective, the study relies on a case emerged from the context of Belize: the Belize Natural Energy Ltd.'s CSR profile and initiatives. Data come from 23 contributions in the form of semi-structured interviews and open conversations, providing insights into the Belizean culture of violence, the social role played in the country by the private sector, and in particular into the company's CSR strategies and initiatives. Data collected from the local informants denote that Belize is a country at peace in a very narrow sense, the country social structure is facilitating violence, and to foster peace a transformative approach is necessary. Moreover, they indicate that BNE Ltd.'s CSR is sound and consistent with the company mission, vision and values, and that its initiatives are able to positively influence society.

The study findings suggest that if BNE Ltd. would invest its resources in integrating CSR into the core of all its operations and in monitoring the initiatives' impact on society recursively, the company could be a welcomed agent of change in Belize.

The study findings ultimately indicate that CSR, in order to enable a significant structural change, need to be effective and profitable. In terms of effectiveness, CSR has to target social needs and structural issues specific of a local context via initiatives aimed at substantively impacting society, so as to reinforce the positive structures and transform instead the detrimental ones, thus preventing them from reproducing themselves. In terms of profitability, CSR has to be collectively endorsed and sustainable in time; in other words, consistent with company's values, embedded in the company culture, and ideally integrated in the company business operations.

The study contributes in bringing evidence on the current debate on the redefinition of business value, as a shared value. In this context, companies need to find their modalities and incentives to shift from a profit-oriented mandate to a social one, from a traditional business paradigm to a peace business one, knowing that companies embracing such shift can actively contribute in transforming social structures promoting a positive peace.

Key words Corporate Social Responsibility, positive peace, peace business, structural violence, Structuration Theory, structure, agent, Creating Shared Value, Belize, Belize Natural Energy Ltd.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BJAT	Belize Junior Achievement Test
BNE	Belize Natural Energy Ltd.
BNECT	Belize Natural Energy Charitable Trust
BZD	Belize Dollar
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSV	Creating Shared Value
E4L	Energy For Life
EnPe	Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development within the fields of Energy and Petroleum
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOB	Government Of Belize
GPI	Global Peace Index
L@Core	Learning at the Core
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSD	Norwegian Data Protection Office for Research
PSA	Production Sharing Agreement
PUP	People's United Party
SSCI	Social Sciences Citation Index
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UDP	United Democratic Party
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

“Markets could not flourish without a strong underlying moral culture, animated by empathy and Fellow-feeling, by our ability to understand our common bond as human beings and to recognize the needs of others.”

-Adam Smith

Throughout history, war and business have been closely connected (Black, 2002).

If it was true in the past, when national interests and borders were defined mostly by the use of force, it is true also nowadays, since “many corporations had connections with violent conflicts – providing armaments, supporting repressive regimes through various natural resource concessions, allowing of encouraging the removal or even eradication of Indigenous peoples, the use of slave labour, or laundering money from these same repressive regimes” (Santa-Barbara, 2007: 233).

These are not just speculations, attributing the causes of conflicts, ongoing in different areas of the globe, to the defence of foreign powers' economic operations and interests (Clark 2005; Klare 2001; McQuaig 2004); business can do harm.

Rentier capitalism carried on by multinational corporations has proved to be able to foment violence and thrive in situations of conflict, since the conflict itself is ensuring profits and revenues (Richani, 2005: 113-144). It is, for instance, the case of conflicts arising in countries where the presence of natural resources became a possible cause of violence, up to the point of being investigated as a possible reason for the onset of civil wars, for influencing negatively the duration and intensity of the same (Ross, 2004: 337-356), or simply as one of the factors able to contribute to foster intrastate violence (Collier and Hoeffler, 1998; Cilliers and Dietrich, 2000; Berdal and Malone, 2000). However, if business is part of the problem, it should also be part of the solution. If it can foster violence, can it also be accountable for fostering peace?

As there are examples of businesses that have always benefited from conflicts and will always do, there are also those that represent examples of good practices, considering peace as a catalyst for resources, and promoting active contribution in its enhancement. In this regard, more than large multinational corporations, the focus should be on small- middle-size businesses operating locally, since “local private sectors have much to contribute through their economic influence and political contacts, their (relatively) large financial resources, their skilled workforce, their capacity to drive balanced development and their connections at all levels of society” (Killick et All., 2005:4).

The main challenge is to identify ways of harnessing such potential and invest on it.

1.1 Conceptual references: Peace Business and Corporate Social Responsibility

Peace studies have recently started to focus on the relations between business and peace, pointing out the potential role of large, medium and small businesses in creating peace as well as fomenting conflict. The field is also open to receive contributions from new generations of scholars interested in further developing the discipline. “This highly interdisciplinary field of research —drawn from anthropology, political and economic indicators, and formal moral theory, among other areas— has emerged to explore the linkages between business and peace and address the argument that ethical business behavior can contribute to peace” (Forrer, Fort, Gilpin, 2012: 3).

The idea behind peace business emerges from Johan Galtung’s definition of positive peace as a way of looking at peace as a process encompassing every aspect of economic, political and social growth, aimed at reducing social inequities, ecological degradation and violent conflicts which exist in today’s world. Johan Galtung and Jack Santa-Barbara suggested that business has reached the point where it has to challenge the same paradigm on which the global economics and business have been standing. They advocate for a shift in the global economic and business paradigm, implying a shift also in its models, practices and approaches, aimed at shaping a more sustainable world and a more peaceful future. “Attempts to continue a profit-oriented, economic growth paradigm may well lead to further ecological degradation, violent conflict and social inequities. Moving to a peace business paradigm will reduce violent conflict, as well as restore and maintain both ecological sustainability and social justice” (Santa-Barbara, 2007: 232).

What has been mostly highlighted, is the need of transforming the business culture from just focusing on increasing the shareholders’ value and enhancing companies’ profit, to implementing a more comprehensive and peace-oriented frame of reference. A frame which “rests on the values of nonviolence to people and nature (including structural and cultural violence as well as direct violence), a focus on meeting basic human needs (rather than profit from whatever will sell) and a fair distribution of the benefits of business activities (rather than the accumulation of great wealth by the minority)” (Ibid.: 241). In practice, though, in order to implement peace-promoting behaviours, companies need to find their own reasons why and their own incentives to adopt them. “Policies, firm characteristics, and operating environment all affect a firm’s decision to engage in peace-promoting behavior. They also influence whether such behaviors are incidental, a consequence of ethical business practice, or purposeful in nature” (Forrer, Fort, Gilpin, 2012: 2).

A critique that applies to the entire “peace business” argument, is related to the lack of well-grounded and established guidelines, representing a practical toolkit finally able to transform the ideals of peace business in a set of accepted good practices. “There is a wide variety of activities underway in various sectors, each contributing to the emergence of peace business. While there is widespread support for the ideals of peace business, there remains limited opportunities for organized expressions of these ideals” (Santa-Barbara, 2007: 232).

More reality/market-based guidelines, concepts, and instruments, able to inspire businesses in embracing a peace-oriented business paradigm, need to be identified. I consider the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) interesting for exploring the contribution that private sector companies may give to the promotion of positive peace within the countries where they operate. The main reason for focusing on CSR is mostly related to how wide the concept has spread in the business world nowadays, as demonstrated by, among other things, the remarkable growth in corporate codes of conduct and social reporting.

Using CSR as a variable means investigating a concept and a tool that has already been established in the business realm, looking by definition at its social component. Moreover, CSR is a dynamic concept able to evolve together with other business practices, giving a researcher the opportunity to explore ongoing transformative processes where CSR might have an impact. CSR is, in fact, a set of strategies, policies and practices conceived to positively impact society, which implies that companies can actually impact society but leave us wide margins for exploring to what extent and how. Acknowledging also the numerous critical perspectives about CSR, I decided to research the CSR peace potential, and its effectiveness, from a positive standpoint. I stress the fact that exactly because the concept is already rooted into the business practice, being a well-acquainted business concept, CSR can be functional to highlight the existing connections between business and peace, in a country context where CSR initiatives have been put in place and carefully implemented.

1.2 The Research Question

My thesis is discussing the capacity of companies to influence positively the peace structures of a country through the embracement of a shift from a profit-oriented to a peace-oriented paradigm in conducting their businesses. By selecting CSR as the variable under examination and positive peace as my dependent variable, I sought to investigate how a company CSR initiatives can be designed to impact social structures and facilitate such paradigm shift, thus fostering peace.

I approached the research asking myself the following research question:

How can Corporate Social Responsibility be supportive of a company shift toward a peace business paradigm in a country where violence has roots in the social structure?

My thesis is not aimed at solving a problem, but it is more intended at exploring an argument that has yet much to say about our contemporary world, relying on evidence coming from the investigation of a case study, and drawing from it some learned lessons, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

1.3 Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into five chapters.

In the next chapter, the theoretical framework in which this study is placed is explained in detail, approaching the theoretical foundations of peace business, Corporate Social Responsibility and its critics, and the Structuration Theory to which I rely to draft my research model.

Chapter 3 discusses and reflects on the methodological issues of the study, regarding the challenges of conducting a fieldwork, the requirements for a sound case study design, and the ethical components of conducting research in a developing country.

Chapter 4 focuses on data presentation and analysis, while the final discussion, and some remarks and recommendations, will be offered in the conclusions presented in chapter 5.

1.3.1 Theoretical contributions

In chapter 2, I will begin introducing the concept of positive peace in order to position my thesis in the conceptual context to which it refers. The same needs to be done under a business perspective; therefore, I will define what a peace business paradigm is and I will present the assumptions on which it stands. In this regard, I will briefly approach the brand new concept of Creating Shared Value (CSV), recently emerged in literature and enthusiastically welcomed among business practitioners. CSV represents today one of the most interesting concepts to be mentioned in relation to CSR, able to complement it from both a theoretical and practical side, adding to the final discussion an alternative perspective from where, in the future, it would be interesting to further explore the research topic.

In the theoretical chapter, I will navigate through the definitions given to CSR, showing how they evolved over time. I will then focus on its potential impact and all the critical aspects widely

addressed by academics and practitioners. I will eventually highlight how CSR can be put in mutual correlation with positive peace, according to the peace business argument.

To be able to show how CSR can actually impact society, I rely on Anthony Giddens's Structuration Theory, which provides a framework able to explain how companies, as agents, by establishing a set of effective CSR practices, are able to impact the social structure of the country in which they operate. According to the structuration theory, agents are part of the structure and able to interact with it by producing new structures, reinforcing the existing ones or transforming them. The structuration theory, in fact, tries to address the issue of the divide between agency and structure, when it comes to the production, reproduction and transformation of social systems (Berends et Al., 2003). It offers the conceptual tools to create a model of interaction between agent and structure that can be related to examples of interaction through CSR, between a company and the country where it operates its business.

1.3.2 Methodology and study context

In chapter 3, I will go through the methods I used to develop my thesis research, I will present the reasons behind my decisions of designing an embedded case study model and the data collection techniques I relied upon. I will also approach the fieldwork narrative from a personal perspective, highlighting the challenges and obstacles I met to access information and to comply with ethics and security on the field. In selecting a study context, I decided to focus on a country that has not yet experienced large-scale violent conflicts, but where structural violence is present and “peace” is a blurry concept, since in its negative extent it is guaranteed, but it still appears far from consolidating the positive features. Belize represented a perfect example; therefore, it was selected as the study context where to carry on my fieldwork and investigate a case study I identified as suitable to help me explore the thesis topic.

Belize is a country at the crossroad: extremely rich in natural, environmental and agricultural resources that should generate a wealth to be shared by a really small and young population. It presents all the ingredients for being the real recipe for success, and yet it fails to guarantee a smooth course towards the achievement of sustainable development, showing increasing rates in poverty and violence, widespread corruption fostering inequality, and a skyrocketing external debt crippling an already not so competitive economy.

High unemployment and poverty rates, mainly among young generations cut off from the national education system, make Belize attractive for drugs- and human–trafficking cartels coming from the neighbouring countries, showing a threatening increase of the crime rate.

In 2012, Belize recorded 145 murders, setting a new record for homicides in the country. Even if Belize is today experiencing no armed conflict, violence is deeply rooted, and most of the domestic issues the country is facing can potentially evolve into internal tensions. If the country fails to invest in structural changes, and promote economic growth and an equal distribution of resources among the population, positive peace will be out of reach.

In Belize the government needs to be backed by the private sector in powering up a common effort towards the transformation of those social structures currently undermining the country achievement of a peaceful and sustainable development. A peace-oriented business approach and effective implementation strategies acquire fundamental importance in the Belizean context due to the small population and economy. It is important to say that in this study I did not intend to develop my analysis on an institutional base, including institutional issues as corruption, which is unrestrained in Belize and embedded in the structures of society, affecting savagely the country performances. To avoid being distracted by the role and responsibilities of the public sector in managing the country’s resources and lead Belize along the transition to a fully “developed” and peaceful society, I decided to look at the private sector for selecting an agent of positive change to be investigated as my case of study.

In 2005, a privately owned company, with international shareholders and a Belizean management, was the first to discover light crude oil in commercial quantities. Belize Natural Energy Limited (BNE) remains to date also the only company producing oil and gas in the country. Being a pioneer in the field has meant also being in charge, together with the Government, of defining the regulative parameters for the country’s brand new oil industry, and setting the standards for Corporate Social Responsibility in the Belizean oil & gas sector.

1.3.3 Data to present, analyse, and discuss

BNE’s CSR represents my case study, since it provides me with concrete initiatives to be investigated, producing evidence able to support my explorative research. In chapter 4, I present the data collected on the field; the analysis happens on a parallel track to the data presentation, in order to provide the readers with a more meaningful overview and get some insights, leading to the discussion in the conclusive chapter. I start presenting data regarding the social structure of

Belize; especially the structural issues conducive to the establishment of a culture of violence. I then proceed analysing the social role of the Belizean private sector to explain the macro-environment in which BNE operates. The company is then approached outlining its business culture, the nature of its operations and, eventually, its CSR, which is analysed in detail, with a focus on four main initiatives representing different examples of CSR targeting key Belizean structural issues. During the data presentation and analysis, I rely massively on the information gathered from the participants of my research and I make extensive use of direct quotes, giving voice to the informants in a critical and reasoned way.

In the last chapter, theory, methodology and data evidence converge, as I will eventually discuss the research topic in light of the data obtained, in an attempt to answer my research question.

CHAPTER 2: Concept definitions and theoretical framework

“Once conclusions about the economic benefits of peace are drawn, it may be possible to transform the world through business-led initiatives, thereby helping to achieve peace and creating the environment that will make future sustainability possible.”

-Steve Killelea

This chapter focuses on defining the key concepts and explaining how they are mutually connected. It begins with shedding light on the concept of positive peace and on what it entails from a business perspective, mentioning the peace business paradigm and the assumptions on which it stands. It then looks at Corporate Social Responsibility and critiques of the argument that CSR can make a difference in society today, looking particularly at the connection between CSR and positive peace. Finally, it introduces the Structuration Theory, which is functional to show how companies as agents can, through recursive interactions with society, impact the structures of the countries where they operate. This allows the researcher to create a model for explaining the nature of the dynamic according to which CSR may foster peace.

Taken together, the chapter attempts an outline of the theoretical framework in which the research is placed and has been developed.

2.1 Defining Positive Peace

“Peace, like many theoretical terms, is difficult to define. Like happiness, harmony, justice, and freedom, peace is something we often recognize by its absence” (Barash and Webel, 2009: 4).

In many different places of the world, at different historical times, there have been attempts at defining peace; several meanings have been attributed and the concept have gained quite a number of connotations. In general, people tend to agree that peace is desirable but they seldom agree about how to reach peace and establish a culture of peace that can last generations and spread beyond borders. In order to understand what a *culture of peace* is, I use the following definition:

“In a culture of peace power grows not from the barrel of a gun but from participation, dialogue and co-operation. It rejects violence in all its forms, including war and the culture of war. In place of domination and exploitation by the strong over the weak, a culture of peace respects the rights of everyone, economic as well as political. [...] In practice, the key to a culture of peace is the transformation of violent competition into co operation for shared goals. It requires that conflicting parties work together in the development process itself. It may be understood as the managing of conflict through the sharing of development. The culture of peace transforms and ultimately replaces the culture of war – it can only flourish in an environment where war and the root causes of war have

been eliminated and their functions have been replaced by other, positive alternatives. Therefore, the process of establishing a culture of peace is a vast project, multi dimensional and world wide in scope” (Adams, 1997 : 16-18).

Two years later, in 1999, the UN General Assembly launched a program of action to build a culture of peace for the future generations. The pillars on which this culture was to be built were matching the core values advocated by peace practitioners, rejecting violence and preventing it, addressing root causes of conflict. “The UN proposed that such a culture of peace would be furthered by actions promoting education for peace and sustainable development, which it suggested was based on human rights, gender equality, democratic participation, tolerant solidarity, open communication, and international security” (Barash and Webel, 2009: 17).

A culture of peace doesn't deny the existence, nor the importance, of the constructive dimensions of conflict. It acknowledges that conflict is normal in human relationships and that it can be considered a source for change and innovation; nevertheless it is suggesting that conflicts shouldn't be resolved but transformed instead¹, preventing their violent manifestations to occur again.

Such perspectives invite us to consider the concept of peace in a broader sense, a positive peace, separated from its minimalist connotation, also known as negative. This require us to delve into the theories presented by Johan Galtung, one of the fathers of peace research, who has worked extensively with peace and conflict theories, looking for alternatives to the traditional *Realpolitik* approach to the subject. “Peace can be defined both as *negative peace*, which remains the ‘absence of organized collective violence’, and *positive peace*, which is the sum total of other relatively consensual values in the world community of nations” (Galtung, 1967: 13).

Johan Galtung focused his academic production on the exploration of the concept of positive peace and of both its theoretical and practical implications, stressing that positive peace is “addressed to all basic needs, survival, well-being, freedom and identity” (Galtung 2003: 32). The concept of positive peace entails a process of recognition and liberation from all the forms of violence, the ones overtly identifiable, but also the ones structurally entrenched in our personal, local and global society and subtly hidden from our sight. “Positive Peace refers to a social condition in which exploitation is minimized or eliminated and in which there is neither overt violence nor the more

1 The concept of Conflict Transformation comes from John Paul Lederach's idea of looking at finding constructive responses to conflicts as if looking at a process of transformation, he writes that transforming conflicts means “to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships” (Lederach, 2003 : 14).

subtle phenomenon of underlying structural violence. It denotes the continuing presence of an equitable and just social order as well as ecological harmony” (Barash and Webel, 2009: 7).

As Galtung explains, this is a comprehensive and multidimensional approach toward the subject. Any attempt to build positive peace takes more time and resources than a minimalistic approach, since it implies the achievement and fulfilment of a broader range of ‘values’. It includes a focus on the economic growth and development of society, the reduction of inequalities and the creation of plural opportunities in a world free from fear, want and exploitation (Galtung, 1967).

If a country does not experience any armed conflict or violent uprising, but its population is exploited, and the basic human needs aren't fulfilled, it can't be considered ‘at peace’. Galtung challenges such narrow understanding of peace. In fact, according to him, the process leading to the achievement of a positive peace is not finished once the violent behaviour ends, but instead it continues until the eradication of any possible cause for a conflict recurrence. It is an ongoing process, which might benefit any country regardless of the forms in which violence is manifested within the society. Violence in fact is present in our world, not just in its direct form, but even in an indirect one, also called structural, which is hard to identify and address, thus becoming the main obstacle to the achievement of optimal peace standards.

Galtung was the first in defining those forms of violence as separate. According to him direct violence is the violence occurring where there is a sender who intends to harm the receiver, while the indirect or structural violence “comes from the social structure itself – between humans, between sets of humans (societies), between sets of societies (alliances, regions) in the world...” (Galtung, 1996:2). The latter, as Barash and Webel point out, is a more subtle, widespread and often-unacknowledged form of violence that comes from within the very nature of social, cultural and economic institutions:

“Structural violence usually has the effect of denying people important rights, such as economic well-being; social, political, and sexual equality; a sense of personal fulfilment and self-worth; and so on. When people starve to death or even go hungry, a kind of violence is taking place. Similarly, when people suffer from preventable diseases or when they are denied a decent education, affordable housing, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, or opportunities to work, play, or raise a family, a kind of violence is occurring, even if no bullets are shot or no clubs are wielded. A society commits violence against its members when it forcibly stunts their development and undermines their well-being, whether because of religion, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual preference, or some other social reason. Structural violence is a serious form of social oppression, which can also be identified with respect to treatment of the natural environment” (Barash and Webel, 2009: 7).

While direct violence is manifest, structural violence goes mostly unnoticed. Both are possible due to what Galtung calls “cultural violence”, defined as all those aspects, usually symbolic, of a culture that legitimize the other two forms of violence and the framework in which they thrive.

What constitutes structural violence, when it comes to social barriers, hierarchy and inequality as well as unconventional cultural norms, practices and lifestyles, surely remains an highly debatable topic. However, the private sector has the possibility to play a key role in addressing some of the structural aspects considered detrimental to the positive peace fulfilment process. Businesses need to develop tools and practices able to mitigate the exposure to the risk of structural violence, and to promote instead effective, sustainable, peace-enhancing relationships with society, whose in the long run everyone can benefit from.

2.2 The peace business paradigm and its theoretical assumptions

What Jack Santa Barbara (2007) call a peace business paradigm, in theory, presents a recipe for a peace-oriented sustainable economics. Companies embrace an ethical, responsible and mutually benefiting social-oriented approach to do business, contributing to the creation and preservation of a both direct and structural violence-free social environment. A business paradigm like this, in order to be implemented in practice, requires a real change in how companies behave in market and society and how they define ‘value’. Opinions and perceptions are shaped around companies’ reputation and image that generally reflects how companies pursues value creation and how they operate. In this regard, so far, there has been a widespread tendency among the public opinion to consider business as one of the main sources of current political, social and environmental problems other than economic ones. A recent article in the Harvard Business Review, critically address the issue regarding why society has come to believe companies are prospering at the expenses of the wider community:

“A big part of the problem lies with companies themselves, which remain trapped in an outdated approach to value creation that has emerged over the past few decades. They continue to view value creation narrowly, optimizing short-term financial performance in a bubble while missing the most important customer needs and ignoring the broader influences that determine their longer-term success. How else could companies overlook the wellbeing of their customers, the depletion of natural resources vital to their businesses, the viability of key suppliers, or the economic distress of communities in which they produce and sell?” (Porter and Kramer, 2011a: 4).

Here the author present a new way of defining “value”, which supports the idea that societal needs, not just conventional economic needs, define markets, and social harms can create internal costs for firms. Such a way of thinking advocates for an active role of companies in bringing back

together society and businesses, putting the social issues at the core (Ibid.: 5). It also implies a transformation of the paradigm on which business currently stands, clearing the path for a shift toward a peace business paradigm.

In scholarly literature, the peace potential of business is supported by two main assumptions:

1. Businesses can promote stability.

Companies contribute in promoting stability in many different, more or less active, more or less conscious ways, as for example providing jobs and economic opportunities, respecting domestic and international rules concerning labour and environmental standards, defining a common political and economic agenda together with governments and international institutions and espousing principles of corporate citizenship (Ferrer, Fort, Gilpin: 2012).

2. Businesses can do well and do good.

Companies also, in accordance to their own profiles, defined in terms of company missions, policies, internal structures and goals, can engage in a long-lasting, mutual empowering and profiting relationship with the society, where companies are able to return profits to the society thus embracing the opportunity to do well by doing good.

Today a new trend in academic literature is currently under development, it pushes businesses a step further from promoting stability and ethical behaviour, affirming that “incorporating societal issues into strategy and operations is the next major transformation in management thinking” (Moore, 2014: 3) and adding a third assumption to the two traditionally debated:

3. Businesses can enhance competitiveness while advancing social and economic conditions in the society by creating a shared-value.

Companies are considered able to contribute solving social problems while making profit, creating a shared-value for for both society and shareholders. In other words, it means that it is possible to create “economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges” (Porter and Kramer 2011: 4).

The current social business trend is to some extent moving in the shared-value direction, as concepts such social entrepreneurship, social innovation, catalyst philanthropy, collective impact or similar are becoming part of the ongoing transformative change the business world is subjected to. This shows the existence of a grounded interest in further exploring the idea of peace business while still ‘talking business’, thus integrating the value aspect and locating it at the core of the business mindset. In fact, from the company perspective, the shared-value approach “reflects a complex interplay of genuine altruism, social or self-image concerns, and material incentives” (Bénabou and Tirole: 2009, 1). Such an approach is designed as a win-win solution and it is rooted

in the need of justifying the social aspect of business in terms of profitability and at the same time justifying the profits in terms of sustainability and social responsibility. While corporate engagement in society has been considered and perceived for a long time as a business cost, to be traded off against profitability, nowadays companies are realizing that there are ways of benefiting society and boosting their competitiveness at the same time. The premise here is that both economic and social progress can be addressed using the principles of business value and value creation, according to whom: profit is revenue earned from customers minus the costs incurred, so the value earned means benefits relative to costs, not benefits alone (Porter and Kramer, 2011). If both businesses and governments, as well as NGOs, start adopting a value perspective in dealing with social issues they will be able to recognize how strong are the ties between economic and social concerns and also how profitable, in the wider sense of the term, can be a strong responsible collaboration between economic and social actors (Bockstette and Stamp, 2011).

In sum, the rules of the business game seem to be changing according to stronger demands, from society and law makers, which are inviting the business sector to actively contribute to rethink and correct failures in market and development policies (Bosh-Badia et al., 2013). In responding to such demands, some companies have shown an interest in behaving responsibly and responsibly cooperate with other institutions and the society in promoting approaches to profit able to benefit everyone. This interest led gradually to the acceptance of Corporate Social Responsibility as part of companies' mission, vision and indeed values, since nowadays companies, at the very least, acknowledge the need to deliver evidence of their desire to conduct business responsibly.

2.3 Defining Corporate Social Responsibility

In 1953 Howard R. Bowen inaugurated the modern period of literature on the subject of Corporate Social Responsibility, using the term in referring to an obligation of businessmen to conduct their businesses in ways considered desirable in terms of objectives and values for society. "Bowen's work proceeded from the belief that the several hundred largest businesses were vital centers of power and decision making and that the actions of these firms touched the lives of citizens at many points" (Carroll: 1999, 269). Soon the concept started attracting more interest and other authors, such as Davis (1960, 1967, 1973), Fredrick (1960), McGuire (1963), and Walton (1967), contributed to its development. At that time though, scholars were mostly referring to "businessman" in their definitions, pinpointing the responsibility of individuals for the consequences of their actions on the social sphere.

Clarence C. Walton (1967), in a book titled *Corporate Social Responsibilities*, being concerned with the role of the business firm and businessperson in modern society, was one of the firsts taking an institutional dimension into account when presenting his definition of social responsibility. He wrote that “the new concept of social responsibility recognizes the intimacy of the relationships between the corporation and society and realizes that such relationships must be kept in mind by top managers as the corporation and the related groups pursue their respective goals” (Walton: 1967, 18). This was a crucial development since it was expanding the concept of CSR from a personal responsibility to an institutional one, making it corporate in the true sense of the term. Later, in 1973, Davis defined CSR in terms of firms’ initiatives:

“[CSR] refers to the firm’s consideration of, and response to, issues beyond the narrow economic, technical, and legal requirements of the firm. [...] It is the firm’s obligation to evaluate in its decision-making process the effects of its decisions on the external social system in a manner that will accomplish social benefits along with the traditional economic gains which the firm seeks” (Davis: 1973, 312-313).

The concept has afterwards been revised, expanded and redefined several times.

More and more commentators, instead of focusing on the mere definitions, gradually embraced a broader perspective regarding the meaning and the evolution of CSR. “In its broadest sense, corporate social responsibility represents a concern with the needs and goals of society which goes beyond the merely economic. Insofar as the business system as it exists today can only survive in an effectively functioning free society, the corporate social responsibility movement represents a broad concern with business’s role in supporting and improving that social order” (Eells & Walton: 1974, 247). Carroll, for instance, provided a definition of CSR looking at the responsibilities it entailed as if they represented the defining components of the concept, its building blocks. According to him the concept of CSR includes four types of responsibilities –economical, legal, ethical and philanthropic– different dimensions abiding to a logic of profitability, competitiveness and efficiency, since economics responsibilities are the foundation of business, therefore of CSR. Such definition doesn't necessarily put societal needs at the core. (Carroll: 1991).

Lately CSR has been more generally defined as a set of management practices that ensures a company the possibility of maximizing the positive impacts of its operations on society, “operating in a manner that *meets and even exceeds* the legal, ethical, commercial and public expectations that society has of business” (BSR, 2001). The concept of CSR is currently experiencing an evolution toward a definition that tries to advance responsible corporate citizenship in a way that includes business as part of the solution to the challenges of our time. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) for example defines CSR as “the commitment of business

to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families and the local communities” (2001).

I highlight this evolving trend adopting the definition created by the CSR Initiative at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government:

“We define corporate social responsibility strategically. Corporate social responsibility encompasses not only what companies do with their profits, but also how they make them. It goes beyond philanthropy and compliance, and addresses how companies manage their economic, social, and environmental impacts, as well as their relationships in all key spheres of influence: the workplace, the marketplace, the supply chain, the community and the public policy realm” (CSRI, 2015).

2.3.1 Criticizing Corporate Social Responsibility

Since the terminology first appeared in literature and again when it fully became part of the business language, CSR has collected support as well as skeptical reactions from both scholars and practitioners. In short, it has proved to be a fertile ground for critiques.

The most common ones can be summarized as:

- CSR might represent a violation of the principle of profit maximization;
- CSR might represent a sensitive cost for companies leading to a disadvantaged competitive position in the market;
- CSR might be useless due to the companies lack of specific social skills and competences;
- CSR might be useless because companies are not realistically accountable to the public;

Addressing CSR from the critical perspectives there are many scholars advocating for the irrelevance and ineffectiveness of CSR practices, questioning the profitability of such a choice because of its controversial relation with the original, and widely perceived as the sole, reason of a company’s existence: making profit and constantly ensure the shareholders that it will increase. Social initiatives are usually a budget cost, sometimes paid back in terms of propaganda, but this happens just if there are channels enabling the communication of CSR policies to both customers and the local community, and while major corporations can afford to allocate a budget to CSR reporting, it is not always the same for smaller businesses. Aneel Karnani in 2010 wrote an article in the Wall Street Journal titled *The case against Corporate Social Responsibility* arguing that corporate social responsibility can be considered as an ‘exercise in futility’. The article fostered a passionate debate among CSR supporters and opponents in the public opinion, among the business practitioners as well as in academia. CSR in fact was defined in the article as irrelevant in cases where private profits and public interests are already aligned. Since (a) companies boosting profits

are naturally improving social welfare, and (b) the “doing good while doing well” option is in itself the most profitable way to do business there aren't ethical considerations supporting the case for CSR, just the ABC of corporate business. Cynically, or realistically, speaking Aneel Karnani, an Associate Professor of Corporate Strategy and International Business at University of Michigan, boldly explains: “These companies are benefiting society while acting in their own interests; social activists urging them to change their ways had little impact. It is the relentless maximization of profits, not a commitment to social responsibility, that has proved to be a boon to the public in these cases” (Karnani, 2010: 1). Healthier foods and more fuel-efficient vehicles, he shows as examples, didn't become so common until they became profitable for producers.

On the other side CSR could be defined as ineffective in all those circumstances in which profits and social welfare are in direct opposition. Executives in fact are unlikely to act voluntarily in the public interest and against shareholder interests, since it is widely perceived that the performance, in terms of profit increase, is a key variable to determine the possibility of a CEO and his or her team to be, or not to be, fired. That's because so far companies have had to be accounted responsible just to two categories of people: the executives and the stockholders, as presented by Milton Friedman's normative business ethics theory, called the Stockholder theory. The theory suggests that “businesses are merely arrangements by which one group of people, the stockholders, advance capital to another group, the managers, to be used to realize specified ends and for which the stockholders receive an ownership interest in the venture” (Hasnas: 1998, 21). Companies executives of any kind are bound to advance the interests of their business-owners without by any means divert business resources away from the purpose of increase the overall profit.

The discrepancy is obvious, the concept of corporate social responsibility holds that companies should be responsible to more than just their owners, a social responsible company in fact should be accountable to a community, as well as to its stakeholders, other than just share or stockholders, for its actions and operations. Moreover, it has been largely perceived that consumers increasingly reject unethical and irresponsibly business practices, placing the entire discussion under a different perspective. This highlights how, in a relatively short time, adopting a social responsible conduct has become no more a matter of choice, nowadays customers and communities are insisting on transparent, accountable and substantial CSR policies coming from the corporate realities.

Counting on a growing public support the concept of CSR has once again been put back under examination, presenting a counterargument against the more severe critiques.

What emerged was an even deeper analysis of the concept flaws in upholding its promises.

“Experience has shown, however, that CSR falls short of the goal for a variety of reasons: it is rarely proactive, instead often reactive and as a result seen to be apologizing for transgressions; and it is rarely strategic and long-term, instead seen as scattershot and random. In both instances, CSR may actually work to the detriment of the business seeking to draw benefits from it. Efforts are often seen by a skeptical society as band-aids to serious problems, and leading business thinkers point to the paradox that CSR has opened up businesses for more criticism, not less. Terms such as ‘whitewash’ and ‘greenwash’ are frequently used to characterize CSR efforts, and often with justification” (Business for Peace Foundation, 2013).

What is contributing to strengthen those critical perceptions about CSR has to be identified, most of the time, in the nature of the initiatives falling under the CSR label.

There is an extensive literature addressing the promotional use that companies and corporations have made of their social and environmental projects, so extensive that it is nowadays recognized as common knowledge.

The public is prone to distrust CSR campaigns, or harshly comment on the reasons behind them, due to the idea that CSR is solely aimed at bringing good advertisement for a company. Even if with some exceptions, it is widely accepted that CSR represents a promotional instrument belonging to the management branches in charge for corporate reputation, PR or marketing and communications. As shown in a related survey conducted among different industries, the majority of respondents “see building reputation as a top reason for addressing sustainability issues. Given that reasoning, it makes sense that most respondents report their companies incorporate sustainability in reputation-building efforts” (McKinsey & Company, 2010: 2).

On the academic ground many have stressed how the close link between CSR and reputation deprives the same CSR projects of any long-term value or impact. They become symbolic attempts to create a responsible and sustainable social/environmental impact lacking a more substantial, therefore meaningful, profile. It is important to operate a distinction between, and explain what is meant by, symbolic and substantive actions. Symbolic might have two different meanings.

First the term symbolic can be used to identify what John Campbell calls ‘The rhetoric of socially responsible corporate behavior’, according to which “corporations may pay lip service in corporate reports, advertising, web sites, and elsewhere to the idea that they act in socially responsible ways. [...] After all, organizations often engage in symbolic and rhetorical framing in order to manage their public image” (Campbell, 2007: 950). So, symbolic refer to a specific way of framing the company image, reputation and overall communications to induce the public to perceive it as engaged in a socially responsible efforts. Here one can found some examples of what is called a “window-dressing” or a “greenwashing” practice, whereby companies engage in actions designed to mislead consumers (and other stakeholders) about their social and environmental achievements,

or they simply maintain a *façade* allowing them to ‘do business as usual’ behind closed doors. (Delmas and Burbano, 2011; Perez-Batres et Al, 2012).

Symbolic, though, can also refer to the nature of CSR initiatives themselves, as those initiatives can easily ‘buy’ large consensus without neither implying tangible actions nor addressing authentic needs. Some symbolic initiatives might be purposefully designed at gaining the support of the public opinion through the display of philanthropic or charitable donations, outsourcing the implementation of social and environmental projects to NGOs, and appointing ethic committees or regulative bodies supposed to monitor companies' compliance (Hawn and Ioannu, 2012). Symbolic initiatives appear to be actions in which companies try to focus on the appearance more than on the substance of what such an action may entail (Weaver et al., 1999). They usually represent ceremonial conformity or compliance and they can be more appropriately defined by a feeling of disconnected engagement rather than commitment to social responsible behaviour.

Substantive initiatives on the other hand require a fully committed endorsement of social and environmental responsible behaviours which consistently reflect and are emanated by the company mission, vision and values. In this case the organization undertakes real actions to meet the expectations of those stakeholders from which it depends for critical resources, even though such actions might constrain internal flexibility (Meyer et al., 1977). Olga Hawn (2012) explains how substantive actions often require significant changes in core practices, or even long-term commitments and investments in the form of corporate culture (Eccles et al., 2012), and how this entails certain risks (Berrone et al., 2009). On a practical side, substantive initiatives appear to be significantly connected with the social, environmental and political context of the country where implemented, addressing the real needs arising from there.

CSR effective initiatives are made of both substantive and symbolic components that need to be skilfully balanced for achieving the ultimate goal of having CSR become a value driver for all the stakeholders. Considering CSR as a value driver also provides a fertile ground for challenging the most critical assumptions. It has succeeded in showing the existence of connections, opportunities, and convergence points able to relate CSR to value creation through the use of creative ideas, innovative approaches and unconventional practices (Burke and Logsdon, 1996; Epstein et al., 2009; Vilanova et al., 2009; Fernández and Luna, 2010; Freeman et al., 2010; Husted and Allen, 2007). A full-scale integration of CSR into corporate strategy would entail to go beyond the goal of returning profits to society, moving instead toward a financially sustainable scenario where CSR is turning from an expense into an investment, creating value and making shareholders aware of this value creation (Bosch-Badia et al., 2013: 13).

2.3.2 CSR and Positive Peace

The new impetus toward a more holistic and business integrated perspective concerning the concept of CSR is in line with the peace business paradigm based on a more active participation of companies in engaging with society and its most critical issues. In order to go a step further in investigating the potential for peace of CSR impact on society it is necessary to look at the possible connections between CSR initiatives and peace.

CSR is a powerful instrument and as most of the instruments it can do good as it can do harm, what makes the difference is how it is managed, for instance “CSR cannot be disassociated from the context in which it operates; rather it should reflect and respond to the challenges (human, technological, environmental, etc.) in the company’s immediate setting” (Prandi and Lozano, 2011: 9). Companies operating in complex settings, facing development contradictions and security issues, have to constantly monitor and adapt to the context where they conduct their businesses while being sensitive to the society’s needs. In practice it means managing CSR consciously. CSR can in fact bring both positive and negative outcomes depending on how it is managed and channelled into the society.

In economy a term that is useful to help us understanding what CSR could represent in terms of positive peace achievement is ‘externality’. “A cost or benefit that arises from production and falls on someone other than the producer, or a cost or benefit that arises from consumption and falls on someone other than the consumer is called an externality” (Parkin et Al., 2008: 342).

Externalities could be both negative and positive, the classic example of negative externalities is pollution, while positive externalities are positive ripple effects created in sectors not directly related to the one of the company which produces the externalities. A classic example of a decision producing positive externalities is the purchase of a product that requires skilled personnel for its maintenance, which would possibly create an increase in demand on the labour market of those able to work with such a product.

Externalities are elements of the cost-benefit analysis but they are related to CSR since first, CSR should be used to mitigate negative externalities and promote positive “spin-offs” and also CSR initiatives, as well as economic externalities, have an impact on the society that could be either positive or negative. Considering the positive side, companies which through CSR establish good practices and relations with the society may gain long-term trustworthiness and profitability

(Jackson and Nelson, 2004). They can even contribute to improve the social condition of the country where they are operating and have a transformational impact on communities.

In practice CSR represents one mode of interaction with the society where a company operates.

In the case of a country struggling with inequality, poverty, crime and/or violence, such interaction can be used as a tool to transform detrimental structures and promote a culture of peace.

2.4 Giddens's Structuration Theory

Once the concepts of CSR and positive peace are defined and put in mutual correlation it is important to identify also theoretical references which can help to understand how companies can establish a set of practices, or modes of interaction, in the country where they operate, which may enhance both the company and the societal conditions. A theory suiting the study aim is *the structuration theory* by Anthony Giddens that relates to both structure and agency. Essentially, it assumes that structure and agents are mutually dependent on each other (Berends et Al., 2003).

Agency is critical to both the reproduction and the transformation of society. Agents draw upon structures to perform social actions through embedded memories, or *memory traces*, which are the vehicle for carrying out the social actions themselves. Agents also have the capacity to monitor their actions, and to rationalize and evaluate them, what Giddens calls the 'reflexive monitoring of actions' (Giddens, 1991). Through action, agents produce structures; through reflexive monitoring and rationalization, they transform them.

Structure, for Giddens refers to a set of systems of generative rules and resources, recursively implicated in the reproduction of social systems². They are 'virtual', "[s]tructures do not exist concretely in time and space except as 'memory traces, the organic basis of knowledgeability' (i.e., only as ideas or schemas lodged in human brains) and as they are 'instantiated in action' (i.e., put into practice)" (Sewell, 1992: 7). Structures are both enabling and constraining.

Agents need to be aware of the structures to be able to reproduce them. Moreover structures are both *outcomes of social interaction* in the way that they are produced and reproduced and a *resource for interaction* because actors, in order to construct social reality, draw upon pre-existing structural elements when conducting their action. Giddens defines this by introducing the concept of *duality of structure*: "structure is both medium and outcome of reproduction of practices.

2 Scholars tend to identify Giddens' rules with 'generalizable procedures'. To better understand what the term rules mean we can look at the example reported by Sewell quoting Giddens, "Structure is to practice as langue (the abstract rules that make possible the production of grammatical sentences) is to parole (speech, or the production of actual sentences) [...]. Hence structure, like langue, is a complex of rules with a 'virtual' existence, while practice, like speech, is an enactment of these rules in space and time». (Sewell, 1989: 7).

Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices, and 'exists' in the generating moments of this constitution” (Giddens, 1979: 15).

Through the duality of structure concept the structuration theory helps to avoid the dualism between agency and structure; it actually considers them mutually dependent on each other, providing a useful lens to better understand the production, reproduction and transformation of social systems. In sum Giddens suggests that “in seeking to come to grips with problems of action and structure, structuration theory offers a conceptual scheme that allows one to understand how actors are at the same time the creators of social systems, yet created by them. [...] It is an attempt to provide the conceptual means of analyzing the often delicate and subtle interlacing of reflexively organized action and institutional constraint” (Giddens. 1991: 204).

Structuration thus provides a theoretical framework showing how a company as an agent is able, through a specific mode of interaction (for example CSR) to impact the social structures in which it is entrenched. Studying the mutual relationship between agent and structures also helps to highlight the potential and the limitations of the interaction itself – in this case how CSR can be effective in fostering positive peace.

2.4.1 Companies as Agents

The structuration theory however has been criticized in many ways and mostly for its lack of empirical evidence (Gregson, 1989) and a tendency to adapt the structure to the agent in the so-called conflation of structure and human agent (Archer, 1990; 2000). Thus, it is fundamental to avoid doubts about what we consider an agent and, assuming that corporations today can operate as corporate actors, to explain the choice of considering them as agents.

“A central premise in structuration theory is agency; that is, actors are viewed as purposeful, knowledgeable, reflexive, and active. The use of the word agent signifies his purpose and power. To be an agent implies the ability to intervene in the world, or to refrain from intervention, and presumes that the agent is able to deploy a range of causal power, including that of influencing others.” (Sarasona et al., 2006: 290-291).

That is, agents have the capacity to make a difference since they are aware of the conditions and consequences of what they choose to do in their lives to the point that one agent ceases to be such if it loses the capability to make that difference (Giddens, 1984: 14). Moreover, through the reflexive monitoring of their actions they gain a theoretical understanding of themselves and others. Agents can thus rationalize their actions, find a motivation for them and finally reflect upon and modify interpretations of such actions (Sarasona et Al., 2006: 291).

If it is simple to define individuals as agents it is not the same when talking of companies, or corporations, or in a wider sense all those organizations that have gradually acquired a sort of ‘personality’ even if they remain complex systems of multiple features.

The ‘corporate personhood’ debate has raised an huge number of issues that are still far from being solved; “because of the meaning and value we attach to personhood in our society, deciding whether a corporation is a person helps us to decide what its rights and duties are and how we can expect it to behave” (Ripken, 2009: 99-100). There are many different perspectives on what kind of identity could be ascribed to a corporation. The main ones are the following:

- The *artificial entity theory* argues that corporations are merely fictional entities, artificially constructed by people in virtue of a statute but deprived of any independent ontological existence (Ibid.: 106-109).
- The *aggregate, associational, or contract theory* argues that corporations are instead intended as a collection of their human constituents, thus existing and operating just in virtue of the actions and consent of the people who together make the corporate entity (Ibid.: 109-112).
- A theory which sees corporations as real and independent beings, neither artificial entities which exist in terms of legal constructs nor realities bounded to their human component; corporations are a whole bigger than the sum of its part and so real and distinctive from the individuals who take part in the corporate enterprises (Ibid.: 112-118)

In each of the three different approaches it is considered acceptable that corporations have identities defined as a set of attributes, which gives the company its own distinctiveness. Companies have missions and visions, goals and values, they present themselves with a history and a reputation, they have strategies, plans, communicative skills, and a self-determining capacity. This identity is continually evolving, first of all because past strategies are contributing in shaping the company identity, as well as the relationship it has, and the degree of dependency it holds, with other corporations, customers, governments and shareholders (Balmer, 2007:8); and secondly because as agents, companies acknowledge the existing structures and through procedures of assimilation or accommodation – that is, *organizational intelligence* - are able to adapt themselves to the operative environment. (Yolles et Al., 2011).

2.4.2 Countries' social structure

The meaning of ‘structure’ in social sciences has always been hard to define “[i]t has a persuasive power that escapes attempts at definition, a power we all feel but find virtually impossible to reduce

to words. 'Structure', in fact, is less a precise concept than a kind of founding or epistemic metaphor of social scientific – and scientific – discourse. [...] for the foreseeable future, 'structure' is bound to escape any attempt at formal definition and continues its essential if somewhat mysterious work in the constitution of social scientific knowledge" (Sewell, 1989: 1-2).

Structures, in Giddens terms, are first of all 'dual' in the sense that they are "both the medium and the outcome of the practices which constitute social systems" (Giddens, 1981, p. 27). "Structures shape people's practices, but it is also people's practices that constitute (and reproduce) structures. In this view of things, human agency and structure, far from being opposed, in fact, presuppose each other" (Sewell, 1989: 4). This is a key assumption on which structuration theory stands.

Here structure is something different from system. To define structure it is fundamental to consider the dimensions of "time and space". Thus, the term 'Social Structure' tends to include two elements not easily distinguished from one another: "the *patterning of interaction* as implying relations between actors or groups; and the *continuity of interaction* in time" (Giddens, 1979: 62). It is then possible to differentiate system and structure according to their nature.

Giddens define social system as a 'structured totality', and structures do not exist concretely except in the moments when they are constituting social systems. It is anyway possible to analyse the time and space component of structures "in terms of the historical duration of the practices they recursively organize, and the spatial 'breadth' of those practices: how widespread they are across a range of interactions" (Ibid.: 65). In other words, one can look at how much structures are rooted in time and how much they are spread in the social space, thus identifying some key characteristics. Structures living their virtual existence may be either codified (i.e. laws, rules, regulations) or uncodified (norms and cultural values). Structures can also be limited, such as within certain organization and subcultures, or all encompassing such as national cultures and broad institutional framework (Giddens, 1984). Structures are both enabling and constraining. «Structure thus is not to be conceptualized as a barrier to action, but as essentially involved in its production» (Giddens, 1979 : 70). Structures are outcomes of, and a resource for, social interaction and interpretation, in the way that they are produced and reproduced. Agents need also to be aware of the structures to be able to reproduce or change them. (Berends et Al. 2003).

Furthermore, structure, according to Giddens, also consists of three dimensions important to understand the interaction between agent and structure:

1. *Signification (meaning)*, which provides an interpretative scheme since it refers to social rules determining what constitutes meaning and govern communication processes in a given context.

2. *Domination (power)*, which are «asymmetries of resources that agents draw upon in exercising power and in the sustaining of power relations in and between systems of interaction» (Giddens 1986: 93). Resources represents what gives power and influence, they can be classified into 'authoritative and allocative'. The former generate command over persons while the latter generate command over objects or other material phenomena (Giddens, 1979). By extension, Sewell suggests, authoritative resources should be human resources and allocative resources non-human ones.
3. *Legitimation (norms)*, which determines the appropriateness of behaviours, sanctioning social actors conduct in referring to norms, rules, rights and moral obligations expected of agents in interaction. (Miles, 2012)

In sum, this three dimensions influence how agents interact with structures in a social context. The agent draws upon *rules and resources*, constituting the structures themselves and embedded in the agent memory, to gain knowledge about the external context, conditions, and potential results of an action, thereby allowing the same agent to influence, interfere and make a difference, in other words, to make an impact on the social context where it lives and operates.

2.4.3 Structuration model

According to Giddens's Structuration Theory, all members of society are agents since they all know the rules of social life and are in control of their share of human (ideal) and nonhuman (material) resources.

“Agency, therefore, can be defined as the actor's knowledge of rules, which means the capacity to apply them to new contexts; alternatively, the same thing can be said the other way around, by defining agency as the actor's control of resources, which means the capacity to reinterpret or mobilize an array of resources in terms of rules other than those that constituted the array. In this theory, then, agency is not an occult quality that exists apart from and in opposition to structure, but the constitutive stuff of structure” (Sewell, 1989: 31).

It allows me to create the following visual model of *structuration*, explaining the mutual relationship between agent and structure (see Figure 1).

The agent is not separated by the structure; on the contrary, it is part of it. Moreover, in order to produce and reproduce structures, the agent needs to be aware of the modality that allows the interaction to occur without compromising the structure in which the agent is embedded.

Agents are elements of change, change can be positive or not, but it happens from within and it affects both the structure and the same agent. The agent doesn't overthrow but instead conforms

to the structure and introduces innovative solutions and transformative patterns by interacting with it while reflexively monitoring the interaction processes in place.

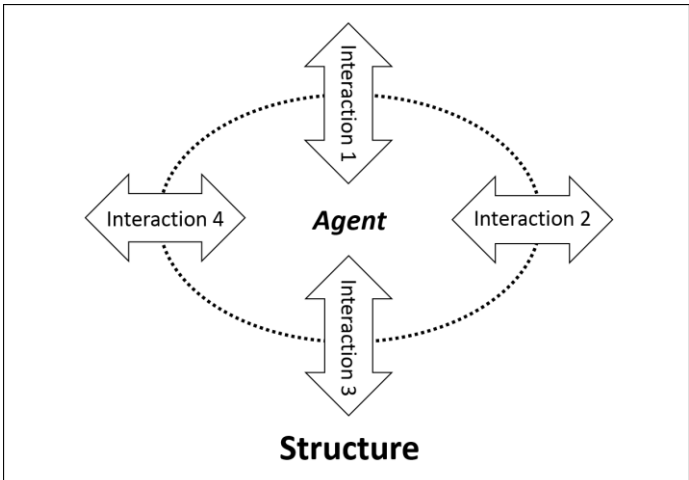


Figure 1: A visual model based on Giddens' Structuration Theory. The agent is within the structure and it is interacting with the structure. The interaction is mutually reiterated and monitored.

Knowledgeable companies, as agents, are empowered both to act in a manner that influences the structures of a country, and to reflexively monitor the impact of their actions, leading to actions that reinforce, modify, or create new structures. So companies may, through their CSR initiatives, influence the structure while simultaneously dealing with the existing structures in order to operate more efficiently. Companies mutually interacting with the country structures are thus able to have an impact by adjusting continuously to what is needed to conform to the structure.

The choice of using Structuration theory to establish a theoretical framework able to shed light on the research topic appears to be clearer now. Giddens' theory deals with processes and illustrates why activity patterns should constantly be assessed and adjusted according to the structure. The organization of social practices is recursive since social structure is medium and outcome of those practices it recursively organizes (Giddens, 1984: 16-18). "If most actors in society are more socially and politically conscious, there will be stronger structuration, meaning greater reproduction and improvement of social behaviors and institutional order embedded in social structure, a process that is always recursive" (Luo, 2006: 750-751). In practice, considering companies as agents acting in the structural context of a developing country, CSR appears to be an example of an interaction conform to the structuration process. CSR initiatives are in fact activities performed by agents (companies) in relation to structures (within the country) that can be recursively monitored, thus allowing companies to influence some structural parameters (Ibid.). From this perspective, it can be also argued that CSR activities can recursively shape stakeholder-

related structural features, by creating a more suitable social or political climate that can further contribute to achieve both economic returns, legitimacy and sustainability (Luo, 2006).

In sum, considering the definition given to positive peace, and the structuration process highlighted here, it is possible then to explore a company contribution to the enhancement of positive peace in the country where it operates through the analysis of specific CSR initiatives, efficiently shaped and recursively monitored. What might have sense in theory though, in order to be taken into consideration as a meaningful contribution to the academic debate, needs also to be supported with empirical evidence. So in order to produce evidence on how Companies-Agents influence and are influenced by structures, and especially on how CSR could be effective to impact the positive peace standards of a country, I considered the possible destinations and modalities of a fieldwork aimed at collecting data. Belize Natural Energy Limited, a visionary energy company in the challenging structural context of Belize, has proved to be suitable for my research purposes, as a result of this, the structuration model presented earlier in this chapter has been provided with a more case-oriented and detailed content (see Figure 2).

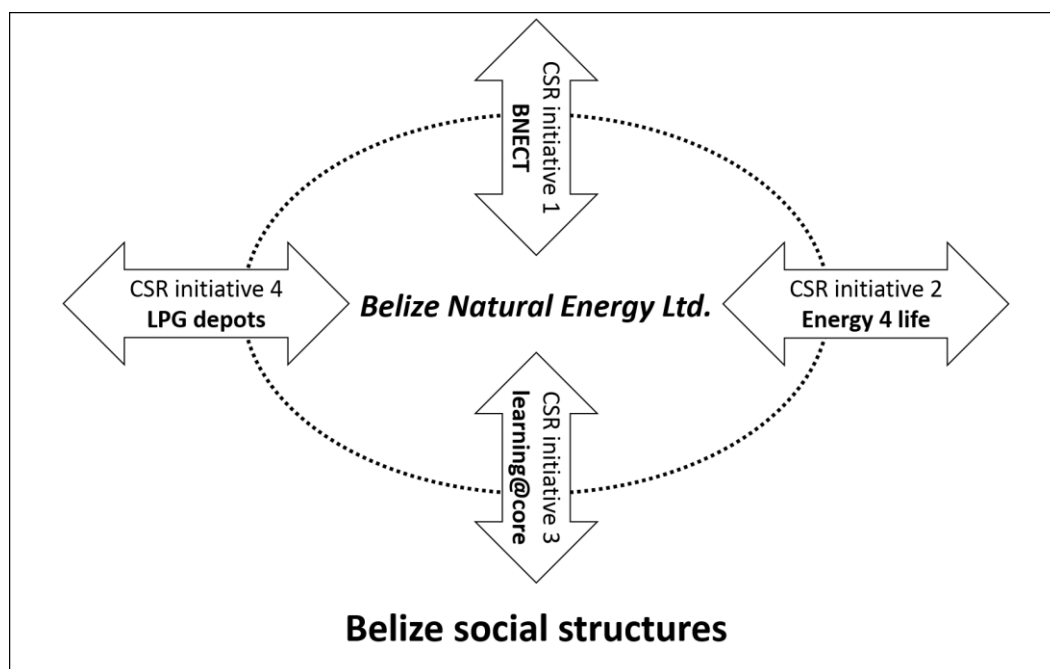


Figure 2: Structuration theory model applied to the context and case of study of this research. The agent is a company named Belize Natural Energy Limited and it operates in the context of Belize. Social structures are produced and reproduced by the agent, through a number of mutual interactions. In this specific case, the interactions are represented by 4 different CSR initiatives impacting in various degrees on the structures of the Belizean society.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has sought to outline the conceptual and theoretical framework of the current research. Initially, it focused on Johan Galtung definition of positive peace and it outlined how such a concept can be related to business performances. The recommended shift toward a peace business paradigm stands on two main assumptions to which a third one seems to have been recently added, implying a different conceptualization of what nowadays creates companies' value. A special focus has been given to Corporate Social Responsibility. The definitions, critiques, and the evolution of this concept toward creating a different idea of business value to be shared between company and society, exploring how it can be potentially positioned in relation to positive peace.

The chapter then described structuration theory, explaining how it is used in this research as a tool able to better identify, and theoretically support, the dynamics enabling a company, as agent, to produce and reproduce structures of society in the country context where it operates. This happens thanks to a mode of interaction that has to be mutual, and recursively monitored.

CSR provides an example of such interaction that can be monitored in a specific context in order to explore to which extent it is able to shape social structures and foster positive peace.

CHAPTER 3: Research methods

“Theory is always simpler than reality.”

- Joseph Viner

This chapter presents and discusses the methods used to identify, access, and collect the field data. It highlights the challenges faced during my research, beginning with a reflection on the idea of conducting a fieldwork, identifying a suitable case study and developing an appropriate research design. It then focuses on the selection of an empirical context and a case for my study. Having chosen Belize, some considerations needed to be made regarding security and access to informants. This chapter also presents the data collection techniques and the sampling procedures used. In conclusion, it addresses the ethical concerns and the role of the researcher in the field.

3.1 Planning the Fieldwork

I have always been fascinated by the idea of conducting field research. “There are no cold mathematics or complicated statistics, and no abstract deductive hypotheses. Instead, there is direct, face-to-face social interaction with ‘real people’ in a natural setting” (Neuman, 2007: 276). However, students and research novices tend to be naïve, underestimating the implications of conducting fieldwork, ignoring delicate power dynamics, or denying consideration to ethical issues that should be addressed from the beginning. This approach fostered criticism toward the concept of fieldwork and fieldworkers, defined by some as “academic tourism” (Mowforth and Munt, 1998: 101) and “research travellers” (Clifford, 1997: 67) to indicate the dangerous superficiality that is sometimes used in planning and designing field research.

In order not to fall into the category of naïve researcher, I decided to prepare in advance as much as I could, relying on the instruments my academic institution was offering me and strictly adhering to ethics & security compliances. Unfortunately, even when institutions provide broad support “[this] typically devotes little attention to—and therefore gives us little preparation for dealing with—some of the very difficult ethical, practical, and emotional challenges that may be encountered during fieldwork” (Clark, 2012: 824). Working according to plans helps, but a researcher also needs to be open to the inputs coming from the field and be ready to follow them to gain new insights. This is especially relevant in my case since I embraced an exploratory approach, which is not intended to provide conclusive evidence but to gain a better understanding of problems on which little or no previous research has been done (Brown, 2006).

According to my work schedule, once a case study (Belize Natural Energy Ltd.'s CSR) and a study context (Belize) were identified as relevant for conducting my fieldwork and gathering valuable information, I would have addressed feasibility, ethical and security issues to be constantly monitored during the field research. Once in the field, I had to gain access to data regarding my case study and conduct an unbiased and relevant data collection, sampling informants according to the research goals. In conclusion, I wanted to acquire, if possible, a local-angle from where to interpret the community perspective regarding BNE Ltd. and the benefits promoted by the company's CSR initiatives, in order to investigate the degree of CSR's impact on the country's peace standards.

3.2 Case Study

A case study can be defined as “a detailed investigation, often with data collected over a period of time, of one or more organisations, or groups within organisations, with a view to providing an analysis of the context and processes involved in the phenomenon under study” (Hartley, 2004: 208-209). The reason why I chose to operate with a case study-centred methodological framework lies in the epistemological stance on which the case study is based. It affirms that “the social world is to be understood from the point of view of the individuals who are directly involved in the events that are investigated. Not the isolated facts as such, but the perception and interpretation by agents of these facts provide us with fundamental data.” (Pauwels and Matthyssens, 2004: 3). In addition, I took into consideration the fact that a case study is usually “selected for its very uniqueness, for what it can reveal about a phenomenon, knowledge to which we would not otherwise have access to” (Merriam, 1998: 46). Due to its exploratory nature, the relatively recent development of the peace business literature, and the little research already existing on Belize, the proposed study was fit for a case study research design since it would have provided new and unique knowledge.

This method has also been widely criticized for some of its aspects. Case studies, more than other methods, are in fact keen to be biased and they have traditionally been considered a sloppy research method or 'soft' research, “possibly because investigators have not followed systematic procedures” (Yin: 2009: 26-27). Doing a good case study is also remarkably hard since the researcher, in absence of routine procedures, has to be even more aware of potential flaws in his or her methodological approach. Moreover, a single-case study cannot be enough for being statistically relevant. A recent trend shows how, even among supporters of the case study research method, many have started using multiple cases to stress the validity of the research.

I endorse the opinion that a case study “does not represent a ‘sample,’ and in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)” (Ibid. 18). A well-developed case study might allow generalization within a specific theoretical proposition, which is one of the goals of my research.

Once I chose to have a single exploratory case study, I had to identify the most appropriate subject to use as my case. Stake suggests (1995: 1-2) that a suitable case must be a well-bounded, specific, complex, and functioning “thing” and not a generality. I thus decided to have Belize Natural Energy Limited’s CSR as my case. BNE is a company that, according to the Giddens’ Structuration Theory, is able to mutually interact with the social structure of Belize through CSR initiatives. Moreover, my choice is supported by the uniqueness of the case. BNE Ltd. is in fact the only company currently producing oil & gas in commercial quantities in Belize. If in the future, other companies, which are currently exploring for oil in the country, could start producing, it would be interesting to conduct a comparative study of multiple companies’ CSR initiatives to stress the validity of the research. My research design, though, envisages a single case.

3.3 Research design

A research design is “the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions. Colloquially, a research design is *a logical plan for getting from here to there*” (Yin, 2013: Ch.2), progressing through major steps such as the collection and analysis of relevant data. To ensure consistency in a single-case study, it is possible to decide for a holistic or an embedded research design. The difference lies in the number of units of analysis that are considered relevant to the research.

In a holistic case study there is a context and a case placed within. The unit of analysis corresponds to the case itself. On the contrary, in an embedded case study, attention is also given to one or more subunits, and the analysis includes results coming from those. The risk here is to emphasize too much on the subunits, transforming a single-case into a multiple-case study.

However, I consider the embedded case study design the most suitable since CSR is made of multiple projects and initiatives, all contributing to define a company approach to social and responsible business, and its effectiveness (see Figure 3). Initially, three initiatives were selected as units of analysis: BNE Charitable Trust (BNECT), Energy for Life (E4L), and Learning at the Core (L@Core). Each of them represents, in fact, a different CSR ‘style’, adding details to the whole characterisation of the company’s CSR strategy. A fourth initiative, the LPG production

and distribution (LPG Depots), wasn't identified together with the others, but later since it doesn't formally belong to BNE CSR. Its potential relevance, in fact, strongly emerged during the data collection and was then confirmed by the data analysis, so I took the decision to officially insert it into the case study design and discuss its contribution to my research.

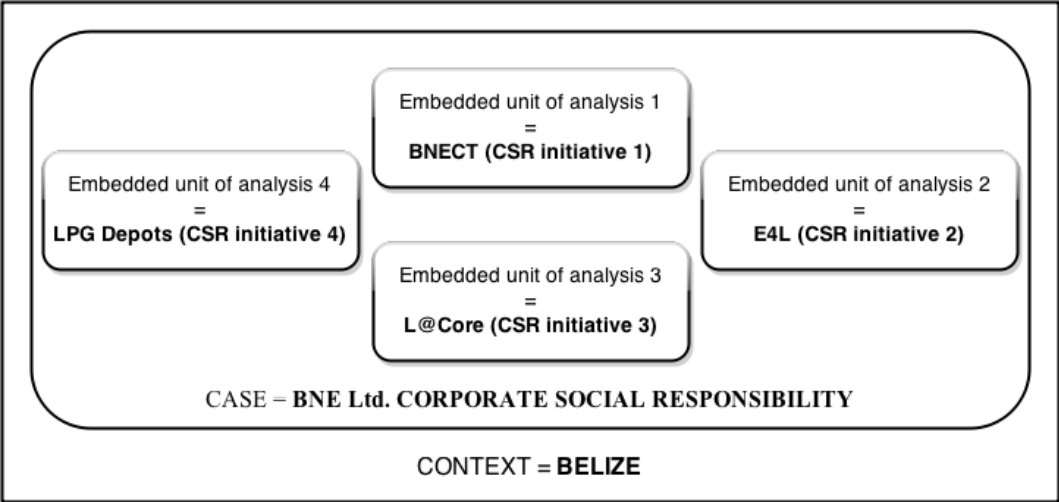


Figure 3: The research design explained as an embedded case study

Researching CSR was a challenge. To understand the nature of any CSR initiative, I first needed to acquaint myself with the company's perspective, its culture and the philosophy behind it. In addition, I had to explore the company business dynamics, adopting the technical business language used in BNE corporate communications, and familiarize with the company perspective in order to understand what the real CSR drivers were. The research design was hard to assess because it had to take into account the concept's fluidity while it also needed to match the research requirements. According to my research question, CSR had to be addressed in relation to a peace-oriented structuration process, thus also taking into consideration the social structure of the context in which my case was placed.

3.4 The study context: why Belize?

Belize is a former British colony and the second smallest country in Central America. It has about 350000 inhabitants, half of whom are less than 21 years old (The Statistical Institute of Belize, 2010). Young generations, cut off from both the national education system and job market, are attracted by drug-trafficking cartels, coming from the neighbouring countries (Legget, 2007). Direct violence appears mostly linked to gangs' activities, localized to specific areas and crimes.

Towns and villages along the borders with Guatemala³ in the east and Mexico in the north (see Appendix 7.1) are also significantly affected.

Recently, Belize has been experiencing a threatening increase of its homicide rate, the most basic indicator of violent crime, which increased by 150 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 16 to 41 per 100,000 inhabitants (OAS, 2012), thereby scoring as the sixth highest in the world in 2010 (Lopez, 2013). “Homicide in Belize is concentrated geographically in cities and within certain neighbourhoods. Belize City, with about a quarter of the country’s population, saw 55 percent of all homicides in 2010 and in 2012, a third of all major crimes” (Peirce and Veyrat-Pontet, 2013: 7). The former capital is the main stage for territorial rivalries between gangs, which are, in fact, “considered as the main driver of homicidal violence in Belize City and account for an estimated 85 percent of murders in the country. However, the homicide cases are not restricted to gang members and sometimes include bystanders caught in the crossfire” (Lopez, 2013: 10).

Belize is one of the least competitive economies in the world, ranking 123 out of 142 countries (WEF, 2012). The tourism and energy sectors are relatively young compared to those that have traditionally sustained the country’s economy, such as agriculture. Agricultural products represent the main export to the entire Central America – Caribbean region, and are characterized by high production costs and sold in protected markets. Caribbean countries have traditionally relied heavily on a system of preferential access to markets for commodities such as bananas and sugar.

In recent years, regardless of a growing urbanization “within the Central American and Caribbean regions, Belize continues to be among the minority of countries that has a predominantly rural population [...] 54.8 percent of the total population was living in rural areas in 2010” (SIB, 2010: 10). The population is also highly differentiated in terms of ethnicity, language, access to education, literacy rate and average incomes. Looking at these social structures, it is possible to identify ongoing marginalization processes within subgroups of the population. In general, “marginalized populations are those excluded from mainstream social, economic, cultural, or political life. Examples of marginalized populations include, but are by no means limited to, groups excluded due to race, religion, political or cultural group, age, gender, or financial status. To what extent such populations are marginalized, however, is context specific and reliant on the cultural organization of the social site in question” (Given, 2008: 495). Social exclusion, poverty

3 Guatemala doesn’t recognize Belize’ sovereignty, so a border dispute is currently ongoing. As a result, frequent breach of laws by Guatemalans –related to poaching, illegal trespassing and illegal extraction of resources in some of the Belizean protected reserves– are fuelling tensions along the borders, putting aside any common attempt to reach an agreement and facilitating violent episodes (Sylvestre, 1995).

and other forms of marginalization have been accounted for being conducive to violence in the entire Central America region, and Belize is not an exception (CLALS, 2014).

3.4.1 Researching Positive Peace in Belize

Before leaving Norway, I conducted the first part of my research, focusing on literature reviews and the content analysis of documents and pre-existing data. “An understanding of the general and specific literatures is crucial for all researchers considering the construction of a research proposal” (Given, 2008: 487). In order to gain an insight on the social political and economic profile of the country, I searched the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), Jstor and Google Scholar for papers containing key words such as “Development AND Belize”, “Poverty AND Belize”, “Violence AND Belize”, and I was quite immediately frustrated by the lack of academic writings regarding recent political and economic assessments of Belize.

First of all, Belize doesn't appear in most of the global indexes, including the most known Global Peace Index (GPI) or the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) since data from the country are simply not available. In other indexes data relative to Belize result old, partial and in general they are showing a worsening trend from the situation assessed at the beginning of the XXI Century. In sum, it is hardly possible to rely on quantitative studies when it comes to Belize since the country doesn't appear in the most popular global measurement of the economic, social and political factors monitored in the fields of international development and security.

When it comes to qualitative studies, the situation slightly improves. Two test books, considered domestically as basic sources of information on the political and economic history of the country, were immediately approached. *The making of modern Belize*, written by Cedric Grant (1976), professor of political science, and *A History of Belize, Nation in the Making* by Robert Leslie (1983), former ambassador in the US, both focused on the state structures established during the colonial time and their heavy legacy. Both books analyse the State and Nation-building processes that led to the independence of Belize, previously known as British Honduras, from Great Britain in 1981.

Most of the information I managed to collect in advance, regarding recent/current social, political and economic challenges in Belize, come from International Organizations reports and papers found online on the respective websites (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, UN, UNDP, Central America Development Bank, etc.). A little improvement was done searching for studies conducted on gender issues and on crime & violence in Belize (Klein 2001; Lewis 2009; McClusky

2010; McClaurin, 1996; Ragsdale and Anders 1999; Legget, 2007), and using the references listed in the most relevant sources to enlarge my literature review sample. I relied on those books, articles and reports to outline the country profile and be prepared to conduct my fieldwork.

3.4.2 A safe location

In order to be able to access the Belize Natural Energy Ltd. facilities and at the same time avoid exposure to risks concerning personal security, I decided to look for an accommodation in Belmopan and to expand my network of contacts and informants within the capital's population. The reasons were mostly function- and safety-oriented.

Belmopan, sited in the Cayo district, is in fact the capital city of Belize and it is known to be a safe place for foreigners, with the highest presence of governmental offices, embassies, and international organizations' branches. However, the periphery has been just nominally included in the city area and it still lacks basic infrastructure such as road paving, electricity and water supply. Moreover, it hosts a significant amount of marginalized population in some of the suburbs which are gradually enlarging and presenting relevant conditions, compared to other city areas of economic disadvantage. A condition consistent with data showing the increase of crime and domestic violence at district level, reflecting a sharp increase in indigence and a 45% increase in poverty (Caribbean Development Bank, 2010). "Homicides in Belmopan nearly doubled over 2011 numbers." (OSAC, 2013).

The Cayo district is also hosting most of the BNE Ltd. facilities, including the headquarters and offices together with the producing Spanish Lookout field and production facility in Iguana Creek, as well as the Belize Natural Energy Charitable Trust (BNECT) offices in Belmopan. The Never Delay field is also just outside the capital. The logistic decision of being in Belmopan allowed me to stay in touch with the BNECT management, visit governmental offices, and eventually move with the Company bus system to the headquarters of the company when needed. Thus, the choice to rent out a room in Belmopan was a conscious attempt to be in the right location from where to conduct my fieldwork, with the necessary logistic and personal support, while operating in a relatively safe environment at the same time.

3.4.3 Researching CSR in Belize

Agreeing on a conceptualization of CSR in my theoretical framework and going through the literature regarding critical and supportive perspective on the topic does not mean that researching CSR is an easy task.

First of all, it means looking at a company's set of initiatives from all directions and being able to identify and categorize relevant CSR activities. While in some instances a company has a standardized CSR protocol, which is monitored and professionally implemented, there are also situations where CSR-like initiatives have not been formalized as belonging to the CSR category, as it is the case of BNE. "One of the difficulties faced by researchers is the ability to properly classify corporations and their activities within a CSR construct" (Clarkson, 1995 : 96).

In their article titled *Corporate Social Responsibility: A Three-domain approach* (2003), Schwartz and Carroll tried to answer to the CSR research challenge by designing a three-domains model which took into consideration the economic, ethical and legal domain to which a business is subjected. Looking at how companies respond and interact, or in other words, how they position themselves when it comes to economics, ethics and the rule of law, it is possible, according to Carroll, to identify their CSR profiles and operate a categorization.

Although I recognize the relevance of Schwartz and Carroll's three levels of analysis to better identify how a company may approach CSR, (i.e. with a more legal-, or ethics-, or profitability-oriented mandate). I don't rely on their model in my research since it tends to accept a static conceptualization of CSR as a set of determined policies which are hardly subjected to a transformative process. Another reason is that, during my fieldwork, I didn't access the financial registers of BNE, nor did I acquire enough understanding of the legal framework in which the company was placed. Monitoring the regulatory network as well as the capital flows would have required much more time and resources, therefore my analysis has approached CSR mainly from an ethical perspective.

To understand the nature of CSR, the researcher needs to get in touch with the business reality, and has to investigate decisions and behaviours of individuals or groups of individuals (e.g. management, board of directors, shareholders) holding decision power within a company. This implies spending time analysing facts, decision making processes and identifying more or less hidden agendas in addition to understanding the multiple perspectives at stake. Once it is understood to which degree CSR represents an important component for the company, it is

necessary to understand why it is or is not important, and how this is then reflected upon the company performances and transferred to the stakeholders. Investigating CSR from this perspective presents some challenges since a comprehensive approach to measuring the impact of decision making, when it comes to companies' social initiatives, should involve a high number of variables outside of the control and direct responsibility of the company, which are hard to identify and assess. Nevertheless it is true that at BNE Corporate Social Responsibility plays a significant role and that it is part of the company culture. Therefore it is also present in the company narrative when explained. In order to understand the nature of the CSR initiatives, and to see how they work in relation to the country structures, I approached the subject during my interviews, trying to outline the decision processes that brought BNE to design its own CSR profile.

3.5 Data collection techniques

I framed my data collection along a triangulation approach, allowing me to combine different techniques, mixing document analysis to semi-structured interviews, open conversations, and field observation. Triangulation is considered a method of cross-checking data coming from multiple sources to search for regularities (O'Donoghue and Punch, 2003). Regularities might come from a shared voice in the discourse of company management, explaining how and why the company is engaged in CSR initiatives. It might as well indicate similarities in the public perceptions regarding the efforts made by such a company. Regularities can be common answers to questions regarding the causes of violence or the factors hindering peace in the society. Regularities are patterns in the narratives investigated, as opposed to irregularities, discrepancies and isolated voices. That is what a researcher is looking for and triangulation helps to identify both.

On a more practical side, triangulation also helps the researcher with confirming data, avoiding 'response bias', according to which people tend to tell what they think the researcher wants to hear, and increasing the study internal validity (Pauwels & Matthyssens 2004).

This is done crossing primary with secondary data, or in other words, balancing interviews with direct observations and document analysis (see Figure 4).

Triangulation also implies the possibility of reviewing the narratives over multiple time periods, resubmitting them to selected participants. This should allow the researcher to see how goals, behaviours and attitudes might change over time, or verify the consistency of all the information obtained. It also facilitates the gain of a deeper insight into certain aspects that might be identified as important in a second phase of the research (e.g. during data analysis).

I didn't submit my narratives to the scrutiny of the study participants, but contacted some of them via e-mail to double check and confirm certain specific sentences, memories and events in order to present the facts in the most accurate way. Moreover, at the time of my fieldwork, BNE Ltd. was undergoing an internal restructuring, including a redefinition of the company vision, mission and values. These are key to understanding a company culture, and therefore what motivates certain decisions and behaviours in the field of CSR. Triangulation allowed me to keep track of the process and relate it to my findings.

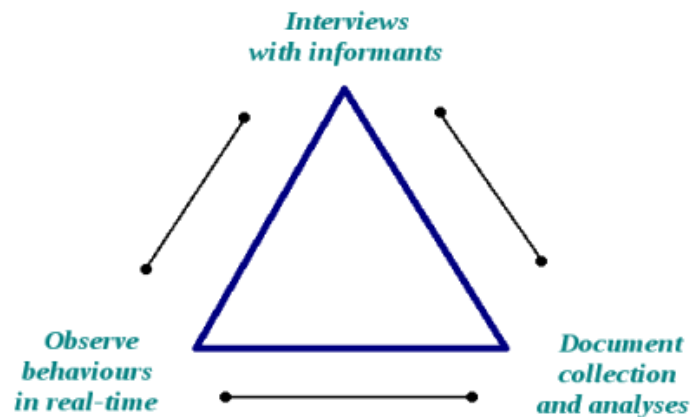


Figure 4: Triangulation shows how the researcher can rely on interviews, observation and document analysis to strengthen the reflexivity and validity of the data collected during the field research.

3.5.1 Document analysis

To understand the lines along which the BNE's CSR initiatives were developed, I conducted a long and in-depth research on the material available online –on the company website, on social media, and in several digitalized press releases published over the last 10 years. The web nowadays can be incredibly helpful to a young researcher, but it is important to sort the material according to the case study inquiry, in order not to risk getting lost in an abundance of documentation that can sometimes be misleading. For instance, the material a private company makes available to the public has promotional features that can't be underestimated in approaching document reviews. Even when a researcher is allowed to go through internal documents, it is fundamental to always keep in mind that each piece of paper is written for a specific purpose and audience.

“In this sense, the case study investigator is a vicarious observer, and the documentary evidence reflects a communication among other parties attempting to achieve some other objectives. By constantly trying to identify these objectives, you are less likely to be misled by documentary evidence and more likely to be correctly critical in interpreting the contents of such evidence”

(Yin, 2013: Ch. 4). Still, documents can corroborate information obtained in other ways or expose some incongruence that could lead to further questioning.

Once in the field, I managed to collect different written sources of information regarding Belize Natural Energy's social and environmental projects, keeping a possible company agenda behind the release of such documents in mind. I profited enormously by reviewing the material, including presentations, reports, brochures, internal bulletins, press release verbatim and other official documents. I also visited the local libraries and the national archives, as well as the UNDP offices, the George Price Centre for Peace and Development and the KOLBE Foundation, which is in charge of the prison management in the country, to get access to domestic documentation on the causes of violence and the challenges to peace.

3.5.2 Direct Observation

Part of my data collection has relied upon direct observation, a technique that is slightly different from the more academically debated 'participant' observation. Participant observation, in fact, is traditionally used by anthropologists who, conducting ethnographic studies, spend a long time in the field to acquire the local perspective and look at reality from within. "Ethnographic approaches aim to be 'actor-oriented' in their attempts to convey reality from a subject's 'point of view', increasingly including those of the researcher as final author and editor of the ethnographic text" (Scheyvens & Storey, 2003: 65). Even though I was not interested in writing an ethnography, I still wanted to gain the local perspective about my research topic, so I decided to participate and observe as much as possible. During my stay, I managed to share some aspects of the company daily life, like transportation means, meals, and office space, with the BNE employees.

Experiencing the company in first person and observing the ongoing dynamics from the inside, even if only for a limited amount of time, provided me with a relative advantage in accessing the information I was looking for. At the same time, my choice of living in a private household, using public buses and doing grocery shopping at the market, allowed me to observe the field from within, avoiding additional barriers to interaction with the local community besides the ones given by my researcher role. The role of the researcher in participant observation contexts has been in fact widely discussed in terms of legitimacy, authority, inequality, and power distribution. The same concerns also apply, albeit in a lesser degree, to direct observation techniques. Since the '80s, an interesting debate in social sciences has highlighted issues related to several structures within the society, such as social and economic differences, able to create distance between the

researchers and the researched. A distance that is reinforcing those structures separating “us” from “them” and fostering dominant discourses of ‘the other’.

Last but not least, as Bryman suggests “[T]here are issues that are resistant to observation” (2008: 466). If some aspects of my research were going to be enlightened by a focused observation, many others would have remained unseen. In truth, I would have never gained access to my core data without verbally articulating my requests in a clear way.

3.5.3 Semi-structured Interviews and Open Conversations

I mostly needed face-to-face discussions where a subjective, unique, detailed and personal story could be told, and I also could stress the focus on how the interviewees understood and explained different phenomena, the world, and their actions in it (Bryman 2008: 438). Qualitative interview literature highlights several possible approaches towards interviewing. These could be placed on a continuum from the least structured, such as “ethnographic interviewing, which avoids substantively oriented topics in favor of general questions that draw out the participant’s own accounts” (Given, 2008: 469) to the most structured one, as the survey questionnaire format, where the questions and their order are already defined by the researcher (Thagaard 2003: 84).

Most qualitative interviewers prefer a semi-structured interview approach, and so did I. In this case “the interview guide typically contains a general framework for the interview, but the researcher also has the freedom to pursue the questions in a different order and to allocate more time to some questions than to others, depending on what is most appropriate for discussing the research topic with each individual participant” (Given, 2008: 469). Moreover, I did not enter the interview settings with fixed hypothesis; the purpose and focus was on exploring the topic (Kvale 1996: 127), so I was open to discuss additional topics they introduced as relevant to our conversation (Bryman, 2008: 438). “As a consequence, each interview turned out unique. After every conversation, I checked the interview guide and modified, added and/or deleted some questions, based on my evolving experience as interviewer” (Kuosmanen, 2013: 29-30).

However, during the interviews, I made a conscious attempt to follow the guidelines (see Appendix 7.3) since they were drafted in order to move through different conceptual sessions while maintaining a discursive flow.

In the first session, I asked the interviewees to describe BNE focusing on the company history, culture and business operations. Then the interviewee was asked to define CSR and to tell me more about how it is designed and implemented by the company, with direct references to the single

initiatives. I also approached the context of Belize, trying to identify both the structures defining and influencing the Belizean society and the issues undermining its efforts to eradicate violence. In the second phase, the interviewee was invited to tell me more about how CSR initiatives are designed and implemented by the company, with direct references, if possible, to the single projects. Some questions were asked to identify what was supposed to be the best way to target Belizean issues with effective CSR strategies and to determine the common perspectives on how CSR was managed in reality, with a look at its effectiveness and profitability.

In the last phase, the wrapping up session, I recalled the main points of the interview, asking the interviewee to comment them and, if necessary, correct some statements or add some final remarks.

In the interview setting, the researcher defines the initial agenda, but the informants are the ones holding all the information so they can choose how much to contribute to the researcher data collection (Thagaard, 2003: 85). The researcher, thus, has to establish a good relationship with the informants, in a way that they feel at ease and comfortable in sharing their experiences. This is another reason for choosing semi-structured interviews: with a semi-structured interview, the researcher can adapt to the informants storytelling and react to the informant inputs, gaining valuable information he did not think of beforehand (Ibid). At the same time, a structured framework deters the interviewer from losing focus, being dragged by the narration to topics not pertinent to the research: a frequent risk faced during an open conversation. In fact, “unlike everyday conversations, the research interview is most often carried out to serve the researcher’s ends, which are external to the conversation itself” (Given, 2008: 470). In practice, during a semi-structured interview, the researcher proceeds one step at a time in order to build a fair dialogue with the informant.

All told, I conducted 12 separated semi-structured interviews with informants aware of the BNE’s CSR initiatives I had identified as units of analysis for my case study research; nevertheless I also relied on information gathered thanks to open conversations.

As soon as I started collecting data, I understood that I had to adapt my data collection techniques according to the situation and the topic. Even if I reckoned that I had to establish a traditional face-to face conversation in the form of the already planned semi-structured interviews, I also came to understand that interviewing company managers or employees would have been much different from interviewing external informants, such as governmental officers, CSR beneficiaries, or others. Sometimes people are more willing to participate in a study if they do not feel the pressure of a formal interview setting, nor experience a progressive questioning attitude from the researcher

part. They prefer to open up during a colloquial conversation, sharing their thoughts more freely. During my stay in Belize, random conversations happening in the least expected scenarios led me to the most interesting data about the social perspectives on peace and violence. They also provided insight on how the initiatives of BNE could be perceived in the country by men or women not affiliated to the company. I wanted to be able to grasp a local perspective on those topics and I can't deny that I collected a great amount of meaningful data in the form of open conversations I had while queueing for lunch or enjoying a bus ride.

3.6 Gaining Access

Before leaving Tromsø, in November 2013, I had already reached out to a contact in Belize who was working as General Manager for the BNE Charitable Trust, a public-private partnership BNE Ltd. established with the government to channel some of the oil revenue into social projects. Initially, I had thought about focusing mostly on the Trust's activities since it represents a major component of the company CSR. All the same, I feared that I wouldn't have seen the bigger picture by keeping other initiatives on a marginal side. In addition, I experienced some issues in gaining access to the Trust's documents and list of collaborators once in the field.

Even if I had gained a formal invitation to meet the Trust management on site and discuss my thesis project with them, once there, a restricted calendar, time constraints, busy schedules and different priorities were threatening to indefinitely postpone my fieldwork, potentially placing me in a risky position. I was already in the field but I wasn't able to get in touch with people that had previously ensured their collaboration, therefore I was experiencing problems in finding participants for my interviews and in getting access to valuable information. This convinced me to maintain the 4 units of analysis as originally agreed.

3.6.1 Gatekeepers

In order to find participants and gain access to information, researchers often make use of their social networks (Rubin & Rubin 2005: 89). In my situation, not having my own social network to rely upon made it fundamental to identify gatekeepers able to introduce me to people, places and information. "Gatekeepers are individuals who can be used as an entry point to a specific community. Gatekeepers will have 'inside' information that can help the researcher in determining who are the best participants to access in the given community or organization. Gatekeepers can also help the researcher to access the community through introductions and by establishing a

relaxed or appropriate environment for the research process” (Given, 2008: 2). Moreover, I have always believed that introducing myself and my project to the informants in an informal way, and by someone they knew and trusted, would help to diminish the feelings of hierarchy and discomfort provided by the power dynamics ongoing between the researcher and the informants.

I approached my access issues in two parallel ways, eventually gaining the support of people who proved to be effective gatekeepers.

On one side, I reached out formally to the BNE management, sending out an e-mail explaining my research topic and asking for their availability to meet me and discuss about my interest in their CSR. The week after my arrival in Belize, I received an answer saying I got their attention and their support. The Marketing Logistic and Communication office personnel introduced me to the company employees dealing with CSR initiatives, and I managed to schedule my first interview.

At the same time, after few days spent in the field, I realized how closely connected the community in Belmopan was, and that I had been noticed by my neighbours but not formally acknowledged. There was a general tendency to elude, *a priori*, any kind of direct involvement in ‘my businesses’. “[O]ften, potential research participants want to identify a common person whom they themselves and the researcher know as a way for them to check the researcher’s credibility and trustworthiness” (Liamputtong, 2008: 9). So I opted for approaching them through my Belizean hosts, who presented me to their acquaintances with courtesy, simply explaining who I was and what I was doing in Belize. Breaking the ice, asking if they might know someone interested in helping me with my research, led me to key informants.

3.6.2 Additional barriers to overcome

Not only were the lack of networks and the short time at my disposal giving me trouble, there were also considerations related to my gender, age, origins, and background that needed to be made.

As a white European young woman, travelling alone and temporarily living in one of the households of a local family, I was openly scrutinized each time I walked in and out the area and, although I experienced friendly interactions, I felt like I couldn’t blend in and pass unnoticed.

This was often a cause of frustration since I would have preferred to be seen and treated as a researcher, a genderless individual, rather than being perceived as a ‘white female’ and constantly sexualized. Even if I knew that I couldn’t really influence the way people chose to see me (Gill and Maclean 2002: 3-11), I barely coped with this constant reminder that the role of gender and sexuality within fieldwork is very significant.

Language is another important element to take into consideration for both gaining access to the field and conducting interviews, and generally it may be one of the hardest barriers to overcome. “Language is a fundamental tool through which qualitative researchers seek to understand human behaviour, social processes and the cultural meanings that inscribe human behaviour. [...] Failure to recognise and acknowledge the role of language and communication issues in cross-cultural research may impact on the rigour and reliability of the research” (Hennink, 2008: 21).

Belize is considered a multilingual society, in fact, “despite English being its official language, only 63 percent of Belize’s population over the age of three years speak English well enough to have a conversation” (SIB, 2010: 21). Spanish is the second most popular spoken language and it is increasing due to recent immigration flows from the neighbouring Spanish speaking countries. In addition, Creole, German, Garifuna, and several forms of the Mayan language (Ketchi, Mopan, Yucatec), contribute to making the scenario even more complex.

While I was generally able to conduct my interviews personally, in a few cases, interviewing Mayan families who benefited from one of the BNE’s CSR initiatives, I had to rely on the translation made by the person who introduced me to the informants. These were risks I decided to take, considering some contributions as essential to my research. In small ethnically and economically defined areas, the majority of the people had a really low level of education, sometimes lacking even the basic writing and reading skills, and this has proved to be challenging; nonetheless, they were exactly the subjects who could offer me “relevant, first-hand experiences” (Rubin et al., 2005: 65).

3.7 Conducting interviews, selecting informants

My target was to be able to get interviews from all the categories of people directly involved in the CSR initiatives, plus a random sample of the population living in different districts of the country, in order to confront the information obtained. In the end, I had 12 semi-structured, formally conducted interviews, 10 contributions in the form of open conversations, and 1 interview that, at the request of the informant, was kept out of the record (see Table 1). All of them, together, yielded something far from any statistically representative sample.

However, in qualitative research, “[i]t is not general opinions that are asked for” (Kvale 1996: 33), and a limited number of research participants guarantee that differences in perspectives, attitudes and beliefs are not lost in generalizations. In other words, a small number of informants can be an advantage since it allows the researcher to give space to the diversity and richness of the data and

to focus on particularities. Moreover, the quality of the interviews can balance the lack of quantity if the researcher is able to go in depth (Baker, Edwards, 2012). In my case, having a small interview sample, I was able to notice, on the spot, when certain discourses, patterns and themes became predominant, profiting from the given opportunity to encourage detailed reflections.

Surprisingly enough, I witnessed true openness from the ones I succeeded in interviewing, thus, ultimately, quality evens up the quantity of data I managed to collect.

Country	Number of Semi-structured Interviews	Affiliation
Belize	7	BNE Ltd. Employees
Belize	2	BNECT
Belize	1	Government Of Belize
Belize	2	Random Sample of the Population
Number of Open Conversations		
Belize	3	BNE Ltd. Employees
Belize	3	BNE Ltd. CSR beneficiaries
Belize	4	Random Sample of the Population
Out of the records		
Belize	1	none
23		

Table 1: showing the number of semi-structured interviews and study-related open conversations I had with my informants and their affiliation. It doesn't take into account e-mail exchanges.

3.7.1 Sampling method

I mostly used a snow-ball sampling strategy which consists in contacting key persons holding the kind of knowledge the researcher is looking for and then asking them for others with similar knowledge (Thagaard, 2003: 54). A method like that might lead to limited diversity among the informants since they all come from the same network (Ibid.). In fact, it is true that in a company, the amount of people responsible for CSR is limited to a small number of individuals employed in key roles. That's why, considering the range of questions I was interested in asking, I had decided to approach different categories of informants in order to obtain variable data.

I thus targeted the decision-makers, the executives and the beneficiaries of the BNE Ltd. CSR initiatives I was interested to closely examine, always considering the positive peace aspect of it all. This allowed me to gain different perspectives and angles on the same topic while expanding the sample if needed. For instance, thanks to this sampling method, one of my informants was able to put me in touch with the KOLBE Foundation, a non-profit, non-government organization managing the prison system of Belize. I reached out to them and I was granted the opportunity to visit the prison and have a look at their rehabilitation and education programs, gaining an

understanding of the Belizean crime and violence situation I wouldn't have gained otherwise. Under this perspective, in a small interconnected country as Belize, using snow-ball sampling has proved to be an effective strategy.

In addition, since I also wanted to get a sense of the general public's opinions on the main concepts discussed in my research and/or relevant to my case study, I had to recruit informants not directly affiliated with the company but aware of its activities. Here I used two very simple criteria for recruiting my informants: district of residence and knowledge of BNE initiatives.

The interviewees were picked in different districts of the country to understand how the company was perceived outside of the district where it operates. He or she also had to be aware of certain BNE Ltd CSR initiatives that in the country have had a huge resonance on the mass media (radio, newspaper and TV) or via web. In this case, the interview was conducted to explore the informant's perspective on BNE's role within the country and its potential in addressing structural issues through CSR initiatives. This random sample was comprised of 6 informants, two of whom contributed with proper interviews, while the others were open conversations.

In the end, I had managed to reach out to a group of 23 people. The sample was evenly represented in terms of men (11) and women (12); the majority of them had residence in the central Cayo district (16), while some lived in the Orange Walk (2), Toledo (2) and Belize (3) districts; the average age of the group was 36 years, with the youngest informant being 15 and the oldest 73 years old. All the informants, except 4, were married or currently in a relationship, among which 13 had children. In terms of education, 10 informants have pursued a university degree, 6 had obtained high school degrees, 4 had a primary school license and 3 hadn't completed primary.

3.7.2 Operationalization

When I arrived in Belize, I had a general knowledge about the country and the company able to support me in drafting a list of questions to be asked during my interviews. I knew my research question and I wanted to gather reality-based data able to help me explore the topic of my study.

On one side, there was the BNE Ltd., the agent, on the other side, there was the Belizean social structure, and also the mode of interaction among the two, represented by CSR initiatives coming from the agent and able to impact the structure. I needed to identify violence-related structures of the society and see how BNE's CSR initiatives, consistent with a peace-oriented definition of CSR, were able to impact those structures and in which way. By asking questions like *'What are the main issues Belize is facing?'* or *'What is your opinion on the causes of violence in your society?'*

and *'If you would have the power to change something to make things better, what would you change?'* I sought to identify what, from an insider's perspective, were the structural issues of the Belizean society that would have required my attention.

Culture, language, race, religion, political affiliation, gender, education or financial status all play their part in fostering either violence or peace within a society. Each country, though, has structures that are more directly connected to the aspect of peace & violence than others, and those are the ones that need to be addressed by initiatives aimed at having a positive impact.

It is important to notice that not all the agent initiatives are capable of, or aimed at, having an impact on violence-related structural issues. Once in the field, I went through all the CSR-related initiatives the company chose to support and I chose to operate first with a selection, looking at which initiatives, on paper, would have been matching the structuration model to which I referred or which would have been interesting under a positive peace perspective.

I decided to avoid focusing on initiatives represented by one-time donations for specific causes because I wanted to look at processes of interaction with the social structure of the country. An interaction that has to be sustained in time and positioned in space to be able to connect with the structure which is by definition made of a time and a space component. One-time donations may highlight the philanthropic nature of a company but lack a reiterative feature functional to the transformation of the social structure.

To be taken into consideration by the study, CSR initiatives had to (a) be generated by BNE and not imposed or suggested by an external actor, they had to (b) be either acknowledged by BNE as part of their formal CSR strategy or, if not, they had to present a strong social-oriented feature. They also had to (c) be substantive or provided with a substantive component in addition to the symbolic one. I thus selected four initiatives which became my units of analysis: The Belize Natural Energy Charitable Trust, the Energy For Life program, the Learning at the Core initiative and the LPG depots one. Each of them is still ongoing at the present time but they represent different examples of CSR practices in a range that goes from the most traditional CSR approach to something close to Creating Shared Value (CSV). Some of these initiatives address needs identified within the company, while others address needs coming from the wider society. Some are mostly substantive, others mostly symbolic. Some are overtly defined as belonging to a CSR strategy, while others are simply born as company answers to challenges and opportunities. Nonetheless, all of them are the expression of the company's willingness to acknowledge impact and transform the structures of the Belizean society, or in simpler words, to be an agent of change for the country.

3.8 Addressing Ethical Issues

Doing research, however, is not just about collecting good data and experiencing the field. There is an ethical component that needs to be fully acknowledged. “Research purposes serve some moral intent, research designs are expected to have integrity, research conduct is required (in some cases by law) to observe certain principles of humane consideration of participants, and research presentations (the representation of results) must observe the ethical conventions common to the venue of the reports” (Given, 2008: 276). First, a research process must ensure the dignity, privacy and safety of all the participants. The researcher is in charge of making sure those conditions are satisfied. Of course there are some guidelines to follow and tools researchers should adopt to ensure that it happens. For example, before starting my fieldwork, the Norwegian Data Protection Office for Research (NSD)⁴ had to evaluate my project and, via the assessment of compliance to defined ethical guidelines, concerning anonymity, data protection, and procedures for participant withdrawal, it had to grant the approval. Thence, before conducting the interview, I gave out an information sheet about my project, in which I explained the purpose of the study and committed to securing the informants’ anonymity (See Appendix 7.4). My informants were then asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix 7.5).

The interviews generally began with a colloquial talk to get to know the informants and let them feel comfortable. Afterwards, I presented the study topic and answered the questions about my research project to be sure the interviewees were aware about the extent of my research and the argument of the interview. During my interviews, I tried to use a digital voice recorder since it provides an audio reminder of the conversations to rely upon when memories fade away, and since it gives the researcher the opportunity to take notes and better monitor verbal and non-verbal communication dynamics (Thagaard 2003). The biggest disadvantage is usually created by the acknowledgement of the recorder itself since it gives the interview a very formal trait.

This aspect has to be negotiated in advance. If the recorder makes the informants uncomfortable, the only solution is to turn it off. Moreover, it is in the informants rights to ask for an “out of the record” statement and the researcher is then ethically required to ensure confidentiality.

Audio and video recordings, as well as written notes, can help the researcher to orient him/herself in the jungle of data, but they also represent concrete physical elements that could be traced back to the source, exposing the informant. In terms of ethics, protecting informants is a priority, and

⁴ NSD website: <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/om/english.html>

researchers can sometimes protect them by choosing not to use parts of the obtained material (Bøås, Jennings et al., 2006: 75-76). There have been occasions when I found myself dealing with sensitive data that may have caused harm if handled in a superficial way. This happened, for example, when informants reported narratives of psychological and physical violence in answering to some of my general questions about ‘peace’ and ‘safety’ perceptions in their local environment, or again if they manifested a strong dissent against people or institutions and feel exposed to any sort of counteraction from them.

To ensure full anonymity of the informants through the entire process of data collection, analysis and reporting, I maintained a strictly reserved access to the material and codified the sources.

In the data analysis chapter, informants are thus listed according to a coding system, which presents a progressive initial number, a capital letter, E or C, indicating if the source is external (E) or affiliated to the company (C), and one of two possible acronyms: ‘opc’ in case of material coming from open conversations or ‘int’ if it is coming from interviews (e.g.: Inf.1Eopc; Inf.3Cint).

A final consideration is related to my writing style, which reflects a natural tendency toward narrative build-ups as well as personal involvement in the research, a proximity given by the emotional components intrinsic in conducting and reporting a fieldwork. In this research, in fact, even maintaining an academic tone and focusing on academic research goals, I couldn’t avoid my voice to emerge at times, through my writing style, to share with the reader the sentiment of empathy I developed for Belize and my group of informants. Empathy, though, is a tricky sentiment; if on one side it seems to provide the researcher with a deeper understanding, it also increases the risks of over-identification with subjects, affecting the detachment required to carry out an ethical, safe, and unbiased research project (Feenan, 2002: 155). Balancing the voices of all the research participants including the researcher’s one while developing an academic sound discourse and consistently reporting it is not easy. However, a researcher’s professional responsibility needs to be demonstrated “first by trying to separate discourse from appearance, and, second, by using those appearances to contextualize the discourse under study” (Robben, 1996: 101). Following these suggestions in reporting the fieldwork narratives helps avoiding the risk of letting one’s research become a personal diary, a vehicle for private and political agendas, or an endless story of human drama and struggling for better opportunities.

3.9 Summary

This chapter attempted to outline the methodological framework of the research.

Initially, it addressed the motivation of the researcher to conduct fieldwork and select a specific case study to support the research with first hand data coming from a single case that, due to its unicity, is considered able to help by contributing to the exploration of the research topic. Once the research design on which this research is based was presented, the chapter continued by approaching in detail the study context and the company selected as the case study. In addition, the chapter identified what researching CSR and positive peace in Belize implies from a general perspective and particularly in terms of security considerations. It then proceeded to examine the data collection techniques used, explaining how the triangulation of document analysis with direct observation and semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to gather data and cross-check them by looking at emerging patterns or discontinuities. The chapter also outlined the process of accessing data and selecting informants, which might have presented serious challenges in a situation constrained by limited time and resources. It stressed the importance of identifying and gaining the trust of gatekeepers, able to introduce the researcher to the informants, and it then explained the selection methods used to obtain a representative sample of population. Furthermore, the chapter focused on the design of a semi-structured interview guide as well as on the more practical aspects of conducting interviews. It explained how the research topics were approached in order to gain the informants' insight and the rationale behind the chosen approach. In general, the chapter also gave an idea of the many difficulties that can be experienced in the field, threatening to jeopardize the research or its results. Other than collecting data that might be relevant to the research purpose, the researcher has, in fact, to handle dilemmas given by his or her role, position within the field, gender, age, language and ethnicity. Moreover, the researcher has to ensure that his or her research has been conducted considerately and ethically, and that the informants won't incur in risks connected to their participation in the study. Those ethical concerns have been addressed in the last section, slightly more open to personal reflections and narrative.

CHAPTER 4: Data presentation and analysis

“We should give as we would receive, cheerfully, quickly and without hesitation; for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers.”

-Lucius Annaeus Seneca

In this chapter, the data gathered are presented and analysed. The chapter presents an overview of Belize and its culture of violence, exposing the presence of both direct and structural violence in the country. The chapter also examines the Belizean private sector, and the contributions it provides to the society, also by fostering social development with CSR projects and initiatives. The chapter introduces then the case of study, informing about Belize Natural Energy Limited origins, operations, company culture and philosophy, in order to understand the CSR profile and strategy of the company. In this regard, the chapter approaches specific CSR initiatives that have been selected to display the range of significant interaction BNE as an agent has with the country social structures, and how those structures have required the agent to flexibly adapt to the challenges arising from the country where it operates. Four CSR-oriented initiatives are analysed: the BNE Charitable Trust, the BNE Energy for Life program, the company Learning at the Core adult education initiative and the Liquefied Petroleum Gas depots project. For each of these examples of CSR, the nature of the initiative and its social impact will eventually be analysed.

4.1 Belize and violence

Although not fully acknowledged, structural violence in Belize exists and is pulling the country backwards, vanishing the efforts of those interested in pushing it forward. “When people suffer from preventable diseases or when they are denied a decent education, affordable housing, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, or opportunities to work, play, or raise a family, a kind of violence is occurring, even if no bullets are shot or no clubs are wielded” (Barash and Webel, 2009:7). Actually, structural violence in Belize is widely tolerated, to some extent monitored, but hardly challenged, thus allowing it to conquer a cultural dimension.

One of my informant sadly commented my thoughts about Belizean peace standards saying that:

“In Belize we are all at war, since I had to earn money to feed my family I woke up in the morning and I feel like I am at war. We are at war against everything and everyone including ourselves, it is a wicked system undermining even the basic sense of community, and guess what? We [the people] never win, we all die in the end poor as we started, just more tired” -Inf.1Eopc

He was expressing a feeling of resignation, suffering from a 'system' that is perceived as heavily burdening the society, limiting the personal freedom in so many different aspects that he compared it to being at war; a condition where violence naturally belongs. Even if understanding to what extent violence has penetrated society and influenced a country mindset is difficult, in Belize a culture of violence has been formed. Thus allowing both structural and direct violence to occur. This is even more evident for an outsider, since it emerges by listening to the simple storytelling of the everyday life going on countrywide, and it is experienced through the precautions one is forced to take to 'avoid trouble', or by simply listening to a common suggestion girls are given:

"You better be scared if you want to be safe." -Inf.2Eopc

In Belize, at first glance, violence might appear as isolated to certain locations and groups within the society, or extremely random in nature. The situation might resemble a small-scale replication of other Central American countries: gangs fighting for self-determination, drugs and human trafficking, heavily armed society with uncontrolled access to weapons, violent crimes and so on. However, this represents just the most direct component of the Belizean culture of violence, the one that is impossible not to notice and has given the country a reputation.

Direct violence, in fact, is narrated through statistics, graphs and numbers showing the worrisome increase of murders and the failure of crime prevention initiatives. Direct violence is shown on TV and in the news, it is presented to the domestic and international public as the number one concern addressed in the National Security Agenda. Unfortunately, what in Belize can be called 'a culture of violence' doesn't necessarily limit itself to the direct component, which exists and must be seriously addressed, but it implies also a more subtle and penetrating structural component that by all means is hard to identify, expose and eradicate.

Violence, in fact, becomes more and more acceptable in society if put in correlation with a domestic or private sphere, if endorsed by religious belief, culture and traditions, or granted impunity thanks to political affiliations, and also if it becomes a desperate measure for surviving. Slowly people become anesthetized to violence and either they stop perceiving certain behaviours as violent or they find them justifiable under certain circumstances.

" say she had a thing with a bad one, the guy was jealous, they say he had told her to behave, then I don't know it was a private matter. What I know is that now she is gone, someone stabbed her right there...such bad things happen, family life in Belize is though, what shall we do? We shake our heads and keep living" -Inf.1Eopc

"They kill you because nobody looks, nobody will find you at all, until a couple of months later in pieces, decayed already." (Vice News, 2014)

“They bring a hammer, a skill, but there are so many laborers available fighting for that same job. So a man who would not normally commit a crime is driven to desperate measures because he can't make an honest living.” (Ibid.)

Data regarding the rise of violence in Belize are alarming and, at a deeper level of analysis, they suggest to look at the social structures for truly grasping where the roots of Belizean violence lie. “Structural violence usually has the effect of denying people important rights [...] when people suffer from preventable diseases or when they are denied a decent education, affordable housing, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, or opportunities to work, play, or raise a family, a kind of violence is occurring, even if no bullets are shot or no clubs are wielded” (Barash and Webel, 2009:9). According to this, Belize appears as a country at peace, but in a very narrow sense. Much can be done to reach better peace standards and every agent within the society can play a role in making it happen. It is clear, in fact, how initiatives in the fields of education, public health and poverty alleviation, aimed at counterbalancing the worsening trend, might be functional to facilitate positive peace even without engaging directly in conflict management processes.

4.2 Belize and the private sector, acknowledging social roles

In Belize, recently, multilateral efforts to improve the social structures of the country have been coming from the private sector. Private companies have contributed both indirectly, by simply providing jobs, supporting the economy and fighting negative trends in the domestic market, or more directly through CSR strategies, initiatives and activities.

Even by considering the sole economic performance, Belize should thank the Private Sector for its contribution. “The size of the private sector can be measured in various ways, including by its shares of total consumption, investment, credit and employment. Based on these measures Belize’s private sector is large, making up roughly two-thirds of the economy” (IADB, 2014:12). To mention some quantitative data, in 2010 the two top exported primary products alone (banana and petroleum) represented the 43% of total national exports by value (Ibid.). Furthermore, despite the rising unemployment rate, the sector providing the highest number of jobs in Belize is the private one. Government data show that the private sector employed the 94% of the active population in the period 2000-2007, whereas the latest data available show that it was the 92% in 2011, consistent with a market contraction. In addition to that, many companies are actively engaged in initiatives of Corporate Social Responsibility, mostly in the core field of education.

The issue of education has emerged as being the *fil rouge* of my research; it is considered fundamental for development and, especially in Belize, key for mitigating the risks of violence.

“There are plenty of families that have to decide if to feed the child or give him an exercise book and guess what? They of course prefer to feed their children, so they won't send them to school simply because they can't afford it!” -Inf.1Copc

“We got calls from School principals who called us because some children have stopped going to school and they know that is due to bad economics in their families. They ask us if we can help them and that's where I believe the government has failed. They [the ministries] could be driving on SUVs that cost thousands of dollars but you have children falling out of school because they can't pay 50\$. And that's why we keep saying that at least primary school should be free, completely free, including books... Especially for a small country which is facing a lot of juvenile issues. Damn! Can't you see? You would spend less money educating them than actually dealing with them in prison.” -Inf.1Cint

“They have been reforming the school system for decades now, but you listen to the amount of money they are putting into education and you still don't see any transformation occurring.[...] Yes, you need teacher, and they have to be paid fairly, but if you have a school where in the first month there are over 600 cases of disciplinary actions to be taken, you do have a problem, and I mean a huge one. Moreover when a lot of those are issues related to drugs and violence between the age of 12 and 15, young adolescents.” -Inf.2Eopc

“I think we are losing them [the young generations], this means that the primary school is failing its purposes, and when they reach the first form in secondary school and they can't even put a compute sentence together you can't find excuses and blame whatever. Regardless of how many millions you spend per year, you are doing it wrong, full stop.” -Inf.1Copc

I noticed that in every interview I conducted, and in every open conversation or friendly chat I was involved in, education was mentioned and indicated as the structural component to be addressed in order to link the issues Belize is facing with their possible solutions. This was consolidated as a pattern in my analysis and as one of the social structures that required more attention. One of my informants explained to me that the Belizean private sector has proven to be especially active in promoting social projects in the field of education.

“On my opinion the private sector plays a huge role in public education, a huge role. If you'd put together what the big companies of Belize put into education or into social project, it would be a huge amount. Millions and millions of dollars. It would probably be matching what the government put down for it. Some of the largest companies in the country, like Bowen&Bowen Ltd., which is the Coca Cola company, and the telecommunication company, which the government has taken over from private sector, then you have the Belize board of services, you have the Citrus company, Belize sugar industry, the largest industry sectors. If you would give them a call and ask ‘Hey, what do you put into social projects?’ You would be amazed at the budget you would come up with” -Inf.2Cint

Generally, it is possible to say that the role played by the Private Sector in developing the country, only recently is starting to be fully recognized and appreciated. The Government agenda, so far, has always maintained a strong focus on policies labelled as “pro-poor”, trying to comply with all the goals set by the international development agenda, borrowing huge amounts of money from

international donors, and leaving the country economy dependable from volatile markets, plundering and exploitation. (Metzgen, 2012; IADB, 2014) While the overall public debt keeps increasing to alarming rates, potentially exposing the country to the risk of a future default, few investments, exception made for the tourism branch, have been made to consistently develop the private sector. In Spanish Lookout at a diner, a business owner approached me in a rainy day, explaining one of the country contradictions he was experiencing:

“We want to develop our economy and we are unable to build a bridge over a creek. There are no roads, no infrastructures. In this area we work hard, we produce a lot for the country, and tracks have to pass the creek all year long. In your place I bet no business stops when there is the rain season but we are in Belize, we have the floods and we take hours of driving through bumpy muddy holes to go past the creek, and we waste time and money, season after season. In Belize it rains heavily for 3 months a year, has not the most productive district of the country earned the right to get a bridge we could cross even when it rains?”. –Inf.7Eopc

From several of my open conversations, I got the feeling that business owners felt their voice unheard by a government too focused in setting agendas aimed at buying immediate political consensus, but unable to keep its promises and invest in long term development strategies. In Belize, in fact, pro-businesses policies have rarely been a priority, and yet, in 2008 it was a brand new industry that avoided the country to collapse under the pressure of the crisis (IADB, 2014).

In 2005 BNE struck oil, and in less than one year it was already able to extract it and commercialize it on the foreign markets. Since then, the government's take of the oil & gas gross revenue, generated solely by the BNE production fields, has been used to repay the super bond, allowing the country to not be strangled by the foreign debt and go default.

“Let's say, the world produces 80 millions barrels a day, Mexico is producing 60 thousand barrels a day out of a single field, BNE produces 2000 barrels a day, with those 2000 barrels a day we were able to single-hand and flow the government through the worse part of the economic crisis of the past. [...] It is such a pity that in Belize we have not been able to build tons of infrastructures out of the back of oil and gas, and I guess the government had to prioritize differently. I am not making excuses for them, but they had to pay the super bond. They had to pay this huge debt that a previous government left, they say they did it with the oil money BNE brought in. Maybe if it weren't for that, after 10 years of operations, you would be seeing different results.” -Inf.3Cint

BNE is not exempted from critics and has wide margins of improvement, but it has proved that investing in the private sector and managing properly the income it generates might be of help to a country navigating through the trouble waters of a financial crisis. BNE has also tried to be of example in the Belizean industry to shape a business mindset that goes beyond the sole profit, establishing a set of best practices in dealing with the environment and the community.

At the same time, constraining structures required the company to adapt and undergo a process of renovation yet to be fully accomplished. The company today is thus transitioning towards an integrated energy company working as a bridge between Central America and the Caribbean.

4.3 Belize Natural Energy Limited

“The background story of the Belize Natural Energy company sounds like a tale of magic, it is both fascinating and truly inspiring.” –Inf.8Cint

For over 50 years, Central America was targeted by major international oil companies looking for new prospects in the region. Big names in the industry also conducted explorations in Belize; considered a frontier exploration area (high costs, high risks, and minimal production). It was in 1956 when Gulf Oil drilled the Yalbac-1, the first exploration well. Exxon, Shell, Chevron and many others followed but none of them found what they were looking for, and soon they stopped believing in investing their energy and money in the tiny British colony.

Years later, Mike Usher, a Belizean who worked as a surveyor for many oil companies worldwide met an Irish woman, Susan Morrice, who had built her career in the US oil & gas industry. Ever since they met, in 1988, they advocated for the possibility of investing in the energy sector in the Central America region, especially in Belize where they saw real potential, being it a freshly independent country, member of the British Commonwealth, and politically reliable.

“In 2000, oil was discovered in a shallow water well in Calla Creek Village sparking renewed interest in petroleum exploration” (Government of Belize informative flyer). It was in 2002 when the first pool of investors, convinced by Mr. Usher and Mrs. Morrice determination, agreed in establishing a company under the name of Belize Natural Energy Limited.

The BNE Directors together created a team with huge expertise in the various aspects of the oil business. They purchased a lease on approximately 500,000 acres of land over a period of 8 years, and started to plan the drilling of two wells. In the summer of 2005, BNE struck oil in the Spanish Lookout field. The first well was named Mike Usher #1 after the man who started this visionary project, and died without being able to see his dream fulfilled.

From that day, as a government representative told me, all moved forward really fast:

“From that moment things developed quickly. In Belize there was nothing like that, the government was totally unprepared, we had to learn how to deal with everything. We relied on external consultants to set up the regulatory framework and align it with the international standards. It was a huge load of work and we had to follow advices trying to get what was supposed to be fair for both parties, we the Government and people of Belize, and the company on the other side. The Company

wanted to start producing so we had to move fast. The first Production Sharing Agreement ever signed in Belize was the one with BNE and it worked amazingly fine considering the situation, it became a model for all the other PSAs. Of course we could have done better, we weren't ready, they were arrogant, we all made the best with what we had and things worked out.” –Inf. 2Eint

From the first beginning, things looked promising; the oil found in Spanish Lookout was in the category of “light crude”, being it a 40 API intermediate oil that trades based on a Louisiana Light Sweet (LLS) benchmark. In 2007 BNE found oil also in the Never Delay field east of Belmopan, reaching the peak of their production two years later, producing between 4.000 and 5.000 barrels per day from 15 wells in Spanish Lookout and 5 in Never Delay.

In 2008, as part of the PSA, BNE Ltd. had established a Trust, called the Belize Natural Energy Charitable Trust, in the form of a private-public partnership with the government, aimed at investing an additional amount of oil revenue (1%) in social projects.

By 2009, BNE had embraced the expansion to gas production. A gas processing plant was realized at the Iguana Creek central gathering, in order to reduce gas flares and maximize profits. Almost 100% of the produced LPG stays in the country providing for the 15% of the domestic need. In addition, the crude oil, which is sold at a lower price than the imported one to various companies working in several industries of Belize, covers the 30% of the national demand.

“Over the past few years the prices for the fuel have been going skyrocket in the country, but yet the price of certain basic food like for example chicken and chicken products has only grown of few cents over like 5 year., and one of the key reasons for that is that the chicken factory utilizes the crude from here as their fuel. If they would have been using the diesel definitely the chicken, instead of being 2,50\$ a pound, would have been almost 3,50\$. A lot of indirect benefit, a lot, and also the citrus companies and other companies as well use BNE crude” -Informant 1Cint

During this exploration period, the company was employing more than 400 people, 95% of them Belizeans. It was also sub-contracting services in transportation, seismic surveying, security and maintenance to Belizean companies, fostering job opportunities among locals. In all that, BNE was both directly and indirectly contributing to the country. The company became one of the largest single private sector revenue sources, allowing the government to complete a restructuring of the external debt and gain a better credit rating from the international rating agencies. Eventually BNE also started implementing a diverse set of initiatives dealing with social and environmental structural needs.

The bright future of the company was, however, challenged by a set of unfortunate events.

In 2011 the government of Belize, led at that time by the UDP party, decided not to renovate the company exploration license, allocating the same lot, on which BNE had had the right to explore for the past 8 years, to another company.

“I can tell you what we were told by the government: that the company that got our license was a bigger company, it had more money and more technical experience, and they felt this was more important than how we were run.” –Inf.3Cint

“Why? It is free market, that's how it works, someone comes in, offering better conditions, if they are sound, they are committed, they got the license. There is a reason why it expires after 8 years and the terms have to be renegotiated!” –Inf.3Eint

“Of course I too I've heard voices; people say Perenco agreement had an under the table component, they paid flights to Paris to the department, while BNE stood up against corruption. Others say that since BNE was founded when PUP was at the government, UDP didn't renovate the license because the company simply has the wrong political affiliation... It doesn't make sense, trust me, no one has done nothing to be ashamed of, everything was done according to the rules of business” –Inf.2Eint

“Look, for 50 years large companies have been coming to Belize and they've found nothing, who found it? We did. Compared to these large companies the company that got it, Perenco, the French company, is a very small company so saying that we did not get it because they are bigger than us does not hold any water, it doesn't work....” –Inf.3Cint

Shortly after having experienced such serious drawback, BNE discovered also that the fields awaiting for a definition were about to be defined smaller than what was expected. At that point in time, the peak of oil production had already been reached, and the production started its natural decreasing trend; so, what was initially conceived as an expansion into the broader energy sector, became a forced transition.

“What pushed us in this direction was that in 2011 our production agreement with the government ran out and they did not renew our license. In full honesty, once you don't have an exploration license as an oil & gas company, you are dead! We weren't gonna wait for that to happen so we started morphing into other areas.” –Inf.3Cint

In the last couple of years, the transition evolved in a complex restructuring process. The company mission and vision have been redefined with the support and participation of both staff and management. A business development unit has been established, converging forces from different areas of the company, in order to identify new business opportunities. People from the affected areas (production & exploration) have been moved to other teams, focusing on specific projects, thus avoiding collective redundancies. In sum, BNE embraced the change and moved forward.

“We just walked through a major restructuring to hopefully reach new business areas, this mean that a lot has changed, a lot is changing and a lot will still have to change. [...] We grew very quickly and the one thing that we've always been doing is changing.” –Inf.6Cint

These are examples of how some structural conditions required BNE to adapt and to keep adjusting to evolving dynamics, influencing the main aspects of the business as the maximization of the shareholders' profit. Nevertheless, the company stood up to be of example in how to deal with social and environmental responsibilities, keeping security at the core and maintaining its social

commitments alive as priorities, investing in new social projects, and supporting the already existing ones, even while facing a time made of uncertainties and hard choices.

“At BNE we are constantly raising the bar. We are never satisfied, we always focus on continuous improvement. We always want safer, we always want cleaner, we always want better” (BNE ‘Safety at the Core’ promotional video)

The company invested and keeps investing resources to set up and maintain an effective social and environmental management system, training dedicated personnel, monitoring risky operations, complying with environmental regulations, planning internal and external auditing on social and environmental performances. As a pioneer of the Belizean oil & gas industry, BNE has done a good job in setting high Corporate Social Responsibility standards. BNE approaches CSR in a systemic way, skipping formal definitions and focusing on best practices.

As Daniel Gutierrez, BNE’s Marketing, Logistics and Communications Manager explained to me:

“At Belize Natural Energy Corporate Social Responsibility is understood as the business culture that elevates people, both internal and external to the company, to become better versions of themselves. In our operations it is represented by a relentless pursuit of responsible and best business practices, in outreach to our communities it is represented by open and frank communication and strategic partnerships in education and community development.”

Under an environmental perspective, CSR at BNE is monitoring the footprint, reducing waste, preventing risks, and training the workforce to deal with emergencies.

“We have about 23 wells here in Spanish Lookout each one of them let's say is on 1 acre of land, you are looking at 23 acres of land, ok? If you look at pipelines and processing plant, we have impacted between 50 and 70 acres of land, that's our footprint. Out of those 70 acres, we could give the government enough revenue; you are looking at millions of dollars that this company generates every year. Now look at the sugar industry. They have to clear cut for the cane thousands and thousands of acres, thousands acres of cane produces much less than us in terms of revenue when you look at that footprint; and that's what I try to explain to people. The oil industry is not what you hear out there, and it is true that some companies are so reckless that they will give the industry a bad name, but if you look at us you can see the difference.” –Inf.1Cint

“Let's bring all the NGO's here and they are quite amazed: “Is this the oil company? Where is the oil? What about the smell?” they expect to see the oil around or feel it in the air, but we are clean and that's under everyone eyes” -Inf.2Copc

By signing a PSA with the government for drilling for oil in a vast and central agricultural area as Spanish Lookout, inhabited mostly by Mennonite and Mestizo farming communities, the company agreed in taking full responsibilities for working in a sensitive environmental area, where water veins and soil are source of income for many villages and households.

“On average over an year we would spill 50 barrels of both water and oil. 50 barrels when in a year we handle approximately about a million of barrels and most of the time we manage to recover the 100% of that spill. But I keep consider it a spill even if it has been recovered, and now that we use

the gas and we generate our own electricity, we are totally self-sufficient. We recycle and keep everything clean as you can see by yourself.” -Inf.1Cint

Besides the environmental risks prevention and the inclusive collaboration with the surrounding communities, the company set up a Charitable Trust and, during its 10 years of history to date, engaged in several additional social initiatives. BNE, in fact, stands proudly on the core values on which it has been founded, and Social Responsibility is one of them.

Those values, shared by all the company members at every level: staff, management and up to the board of directors, have not been undermined by the recent internal restructuring, since they represent the pillars on which the company culture has formed and around which it evolves. BNE values emerge from a business philosophy that has been defined by the founders and carefully transmitted to the employees, focused on dreaming big without getting discouraged, and investing on each individual potential to do right and do better day after day. This is part of their vision and it reflects on the way they conduct business. They call their model a “holistic business model”, which is applied not only to each and every single aspect of the company management, but it has been also welcomed by the workers as a model to refer to in their everyday life.

“BNE trained me to be a better worker, a professional one but the company gave me also standards and values to look at, they push me to be always the best I can and to care for what I do. It is our way to do business here, our holistic model; it influences you on so many levels! Today I have a family, things go well, I feel like I am a better person and yes, a part of it comes from the BNE working culture.” -Inf.2Copc

“I’ve been able to help my family, my friends and it kind of ties back into what the whole holistic model is about here at BNE. It’s about giving back. It’s about more than just BNE. It’s about the community. It’s about the people of Belize and I’m just fortunate to be a part of it.” -Inf.7Cint

Eventually, BNE expresses the company mission in these terms: “We produce and deliver leading energy solutions, positively impacting people and creating opportunities. Our innovative, driven and proven team is our greatest resource, conducting business in a socially and environmentally responsible manner” (BNE website). Therefore, BNE is stating that making a positive impact on people, and doing it responsibly, is the main goal of the company, thus placing CSR at the core as a fundamental component of the company business. It provides CSR with a business component that, in order to be taken seriously, needs to be consistent with the company behaviour.

4.4 BNE Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in practice

Such powerful example of business philosophy and corporate culture, coming from a young company as BNE, is surprising for an external observer and it raises expectations. BNE appears to

be an agent with strong identity and values, which has acknowledged its capacity of positively impacting society, and seems ready to take full responsibility of its actions.

“We have been blessed with a well-paid job in the oil& gas industry, working for a company that cares about this country and wants to do things right. We have been given a lot, now we want to give back.” –Inf.4Cint

Corporate Social Responsibility is a label, which can be given to many different single initiatives contributing to build the social and environmental profile of a company. It is a dynamic concept evolving together with the company culture, and in response to the structural context in which the company is placed and operates. BNE isn't currently involved in conflict transformation programs and CSR is not conceived as directly supporting conflict prevention practices⁵, but it nevertheless contributes to promote a peaceful environment by addressing social issues and dealing with challenges arising from the structures of the Belizean society. The company has spent resources trying to design an effective and substantive CSR profile, in compliance with the international standards to which the company refers, while ensuring a pay back in terms of image and reputation.

The following are four examples of ongoing CSR initiatives the company promoted. The analysis of these initiatives is key for understanding, from a positive peace perspective, the role BNE plays in Belize. The four initiatives have different features, profiles, and reasons why they have been implemented (see Appendix 5), thus reflecting a wide range of possible options that can be considered when investigating CSR and its potential peace-oriented impact on social structures.

4.4.1 Belize Natural Energy Charitable Trust

In developing countries, nowadays, it has become common that, in order to have a good CSR profile, oil companies help to build schools and hospitals, launch micro-credit schemes for local people and assist youth employment programs, or even participate in partnerships with international organizations, NGO's and government bodies (Frynas, 2005). As a product of the most traditional approach to Corporate Social Responsibilities, in February 2008, the BELIZE Natural Energy Charitable Trust was established with headquarters in Belmopan.

“I didn't want it to be called “charitable”, we were not going to do charity, we were simply doing what was the right thing to do having the possibility to do it, we were empowering Belizeans, helping

⁵ In 2009 through the BNE Charitable Trust, sponsorship was given to finance a two year pilot program in conflict resolution, aimed at preventing urban violence in Belmopan. The George Price Centre for Peace and Development, with funding from the Trust and assistance from US Peace Corps volunteers, launched a project that offered conflict resolution sessions to children in scholarly age (6-16) and their teachers. Since the completion of the pilot program in 2010 no updates have been published on the organization website: <http://www.gpcbelize.com/?cat=27> .

them mining their potential and achieve their dreams, as we did, finding oil in Belize. We were not throwing money out the window to look good, we were investing in our country...it didn't sound to me like "charity" but now I am getting used to the name, I don't complain no more" –Inf.4Cint

Even the government has issues with the name, since it doesn't mention out loud their participation.

"it sounds like an advertisement campaign for the company, I think we should change it in order to show that there is a consistent contribution also from the Government side, if we are equal partners the name should say it clearly, so people know." –Inf.3Eint

The name has obviously served a reputation purpose, since it is now possible to notice labels with the BNECT name and logo in each village where the Trust operated. It is a constant reminder benefiting the company brand more than the government. However, since the money comes clean from the company shares, BNE has the right to put its name on the brand. The funds the Trust is managing come in fact from a further share of oil profits, amounting to the 1% of the annual gross production of crude oil and/or natural gas, produced and saved in each calendar year and not used or consumed in petroleum operations. This is what, in addition to the government's take, BNE contributes financially with, to benefit social, environmental and developmental projects according to its CSR strategy. The Production Sharing Agreement signed on January 2nd, 2003, between the Government of Belize and the Belize Natural Energy Limited stated that a Trust was going to be established as soon as the parties would have agreed on modalities and executive details.

"BNE actually put in the clauses in the PSA, it suggested to put in the clauses to have the BNECT out of the funds they would be getting with the oil & gas production. So it was the company itself, the directors, who said 'We want to put this amount of money in a Trust Fund' and ever since then the Government took our PSA as the base for the others. [...] It wasn't something they were required to do it was something they wanted to do." –Inf.1Cint

The BNECT consists in a Public-Private partnership between the company and the Government of Belize; it is led by a board of trustees in the number of 6, three of them appointed by BNE and the other three appointed by the GOB, with the chairmanship rotating every 2 years. The trust is employing a small technical team of experts under the supervision of a General Manager who refers to the Board for the final decisions regarding projects to be financed. "The Trust was founded on the principle that it can make a difference by creating innovative partnerships in Belizean communities to effect change in a sustainable and responsible manner particularly where it relates to general education and the social environment" (BNECT, 2014: 3).

Looking at the annual budget reports available on the Trust website, it is possible to notice the wide range of completed and ongoing projects, sponsored until now. For the Trust, education is a primary focus, given the increasing percentage of youths at risk of social failure. Once again, it is the country's structure that is influencing the agent to target a certain sector with its initiatives.

“I mean to be fair to all the Belizean governments. The Ministry of Education has been the large expense by far of any other Ministry. That doesn't mean it is the most efficient but it has always been the target of everyone effort. We are not spending in the Army, no high-tech weapons, no huge defence budgets, we are not spending in any of that, we are spending in education, right? That's what we need: educated Belizeans who remain here to work and contribute to develop the country.” – Inf.3Cint

The Trust is both financing the construction, renovation and maintenance of educational infrastructures, and participating with local trade unions in the disbursement of student loans, from the high school, through the junior college, up to the university level (766 loans in the financial year 2013-14). “It is expected that through education and the reshaping of their immediate environment, people will be empowered to improve their lives, the lives of their children and their communities for generations to come” (Ibid.).

In such partnership, the close collaboration with the government has both pros and cons. For example, a collaboration with the government should help the alignment with development strategies set by national and international institutions, by channelling the allocated funds into projects relevant for prioritized areas. Another advantage is also given by having access to a wide range of additional resources, connections and information that each partner, but mostly the government, is able to attract. Furthermore, obtaining in advance the government's consent to proceed, should smooth the way toward the implementation phase of the projects, gaining the Trust financial support. The applications for funds, in fact, have to be evaluated and agreed upon, passing or failing the scrutiny of both partners. On the other hand, collaborating with the government means bringing politics in the decisional process, exposing the Trust to the vagaries of politics, forcing it to flow with the political wind, which might be a big risk in a country where political colours tend to come before national interests.

For sure, working cheek to cheek with the government, strongly affirms a cooperative attitude, instrumental to the success of any charitable initiative aimed at being effective. Moreover, the two parties equally represented are put in the condition to reciprocally supervise all the financial operations, thus avoiding an illegal appropriation or the misuse of funds. If BNECT is to ensure commonalities of intents and certain levels of transparency, this happens at the expense of the contributions incisiveness, since it tends to favourite symbolic interventions to substantive ones. This is due to the nature of a partnership whose management is continuously striking a balance between the government's interests and BNE Ltd. ones.

“They have good intentions of this I am sure, but then you see money spent in ways that...I mean, one thing is giving out scholarships or promote STEM, the country need that, a different thing is building a music room in the periphery of Belmopan or a sidewalk here, a bus stop there. I am not

saying it is a waste, but then you see where they build and all the fuss they made out of it, everything says 'look we are good, we have done this for you!' and who cares if it is really useful." –Inf.4Eopc

"I am just saying that the GOB is always in electoral campaign and BNE lives and thrives on image, brand and reputation. The Trust do help Belizeans but it also functional to foster visibility for both partners, so the projects sometimes pay the price" -Inf.5Eopc

The trust also calculates the alleged impact of the initiatives by simply stating the number of individuals directly benefiting from the projects. While an investment of 28,000 BZD in building Restroom facilities at the Guadalupe Roman Catholic School in the Belize District would impact 100 students and 5 full-time staff members, 41,232 BZD invested in Classroom Renovation for the Maya-Mopan Pre-School would impact 20 children between the age of three and seven and 2 teachers. Such way to monitor an impact means to merely scratch the surface; it doesn't involve a baseline study, neither it implies a reasoned assessment of the intended and unintended consequences of the investments, nor it elaborates a set of long term general social goals to achieve. BNECT has a really strong symbolic component; it is the CSR public face of the company and even if it has been designed following sound social responsibility guidelines, it has been lacking a significant long term strategy, able to strengthen the impacting capacity of its initiatives.

The acquired procedures ensure accountability and transparency while maintaining a high degree of flexibility. The Trust presents a philanthropic profile, which privileges small infrastructural projects, student loans and capacity building projects to donations. Even though it endorses creativity and innovation, it remains linked to a conservative paradigm. Surely, it can be defined as the most traditional approach BNE has to CSR. However, the Trust is slowly embracing an alternative model of business; looking for additional sources of income, it welcomed the possibility of external fundraising and it focused its efforts on the establishment of strategic partnerships with national and international donors, interested in conducting social projects in Belize.

BNECT depends massively on the oil profits, which have been sensitively reduced over the last 4 years, along with BNE's productivity decrease, and even further compromised in 2014, by the global contraction of the oil price.

To ensure long-term sustainability, BNECT has to revise its strategy, and the most recent initiatives have shown how, together with the symbolic component, the Trust has endorsed a shift toward a more substantive approach. In 2014, for instance, it became the facilitator in a partnership between international and domestic universities aimed at developing a Master Program in the fields of Energy and Petroleum in Belize. The project was developed thanks to the commitment of the Trust in bringing all the parties to the table to develop a proposal to be submitted to the Norwegian EnPe programme. The Trust reached out to the Universities' boards, the private sector

and the Ministries, which, for the first time in history, agreed on working together to succeed in the application.

“Unfortunately the new Norwegian government set different priorities in terms of foreign aid and Belize was cut off the list of the countries allowed to benefit from the EnPe program funds. We had already received seed capitals presenting a first draft of our proposal and we were ready to submit our application when we received the bad news. We had done an amazing job, for the first time the University of Belize and Galen had signed a Memorandum of Understanding to join their resources and work together in this project, we had 3 Ministries directly involved and the support of the private sector, it was a big project. This is not over though, we recognize the importance of investing in sustainable resource management, we are a small country facing big challenges we need to introduce STEM in our school system from the beginning and reinforce our STEM courses at the higher education level. BNECT will be on the front line in supporting this.” –Inf.9Eopc

Lately, the Trust has invested time and resources in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) related projects, supporting the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology, and Public Utilities to promote initiatives aimed at increasing the number of Belizean students pursuing careers in these disciplines, thus laying the foundation for promoting a more substantive approach able to impact the Belizean social structures.

4.4.2 Energy for Life

In 2010, BNE’s employees decided to found a small organization of workers with a limited budget and a philanthropic mission. The initiative started out as simple fundraising among colleagues to finance donations to families in need of assistance; it was then reorganized with a more formal structure, and it took the name of Energy for Life, matching the company’s motto.

In few years, it became a reality of its own.

“Someone was going around with a little box asking if you wanted to give few cents, maybe a dollar for helping out a family from a village nearby, it started like this... we would have never imagined what it would become” - Informant 5Cint

“I joined BNE in 2007 couple of months after that I have learnt about a group, it was a school fundraising or something, it was not too organized someone was just going around saying they wanted to collect some money for a school project. There was a piece of paper where people wrote their names giving 5 dollars 10 dollars of donation, and one day we met in the conference room and we said let's form an organization” -Informant 1Cint

Energy4Life is an example of employee volunteerism, a spontaneous initiative of the staff, in a company promoting a caring attitude. In fact, feeling free to take the initiative, a small group presented the idea to the BNE management, immediately gaining the company’s full support. Donations come out straight from the pockets or in the form of small salary deductions, and end up deposited in a separate fund. Everyone is free to join, there is no mandatory subscription to the

program, and the members try to avoid putting pressures on the colleagues who are not interested or feel reluctant.

“I don't know, we come up with the biblical phrase ‘give, and it will be given to you’ and we convinced quite a bit of them. Over time we have lost some members but at the same time we gained new ones, they are back and forth really. We gave them the option, if things are getting really hard for them, they don't have to feel pressure, they can always ask to uplift the deduction and when their finances get better, they can donate again. We don't want them to feel they have to keep giving although they are struggling, the first thing is peace of mind with them.” –Inf.5Cint

“You know they don't make that much but they still give 1, 2 dollars every two weeks, or a month they put them aside and you don't even realize but for someone even 2 dollars make a difference. It has been five years now and just the employees donated up to 150,000 BZD, so we reached up close to 30,000 dollars a year, it is big money that we used for our projects. 7 students all over the country are currently receiving scholarships, although in the beginning we tried to concentrate mostly on our district here, we have then decided to start sharing in other areas and now we are focused in going where the need arise.” –Inf.1Cint

The projects are mostly targeting families, and sometimes villages, in need of assistance. Such assistance may vary from the donation of schoolbooks and backpacks, to furniture, from house renovation interventions, to disaster relief support after fires or floods, which are not rare in Belize and mostly affect the lower-income population.

When it comes to bigger projects, Energy4Life partners with BNE Ltd. The company provides all kinds of support, allowing the staff to take extra time for E4L activities, donating seed capitals, raw materials, equipment, and even providing advice, technical expertise and labour when needed.

“One of the other things that is worth mentioning is that we have a recycling program within the company. We recycle paper, but we collect and send it to a recycling company, we do it also with scrap metal and whatever funds we get back go into our program. When we started putting those recycling program in place we spoke to the CEO and we told him ‘Listen we would like the funds to come into the Energy4Life program’ and he said there is no problem just do it” –Inf.1Cint

“The company gives us freedom to do, and every year we normally come to them asking for seed money for that year, and they donate few thousand dollars more. Then we have one of the directors who normally visits, she is the owner of the company, she normally visits and she is very friendly and if there is any special program we just inform her and she would take out her check book and help us.” –Inf.5Cint

Energy4Life identified in the struggle for the access to higher education one of the main problems of Belize, and decided to set up a scholarship program. The selection of the beneficiaries is based on merit and income. Brilliant students coming from poor families that cannot afford the school fees and all the expenses related to uniforms, books, food and transportation, receive from E4L an all-inclusive scholarship that is disbursed semester after semester if the grade average matches what is required. Standards are set high since there are limited available funds compared to the number of people asking for support. The beneficiaries have to be motivated to commit to the

program that, in addition, requires their involvement in extra hours of community service aimed at reminding them of the importance to give back.

E4L targets students enrolled at high school level in different districts; the organization also monitors the students during the academic year, reporting the progress to the General Assembly of all the members gathering at BNE to revise the financial statements every 12 months.

“In my village we are about 300 people. I come from a family of 7 and I am studying at Sacred Heart. I got the opportunity to get a scholarship through BNE the Energy 4 Life program and in few months I will finish high school. We have exam every term but I will have the final exam at the end of the year, it will be the same for all the Caribbean countries. Afterwards I would like to study architecture at St. Johns” – Inf.6Eopc

“I am the third of five sisters, but I am the only one that had the opportunity to attend the high school. We are Mayan, traditionally the girls get married when they are at my age [14 years old]. My two elder sisters finished their primary and then got married, now they live with their families, they both have children. The problem is that my dad is working in a shrimp farm and he is getting a wage of 350BZD every two weeks. We have to pay for our food, for our electricity, the clothes, at the end there was no money for my education, but my teacher was able to find me a scholarship financed by Energy 4 Life so now I can continue studying. I would like to become a doctor!” -Inf.8Eopc

With less bureaucracy to handle, E4L is more flexible than other no-profit organizations. It also relies on its own members to reach out to individuals or communities in need, or to identify particular cases to support; the connection is thus developed on a personal level, by word of mouth or by formally submitting a case to the small board of directors.

“People here have been really participative, the management, the staff and of course also the members, but everyone even if they are not members of the program they come sometimes and present some possible projects to be take care of by E4L, They can come to us and speak with us, they can write us emails, how they prefer. We are ready to do the best we can” –Inf.6Cint

Similarly to BNECT, the Energy4Life program is philanthropic by nature, but instead of coming from a decision of the directors, the initiative has been presented to BNE Ltd. from its working force, following a bottom-up trajectory as opposite to a top down one, as in the case of the Trust. E4L has a symbolic component represented by frequent one-time donations. Such donations reflect a genuine interest in helping, but most of the time the results are not able to be sustained in time. The symbolic feature is mitigated by the more substantive scholarships program on which the organization has focused its efforts. The organization lacks though a formalized structure and standard procedures able to grant full accountability and transparency. The fact of being born within a bigger company as a volunteering initiative fostered a more relaxed compliance with the regulative framework.

To accept a more rigorous conduct is a challenge that E4L would face together in case the organization decides to take off and expand beyond the company borders.

It is interesting to mention how E4L acknowledges the importance of impacting society through their program, and shows a strategy which entails a logic consistent with the idea of CSR as an interaction of an agent with the structure.

“We prefer some little projects so we can impact more than one person. Sometimes when we deal with big project we got the feeling that small people below they don't get impacted as much, so if we start from the bottom and go up that's where you get the impact. Maybe we haven't yet seen the impact that we have had, it takes time, maybe those girls we have been helped with school, they will probably go on, and after they graduate maybe we will not hear from them for a while, but then maybe later on we might be able to meet them and maybe they will be doctors or architect or engineers, becoming the most influential people in this country, impacting the lives of many other who will meet them. The impact is just growing, actually it is a pay forward type of thing, we give them and later on they will be giving to someone else. We give back as we received” -Inf.1Cint

4.4.3 Learning at the Core

In a country where there is a documented lack of expertise in the industrial sector and no engineering programs are offered by the local universities, BNE, a pioneer company in the oil & gas sector, decided to hire Belizeans instead of foreigners. BNE thus, in order to be able to meet the world-class standards required by operating in the oil & gas industry, invested heavily in various training programs.

“Obviously, being new to the industry, we were able to get people that had experience in other areas, not oil & gas, so we knew we quickly had to get them ready, because whenever you have outside people in oil and gas the thing is: ‘Oh, you can't do it! Oh my goodness, you know, there is no way!’. Of course we started going on courses and we quickly learned the reality of how things work [...]. What happened was that by the time we came on board, we already had 50 or 60 field people. There were gaps, because when you start up an operation like this you just need anyone that can do anything. We quickly realised that to bring them up to speed we were going to need to do something. In some cases we were lacking some basic English writing, or the basic skills you need to reach standard operating procedures...” -Informant 2Cint

People working at BNE have always been put in the condition of improving, but the improvement has not been forced upon them: it looks more like a self-empowering process. On this line, a program of Adult Learning has been developed, aimed at providing the basics of primary education to those employees who had not managed to complete it and felt willing to do it at BNE.

“In BNE, we want you to want something and you do it for yourself, we don't want to be giving hands out for that. So, even though we knew people that needed to go, instead of making it a mandatory or forced or whatever, we put up a flyer saying ‘We are starting an adult education class, it's going to

be at this place at this time. If you are interested, come' and we got the initial list of people. I think we had between 10 and 12 who subscribed.” –Inf.2Cint

The pilot Adult Education Programme, also known as Learning at the Core (L@Core), was born from a shared need of both the company and the staff. Until now, 5 employees have graduated from the Primary Education Program, 12 employees have completed Secondary education, 3 completed higher education and by the end of August 2014, 2 will complete their Master’s degree. A second round of 18 employees are currently enrolled in school from Primary Education to Master’s Degree level, representing a small sample but a really powerful example of continuity and intended sustainability of such programs.

“The key to the adult education was finding the right teacher, and we were lucky enough to find ours. She is ‘The Teacher’, she has years of experience, she has taught people around here, but more than that she just has passion....and she knows how to teach adults because you know it is different, and she just jumped on board with it. So, that's how we have her in terms of the basic level and I can say that, in terms of the other trainings that we do, it was really just to get people off the part in the oil and gas, and as I said, we have very intelligent people, that is not our problem. So, that in a nutshell is how Learning at the Core started.” –Inf.2Cint

The first academic year at BNE started August 7, 2010. A class of 6 students, plus 3 who joined later, went through the program meeting every Saturday morning in a small building at the Iguana Creek central gathering facility, which hosted the school. Once again, education figures as a resource able to give access to opportunities, overcoming structural issues. BNE is deeply convinced that training and self-development are the pillars for a person's empowerment, and empowered people in an empowered society, are the backbone of a stable and peaceful country. Moreover, the lack of adult education services in Belize represents an issue for the entire society. In Belize people don't have the chance to approach school at a later stage in life, or even to attend basic literacy programs, so their access to better working and living opportunities remains constrained by a low level of education. BNE, with an investment of only 15,000BZD, managed to cover all the expenses related to the L@Core initiative, including the teacher wage for the 45 sessions of frontal lectures. The positive spin offs such amount of money generated were beyond the company’s initial expectations.

The primary school students completed the courses and sat the Belize Junior Achievement Test (BJAT) in June 2011. Initially, the company did not investigate the reasons why some of the employees didn't complete their primary education when they were of age. At a later moment, though, the company decided to participate to the 2013 GetEnergy Global Education and Training in Exploration Award, presenting their Adult Education Programme in the category ‘Learning at the Core’. A promotional video was shot and it gained the support of both the committee and the

wider public, touched by the stories of the students who were explaining what kind of impact such program has had on their lives.

“I was able to see their confidence growing day by day, taking full ownership for their little improvements and showing it with pride. It has been one of the most touching experiences I've ever had, and trust me, I taught a lot of classes over the years. I was retired already when BNE contacted me, making me this great gift. [...] As I said before and I keep saying everyone, Learning at the Core has been an amazing project that need to be replicated. The Ministry of Education need to use it as a template and reproduce it all over the country, it works and it transforms people lives [...] They now believe in themselves, they understood the importance of self-development, they will transmit those values to their children, their perspectives have changed” –Inf.3Eint

According to those who led the project, L@Core is a successful initiative and can be the template for the implementation of a similar program on a larger scale, countrywide.

From a CSR perspective, L@Core is defined in its purpose as a win-win solution for both the stakeholders, a category that includes the workers, and the company: “BNE employees with less than a primary school education and formal training must be motivated to break down barriers to education. By encouraging learning and development BNE can strengthen the development of its human resources” (BNE, 2010a: 3). The same concept is repeated in the Training and Development Policy document, saying that “BNE can meet the challenge of having a well educated, knowledgeable workforce, by supporting continuous education, through targeted education and employee development programs. These programs may also help BNE attract and retain employees who are interested in in advancing their education, skills, and careers going forward” (BNE, 2010b: 4). BNE doesn't consider the Adult Education Programme as part of the company CSR practices, keeping it confined to the HR realm. However, L@Core is a powerful example of internal CSR that has made an impact also outside the company's gates, and it can visually work as a drop generating a ripple effect entering still waters. The initiative, in fact, targeted a specific category of employees, but the direct benefits spread also to their families and communities.

“I changed, I felt better. I also understand now the importance of education so I can tell my daughter to study and the others in my family. They saw me studying hard and be happy and proud. They also know it now, how good is to study” – Inf.9Cint

L@Core is the result of a top-down approach to solve an operative issue: having employees able to fill their education gaps, so as to operate the standard procedures required by the company. It was the outcome of a management decision endorsed by the directors, and it was done to answer a particular need arising from the workforce. It is highly substantive by nature, even though winning the GetEnergy Award worked also as a reputation boost, providing the program of an

additional symbolic value which wasn't intended by the promoters of the initiative. L@Core represents a valid initiative that, if kept alive and sustained in a transition from the company to the outer society, might generate an impressive impact in Belize.

4.4.4 LPG depots

A second example of win-win solution is the development of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas production and the subsequent local distribution: a project that started in 2007 when BNE decided to put gathering pipelines in place. The pipelines carry all the fluids, extracted by the wells of the Spanish Lookout field, to a central Gas Recovery & Processing Plant.

This allowed the company to process all of the gas gathered in a single location at an economically profitable rate, while also ensuring the company self-sufficiency in terms of energy. Thanks to this investment, BNE has been able to produce fuel gas for internal power generation and LPG to be sold on the local market. One year later, the processing plant was completed, and in 2009 the LPG production officially started.

In Belize, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is called "Butane". It is a combination of butane and propane, in a 70-30 ratio, produced by processing the associated gas, extracted along with the crude oil, that otherwise would be flared. In Belize, commercial butane is massively used for cooking in both urban and rural areas, and it represents a basic household necessity.

By being able to produce LPG locally and distribute it without intermediaries, BNE gained sensitive comparative advantages. The company was then able to sell butane on the Belizean market at a sensible price, much lower and therefore affordable for the community, while granting new sources of profit for the company. A win-win solution able to ensure a long-term sustainability depending solely on the availability of gas for production and retail.

“Now, we are a small company but we produce our own power, we produce gas and we produce an exported oil, so it was done. The question: why was it done? It was done because it made sense, it was done because we are monetizing gas that would have been otherwise burning, it was done because we don't want to pump more hydrocarbon into the environment and it was done because people can actually feel it in their pockets.” –Inf.3Cint

The motto for the project became “Putting food on the table for LESS”, overtly expressing the most immediate benefit such initiative generates for Belizeans: nowadays, they are able to spare from 5 to 12 BZD per cylinder since the ceiling price of BNE's LPG is currently 85BZD per 100lb cylinder, against the 97 of the imported butane at the controlled prices.

The rollout of BNE's Liquefied Petroleum Gas Depots began in the first half of 2011. In order to satisfy the high demand, the company decided in 2013 to start complementing it with Mexican LPG. The blend covers for the 15% share of the local market and today BNE's LPG can be purchased from different franchise partners in 4 locations across 2 different districts in Belize: the so called BNE's LPG depots.⁶

"We cover for the 15%, honestly we have never considered possible for us to satisfy more than the 25-30% of the market, moreover considering the decreasing production of crude oil from where the LPG is processed. It has always been important for us to be able to work out a system whereby we don't have disruptions in the market. But we were able to provide a product to Belizeans which is better in terms of both price and quality. BNE's LPG is significantly less costly and has a higher butane content than the other products on the market. And that means that it burns hotter, it last longer, and it is safer to store and handle." –Inf.3Cint

The first communities to ever benefit from the BNE's butane, were the ones affected by Hurricane Richard in October 2010. By that time, the company had just started the LPG production and it partnered with the Ministry of Human Development to provide free butane to the villages of Gales Point Manatee, Mullins River, La Democracia and Georgeville, for a total amount of 380 filled tanks. The donations ensured the company a good media coverage of the next step BNE would have been taking shortly after in the country's energy industry.

The government endorsed the initiative labelling it as 'helping to alleviate poverty', supporting food security in both rural and urban areas.

"Once per month my dad and a friend of him, who owns a truck, drive up to Burrel Boom Road to the gas station and fill all the tanks. We call first to be sure there is butane available for the day and then they go fill them and come back. It might seem nothing for you but we have to plan it ahead because we can't go by ourselves when we just need. [...] We could use others' [products] but the BNE's one costs less and it burns just fine, we still spend the same amount as before but we simply can get more. [...] In Belize City it is not easy to have a fireplace, it is not like in the villages where you cook outside, here you need a stove for cooking. I have three younger brothers and my daughter with me. Trust me it is a lot of cooking everyday! Thanks to them we can lit up our stove more often than before, it helps us, it really does" –Inf.5Eopc

This makes of the LPG Depots a profit maximization initiative that turned out generating positive externalities. The initiative has a consistent and verifiable positive impact on the wider society in the form of a price reduction for a primary necessity as butane. On the downside, there is the aspect of the availability of LPG since it is strictly depending on the crude oil BNE produces. BNE's

⁶ The initiative created some initial disagreement with other dealers that felt their incomes threatened by BNE entering the market with a more competitive product. At the beginning of 2011 when the company announced their LPG project, the five main Belizean LPG importers protested against the initiative. The government allowed anyway the company to enter the market with the more affordable alternative. The news appeared on the local media.

crude production is steadily declining and without opportunities to explore new prospects, due to the lack of a governmental license, the company won't be able to sustain the offer indefinitely.

The LPG Depots initiative comes from a directors' profit-oriented decision, which has proven to be substantive in nature, as the L@Core one, but with the additional advantage of having an horizontal impact on a far larger number of beneficiaries, namely all the Belizean families dependent on butane. Although it is not formally considered a CSR initiative, it represents the closest example to the creation of shared value BNE has ever put in place. LPG Depots remains to date a need-oriented approach to business that could generate value for both company and society.

4.5 Summary

The chapter has presented the data gathered during the fieldwork in Belize.

Using quotes from the informants, it described the degrees of exposure to, and perception of, violence within the Belizean society. In Belize, violence is provided with both a direct and a structural component. While the former is addressed by national development and security policies, the latter is not yet fully acknowledged. Social structures reproduce themselves facilitating the spread of structural violence. Lack of fair access to education and health care, poverty and inequality, are some of the conditions on which structural violence thrives, making Belize a country at peace in a very narrow sense. The chapter tried to briefly explain the role played by the private sector in such scenario. On a macro-economical level, it generates revenues and employment for the country. In addition, resources generated by the private sector have been supporting the government in avoiding a dangerous debt crisis. The chapter outlined also the social-oriented initiatives the Belizean private sector is engaged in, especially concerning educational projects.

The chapter then presented Belize Natural Energy, the case study. It introduced the story behind the foundation of the company, its operations as a pioneer in the Belizean oil & gas industry, and explored in depth its CSR profile. At BNE CSR is embedded in the company's culture and endorsed by the company's business philosophy. The chapter reported a detailed overview on the CSR profile of the company, including some references to the environmental aspect of it, and it focused on the social initiatives; four of them have been selected, presented and analysed.

BNE Charitable trust appears as a traditional CSR initiative with a large/medium-scale impact in the field of education; it manages resources in a systemic way, channelling them to education programs and the construction/rehabilitation of educational infrastructures. An example of a less structured initiative, also impacting communities on a smaller-scale, is the Energy For Life

program: born within the company workforce and grown to become a consistent component of the company's CSR profile, it also channels resources to educational support and small poverty alleviation initiatives. Learning at the Core is the third initiative presented here, and it is addressing directly a social issue identified internally by the company's HR: bridging fundamental education gaps given by an early drop out from school at the primary level. Such initiative was aimed at promoting an Adult Education Program among the employees and resulted in a self-empowering initiative whose benefits exceeded the direct beneficiaries and spread outwards as a ripple effect. The last initiative, LPG Depots, doesn't formally belong to the company's CSR. LPG or Butane is a basic necessity for many households in Belize and BNE has been able to market it domestically at a cheaper price, since it is produced locally, instead of being imported. The initiative has been mainly conceived to monetize gas that would have been otherwise flared, ensuring additional profit to the company; nonetheless, it had a large-scale substantive impact benefiting society at a national level. The LPG Depots initiative targeted specific needs within the society, and answered them with a business product. It means creating value for both company and society in a responsible and sustainable way. All these initiatives have limitations, advantages, strengths and flaws, and they offer a clear picture of what BNE Ltd. is, in what the company's CSR consists and how it conducts business in Belize.

CHAPTER 5 Discussion and Conclusions

“The business of peace requires more than showing up with paint brushes, foodstuffs and an oil pipeline or two.”

- Tony Snow

The chapter provides a final discussion about the topics explored in the research: CSR, Positive Peace and Structuration Theory. It intends to recollect the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological aspects of the study, and discuss them with the support coming from the data, presenting a revised structuration model. In an attempt to answer the research question, the chapter presents a conclusive discussion of the findings emerging from the study in relation to CSR. It offers also some final remarks and recommendations. Eventually, it concludes with a reflection on Corporate Social Responsibility and the existing divide with the Creating Shared Value approach, awaiting for contributions from both scholars and business practitioners.

5.1 Discussing the research building blocks

The focus of this research has been to explore, from a positive stand point, the potential contribution of Corporate Social Responsibility in promoting a shift toward a peace-oriented way of conducting business, also called a peace business paradigm (Santa-Barbara, 2007).

This research is built on three building blocks: the business aspect of Corporate Social Responsibility, Johan Galtung's concept of Positive Peace, and the Structuration Theory by Anthony Giddens. These concepts have been defined and correlated to each other, showing how companies can perform the role of agents in society, and how, by interacting with the society through their CSR initiatives, they can produce structures or transform the existing ones, thus facilitating positive peace.

CSR is my subject of investigation with its modalities of implementation, its limitations, its potential ability to impact society and its role, to be defined by the company's shareholders and stakeholders. Positive peace is the lens through which I look at all the processes outlined in the study, and it is also the missing structural element. It represents the goal to strive for: a goal businesses can contribute to achieve by shifting from a profit oriented / economic growth paradigm to a peace business one. Structuration Theory is the key to solve the riddle, and I relied on it to orientate myself. Such theory allowed me to put all the pieces into place, see how they mutually interact and what outcomes such interaction may generate according to its dynamics.

What emerges from the study is the identification of the notion of structure as the common denominator of this research: an element around which the three building blocks gravitate and on which they converge (see Figure 5).

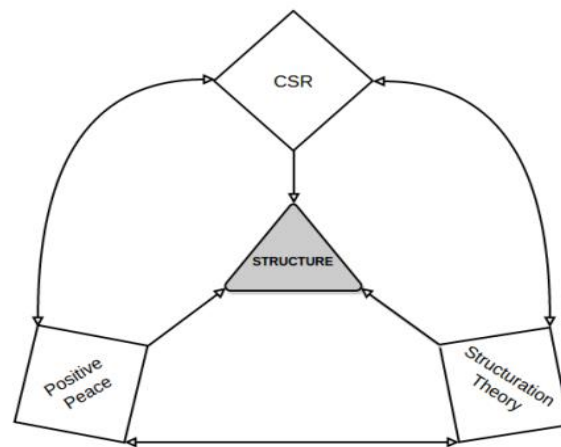


Figure 5: the diagram shows CSR, Positive peace and Structuration Theory, as distinct and interconnected blocks, converging on the notion of structure, around which the concepts gravitate.

Structure is a slippery concept, hard to define, ambiguous and heavily loaded with abstraction. The notion of “structure” is also central in this research. The data collected during the fieldwork in Belize, researching Belize Natural Energy Limited’s CSR in details, support the centrality of structure, as the concept linking theory with methods and data analyses in a logic progression.

In my theoretical chapter, I presented Johan Galtung’s concept of positive peace, considering it dependant from the absence of not only direct, but also structural, violence. Structural violence is an avoidable form of violence, produced by social structures, preventing people from meeting their basic needs, accessing opportunities, and living their lives with dignity (Galtung 1967, 2003).

In the same chapter, I also tried to define CSR, to outline the potential as well as the limitations attributed to the concept, explaining how it can be supportive of a shift in the business paradigm. It emerged strongly the importance for CSR to be channelled toward structural issues and social needs, because exactly by addressing them, it is possible to make a significant, social and responsible impact.

Finally, I approached the theory of Structuration, and I decided to design a model considering agent and structure as interdependent units (see Figure 1). The model helps visualizing how agents are empowered to both operate in a manner that influences the structures and reflexively monitor the interaction with, and the impact on, those structures, thus leading to actions that reinforce, modify, or create new structures.

In my model, CSR became the mode of interaction to be monitored, together with its impact, in order to allow the company to reinforce the positive structures of a country, to transform those that instead are conducive to violence, or to create new structures able to foster positive peace.

In the methodological chapter, I discussed my choice of conducting a fieldwork in Belize, selecting BNE Ltd. as my case study. Once in the field I tried to identify the social structures of the Belizean society, and among them, the ones conducive to structural violence, to then be able to see whether they corresponded to the structural issues targeted by the company's CSR, and if so, to what extent the initiatives were able to impact them. Through observation, document analysis and by conducting interviews and open conversations, I collected valuable data, here presented and analysed.

In the analysis, it emerged that in Belize violence is present in both its direct and structural form, and such presence has become acceptable by gaining a cultural dimension. In order to understand what may represent structural violence in Belize, I looked at poverty as lack of opportunities. In fact, poverty should not be seen solely as a question of scarce income, rather it is a matter of opportunities; it ultimately lies in the difficulties entailed in developing personal capacities and freedoms (Sen, 2000). Societal structures contribute to people's poverty through deprivation, marginalization, repression and exploitation. People occupying the bottom rungs of society in Belize are struggling for getting access to basic education and health treatments; they feel trapped by social structures that reproduce themselves and appear immutable.

To break down the violence circle, Belize needs a structural change redefining the access to opportunities in more equal terms. Therefore, I investigated the role of BNE as an agent able to facilitate structural changes in the Belizean social context. BNE's contribution is both an indirect and a direct one. Indirectly, BNE provides a specialized understanding of local context, being close to the local communities; it contributes to the country's GDP and influences stability through employment, attraction of foreign investments and international visibility, being to date the sole successful representative of the oil & gas industry of Belize. In a more direct way, instead, BNE contributes to the reinforcement, transformation and production of social structures through its CSR initiatives aimed at unlocking opportunities for all Belizeans.

5.2 CSR between effectiveness and profitability

CSR in itself does not guarantee a successful impact on society.

According to how it is planned and carried on, CSR can be more or less effective, substantive, and provided with long-term impacting potential. It can also be more or less profitable, since it may be able to provide a company with a competitive profile and advantages in terms of brand, image and reputation. What makes CSR a good investment for both companies and society, is the capacity to design programs able to target relevant structural issues, while respecting the business requirement of creating value for the company carrying on such programs.

CSR usually doesn't belong to a company's business model, and for how much effective and profitable it can be, it remains conceived as a distribution of resources generated by the business in projects aimed at tackling social issues. Moreover, on a more practical side, CSR's capacity to impact and transform societies is constantly challenged by operational flaws.

CSR can be mismanaged, resources can be scattered all over different short-term oriented initiatives that sometimes are even in contrast among themselves. The assessment of the context of intervention can be superficially conducted, the unintended consequences of some investments can be underestimated, and a weak monitoring system can fail to provide important feedback. This often leads to a disappointing misalignment between the initial good intentions, the declared CSR impacting potential, and the actual outcomes. Looking at this from a positive peace perspective, it is even more important to identify features functional for designing a good CSR: effective and profitable, thus able to positively impact social structures and promote peace.

BNE's approach to structural issues has shown a variegated range of complementary CSR initiatives, able to foster a serious discussion and suggest possible generalizations. At BNE social responsibility is strongly supported by the decision makers, the investors and the top ranks of the company management. CSR values are reflecting the company's philosophy; they have been embedded in the company's culture, and expressed in the company's mission, vision and values. The importance of CSR has been naturally imparted to the employees, proving to be consistent and resilient to external challenges. At BNE, CSR is part of the company's DNA, so entrenched in the company's profile that some of its initiatives, producing significant positive externalities, may not be explicitly referred to as part of the company's CSR strategy.

In terms of effectiveness and profitability, Belize Natural Energy Ltd. is a good example of CSR. The 4 CSR initiatives analysed are born as responses to specific Belizean structural needs, or to

target structural issues. Moreover, they have been also able to reward the company with a growing public consent or, in the case of the LPG distribution, with additional sources of profit.

The company is active in the education sector, channelling resources to the construction of school infrastructures, and promoting a more fair access to education among people, including its own employees and marginalized communities. Education, in fact, strongly emerges in Belize as one of the driving forces able to unlock opportunities, to free someone from conditions of poverty or indigence, and, on a macro-level, to reduce social inequalities.

In Belize, smart investments in education, coming from the private sector through CSR programs, can be wisely addressed to produce welcomed structural changes.

In conclusion, to summarize my study findings, I revisit my initial structuration model as this:

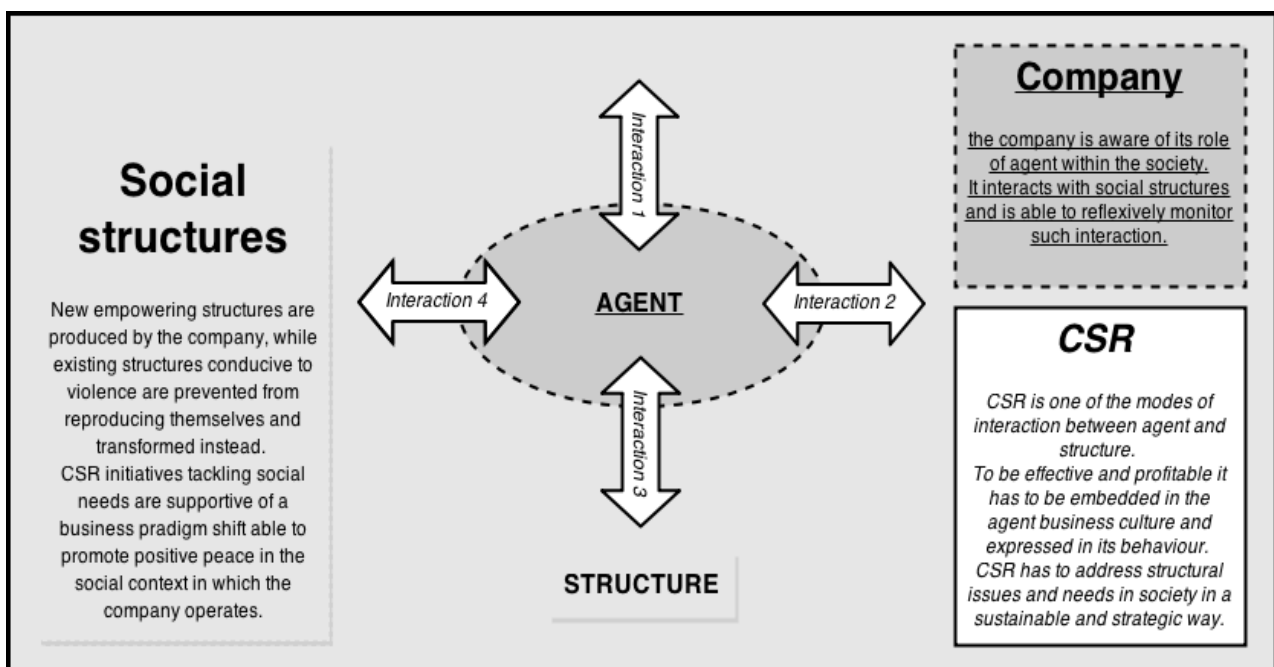


Figure 6: this conclusive structuration model is a revision of the model initially drafted. It presents an ideal scenario in which CSR is supportive of a shift toward a peace business paradigm, facilitating positive peace.

CSR initiatives, as the ones promoted by BNE Ltd., are in fact indicative of how CSR can be supportive of a shift toward a peace business paradigm, since they suggest which characteristics the agents should have (awareness, reflexive monitoring ability), how its mode of interaction with the structure should work (CSR targeting social needs effectively, profitably and sustainably), and what kind of impact such interaction might have on the social structure in which the agent operates (productive, reinforcing/preventive, transformative) to facilitate positive peace.

5.3 CSR and Creating Shared Value

According to the business assumptions presented in the first chapter, other than promoting stability and doing well while doing good, companies are more and more attracted to the possibility of enhancing their competitiveness in tackling social problems. “Businesses acting as businesses, not as charitable donors, are the most powerful force for addressing the pressing issues we face” (Porter and Kramer, 2007: 3). Such business assumption is the pillar around which the idea of Creating Shared Value (CSV) stands.

Creating Shared Value is a recent business concept, generally reported as an alternative to CSR. CSV advocates for *the integration of* social and environmental impact into the core business operations, instead of consider it as separated from the business. Porter (2011) argues that the fundamental distinction between CSR and Shared Value approach lies in this strategic integration able to drive economic value. “Companies and employees know that charitable donations are important. However, they want to expand their engagement so that their core business models improve the well-being of people and the planet, reduce or eliminate negative externalities, and earn a profit” (Moore, 2014: 4). The divide between CSR and CVS needs to be further investigated. The two approaches, in fact, do not necessarily exclude each other. They rather provide a company with different solutions that, if adopted strategically, can complement each other.

BNE Ltd., for instance, remains linked to a definition of social and environmental impact that is not integrated in the core business operations. It adopted a responsive, embedded and at time strategic version of CSR, but from the analysis of its initiatives, it emerged that the company expresses the role of CSR as a value belonging to an ethical dimension, not as a source of profit economically positioned within the business. Exception made for the LPG Depots initiative, which it is perfectly adhering to the CSV principles, demonstrating how it is possible to harmonize both approaches to achieve better results. The LPG distribution targets a fundamental Belizean social need, and responds to that marketing domestically a primary necessity at a more affordable price. BNE, as a company operating in the energy sector, has answered to a structural issue with pure business, increasing its competitive profile in benefiting society.

Since BNE is currently experiencing an internal restructuring, the time would be mature to support a more systemic integration of the social and environmental impact in the business day-to-day operations, strategies and procedures. While maintaining a substantive CSR profile, future investments in new services and products could be aligned to the same business paradigm from

which the LPG Depots initiatives were generated: a CSV one that places social structural needs at the core of the company's business. Such paradigm is probably the closer to a peace business one, exemplifying nonviolence, social justice and ecological sustainability as part of normal business operations, and targeting social needs and structural issues with sustainable and responsible business solutions. "In summary peace business has to do with the production and exchange of goods and services which meet basic human needs in an equitable and ecologically sustainable manner" (Santa Barbara, 2007: 242) and in this regard it clearly appears how both CSR and CSV represent significant steps in supporting a paradigm shift in that direction.

5.4 Remarks ad recommendations

BNE as an agent has found through CSR effective modes of interaction with the country's structures, and by targeting structural needs, it has made possible on a wider extent to improve the conditions for eradicating structural violence from the Belizean society, thus moving a step further in the path toward positive peace. BNE can do even better.

The company, in fact, lacks a proper CSR assessment, able to identify gaps and opportunities, and thereby help in making informed decisions about moving ahead (Hohnen, 2007).

In Belize, lack of education, lack of infrastructure, widespread poverty and inequality are some of the forms in which structural violence presents itself. Identifying the real needs and the best programs, impact- and resource-wise, to respond to such needs, implies a vast, and most of the time direct, knowledge of the social context and its structures. BNE is a Belizean company with a 95% of Belizean employees who have personally experienced some degrees of exposure to the country's structural issues; therefore, CSR has been naturally tailored to address the most relevant social needs even without a proper assessment. A CSR assessment though, does not only provide with insights on the social context in which a company operates, but it is mostly a self-monitoring tool and it sets the baseline on which to build the CSR strategy.

"A CSR strategy is a road map for moving ahead on CSR issues. It sets the firm's direction and scope over the long term with regard to CSR, allowing the firm to be successful by using its resources within its unique environment to meet market needs and fulfill stakeholder expectations" (Ibid.: 32). Once presented, the strategy has to be developed and implemented, and usually it is exactly in these phases that the issues arise undermining all the company's efforts.

A recursive evaluation, over a fixed period, points out what has to be improved. Evaluating CSR is fundamental and it can't be done properly without an initial assessment to compare the results

with. In structuration theory, the agent needs to reflexively monitor its actions. It has to acknowledged and adapted to the structures, transforming them exactly by virtue of its capacity to monitor the impact of its actions. The same needs to be done by a company, systemically monitoring its CSR initiatives to make them effective, profitable and sustainable in time.

Surely, CSR is hard to define and even harder to measure, thus to evaluate.

In 2014, the contributors to a project called IMPACT, aimed at developing new tools for measuring CSR's impact, released a "practitioner handbook" presenting their research. The project combined four empirical methods –econometric analysis, in-depth case studies, network analysis and Delphi analysis– (CSR impact, 2014). Looking at some examples listed in the report, and applying them to the specific context and peculiarities of the case, it should be possible to design an assessment system suitable for a particular company. In case the company lacks such capacity, it is recommendable to invest in assembling a CSR leadership team provided with the knowledge, skills and expertise necessary to start developing and implementing a successful CSR strategy, or else, rely on external services provided by CSR consultants.

5.5 Propositions for further testing

Based on the discussion, I envisioned multiple propositions for further testing.

Recently, US Capital Energy, a Texas-based oil company, started oil exploration activities in the south of Belize, in the Sarstoon Temash National Park in Toledo: a district mostly inhabited by Mayan communities who consider the territories, their homeland. The company reached out to the community experiencing a strong resistance. It would be interesting to investigate CSR strategies in such sensitive context, outlining the ongoing structuration process to understand how the agent interacts, through CSR, with indigenous cultural issues.

In the Belizean context, it would be also interesting to explore the ongoing institutional dynamics linking BNE Ltd. to the government in their set up public-private partnership. The peculiar nature of the BNE Charitable Trust represents an interesting case study to investigate on its own, or in a comparative study, to highlight the effectiveness of a CSR implemented in close collaboration with political institutions.

Finally, it would be interesting to research in depth the existing divide between Corporate Social Responsibility and the creation of Shared Value approach; building theory in this field would benefit both scholars and business practitioners interested in the social role of private companies.

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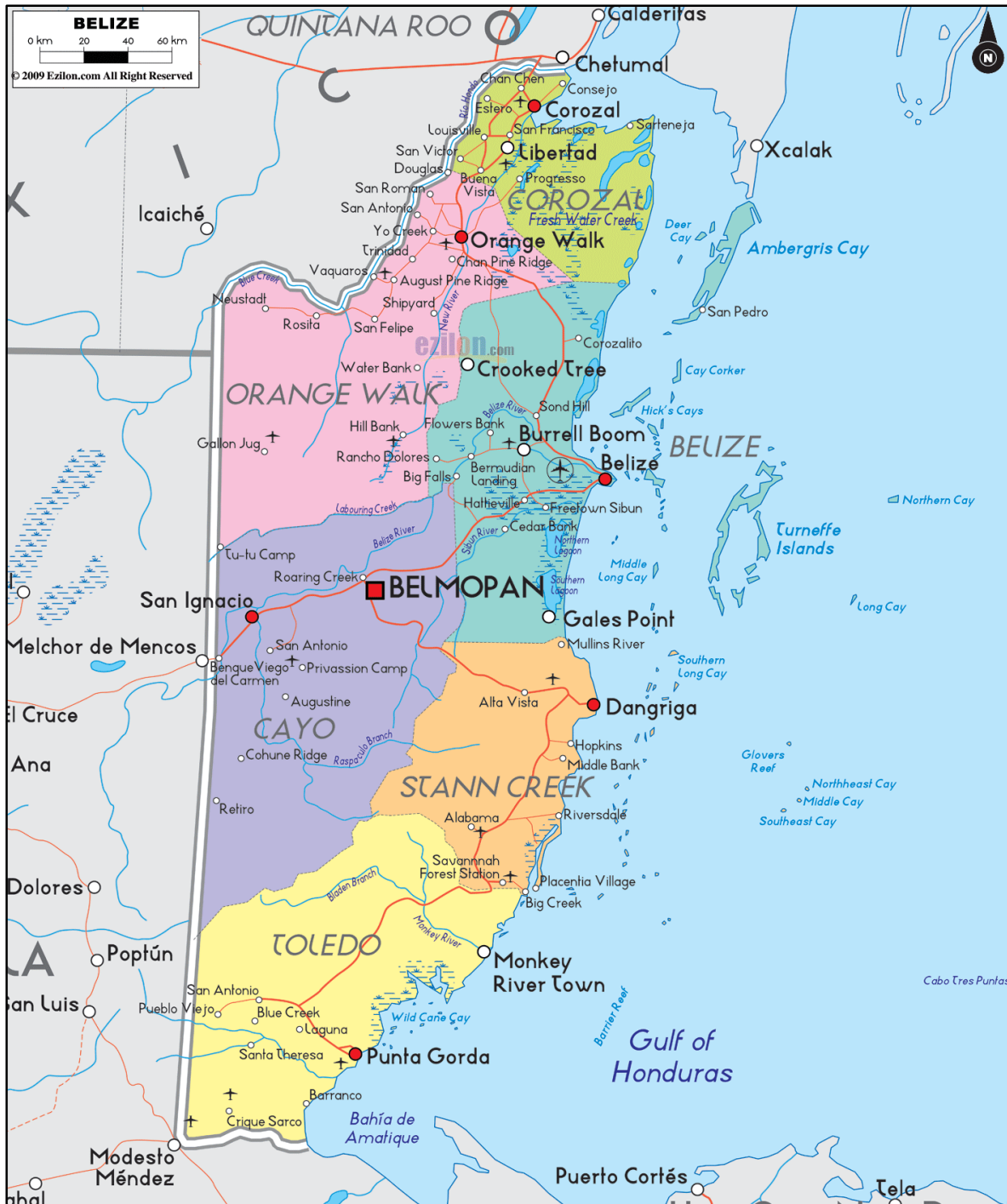
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APPENDIXES

7.1 APPENDIX 1: Belize Map



Map 1: Belize Political map showing the international boundary, districts boundaries with their capitals, and national capital. The country shares its borders with Mexico in the north, Guatemala in the south and west, and Caribbean Sea in the east. Belmopan is the capital of Belize and is indicated in the map with a red square.

7.2 APPENDIX 2: Interview Guide

Interview guide (semi-structured interview)¹

Phase 1: information

Informal talk (2-5 min.)

Informal talk to introduce myself (the researcher) and get to know the informants, reducing the distance interviewer-interviewees thus allowing them to feel more comfortable.

Information (5 min.)

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):

It is a way for companies to contribute to society. Usually, it is implemented through social and environmental projects and initiatives that should benefit people, communities and societies [providing examples if necessary].

With this study I hope to see how CSR works in practice, to which extent is able to impact society and if a company can, through CSR, transform the social structure, fostering peace.

- Positive peace:

It is a definition of peace broader than the absence of organized violence, or open conflicts (negative peace). It implies the fulfilment of basic human needs, social and political freedom and the access to opportunities [providing examples if necessary].

In this study, I try to understand violence in Belize and its structural aspects preventing positive peace.

- The interview:

Data and information gathered in this interview will be a part of my research on CSR contribution to positive peace. The interview will be anonym, all the data will be anonymized as soon as this study is completed, and for no reason it will be possible to trace the interview contents back to the informant. It is only me (the researcher) that has access to the interview material, including, visual and audio recordings, which will only be used for this study.

You, as an informant, have the right to ask questions, require additional information and/or withdraw from this interview at any given time.

¹ The interview guide has been a 'work in progress', it has been revised, corrected, and integrated with additional questions during the fieldwork according to information obtained locally and the inputs coming of the participants of the study.

Questions:

- Is everything clear or do you (the informant) have any questions before we start?
- Is it ok for you (the informant) if I record this interview? [Negotiate with the informant]

Phase 2: Transition

Questions:

a) For employees at Belize Natural Energy Limited, Belize

- What is your position in BNE and what does that entail?
- In what way does BNE work with CSR?
- Do you have any direct experience with CSR?
- How BNE deals with social/environmental projects?
- What kind of relationship is there between BNE and the communities where it operates?
How is it managed?

b) For all participants and locals in Belize

- What do you think about BNE?
- What do you think about this country (Belize)?
- What are the main issues this country (Belize) is facing?
- Have you, or someone close to you, ever received support from BNE? Tell me about that...

Phase 3: Focusing

Questions:

a) For employees at Belize Natural Energy Limited, Belize:

- Name 3 BNE's CSR initiatives you know about...
- Do they have any significant impact on society? Explain.
- What do they bring back to the company (BNE)? Explain.
- How is CSR assessed/monitored?
- How are your social projects evaluated?

- Do you work with the government and how?
- What kind of laws do you have to follow?
- What kind of social initiatives do you promoted?
- Can you see any change in the communities where you have implemented social initiatives?
- How are the contact between you and the local community?
- What is accepted behavior in the contact with the community?
- What kind of environmental issues do you have?
- How does BNE manage environmental compliance/risk?
- Do you see any health problems in the community?
- Do you received any complain from the community regarding environmental issues?
- Have there been any noticeable changes in the local communities/local environment after BNE started its operations?
- Why did BNE decide to implement BNECT/E4L/L@Core/LPG Depots initiative? Who took the decision?
- How did the employees reacted to the BNECT/E4L/L@Core/LPG Depots initiative?
- How did the community reacted to the BNECT/E4L/L@Core/LPG Depots initiative?
- Did the BNECT/E4L/L@Core/LPG Depots initiative get media coverage? If yes with what result?
- What are your (the informant) personal impressions about the BNECT/E4L/L@Core/LPG Depots initiative?
- Have the BNECT/E4L/L@Core/LPG Depots had any positive spill-over effects in your community?
- Does BNE target violence prevention in its CSR strategy? Why?
- How does BNE contribute to peace in this country (Belize)?
- Do you think BNE could contribute to peace through CSR? Why? How?

b) For all participants and locals in Belize

- How are resources distributed in your society?
- What do you think about poverty in your country (Belize)?
- Do people have free access to health treatments in Belize?
- Does the country provide a quality health care service?
- Do people have free access to education in Belize?
- Does the country provide a quality education service?

- How is the job market in Belize?
- What are, on your opinion the main problems for accessing the job market in Belize?
- What do you think about violence in the country (Belize)?
- What is your opinion on the causes of violence in your society?
- Have you ever directly witnessed/experienced episodes of violence?
(if comfortable let them talk about it)
- Do you know someone (relatives/friends/acquaintances) who have witnessed/experienced episodes of violence?
(if comfortable let them talk about it)
- Would you define Belize as a country at peace? Why?
- Do you think companies as BNE can help Belize? How?
- Do you think companies as BNE should be involved in social projects targeting violence? Why? How?
- What do you think about BNE' CSR initiatives (e.g. BNECT/E4L/L@Core/LPG Depots)?
- What do you think BNE could do more/better?
- If you would have the power to change something to makes things better, what would you change? Why? How?
- How do you envision the future of Belize in terms of peace and development?

Additional questions specific about BNE's CSR initiatives:

- a) On BNE Charitable Trust (to whom applicable):
 - How does the Trust work in practice?
 - How are BNE interest represented in the Trust?
 - What is, in your opinion, BNE agenda when it comes to the Trust?
 - What is, in your opinion, the Government of Belize (GOB) agenda when it comes to the Trust?
 - How is the relationship between BNE and the GOB regarding the selection of the projects to finance?
 - How are the project implemented, monitored and evaluated?
 - Why focusing on education?
 - On your opinion, are the Trust's project producing long-term sustainable positive spillovers? Explain.
 - What kind of issues, if any, is the Trust experiencing?

- Looking ahead, what are the main challenges, if any, you envision for the Trust?
 - Looking ahead, what on your opinion is a possible future for the Trust?
- b) On Energy for Life (to whom applicable):
- What is Energy for Life (E4L)? How do you define the initiative?
 - How does E4L works in practice?
 - Does E4L have a geographic focus on specific districts or is it operating nation-wide?
 - Who contributes to the donations? How?
 - How is the relationship with BNE?
 - Has BNE any influence on how E4L manages the funds?
 - Has BNE any influence on how E4L select the projects/students to finance?
 - What does E4L bring to BNE?
 - Why focusing on education?
 - How are the students assisted by E4L? How are their progress monitored?
 - Who is eligible for assistance?
 - What kind of issues, if any is E4L experiencing?
 - Looking ahead, what are the main challenges, if any, you envision for the program?
 - Looking ahead, what on your opinion is a possible future for E4L?
- c) On 'Learning at the Core' Adult Education Program (to whom applicable):
- How did Learning at the Core (L@Core) begin?
 - Why focusing on education?
 - What were BNE objectives to achieve?
 - How does L@Core work in practice?
 - Why the class for the primary school was hosted at BNE facilities?
 - How did the students balance work, life, and school?
 - How did BNE encourage the workers to participate to L@Core?
 - How did BNE assist the participants (meals/transportation/time flexibility)?
 - What has BNE gained from L@Core?
 - What does the award BNE obtained for the initiative represent for the company?
 - How does BNE evaluate the initiative?
 - How could L@Core represent a successful CSR initiative? Why?
 - What kind of issues, if any, has the initiative encountered?

- Do you think L@Core should be replicated in a national program for Adult Education? Why? How?
 - Looking ahead, what are the main challenges, if any, you envision for L@Core sustainability?
 - Looking ahead, what on your opinion is a possible future for L@Core within BNE?
- d) On LPG production and local distribution (LPG Depots):
- Why BNE decided to start the local distribution?
 - Would you consider the LPG Depots initiative a CSR one? Why?
 - How did BNE choose the LPG Depots slogan? Why?
 - Why does the LPG distribution work just in some districts?
 - How does BNE choose the franchising partners?
 - What kind of issues, if any, has the initiative encountered?
 - How did BNE deal with the other LPG importers and retailers complaints?
 - Why did the government agree to let BNE access the market?
 - Do you think BNE could engage in other initiatives similar to the LPG one? Why? How?
 - Looking ahead, what are the main challenges, if any, you envision for LPG Depots sustainability?
 - Looking ahead, what on your opinion is a possible future for LPG Depots within Belize?

Phase 4: Looking back at the interview

Summary of the interview (2-5 min.)

- Have I understood what you (the informant) wanted to share?
- Do you (the informant) have anything to add to this?
- Do you have any final comment?

[In interviews look for any underlying attitudes, preconstituted narratives, dominant discourses]

[In interviews take note of informants' body language]

7.3 APPENDIX 3: Information Sheet

Information about the Study

My name is Sara Lupini and I am a student at the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS), University of Tromsø, Norway. I am enrolled at the second year of Master program in Peace and Conflict Transformation. In regards to this, I am writing a thesis on the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), conducting a fieldwork in Belize where Belize Natural Energy Ltd. (BNE)'s CSR has been selected as my case study.

The purpose of this study is to see how Corporate Social Responsibility works in practice. The study will try to establish in what way CSR contributes to positive social and economic externalities, fostering peace. To do this, I (the researcher) will look at BNE's CSR strategies and initiatives.

This project will focus on if and how CSR initiatives, implemented by BNE, have had any positive spill over effect both directly and indirectly on the Belizean peace standards. Trying to understand on what scale the CSR can positively affect the achievement of a positive peace, a comprehensive idea of peace which involves social, economic, political structural issues other than security ones. The study will be completed during the 2014/15 academic year, and all of the collected material will be then destroyed.

This project is supervised by Elin Merethe Oftedal (elin.m.oftedal@uit.no), associate Professor in Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Innovation at the University of Tromsø.

In this study, I will ask to record interviews. Such audio/video files will only be used for this research, and will not be available to anyone besides the researcher. Personal information will not be recognizable in the publication. The material will be anonymised and it will not be possible to trace back the informants. The participation in this study is on a voluntary basis, and will not have any effect on the informants' relationship with any of the initiatives or organizations that are being investigated in this study. The informants have the right to withdraw from this research and ask questions at any given time, without penalty.

This project is not designed to help the informant personally. The researcher hopes to learn more about Corporate Social Responsibility, the advantages for both company and society, and the possible challenges.

If there are any questions about the study, or if the informant want to withdraw his/her material, please contact:

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Center for Peace Studies

University of Tromsø

N-9037 Tromsø

Norway

7.4 APPENDIX 4: Consent form (English)

Consent Form

I hereby confirm reading and getting oral information about this project concerning Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). I have received and read the information sheet about this project, and I assent to participate in this study.

Signature of participant:

Date:

7.5 APPENDIX 5: Analysis snapshot of BNE Ltd.'s CSR initiatives

ANALYSIS SNAPSHOT	BNECT	E4L	LPG Depots	L@Core
Which type of CSR does it belong to?	Traditional CSR	Workers voluntarism	None	Internal CSR
Who is the initiative driven by?	Management / Board of directors	Workers / Management	Management / Board of directors	Management / Board of directors
What social issue is the initiative targeting?	Access to education / lack of infrastructures	Access to education / poverty alleviation	Poverty alleviation / food security	Access to education / self-empowerment
Is this CSR initiative substantive or symbolic?	Symbolic > substantive	Symbolic > substantive	Substantive > symbolic	Substantive > symbolic
What moved BNE in implementing the initiative?	Reputation / image	Charity / philanthropy	Profit maximization	HR / Bridge education gaps
Is the initiative sustainable in the long run?	Depending on the availability of financial resources	Depending on the availability of financial resources	Depending on the availability of BNE crude oil	Depending on the internal request for education programmes
Who are the direct /indirect beneficiaries?	Students, town/village schools Districts towns and villages	Students, Low-income families Small villages communities	Households, Butane consumers in Belize	Employees, employees families
What kind of impact does the initiative generate?	Immediate impact on students, school teachers and admin, Long-term effectiveness in empowering communities at a district level	Immediate impact on students performances Long-term effectiveness in shifting communities attitude toward education at a village/town level	Immediate impact on the wider society in reducing market prices for a basic necessity at a national level	Immediate on an individual level self-empowerment Long-term effectiveness in shifting families attitude toward education

An analysis snapshot summarizing the main aspects of the four BNE's Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives presented and analysed in details over the chapter