Selecting and Prioritizing Projects:
A study on Intergovernmental and Non-profit Organizations.

Authors: Marcela Figueroa Padilla
Laura Rojas Muñoz

Supervisor: Prof. Vladimir Vanyushyn
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Marcela Figueroa Padilla
Laura Rojas Muñoz
Abstract

Nowadays, organizations are shifting towards project-based management strategies in order to implement more flexible structures that allow them to respond and compete in complex business environments. In this way, project management has been regarded as a valuable competence, providing the organization and its management teams the opportunity to adapt the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to meet project requirements as well as organizational goals. Among the wide array of decisions project managers have to evaluate project selection (PS) and project prioritization (PP) are crucial in order to maximize stakeholder’s value through the effective management and allocation of resources to projects that are in alignment with the organization’s strategic objectives.

Moreover, the integration of management techniques, guidelines and practices has also become a necessity for intergovernmental (IGOs) and non-profit organizations (NPOs), especially because they do not possess a conventional bottom line and in most instances, their main goal is rarely profit maximization. Although the main objective of operations of IGOs and NPOs is also success, this is difficult to be defined and evaluated. As a matter of fact, studies related to project management in IGOs and NPOs argue that the literature available has ignored the public good sector to a great extent, since the majority of the portfolio management tools available are tailored for commercial and for-profit organizations (FPOs). Consequently, this study explores the project portfolio management (PPM) process in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations focusing specifically on the decision-making process regarding project selection and prioritization. It provides an understanding of the main criteria these organizations take into consideration when selecting and prioritizing projects and the impact these methodologies have in terms of achieving project and organizational success. In addition, it examines the role of the project management office (PMO) and individual project managers based on their influence on the decisions concerning project selection and prioritization, as well as project success and organizational success.

The key findings of this study confirm the relevance of the priorities determined by the main stakeholders as one of the principal criteria for project selection, followed by the allocation of funding and resources and the need for strategic alignment. Furthermore, in terms of determining a ranking among the selection criteria, this study has found that within these organizations all the different requirements encompassed in the selection process should be treated as equal. Additionally, it has been possible to determine that for intergovernmental and non-profit organizations the project selection and project prioritization phases are not isolated from one another; and are in fact treated as on single criteria. Conversely, the findings of this study contradict the proposition that the project management office is highly influential in the decision-making process of IGOs and IGOs; however, it emphasizes the role of the project manager in project and organizational success as highly valuable since they possess the hard and soft project management skills that increase the chances to achieve the organizational goals.

Keywords: Project selection, Project prioritization, Decision-making, Non-profit Organizations, Intergovernmental Organizations, Project Management Office, Project Success, Organizational Success.
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List of Abbreviations

Analytic hierarchy process (AHP)
Decision-Making (DM)
European Union (EU)
For-profit Organization (FPO)
Gross domestic product (GDP)
Intergovernmental Organization (IGO)
International Organizations (IOs)
International Relations (IR)
Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM)
Multiple Attribute Decision-making Methods (MADM)
Multiple Criteria Decision Aid (MCDA)
Non-governmental organization (NGO)
Non-profit Organization (NPO)
Portfolio Project Management (PPM)
Preference Ranking Organization Method for Enrichment of Evaluations (PROMETHEE)
Private Non-Profits Organization (PNPs)
Project-based organizations (PBOs)
Project Management (PM)
Project Management Institute (PMI)
Project Management Office (PMO)
Project Selection (PS)
Project Prioritization (PP)
Thematic Analysis (TA)
Top Management Teams (TMT)
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Nowadays companies are operating in more turbulent and competitive business environments as a consequence of globalization and technological advances. Therefore, corporations are turning towards project-based management as a strategy to adopt a more flexible structure in order to respond to changing contexts (Turner, 2009, p.5). In this manner, Project Management (PM) has emerged as a remarkable competence in Top Management Teams (TMT), since it refers to the “application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements” (PMBOK® guide, 2013, p.5). In addition, it helps to improve success rates by ensuring strategic alignment between project and corporate goals and decreases costs by allocating in a more efficient way resources and capabilities (Orčik & Gajic, 2012, p.3).

Taking into account that carrying out successful projects drives organizational success by generating economic value and competitive advantage, Project Selection (PS) and prioritization have become vital activities for executives in terms of the decision-making process. Hence, project managers have to decide on which projects they should focus and determine which are the most important and urgent to be implemented, to hold on or to cancel (Costa Dutra, et al., 2014, p.1042). In this way, studies in the field of project management have recognized project selection as a dynamic process to categorize, evaluate and prioritize a group of projects or programmes (Cooper et al., 2001, p.362). Literature also recognized Project Portfolio Management (PPM) as a solution for project selection problems and it is defined as the formalization and assistance in the selection process by applying a set of methodologies and business techniques (Levine, 2005, p.17). Its main objective is to maximize the shareholders’ value by properly allocating resources and risk to projects that are aligned to the strategic business objectives (Costantino, et al., 2015, p.1745).

Working in multi-project environments has raised the importance of the Project Management Office (PMO) as coordinator of all project operation activities (Spalek, 2012, p. 172). Some organizations have established PMO as experimentation in order to acquire the best practices and improve organizational performance (Hobbs, Aubry & Thuillier, 2008, p.547). However, PMOs are sometimes perceived as unstable structures and their legitimacy has been questioned. Moreover, a different approach is observed from practitioners and researches in which the role of the PMO as a coordinator, controller and supporter has a positive impact on portfolio management and success (Aubry, 2015, p.20) helping to deliver projects under budget and ahead schedule and increase resources capacity (Parchami & Koosha, 2015, p. 458). This is possible thanks to the opportunity PMOs provide to train project managers to manage project plans, budgets, resources, as well as stakeholders by providing Project Management tools with templates and adequate guidance (Tengshe & Noble, 2007, p.2).

Project selection is a challenging process since managers have to compete for resources, manage uncertainty, deal with governance and guarantee strategic alignment to business goals. Therefore, the correct decision regarding potential projects depends on a clear definition of the criteria and methods to be used when selecting a specific project. Many discussions in the literature show that there is a great variety of qualitative and quantitative criteria in order to provide some parameters to decision makers (Caballero et
al., 2012, p.1). For example, Mavrotas et al. (2005, p.297) developed a combination of Multiple Criteria Decision Aid (MCDA) with a binary decision approach to solve a budget allocation problem dealing with the selection among a large number of projects. On the other hand, Viljoen & Stain (2007, p.92) proposed a conceptual model, which provides the ability to select and prioritise projects applying supply chain and constraint management principles, without affecting project schedules. In any case, once a specific model or method is determined, organizations should adapt their processes and resources in order to support the project selection process.

Generally, the term management has been closely associated to business management and for-profit organizations (FPOs). However, non-profit organizations have also faced the need to integrate management techniques, guidelines and practices within their operations even more because they do not possess a conventional bottom line (Drucker, 1990, p.x). According to Drucker (1989, p.1), even though successful non-profit organizations are committed to “doing good” they also understand that good intentions are no substitute for leadership, accountability, performance and results. In fact, those require management, and that, in turn, begins with the organization’s mission.

According to Smith et al (2006, p. 156), a non-profit organization (NPO) can be defined as an association formed by a group of people united in order to pursue a common non-profit goal. Therefore, the organization pursues its aims and objectives without the intention of distributing excess revenue to members or leaders; in fact, non-profit organizations use surplus income to further accomplish their mission or purpose (Hansmann, 1980, p.838). They are usually known for promoting a particular social cause or advocating for a particular point of view. It is important to emphasize that according to this definition non-profit organizations are non-business groups that have achieved formal status (Smith, 1972 as cited in Smith et al, 2006, p.159).

Similar to the case of for-profit and commercial organizations, the goal of the non-profit organization's operations is also success. However, non-profit organizations success is harder to be defined and evaluated since it grows out of the vision and mission and the main goal is not set for financial gains (Woźniak, 2014, p. 17). In this way, the organization’s mission builds on the organization’s vision and should carefully integrate the values, ideas and aspirations of the many different stakeholders of the non-profit projects (Zawadzki, 20017 as cited in Woźniak, 2014, p.17). This is particularly important because not only determines the continuity of activities within the organization but also influences the social usefulness of the organization and the projects carried out by it.

Likewise, the study of Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) has been similar in relation to non-financial goals. In fact, studies in this field have gained more importance after the Second World War, where a new way of thinking regarding cooperation between states by generating diplomatic strategies that can solve transnational problems and crises peacefully was introduced (Reinalda, 2013, p.3). These organizations are also regarded as International Organizations (IOs) and their mission is focused on being an autonomous global system of regulations with the purpose of ensuring prosperity, maintaining peace, regulating monetary and financial systems, as well as protecting and generating environmental awareness (Weiss and Wilkinson, 2014).

Furthermore, the organization’s mission shapes the framework for the objectives and consequently the intergovernmental and non-profit projects portfolio selection and
prioritization (Woźniak, 2014, p. 20). In fact, the mission of each individual project in the portfolio should be coherent with the mission of the public good organization. Even though the social missions of the individual projects may slightly vary, they should always reflect the essence of the mission of the whole organization and should be taken into account in the project portfolio selection and optimization (Drucker, 1990, p.x).

It is important to mention that non-profit organizations have gained a significant relevance in the worldwide economy. According to the National Centre for Charitable Statistics (2014), the non-profit sector represents the third-largest workforce in the United States and contributed 5.4% of 2012 gross domestic product (GDP) by generating more than 2.3 million of full-time jobs. On the other hand, national and local authorities in the European Union (EU) designated over the 76% of their budget to fund a broad range of projects and programmes in non-profit organization in order to improve mainly social development, social inclusion and employment (European Union, 2017). In the same way, the United Nations (UN), one of the biggest International Organization in the world, has revealed in its most recent annual report the importance to secure resources among multi-year appeal priorities that include political development, women rights, peace, security and electoral support. In fact, it was shown in the report that the UN was able to fundraise over a $31.5 million of dollars, which reflects a significant amount of money to be used in public interest projects (United Nation, 2016, p.7).

Martinuso (2014, p.57) among other researchers argue that relevant project management literature has overlooked the non-profit and public good sector since the majority of the portfolio management tools available are tailored for commercial organizations (Lacerda, Martens & De Freitas, 2016, p. 4). In fact, Intergovernmental and non-profit organizations face decision making challenges as they seek to obtain the best value from their investments, however as noted earlier in this study, financial gains is not their main priority (Killen et al., as cited on Martinuso, 2014, p.57). Likewise, scholars claim that it is difficult to determine exact project techniques to deal with the project selection problem in these organizations, since making the right decision depends on the nature of project, alignment with organizational goals and resource availability (Huang & Tianyi Zhao, 2016, p.1).

1.2. Research Gap

Based on the previous evaluation, it is evident that there is a need for the further development of studies that provide deeper insights on the techniques being used by project managers working in non-business entities. Hence, this study will discuss the gap in the literature related to the project portfolio management process in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. Specifically, it will provide a contribution to the literature by identifying the main criteria that these organizations evaluate for the selection and prioritization of projects. Moreover, it will discuss the role of the project management office within these stages as well as the role of individual project managers in the decision making process towards achieving project and organizational success.

1.3. Research Questions and Objectives

Before defining the research question and objectives, a few considerations regarding the basis for formulation are discussed.
1.3.1. On the formulation of Research questions and objectives

The definition of what is to be studied as well as how to conduct the study is an extremely important part of any research project (Yin, 1989, p.19). Research questions or hypotheses influence the strategy that is applied in order to yield answers to particular questions or confirm as well as reject hypotheses (Saunders et al, 2009, p.32-41). In fact, according to Saunders et al. (2009, p.32), the research strategy to use must be carefully linked to the nature of the problem area and precise formulation of research questions. Therefore, formulation of accurate research questions entails deep understanding of the study domain.

For this particular research project, the researchers’ knowledge and previous understanding on the subject of Project Portfolio Management was considered sufficient to formulate precise research questions in advance. However, further study of the problem area and available literature was also expected to result in more sophisticated understanding of central concepts, so that the research questions could be adjusted accordingly. Consequently, the research question and objectives presented below have evolved as a part of the research process. The approach and methodology of this research will be discussed further in section 3.

1.3.2. Research Question and Objectives

The research problem identified in the literature relates to the importance and recurrence of the Project Portfolio Selection task. Although there are many techniques available to assist in this process, there are no integrated frameworks for carrying it out, especially in the intergovernmental and non-profit sector. Therefore, the overall purpose of this study can be formulated as follows:

“How do Project Managers in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations select and prioritize projects within project portfolios?”

In this way, the objectives corresponding to this study are:

- Identify the criteria that project managers take into consideration when selecting the projects that they include in the portfolios of Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations.

- Determine the criteria that project managers take into consideration when ranking and prioritizing projects within the portfolios of Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations.

- Analyse the impact of project portfolio selection and prioritization in project and organizational success of Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations.

- Understand the influence of the Project Management Office in the selection and prioritization of projects in Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations.

- Comprehend the influence of the project managers in the selection and prioritization of projects in Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations.
1.4. Structure of the study

This study is organized in the following manner:

Section 1: Introduction. The purpose of this introductory part is to provide the background and context regarding the topic of project management, especially concerning the subjects of project selection and prioritization as well as project management office. Additionally, Intergovernmental and non-profit organizations are briefly described. Based on this, the research question is presented, and the objectives of the study are specified.

Section 2: Literature review. This section provides to the reader the theoretical framework of the areas of enquiry of this study. It is divided in four parts. First, the definition of project-based organizations is introduced, which are the general structure of the organizations evaluated. Second, the notions of project portfolio management are included, addressing the different approaches towards the selection and prioritization stages, their importance in project and organizational success, as well as the challenges and the role of the project manager in decision-making process. The third part is related to project portfolio management in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations, introducing an understanding of their definition and implications, in addition to a depiction of how they select and prioritize projects, and how they define success at a project and organizational level. This chapter finalizes with an explanation of the role of the project manager in IGOs and NPOs decision-making process.

Section 3: Methodology. It discusses the philosophical standpoint that underlines the study as well as the theoretical methodology that supports the rationale for the selected qualitative methods. It follows by describing the case study research strategy, which is the approach of choice for this study

Section 4: Research Design. This section is divided in five parts. It starts by explaining the literature selection method used to support the introduction and literature review sections. Second, it introduces the data collection criteria through a description of the organizations and respondents selected, as well as the structure of interview proceeding and the limitations of qualitative research. Further, thematic analysis as the data analysis technique is presented into details. Finally, the truth criteria and ethical considerations are presented.

Section 5: Data Analysis and display. This section includes the empirical findings according to the main themes determined for the purpose of the study.

Section 6: Discussion. The empirical findings are compared with the literature introduced in section 2, with the aim of proving the validity of the propositions of the study as well as to identify any contradiction between empirical results and theory.

Section 7: Conclusion. It reviews the research question and objectives to determine whether they have been fulfilled. The more interesting findings are shown. Finally, the authors examine the limitations of the study and suggest some recommendations for futures studies.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the theoretical framework focusing on the areas of enquiry of this study. The theory provided helps to answer the research question. Therefore, the literature review is split in four sub-sections. It begins by introducing an overall definition of project-based organizations. Secondly, it presents an overview of project portfolio management, specifically of the project selection and prioritization phases. The importance of project selection and prioritization in project and organizational success is also discussed as well as the influence of the project management office and the challenges in the decision-making process. Further, this section provides an overview on project selection and prioritization in the public good sector by introducing an examination of Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations, analyzing project and organizational success in this type of organizations and defining the role the project management within the decision-making process. The section concludes defining project selection and project prioritization practices.

2.1. Project-based Organizations

Organizations are dynamic entities, with contexts and practices that change over the time as a strategy in order to remain competitive in aggressive markets. Therefore, a large number of companies in construction, engineering, design, research and development, sustainability, consultancy and other fields are shifting towards project-based structures. According to Pemsel & Wiewiora (2013, p.31) project-based organizations (PBOs) are those in which products or services delivered to internal or external customers are carried out through projects. Canonico and Söderlund (2010, p.797) introduce the multi-project organization concept as similar way to describe project-based organizations. The authors mention that these organizations are different business units executing several projects simultaneously. In contrast, Lindkvist (2004, p.5) defines a project-based organization as ‘one which conducts most of its work as projects’.

Among the main benefits that have been identified when implementing this specific type of organizational structure are those related to avoiding governances and bureaucracy (Kwak, et al., 2015, p.1653), which are relevant characteristics of functional hierarchies. Pemsel, et al. (2014, p.1416) argue that working with a project form methodology releases the tension between the temporary projects and the permanent organization by allowing a high mobility of staff, promoting teamwork spirit and developing an improved relationship with customers. Miterev, et al. (2017, p.486) suggest that the application of project management practices is a strategic competency that encourages people within the organization to endorse change and collaborate through projects while managing uncertainty and conflict.

Nevertheless, some literature also pays attention to challenges that PBOs may face. For instance, in some firms, projects are perceived as autonomous groups that do not allow the transference of knowledge across project boundaries and hinder fluid communication between areas within the same company (Bartsch, et al., 2013, p.242). However, Koskinen (2012, p.46) argues that organizational learning is possible only when people share their knowledge between projects; Yet, interpretations of events, problems, and solutions vary among individuals, and therefore, may cause turbulent environments based
on contradictions. Petro & Gardiner (2015, p.1719) claim that PBOs require a great deal of communication and alignment to ensure the success, control and execution of project portfolio.

2.2. Project Portfolio Management

This section contains an overview of Project Portfolio Management with the aim to understand how Project Selection and Prioritization is managed when undertaking a project. It presents the definitions of project, project portfolio and Project Portfolio Management to identify their main differences and dependencies. Furthermore, the importance of project selection and prioritization is briefly discussed as well as an analysis related to their influence on the success of projects and organizations. The role of the project management office within the decision making process is examined. The section closes by exposing the challenges that Project Managers face when selecting and prioritizing project portfolios.

2.2.1. Project, Project Portfolio and Project Portfolio Management

When referring to multi-project management, it is fundamental to understand the concepts of project, project portfolio and Portfolio management. The classical definition of project is given by the Project Management Institute (PMI), which describes it as “a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result” (PMBOK® guide, 2013, p.3), in order to implement strategic change. Turner & Müller (2003, p.7) agree on this by arguing that projects are regarded as transitory, unique and novel, in the attempt to deliver a beneficial objective of change. Likewise, Miterev et al. (2017, p.486) explain that a project is a temporary organization, which requires the allocation of certain resources in order to become an agent of change within the organization. When the previously mentioned authors describe a project, it is interesting to realize a common interpretation stands out, which refers to the nature of projects as “temporary organizations”. Earlier literature mentions that projects are “transitory organizations”, since they are considered as non-routine processes on time-limited spans, that create a sense of devoted urgency (Packendorff, 1995, p.327). Additionally, a diversity theoretical perspective establishes that projects are perceived as a temporary organization since they are going to exist for a certain period of time; therefore, they are expected to end (Modig, 2007, p.808).

Temporary organizations are well suited for carrying out complex, multi-disciplinary and visionary tasks. Therefore, project managers not only work with one unique project, they can manage a wide variety of projects. The PMBOK® guide (2013, p.3) refers to Project Portfolio as way to group projects and operations around strategic business objectives. However, during the review of the literature there were found other definitions provided by different scholars. These are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Project Portfolio definitions
### Project Portfolio definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Project Portfolio definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turner and Müller (2003)</td>
<td>Organization permanent or temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group of projects manage together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective - Coordinate interface, prioritize resources and reduce uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levine (2005)</td>
<td>Mix of projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective – Support the achievement of the organization's goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Considering organization's resources (people and funding) constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martinsuo &amp; Lehtonen (2007)</td>
<td>Group of projects that share and compete for the same resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carried out under a sponsorship or an organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teller et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Collections of single projects executed simultaneously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective – Yield the most return on investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerzner (2014)</td>
<td>A set or collection of initiatives or projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikolova (2016)</td>
<td>Formed, structured and resources allocated set of assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It requires optimal ratio between probability and risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investment initiatives connected with the strategic objectives of the organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, organizations with multi-projects structure face the dilemma of what initiatives to carry out, since there are always time, resources and quality concerns. Selecting the right projects became a crucial decision for the success of project-based business models (Pemsel et al., 2014, p.1414). Therefore, academics and practitioners have focused their attention towards Project Portfolio Management (PPM) in order to address the project selection problem. For instance, The Project Management institute defines PPM in its PMBOK® guide (2013, p.10) as “centralized management to achieve the strategic objectives”. Many authors agree on saying that PPM is a method to select, prioritise and re-allocate resources across the collection of projects based on the organizational strategy (Kaiser, El Arbi & Ahlemann, 2015, p.128; Nikolova, 2016, p.36; Martinsuo & Lehtonen, 2007, p.56). The main advantage to acquire this framework within the decision-making process refers to the ability to evaluate how to effectively allocate resources and how to ensure the consistent alignment with strategic goals (Martinsuo, 2013, p.795). In this context, good project portfolio management (PPM) is becoming a key competence for companies handling numerous projects simultaneously. Hence, efforts should be directed to ensure project portfolio success. According to Cooper et al. (2001, cited in Jonas 2010, p.820) project, portfolio success may be guaranteed when: (1) it is possible to achieve project success regardless the Project Management Triangle constraints (Time, Budget, Scope). (2) There is a synergy and balance in terms of risk and resources within the project portfolio. (3) The portfolio fits the organization’s business strategy.

#### 2.2.2. Project Selection and prioritization

To find the right project or pool of projects that fit with the business strategy and have the best chance of success is a crucial objective for project managers. Hence, PPM has become a practical tool to facilitate this decision-making process. According to Moustafaev (2010, p.216-218), PPM can be divided in three separate steps, (1) Evaluation and selection of candidate projects for the portfolio, (2) Prioritization of the successful candidates according to the selection criteria and (3) Assessment inventory of available resources. Some authors also recognize that project selection and prioritization are key factors for PPM success (Heising, 2012, p.584; Levine, 2005, p.24). Thus, for the purpose of this study, the discussion will be addressed specifically to these two topics, in order to
increase the understanding on how multi-project organizations select and rank their portfolio of projects.

Project Selection (PS) is defined as the evaluation of individual projects or group of project with the aim of choosing and executing those that help to achieve organizational objectives (Costantino, et al., 2015, p.1745). According to Oueslati (2016, p.76) PS consists in selecting projects that are able to return the initial investment. In a portfolio level, literature mentions project portfolio selection (PPS) as the process of creating an optimum portfolio from several projects available, regardless time, budget and resources restrictions (Tofighian & Naderi, 2015, p.30). Similar description is offered by Khalili-Damghani and Tavana (2014, p.89), which refers to the ability of the selected portfolio to be implemented considering risk analysis, cost/benefit and preparation. There is scarce research related to project prioritization definitions, literature generally explains it as part of Project Selection process. However, Mavrotas et al., (2005, p. 299) defines that Project Prioritization is used to rank project according to decreasing order or global preference, taking into account the selected evaluation criteria.

Literature also recognizes how complex it can be to determine whether to undertake a project (Salehi, 2015, p.109; Bakshi et al., 2016, p.1644). Therefore, many researchers have proposed different methodologies of projects selection and prioritization consisting of several steps. Khadija and Laila (2014, p.137) present a four-step approach (Figure 1). It starts by taking an inventory of projects (on going or potential), it continues with their classification based on the objectives of the organization, and it follows by evaluating alternative portfolios in order to ensure the optimization of the portfolio.

Figure 1. Four-step approach for Project Selection

A cyclical approach is presented on Figure 2. Kerzner (2014, p.589) proposes that project selection is part of the overall PPM process. The first step is the identification of ideas or initiatives through brainstorming sessions, market research, customer research, supplier research, and literature searches (Flifel, Zakic and Tornjanski, 2017, p.12). The second step is the classification of projects, evaluating their feasibility and benefit-to-cost. The third step is to determine the strategic fit and the prioritization in terms of cash flow,
profitability and stakeholder expectations. Finally, the fourth step is organizing the right number of projects according to availability of resources and risk level.

Figure 2. Project Selection Process as part of PPM

In addition, several researchers have developed different qualitative and quantitative selection and prioritization models with varied emphasis on different factors of project selection. Nevertheless, these practices will be discussed further in section 2.4.

2.2.3. Importance of Project Selection and Prioritization

This section is divided in two parts. The first addresses to the importance of project selection and prioritization in achieving project success. Similarly, the second presents a discussion about the relevance of project selection and prioritization although focused on organizational success.

2.2.3.1. Project Portfolio Success

Nowadays, companies need to select and prioritize projects in order to ensure the alignment with strategic planning and to spend their limited resources in the best possible way (Levine, 2005, p.23). Therefore, project selection frameworks and techniques have an impact on project portfolio success and this topic is receiving more attention in practice and research (Martinsuo & Lehtonen, 2007, p.57). For instance, Voss and Kock (2013, p.848) propose that for a portfolio to be successful, it should reflect sales objectives, fulfilment of project performance criteria (budget, schedule and quality), demonstrate long-term benefits and opportunities, and possess strong alignment between project portfolio and the company’s strategy. A similar approach is given by Cooper et al. (2002, p. 4), based on four macro goals: (1) Value Maximisation - to effectively allocate resources so as to maximize the value of your portfolio; (2) Balance - to achieve a desired balance of projects; (3) Strategic direction - projects truly reflect the business’s strategy; and (4) Right Number of Projects. Moreover, some literature mentions that there exists a relationship between organizational structure and project portfolio success (Teller, 2013, p.41; Kaiser, El Arbi & Ahlemann, 2015, p.127). An unbalanced authority among project
managers may enhance success of a single project, but not necessarily of the overall portfolio. Therefore, a steering committee is required in order to regulate resources allocation and to ensure the alignment with the organizational strategic direction (Petro and Gardiner, 2015, p.1726). In any case, project managers should take into consideration the criteria mentioned before in order to increase the complexity of project selection standards, since more complex criteria ensures adequate structural portfolio alignment by increasing the timely and efficient delivery of high-quality information which is a requirement for PPM (Kaiser, 2015, pp.133-135).

2.2.3.2. Organizational Success

In a growing turbulent business environment, organizations are constantly under pressure to stay competitive among contenders and to find the best strategy that ensures the success of the organization. However, scholars have interpreted in so many ways what organizational success is. Klubeck (2017, p.10) describes it as the level of accomplishment of the strategic plans towards the company vision and vision, taking into the account goals, values and culture. Additionally, Zich (2009, p.344) proposes a similar definition by saying that when the company has the ability to achieve goals and to acquire a certain degree of development, under external influences and the competitiveness itself; it means that it will be able to succeed.

In this context, selecting and prioritising the right projects has become a crucial decision in order to successfully execute the business strategy. Thus, PPM has become an effective tactic to achieve organizational success though competitive advantage by implementing its business strategy, balancing its project portfolios, maximising value, and ensuring an efficient allocation of resources (Oosthuizen, Grobbelaar & Bam, 2016, p.239). There are a few studies exploring the link between, project portfolio management and business success. Cooper et al. (2000, p.27) discuss that there is a positive influence on PPM performance on business level results, since there is empirical evidence that proves that the application of these models improves success rates on launching new projects; aids in meeting new challenging sales goals and increases profitability. Meskendahl (2010, pp.8-14) proposes a framework (Figure 3) suggesting that companies should decide first how they want to compete in the industry in comparison to their contenders. Secondly, this strategic orientation influences project portfolio structuring by determining the degree to which an organisation follows the general conditions regarding project evaluation and portfolio selection in line with overall strategic objectives. In third place, the structure or the project portfolio should include a constant evaluation, as well as selection and prioritization processes to find the suitable balance of projects within the portfolio. Finally, business success is examined in a multidimensional way across the literature. Klubeck (2017, p.6) asserts that if the project portfolio generates revenue and addresses long-term benefits and opportunities then PPM will lead to organizational success.

Figure 3. Effect of strategic orientation on business success

![Figure 3](image)

Source: (Meskendahl, 2010, p. 8)

On the other hand, Nikolova (2016, pp.36-37) proposes an alternative framework (Figure 4) in which once the strategic positions of the organization are defined (Vision, Mission
and Strategy and target), then, the strategic planning and management should work consistently in line to Portfolio Management to set priorities and to find the right portfolio balance. As a result, it would be possible to ensure the strategic development of the organization.

*Figure 4. The location of the PPM in the mechanism of strategic management*

![Diagram of strategic management mechanism with Portfolio Management highlighted.]

**Source:** (Nikolova, 2016, p.31)

### 2.2.4. Role of Project Management office in Portfolio Management

Current project management research has highlighted the importance of project management offices. Nevertheless, there is a scarcity of literature exploring the role of the PMO when selecting and prioritizing a project portfolio. A project management office standardizes project governance, facilitates the sharing of knowledge and resources, and provides support to all project-related activities (PMBOK® guide, 2013, p.10). The PMO has an overall perspective not only at project level but also at project portfolio level. Its main role is based on the capacity of reducing overage spending among projects by avoiding early cancelation of projects, as well as monitoring and controlling the portfolio balance (Kendall and Rollins, 2014, pp.212-214). Researches have shown an increasing number of organizations establishing PMOs, since they have a positive influence on the success of the project portfolio (Bredillet, Tywniak & Tootoonchy, 2017, p.28). As shown in Figure 5, Unger, Gemünden and Aubry (2012, p.616) propose that PMOs play roles as coordinators, controllers and supporters within PPM in order to ensure success.

*Figure 5. Three roles of PMO within PPM*
2.2.5. Challenges in Decision-making

The application of PPM practices offers many benefits such as effective allocation of resources, achievement of organizational goals and an increase in profitability ratios. Nevertheless, companies also face challenges when selecting and prioritizing projects. Literature stresses three major problems that project-based organizations have to deal with.

In the first place, literature refers to how project managers allocate resources to a broad range of projects. When talking about innovation project portfolios, there is a problem in resources allocation and decision making related to how ambitious innovation objectives are (Weiss, Hoegl & Gibbert, 2013, p.279). More innovative projects frequently indicate a greater use of resources, but not always ensure high rates of project success or high level of sales. Consequently, they run the risk of not investing in projects that require fewer resources but generate more profit (Klingebiel & Rammer, 2013, p.248). On the other hand, according to Abrantes & Figueiredo (2015, p.1275) the resources allocation problem is a consequence of inadequate project selection and prioritization. Organizations need to understand which projects should be selected and list them in order to reconfigure the resources based on the detected changes (Abrantes & Figueiredo, 2015, p.1275). In this way, a similar approach is provided by EPMCInc (2011, pp.173-175), which states that the foundations of a project are built into the project definition; if the project’s scope is not well defined, then project managers may not appropriately assign resources successfully in order to complete the project. More literature mentions the interactions among projects as a problem since the higher the dependence of projects is; the more difficult it is to assess resources (Salo, Keisler & Morton, 2011, p.81).

Secondly, some literature mentions that governance makes a project portfolio difficult to manage (Oosthuizen, Grobbelaar & Bam, 2016, p.241). When managing multiple projects, portfolio governance refers to the relationships between individuals, responsibilities and decision-making processes that are recognized at portfolio level. The main actors identified are portfolio committees like PMOs, portfolio offices and project managers (Mosavi, 2014, p.389). In contrast, Urhahn and Spieth (2014, pp.523-524) define portfolio management governance as the way in which the PM process is steered, guided and directed. Authors discuss that a low level of formality and explicitness in PM governance decreases the effectiveness of portfolio decision making, since there is a lack of information and knowledge from previews projects that makes it difficult to learn from errors and experiences. Therefore, formal and explicit PM governance may foster
organizational learning and consequently improve the decision-making process within the portfolio management (Dinsmore & Rocha, 2012, p.38).

Finally, linking projects to the business strategy has become a main top-executives’ priority in many organizations. In this manner, the misalignment between strategy development through projects and a successful strategy implementation may result in strategy failure and a loss of competitive advantage, profits, and employment. Hence, organisations that have formally adopted PPM methodologies, have improved their strategy implementation and project delivery success rates (Buys and Stander, 2011, pp.62). According to the study conducted by Kaplan and Norton, 70% organizations surveyed reported lower or average performance of their strategies as result of insufficient integration, collaboration, communication and incentive setting amongst different business functions. In this sense, they claim that companies should adapt comprehensive and integrated management systems, such as PPM frameworks, which provide guidelines in order to align strategy and operations (Kaplan and Norton, 2008, cited in Jurečka, 2013, p.29).

2.3. Project Management in IGOs and NPOs

This section presents an overview on project management practices, specifically related to project selection and prioritization in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. A conceptualization of IGOs and NPOs is provided. The definition of project and organizational success are discussed and the role of the project manager is highlighted. The section closes with the identification of challenges in decision making within these types of organizations.

2.3.1. Understanding Intergovernmental and Non-Profit organizations

With more and more interactions taking place on a worldwide scale as result of the progress of globalization, there has been an increased number of actors focusing on public interests rather than achieving financial goals. Adequate examples are Intergovernmental and Non-Profit Organizations. These organizations have been extremely influential in order to improve international cooperation to accomplish sustainable societies and global development (Coicaud & Heiskanen, 2001, p. 190).

Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) are a post-Cold-War initiative, as a response to pressing transnational problems that could not be solved by national policies (Reinalda and Verbeek, 2006, p.12). According to Harvard School (2017) IGOs are “entities created by treaty, involving two or more nations, to work in good faith, on issues of common interest”. These organizations play relevant roles in different environmental, social, economic and political frames. Studies in International Relations (IR) often examine the effect IGOs have on reducing conflict (Fausett & Volgy, 2010, p.81; Tsai, 2017, p.321), since they can gather and share information about member-states foreign priorities with the aim to reduce uncertainty and thereby resolve potential misunderstandings (Lupu & Greenhill, 2017, p.835). From another perspective, when knowledge structures (skill information, education systems, labour market structure and technological heritage) differ from one country to another, it leads to incompatibility between countries (Murmunn, 2006, p.48). Therefore, IGOs may establish common regulations and create international channels for collective learning and knowledge diffusion. In this way, IGOs promotes
cross border knowledge transfer and greater innovation (Jandhyala and Phene, 2015, p.713).

Other important actors related to public interest projects are non-profit organizations. They have been similarly defined throughout many references. Gandlgruber et al. (2014, p.132) refers to NPOs as the ‘Third sector’, describing these organizations as those, which are based on solidarity and social sense, more than individual interest. Hudson and Rogan (2009, p. 10) also adopt the term third sector and further agree stating that NPOs are created for social purpose more than for profit-making objectives. Same authors add to the definition that NPOs should be independent of the state and in case that the organization has financial surplus, it is reinvested for a greater public good. Along the same line of thought, The handbook of Non-profit Governance states that NPOs should raise sufficient funds in order to serve a social purpose and not for private gain. In these organizations, there are no individual owners and assets cannot be for their own benefit (Board Source, 2010, p.4). Other approach is given by Kilby (2006, cited in Modi & Mishra, 2010, p. 553), which defines NPOs as:

*Self-governing independent bodies, voluntary in nature, and tend to engage both their supporters and constituency on the basis of values or some shared interest or concern, and have a public benefit purpose.*

NPOs can be classified in two main categories: Private Non-Profits Organization (PNPs) and Non-Governmental Organizations, also called NGOs (Anheier, 2005, p. 47). Private-type organizations combine civilian goods or services such as – education, health care, park, libraries- with an important element of consumer protection (WEISBROD, 1989, 541). On the other hand, several studies have tried to assess the important contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to international coordination by increasing the awareness regarding to social problems including them on the international agenda (Coicaud & Heiskanen, 2001, p. 214). NGOs can be a facilitator to tackle environmental challenges (Scheyvens, 2011, p. 23; Johnson, 2011, p.6), to develop economies (Chesbrough et al., 2006, p. 49), as well as to improve education (Lingenfelter, Solheim & Lawrence, 2017, p. 145) and health systems (Hershey, 2013, p. 673).

One critical factor that scholars discuss regarding NPOs and NGOs is how these organizations finance themselves. Their funding may come from just a handful of sources or from an array of charitable contributions, membership dues, grants, fees from programs and services, and more (Board Source, 2010, p.15). Svidroňová and Vaceková define various forms of funding, as it is shown in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of funding</th>
<th>Form of funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public sources</td>
<td>State and/or public contracts and subsidies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. Sourcing and forms of funding in NPO and NGOs*
Finally, it is important to point out that despite IGOs, NPOs, NGOs may vary in their conception, structure, funding, and nature; they work based on the same premises, with similar goals, and share similar opportunities (Schemeil, 2013, p. 220). The three of them work in Public Interest Projects.

### 2.3.2. Project Selection and Prioritization in IGOs and NPOs

Studies related to public interest projects selection and prioritization are small in number throughout literature since they have been traditionally addressed to the for-profit sector.

The design of project management frameworks in IGOs has been mainly focused on creating a committee able to balance national objectives and priorities with regional objectives and priorities, to involve stakeholders both nationally and regionally and finally to successfully spread activities among all member countries (Pernetta and Jiang, 2013, p. 142). Now, concerning project selection, IGOs possess certain criteria when undertaking a project, particularly based on humanitarian, social, scientific, environmental or any other kind of public interest. Likewise, budget is a critical criterion since no project can be executed without funds or resources (Oueslati, 2016, p. 78).

In a non-profit context, the number of decision-theoretical studies solving the project selection problem is larger than compared to IGOs. PS process in NPOs differs from for-profits corporations in many aspects. Dehouche (2015, p. 341) exhibits in Figure 6 three main characteristics when selecting non-profit projects:

![Figure 6. Project Selection framework in Non-profit projects.](image-url)
On the other hand, non-profit organizations are changing to adopt the strategic planning techniques to ensure that the programs and projects are properly managed. For instance, Wang, Narvekar and Nguyen (2013, pp.401-402) created a Hierarchical Decision Model, which is composed by five levels of decision elements: (1) Mission: non-financial long-term achievements, (2) Objectives and goals: guide to direct motivation to actions, (3) Strategy: construct method to achieve objectives and (4) Actions: candidate projects to complete. Similarly, Lacerda, Martens and De Freitas (2016, p.13) present a Project Portfolio Management adapted to NPOs. This study reveals that capturing financial resources has been a relevant criteria when selecting a project, therefore the PPM model was adapted in three dimensions, which involve planning fund-raising, conducting fund-raising, and signing agreements with investors. Just as the previously mentioned researchers, Woźniak (2014, p. 16) also proposes an optimization model, which is focused on the relationships between four categories: non-profit organizations, donors, co-participants and customers. The author proposes different project categories as it is shown in the following Matrix:

![Figure 7. Optimization model to Select Non-profit Project Portfolio](source: (Woźniak, 2014, p. 16))

2.3.3. Organizational success in IGOs and NPOs
IGOs and NPOs differ from for-profit organizations in the definition of organizational and project success. In terms of organizational success, researches pay little attention to Intergovernmental organizations. Few studies were found addressing the topic, one example is the study presented by Grigorescu (2015, p. 10) who emphasises that IGOs should meet five important democratic norms to meet their goals: (1) Fair representation in decision-making, (2) fair voting, (3) Civil society participation in decision-making (DM) and execution initiatives, (4) Conduct Parliamentary oversight of the executive branch and (5) allow access by the general public. Likewise, Schemel (2013, p. 221) describes that IGOs success depends on finding the equilibrium between technical and political issues, generating innovation and pursuing exploration as well as exploitation.

Moreover, while reviewing literature, it was possible to identify different NPOs success factors. In the first place, the mission statement reflects the value that these organizations can create in a community. Therefore, it can positively influence their organizational performance, since it creates an affective commitment not only from supporters but also from donors, in order to pursue their non-financial mission (Patel et al., 2015, pp.770-773). Secondly, the ability to manage a corporate identity effectively is also a success factor. According to Holtzhausen (2013, p.2) when NPOs develop and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders, especially with donors; it is possible to position themselves strategically within the communities that they serve. Third, NPOs basically depend of the resources donated by different sources; therefore, their success relies on their ability to raise enough funding to cover their expenses and to meet their goals. Given the case of generating excess revenues, such surplus must be used to support the organization’s mission (BoardSource, 2010, p. 22).

2.3.4. Role of Project Manager in IGOs and NPOs organizations

A number of researchers and practitioner with different applications (Meng and Boyd, 2017, p.717) has studied the role of the project manager. However, in non-profit organizations there is limited literature available. A list of characteristics was provided by Cormack and Stanton (2003) which include: passion a strategic perspective; networking and influencing; personal humility; motivating a team; resilience; self-confidence; being a visionary and inspirational communicator; and involving others in decision-making. It was mention above in the literature review that a critical factor for non-profit organizations, the ability of fund-raising. Project managers have to deal with a range of stakeholders in order to recruit donors; therefore, communications skills and interaction ability are relevant (Hodges and Howieson, 2017, p.70). Uzonwanne (2014, p.287) agrees by saying that top executives should be able to transmit the organization vision and mission to others and to possess resources management skills.

2.4. Project Selection and Prioritization practices

There is no consensus on what criteria should be used when selecting and prioritizing project portfolios. Each organization tends to choose a set of criteria according to their own needs and objectives. A large number of researchers have used different quantitative, statistical and multi-criteria decision-making methods to solve the project selection problem.
Literature analysis reveals that many researchers use the Multiple Attribute Decision-making Methods (MADM) for project selection. MADM also called multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) is the most well known branch of decision-making. Its main objective is “to select an appropriate alternative from a finite number of feasible alternatives based on the features of each attribute with respect to every alternative” (Rao, 2007, p. 5). Ravanshadnia, Rajaie and Abbasian (2010, p. 1085) apply MADM methods to propose an adapted model based in five steps in order to select the most appropriate candidate projects for bidding. The model is presented in Figure 8:

Figure 8. Fuzzy MADM project selection

Another hybrid model is presented by Rathi, Khanduja and Sharma (2016, p. 257). The authors propose a project selection approach based on a combination of fuzzy and MADM technique to help organizations determine proper Six Sigma projects and identify the priority of these projects mainly in automotive companies. It is important to highlight that Six Sigma approach is also associated with project prioritization and selection. This method is based on data, which pretend to reduce defects within statistical modelling of manufacturing processes (Neuman & Cavanagh, 2000, p. 5). In this way, Six Sigma projects selection using fuzzy MADM techniques is also used by Farsijani, Shafiei Nikabadi and Amirimoghadam (2015, pp. 88-90), but they apply it on large-scale ship-industry projects, in order to achieve the highest possible quality. Other parallel studies propose a mean-variance model not only to select a project, but also to schedule start times in order to help investor to efficiently use budget and gain more profits. This model is mainly used due to lack of historical data, which increases the uncertainty within project selection process (Huang, Zhao and Kudratova, 2016, p. 11).

On the other hand, analytic hierarchy process (AHP) is suggested as a methodology to prioritize projects. AHP is one the most relevant analytical techniques for complex decision-making (Rao, 2007, p. 29). It is a useful method to present complex problem according to a hierarchy. Different levels represent sub-problems or sub-criteria involved in the goal definition (Ishizaka and Nemery, 2013, p. 13). In relation to project prioritization, this approach is used to weight different pair-wise comparisons between project selection criteria (Liang, 2003, p. 447). In the same way, literature mentions PROMETHEE methods as a special type of MADM (Rao, 2007, p. 182). This methodology provides a prioritization/ordering of tasks from the decision alternatives (Avikal, Mishra and Jain, 2013, p. 1308).
3. METHODOLOGY

The present section examines the philosophical and methodological standpoints that motivate this research. It begins with a brief overview regarding the epistemological and ontological considerations that best apply to this study, as well as a thorough account of the methodology employed the research strategy, research approach and perspective. In order to complement this description, evidence that emphasizes the association between the concepts is also provided. Finally, this section also highlights the advantages of the chosen methodology and strategy in addition to exploring the limitations and the actions undertaken in order to overcome them.

3.1. Philosophical Standpoint

According to Saunders et al (2009, p.107), research philosophy relates to the development of knowledge as well as the nature of that knowledge. It contains important assumptions about the way in which we see the world, and there are two major considerations, which this is usually explained: epistemology and ontology (Saunders et al, 2009, p.108). An epistemological issue deals with the subject of what should be regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.26). Bryman and Bell (2015, p.27) argue that one of the main concerns in this context is whether or not the social world can and should be studied according to the same principles, procedures, and ethos as the natural sciences. Social ontology, on the other hand, has to do with the nature of social entities (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.32). A particular central issue in this context is whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered as social constructions strengthened by the perceptions and actions of social actors (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.32).

Three major epistemological research philosophies are distinguished in literature; these are positivism, interpretivist and realism. (Neuman, 1994; Saunders et al, 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Bryman & Bell, 2015). Positivism adopts the philosophical stance of the natural sciences (Saunders et al, 2009, p.113). In this way, the main purpose of positivist research is to learn more about how the world works so that events can be controlled or predicted (Neuman 1994, p.58). According to Neuman (1994, p.61) positivist researchers begin with a general causal relationship that has been logically derived from a causal law in general theory. The researcher logically links abstract ideas in laws to precise measurements of the social world. The researcher remains detached, neutral and objective as he measures aspects of social life, examines evidence, and replicates the research of others.

Furthermore, interpretivists believe that the purpose of research is to understand social life and discover how people construct social meaning (Neuman, 1994, p.62). It emphasizes the importance of a strategy that respects the differences between humans in their role as social actors versus objects of the natural sciences (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.29). Saunders et al (2009, p. 116) argue that it is crucial for interpretivist researchers to adopt an empathetic stance, grasping the subjective meaning of social action. Therefore, the main challenge is to enter the social world of the research subjects and understand their world from their point of view (Saunders et al, 2009, p. 116).

Realism is another philosophical position closely linked to the nature of scientific practice (Neuman, 1994, p. 185). The core of realism is the belief that objects have an existence
independent of the human mind (Saunders et al, 2009, p.114). According to Bryman & Bell (2015, p.29), realism shares two particular characteristics with positivism: a conviction that is possible for both the natural and social sciences to apply the same approach to data collection and description, as well as a commitment to the view that there is a reality isolated from our descriptions of it.

Two major forms of realism can be identified; these are empirical realism and critical realism (Saunders et al, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2015). Empirical realism argues that through the implementation of adequate methodology reality can be understood (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.29). Critical realism, on the other hand, claims that it will only be possible to comprehend and transform the social world if we recognize the factors at work that produce those specific events and outcomes (Bhaskar, 1989 as cited on Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.29). In this way, critical realism perspective highlights the idea that our knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning and cannot be understood separately from the different social factors that take part in the process to develop knowledge (Dobson 2002, as cited on Saunders et al, 2009, p. 115).

According to Saunders et al (2009, p.115) there are two important distinctions between empirical and critical realism that need to be emphasized in relation to management and business research, both in terms of the capacity of research to influence the world it studies as well as the importance of multi-level evaluation. In fact, the direct realism point of view proposes the idea that the world is rather fixed and unchangeable, operating at one level in the business context and focusing on either the individual, the group or the firm. Conversely, critical realism acknowledges the significance of a multi-level analysis including the individual, the group and the firm, based on the belief that each of these levels has the potential to influence the understanding of the subject under analysis due to the existence and interaction of different structures, processes and procedures.

Critical realism is the philosophical perspective adopted for this study in particular; mainly because it not only stresses the importance of understanding the decision-making challenges that non-profit projects face as they seek to gain the best value from their investments (Martinsuo and Killen, 2014, p.57); but also, the pressing need for the development of better project portfolio management tools and resources. In fact, Saunders et al (2015, p.115) claim that the critical realism perspective on the social world as a continuously changing context is much more in consonance with the main goals of management and business research, which aim to understand the motives or causes of particular events as a precursor to recommending change.

Moreover, in agreement with the critical realism perspective adopted in this study, the authors have also implemented a subjective approach. In this way, the subjectivist view regards social phenomena as an issue created from the perceptions and resulting actions of social actors in a continuous process (Saunders et al., 2015, p.111). Saunders et al. (2015, p.10) assert that for the study of management topics it is better to take the view that the objective aspects of management are less important than the way in which the managers themselves attach their own individual meanings to their jobs and the way they think that those jobs should be performed. Furthermore, according to Remenyi et al. (1998 p.35) it is necessary to analyse the details of the situation to comprehend the reality or, in some instances, a reality working behind them.
3.2. Methodological Standpoint

Quantitative and qualitative are terms extensively applied in business and management research. They are used to make a distinction between data collection techniques and data analysis procedures (Saunders et al, 2009, p.151). According to Bryman & Bell (2015, p.37), many researchers see quantitative and qualitative studies as having different epistemological and ontological foundations; thus considering each of them as two distinctive clusters of research methods.

In this way, the term quantitative is mainly regarded as a synonym for data collection techniques and data analysis practices that implement or produce numerical figures (Saunders et al, 2009, p.151). This research method involves a deductive approach to the association between theory and research, with particular importance placed on testing theories (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.37). In addition, quantitative methods incorporate the norms and procedures of the model of the natural sciences and positivism. In fact, its view of social reality is that of an external objective reality.

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is a research approach that places special attention on the generation and use of non-numerical data rather than quantification during data collection and analysis (Saunders et al, 2009, p.151). Moreover, regarding the link between theory and research, it gives prominence to an inductive approach, in which the main focus is the creation of theories (Neuman, 1994, p.405). This research method emphasizes an understanding of the way in which each individual interprets its own social world, rejecting the rules and procedures of positivism and the natural science model (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.38). Bryman & Bell (2015, p.38) argue that this approach views social reality as dynamic and continuously changing as a result of the individual and its interactions. In this way, qualitative research has been selected as the preferred method to conduct this particular study.

Both qualitative and quantitative procedures for data collection and analysis present their own advantages and disadvantages (Smith, 1981, p.153). In fact, qualitative research is often criticized by quantitative researchers, who describe these types of studies as being too subjective since the findings rely on unsystematic views of what is significant and important (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.413). Additionally, common criticism of qualitative research, according to Bryman & Bell (2015, p.414), also includes problems with generalization of the findings to other settings as well as lack of transparency.

Despite the criticism towards qualitative research, we still find the qualitative approach and methodology more suitable and beneficial for the purpose of this study. Therefore, we have tried to take advantage of all the practices and strengths encompassing the qualitative approach as well as transcend its limitations. The qualitative approach to research provides the opportunity to understand the decision-making process that non-profit organizations undergo when evaluating, selecting and prioritizing projects within their portfolios. Based on the premises of qualitative research we can explore the project portfolio management process through the eyes and expertise of project managers in the non-profit sector as well as provide a detailed account and information of what goes on in the non-profit and public good projects environment. Likewise, among the main concerns of qualitative research is the tendency to view social life in terms of processes including understanding of how past events and patterns unfold over time (Bryman &
This is particularly useful when trying to understand the evolution of the criteria and frameworks applied by non-profit organizations through the years.

When trying to overcome the limitations and constraints related to this particular methodology, great effort has been made in order to provide full transparency, presenting a thorough description of how the study was conducted and how we arrived to our conclusions. Similarly, the sample selection and data collection processes were carried with caution and impartiality.

3.2.1. Research Strategy

Case study has been the research strategy of choice for this study. According to Robson (2002, p.178), case study can be defined as a strategy for conducting research that engages into empirical analysis of a specific issue within its particular context, while incorporating several sources of evidence. Additionally, Yin (2003, p.4) emphasizes the relevance of context arguing that the case study method is particularly useful when the boundaries between the subject of study and the context in which it is being studied are not readily distinguishable. The case study strategy is especially useful when the researchers aim to achieve deep understanding of the context of the study as well as the procedures involved (Morris and Wood 1991, as cited on Saunders et al, 2009, p. 146).

Moreover, the case study strategy provides the opportunity to generate answers to the questions ‘why?’, ‘what?’ and ‘how?’ (Saunders et al, 2009, p.146). Consequently, the strategy is suitable in order to address the main research question of this study, which focuses on understanding how intergovernmental as well as non-profit organizations select and prioritise projects within their portfolios. Since the main research method is qualitative, the case study allows the implementation of an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and project portfolio management (Bryman, 2012, p.69).

Yin (2003, p.5) makes a distinction between research based on single and multiple-case studies. A single-case study is often used to represent a critical case (Saunders et al, 2009, p. 146). Multiple-case studies, on the other hand, include within the same study, the analysis of two or more cases (Bryman, 2012, p.66). The multiple-case study rationale is the strategy used for this research in which five specific organizations within the intergovernmental and non-profit sector have been analysed. According to Saunders et al, (2009, p.147), the motivation for the analysis of multiple cases is based on the need to determine “whether the findings of the first case occur in other cases” and therefore generalize from these findings. This is also supported by Yin (2003, p.5), who argues that these multiple-cases should be chosen in a way in which they replicate one another, allowing to predict similar results or to make a contrast regarding results.

Among the six types of case studies identified by Yin (2003, p.5) this particular research falls within the descriptive dimension. Descriptive case studies are characterized by providing a thorough depiction of a particular issue within its context (Yin, 2003, p.23). In fact, this investigation’s main objective is to provide not only a description but also a deep understanding of how intergovernmental and non-profit organizations select and prioritize projects within their portfolios. Furthermore, the emphasis of this study is directed towards an intensive examination of the intergovernmental and non-profit settings in relation to project portfolio management (Bryman, 2012, p.67), analysing the
impact of project portfolio selection and prioritization in project and organizational success.

One of the main criticisms regarding case study as a research strategy is that findings cannot be generalized as well as the fact that it does not seem to provide sound scientific support (Bryman, 2012, p.71). Saunders et al. (2009, p.147) however, argue that a case study strategy proves to be very useful when exploring existing theory. Furthermore, the proper construction of a case study research and analysis provides the research with the opportunity to not only challenge existing theories, but also provide insights towards new research questions (Saunders et al., 2009, p.147).
4. RESEARCH DESIGN

Within the present section, the selection criterion for the reviewed literature is discussed. In addition, a description of the methods used for the collection of data is also provided, including the definition of the units of analysis and the criteria for the selection of potential candidates. In addition, the relevant variables of interest are identified. Finally, an overview of ethical implications is also provided.

4.1. Literature Selection Methodology

For the purpose of this study, the examination of the pertinent literature was conducted mainly through the search engines available at the Umeå University’s library resources including both, online and physical material. Likewise, Heriot-Watt University’s online resources were also useful. In this way, databases such as Emerald, ProQuest, ScienceDirect and IEEE Xplore digital library among others, served as one of the main sources for the collection of relevant literature. Search engines such as Google and Google scholar were also used in order to explore sources available in the web. The literature review contemplates articles from peer reviewed journals including the Project Management Journal, International Journal of Project Management, Scandinavian Journal of Management, as well as the International Journal of Managing Projects in Business just to name a few. Additionally, taken into consideration within the literature review are books and papers from recognised authors in the project management and non-profit organization fields, as well as literature focused on intergovernmental and public sector projects.

It is important to mention that one of the main criteria in order to select the literature included in this research has been its reference to the highest and most advanced level of development in the fields of project management and the public good sector. Even though conventional literature has also been included, most of the papers selected for this study have been published within the past 20 years. Furthermore, since most of the literature search was conducted online, the primary search was conducted using key words such as project portfolio management, project portfolio selection, project portfolio prioritization as well as project portfolio management in non-profit organizations. Once different papers have been identified the articles abstracts were reviewed and evaluated based on the previously mention criteria to determine their relevance. Moreover, additional literature was identified through the analysis of the referenced literature within the articles selected during the primary search.

4.2. Data Collection

How empirical evidence was collected is the subject of the present section. The units of analysis are defined and the data collection methodology is explained, including a brief discussion regarding its advantages and disadvantages.
4.2.1. Respondents Selection

Respondents’ selection was based on two different approaches. The first was the researchers’ ability to use existing contacts, since one of the researchers already knew two of the respondents among other potential candidates, and the supervisor of this study facilitated contact with another participant. Furthermore, the second approach was direct communication with different organizations of interest in order to identify the appropriate candidates. In this way, a list of non-profit organizations was determined through a web search on Google. Then, each of the organizations’ website was explored to determine the contact details, specifically e-mail addresses of project managers within the organization. Thirty-one different project managers were e-mailed, working for six different non-profit organizations based in Europe. Only eight of the project managers addressed replied to the e-mail, and only four were positive responses, thus showing interest in participating from the study. In the end, it was possible to carry only, however one of them had to be excluded from the study due to concerns regarding its relevance for this particular study.

Therefore, based on the premises of purposive sampling, the choice of the participants was strategic (Bryman, 2012, p.418) and based on two main criteria: The first is that the respondents some degree of expertise in project management. Moreover, the second is that the respondents work in intergovernmental or non-profit organizations.

Based on the conditions mentioned above, five project managers were interviewed in total, one working at a non-governmental organization, two in non-profit organizations, and the rest in intergovernmental organizations. For this study, the names of the respondents will remain anonymous.

4.2.2. Organizations Selection

The topic of sampling in qualitative research focuses on the concept of purposive sampling (Bryman, 2012, p.416). According to Bryman (2016, p.416) this kind of sampling strategy is mainly related to the selection of units such as people and organizations that are in direct connection to the main research question. Saunders et al (2009, p.237) claim that purposive sampling enables the researchers to use their own judgement in order to select the cases that will allow them to answer the research question and achieve the research objectives. In this way, it is expected that the research question will provide an idea of the units that need to be sampled (Bryman, 2012, p.416).

Since this is a non-probability method of sampling, purposive sampling aims to sample cases in a strategic way rather than to select participants on a random manner (Bryman, 2012, p.418). Furthermore, Neuman (2011, p.268) argues that this kind of sampling is particularly useful when sampling to select members of a specialized population, which is the case of project managers in the non-profit and intergovernmental sectors. In addition, Saunders et al (2009, p.237) claim that this particular form of sampling is usually implemented in case study research, where the researchers work with small samples that are mostly informative.

Moreover, within this study the choice of the organizations has been made based on the availability of known contacts (Buchanan et al. (1988, p.56) as well as the implementation of a direct approach strategy in which organizations were directly addressed in an attempt
to identify the appropriate person to contact in relation to the particular research question (Saunders et al, 2009, p. 177).

In this way, the main organizations selection criterion is based on two main factors: The first is that the organization operates in the intergovernmental and non-profit sector since this is the context of particular interest for this research. Second that the organization manages several projects, given that this is basic for project selection and prioritization within project portfolios.

Background information is provided bellow regarding the five different organizations included in the case study analysis. This information is based on the answers provided by some of the respondents as well as the organizations’ descriptions on their official websites. Three of the organizations analysed belong to the non-profit sector, while the remaining two belong to the intergovernmental sector also known as international public organizations. It is important to emphasize that these organizations main purpose is not profit maximization, but public good, which for the purposes of this study are also regarded as non-for profit organizations. The following descriptions are based on the information available on the organizations’ websites and from some of the research participants’ answers.

**TRIAS** is one of the largest Belgian non-governmental organizations working in economic development initiatives. With more than 50 years of experience, the organization seeks to promote international and local cooperation among volunteers, governments, foundations, and companies in order to support farmers and entrepreneurs in order to fulfil their ambitions. They execute a wide range of worldwide project and programs mainly in Africa, Latin America and Asia. TRIAS is the first NGO granted with the Foundation for Quality Management certification, which reflects its transparency by offering and professional quality policy and efficient fundraising (Trias.ngo, 2017).

**Eurochambers** is a non-profit organization established in 1958, with the aim to create an European Economic Community. It is the umbrella organization representing chambers of commerce and industry of 45 countries at EU level. As a lobby organization, Eurochambers works in cooperation with a network of 1700 regional and local chambers, which develop and implement a large number of European projects. The organization attempts to improve European market conditions in which small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) operate, to ensure access to human, financial and natural resources (Eurochambres.eu, 2017).

**The Finnish-British Chamber of Commerce (FBCC)** is an independent non-profit organization, founded in 1965. The organization is committed to provide to members, an excellent networking of more than 1500 business contacts, in order to encourage Finnish companies to enter to UK market and vice versa. FBCC organizes all along the year, exclusive business and social events to increase visibility within both the Finnish-British and the international business communities. It is also an active member of the Council of Foreign Chambers of Commerce (CFCC) (Eurochambres.eu., 2017).

**World Food Programme (WFP)** is a United Nations’ agency based in Italy, fighting to eliminate hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition by delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. This humanitarian organization is the largest agency assisting over 80 million
people in around 80 countries. WFP mandate is focused on food assistance in countries affected by conflict or people affected by natural disasters (WFP, 2017).

*United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)* works to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure that people enjoy peace and posterity. UNDP helps countries to develop strong policies, skills, partnerships and institutions in order to accomplish a sustainable progress. This intergovernmental organization bases its efforts on 17 sustainable development goals, which includes areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. The goals are interconnected; often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another (UNDP, 2017).

*Table 3. Organizations overview*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type Organization</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cooperation</th>
<th># Projects per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRIAS</td>
<td>Non-governmental</td>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>15 countries</td>
<td>10 programme and 13 projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro chambers</td>
<td>Non-profit</td>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>45 countries</td>
<td>20 projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBCC</td>
<td>Non-profit</td>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>United Kingdom/Finland</td>
<td>2 countries</td>
<td>25 projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN - WFP</td>
<td>Intergovernmental</td>
<td>Food Security &amp; Nutrition</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>80 countries</td>
<td>10 projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN – UNDP</td>
<td>Intergovernmental</td>
<td>Sustainable Development</td>
<td>Mozambique, Bolivia</td>
<td>170 countries</td>
<td>2 to 5 projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.2.3. Semi-Structured Interview Procedure**

Interviews are regarded as the most widely implemented practice when conducting qualitative research in order to collect valid and consistent data that are significant to the research question (Saunders et al., 2009, p.320). Kahn and Cannell (as cited on Saunders et al., 2009, p.318) define interviews as ‘purposeful discussions’ among two or more participants. According to Bryman (2012, p.470), qualitative interviewing places greater interest on the respondents’ point of view, and provides greater insights into what they consider as relevant and important. Consequently, qualitative interviews allow more flexibility, acting in accordance to the course in which the interviewees take the discussion and admitting adjustments based on the emergence of significant issues (Bryman, 2012, p.470).

Likewise, Saunders et al., (2009, p.320) identify three different categories for qualitative interviews based on their formality and structure. On one hand, interviews may be extremely structured and formal, employing identical questions for each respondent (structured interviews); while on the other hand, they can also be informal and less structured conversations (unstructured interviews) (Saunders et al., 2009, p.320). A third category is semi-structured interviews, which has an intermediate position between the two previously mentioned (Bryman, 2012, p.471) and this is the method adopted in this study.

Semi-structured interviews involve the use of a guide with a series of questions formulated with emphasis on greater generality (Bryman, 2012, p.470). Saunders et al. (2009, p. 320), claim that these questions may vary among different interviews, since
some questions can be excluded in particular cases and contexts, as well as the order of the questions may change according to the flow of the conversation. Hence, for this research the interview guide was designed in order to address project managers in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. This interview guide evolved and was adjusted after the researchers conducted the first two interviews. In fact, the questionnaire consisted of 10 general questions regarding project portfolio management practices in non-profit organizations with special focus on the criteria’s to select and prioritize projects within the organization’s project portfolios (see Appendix 2).

However, after carrying out the first two interviews, the researchers realized the need to include questions addressing the role of the project management office in the decision-making process as well as the main role and characteristics of project managers leading projects in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. Therefore, the final interview guide consisted of 14 general questions (see Appendix 3). The procedure in which the interview guide was modified to include emerging topics in the discussion is also known as Abduction. According to Bryman and Bell (2015, p.27) the research process in the abductive approach involves the identification of ‘surprising facts’ or ‘puzzles’ that may emerge when a researchers encounters with an empirical phenomena that cannot be explained by the existing range of theories. In this way, the researcher seeks to choose the ‘best’ explanation among many alternatives in order to explain ‘surprising facts’ or ‘puzzles’ identified at the start of the research process. In this way, when trying to explain ‘surprising facts’ or ‘puzzles’, the researcher can combine both, numerical and cognitive reasoning.

After the first contact was made with the participants and they had agreed to take part on the interviews, a second e-mail was sent including the interview guide including a further explanation of the purpose of this study. They were encouraged to revise the questionnaire before hand to ensure their comprehension of the thematic, as well as requested to get back in contact with the researchers in case they had any questions or comments.

Correspondingly, the first seven questions included in the interview guide were introductory ones so that he researchers could familiarize themselves with the respondents and their expertise in project management, as well as to understand to scope and size of the organizations they work with. The following questions were related to the theoretical framework already established in the literature, as shown in Figure 9 below:
As the interviews were carried out, the researchers tried to remain as neutral as possible, using a certain degree of order and avoiding the use of leading questions. The open-ended conversational nature of the interviews allowed flexibility and the collection of a rich and detailed set of empirical data (Bryman, 2012, p.471) in relation to the respondents’ views and perceptions regarding project selection and project prioritization within their organizations. Given the realist epistemology standpoint adopted in this study (Saunders et al., 2009, p.324), allowing the respondents to speak freely about specific topics not only provided valuable insights, but also the opportunity to identify new themes that emerged from discussions based on the interview questionnaire (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998, as cited on Saunders et al., 2009, p.323). All of the questions included in the interview guide were asked in a similar fashion, however depending on the flow of each particular conversation, the researchers allowed themselves the flexibility to ask further questions or skip some questions, especially when the answer to a particular item had been already provided (Bryman, 2012, p.475). As supported by Bryman (2012, p.472) the semi-structured interview procedure offers the degree of structure necessary when conducting analysis and comparison among several case studies.

4.2.4. Interview Procedure

Qualitative research supports the conduction and analysis of non-standardized interviews in order to reveal and understand research questions (Saunders et al., p.321). Therefore, in order to collect the empirical data for this study, semi-structured interviews were carried out electronically. These internet-mediated interviews (Saunders et al., p.321) were all administered via Skype given the physical location constraints. In fact, only one of the respondents is based in Sweden although in a different city from where this study is being developed, two respondents reside in other European cities: Brussels and London; while two others live in El Salvador. The duration of the interviews ranges
between 20 minutes to a little bit more than 1 hour. Both researchers interacted with the participants, and the interviews were carried out conjointly. Out of the five interviews, one was carried out in Spanish as requested by the research participant.

The interviews were recorded using the researchers’ mobile phones recording apps. Even though the process to transcribe the audios was performed manually, the tools provided by the online application transcribe.wreally.com, which is a voice-to-text software, were also very useful in terms of saving time. Despite the fact that manual transcription is a very demanding and time-consuming task, it offered the researchers great benefits in terms of getting closer to the data, facilitating the identification of key themes as well as similarities and differences between the diverse explanations offered by the participants. Table 4 provides more details regarding each interview proceeding.

Table 4. Respondent presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Type of organization</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Years of experience</th>
<th>Interview duration</th>
<th>Interview Audio Transcript (# pages)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRIAS NGO</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Respondent 1</td>
<td>12 Years</td>
<td>00:50:41</td>
<td>7 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN- WFP</td>
<td>IGO</td>
<td>Respondent 2</td>
<td>17 Years</td>
<td>00:45:20</td>
<td>8 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN- UNDP</td>
<td></td>
<td>Respondent 3</td>
<td>14 Years</td>
<td>01:15:38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>NPO</td>
<td>Respondent 4</td>
<td>2 Years</td>
<td>00:20:10</td>
<td>5 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurochambers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Respondent 5</td>
<td>25 Years</td>
<td>00:30:04</td>
<td>6 pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to realize that the length of the interviews varies among the respondents due to different factors. One of the main reasons is the availability of the respondents and the amount of time they could spare for the interview. In this manner, the interview guide was prepared to last no more than 60 minutes and this is the amount of time specified on the interview guide as well as one of the main criteria on which the respondents agreed to participate on the research. Even though, one particular interview extended for a bit longer than an hour, the researchers were still able to ask all of the questions included in the interview guide, while allowing the respondent to provide deep answers. Another important aspect that influenced the length of the interviews was the years of experience of the respondent. In this way, one of the shortest audios corresponds to the interviewee with the least amount of experience in the field in terms of years, in addition to the size of the organization and the department in which the respondent operates. However, it is necessary to emphasize that an influential factor in the interview length was the preparation that the respondents performed prior the interview. Since the interview guide was sent to the participants beforehand, some of them had already revised the questionnaire and prepared to answer specific questions, facilitating the dialog and the pace of the conversation. One good example is respondent number 5, who despite the long trajectory in the field, provided well-structured answers and direct to the point, allowing the interview to be conducted in only half the time estimated.

4.2.5. Limitations of Qualitative interviews and their overcoming

Qualitative interviews constitute a good research method since they can provide more depth and detailed insights from individual and group experiences, social processes, institutions, relationships, practices, events and other social interactions (Edwards & Holland, 2013, p. 90). However, qualitative research is often criticized because of its objectivism and credibility. According to Saunders et al. (2009, p. 326) reliability,
Objectivity and validity are data quality issues that researchers have to take into consideration when working with qualitative data gathering techniques. In the first place, the reliability of a study relates to the reproducibility of the findings - in other words, the risk of alternative researchers would evidence similar information (Saunders et al., 2009, p.326). On the other hand, carrying out improperly qualitative interviews lead to biased outcomes in many forms. For instance, there is interviewer bias when his/her behavior may influence the respondent’s answers by imposing his/her own beliefs or conducting the questions in order to receive an expected answer. Another bias is related to interviewees; in this case, perceptions and predisposition may become obstacles to obtain valuable information (Saunders et al., 2009, p.327). Finally, Validity relates to the honesty and genuineness of the research data (Anderson, 2010), researcher should be able to adequately represent the findings of the phenomena they are trying to understand (Saunders et al., 2009, p.327).

Researchers should enhance reliability by using a reputational approach, contrasting data frequently, comprehensive and data and using interviews techniques (Leung, 2015, p.326). In this sense, it was created an interview guide prior to the interviews with the aim of having a more structured session. During the interviews, researcher took some notes to seek out similarities and differences across discussion and they avoided to ask leading questions. Moreover, in order to minimize bias interviewers be revised and evaluate their own prejudice, analytic approach and relationship dynamics (Polit & Beck, 2014; cited in Galdas, 2017, p.1). On the other hand to increase the validity in the study, researcher might revise the conclusion derived from interviews are consistent with finding from transcripts. “The more the categories and conclusions are confirmed by different data sources, the more valid the results” (Lub, 2015, p.5).

There is a particular limitation regarding to the language, technological resources and sample size. The conduction of the interviews was in English; therefore, it may lead to bias findings since it is the native language of neither the researchers nor the interviewees. Likewise, one of the interviews was conducted in Spanish. In that case, it was easier for the interviewers to formulate and reformulate some questions, since this language is the mother tongue of both of the researchers. However, findings were translated to English; hence, the validity of the data might be compromised. Therefore, to avoid quality issues, both researchers checked grammar and sense of finding translations. Regarding to technological issue, Skype was used as mediating technology, which can have some technical problems in terms of internet speed and volume. This last limitation can be overcome by conducting face-to-face interviews. Finally, due to time limitations, it was possible to conduct only five interviews. This sample size can be considered as not transferable. Nevertheless, it is recommendable for further researches to increase the sample size by interviewing a larger number of IGOs, NPOs and NGOs and to maintain the same.

4.3. Data Analysis

According to Bryman (2012, p.578), thematic analysis is one of the most common approaches in order to analyse qualitative data. The identification of themes is an activity implemented in the majority of qualitative data analysis strategies and it is usually assisted by the Framework approach (Bryman, 2012, p.579). Ritchie et al. (2003, p.219) refer to the framework approach as a matrix based technique for the organization and a unification
of data. Although researchers argue that thematic analysis lacks specified procedures, the framework structure serves a great tool to organise and analyse the data (Bryman, 2012, P.581). Given the flexibility of this approach, it has been the strategy of choice in order to analyse and display the data gathered in this research.

In this sense, the main idea is to develop a list of predominant topics and subtopics, which are later displayed on a matrix (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79). Furthermore, when referring to these topics or themes Bryman (2012, p.579) asserts that they are basically repetitive patterns in the text that can be spotted in the data. Therefore, the identification of recurring themes is a result of a thorough procedure of data familiarisation including the reading and rereading of the audio transcripts or notes that conform the data (Bryman, 2012, p.579); the coding of data, as well as theme elaboration and review (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79).

As a matter of fact, Bryman (2012, p.580) emphasizes repetition as one of the most important condition to determine that a pattern should be regarded as a theme. However, according to Braun and Clarke (2006, p.79), the fact that a theme is constantly repeated on the data sources is not alone a sufficient reason to label it a theme. Consequently, it is even more important that the recurrent subject is relevant for the examination of the study’s question and objectives (Braun and Clarke, as cited on Bryman, 2012, p.580). This has been useful for this study in particular since one of the research objectives is to determine the main criteria used by IGOs and NPOs in order to select and prioritize projects.

### 4.4. Criteria for Qualitative Research

In order to evaluate the quality of the findings in a qualitative research, it is necessary to determine a set of criteria, which provides valuable conclusions (Saunders et al., 2009, p.156). Reliability and validity are the most common criteria used in quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2009, p.326), however other authors consider alternatives criteria such as:

**Trustworthiness:** the confidence and trust in the theoretical framework that the researcher considered in order to support and explain the phenomenon to be studied. Dividing data in categories and subcategories helps to increase the trustworthiness (Whiting and Sines, 2012, p.22). Additionally, the use of concepts for describing trustworthiness encompasses validity, reliability, which were explain in section 4.2.5 as well as credibility and transferability (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004, p. 109), that would be further explain in this section.

**Credibility:** refers to the truth of the information provided by either the participants or the researchers. To improve the credibility the researcher should demonstrate engagement, methods of observation, and revise trails (Cope, 2013, p.89). Likewise, Hammersley (1992; cited in Cutcliffe & McKenna, 1999, p.376) suggest that the researchers should focus completely on their goals; otherwise, they will infer concepts and propositions from imagination. Therefore, this criterion deals with the approach of the research and alludes to confidence in how well data of analysis report the intended approach (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004, p.109).
Researchers should make some efforts towards this goal; otherwise, researchers could be 'conjuring up' concepts, propositions and theories entirely from their imagination, which do not reflect the phenomenon or situation under investigation.

Confirmability: according to Cope (2013, p.89) confirmability is the research ability to prove that the data provided by the interviewees represent their own thoughts and not the researcher’s point of view. If the finding of the research can be supported by alternatives studies in the same filed, then it is correct to affirm its confirmability (Korstjens and Moser, 2017, p.2). To avoid this bias, the same author proposes to exemplify how findings and interpretation were established. In this manner, this study uses thematic analysis as methodology to examine the data collected thought the interviews.

Authenticity: refers to the ability and extent to which the researcher expresses the feelings and emotions of the participant’s experiences in a faithful manner (Cope, 2013, p.89). Documenting and displaying the evolution of the interview protocols, data displays and coding schemes, enhance authenticity of the research (Sinkovics and Alfoldi, 2012, p.837).

Transferability: it refers to the possibility of make generalizations or to apply the same criteria to other groups (Cope, 2013, p.89). If the qualitative research is properly and meticulously conducted, then findings can be transfered to other settings (Pearson, Parkin & Coomber, 2011).

4.5. Ethical Considerations

The conduction of qualitative research inevitably experiences ethical issues. Ethical considerations are defined as the application of key moral principles in order to make honest choices concerning the behavior and relationship of an individual towards others (Saunders et al., 2009, p.184). Some of these ethical issues can be considered prior to the study, or they can be identified along the research process (Haahr, Norlyk & Hall, 2013, p.8). Therefore, in terms of the literature analyzed, this study acknowledges the sources of the material included, by providing proper citation and references in order to avoid any issues related to plagiarism.

Moreover, the discussions regarding ethical principles in social research acknowledge a set of defined issues (Bryman, 2012, p.135). Deiner and Crandal (1978 as cited on Bryman, 2012, p. 135) have classified these issues into four main areas, which include harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception.

Therefore, when conducting this research, the authors have taken into consideration these four ethical principles. In this manner, based on the assertions of Bryman (2012, p.135) in order avoid the harm of the participants issue, the researchers should carefully evaluate the negative influence that the conduction of the study may pose for the participants, taking into consideration the minimisation of personal harm, risks, stress, and inconveniences. In the basis of these criteria, the participants of this study were guaranteed the concealment of their names and responses and assured that the information collected would be used exclusively for the purposes of this study. These measures are closely related to the considerations of confidentiality. Thus, the identities of the respondents have remained anonymous. In addition, all of the respondents were
knowledgeable of the nature of this study and the fact that the final outcome would become a public document. Moreover, in order to mitigate the issue of consent and deception, a clear explanation of the objectives and aim of the research as well as copy of the interview guide were sent to all the participants in advance. Given the fact that the majority of the respondents were abroad, all of the interviews were conducted via Skype, and based on the approval of each interviewee the conversations were recorded for further analysis. Finally, in order to avoid any invasions of privacy, all of the potential participants as well as the actual respondents were informed in several occasions that they were free to refrain from answering any questions they did not feel comfortable with. Consequently, to the knowledge of the authors, no ethical issues were raised during the conduction of this research.
5. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISPLAY

The exhibition of the data analysis results is the subject of the present chapter. The outcomes of the thematic analysis are presented in section 5.1 including the initial and final codes. Additionally, section 5.2 shows the results of the thematic analysis ordered and synthetized based on the framework strategy. There is a summary accompanying each matrix comprising fragments of empirical evidence that support the research findings.

5.1. Thematic analysis

Thematic Analysis involves five phases that facilitate the qualitative analysis of the information. After transcribing the interview audios, it was possible to generate five general initial codes: general information, Project Selection, Project Prioritization, success factors as well as Project Manager and Project Management office Role. These categories were later subdivided into forty sub-codes that represent in more detail the feature of the data. Table 5 with the initial codes is shown below:

Table 5. Initial codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Information</th>
<th>Project Prioritization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years of experience</td>
<td>Project Prioritization criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Background</td>
<td>Project Prioritization process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge in Project Management</td>
<td>Project Prioritization criteria ranking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management Certification</td>
<td>Project Prioritization framework Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project training</td>
<td>Project Prioritization framework time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Scope</td>
<td>Project Prioritization in Project Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Size</td>
<td>Project Prioritization in Organizational Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Challenges</td>
<td>No PP framework/ Beneficial?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection</td>
<td>Project Success factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection criteria</td>
<td>Organizational success factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection process</td>
<td>Project Management Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection criteria ranking</td>
<td>Role Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection framework description</td>
<td>Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection framework time</td>
<td>Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection in Project Success</td>
<td>Characteristics Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection in Organizational Success</td>
<td>Role Project Manager in DM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No PS framework/ Beneficial?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the TA guideline, when all data have been initially code and collated, it was necessary a second review in order to have an overall conceptualisation of the data patterns and relationships between them. In this sense, some current codes were modified and new codes were included. Additionally, three levels of coding were created: first level highlighted in darker grey represents the main categories; second level highlighted brighter grey denotes sub-categories and codes in white are factors that supports the sub-categories. The revised and new highlighted codes are displayed in Table 6.
5.2. Interview results analysis and display

Thematic analysis (TA) is a qualitative analytic technique that aids towards the identification, analysis and interpretation of patterns of meaning within data obtained during the collection process (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p.297). In this manner, the present section provides a summary of the data thematic analysis applied to the information obtained through this investigation and its depiction in matrix form as suggested by the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. Revised Categories, sub-categories, factor and codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Project Management Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Education Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Knowledge in Project Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Years of experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Project Management Certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Project Management trainings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Project Management Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Project Management Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 PMO influence decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Funding Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Independence level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4 No influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Project Selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Project Selection Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1 Strategic Alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2 Focused areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.3 Target groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.4 Country context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.5 Legal Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.6 Internal Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.7 Context Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.8 Stakeholders Priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.9 Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.10 Organizational capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.11 Project Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.12 Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.13 Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.14 Political Relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Project Selection Criteria Ranking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Project Selection Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Diagnosis/Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3 Selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.4 Prioritization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.5 Approval/Resources Allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.6 Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.7 Formal process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Project Selection Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Project Selection Tool length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 PS influence in Project Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 PS influence in Organizational Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Project Prioritization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Project Prioritization Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 No defined criteria (Mix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2 Context Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.3 Stakeholders Priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.4 Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.5 Project goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.6 Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.7 Prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.8 Policy Relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Project Prioritization Criteria Ranking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Project Prioritization Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Project Manager characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1 Resources Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2 Time management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3 Risk Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.4 Goal Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.5 Strategic Alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.6 Build Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.7 Interpersonal Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.8 Political Savviness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.9 Analytical Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.10 Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.11 Negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.12 Expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Project Manager in project performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
framework method. It is important to highlight that in this section, the analysis and display are presented according to the interview structure (See Appendix 1 and 2), while results and findings will be discussed in chapter 6 in accordance to the research objectives.

**5.2.1. Project Management Knowledge**

At the beginning of the interview, the respondents were required to answer specific questions with the purpose of allowing the researchers to familiarize themselves further with the respondents’ Educational Backgrounds (EB) and Knowledge in the Project Management field (PMK). In this sense, the data reveals that all interviewees possess an educational background different from Project Management. For instance, two of them have Business Administration degrees, while other has a degree in International Relations with a focus on Economic Development. Respondent 4 has a Bachelors degree in International Business and respondent 5 in European Economics. However, the five of them state that they have acquired knowledge in Project Management throughout their professional experience and expertise, which ranges from 2 year as minimum time to 25 years, this being the longest career in this field among the respondents. On the other hand, none of the respondents possesses a certification in PM provided by The Project Management Institute (PMI) or from any other Project Management Association. Respondent 2 even asserts that “in the UN […] no one cares basically”. Nevertheless, for three of them, the organization has provided courses and trainings in Project Management.

Table 7. Project Management Knowledge responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>Education Background (EB)</th>
<th>Knowledge in PM (PMK)</th>
<th>Years of experience (YE)</th>
<th>PM Certification (PMC)</th>
<th>PM trainings (PMT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - NGO</td>
<td>Business Administration and Finance</td>
<td>Professional experience</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Training and certifications provided by the Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - IGO</td>
<td>International Relations focused on economic development -Humanitarian emergency operations</td>
<td>Professional experience</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Internal training programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - IGO</td>
<td>Business Administration and Economics -Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Professional experience</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - NPO</td>
<td>International Business and Marketing</td>
<td>Professional experience</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - NPO</td>
<td>European Economics</td>
<td>Professional experience</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Project management courses, and trainings provided by the organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.2.2. Project Selection**

Table 8 shows a summary of the criteria that Project Managers take into consideration when selecting a project portfolio, how it could be ranked and whether or not the organization implements and describes project selection processes (See Appendix 4 for more details).

Table 8. Project Selection Criteria and process responses.
Stakeholders’ priorities are the most considered criterion between organizations, since all respondent mentioned it (See Table 9). However, it is important to highlight that for IGOs, stakeholders are governments of each country, while for NPOs and NGO stakeholders could be private organizations or local associations. According to Table 9 organization focus areas, country context, context analysis, funding, organizational capabilities and strategic alignment also represent a relevant conditions, since each criteria was mentions at least by three of the interviewees. Regarding to Strategic alignment, respondent 1 refers to the alignment between organisational goals and potential patters when the respondent states, “we select those organizations that identify the most with our purpose”. The same manner, respondent 2 and 3 declare that government needs and Organizational plans should be aligned. Only, respondent 3 and 5 consider that resources should be taken into consideration. While, target group, legal status and internal policies are specific criteria that TRIAS organization contemplates in order to select a counterpart. In contrast, Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>Project Selection Criteria (PSC)</th>
<th>Project Selection Criteria Ranking (PSCR)</th>
<th>Project Selection Process (PSP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - NGO</td>
<td>- Strategic alignment: Mission, Vision, Objectives and organizational strategy of potential partners in alignment with TRIAS strategy - TRIAS focus areas and Target groups</td>
<td>- It is not possible to prioritize them (org.) because they are different and cannot be evaluated based on the same criteria.</td>
<td>- Meticulous evaluation - Five steps approach structured process:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - IGO</td>
<td>- Food security needs by a given country or context - Impact of the disaster in terms of proportion of food for the victims - Alignment between Government / partner and WFP in order to seek development goals. - Project criteria varies according to every government needs and context.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Very world class project evaluation and process: <strong>Resources allocation</strong> - Donor relations division in our organization. - Evaluation project portfolio across the world - Selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - IGO</td>
<td>The project portfolio is based on: -The country capacity -Strategic alignment: he competitive advantage of each UN agency within this plan of the UN -what the UN in that country has prioritized</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>PROJECT OUTSIDE REGULAR BUDGET 1. Define main criteria: a national demand, enough time and money. 2. Look for government or NGO support: National counterpart 3. Find a balance between Government priorities and agencies’ needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - NPO</td>
<td>-Members interest on a particular issue -Members interest in organizing an event with them -most of our events would have some sort of business purpose.”</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- Meetings and conversations with members to define the topics they are interested in collaborative decisions in that sense. -I answer to the board of directors, so for anything bigger I would usually present the idea to them and then decide if it is ok.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - NPO</td>
<td>Political relevance of the topic, -The partnership -The risk - The financial impact of the certain projects. Criteria considered and based on that we take a decision whether to participate or not. 1. Policy relevance 2. The interest and expertise for our members 3. Operationally/financial liability questions</td>
<td>- The three of them should be equal important.</td>
<td>- Call for proposals -Consultation (CEO and organization members) -Discussion -Final decision CEO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Size and Political Relevance are important for respondent 4. Finally, project size is relevant only for respondent 3, whereas Political Relevance for respondent 5.

Table 9. Project Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Selection Criteria (PSC)</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>1 - NGO</th>
<th>2 - IGO</th>
<th>3 - IGO</th>
<th>4 - NPO</th>
<th>5 - NPO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Alignment</td>
<td>STA</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused areas</td>
<td>FOar</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target groups</td>
<td>TG</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country context</td>
<td>CONctx</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Status</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Policies</td>
<td>INTpol</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context Analysis</td>
<td>CONan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders Priorities</td>
<td>STKpri</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>FUN</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational capabilities</td>
<td>ORGcap</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Size</td>
<td>PRsiz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>RES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>TIM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Relevance</td>
<td>POLrelev</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once interviewees mentioned the project selection criteria, they were requested to rank them in terms of relevance. Consequently, data analysis shows that three of the respondent agree on saying that it is not appropriate to prioritize the criteria. For instance, Respondent 1 claims that “It is not possible to prioritize them, because they are different and cannot be evaluated based on the same criteria”. In the same context, Respondent 5 says, “The three of them should be equal important”. The rest of participants did not provide insights regarding this topic.

Concerning to Project selection processes, four of the organizations use a formal method. This becomes evident when Respondent 1 from TRIAS points out that “It is a meticulous evaluation” divided into a 5-steps approach. WFP respondent mentions, “We have a very world class project evaluation and process. Respondent 3 supports this statement by saying that “all committees’ criteria are extremely formalized in the UN”. Moreover, as shown in Table 8 and Table 10, identifying potential project is the first step within the selection process. Following, four organizations evaluate or diagnose their projects according to selection criteria. For the Director of the Operations Department at Euro chambers, this stage makes reference to “consultation process which consider […] the criteria […] to make a decision whether to participate or not. The five organizations have included Selection as part of their selection process. Once organizations approve project portfolio, the next step is allocate resources. For example, within the WFP donors and divisions within the organization do resources allocation jointly. Respondent says that “depending on the different government, the different donors and then depending on what the funding of those operations look like, then we do kind of a strategy resource allocation”. Finally, three out of the five organizations, review their selection processes.

Table 10. Project Selection Process
Four of the organizations have formal Project Selection Processes, and they use different tools such as: forms, sheets, templates, resources allocation models, protocols and radar charts. These tools work as support and guidance for Project Managers when selecting projects (See Table 11). Respondent 1 from TRIAS declares that “It is a tool that helps us scan the counterparts in order to develop our organizational development plan”. Likewise, UNDP interviewee uses this tool “to address given needs to each country, select project according government needs”. On the hand, as presented in Table 11, these project selection tools has been implemented for a long time, as the case of the WFP and UNDP which has been implemented since the decades of 1950 and 1960. In TRIAS, their “spider” system has been used for more than 8 years. While in Eurochambers, their system has been in use for about 10 years. Respondents also mentioned that these tools have been revised through time. One good example is TRIAS where it is updated every three years. However respondent 3 from Eurochambers says that in their case the systems are revised and updated “not so often, for the moment this is how it works. At the moment there is no review on the table”.

**Table 11. Project Selection Tool responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>Project Selection Tool (PST)</th>
<th>Project Selection Tool length (PSTL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - NGO</td>
<td>- “We have a system called Spider”&lt;br&gt;- “It is a tool that helps us scan the counterparts in order to develop our organizational development plan”&lt;br&gt;- It helps us select who we work with and on which issues&lt;br&gt;- The process was very basic at the beginning and has evolved through time</td>
<td>- Over 8 years&lt;br&gt;- Constant Updates (every 3 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - IGO</td>
<td>- Resources allocation model&lt;br&gt;- Integrate World Map - used to address given needs to each country, select project according government needs.</td>
<td>- Resources allocation model has been implemented since 1963&lt;br&gt;- The model itself has changed so many times over the years.&lt;br&gt;- The current model has been emplace for the past 5 years and&lt;br&gt;-It is actually under review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - IGO</td>
<td>- UNDAF: The basis for the project portfolio management is called United Nations Development UNDAF is a common plan of all the UN agencies&lt;br&gt;- Protocols&lt;br&gt;- Results based management.</td>
<td>- Since the late 50's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - NPO</td>
<td>- NO TOOL.&lt;br&gt;- There is no formal framework or method.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - NPO</td>
<td>- Internal, standard sheet/ template to centralize number of data and based on that internally.&lt;br&gt;- The template is the reference document.&lt;br&gt;- It is a management tool among other tool that we have, we use.</td>
<td>- 10 years&lt;br&gt;- Updates (not so often)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three of the participants agree on Project Selection criteria, process and tools influence in Project Success. Table 12 displays the responses from the five organizations standpoint. Respondent 1 refers to this topic by commenting: “It is relevant because it gives you the guidance to make decisions based on standard criteria”. Although respondent 5 agrees regarding the influence on project success, respondent declares, “It is necessary but it is not enough, […] it is just one piece of the bigger process”. Instead, interviewees 3 and 4 consider that is not relevant. In the case of FBCC respondent 4 argues that due to the fact that there are no a large number of projects, it does not influence Project success. Respondent 4 consider that “it doesn’t matter which methodology you use, I think most of them are quite useless to be honest in terms of reaching results. […] Project success and impact will depend on factors beyond your control”.

Table 12. Influence of Project Selection in Project and Organizational success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>PSP influence in Project Success (PSps)</th>
<th>PSP influence in Organizational Success (PSos)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 - NGO                | - It is relevant because it gives you the guidance to make decisions based on a standard criteria  
- It helps you track results/ Measure results  
- Supports transparency and reliability in the resource allocation process | - Ensures alignment between partners and the organizational goals.  
- Supports organizational success by implementing the best business practices for organizational management.  
- Since one of the organizational success criteria is implementing the best business practices for organizational management, having a structured PSP reflects the achievement of this goal. |
| 2 - IGO                | - Yes “I feel confident the way the model has been developed, the way it has been implemented. It is the most efficient model structured that we have emplaced”  
- It is unfair to say that these model or techniques are sufficient. | - It is unfair to say that these model or techniques are sufficient. |
| 3 - IGO                | "I would say that it doesn’t matter which methodology you use, I think most of them are quite useless to be honest in terms of reaching results.  
"Project success and impact will depend on factors beyond your control“  
- It is good because everyone is using the same project management methodology or follows the same rules“  
- "the value of results based management or any of these models in complex environments is that you organize your thoughts and you make the logic of the project transparent and clear so everyone understands it." | N/A |
| 4 - NPO                | -No, I do not think that would work for us. It is such a small organization and we do not have such a big number of projects that are being offered to us. It is more us seeking out projects or events to do. | N/A |
| 5 - NPO                | -For sure, otherwise we would not do it. It is one more over many other elements to ensure success.  
-It is necessary but it is not enough.  
The project is part of a bigger process of establishing priorities with our members.  
-So that specific tool that we have, it is just one piece of the bigger process. | -It is necessary, it is important but it is also important other elements.  
-So that specific tool that we have, it is just one piece of the bigger process. |

Project Success influences Organizational Success. Only one respondent supports this statement since the organization’s prestige is based on having best business practices for organizational management, therefore its processes must be all formal and well structured. Nevertheless, respondent 2 and 5 claim that even though these frameworks
may influence organizational success, they are not enough; it is required also to look at others factors.

5.2.3. Project Prioritization

Table 13 summarizes data related to the decision-making process in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations in terms of prioritization of projects within the organizations’ project portfolios. As shown in Table 14 the most important criteria for project prioritization is funding availability since 3 out of 5 respondents discussed the topic. Respondent 3 asserts that in terms of projects “the most important priority is that which allows you to mobilize new resources carried out where you can show the biggest impact, but within your kind of priorities”. In this way, the priorities, concerns and goals determined by the different stakeholders, especially the governments and donors, are also top criteria in order to prioritize projects. For example, respondent 3 noted: “At the moment, we have contributions that came in from the donor; they are to be allocated towards activities related to climate change. So, that funding goes to specific activities within our budget, within our project portfolio, that are working on climate change activities”. Likewise, respondent 4 says, “I have a lot of conversations with our members and I try to meet up with them whenever I can and ask them what kind of topics they interested in or if they would like to organize something with us and that is the main thing to prioritize. So, if we have a company who wants to organize something with us, it is obviously more important to us than anything than an external party would want to do with us”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>Project Prioritization Criteria (PPC)</th>
<th>Project Prioritization Ranking (PPCR)</th>
<th>Project Prioritization Process (PPP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - NGO</td>
<td>“There are no criteria. It is a group of factors that are determinant, in order to choose an organization.” - It is difficult to determine one criterion is more important than another is. - It is very complex</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1. Contra 2. Preparation plan (determine specifics areas to work on) 3. Plan assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - IGO</td>
<td>Emergency operation level - Donor priorities - Funding availability - Long-term impact project are taken as higher priority - Budget level</td>
<td>Level 3 is top priority - It is directly allocated human and financial resources</td>
<td>- Internal exercise - Review activities to determine critical activities need to continue when there are limited funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - IGO</td>
<td>- Core projects, within the regular budget are prioritized because these are key areas of the organization; even if there is less money on those projects, they are still prioritized. - the most important priority is that which allows you to mobilize new resources carried out where you can show the biggest impact - prestige - Because that kind of gives you media impact, it gives you the ability to mobilize new resources so it’s all about where you can show result because the UN needs publicity to be competitive. You need to always show that you are on top of things. And that you do by being able to deliver on your promises.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - NPO</td>
<td>if we have a company who wants to organize something with us, it is obviously more important to us than any than anything than an external party would want to do with us if they would like to organize something with us and that is the main thing to prioritize</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moreover, two of the respondents claimed that the organizations had no defined prioritization criteria, and that it was very difficult to rank the different factors that determine the importance of the performance of one project over another. In fact, they argue that it is a combination of different factors and that all of them had to be fulfilled as noted by respondent 5 “*What it is more important, it is a mix*”. Respondent 1 states: “*There are no criteria. It is a group of factors that are determinant, in order to choose an organization*”. Respondent 1 also adds: “*I cannot say what is which factor is more important or less important because it is very complex. You cannot rank them*”. Similarly, Respondent 5 acknowledges that when a project has already been selected and included in the organizations’ portfolio, there is no project that is more important than other. He adds: “*we cannot do a project half-half. If you go you go for it 100%.*”

**Table 14. Project Prioritization Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>1 - NGO</th>
<th>2 - IGO</th>
<th>3 - IGO</th>
<th>4 - NPO</th>
<th>5 - NPO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No defined criteria (Mix)</td>
<td>NOPPcr</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context Analysis</td>
<td>CONan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders Priorities</td>
<td>STKpri</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>FUN</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project goals</td>
<td>PRgoal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>RES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>PREST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Relevance</td>
<td>POLrelev</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the different factors that determine project prioritization within project portfolios, respondents also mentioned context analysis, project goals, policy relevance, the availability of resources (other than financial) as well as the prestige taking part of a particular project would provide. The context analysis criterion can be illustrated by the following example provided by respondent 2 from the perspective of the World Food Programme: “*in the context of emergency operations, what are consider level 3 emergencies those take top priority for the organization, for everything from financial resource allocation to human resources that are dedicated to those operations, so those are top priority*”. This aspect is also relevant regarding the conditions that are more important regarding project prioritization. In addition, respondent 3 determines prestige as a relevant prioritization criterion in the United Nations “*because that kind of gives you media impact. It gives you the ability to mobilize new resources, so it’s all about where you can show results because the UN needs publicity to be competitive. You need to always show that you are on top of things, and that you do by being able to deliver on your promises.*”

Regarding the project prioritization process, the respondents did not provide much detail. In fact, only two of them provided a specific answer, although the two processes are
outlined in very different ways. Respondent 1 states that “once the counterpart has been selected and we determine what their development plan is going to be, we focus on preparing a plan for the duration of the program as well as an annual plan where we determine the specific areas we are going to work on”. Respondent 2 on the other hand, defines the process as an internal exercise of the organization. Respondent 2 explains: “So it is basically the maintenance of the different activities to keep them alive and as healthy as possible, but also a review of activities. So if the funding becomes critical we are not simply receiving contribution that we required, then we do an internal exercise to determine what are the critical activities that need to continue.”

5.2.4. Role of Project Management Office

Table 15 summarizes criteria related to the project management office (PMO), whether or not the organizations have a PMO, as well as the structure and influence within the organization, especially regarding decision-making in terms of selection and prioritization of projects. According to 4 of the respondents, there is some kind of selection committee, team, delegation or agency within each of the organizations that is in charge of project management, although it is not necessarily called PMO. However, the functions of these committees or teams vary across the four different organizations in terms of tasks and authority. Furthermore, the structure of the project management teams and committees is also different depending on the organization. For some of the organizations these teams are relatively small, conformed by 20 or even less people, while in other organizations bigger agencies are subdivided into smaller committees.

Table 15. Project Management Office responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>Project Management Office (PMO)</th>
<th>Project Management Office structure (PMOS)</th>
<th>PMO influence decision-making (PMOdm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - NGO</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - IGO</td>
<td>- Delegations have different kinds of authority in decision making</td>
<td>- Depending on budget level there are certain delegations - Different levels within the organization can sing up and approve documents.</td>
<td>-Certain delegations have different kinds of authority -Authority based on project budget level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - IGO</td>
<td>-There is no PMO within organization -There is a management committee</td>
<td>-UN is composed by agencies -The agencies have different committees -The more money involved, the most senior people are participating in the decision-making</td>
<td>-The bigger the agency and more funding it has, the bigger its power to influence the whole prioritization criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - NPO</td>
<td>-There is no PMO within organization -Committee</td>
<td>-Committee conformed by 3 people (General Manager and two trainees) -General Manager answers to the Board of Directors</td>
<td>-Committee makes most of the decision, however the manager considers the board of directors’ criteria. -When project is big, it requires the board of directors’ approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - NPO</td>
<td>-There is a project management team, which is in charge of executing projects, not selecting them.</td>
<td>-Conformed by more than 20 people</td>
<td>-Project management team influences in terms of activities related to project, but not the project selection process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has been found, as shown in Table 16 that the influence of the project management office (PMO) in the decision making process of intergovernmental and non-profit organizations is based on two main factors: the size of the agency or PMO as well as the funding or budget level of the project. In this way, as respondent 2 states “the bigger the
agency and the more money the agency has in the country the bigger their power to influence the whole prioritization for every agency”. This is also supported by respondent 3 who says that within the organization “there are different levels, that we call thresholds, depending on the budget level, so they have specific different levels of authority depending on the approval”. Respondent 4 also states that even though the project manager is usually in charge of making most of the decisions for small projects, it is the board of directors who make the decisions for bigger projects. Conversely, respondent 5 notes that in this organization there is a project management team that is in charge of the execution of projects, but it is not involved in the selection of projects for the project portfolio since “[...] the final decision is taken by the CEO”.

Table 16. Influence of Project Management Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PMO influence DM (PMOdm)</th>
<th>Sub -Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>1 - NGO</th>
<th>2 - IGO</th>
<th>3 - IGO</th>
<th>4 - NPO</th>
<th>5 - NPO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding Level</td>
<td>PMOF</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>PMOS</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence level</td>
<td>INDL</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>NOIN</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.5. Role of Project Manager

Summarized in Table 17 are the main characteristics that a project manager should possess when carrying out projects in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations based on the opinions of the interviewees. It is important to realize that given the development of the interview guide during the data collection process, two of the interviewees where not asked these questions.

Table 17. Role of Project Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>Project Manager characteristics (PMC)</th>
<th>Role PM in project performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - NGO</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - IGO</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - IGO</td>
<td>- High delivery in term of resources, time and goals - Resources Management skills - Risk management - Ability to align UN goals with local governments - Build trust - align PM responsibilities with organizational goals. - Interpersonal skills. - political savviness - The most important</td>
<td>Possessing those skills, improve the chance to get funding or UN resources allocation. PM is the bridge to move towards the UN goals and government goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - NPO</td>
<td>-good time management skills -ability to grasp very wide concepts and hold a lot of pieces together -Ability to delegate to your team and people working with you -Ability to sell, because you need to find sponsors (specifically for non-profits) -control budget and stick to budget constraints</td>
<td>-Very influential, especially in small organizations -responsible for making or breaking the event. -Delegating and having a team you can trust is very important, as well as to rely on their capacity to come through with it. -As the manager you have to take all the important decisions -Hold all the pieces together and have a broader view of how it is going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - NPO</td>
<td>Good mix between: -interest in the contents -more classical project management skill, meaning: managing</td>
<td>-if you have those skills, the chances of being successful are higher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the characteristics mentioned by the respondents, Resources management is the one that has been emphasized by all of them. In this way, respondent 3 acknowledges that this implies “good project management and high delivery, which is to spend the resources on the right activities and achieve the right goals”, adding also that “looking at the specific question, your career in the UN is very much dependant on your ability to mobilize resources. If you are a project manager in the UN the best way of having a successful career is your ability to mobilize additional resources, so more money for UN organizations”. Similarly, respondent 4 emphasizes the topic by noting the importance of controlling the budget and “sticking to budget constraints”, while respondent 5 refers to it as “having an idea of the technical project management skills”.

Time management has also been pointed-out as one of the main characteristic project managers in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations should possess. In fact, 3 of the respondents note it. Likewise, strategic alignment and goals management have also been acknowledged. Respondent 3 claims that for this particular organization it involves “to be able to kind of balance your responsibility to comply and your responsibility to move towards the goals of the UN with the goals of the government”. Other categories mentioned by the respondents have been analytical skills and expertise. In this way, respondent 4 says that project managers “have to be able to grasp very wide concepts and hold a lot of pieces together”, while respondent 5, referring to the topic of expertise declares: “I think, specifically for project manager in Non-profit organizations, they must have knowledge about the content, so if you do projects in energy efficiency so you must have knowledge about this topic”.

Negotiation skills are another trait that has been highlighted. In this case, respondent 4 notes that “specifically for non-profit organizations maybe you also need to be quite talented at selling in a sense, because we rely quite heavily in finding sponsors for the venues, catering and things like that”. Equally important is political savviness and the ability to “foresee some of the issues that might be a problem for the government” as asserted by respondent 3.

Moreover, good interpersonal skills, trust building skills and leadership were also mentioned. Respondent 3 emphasized the relevance of people skills as the understanding of “what drives people”. Respondent 4 refers to leadership, including “the ability to delegate to your team and people working with you”. In addition, respondent 3 develops on the importance of building trust because as a project manager from the UN “you want to be seen as someone who facilitates that they (the country) reach their goals” “...if there is a trust in that you are there to help them deliver and solve the problem they have, then it will be much easier for you to comply because then the government or your counterpart will work as much as they can to solve your problem while they solve their own problem”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Manager characteristics (PMgC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time, people, budgets, more technical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think, specifically for project manager in Non-profit organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-knowledge about the content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-technical project management skills: budget, time, bureaucracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-If the person does not have that combination of skills you have a risk that the project will be a mess, financially, time table, so it is all connected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18. Project Manager Characteristics

47
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>1 - NGO</th>
<th>2 - IGO</th>
<th>3 - IGO</th>
<th>4 - NPO</th>
<th>5 - NPO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources Management</td>
<td>RM</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>TM</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Management</td>
<td>RM</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Management</td>
<td>GM</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Alignment</td>
<td>STA</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build Trust</td>
<td>BT</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Skills</td>
<td>IP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Savviness</td>
<td>POLsav</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Skills</td>
<td>ANAsk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>LEAD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation</td>
<td>NEGO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>EXP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 18, the respondents were also asked to provide their opinions regarding the role of the project manager in the performance of intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. In this way, for the UN, according to respondent 3, the role of the project manager is to be the bridge between the UN and the government, “balancing your responsibility to comply and your responsibility to move towards the goals of the UN with the goals of the government”. In addition, respondent 3 asserts that this “is kind of the basis for future resource mobilization because with that you can show that you are good at managing projects, and the government may be [...] interested in financing you again”. Furthermore, respondent 4 favours the role of the project manager as “very influential, especially in small organizations, because you are solely responsible for making or breaking the event”. Finally, respondent 5, refers to the role of the project manager as involving a complete set of skills and claims that “if the person does not have that combination of skills, So if the person have only a good knowledge in content but no in project management, you have a risk that the project will be a mess, financially, time table, so it is all connected. If you have the skills the change of being successful are higher. It is obvious.”
6. DISCUSSION

The present section discusses the main findings obtained from the analysis of the data collected during the interview procedure. It has been divided in sections corresponding to the topics of project selection, project prioritization as well as their importance on project and organizational success. Additionally, it discusses the role of the PMO and individual project managers in the decision-making process.

6.1. Project Selection

Taking into account the fact that four out of the five organizations interviewed manage a large number of projects, the selection of the right projects has become a relevant concern within the decision-making process of intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. Therefore, determining a set of criteria and specific guidelines aids in solving the project selection dilemma (Levine, 2005, p. 17).

Selection of projects based on stakeholders’ priorities has been confirmed by all the respondents of this study as one of the top criteria when selecting the projects in which the organizations analysed work on. In the case of intergovernmental organizations, the selection decision is influenced by the country priorities and needs, as well as the country capabilities and infrastructure. In the case of intergovernmental organizations, the selection of a project depends on the requests for funding allocation coming from donors and financial supporters. For non-profit organizations, the selection criteria are based on the interests of internal stakeholders and member organizations. This is also closely related to another factor identified in this research, which refers to the focus or scope of the organization. In this sense, for intergovernmental and non-profit organizations, the selection criteria relates to focus areas concerning public interest and policy relevance such as humanitarian, social, scientific, and environmental issues, among others (Oueslati, 2016, p. 78).

According to Oueslati (2016, p. 76), PS in for-profit organizations focuses on the selection of projects that are able to return the initial investment. However, in the case of intergovernmental and non-profit organizations the bottom-line is not defined in terms of profit maximation (Drucker, 1990, p.x). Thus, according to the findings of this study, non-profit and intergovernmental organizations project selection criteria is based on strategic alignment between the organizational goals and the stakeholders’ priorities. It is important to realize that regarding IGOs, the main stakeholders are the governments of each country, whilst for NPOs and NGOs stakeholders usually include private organizations, local associations and donors. This is also supported by the research of Pernetta and Jiang (2013, p. 142), who determined that IGOs should find a balance between national priorities with regional objectives in order to successfully extend activities among all the participating governments. In addition, the findings of this study highlight the importance of strategic alignment not only in terms of the agreement between the organization’s goals and the stakeholders’ priorities, but also refers to the internal alignment between the organizations mission, vision, strategy and objectives. In this way, this research has determined that only after the organization has a clear definition of its strategy and has achieved alignment between the organizational statements and practices, it will be possible to find the balance concerning the organization and stakeholder’s priorities (Nikolova, 2016, pp.36-37).
This study has also found that the management and allocation of resources is also a relevant concern. Specifically, for intergovernmental and non-profit organizations, resources allocation refers to the management of funding coming from different sources, including charitable contributions, grants, public contracts, and taxations, among others (BoardSource, 2010, p. 15). Comparatively, this highlights an interesting contrast between the for-profit and non-profit sector, given the fact that enterprises obtain their resources from the profits realized by business operations (Khalid, 2010, p.3).

This research also notes a peculiarity regarding the criteria of country and context analysis. Since IGO’s main counterparts are governments and nations across the world, the decision-making process in order to select projects for their portfolios involves a thorough analysis of the situation and environment of the target country. Thus, this is similar to performing a PESTEL analysis of the country business climate through which the organization tries to obtain insights regarding the political, economic, social, technologic, ecologic and legal factors that encompass and influence activities in a particular country (Kampanje, 2014, p.1). In contrast, although NPO’s undergo a similar process, this is oriented towards an analysis of the target organization and its internal context, including internal capabilities as well as policies and processes, availability of non-financial resources such as human resources, and legal aspects.

Other factors mentioned among the main criteria considered when selecting projects in non-profit and intergovernmental organizations were the size of the project as well as the time frame for the execution. Nevertheless, one of the respondents only pointed out these criteria.

Regarding the level of importance of the different selection criteria, this study has found that project managers in the organizations analyzed do not rank or regard as more important one criterion over another. In fact, it has been found that within these organizations all the different requirements encompassed in the selection process should be treated as equal. Therefore, the elements defined in the selection criteria could be compared to a “check-list”, in which all the different boxes or aspects should be “ticked” in order to proceed with the approval and thus the execution of the project.

Moreover, literature also acknowledges the complexity of the project selection process (Salehi, 2015, p. 109; Bakshi et al., 2016, p. 1644), this is the reason why many researchers have proposed different methodologies and frameworks to facilitate the decision making process. Nevertheless, studies have found that in the commercial product and service development context there is a strong focus on financial measures without taking into consideration other relevant aspects (Killen et al., 2008; Cooper et al., 1999). Clearly, the need to develop more frameworks that are integrated is a need of the private sector, but this is even more complex in the intergovernmental and non-profit sectors. Martinusso (2014, p.57) among other researchers argue that relevant project management literature has overlooked the non-profit and public good sector since the majority of the portfolio management tools available are tailored for commercial organizations. In fact, Intergovernmental and non-profit organizations face decision making challenges as they seek to obtain the best value from their investments, however as noted earlier in this study, financial gains is not their main priority (Killen et al., as cited on Martinusso, 2014, p.57). Nonetheless, this study has found that 4 out of 5 of the organizations analyzed possess a well-structured selection process. According to the literature, one of the main advantages of implementing project management frameworks when deciding to undertake a project
relates to the ability to evaluate how to effectively allocate resources and how ensure their alignment with the organization strategic goals (Martinsuo, 2013, p.795). These four organizations evaluated fall among the top performers in their fields, with an international level and long history, established procedures and remarkable prestige. This allows the researchers to infer that the bigger the organization and the longest its trajectory, the more structured their processes are.

In like manner, this study has found that the overall steps encompassed in the project portfolio management framework are implemented and adapted by intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. In this way, the 5 organizations evaluated perform the identification, evaluation, and selection steps. Meanwhile 3 of them also go through additional steps of the framework such as approval and review. In this way, according to the respondents this is a process that is constantly revised and updated within the organization, and the frequency of these revisions depend on the organizational needs.

6.2. Project Prioritization

According to the literature in project management, the definition of an organization’s project portfolio consists of several steps, which include selection and prioritization as separate activities within this process (Khadija & Laila, 2014, p. 137). Although there is scarce research to project prioritization, literature generally explains it as part of the project selection process (Mavrotsas et al., 2005, p. 299). One of the main findings of this study supports this claim since it has been possible to determine that for Intergovernmental and non-profit organizations the project selection and project prioritization phases are not isolated from one another. In fact, these two steps are merged into one single set of criteria. Thus, within these organizations, once the projects have been selected and the portfolio has been determined all of the projects are equally important and each of them contributes towards the achievement of the organizational goals. As a consequence of the fact that the distinction between project selection and prioritization for these organizations is very blurry, there are no specific frameworks and tools that apply strictly to the prioritization and ranking of projects.

Nevertheless, there seem to be some exceptions in the criteria for prioritization based on the nature of a specific project. This is the case in particular of the UN-WFP, where emergency operations translate into projects that take immediate top priority at all levels including financial and human resources. Examples of these emergencies include natural disasters, conflicts, famines, and pandemics. In this manner, these finding support one of the main objectives of this research in terms of determining the criteria that project managers take into consideration when ranking and prioritizing projects within the portfolios of intergovernmental and non-profit organizations.

6.3. Importance of Project Selection and Prioritization

One of the objectives of this research was to analyse the impact of project portfolio selection and prioritization in project and organizational success of Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations. However, based on the data collected, it is not possible to provide any conclusions on this matter. According to the results, 2 out of the 5 respondents agree on the importance of implementing project selection tools and
frameworks since it provides the guidance to make decisions based on standard criteria. However, 1 of the respondents claims that the application of project selection tools is not sufficient in order to achieve success, since this entails a wider set of factors. Finally, the remaining 2 respondents state that project selection tools and the overall selection process have no impact on project and organizational success within their organizations since they claim that in most cases, success depends on factors beyond the project manager’s control.

6.4. Role of PMO and Project Managers in PS and PP

For this particular study, the researchers considered the understanding of the selection and prioritization of projects as one of main goals, including the influence of the implementation of defined processes, frameworks and tools towards project and organizational success. Nonetheless, as a result of a more thoughtful consideration and study of the literature as well as the insights obtained from the interview process, the researchers realized the importance to include as part of the aims of this study the examination of the role of the project management office and project managers within the decision making process.

6.4.1. Role of the Project Management Office

Literature on the topic of project management has highlighted the importance of the Project management office, stating that an increasing number of organizations are creating them given the positive influence PMOs have on project portfolio success (Bredillet, Tywoniak & Tootoonchy, 2017, p. 28). However, this study has found that none of the organizations has established a project management office per se. In this sense all of the organizations possess some sort of committee, team, delegation or agency in charge of the management of projects, although the functions, structure and responsibilities of these teams or committees vary across different organizations.

Moreover, it is important to emphasize that due to the fact that these organizations have not obtained structured PMOs with defined responsibilities, it seems that the teams, agencies, and committees within the organizations analysed lack autonomy, power and authority to make all the decisions regarding the selection, prioritization, and general management of projects. For this matter, the researchers get the impression that the main function of these delegations is more related towards balancing the priorities of the, donors, governments as well as primary stakeholders, with the priorities of their organizations, managing funding and resources in alignment with these priorities.

6.4.2. Role of Project Manager

A very interesting finding obtained from the analysis of the data collected is the fact that although all of the respondents function as project managers within their organizations, none of them possesses certifications or formal academic education specific to project management. However, most of them received training related to the topic provided by the organizations where they work at.

Furthermore, literature in project management focused on intergovernmental and non-profit organizations refers to the role of the project management as someone that possesses resource management skills (Uzonwanne, 2014, p. 287). This is supported by
the data collected from the interviews, in which the skill to effectively manage resources was the most common characteristic mentioned by all the respondents. In particular, this is important because in the majority of cases funding and resources in IGO’s and NPOs come from donors and fund raising activities, or volunteer work; this translates into a very limited and scarce number of resources that the project managers need to properly administer in order to achieve successful outcomes. Among other relevant skills that the respondents identified as necessary for project manager in public interest projects is good interpersonal skills, trust building and leadership, having the ability to delegate and manage human resources as well as someone who facilitates the governments and counterparts to achieve their goals. In a similar manner, political savviness was recognized as relevant for IGOs specifically, since they need to address strategically the needs and requirements of governments.

Finally, the role of the project manager in project and organizational success has been found as highly valuable and influential since the possession of good project management skills both hard and soft, provides the manager the knowledge to make better decisions taking into consideration all aspects of the project.
7. CONCLUSIONS

This study provides a contribution concerning the understanding of project selection and project prioritization in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations. In addition, it provides an analysis on the influence of the project management office as well as individual project managers in the decision-making process towards achieving project and organizational success.

Despite the fact that previous studies on the project portfolio management topic are mainly grounded on quantitative methods, the present study has adopted a qualitative approach and analysis of the data collected. In this manner, the interviews conducted have proved to be a valuable strategy in order to shed light and provide new insights to the research question as well as better understanding of the complexity of the project selection and prioritization issues. Therefore, the semi-structured interview procedure was conducted via Skype in order to gather the relevant empirical data. Further, a thematic template analysis through the application of the framework methodology was used in order to analyze and provide a display of the research findings. The delimitation of the theoretical framework on project portfolio management, specially project selection and prioritization in concordance with the qualitative research strategy contributed to the fulfillment of the main questions and objectives of this study.

7.1. Theoretical Contributions

The study aims to determine how do Project Managers in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations select and prioritize projects within project portfolios. More specifically, to identify the criteria that project managers take into consideration when selecting and prioritizing projects in Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations. As mentioned in the literature review, researches in these topics have been traditionally limited to the for-profit sector (Lacerda, Martens & De Freitas, 2016, p. 4). Therefore, the main contribution of this study, is to provide increased knowledge regarding the criteria that Project Managers working IGOs and NPOs take into considerations when selecting and prioritizing a pool of projects.

On the other hand, it was relevant for this research to analyse the impact of project portfolio selection and prioritization in project and organizational success of Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations. According to literature, a proper project portfolio should generate revenue and address long-term benefits and opportunities to lead organizational success (Klubeck (2017, p.6). In this manner, findings contribute to the understanding of how IGOs and NPOs project and organizational success criteria differs from FPOs in the sense that PS and PP should be focused mainly on the interests of internal stakeholders and member organizations and to ensure the strategic alignment between the organizational goals and the stakeholders’ priorities.

Finally, this study tried to expand knowledge about the influence of the the Project Management Office in the selection and prioritization of projects in Intergovernmental and Non-profit organizations. While literature stresses that PMOs influence positively on the success of the project portfolio (Bredillet, Tywoniak & Tootoonchy, 2017, p.28), finding proves that this statement is not applicable for IGOs and NPOs. This research provides new insights about the main functions that the PMO has in these type or
organizations, and it proves that they are not related to selection and prioritization of project.

### 7.2. Managerial Contributions

The outcomes of this study provide further comprehension concerning the relevant set of criteria that determine the selection and prioritization of projects in the public good sector. Hence, in Intergovernmental and non-profit organizations there is not a clear distinction between the processes of selection and prioritization; rather, these two encompass one single set of criteria and procedures that cannot be disconnected from one another.

Although, most of the project portfolio management tools and frameworks available are tailored towards profit maximization and the needs of commercial and for-profit organizations, this study has found that IGOs and NPOs implement structured procedures adapted to the specific needs of each organization. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are crucial and directly influential in the achievement of project and organizational success since there are many other factors that define their success.

The findings of this study contradict the proposition that the project management office is highly influential in the decision-making process regarding selection and prioritization of projects in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations, since the main role of the project management teams and committees within the organizations examined relates to the alignment of the priorities of the primary stakeholders, with the priorities of their organizations. In this way, although they are involved in supervision of the activities, the project management agencies in the organizations evaluated lack the autonomy, power and authority to make all the decisions regarding the selection, prioritization of projects. It has been found that in most cases it is a group conformed by members of different departments with different roles and responsibilities that make project management decisions in conjunction with the main stakeholders; while in other cases it is the CEO who has the final word in the decision making process. Given the size of the sample evaluated, it is important to emphasize that even though the project management office is not influential in the decision making process of these particular organizations, the results should not be generalized to all organizations in the non-for profit sector. Further research should be conducted in order to determine the applicability of these findings in other organizations executing projects in the same sector.

On the other hand, this study confirms the proposition that the role of the project manager in project success as well as organizational success is valuable since they possess the hard and soft project management skills that increase the chances to achieve success. For this matter, the most valuable trait identified by this study is the ability to manage resources effectively given the context in which IGO’s and NPOs act, where the availability of resources is usually limited and depends on the support of external donors. Moreover, good interpersonal skills were identified as relevant for both IGOs and NPOS, while political savviness and balance governmental needs with organizational needs were mostly important for IGOs.
7.3. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

The authors recognize that this research presents several limitations that are closely associated to the nature of the study since it leans towards a more qualitative and descriptive approach. In addition, this study presents restraints in terms of the analysis of data since the sample studied is very small, hindering the chances for the construction of pivotal conclusions.

Likewise, qualitative research provides a flexible approach to the collection of data as well as increased control to the participants over the information they disclose. This makes it difficult for the researchers to verify the results in an objective manner against the context depicted by the participants of the study. In this sense, qualitative studies are often criticized for the partiality and subjectivity they entail. Researchers and respondents alike are allowed to interpret and analyse contexts based on their personal points of view. Nevertheless, the management of project portfolios encompasses subjective interpretation to a great extent, formulating decisions based on the judgement and expertise of the project managers.

Moreover, the quality of a research relies heavily on the individual skills of the researchers. Likewise, it is greatly influenced by their personal biases and idiosyncrasies. Thus, it is particularly difficult to not only maintain, but also evaluate and demonstrate the rigor of the study. Besides, the bias in decision-making the authors of this study would like to emphasize that this is not the only factor behind the shortcomings mentioned before. In this manner, other relevant issues affecting the reliability of the findings provided refer to language barriers and technological concerns. Additionally, the authors recognize that the criterion for selection and decision making in intergovernmental and non-profit organizations on which this study reflects upon is far from exhaustive.

Nonetheless, the data evaluation suggests the need for a clearer definition of the main selection criteria for projects in the public good sector as well as a more in depth analysis of the impacts of establishing structured project management offices within these organizations. Equally important would be the development of measurement criteria in order to dimension the impact of the implementation of project portfolio management tools in organizational success. The authors would also recommend further research with the purpose of developing more knowledge in the topic of project prioritization in general. Finally, this study proposes the elaboration of a decision-making framework tailored specifically for the needs of intergovernmental and non-profit organizations.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Introduction email to participants

Dear [ ],

Our names are Laura and Marcela, and we are two Master students currently studying the last semester of our Masters degree in Strategic Project Management. This is an international master program, jointly delivered by three top universities in Europe: Politecnico di Milano (Italy), Herriot Watt Univeristy (Scotland) and Umea University (Sweden).

As part of the research for our master thesis, we are conducting interviews in order to increase our understanding of Project Selection and Project Prioritisation in Non Profit Organisations. Therefore, as (position) at (organization’s name), you are an ideal candidate to provide valuable insights from your own experience on this matter.

If you kindly decide to take part in this study, we would like to arrange a phone or Skype interview. The meeting would last around 60 minutes and it will be audio recorded so that we can accurately reflect on what is discussed. Participation on this study is completely voluntary and the participants are not required to answer any questions they do not feel comfortable with. We are simply trying to capture your thoughts and perspectives about these topics. The information collected will be confidential and all data will be accessible only for the researchers.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. If you are willing to take part in the interviews, please reply to this email by suggesting a day and time that best suits you. We would like to schedule the meeting preferably before [ ]. In case you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

With kind regards.

Laura Rojas Muñoz & Marcela Figueroa Padilla
Appendix 2: Interview guide

We are two Masters Students currently studying the last semester of our Master’s degree in Strategic Project Management. This is an international master program, jointly delivered by Politecnico di Milano (Italy), Herriot Watt University (Scotland) and Umeå University (Sweden).

As part of the research for our master thesis, we are conducting interviews in order to increase our understanding of Project Selection and Project Prioritisation in Non Profit Organizations. Please take the following questions as a general guideline for the upcoming interview that will be audio recorded, so that we can accurately reflect on what is discussed. Participation on this study is completely voluntary and the participants are not required to answer any questions they do not feel comfortable with. We are simply trying to capture your thoughts and perspectives about these topics. The information collected will be confidential and all data will be accessible only for the researchers.

Interview questions

1) Could you please tell us briefly about your job role, department, and years of experience?

2) Could you please tell us a little bit about your educational background?

3) Do you have any background (Knowledge or practical) in project management?

4) Do you have any project management certification?

5) Typically, how many projects does the organization manage per year? /Could you provide an estimate of how many projects the organization manages per year?

6) What is/are the main scope/focus of the projects the organization undertakes?

7) From your experience, how does the organization decide what projects to select? Can you please provide an example?
   a) From the criteria you mentioned before, which one is the most important and which one is the least important?

8) Once you have selected and determined the project portfolio, how does the organization decide which projects are more important than others? /Which projects’ performance is the organization more concerned about? Can you please provide an example?
   a) From the criteria you mentioned before, which one is the most important and which one is the least important?

9) Does the organization or the TMT use any formal or informal way for the selection of projects? Are there any particular elements or components that are taken into consideration? Any rules of thumb? Yes ____ No____
   a) If yes please answer the following questions, otherwise go to question b)
      i) Could you please explain further what this model is about?
ii) How long have you been applying these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies for?
iii) Do you consider they are relevant in order to achieve project success?
iv) Do you consider that applying any of these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies influence organizational successes?

b) If no,
i) Do you think it would be beneficial to consider a selection framework? Why?

10) Does the organization or the TMT use any formal or informal way for the prioritization of projects? Are there any particular elements or components that are taken into consideration? Any rules of thumb? Yes ____ No_____
a) If yes please answer the following questions, otherwise go to question b)
i) Could you please explain further what this model is about?
ii) How long have you been applying these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies for?
iii) Do you think they are relevant in order to achieve project success?
iv) Do you consider that applying these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies influence organizational success?

b) If no,
i) Do you think it would be beneficial to consider a prioritization framework? Yes____ No____ Why?
Appendix 3: Interview guide revised

Our names are Laura and Marcela currently studying the last semester of our Masters degree in Strategic Project Management. This is an international master program, jointly delivered by Politecnico di Milano (Italy), Herriot Watt University (Scotland) and Umeå University (Sweden).

As part of the research for our master thesis, we are conducting interviews in order to increase our understanding of Project Selection and Project Prioritisation in Non Profit Organizations. Please take the following questions as a general guideline for the upcoming interview that will be audio recorded, so that we can accurately reflect on what is discussed. Participation on this study is completely voluntary and the participants are not required to answer any questions they do not feel comfortable with. We are simply trying to capture your thoughts and perspectives about these topics. The information collected will be confidential and all data will be accessible only for the researchers.

Interview questions

1) Could you please introduce yourself and tell us briefly about your job role, department, and years of experience?

2) Could you please tell us a little bit about your educational background?

3) Do you have any background (Knowledge or practical) in project management?

4) Do you have any project management certification?

5) Could you please tell us (briefly) about what the organization does?

6) What kind of projects does the organization work on?/ What is/are the main scope/focus of the projects the organization undertakes?

7) Typically, how many projects does the organization manage per year? /Could you provide an estimate of how many projects the organization manages per year?

8) Does the organization have a specific selection committee/ project management office (PMO)/ project management team?
   a) How is it conformed?
   b) How influential is the PMO in the decision making process of selecting and prioritizing projects?

9) When the organization has several proposal or potential project ideas, from your experience, how does the organization decide what projects to select/work on? /How does it select the projects? Can you please provide an example?
   a) From the criteria you mentioned before, which one is the most important and which one is the least important?

10) How does the organization prioritize the projects already selected? Once you have selected and determined the project portfolio, how does the organization decide which projects are more critical than others? /Which projects’ performance is the organization more concerned about? Can you please provide an example?
a) From the criteria you mentioned before, which one is the most important and which one is the least important?

11) Does the organization or the project management office use any formal or informal way for the selection of projects? Are there any particular elements or components that are taken into consideration? Any rules of thumb? Yes _____ No_____
   a) If yes please answer the following questions, otherwise go to question b)
      i) Could you please explain further what this model is about?
      ii) How long have you been applying these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies for?
      iii) Do you consider they are relevant in order to achieve project success?
      iv) Do you consider that applying any of these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies influence organizational successes?
   b) If no,
      i) Do you think it would be beneficial to consider a selection framework? Why?

12) Does the organization or the project management office use any formal or informal way for the prioritization of projects? Are there any particular elements or components that are taken into consideration? Any rules of thumb? Yes _____ No_____
   a) If yes please answer the following questions, otherwise go to question b)
      i) Could you please explain further what this model is about?
      ii) How long have you been applying these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies for?
      iii) Do you think they are relevant in order to achieve project success?
      iv) Do you consider that applying these models/techniques/tools/frameworks/methodologies influence organizational success?
   b) If no,
      i) Do you think it would be beneficial to consider a prioritization framework? Why?

13) In your opinion, what are the main characteristics the project manager/leader should possess when carrying out projects in non-profit organizations?

14) What do you think is the role of the project manager/project leader in the performance of projects in non-profit organizations?
## Appendix 4: Project Selection Criteria and process responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent – Type Org.</th>
<th>Project Selection Criteria (PSC)</th>
<th>Project Selection Criteria Ranking (PSCR)</th>
<th>Project Selection Process (PSP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - NGO</td>
<td>- Strategic alignment: Mission, Vision, Objectives and organizational strategy of potential partners in alignment with TRIAS strategy - TRIAS focus areas and Target groups - Country context analysis - Minimum 3 years of operations - Legal Status - Transparency and well-structured internal policies</td>
<td>- There is no ranking criteria - &quot;It is a complete cycle, we cannot skip any step&quot; - &quot;There is a set of determinant factors in order to select an organization&quot; (project) - &quot;It is not possible to prioritize them (org.) because they are different and cannot be evaluated based on the same criteria.</td>
<td>Meticulous evaluation Five steps approach structured process: 1. Identification 2. Diagnosis/ Evaluation 3. Selection 4. Review 5. Approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - IGO</td>
<td>- Food security needs by a given country or context - Impact of the disaster in terms of proportion of food for the victims - Alignment between Government / partner and WFP in order to seek development goals. - Governments main priorities - Type of funding - Donor requirements - Project criteria varies according to every government needs and context.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Very world class project evaluation and process: - Evaluation - Design (Indicators, outcomes and project desires) - Measurement - Resources allocation Resources allocation -Donor relations division in our organization. - Evaluation project portfolio across the world - Selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - IGO</td>
<td>The project portfolio is based on: - The country capacity - Strategic alignment: he competitive advantage of each UN agency within this plan of the UN - what the UN in that country has prioritized - the agency level - Size - Funding availability Requirements - National demand - National counterpart - Time - Balance between what the agency wants and financing criteria - Government priorities</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>PROJECT OUTSIDE REGULAR BUDGET 1. Define main criteria: a national demand, enough time and money. 2. Look for government or NGO support: National counterpart 3. Find a balance between Government priorities and agencies’ needs. - Priority Projects based on the regular resources are planned by the end of the year - The remaining projects/ funding during year then those projects are developed again through the project management committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - NPO</td>
<td>- Members interest on a particular issue - Members interest in organizing an event with them - most of our events would have some sort of business purpose.&quot;</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Meetings and conversations with members to define the topics they are interested in Collaborative decisions in that sense. - I answer to the board of directors, so for anything bigger I would usually present the idea to them and then decide if it is ok. With smaller events, I do not really need their approval for everything, but I would take into consideration what they would think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - NPO</td>
<td>Political relevance of the topic, - The partnership - The risk</td>
<td>- The three of them should be equal important.</td>
<td>- Call for proposals - Consultation (CEO and organization members)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- The financial impact of the certain projects. These are the criteria are being considered and based on that we take a decision whether to participate or not.
  (1) Policy relevance
  (2) The interest and expertise for our members
  (3) Operationally/financial liability questions

If all three have a low ranking. We won’t do them. If 2 out of 3, if politically is very relevant and it is very motivated interest but the financial is not so good, we may still consider.

- Discussion
- Final decision CEO