Implementation of Resolution 1325 on a grass-root level

Can youth exchange program in south-north direction improve women role as decision makers?

General thesis for peace and conflict studies
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List of acronyms and abbreviations

FENOCIN = Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas Indígenas y Negras
NGO = Non Government Organizations
Sida = Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SLA = Solidaridad Suecia-América Latina
YEPGSN = Youth Exchange Programs on Grass-root levels in South-North direction

Keywords

➢ Resolution 1325
➢ Women’s role as decision maker
➢ Youth exchange program
➢ Grass-root level

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The correlation between gender inequality and armed conflict is proven by many academic and scholars. One of the scholars is Mary Caprioli who in the article *Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal* analyzes civil wars from 1960 to 2001 and shows that the greater the gender inequalities between men and women are in a society the greater the risk of civil- and interstate wars.¹ In the article *Gender, violence, and international crisis* Caprioli goes along with Mark A. Boyer and presents a report showing that the greater the gender inequalities in society, the greater the risk of using violence in interstate conflicts as tools to manage the crisis. The report also shows that states with high gender inequality in the conflict-ridden zones are more affected by the “spill over” impacts from surrounding internal armed conflicts.²

Mary Kaldor is another academic that points out the correlation in the book *New an old wars – organized violence in a global era*. Kaldor shows that civilian women constitute the vast majority of those who are most vulnerable in armed conflicts, not least as refugees - both external and internally displaced. Women are also increasingly selected as targets for combatants and armed elements that are aware of the implications their actions have on durable peace and reconciliation.³

The United Nations have paid special attention to correlation between gender inequality and armed conflict since 1969.⁴ As a result of the proved correlation the United Nations Security Council approved Resolution 1325 in the year 2000.⁵ Resolution 1325 reaffirms the important role that women play in conflict prevention, resolution and reconstruction. The resolution stresses the importance of women equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to preserve and promote peace and security. Resolution 1325 calls on the Security Council’s member’s states to ensure that women are increasingly involved in all decision making levels

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² Caprioli, Mary, Boyer, Mark A .2001. “Gender, violence, and international crisis”, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol.45 No.4, ss. 503 -518
⁵ Ibid
in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms in order to create better mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution line with Resolution 1325.⁶

1.1 Problem formulation

As described in the introduction the correlation between gender inequality and armed conflict is strong. Therefore, gender equality is a focusing issue in peace building processes all over the world through the implementation of Resolution 1325. But in order to improve women’s role as a decision maker it is important to understand the peace buildings context of levels and actors where the improvement is needed. The seven clause in Resolution 1325 refers to one of the strategies that all the United Nations members states is supposed to adopt in order to complete the vision of Resolution 1325 in all levels and actors:

“7. Urges Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children’s Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies”⁷

But the seven clause in Resolution 1325 dose not explain in what way the United Nations member states are supposed to ensure that they “increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes” in order to make women increasingly involved in all decision making levels. This creates a question to which levels and actors that the seven clause in Resolution 1325 should be directed against.

The paradigms on which level and actors that are the most important in peace buildings processes varies in different theories and that effects the view on the seven clause in Resolution 1325 also. One paradigm is that peace should be built from a “top-down” perspective because it is more effective. Other suggest the “bottom-up” perspective is better because it makes the process more legitimate. The paradigm that is winning more and more ground in peace buildings processes is the inclusion of the civil society on grass root level

⁶ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1325, 2000-10-31
⁷ Ibid
because the inclusion makes the process more likely to succeed in a long term perspective.\(^8\) Therefore is research on how the seven clause in Resolution 1325 can be directed towards the inclusion of the civil society on grass-root level of importance in order to build sustainable peace.

### 1.2 Aim and research questions

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) leads the Swedish state development agenda. One example of Sweden’s implementation of the seven clause in Resolution 1325 is Sida’s grant of funding for youth exchanges program on grass-root levels in south-north direction (YEPGSN).

Through the grant has the Non Government Organizations (NGO) “Africa groups” realized YEPGSN with “Boader Rural Committee” from South Africa and “Solidaridad Suecia-América Latina” (SAL) has realized YEPGSN with “Saude and Alegria” from Brazil and with “Confederacion national de las organizaciones campesinas indigenas y negras” (FENOCIN) from Ecuador.

The south – north direction means that the participants travel from Ecuador, South Africa and Brazil to Sweden in order to enhance the participants’ knowledge to strengthen their homeland NGO on grass-root level. The selected participants are required to spread and exchange their new experience and knowledge when returning to their homeland organization in order to strengthen the organizations fight for gender equality, democracy and civil rights. The vision of the YEPGSN is specific fore each one of them but they all together includes a focus to improve women’s role as decision makers at grassroots level in order to implement the vision of Resolution 1325.

The evaluation material that can be found from all YEPGSN is based on how the Swedish NGO’s has been effected by the YEPGSN and lacks the dimension of the results that the

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YEPGSN has had an impact on the organizations in South Africa, Brazil and Ecuador. Mikael Lindgren, who works as an administrator in the Department of Civil Society within Sida, acknowledges that this dimension is missing:

"Evaluation of the results that the YEPGSN has on women’s role as decision makers is a very important key for understanding if the model can be seen as a implementation of the seven clause in Resolution 1325 on grass-root level, but that type of material does not exist."

Without the research of the results that the YEPGSN has had on the participating organizations in Ecuador, South Africa and Brazil it is impossible to make a rational decision as to whether the YEPGSN can be seen as way to implement the vision of Resolution 1325. The purpose of this thesis is therefore to collect empirical results from the YEPGSN and test them against a theory on levels and actors in peace buildings processes in order to understand if the YEPGSN can improve women’s role in all decision making levels in line with the vision of Resolution 1325.

The intention in a broader context is to create a conclusion whose practical consequence will be a basis for dialogue, decision-making and development in order to understand how the seven clause in Resolution 1325 should be viewed.

The research questions that this thesis aims to answer are therefore:

- What are the levels and actors that the vision of Resolution 1325 reaffirms to?
- In what way have the participants ability to improve women’s role as decision makers on grass-root improved through the YEPGSN?
- Can the YEPGSN be seen as an approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 on a grass-root level?

### 1.3 Limitations for the study

Overall the limitation of this thesis makes it difficult to generalize the drawn conclusions into a wider context so the case study should be seen as a way to approach the research questions rather than a final answer to the same questions.

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10 SIDA. 2004. Översyn av personal i utvecklingssamarbete. Edita Sverige AB

11 Interview with Mikael Lindgren, administrative executive official on the Department of Civil Society at Sida, 2009-10-12
Firstly, the case study is limited to the YEPGSN that occurred between FENOCIN and SAL in 2008 and 2009. The limitation of the Ecuadorian context makes the study's generalization durability questionable even though women’s role as decision maker in Ecuador is clearly linked to the situation in many other developing countries.\(^\text{12}\)

Furthermore the study is limited to investigate the participants view of the YEPGSN and not the general context of approaches on grass-root level that aims to implement the vision of Resolution 1325. This limitation has been made in order to get first hand information about the results that the YEPGSN has produced.

**1.4 Disposition of thesis**

In chapter two a theoretical framework is presented that explains the overall picture of gender equality and women’s role as decision maker in the world and the level, actors and approaches that can improve women’s role as decision makers in peace building processes. The third chapter presents the methodological approach that was taken in order to collect the empirical data and how it later was analyzed. Chapter five gives a background to the vision of the YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SSLA and presents the organizations. Chapter five presents the empirical data from the interviews structured around thematic questions on gender equality, how the participations felt that YEPGSN worked with women’s role as decision maker, the results that the YEPGSN had on the participations and the levels and actors that the participants feel are important in order to improve women’s role as decision makers in Ecuador. The last section in this chapter summaries the suggestions on improvements that the participants have made on the approach in order to improve YEPGSN vision to empower women’s role as decision makers. Chapter five also gives a background to the vision of the YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SSLA and presents the organizations in the YEPGSN. Chapter six includes the concluding analysis, discussion and reflections structured according to the three research questions. Last in the thesis is a summary presented.

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CHAPTER 2: Theoretical Framework

The main purpose of the theoretical framework is to give a basic understanding of the levels, actors, approaches where women’s role in decision making has to be improved in order to complete the vision of Resolution 1325. The first section of the framework defines what gender equality means and how the big picture of women’s role as decision makers looks in the world. The second part describes the three levels of actors where women’s role as decision makers has to improve. The third section relates to examples of approaches that can be taken in order to improve women’s role as a decision maker at all three levels of actors. The final section describes how the theoretical framework was used in this thesis.

2.1 Gender equality in general

According to UNICEF, gender describes the social-constructed roles, rights and responsibilities that communities and societies consider appropriate for men and women. So gender doesn’t refer to the biological differences between males and females, gender refers to the bigger picture on how girls, boys, women and men becomes what they are through what they learn from the societies where they live. This means that gender is a social construction that can change over time, from geography location, cultures and groups within a culture. Gender is therefore not a “natural” result of the biological differences between men and woman, it is a definition set by the society and culture in which a person lives. Therefore, gender can also be challenged and by addressing and contributing to gender issues the situation can be changed in order to create equal rights in between gender identities in the society.

Gender equality between gender identities in a society doesn’t exist in any part of the world but the differences are bigger depending on different contexts. Most common in the world is that females face gender discrimination in the form of human rights such as the denying their role as decision makers, rights to land and property, financial resources, employment and education.

While it is estimated that women perform two-thirds of the world’s work, they only earn one tenth of the income, and own less than one per cent of the world’s property. At work women are often paid less and receive lower benefits from their work than men in both developed and
developing countries even though both women and men play equally important roles in productive work throughout the world, providing for themselves and their families. Generally women’s roles in work are often invisible, as they tend to be more informal in nature, such as self-employment and subsistence production which makes them work longer hours for less rewards than men.

By understanding gender discrimination against women the society is more likely to successfully work for equal human rights where women’s role as decision maker improves but also to work against discrimination of other kind for example age, race or class.\(^\text{13}\)

### 2.2 Levels and actors in peace building processes

One of the researchers that argue for the paradigm to include the civil society on grass root level in peace building processes is John Lederach who is a professor of peace-building elements. Leaderachs paradigm on peace building levels, actors and approaches has been chosen in this study because the theory is widely spread into many different conflict zones that aim for sustainable peace. For example has Lederach during more than 20 years provided training and supporting peace building out of his theory in Colombia, Somalia, The Philippines, Nicaragua and Northern Ireland and the theory have been published widely in English and Spanish. Therefore is Lederachs theory structure on levels, actors and approaches in peace buildings processes of special interest to test on the YEPGSN in order to answer if the approach can be seen as a way to implement the vision of Resolutions 1325.

Lederach divides the peace building actors into three levels (see appendix E); the top level, the middle range and the grassroots level. Furthermore Lederach argues that without the full integration of middle-range and grass-root levels actors in peace building the process will always be put under severe stress and danger that can make the process collapse. So in order to build sustainable peace where the vision of Resolution 1325 can be implemented it is important to create a balanced and equal participation of all actors at all three levels in the

\(^{13}\) UNICEF. “Gender equality -The big picture”, http://www.unicef.org/gender/index_bigpicture.html, visted: 2010-03-15
peace building process. That balanced and equal participation can only be done by analyzing
the society context and create approaches that fit with the context.  

The possible actors on the top level in Lederachs theory are for example political, religious or
military leaders. The top level actors are the most visible ones in the societies and therefore
receive a great deal of attention to their movements, statements and positions. They are also
normally bound by a special position or a statement which is closely connected to their profile
in the society. This position makes them less likely to change their view because they would
then be considered weak and would risk losing the top level position. But even though the top
level actors are limited in their ability to change views, they still have significant power and
influence over the society due to their high visibility. In the international context the top level
actors are equally put in a hierarchical pyramid depending on how strong their state is and
how strong the support is for the top level actors from the state. Without the support of the
state the top level actor cannot expect strong support from the international community.  

The middle range actors in the theory are a mix that can be defined in a lot of different ways
because they are far more numerous than the top level leaders. Some of these actors are
individuals that are highly respected because they occupy formal positions in for example
education, business, agriculture or health. Other actors at this level are persons that are
respected because they have strong networks in for example religious groups, academic
institutions or NGO’s. A final way of looking at these actors is to find them in a special
geographical area where they are supported by the people like for example a leader of a
indigenous group or a person that has recied a lot of support and respect for a special
achievement, for example the Nobel Peace Prize.

All of the middle range actors are characterized by the fact that they have a close connection
to the top level actors and a significant connection to the broader context of the society, the
grass-root level. The middle range is not bound by a special movement, statement or position
which makes them have a greater flexibility of movement and action. Their position does not
depend on the visibility or publicity as the top level. Their position depends more on their
ongoing relationships in the society which makes them more closely connected to the grass-
root level even though they do not have to be encumbered by the survival demands facing
many at the grass-root level. Their dependence on relationships also makes them far more

United States Institute of Peace, ss. 95

15 Ibid, ss. 38-41
likely to build connections to networks that cut across the identity divisions within the society.\textsuperscript{16}

The grass-root level actors represent the masses and the base of the society. The actors are leaders in for example local communities, NGO’s or indigenous groups. These leaders are characterized by their knowledge of the local context and politics, most often a local hierarchy pyramid is found within this level of leadership.

In the theory Lederach points out that the organization of actors in a pyramid model should be observed with a skeptical view because there are always social, economic, political or cultural circumstances that make the line of leadership within a society to be drawn in a horizontal way rather than vertically. Lederach also points out that the position within a pyramid of actors’ creates different opportunities to view the society. Therefore it is important to understand that it is easier to view the broader context for the top level but on the grass-root level it is easier to experience the outcomes of the decisions. Without this knowledge approaches to improving women’s role as a decision makers will not likely be achieve.\textsuperscript{17}

\section*{2.3 Approaches to building peace}

To improve women’s role as decision makers in order to build sustainable peace different approaches needs to be taken at all three levels of actors in the society. The focus on approaches is crucial to how a peaceful society can be built and how women’s role as decision makers can improve, most important is the relationship between the different levels. The approaches also have to be created so that the results can be seen in a long term perspective which can mean up to 20 years or an entire generation or two.

At the highest level a “top-down” perspective is applied that is based on high-level negotiations which are led by visible single actors.\textsuperscript{18}

But the biggest influence on a society’s peace building process lies at the middle–range actors argues Lederach’s theory because there the fundamentals of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and reconstruction are created. The middle-range actor also acts as a hinge between

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16} Lederach, a.a., ss. 41-42
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid, ss. 42-44
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ibid, ss. 44-46
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the top-level and grass-root levels by passing on the created fundamentals between the two. Examples of approaches at middle-range level are problem-solving workshops, peace commissions and roll plays of women’s role in decision making.\textsuperscript{19}

On grass-root level the “bottom-up” perspective on approaches is in focus were the aim is to create a change from the bottom of the society that has strong support and then pass on the change further up the system. If the grass-root level is able to influence the top-level agenda, the actors should put their focus on the middle range actors because of their hinge position. But to do that organization is required and that is normally difficult on grass-root level because of the fact that this level represents a massive number of people. A recommended approach is to focus on the local and community leaders that then can pass on the information to the other parts of the grass-root level. One example is to arrange national seminars that are focusing on for example improvements of women’s role as decision makers with local and community leaders. They are then given the responsibility to implement seminars or workshops at local levels on the same issues in order to pass on the knowledge. These seminar and workshops are often carried out by in the local and community leaders’ networks and have shown success in countries like Mozambique, Somalia and Liberia in different forms. But there are also many examples of failure of these approaches because the vision does not succeed in reaching out to the rest of the grass-root level. A second problem at the grass-root level is that the people often face a survival mode in developing countries where the basic human needs of food, shelter and safety takes most of their time. This fact affects the opportunities of organization which therefore make their affect on the middle-range leadership smaller.\textsuperscript{20}

\subsection*{2.4 Using the theoretical framework}

The theoretical framework above was used as a guide to the methodological approach for the field study in Ecuador and as a tool to analyze the material that the interviews gave. The first section that defines gender equality and describes the big picture on women’s role as decision makers was created as a measurement that the results that the YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SAL could be evaluated against. The definition was chosen from UNICEF

\textsuperscript{19} Lederach, a.a, ss. 46-51
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid, ss. 51-55
because the fact that this thesis is formed out of the implementation of Resolution 1325 that is approved by the United Nations Security Council. One part of the interview questions were therefore focusing on how the participation describes women’s role as decision makers according to the gender equality in Ecuador and if they felt that the YEPGSN has changed their view in the gender equality in any way and why in order to improve women’s role as decision makers. By establishing these section the research question about if the former participants from the YEPGSN feel that the experience can improve women’s role as a decision makers could be analyzed.

The section concerning peace building levels and actors was used as a tool to identifying the YEPGSN effect on empowering women’s role as a decision makers on grass-root level and in Ecuador. Out of this section of research questions on which are the levels and actors that Resolution 1325 reaffirms to and if the YEPGSN be seen as a approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 on grass-root level be analyzed.

The last section on approaches to peace building gave an insight into others examples of approaches that had been used on grassroots level and the problems that those approaches been fighting. This section provides understanding on which problems that the YEPGSN could have had to implementing the knowledge that the participations had faced. This section provided questions for the interviews that could create a deeper analyze on the research question if the YEPGSN can be seen as a approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 on grass-root level.
CHAPTER 3: Methodological Approach

The main purpose of this chapter is to describe in what way the empirical material was gathered in order to get a high level of reliability and validity in the study. The first section explains the how the case for this study was selected. The second part presents and describes how the material and respondents in the study was selected. The third section describes how the design of the filed study was built up. The fourth section describes how the interview material was analyzed. The final section discusses the chosen methodological approach out of the level of reliability and validity for the study.

3.1 Selection of the case study

In order to investigate the research questions for the thesis a field study in Ecuador was conducted during April and May 2010 focusing on results of the YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SSLA.

The YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SAL was chosen in preference to the YEPGSN in South Africa and Brazil because of three factors which made the Ecuadorian case more appropriate to study according to the research questions for this thesis. These three factors are independently explained in the following three sections.

3.1.1 Gender equality in Ecuador

Even though the Brazilian and the South African societies also are marked by gender inequality the Ecuadorian society stands out for many reasons. From a statistical point of view you find a very strong correlation between the Ecuadorian society and gender inequality through the machismo culture which makes it difficult for women to be decision makers on all levels of society. The machismo culture in Ecuador has roots in the Spanish invasion of South America. The Spanish culture was based on both the Catholic and the Islamic view on man and woman and mixed up by the indigenous culture that also was very patriarchal can explain how the machismo culture was formed.21 Although the number of women who are opposed to

21 Stråle, Malin. 2010. "Kvinnor på undantag I Zorros land", Latinamerika, No.1, ss. 46
this culture and who go against the traditional gender roles are growing, the machismo culture still effects the whole society. The machismo culture means strongly divided gender roles where the man is considered to be a “real” man if he is characterized by confidence, aggressiveness, strength and charm. A man's traditional role in Ecuadorian society is to be the income-generating factor, whereas women have family responsibilities. In particular, the machismo culture is strong in environments with high unemployment where the gender roles are strongly divided, leading to dependence on male subjects with the result that women not having the same opportunities and rights to influence the society.²²

According to the UN definition, more than half of Ecuadorians citizens live in poverty and the gap between rich and poor is large. Due to Ecuador's economic under-development the social “safety net” is largely made up of the family and through the machismo culture, women are expected to take responsibility for the family which prevents them from getting into the small formal labor sector or study and thereby reducing their dependence and improve their role as decision makers.²³

### 3.1.2 Risk for armed conflict

Secondly, the risk for conflict that surrounds Ecuador makes the case interesting because it can be closely connected to Resolution 1325. Ecuador’s geographical location in the northwestern parts of South America next to Colombia with the world's longest civil war, makes the risk of a “spill over” effect high.

Ecuador has not been involved in a civil war or an interstate war since Ecuador's border war with Peru in 1995.²⁴ But since Colombia's violation of Ecuador's sovereignty by an attack on a Feurtas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) camp on Ecuadorian soil in February 2008, the relationship between the countries deteriorated significantly. The attack led to troop reinforcements on the northern border and the diplomatic relations between the countries was suspended.

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²⁴ [Uppsala University, “Uppsala Conflict Data Program”, www.ucdp.uu.se/database, visted 2010-03-31](http://www.ucdp.uu.se/database)
Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez’s vague link to FARC and the Colombian President Alvaro Uribe’s strong link with USA have made the argumentation between the two “Heads of state” very aggressive which also has made the region increasingly more unstable.²⁵

According to the Human Development Index, which measures education, life expectancy and income per capita Ecuador is given a relatively high development index and ranks on the 80th spot of the world's 194 sovereign states.²⁶ But the high ranking is strongly related to exports of oil, making Ecuador extremely sensitive and dependent on a natural resource which increases the risk of conflict.²⁷

3.1.3 FENOCIN

The third reason to that the YEPGSN between SAL and FENOCIN has been chosen is because FENOCIN is a much larger organization than Boarder Rural Committee from South Africa and Saude and Alegria from Brazil that also have been parts of YEPGSN. FENOCIN is the base for organizations in 18 of Ecuador’s 24 provinces and more than 20 000 families in Ecuador have family members who are connected to FENOCIN.²⁸

The amount of members makes FENOCIN suitable in order to answer the research question and because it would be easier to assume generalizations out of such a big organization and that is spread throughout the country. Furthermore, FENOCIN is focusing their workshops on improving gender equality and improve women’s role as decision makers within the organization during 2010.²⁹

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²⁹ Malm, Markus, Fraurud, Tove. 2010. “Båda könen behövs i kampen för jämställdhet ”, Latinamerika, No.1, ss. 80
3.2 Material and respondents

Before my departure to Ecuador studied printed information and evaluation materials from SAL and Färnebo folk college about the YEPGSN. These initial studies were used to understand the YEPGSN design, purpose, vision, funding and actors. To complement the printed information an interview was carried out in Stockholm with SLA’s coordinator for the YEPGSN in order to compensate for any gaps in understanding.

The choice of the interviews respondents in Ecuador was selected through the centralized selection principle which means that the respondents who are the most centrally placed sources to seek information about the research questions are selected. In this case study the Ecuadorian participants and supervisors from the YEPGSN 2008 and 2009 were selected. Not all participants were interviewed because out of the total 18 participants in the YEPGSN three declined to interview or could not participate due to personal circumstances. But the 13 ones chosen were selected in a strategic way with a maximum variation and with relevant individual characteristics in order to capture and identify different perceptions. Therefore, the interview respondents in this study were both men and women that live in different provinces in Ecuador (see Appendix A + D).  

3.3 Research design

The field study consisted of 15 qualitative interviews in the form of a respondent characteristic. The first phase of field study was spent in the capital Quito visiting FENOCIN’s- and SAL’s- office where two interviews were done with FENOCIN’s chairman and co-coordinator of the YEPGSN. These interviews provide a comprehensive picture of the results on how the YEPGSN has affected FENOCIN’s possibility to improve women’s role as decision makers in the society (see Appendix C). During the first phase in Quito phase two of the field study was planned in conjunction with the staff of FENOCIN’s and SAL’s offices in Quito to make it more feasible.

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In phase two, 13 interviews were conducted with former participants and supervisors of the YEPGSN from 2008 and 2009. The interviews had a semi-structural design where the same 20 interview questions were asked to all respondents. The 20 questions govern the interviews, but follow-up questions and debate took place (see Appendix B).

In phase three the empirical facts that the interview produced were transcribed and analyzed.

### 3.4 Method for analysis

To analyze whether the participants have increased their possibility to influence their organizations to work for women’s role as decision makers after completing the YEPGSN a reference point was needed. By establishing the definition of gender equality with a direct connection to women’s role as decision makers, the interviews were able to focus on their thoughts and experiences EPGSN based on that definition.

For the empirical analysis of the interviews Kalvens six divisions of qualitative interview studies were used. In the first step the problem formulation, purpose and question for the thesis was formed. Here the theoretical perspective was structured in order to create a method of gathering of the empirical data. In step two the method design of the study was planned and formed and a interview guide was created where extra time was added to create questions that would have a direct connection to the research question in this thesis (see Appendix B + C). In step three, the interviews were conducted and recorded. In step four the interviews were transcribed so that the material became more transparent and easy to process for the analysis. In step five, the transcribed material was structured by looking for links, diverges and common words. Patterns that could be found lead to statements or descriptions from where conclusions could be drawn against the theoretical framework. In step six the conclusions were discussed in terms of reliability and validity in order to see if the conclusions could withstand critical scrutiny.31

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3.5 Discussion about the chosen method

So what is the level of validity in this method, or in other words, to what extent is the method measuring what it is suppose to measure?

The dependent variable, which is to be explained in this study, is if the participants perceived ability to influence women’s role as decision makers has been enhanced through the YEPGSN. The independent variable which explains their perceived ability is the YEPGSN that they participated in.

So by focusing the interviews on how the participants describes women’s role as a decision makers in Ecuadorian and FENOCIN, how the YEPGSN worked to empower women’s role as decision makers, the results that the YEPGSN have had on the participants view on women as decision makers and the levels and actors that the participate believe are the most important to empower their role as decision maker the study achieved a high level of constructed validity. Constructed validity is the correlation between the theoretical definitions and the operational indicators that the interviews gave. 32

Qualitative interviews with respondents characteristics are particularly appropriate for the research questions of the thesis because this type of interview is focused on understanding how the respondents think and feel about the world they live in. The choice of qualitative interviews in preference to for example focus groups with group interviews is that this form does not give each person the opportunity to express their own views and attitudes to the question because they can be influenced by all attitudes within the group and its common interpretation.

The other question that is important to ask is the level of reliability in the method, in other words, are there unsystematic or random errors that affect the quality of the conclusions? In order to create a high reliability I thought about the relationship between me and the interview respondent. Did the relationship that we created during the interview in any way effected the respondent apprehensions on me as a interviewer and did the respondent in any way apprehensions my view.

32 Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oskarsson, Wägnerud, a.a, ss.54
In order to make sure that the relationship did not effect the interview an information letter was given to the participating respondents about what the field study aimed to achieve before the interviews were conducted. In this way the participants could create a picture about what they were accepting (or declining) to be a part of.

Confidentiality requirement is also important to create answers with high reliability in interview situations and therefore I informed that the respondents answers were anonymous in the thesis. Instead numbers were assigned to each one of the respondents as identification so that their answers in some way could be tracked in the empirical data for this thesis.  

Finally the reliability in the transcribed material that were investigated. The fact is that the transcriptions are not 100 % correct in this thesis due to the fact that the interviews were held in Spanish and the thesis is written in English. When translating between two languages there is always a part of the message that is changed due to the different ways of communication in each language. A lot of time was spent on creating correct transcriptions method so they could be viewed on with high reliability.

33 Gustafsson, Bengt, Hermerén, Göran, Petersson, Bo. 2004. Vad är god forskningssed?, Printfabriken, ss. 18
CHAPTER 4: Findings

The main purpose of this chapter is to describe the findings that could be done in the interviews with the participates in the YEPGSN. The first section of this chapter however gives a description of the organization in this study and the vision of YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SAL. In the second part the findings are presents that describes how the participants view gender equality in Ecuador and women’s role has decision maker. The third section describes how the YEPGSN worked with the vision of Resolution 1325. The fourth section describes the results that the YEPGSN has had on the participates and if the feel that the resolute can improve women’s role as decision makers. The final section presents the suggestions on improvements that participants has on the YEPGSN as approach model.

4.1 Descriptions of the organizations in the YEPGSN

SAL was founded in 1968 with the vision to change the development operation that Sweden had through Sida. SAL as organization protested against the fact that development programs did not focus on the needs the receiving countries inquired as the directing instrument in the planning of development operation. To fulfill the aim for the organization, SAL started to send volunteers to Latin America in order to evaluate the development operations. By listening to the receiving country inquires and bringing back experience and knowledge to Sweden, the development operation could improve. The SAL operations has varied during the years and different countries in South America have been part of projects. Today SLA projects are mainly financed by Sida.34

Since 1979 Ecuador has been a part of the SAL operation and today works SAL for example with FENOCIN which is an umbrella organization for indigenous and black farmers. FENOCIN is one of the strongest NGO:s in Ecuador and effects the government directly through members that have been elected in to the national congress. FENOCIN is the base for 1.300 organizations that are represented in 18 of 24 provinces in Ecuador. The organizations are represented in FENOCIN through 52 regional organizations on the second level that are categorized in four groups that together builds up the federation of FENOCIN. The 52

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34 Interview with Markus Malm, Coordinator for the YEPGSN at SAL, 2010-12-03
regional organizations selects the board of FENOCIN which is lead by a president. The board discusses and formulates the vision, strategies and goals for the FENOCIN agenda in order to improve the situation for the indigenous and black farmers in Ecuador. FENOCIN is a member of Via Campesina which is an international network that coordinates peasant organizations of small and middle-scale producers, agricultural workers, rural women and indigenous communities from Asia, Africa, North- and South America and Europe. For example, Via Campesina plays an important role at World Social Forum because of its large amount of member organizations (56 different countries) where both FENOCIN and SSLA have participated.35

4.2 Descriptions of the YEPGSN

Since World Social Forum started in Porto Alegre, Brazil 2001, the forum has grown each year. At World Social Forum, grass-root level organizations from all around the world meet to discuss and exchange ideas which aims to development based on a “bottom-up” perspective.36 Empowered by the World Social Forum and financed by Sida, SAL in cooperation with Färnebo folk college has conducted two YEPGSN with FENOCIN in 2008 and 2009.

Each one of the YEPGSN lasted for three months and included work with solidarity and public education issues with other grass-root organizations in Sweden. The vision of the YEPGSN was to increase the cooperation between FENOCIN and SAL in order to create stronger global alliances on grass-root levels to influence decision makers in the society and to strengthen civil power. The focus of the YEPGSN was development of the 18 participants’ leadership ability. One of the areas in the leadership was focused on women’s role as decision makers. The idea was to develop instruments and methods on how women can be involved in decision making within FENOCIN in order to strengthen its role as an actor to improve women’s role in decision making in Ecuadorian society.37

35 Interview 2
37 Interview with Markus Malm, Coordinator for the YEPGSN at SAL, 12-03-10
### 4.3 Gender equality in Ecuador

In order to understand if the participants felt that the YEPGSN had empowered their possibility to work for the improvement of women’s role in decision making within FENOCIN and Ecuador a measurement point was necessary. So the participants were asked to describe their view on gender equality in Ecuador. All participants except one, described that gender equality was a problematic issue because it did not give men and woman equal rights in the Ecuadorian society and that effects women’s role in decision making. The participants described the gender inequality in Ecuador and within FENOCIN like this:

“The gender equality in Ecuador is so deeply rooted in the system, you find it in the television, radio and books since you were young. The machismo is a normal thing.”

“Within FENOCIN we still have a long way to go before we achieve gender equality and for the Ecuadorian society I almost feel that it is an utopia.”

The background for this problem the participants described is the fact that Ecuador and South America since century’s have had a strong machismo culture that creates sharp gender roles were women are not seen as a decision makers. The most frequent description of the gender roles among the participants is that men are supposed to work for money and the women are supposed to work in the house with the children. These gender roles are created from a young age, the participants described because boys are given a football and have the opportunity to play out in the street. The girls are given dolls and are not allowed to walk the streets in the same way as the boys. This division creates from a very early age sharp roles between men and women where men have the opportunity to make decisions and where women has to obey the decisions that the gender roles creates.

“Some may say that I am crazy when I tell men here in Ecuador to wash the plates, why? The ones that are crazy are they who tells me that I am crazy. Why shouldn’t a man be able to wash plates? Well I know they can because I experience that in Sweden!”

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38 Interview 10
39 Interview 11
40 Interview 12
When asked where the machismo culture is strongest participants explained that the situation is worst in the rural areas on the cost and in the mountain because there the machismo culture is more difficult to break. In the rural areas most people work as farmers and that demands a stronger physical condition and therefore the men work in the field and the women take care of the house.

"In Ecuador most people do not respect homosexuality and less in rural areas where everybody know each other. But through the experience in Sweden I learnt to respect homosexuality because I spoke to people who were homosexual and now I understand more about their way of thinking." 41

When asked about the women’s role as decision maker within FENOCIN the participants described that the situation is better in the organization than Ecuador in general and that it is improving but there is still a long way to go to get an equal situation. For example FENOCIN has never had a female president during the organizations 34 years of history.

"Earlier men had stronger positions within FENOCIN but these days I see a lot of improvement on gender equality because women speak more and the power within the organization is better divided between men and woman.″ 42

One example of the work that FENOCIN was doing to create gender equality was described by the coordinator for gender issues within FENOCIN:

"For example we do a lot of work to understand the term “gender equality” in reality. Because it just not men and women, it is so much more you have to understand in order to empower women’s role as decision makers. For example the difficulties that men have to fulfill their role as “machismos.” 43

Participants were also asked if they felt that women’s role as decision makers could be improved:

"The machismo culture structure is very difficult to change because it doesn’t have anything to do with laws, it has to do with the mentality and how we as Ecuadorians think about the gender role." 44

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41 Interview 3
42 Interview 5
43 Interview 1
44 Interview 12
For example, the participants have seen a lot of fear, insecurity and lack of independency when a female is going to be selected for a role in FENOCIN where decisions making are a part of the role. Many females also ask for permission from their husbands to enter the position. But the participants described that they feel a change is slowly happening in the Ecuadorian society.

"The discussion about women’s role as decision makers is improving here in the country, like for example the issues of whether men and women can do the same job or not."45

The only participant which said that said that women’s role as decision maker is strong in Ecuador explained that the reason for that was:

“Since I was young my family has worked together and therefore I can say that we have an equal situation between men and women. My dad for example helps out in the house and my mum works in order to earn a salary, and that view on gender equality has been carried on to the rest of my family.”46

All participants described that they believe that gender equality is one of the hardest things to achieve in the Ecuadorian society because the machismo culture it so deeply rooted and to be seen as a system rather than a culture. Therefore the vision to improve women’s role as decision makers must be seen in a long term perspective where many small steps will lead to a change. But the participants also points out that the process needs to be more effective because the machismo culture is a problem for all women in the Ecuadorian society.

“You can speak about women’s role as decision makers in workshops but in order to understand it for real, if you are an Ecuadorian, I believe that you have to experience it yourself. The machismo culture is so deeply rooted in our system, therefore I believe that the experience from the YEPGSN is a great way to improve women’s role in reality.”47

In order to make any changes the participants meant that the ones who are going to create the approach on how women’s role as decision makers can improve has to understand how the Ecuadorian system works and how the approach can be created son that it works together with the system. Otherwise it will never work.

45 Interview 11
46 Interview 8
47 Interview 12
4.4 How the YEPGSN worked with the vision of Resolution 1325

“Ecuador is a country of machismo culture because the culture is within the Ecuadorian system...From what I saw in Sweden it is different and by explaining and showing pictures in my organization I have a lot of interesting questions that has aspired discussion about women’s role as decision makers here in Ecuador.”

When interviewing the participants it is obvious that the experience of living in Sweden has affected their view on women’s role as decision makers more than the workshop or role-plays that were done during the YEPGSN. The fact that women’s role as decision makers is much easier to approach in Sweden created a culture chock that led to discussions and reflections about the situation in Ecuador.

“We had a workshops on women’s role as decision makers during the YEPGSN but we learnt most about the issue through the reality that we experienced by living in Sweden. I believe that the women’s role as decision makers in Sweden is not much better than what is in Ecuador, so I believe that all participants learned a lot and that we developed a new way of looking at women’s roles.”

The participants described that women’s role as decision makers in Sweden can be seen as a model for the Ecuadorian society to aim for. The opportunity to experience this model has been of a great importance in the empowerment of the issues within FENOCIN in many ways, mostly because the participants now can speak about women’s roles from their own experience.

“I saw another side of women’s role as decision makers in Sweden and I have brought that back to my organization in the way that men and women now work more together than before.”

The experience has also created an understanding that the fight for women’s role as decision maker is an international phenomenon and nothing unique for Ecuador. The participants saw that understanding as a help to create international alliances where knowledge and experience can be discussed.

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48 Interview 9
49 Interview 4
50 Interview 7
“The opportunity to travel to Sweden has given all participants an experience and understanding of another society that has helped us to understand the international reality. The same problem that we have in Ecuador also exist in other parts of the world. Therefore we have to work together in order to change the world.”

4.5 Results that the YEPGSN had on the participants

The coordinator and the president of FENOCIN has not participated themselves in the YEPGSN but they described that the participants obviously returned with a lot of new motivation to work for the organization in order to improve women’s role as decision makers.

“There is no experience stronger than to live in another context because it makes you think in another way. You cannot get that experience from books.”

When asked about how the YEPGSN has effected their view on women role as decision makers the most frequent answer was that living in Sweden for three months had a large impact on their view because it was a culture chock that they all learnt from.

“The context in Sweden about gender equality is very different, the woman in Sweden is stronger in the way that they act more within the communication, that everyday experience changed my thoughts about men’s and women’s role as decision makers.”

The participants explained that before the YEPGSN, both men and women’s often worked separately in FENOCIN but now they feel that it is easier to work together because they understand that women can take the role as decision maker. Through the experience their position within FENOCIN has also improved because they describes that they now can work more directly to empower women’s role as decision makers.

“Through the experience from the YEPGSN I have become more open with my communication with other people. Before I thought that because I am a girl, I should be quiet and listen, but today I speak a lot more on reunions within FENOCIN.”

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51 Interview 10
52 Interview 10
53 Interview 10
54 Interview 5
A male participant described that before the YEPGSN, he didn’t really understand the importance of empowering women’s role as decision makers. But when he saw that the majority of the women didn’t work in the household and that men and women spoke as much as during the reunions he created an understanding for women’s role as decision makers. Other male participant understood in the YEPGSN that his role as a man is very important for the empowerment of women.

“My way of thinking has changed through the YEPGSN, one of the things is the fact that men and women should have equal rights in all forms. No one should be able to tell a woman that she shouldn’t speak on a reunion, we all have the same rights.”

Part from the research question the participants were also asked if the experience and knowledge in any way had empowered FENOCIN’s role as an actor to improve women’s role as decision makers in the society. The participants meant that was the case because they felt that they had been involved more within the FENOCIN’s activates since their return to Ecuador. New and unique views and ideas had also been developed within the YEPGSN on how workshops could be arranged to work with women’s role in decision making that people listen and react in a different way.

“When I returned to my organization I organized seminars and workshops together with other Ecuadorian participants and with a former Swedish participant that was in Ecuador at the time. The seminar was visited by more than a 100 members and I believe that this was a success for the YEPGSN vision because we spread the new knowledge to a lot of people in the society that way.”

The participants also described that they now can create workshops that looks at women’s role as decision makers from both a male and a female perspective. Before they only looked at it from a male perspective and how men could improve the situation. The new view was more effective because it creates a discussion on women’s role as decision makers right from the cause of the problem. If someone has to make a decision, why not women?

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55 Interview 11
56 Interview 4
57 Interview 6
58 Interview 9
“I can lift another perspective on women’s role as decision makers then the general perspective here in Ecuador through the experience from Sweden.”

But the participants also pointed out that the effects that the YEPGSN have had on women’s role as decision makers within FENOCIN and in Ecuador in general should be seen in a long term perspective. Through the YEPGSN the participants understood that in order to change women’s role as decision makers in Ecuador, focus has to be on changing the whole system. The problem described by the participants is that every Ecuadorian has to adjust to a new view on women’s role in decision making and that has to start with a discussion between men and women but later the focus should be on the entire system.

“We can as participants not change the whole society here in Ecuador but I believe that the new knowledge that we have brought back from Sweden can help and should be seen as a first step to empower the women’s role as decision makers here in Ecuador, through improvements within FENOCIN.”

Another interesting result that was brought up in the interviews and that can effect women’s role as decision makers was described by one participants like this:

"The YEPGSN has also effected my view on leadership, now I believe that all persons in a group can be leaders and that it is not necessary that one person is posted as the president and that the other ones have to obey. Horizontal leadership is from my point of view more effective when working with organizations on grass-root levels in order to empower women’s role as decision makers."

4.6 Important levels and actors

“FENOCIN can start the discussion about women’s role as decision makers through the new experience that the YEPGSN has given and I believe that those discussions later can develop and spread into the Ecuadorian society in general.”

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59 Interview 5
60 Interview 4
61 Interview 9
62 Interview 2
According to the participants, FENOCIN can through the new experience and knowledge that the participants brought back improve women’s role as decision makers in Ecuador. The first reason for that is the fact that FENOCIN is represented in 18 of the 24 provinces in Ecuador which creates a great connection to the grass-root level of the society. The second reason is that FENOCIN has an agenda that works for women’s role as decision maker. But though that FENOCIN focus on improving women’s role as decision maker the participants describes that it was very difficult task because sometimes they felt that they made mistakes themselves and fell into the machismo gender roles since it is so deeply rooted in the Ecuadorian society.

“I think that FENOCIN can empower women’s role as decision makers in Ecuador but we have to start with our own organization. For example the majority of the participants in the YEPGSN have been females so we have a lot of new knowledge that we can use but we can’t only talk! If we are going to make a change, the most important thing is that we organize and act together within the organization.”

When asked more specifically on how FENOCIN can improve women’s role as decision makers in Ecuador, a frequent answer was that the changes that are driven from the top of FENOCIN is more difficult to implement. According to the participants, focus should therefore be put on the base organization within FENOCIN, because in that way the change will be driven from a bigger part of the organization which makes it more likely to succeed.

"The most important ones that can improve women’s role as decision makers are the families that construct the foundation of the FENOCIN organization because they are the ones who can transfer a different view on gender roles on to their children.”

The participants also gave a lot of answers on how FENOCIN as an actor within the society can make a change. The participants described different levels and actors within the FENOCIN as important, for example the members of the committee in FENOCIN because they are the ones that creates ideas that FENOCIN later as an organization will implement. The president was also pointed out because he is the voice and the face of FENOCIN. If the president does not raise the issues of women’s role as decision maker in FENOCIN the participants described it will be very difficult to create a change in the whole organization that later can be spread into the Ecuadorian society.

63 Interview 12
64 Interview 11
65 Interview 3 + 5 + 6
Furthermore one participant described that the most important actor within FENOCIN was the leaders of the second grade organizations because they were the ones that could put the issue of women’s role as decision makers on the agenda in their base organizations and still have the connection with the top of FENOCIN. These actors could easier implement a change because their position makes it easier to reach out to a wider part of the organization.  

When the interviews shifted towards the most important levels and actors in the Ecuadorian society to improve women role as decision makers the answers were almost identical to the ones pointed out within FENOCIN. The most frequent answer is the families because without a change on the grass-root level the ideas from higher levels of society would never be implemented into the whole society.

“I believe that actors who can improve women’s role as decision makers can be found at all levels of society. But the strongest force to empower the issue is found out in the country side, because if a change is not done on the grass-root level, the political vision on higher level will never be implemented.”

Other levels and actors from all parts of society were also pointed out and given as examples but it is was obvious that the participants had a strong believe in that NGO’s can make a difference. They described that NGO’s have a strong connection to the foundation of the society where they can implement new perspectives that can be spread in society. The participants also described that they do not believe that a single actor at any level can do anything. In order create a change in reality all actors on all levels has to join together and organize an approach to improve women’s role as decision makers.

“Of course we who participated in the YEPGSN can empower women’s role as decision makers in Ecuador, everyone can do that! If you don’t start with yourself it will be impossible to make a greater change, but in order to make a bigger change in society you need to organize yourself with others and understand that it will be a long process.”

The participants also described that in order to create a change in female decision making, the female part of society need to speak up for equal right. If they do not, that will be the biggest

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66 Interview 2 + 4
67 Interview 1
68 Interview 2 + 3 + 5 + 6 + 11
69 Interview 12
obstacle because the participants do not believe that the Ecuadorian men will start the fight for equal rights.

“The actors who can improve women role as decision makers are both formal and informal actors within society. But the female part has to understand that they carry a great responsibility because I don’t believe that the machismo culture will allow men to start the process.”

4.7 Suggestion to improve the YEPGSN

In the interview the participants express suggestions on improvements that could be done in order to make the YEPGSN work even better as approach to empower women’s role as decision makers. One suggestion was to improve the selection process of participants because they felt that the process lacked of rationality and strategy. So far, the selections have been last minute selections which meant that little time was spent on preparation before departure. If the selection process was arranged in advanced the participates could start to focus on female decision making earlier on, which would make the YEPGSN vision more likely to succeed. One suggestion that the participants described was to use an application process in the selection because that would make the most interested person more likely to be selected. That would also increase the opportunity to implement the vision of the YEPGSN when returning to Ecuador.

“My mother told me that I was not meant to go to Sweden because I was a woman. She thought it was better to send a man. But FENOCIN told her that they wanted a woman in order to challenge the view on women’s role as decision makers.”

Another suggestion that was brought up was to focus more on one issues rather then cover a little bit of everything during the YEPGSN. By doing so the knowledge about the selected issue would become deeper and it would be easier to implement into the organization in Ecuador. A third suggestion was that the planning of the YEPGSN should be done together with all participants from both Ecuador and Sweden so that the form could be adjusted to both organizations vision.

70 Interview 12
71 Interview 9
In Sweden the participants also felt that the communication between the Ecuadorians and the Swedish could improve in order to discuss and exchange ideas in a better way.

“I think that all participants have to be more communicative so that the culture chock does not becomes as strong as it became when I arrived in Sweden. With more communication it would be easier for both culture to understand each other and have discussions.”72

The most frequent suggestion on improvement that was brought up was on how the implementation of the knowledge and new experience from the exchange program should be done. One of the participant compiled the other participant suggestions like this:

“With my fellow participants that I went to Sweden with I have continued to spread the knowledge and new experience from the YEPGSN into FENOCIN:s organization but not as much as I would like to. One reason is that we live far away from each other but the main reason is that we haven’t had a much support here in Ecuador. Therefore I would suggest that more focus is placed on the implementation of the knowledge when the participants return to Ecuador and their organizations in order to complete the vision of the YEPGSN.”73

72 Interview 3
73 Interview 4
CHAPTER 5: Concluding analysis

The purpose of this thesis was collect empirical results from the YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SAL and test the results against one theory of levels and actors in peace buildings processes in order to understand if the approach can be seen as a way to improve women’s role in all decision making levels in line with the vision of resolution 1325. This chapter will therefore be devoted to concluding analysis where the findings will be tested against the theoretical framework in order to answer the three research question that this thesis has been structured around.

5.1 What are the levels and actors that the vision of Resolution 1325 reaffirms to?

According to John Lederach theory on peace-building elements the vision of Resolution 1325 reaffirms to three levels of actors where women’s role as decision makers has to improve. Each of these levels (national, regional and international) are in Lederachs theory divided into three levels of actors; the top level, the middle range level and the grassroots level (see appendix E). In Lederach theory the implementation of Resolution 1325 cannot be done without the full integration of middle-range and grass-root level actors because an implementation that is done without these two actors are always put under severe stress and danger, which can make the implementation process collapse. So in order to implement the vision of Resolution 1325, balanced and equal participation of all actors at all three levels on both national, regional and international level has to be created. That creation can only be done by analyzing the context where the implementation is going to take place and create an approach that fits with the context.

5.2 In what way the participants ability to improve women’s role as decision makers on a grass-root level improved through the YEPGSN?

The interviews confirmed the gender equality situation defined by UNICEF in the theoretical framework and by the gender inequality in Ecuador that was described in chapter three. The
interviews gave a clear picture on how deeply rooted the machismo culture is in the Ecuadorian society and how difficult it will be to change it. The participants could see a positive trend in the Ecuadorian society but there is still a long way to go before women will be in the same position as man decision makers. The machismo culture can almost be seen as a system possible to observe in all parts of society and these clear gender roles affect women’s role as decision makers in a negative way.

Within FENOCIN as an organization, the participants described that women’s role as decision makers are better than the Ecuadorian society in general. But the participants also described that the women’s role as decision makers is at its worst within in families in rural areas where FENOCIN foundation members live.

The experience to be in Sweden during three months and experience another context is clearly the strongest effect YEPGSN has had on the participants and their view on women’s role as decision makers. The culture chock that they experienced created discussions on women’s role as decision makers. Those discussions between Swedes and Ecuadorians, brought understanding that the fight for women’s role as decision makers is global.

Furthermore the YEPGSN empowered the participants ability to improve the view on women’s role as decision makers within FENOCIN. The participants also shared a strong believe that NGO’s, for example FENOCIN, can play an important role as an actor in the implementation of Resolution 1325 on a national level. The participants also felt that FENOCIN, from a grass-root level, was empowered by the result the YEPGSN had on the participants.

5.3 Can the YEPGSN be seen as a approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 on a grass-root level?

In order to answer this research question, a deeper analyze was necessary where Lederachs theory was tested against the empirical material the interviews gave.

In general there is a strong correlation between the answers and the theory. The participants pointed out the same levels where the vision of Resolution 1325 had to be implemented and gave the same examples of important actors on each level.
For example, participants pointed out that FENOCINS’s president can be seen as the face and voice of the organization and therefore is highly visible. Furthermore the participants also described the importance of focusing on middle level actors because they can be seen as a hinge between the top-level and grass-root level by passing on the created fundamentals between the two levels. The grass-root level is also managed because without organization and coordination of the approaches on all levels, the actors want improve the situation because they are all depending on the grass-root level to implement the new ideas.

Both theory and participants describes that all level of actors plays an important role if the vision of Resolution 1325 is going to be implemented on national, regional and international level. The approach that will be created in order to implement the vision of Resolution 1325, has to be created and structured through analyzing the context where it is directed to. Otherwise it will not work. In the Ecuadorian context the participants described that special analyzing has to be focused on how the female part of the society is going to be involved from the start of the process according to the machismo culture. Both theory and the participants also described that results has to be seen in a long term perspective.

The participants point out that the YEPGSN has empowered FENOCIN and that FENOCIN can play a role in the improvement of women’s role as decision makers but the participants also pointed out that a coordinated approach has to be applied if a change is going to happen.

Another interesting conclusion that can be drawn when comparing the answers from the interview to Lederachs theory is that the same theory model on the levels and actors can be used to describe the decision making levels within FENOCIN. Lederach describes that most often can a local hierarchy pyramid be found on a grass-root level and that was the case in this interviews as well.

So Can the YEPGSN be seen as a approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 on a grass-root level?

When comparing how the participants described that their ability to improve women’s role as decision makers on a grass-root level has improved through the YEPGSN, that FENOCIN can be an important actor on a grass-root level through the improvement YEPGSN and the fact that the participants points out the same levels of actors as the theory the conclusions has to be YES, the YEPGSN be seen as a approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 on grass-root level.
But the approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 through YEPGSN must also be seen with skepticism because the analyzing points on the fact that implementation of knowledge and experience has to improve. Because if the implementation is not carried out in a constructive way, the results will stay within the participants own network, base organization and families and in that way it will not benefit the grass-root level in general or the regional, national, and international level in a wider context.

The conclusion of the suggestions on improvement given by the participants is that the implementation of knowledge and experience that they brought back to their organizations in Ecuador has to improve. These suggestions are a direct connection to the normal fail on approaches on a grass-root level that are described in the theory. The fact that this approach normally fails to reach out to the rest of the grass-root level is also the case in this study. The participants doesn’t feel that they have the time or possibility to coordinate activities because they have to focus on the basic human needs of food, shelter and safety for themselves and their families.

Without improvement of the implementation of the results that the YEPGSN has showed in this study the answer has to be NO, YEPGSN cannot be seen as a approach to implement the vision of Resolution 1325 on grass-root level according to Lederach theory.

5.4 Concluding discussion and reflections

This are the findings that could be drawn from the interviews with the participants in the YEPGSN that occurred between FENOCIN and SLA in 2008 and 2009. The experience of creating this thesis through a field study in Ecuador has been interesting, challenging and very stimulating.

The results that surprised me most when studying the YEPGSN was the fact that the evaluation material lacks the dimension of results that the YEPGSN has had on the organizations in South Africa, Brazil and Ecuador. For example, one participant gave me these comments when the interview was over:
"We have never been asked what the YEPGSN has meant for us participants before and I believe that an important point of view on the YEPGSN therefore is missing in the evolution material which also makes the implementation more difficult to improve."

Another interesting conclusion in this study that Lederach's theory also points out is the fact that approaches on grass-root level in many cases fails to reach out to the rest of the grass-root level do the fact that the people in development countries focus on the basic human needs of food, shelter and safety for themselves and families. In 1943 the American physiologist Abraham Harold Maslow presented the article A Theory of Human Motivation where Maslow describes a model on how humans make priorities of need in life. Even do the article has been heavily criticized and today is old a connection can be done to the question of why approaches on grass-root level to implement for example the vision of Resolution 1325 fails. Maslow describes that the first need is the basic human needs of food, shelter and safety for themselves and families, the second need is the one of safety, the third is love and belonging, the fourth the need of esteem and the fifth is the one of Self-actualization.

So where does the need for gender equality and women role as decision maker fit in?

Well with the proved strong correlation between gender inequality and armed conflict in it obvious that the vision of Resolution 1325 refers to the second need of safety. So it would be interesting to study if the development of basic human needs as water, food and shelter has to be completed first before approaches to implement Resolution 1325 can be completed on grass-root level or if they can be prepared together.

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74 Interview 7
SUMMARY

As a result of the proved correlation between gender inequality and armed conflict, the United Nations Security Council approved Resolution 1325 in the year 2000. In the implementation of resolution 1325 it is important to understand which levels and actors that can improve women’s role as decision makers in order to build sustainable peace. This thesis has analyzed the results that the YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SAL has had on the participants ability to improve women’s role as decision makers within FENOCIN and if the participants feel that FENOCIN empowered by the YEPGSN can be an important actor in the process to improve women’s roles in Ecuador from grass-root level. In order to understand the YEPGSN results, a field study was conducted in Ecuador and interviews were done with the participants in the YEPGSN. The empirical material was then tested against Lederach's theory on levels and actors in peace building processes in order to understand if the YEPGSN approach could be seen as an effective way to implement the resolution 1325 vision or not. The results showed that the view on women’s role as decision makers among the participants has changed from their experiences in Sweden and that they felt that the YEPGSN had empowered their role within FENOCIN. The participants also felt they, through FENOCIN, can improve women’s role as decision makers in Ecuador from grass-root level. But that the results must be seen in a long term perspective and that more focus has to be put on implementation of the results. This result was closely linked with the theory on levels and actors in peace building processes. Therefore, the conclusion is that the model of YEPGSN can be seen as a approach to improve women’s role as decision makers on grass-root levels in line with Resolution 1325.
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APPENDIX A: Map of Ecuador
APPENDIX B: Interview question for the participants

THEME A: You and FENOCIN

1. Tell me about yourself?
2. Tell me why you became a member of FENOCIN and describe the vision you would complete by being active in FENOCIN?

THEME B: The YEPGSN in general

3. Describe the view you had on the YEPGSN between FENOCIN and SLA before you departure from Ecuador?
4. What is the most important thing that you have learnt from the experience in the YEPGSN?
5. Can you describe how the experience of the YEPGSN has effected you as a person in general?
6. Can you describe what you normally tell people today if they ask you about the YEPGSN?

THEME C: Women’s role as decision makers

7. Describe how you view women’s role as decision makers in the Ecuadorian society?
8. Describe how you view women's role as decision makers within FENOCIN?
9. Describe how the YEPGSN worked to empower women’s role as decision makers?
10. Has the YEPGSN effected your view on women’s role as decision makers?
11. Has the YEPGSN in any way empowered your ability to improve women’s role as decision makers in FENOCIN?
12. Has the YEPGSN in any way improved women’s role as decision makers within FENOCIN?
13. What are the biggest obstacles to implement the knowledge of women’s role as decision makers from the YEPGSN into a wider context of FENOCIN?

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14. Do you think that FENOCIN can improve women’s role as decision makers in the Ecuadorian society by the experiences of the YEPGSN?

15. Which levels and actors are the most important within FENOCIN to improve women’s role as decision makers?

16. Which level and actors are the most important in the Ecuadorian society to improve women’s role as decision makers?

**THEME D: After the YEPGSN**

1. Describe in what way you have continued to work with the other fellow participants to improve women’s role as decision makers in FENOCIN?

2. Do you believe that the experience and knowledge that you brought back from the YEPGSN can improve women’s role as decision makers in the Ecuadorian society in any way?

3. How can the YEPGSN develop the work to improve women’s role as decision makers?
APPENDIX C: Interview questions for FENOCIN

THEME A: You and FENOCIN
1. Tell me a about yourself?
2. Tell me why you became a member of FENOCIN and describe the vision that you would complete by being active in FENOCIN?

THEME B: The YEPGSN in general
3. Describe the vision that FENOCIN has with the YEPGSN with SLA?
4. Do you feel that the YEPGSN has fulfilled the described vision?

THEME C: Women’s role as decision makers
5. Describe how you view women’s role as decision makers in the Ecuadorian society?
6. Describe how you view women’s role as decision makers within FENOCIN?
7. Describe how the FENOCIN works to empower women’s role as decision makers?
8. Has the YEPGSN improved women’s role as decision makers within FENOCIN in any way?
9. What are the greatest obstacles to implement the knowledge of women’s role as decision makers from the YEPGSN into a wider context of FENOCIN?
10. Do you think that FENOCIN can improve women’s role as decision makers in the Ecuadorian society by the experiences of the YEPGSN?
11. Which levels and actors are the most important within FENOCIN to improve women’s role as decision makers?
12. Which levels and actors are the most important within the Ecuadorian society to improve women’s role as decision makers?

THEME D: After the YEPGSN
13. Do you believe that the experience and knowledge from the YEPGSN can improve women’s role as decision makers in the Ecuadorian society in any way?
14. How can the YEPGSN develop the work to improve women’s role as decision makers?
## APPENDIX D: Respondents in the field study

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<th>Nr.</th>
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APPENDIX E: Lederach theory structure of levels, actors and approaches

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