Promoting peace from below

An analysis of the working conditions for NGOs promoting children's rights in Russia

Anne Sandanger Time

"I have heard what the talkers were talking,
The talk of the beginning and the end,
But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.
There was never any more inception than there is now,
nor any more youth or age than there is now,
and will never be any more perfection than there is now,
nor any more heaven or hell than there is now."
(Walt Whitman)

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Anne Sandanger Time

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Abstract

This thesis looks into the working conditions for international NGOs in Russia, focusing on a children's rights organization. The main objective of this thesis is to direct focus on how NGOs can contribute to promote sustainable peace from below and improve children's situation in Russia. Children in Russia are experiencing different challenges; this is often due to socio-economic instabilities and political problems. Consequently these factors have effects on children growing up within the Russian Federation and have effects on children's lives. UNICEF reports that the number of children living on the streets is increasing. Thus, Save the Children is concerned about the high numbers of street-children and child neglect. Therefore, this thesis will regard the situation for children in Russia by relating Save the Children Norway in Russia's efforts on promoting children's rights and peaceful developments at the individual level. When focusing on an international NGO's efforts for children in Russia, one needs to regard the working conditions for NGOs in the Russian context, and thus how Save the Children in this case, can work within the civil society and according to their objectives.

The Russian Federation do not have a strong tradition of civil society, it was first in the late 1980's non-governmental and civil organizations appeared in the society. By the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Russian society experienced several challenges that led to socio-economic problems and political insecurity. The NGOs does still have a weak position within the society, and the lack of a pluralistic society in Russia can be explained through three main reasons: i) economical, ii) cultural, and iii) political. The latter has been characterized by a top-down approach, which has led to vulnerable NGOs that are linked to the state. Nevertheless these challenges, NGOs and international NGOs can be important actors for positive developments on the individual level and create an arena for children's voices to be heard on higher levels.

Key words: Russia, civil society, NGO, INGO, Children's Rights, child participation, human security, positive peace

List of Abbreviations

GO – Government Organization

INGO – International Non-Governmental Organization

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

RFSFR – Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

SCNiR – Save the Children Norway in Russia

UN CRC – United Nation Child Rights Convention

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

UNHCHR – United Nation office of the Commissioner for Human Rights

UNICEF – United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

USSR – Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic

Chapter 1: Introduction

"State Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare" (UN CRC art. 36)[1]

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was ratified by the Soviet Union in 1990, and maintained by the Russian Federation since 1991 (Save the Children 2009). This thesis will address the practical fulfillment of the Rights of the Child through a study of Save the Children in Murmansk, who work according to the UN CRC. This will generate important knowledge about the working conditions for NGOs in Russia, and thus provide insight on the process from below. The need to focus on children within this perspective is underlined by UNICEF, who reported that in the recent years the number of children living on the streets or in institutions has had a dramatic increase within the Russian Federation. Related concerns are stated by the UN Committee on Rights of the Child in Russia (2005), stressing the need for data collection and statistic concerning children's welfare, and concerning protection of children from torture, corporal punishment, ill-treatment, neglect and abuse (UNICEF 2008; UN CRC 2005). These reports shows the significance on addressing the needs concerning children's rights through a peace perspective, by arguing that children's rights should not be neglected when regarding human security. This study will be concerned about the practical fulfillment of the convention, and focus on how NGOs can be providers of positive peace.

NGOs have been important actors within the global context, both during humanitarian crisis and they have served as active proponents for system change and been promoters of peaceful developments within the society (Bebbington et al. 2008). Though there is not war within a society, there may be different challenges which can create dire situation for the individuals, and thus peaceful developments are needed to enable individuals to create peaceful developments for the society. NGOs can be regarded as actors for such developments, as NGOs are an important link between the people on the one hand and the state on the other hand. Individuals can still face threats, especially regarding insecurities and the well-being of children who are the most vulnerable for socio-economically changes. Often, the state is the provider of social goods and responsible for protecting its inhabitants, yet in the cases where the state falls short of providing social goods, NGOs can operate as important actors in promoting children's rights and a secure environment for children facing threats. In societies

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[1] UN CRC: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm#art36

where war is absent; there can be other factors than immediate violence within the structures of the society that provides an insecure environment for children.

1.1 Introducing the topic

Due to the lack of official statistics regarding children's situation within the Russian Federation, it is difficult to establish a picture of the insecurities facing children in this region. According to calculations by the UNICEF, of the 143 million inhabitants of the Russian Federation more than 30 millions are children. UNICEF estimates that 730,000 children live without parental care and about 180,000 children live in institutions (UNICEF 2008). These measures draw attention to a startling situation for a large group of children living in Russia. The Russian authorities declared the year 2008 as *God Semjenjnyj* (The Year of the Family) aimed at stressing issues related to families. One element of this policy entailed that the government would put particular focus on family related issues (Putin 2007), thus the Russian Federation is experiencing a decline in the population, which could be another aspect of this particular focus (see BartensObserver 2009a and UNICEF 2008). Disregarding these initiatives, the Russian Federation is facing different challenges, and consequently the issue of the state's efforts to promote children's rights has been questioned as a part of the human rights debate.

In order to understand the issues facing children living within the Russian Federation, I will focus on an NGO working on promoting children's rights, and child empowerment within a region in Russia, namely Murmansk Oblast. This will enable me to get a grasp of the Russian society. When studying a country like Russia, it is important to consider the heritage from the past to enable understanding of why Russia functions as it does, and how such a large country is organized. This is a challenge, but also what makes Russia fascinating and intriguing for a foreigner. This project will address the civil society in Russia and look at challenges and possibilities for youth work as a part of societal development. This implies a discussion of what kind of civil society we find within the Russian context, and what definition of the concept will be useful in this particular context. In order to gain a pragmatic understanding on how the civil society in Russia is, Save the Children Norway in Russia (SCNiR) will be used as a case study for this purpose. This will be done through an understanding of the needs children have and how they are met by the state and the society. *In this thesis I will argue that civil society can be an actor for promoting sustainable development and positive peace.*

1.2 Relevance to peace studies

Violence can occur on micro level as well as on macro level, however, the victims are on the micro level and therefore peace building from below is important. Peace must then be created on the individual level and I will argue that NGOs can be actors for creating awareness and promoting children's rights through peace building from below. This can in the long term lead to peaceful developments. Though, as Galtung (1996: 35) argues: "Peace studies may contribute through research-based knowledge. But studies alone do not halt direct violence, dismantle violent structures, nor do they build direct, structural and cultural peace." As this argument entails, studies alone cannot build peace, however studies can be starting point for creating a greater focus on the active efforts to peaceful developments on the micro level.

1.3 Stating the problem

The academic discussion about the civil society in Russia has received much attention, as the dissolution of the Soviet Union gathered great interest around the globe. Many scholars (see Linz and Stepan 1996, Evans 2006, Diamond 1999) discussed the developments of democracy in Russia, thereby focusing on the civil society. The scholars noted that the relations between the state and the society had shifted, and predicted a vigorous civil society in the years to come (Evans 2006: 147). Though many social movements appeared after the break with the Soviet Union, and the rapid growth of informal groups gave the image of active Soviet citizens. However, the civil society remained weak in the years to come. Distrust from the people and weak organizations gave the civil society a marginal status in the following years. Distrust to the organizations and economical scarcity dominated within the population (Evans 2006). Despite challenges the civil society met in the transition phase in the 1990s, the civil society survived in to the next millennium. The dissolution of the Soviet Union had both economical and social dimensions. This have had severe effects on individuals within the society especially children are vulnerable for such changes. When the strong state system after Soviet Union collapsed, there was no longer any system that offered social protection and these developments had impact of the welfare of children. Though the Convention of Children's Rights were ratified by the Soviet Union in 1990 the UN Committee on the CRC in Russia reports the lack of fulfilment of the Convention within several aspects (UN CRC 2005).

Developments of the civil society has been dependent upon several factors, though I will only focus on three of them: i) the political situation, ii) cultural heritage, and iii) the economical

situation. These factors have challenged the developments of a civil society in several aspects, such as lack of support politically and economically, and historical distrust to organizations halting from the Soviet Union. Under Boris Yeltsin, social movements were encouraged to be established. These movements did not have any direct or indirect influence, as the public sphere was mostly dominated by the oligarchs. When Vladirmir Putin assented to take over the presidency after Yeltsin in 1999, Putin introduced reforms in order to link the social movements closer to the interest of the state. In 2006 the Government introduced a new law directed at NGOs that received foreign funding. This law had different effects for NGOs operating in Russia and was widely discussed among human rights organizations and the international society. In 2008, Dimitry Medvedev was elected president and he soon proclaimed the importance of a vivid civil society (see BarentsObserver 2008a). Though until present time there have been minor measures to increase the role of social movements within the Russian Federation. In April 2009 Medvedev stated that the controversial NGO law of 2006 should be amended, and announced that the law could be changed to be more beneficial to NGOs (BarentsObserver 2009b). The practical changes of Medvedev's statements are yet to be attested. However, only recently international actors note that freedom in Russia is decreasing[2]. They are concerned about the developments of human rights and the civil society, criticizing the Russian authorities for lack of action. What does the state do to fulfill human needs, and under what conditions can Save the Children work to protect children? To what extend can Save the Children act according to their objectives?

1.4 Research questions
This thesis will contribute to direct focus on children within the concept of human security and argue that NGOs, such as Save the Children can be seen as actors for a peaceful development. This will be done by underlining the importance of NGOs as protectors of civil rights. In the past years there has been a new focus on the *security* notion, by extending it to *human security*, an approach that often has directed focused on gender. The focus on children within this notion will be an addition to the field. In the past years, new laws and regulations have been directed at NGOs, with a special focus on NGOs that receive foreign funding. These factors make the debate about the civil society highly relevant, and this project will be

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[2] See for example: Freedomhouse (2009): "Freedom in the World 2009 Survey Release" http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=445, Amnesty (2009): "Human Rights in the Russian Federation" http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/russia, BarentsObserver (2009c): "Russian NGOs fear law on treason" http://www.barentsobserver.com/russian-ngos-fear-new-law-on-treason.4538019-16180.html

concerned with questions addressing the challenges and possibilities for the civil society in Russia, with a youth organization as the case. My main objective for this thesis is to place the importance of children's rights within the peace and human security focus. Then analyse how NGOs can act in order to build and promote *peace by peaceful means* despite of challenges they meet. The aim for this thesis is to understand under what conditions Save the Children in Russia work, and how the situation of the civil society in Russia affects Save the Children to perform their work for children. Thus focus on NGOs as actors for creating peace from below. An in-depth study of Save the Children in Murmansk will enable me to understand the conditions NGOs work under, and how they can meet the challenges children in this region experience.

The objective of this project is to analyze the NGOs roles and possibilities to work for children's rights in Russia, with Save the Children Norway in Russia (SCNiR) as the main case via the following addressed research questions:

1. How can NGOs promote peaceful developments from below?
2. What conditions does NGOs in Russia meet?
3. How can NGOs act according to children's situation in Russia?

1.5 Scope of this thesis
Though there are many factors and interesting debates relevant to the issue of civil society and children's right in Russia, this thesis will primarily focus on the conditions for the civil society in Murmansk Oblast, and how NGOs can act in order to fulfil the needs of children living within this area. Thus, a detailed analysis or a theoretical discussion of the situation for civil society within the Russian Federation, and children's conditions in this area is beyond the scope of this paper. In addition, this thesis only address international NGOs presented within Murmansk Oblast, and do not represent local NGOs. Because of the presidential election in 2008, there are suggested new policies toward NGOs and international NGOs operating in Russia. These new policies are highly relevant for understanding the developments of the civil society; however, I will not focus on these policies as it is still early to predict the actual outcome and consequences of the new reforms.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

In chapter 2, I will present a background introduction to the context of this study; this entails a brief historical introduction and outline of the region where I conducted fieldwork. Further, I will give an introduction to the civil society debate and relate it to the Russian context. In chapter 3, I will give account for the theoretical framework for this study, concerning Galtung's (1996) notion of violence and positive peace, and UNDP's (1994) human security approach. Chapter 4 will be concerned with the methodological approach for this study, which is based upon a qualitative approach and fieldwork. Chapter 3 and 4 will be the basis for the discussion and the empirical parts in the following chapter 5. Chapter 5 will give an empirical basis of the working conditions for NGOs in Russia based upon Galtung's theory of violence and positive peace. Than I will give an empirical outline of children's situation in Russia linking it to the theoretical framework of Galtung and the human security approach. Chapter 6 will give the final conclusions.

Chapter 2: Background

The transformation from Soviet Union to the Russian Federation did not only have impact on the socio-economical and political life, it had also great impact for individuals and the daily reality, therefore it is crucial to give a brief historical background of the Russian Federation/the Soviet Union with a special focus on i) the economical situation, ii) the cultural heritage and iii) the political situation. These factors will contribute to explain the present context for NGOs and children in Russia. Thus, a definition of civil society and the Russian context will be outlined.

2.1 Spasjom Djetej **- Save the Children Norway in Russia (SCNiR)**

Save the Children Norway in Russia is a representative office for Save the Children Norway, which makes Save the Children in Russia an administrative office of Save the Children Norway. The Organization is known as Save the Children Norway in Russia (SCNiR) or *Spasjom Djetej* (Save the Children). Save the Children Norway has been present in Russia since 2002, and a formal country programme office was established in Murmansk December 2004 and was accredited with the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. Due to a new legislation law in quest for increased control over the civil society, the organization was re-registered in 2006 on the basis of proper accreditation from the authorities in Moscow. SCNiR is operating from its office in Murmansk city, and supports partners in the Murmansk Oblast and Archangelsk city, and respond to challenges facing children living in North-West Russia. Their work is based upon close co-operation with municipal structures and co-operation with GOs and NGOs, though the number of NGOs in North-West Russia is limited. SCNiR is financially dependent upon Norway, as well as additional funding from the member organizations in the Northern parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009).

The objective for Save the Children Norway's presence in the Russian Federation is to diminish the dire situation for children living in the areas close to the Norwegian border. This work includes attend to Children's Rights, preventive work by spreading information and influencing the Government to increase focus on children's rights. Most of the work is based upon self-implementation where the aim is to have a truly partner-based organization (Save

the Children 2009). SCNiR follow the strategic plan for the Save the Children alliance, yet they are enabled to focus on issues which are country specific. The most relevant objectives are to fulfil the rights of children to protection against physical and psychological violence and abuse. For the strategic period of 2006-2009 the main focus areas for SCNiR was: i) Mobile Street Work with Socially-Marginalized Children, ii) Fulfilment of the Rights of Children in Conflict with the Law, iii) Fulfilment of Children's Rights to Protection form Violence and Sexual Abuse, and iv) Strengthening and Monitoring of Children's Rights. The two latter focus areas are country specific, as these areas indicate specific problematic areas within the Russian Federation. The country specific areas requires a greater attention than other global strategies, such as children affected by armed conflict, which is regarded irrelevant for the area SCNiR operates (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009).

2.2 Brief historical introduction

The Russian Federation has been described as an authoritarian state, and lack a democratic tradition, not only due to the Bolsheviks, but also before 1917 under the tsarist rule. The tsar-state was developed as an absolutist-patrimonial empire, based upon exploitation of mass population; serfdom was a striking example of this. When the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917 they had to create a new state-system (Robinson 2002), this developed into an authoritarian and in some periods a totalitarian state. The political power in Russian history has traditionally been hierarchal and concentrated around one person (Hønneland & Jørgensen 2006). A new direction in Russian policy started in 1985 when Mikhail Gorbachev inherited a powerful state system with a slow economy after he succeeded Konstantin Chernenko. Gorbachev was open about the problems facing the Soviet society and shortly announced the need for a *novoje mysjlenije* (new thinking) in the political and economical policies. He introduced the policy of *glasnost* (openness) which emphasized the efforts of new ideas and flexible thinking. An overt public opinion created a public debate over former sensitive topics like economy, societal problems, crime and corruption. The ruling elite were also criticized, and for Gorbachev this required reanalysis of the past, with focus on the Stalin-period. The process of de-Stalinization raised questions about the Soviet ideology and undermined some of the main concepts that made the Soviet state survive, without offering alternatives (Marples 2004). In 1987 the policy of *perestroika* (restructuring) was introduced, and was first and foremost aimed at economic policies by encouraging new technologies to reach a Western level. Gorbachev argued that the Soviet state focused more on administration than political work. Therefore he saw it necessary to separate the party and the state in order to fulfill its

responsibilities more efficiently. This made the lines between the state and the society distorted. The state had shown itself too blunt to redress the problems facing the society and a poor advocate for socialism (Robinson 2002; McAuley 1992: 91).

In 1985, Gorbachev appointed Boris Yeltsin as first secretary of the Moscow city administration. Two years later Yeltsin lost his position due to his systematic attacks on corruption. The policies of glasnost and perestroika created room for Boris Yeltsin to revive as a politician and opponent to Gorbachev. In 1990 he was elected as chairman of the Supreme Soviet, and in 1991 Yeltsin became the elected president of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RFSFR), while Gorbachev still was the president of USSR. The USSR soon after dissolved into the RFSFR with Boris Yeltsin as the leading president (Marples 2004). RSFSR faced different challenges, as a break with the past required reconstruction of political, economical and social aspects. The democratic efforts and economical reforms should provide 'public goods' which would be beneficial for the majority of the society, but the changes involved a risk that some individuals could loose more than they gained from the public goods. In Russia the challenge was to meet the demands from both ordinary people as well as the elite, in order to secure a democratic consolidation and economic reforms (Robinson 2002: 80). The trust to the political government was low among the people and in addition to the dissolution of the USSR the new RSFSR met internal political disputes. Yeltsin prioritized economical reforms before political, and through "shock therapy" the inflation increased to 245 percent in 1992 (Hønneland & Jørgensen 2006).

In 1992 the Government had already made over 200 changes in the Constitution and the political situation was unstable. The Constitution made both the executive and juridical power to the top authority. Political fragmentation led to a power struggle, and the new state was on the verge on a civil war. Yeltsin won the polarization, but his victory did not make him popular. People started to question his democratic attitudes and the proposed Constitution was only ratified with a small majority of the people. Further, by the next election the Communist party gained popularity while Yeltsin and the nationalists lost support. The major changes under Yeltsin's rule were the oligarchs influence on politics. This erased the former division between public and private, between state and the economy, and only a minority could directly influence the politics. The term *novyi russkiy* (new Russian) is used with negative connotations to describe those who earned money during the economical chaos, with negative connotations (Hønnesland & Jørgensen 2006). When Vladimir Putin became president in

1999, he faced a state in a deep crisis with an administration incapable of providing the most basic functions for the society. Social benefits were limited to a minimum, regional leaders were governing after own wish and the instability in Chechnya reached a maximum. People's trust to the authorities was a minimum. During the election in 2000 Putin promised people peace and stability, though people were unfamiliar with the rest of Putin's agenda, he gained support and won the primary election. During Putin's first period, the economy cultivated and the oligarch's powers were decreasing. Thus the situation in Chechnya became stabile by the use of force. In addition, Putin introduced several changes in the following years of his presidency. He brought the regions under federal management and the media and civil society became restrained. These measures were explained as necessary to prevent anarchy, collapse and capital interests (Hønneland & Jørgensen 2006).

2.2.1 The Economic Situation

In the beginning of the 1990's, Yeltsin used radical economic reforms to deal with the transformation form a productive planned economy to a "virtual economy." These efforts led to a hybrid economy, followed by several economic crises during the 1990s. Corruption increased and private interests were favoured over public interests (Robinson 2002). Economic uncertainties followed Yeltsin's presidency, and in 1998 the Russian economy marked a temporary crack down, which had major effect on the state budget. Thus, the economic crisis put many of the oligarchs out of action. In the beginning of 2000, during Putin's presidency, the economy was rising due to high oil prices. The marked economy was adapted and Putin kept developing the economic reforms towards a marked economy and decreased the oligarchs influence further. Thus, the state became involved within important strategic sectors (Hønnesland & Jørgensen 2006).

Though, the economic factors Russia faced in its transition phase, the non-governmental organizations were not supported financially from the state and had a minimal influence on the political decisions. In most cases Russian NGOs lacked funding opportunities and were both weak and short-lived. In other cases they become dependent upon foreign funding as Russians tended generally not to donate money to fundraising. Because of the economic situation, many Russians regarded voluntary work as something for the privileged, and for the ones who could afford it. Therefore the most important funds came from foreign donors and from local administration; many scholars (see Henderson 2003 and Howard 2003) have issued concern about funding from abroad as this tends to shape the NGOs priorities. The lack of financial support has lead to limitations for NGOs to operate as they cannot afford

to hire staff members, lack of facilities and minimal capacity to carry out work (Wegren 2006; Hønnesland & Jørgensen 2006).

2.2.2 The Cultural Heritage

The Russian Federation comes with a strong cultural heritage which has made the people skeptical to others, and often found it hard to cooperate towards a common goal. In the USSR there was not a common sphere outside the Communist Party, however, social organizations existed, like *Komsomol* (Communist Youth Organization) and others, who were constructed from above. These social organizations were hierarchal, centralized and dominated by the Communist party. Most Russians were dubious to these organizations (Evans 2006: 32f). The collapse of Soviet rule did not erase the division between *us* and *them*, referring to the people and the authorities. The organizations were controlled by the regional authorities and did not gain political influence or local funding. Tax laws tended to discourage charitable giving and NGOs found it hard to exist without any connections in the Government. As a result of lacking power, the public sphere enforced the popular perception of the public sphere consisting of criminals and corruption (Richter 2008: 188ff). Under Yeltsin's rule, political decisions were not public and personal relations were the most influential tool. Oligarchs influenced the policy and ordinary people did not see any reason to organize. The cultural heritage from the Soviet regime had created distrust to the public sphere, as many of the NGOs were assumed to be motivated by own interest (Hønnesland & Jørgensen 2006).

2.2.3 The Political Situation

Boris Yeltsin started the political transition by introducing reforms using a top-down approach, and the only way for people to influence this policy was through personal relations with people in power. Vladimir Putin's strategy toward the civil society in Russia has been characterized by linking it closer to the interests of the state, by putting restrictions on the organizations. This has especially affected organizations dependent upon foreign funding, as the authorities claimed that it is an attempt by international actors to influence and interfere with domestic policy in Russia (Hønneland & Jørgensen 2006: 141ff). Putin underlined these policies early in his reign. Journalists and environmentalists who were too critical to the Government's actions were subject to harassment or prison. In 2006, Vladimir Putin introduced a new NGO reform. The new reform gave constraints to social organizations, and required that all organizations re-registered and integrated into the centralized system. NGOs who receive support by foreign funding have been highly criticized by Putin and Kremlin,

who underlines the importance of this law in order to protect the state from terrorism, and foreign influence (Evans 2006: 147ff). The law gives the authorities the right to deny organizations registration, the law increases governmental supervisory power and requires more reporting on activities and survey of all funds from foreign sources, by allocating how the money are spent. The Government can claim documentation of the organizations governance, policies and finances at any time; further the government can send representatives to follow the organization's events and all internal meetings within the organization. In addition, the Government has supervisory power over international NGOs, and can terminate implementation of a program to a partner of the INGO and will have full survey over funds. Thus, in order to found a NGO by a foreign national person, he or she must have residence within the Russian Federation in order to found, participate or join an NGO (ICNL 2006). As a result of the NGO reform, 77 NGOs were temporary forced to suspend activities because they exceeded the deadline for registration, among these organizations were Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (Moscow Times 2007).

2.3 Region: North-West Russia

The geographical area North-West Russia has different connotations in Russian and is often defined broader than the definition in the West. In the Russian context, North-Western Russia is often described as an economic entity consisting of the oblasts of Novgorod, Leningrad, Pskov and St. Petersburg. The oblasts of Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Vologda are usually defined as the Northern economic regions. Therefore a clarification is needed, and this thesis will refer to North-West Russia as the geographical Russian part of the Barents region: Murmansk- and Arkhangelsk Oblast, the Republic of Karelia and Nenets Okrug.

2.3.1 Murmansk Oblast

The city of Murmansk has a short history as the city was founded in 1917 and was not considered of any strategic importance for the Russian Federation. During the civil war from 1918-1920 Murmansk was used by the British, French and Americans as a base against the Bolsheviks. Soviet power was re-established in 1920, and as a result of a growing population in the region Murmansk attained oblast status in 1938. During World War II the strategic importance of Murmansk and the Kola Peninsula was reinforced as the area was a vital corridor for supplies during the siege of Leningrad and as a home for the Northern Fleet. Also, during the Cold War, Murmansk Oblast was a strategic important area with shared boarders to a NATO member. The area became heavily militarized, and by 1970 the Northern

Fleet was considered as the most important Soviet naval fleet. Due to these factors Murmansk Oblast attracted a significant part of the population and developed a state within the state. The civilian sector and post-war economy was dominated by heavy-industry and entire towns were built around enormous mining, metallurgical and chemical enterprises. The cities close to the coast were used for fisheries and fish possessing industry. Murmansk was constructed around some massive industrial enterprises and military complexes. The region experienced a major population growth and people were attracted by a number of advantages given to them by the Soviet state. Higher wages, lower retirement age and subsidised holidays at resorts at the Black Sea were many of the benefits provided them. Many of the inhabitants of Murmansk Oblast regarded this as a temporary place of residence, as many lacked social identity to the area, and did not consider it as a permanent home. People would live on their pensions and great savings they achieved by working in Murmansk Oblast for a period (Hønneland and Blakkisrud 2001). After the 1990s, industrial activities in the area decreased, and Murmansk experienced a population decline. Yet today, Murmansk Oblast is one of the most developed regions of North-West Russia, and the total population is estimated to 857,000 people, and there are still concerns about the demography in the Northern parts of Russia. The Murmansk economy is dependent upon the fishing industry, constituting more than half of the industrial production of the city. Further, Murmansk Oblast is rich in natural resources, and in addition to fishing, mining, metallurgy and ship repair are important industrial sectors (Barentsinfo 2009).

2.4 *Grazhdanskoe Obschevstvo* - Civil Society in the Russian Context

"NGOs are an important constituent part of society as an organism, but we do not want them to be run by puppet masters from abroad." Vladimir Putin (2006)

Numerous scholars, (see e.g. Diamond 1999, Putnam 1994, Dahl 1991) offers definitions of the term civil society. The debate can be divided between two perspectives, a Western and an Eastern. The Western perspective puts the individual in focus, and is often interrelated to democratic liberties and processes. In Eastern Europe, and the former USSR, civil society was connected with nationalism and networks (Narozhna 2004). Therefore it is necessary to avoid confusion by a sufficient clarification of how the concept will be understood in this thesis. First and foremost, I will not argue that civil society is inherently democratic, rather focus on how people can co-operate through network connections in the public sphere as a link

between the individuals and the state. The definition is based upon London School of Economics (2004):

> "Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trades unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy group" (LSE 2004).

As this definition implies civil society can be interpreted as a realm between the state and society/individual and consists of organizations, groups, unions and social movements. The concept of civil society was indistinct in political theory, but during the past years the term has been widely accepted and applied to different contexts throughout the world. As Gellner (1994: 5) points out: "The dusty old term, drawn from antiquated political theory, belonging to long, obscure and justly forgotten debates, re-emerged, suddenly endowed with a new and powerful capacity to stir enthusiasm and inspire action." The socialist society was a society determined by the party, and after the dissolution of the USSR, the concept of civil society evolved as an essential feature for development and liberalization form the Communist state. During the 1960s, the first attempts to liberalize the Communist society started with Khrushchev, and these efforts were later followed by Gorbachev. Gellner (1994) criticize the liberal debate about civil society, where the state is marked as a negative institution. With Gorbachev's reforms of liberalization and the political shift in the 1990s the "new slogan" of civil society became a counter-vision to Marxism (Gellner 1994). Since the post Cold War era, the developments of a civil society have been regarded as a positive instance for influence on a democratic transition (Diamond 1999), thus a vibrant civil society has been considered a key indicator for "success" (Howard 2003: 31f), and the main indicator of the democratization efforts. Accordingly, in the post-communist states civil society became "central to western aid programs in Eastern Europe linked intimately to privatization aid" (Hann & Dunn 1996:9 cited in Hemment 2007).

Russia does not have any strong traditions with civil society. Both before and after 1917 (Bolshevik Revolution) only a few organizations existed in Russia. After 1930 the organizations were restricted and did not have any strong position in the society. Under the Soviet regime the organizations that existed were linked to the Communist party and were

supervised by the party-state. Most scholars agree that it did not exist any civil society under the Soviet Rule (e.g. Evans 2006). In the 1980s, Gorbachev's reforms of *perestroika* and *glasnost* resulted in formation of social movements and coalitions of political parties. Many of the groups were politicised and claimed rights and changes from the state (Evans 2006: 44ff). The new reforms contributed to dismantling of the party-state and weaken the ideology; however, because of the historically strong impact of the party-state, the society did not give rise to a civil society in the Western sense of the concept. There were no traditions of a pluralist society within the Russian state, and it is highly debated whether there in fact exist a civil society in Soviet time (Linz & Stepan 1996: 376). In transition to democracy, civil society and marked economy have often been regarded as inevitable to get a functioning democracy. Russia did not have any traditions of either; nevertheless, the establishment of independent organizations in the late 1980s gave optimism among the people. The Russian Constitution anno 1993 gave room for a civil society to develop, as it underlined people's right to organize (Hønneland & Jørgensen 2006: 141).

In order to have a vigorous civil society the state in the post-communist context has played a role, as it has to provide the necessary resources and support of organizations of civil society. Thus, political battles among elites and corruption within the Government have decreased developments. Many scholars (Evans 2006, Linz and Stepan 1996) have indicated that there was no room for the civil society to develop within the USSR. In addition, the development of a civil society is dependent upon a stabile economy. In the case of Russia, economic uncertainty and chaos persisted and increased since the collapse of Communism. Economic instability and lack of state support can contribute to a valid explanation of the weak civil society (Howard 2003: 17). Putin's design for the civil society in Russia has been to link it close to the interests of the state and his policies towards the civil society have been characterized by decreasing foreign support. In 2006 a new NGO law was ratified by the Russian Government, claiming the necessity to clear any disorder among the NGOs and to have full access to all the financial sources, and thereby clarify the NGOs role within the society. Though these measures were implemented, Putin has repeatedly underlined the importance of a civil society and signal gratitude to those who he claims does a constructive job (Hønnesland & Jørgensen 2006: 147f).

2.4.1 Civil Society in North West-Russia

The situation in North West Russia is hard to map out, due to scarce statistical measurements available. Marina Mikhailova (2008) has stated the concern about official numbers on NGOs opposed to the real numbers of operating NGOs. There are registered about 700 NGOs in Russia, and Mikhaliova states that this number should be reduced ten times to get the real number. This statement shows the complexity in getting real numbers and a truthful picture of the reality for the civil society in Russia. There are few non-governmental (NGOs/INGOs) and governmental organizations (GOs) in this region. UNICEF and other big international organizations are placed in Moscow or other big cities and are concerned with other parts of Russia. Mikhailovna also raises concern about the instability of the NGOs, this in form of low competence, lack of financial support and bad facilities. These factors have been a particular challenge in the North-West regions. In order to work systematically one needs professionals, and it is hard to do this work on a voluntary basis (Mikhaliova 2008).

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

My research is based upon the theoretical framework of peace theory and the security concept: human security. The peace theory is drawn from Galtung (1969; 1996) and is focused around the notion of positive peace. Human security includes directed focus on insecurities individuals face in their daily life, and is concerned with promoting sustainable peace from below, which is pertinent for the peace research paradigm. Both theories are concerned with the protection of the individuals and in this chapter I will give an outline of the theoretical framework.

3.1 Peace theory

"Peace, in the sense of absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold. It will not remove the pain of torture inflicted on a prisoner of conscience … peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free" (Dalai Lama 1989).

The philosophy of peace has long traditions, and can be subdivided into several positions. Defining *peace* is a challenge and one might talk about a positive and a negative definition. The latter is concerned with the absence of something and the most common definition regards peace as "absence of violence" (Galtung 1969). Further, Galtung (1996) explains negative peace in terms of: "Peace is the absence/reduction of violence of all kinds." This definition implies that peace is a contradiction of violence, and in order to experience peace one must know violence (Galtung 1996: 9). Galtung (1969) do not offer a definition of violence per se, however, he claims that if peace is antonym to violence, the concept of violence should be broad enough to encompass significant varieties, and it should be specific enough to serve as a basis for concrete action (Galtung 1969). Violence, as such, can occur in different arenas, and Galtung (1996) sees violence in a triangular vision: i) *Direct violence,* ii) *Structural violence* and iii) *Cultural violence*. Direct violence can be physical or psychical and happens within the person or the social space. Direct violence is visible; further Galtung claims that direct violence is intended. Structural violence on the other hand, is divided within the political, repressive and economic sphere. Structural violence is built within the person by the social world. Structural violence can take different forms and this kind of violence is often unintended. Cultural violence does often occur within several contexts such as religion, law and ideology. Cultural violence legitimizes both direct and structural violence by motivating

actors to commit violence, this type of violence can be intended or unintended (Galtung 1996: 9; 31f).

Positive peace is more than absence of war or absence of violence, it refers to a social condition where exploitation is to a minimum, and there is no overt violence. A positive way of defining peace is offered by Galtung who claims that peace is when exploitation is minimal or eliminated and there is no structural violence (Barash & Webel 2002: 4f). Thus, Galtung (1969) notes that peace should be used for social goals that are verbally agreed amongst a majority of people, further the social goals may be "complex and difficult, but not impossible to attain" (Galtung 1969). Positive peace would then be divided into: i) *Direct positive peace*, ii) *Structural positive peace* and iii) *Cultural positive peace*. Direct positive peace would concern the person's own mind and spirit, as well as give room for basic needs, survival, well-being, freedom and identity. This would also include nonviolence in the social context, and would be brought by peace movements. Structural positive peace would give freedom from repression and equity from exploitation and reinforce each other through dialogue, solidarity and participation. Further, peaceful developments and equity would bring peaceful structures through peace regions and governance on a higher level. Cultural positive peace would contribute to legitimize peaceful developments through institutionalised measures, such as ideology, and in law this could be trough promoting human rights, which would be possible in all levels in the society (Galtung 1996: 31ff).

In many societies peace has been identified with social and political goals. The negative definition entails that one need to know about war, conflict and violence in order to understand or know peace. The positive definitions of peace are not concerned with war, but underline the importance of human beings in social settings and promote the idea of a sustainable peace (Galtung 1996: 9). To be enabled to create peaceful developments, Galtung (1996) posts different arenas: i) the state, where the government can be an actor for promoting both positive and negative peace, ii) capital, through corporation, and iii) civil society. The civil society consists of people and people's informal and formal organizations of all kinds, like NGOs that can be actors for promoting positive peace (Galtung 1996: 35). While negative peace often refers to peacekeeping or peace restoring after war, positive peace focuses on peace building, by the establishment of social structures that are not exploitative. Further, negative peace can be seen as a conservative notion, in the sense that it strives to keep things at status quo, given absence of war. While positive peace is dynamic, as a creation of

something that does not currently exist. Thus, in order to attain positive peace there are several aspect to consider. Barash & Webel (2002) notes the promotion of human rights as one crucial aspect.

Human rights have been noted as a means to peaceful developments and sustainability in a society and are often linked with the notion of peace. The denial of human rights would be a direct denial of positive or real peace. Further, Eide (1977) argues: "Whether a child dies in infancy due to poverty and consequent malnutrition and lack of hygiene, or if it grows up and at a later stage is executed as a political opponent, the society in which this happens must be considered hostile to human rights". To this argument Barash & Webel (2002) includes peace, and claim that peace should be the end in itself. Therefore, human rights and peace are connected in different aspects. Human rights are fundamental rights of each and every individual, even though the respect for these rights is quite new. The fundamental rights have traditionally been a part of the social order, yet in the recent times these rights have been focused on the individuals, especially those who were victims of armed conflicts. The human rights law gradually developed to include several factors for protecting and respecting the right of the individual (Barash & Webel 2002: 432f; 454).

As an extension of the human rights law, the children's rights convention sprung out as a result of the atrocities to children after the Second World War. The Convention of the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN and the final bill was passed in 1989. UNHCHR (2008) states: "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth". The countries that ratified the Convention of Rights of the Child regard the immanent dignity of every human being and believe in the basic human rights. These rights include civil liberties and freedoms with equal treatment disregarded of race, gender, language, religion or national or social background. The UN human rights have established that children have the right to special care and assistance. Further, the child has the right to be raised within the ideals proposed by the UN, which includes peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity (UN Child Convention 2003).

UNESCO has instituted the definition of peace in to the concept: *Culture of Peace*, defined as: "a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by taking their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and

negotiation among individuals, groups and nations." This definition is concerned with education, economic and social development and human rights (UNESCO 2008). This definition emphasizes the importance of humanity and human rights in order to have peace, and underlines that peace is not simply an antonym with war, but the concept includes respect and certain rights for the people. In this perspective, the idea of peace is more than the absence of war and it includes more than a balance of power. One important aspect of the concept of peace is on micro level, as Galtung (1996) underlines, the positive peace gives room for basic needs, freedom and institutionalised measures, both socially and individually. On the national level, positive peace is when structural violence is absent and socially by the exclusion of violence. Galtung (1996) argues that negative peace implies the presence of violence and injustice, and is often linked with peace building efforts. Violence can occur on a macro level, between states; however, the victims of violence are on micro level. Within this framework, peace building from below is of importance. Hence, war is not a precondition for building peace in a country in order to build peace. This leads to a positive understanding of peace, as the presence of something, rather than the absence. In terms of UNESCO, peace is the presence of human rights. Within this view, the declaration of children's rights can be placed in a peace perspective.

Galtung offers a thorough framework for the study of peaceful developments by arguing for the importance of actors such as NGOs to promote positive peace and bring about sustainable peaceful developments. As an addition to Galtung or a contestant to the theory of positive peace, UNDP (1994) developed the notion of human security which is a contemporary approach. Human security directs focus on the individuals and put them within the security notion, by regarding a set of insecurities that may occur on micro level and how these may pose a threat to the individuals. Further, human security regards how individuals can be empowered in order to meet these threats. Though there are similarities between the positive peace and human security approaches, such as the focus on individuals, yet there are also differences. Therefore I will apply on both approaches, first as independent parts, and then compile them to examine how they can contribute as a possible tool of explanation in this thesis.

3.2 Human Security

"Human security and national security should be – and often are – mutually reinforcing. But secure states do not automatically mean secure people" (Human Security Report 2005).

Traditionally, the question of security has been concerned with protection of the nation-state with the main objective of "national security" - to protect the state from external threats. The challenges to security in the 21st century differs from the traditional security threats, as most of the conflicts in the world today are intra-state conflicts; this demands an extended definition of the security concept (UNDP 1994). The security concept is not static in quest to preserve status quo, on the contrary, security is dynamic, seeking to achieve comprehensive and true security. This requires efforts to correct unjust conditions and to promote human development; therefore security is not limited to protect the state from war, but also protection from other threats and potential dangers to individual survival and people's well-being (Fischer 1993: 7). The concept of security can be divided into a positive and a negative definition. The latter is concerned with the "management of external threats" and the positive definition claims that security is a choice which is reliant upon "a moral judgment about human *needs* not only human fear" (McSweeney 1999: 91f). This shift in the traditional notion of security marks the importance of human needs as a part of security. The definition of 'security' can entail four important questions to be taken into consideration; i) security from what, ii) security by whom, iii) Security achieved though which means, and iv) security for whom. Historically, the state has been regarded as the protector of human fear, yet when defining security outside of the state one needs to determine which new parameters could be equally useful (Hoogensen & Rottem 2004).

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) expressed the important shift in the security debate and posed the significance to focus on people rather than states. The broadest meaning of the concept entails "freedom from want, freedom from fear" and a life of dignity. UNDP (1994) offers the following definition of the concept, by focusing on two important aspects: "It means first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities" (UNDP 1994: 23). Thus, the focus lies on the micro level and is concerned with individual's interests, grievances, deprivations and needs. Therefore, UNDP argues that human security will complement state security by

enhancing human rights and strengthening human development, by protecting people and empower them to act on their own behalf (UNDP 1994). As an extension to the definition of human security, one should consider the individual in a social context by providing security from insecure elements, such as: i) *personal sources*, forms of visible and immediate consequences, ii) *institutional sources*, neglect of human rights, and iii) *structural and cultural sources* of human insecurity, such as poverty, hunger and unemployment. To provide human security, these functions must be regarded. The pressure from transnational and local NGOs can contribute to changes and enforcement of peace (Conteh-Morgan 2005). National security is concerned with defending the territory from military threats, yet most people experiences other threats to their personal security from such insecurities as disease, hunger, crime or domestic violence. For others, the threats come from the state itself, rather than an external actor. Therefore the traditional state security is necessary, yet not a sufficient condition of human welfare (Newman 2001: 240).

Subsequently, the concept of human security has been widely discussed among scholars (e.g. see Krause 2004; Mack 2004; Axworthy 2001; Thankur 2000, Thomas & Tow 2002), questioning whether a refinement of security is important, and how the concept should be defined. The scholars are positioning themselves within two distinct directions, a broad and narrow framework, discussing whether the notion is useful as a policy matter or as an analytical tool. The proponents for a broad definition (see Axworthy 2001, Thakur 2000) lists several factors that can harm people, while the proponents for the narrow approach (see Mack 2004) claim that violence is the only category who poses human insecurity. The proponents for the latter (see Mack 2004, Krause 2004, Thomas and Tow 2002); argue that violence is a threat to human security, and limits their focus to claim that violence is the only category who pose threats. As Mack stresses, more people are killed as a result of state repression and its own government, than by foreign armies (Mack 2004). The narrow proponents claim that by focusing on one distinct category of security dilemmas will enable a clarification of the analytical and policy level of the concept. The proponents for a broad definition (see Axworthy 2001, UNDP 1994, Thakur 2000) argues that human security includes more than violent threats, and claims that the narrow definition excludes other coercions by limiting their focus to violence. The scholars in favour for a broad definition argues that threats should include hunger, disease and natural disasters, as these insecurities kill more people than war and terrorism (Owen 2004).

The broad proponents are often criticized for regarding development issues as threats to individuals, while the narrow proponents are critiqued for excluding other than violent threats to human security. The lack of an agreed definition complicates the analytical aspect of the concept. On this basis, Owen (2004) suggests a threefold-based conceptualization of the concept; i) the need to accept that all causes of death, except age (old age) should be regarded as preventable harms and can be regarded as human insecurities, ii) the categories is not threats per se, rather, they are conceptual groups that gives disciplinary alignment to the concept. Therefore Owen suggest: "*human security is the protection of all human lives from critical and pervasive environmental, economic, food, health, personal and political threats*" (Owen 2004: 383).

Burgess (2007) argues that the concept would have a wider relevance if it was regionally determined by the insecurities the region faces. With starting point in Central and Eastern Europe, Burgess states that though each region experience different threats; there are common risks and insecurities, such as common human worries: personal security, income security, environmental and health security (Burgess 2007). Similarly, Winslow & Ericson look beyond the debate of a broad and narrow definition by focus on the social and cultural contexts where people experience insecurity. Following this line of arguments, Owen (2004) suggests that a definition of human security should be a compromise between the narrow and broad definition. The advocates for the narrow definition should accept that violence is only one of many categories, as should the proponents for a broad approach accept that not all developmental issues pose a threat to human beings. Therefore, Owen advocates that human security must protect the vital core of all human lives, without differ between factors that cause death. Further, Owen rejects a limited list of causes and suggests a clearer definition: "Human security is the protection of the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive environmental, economic, food, health, personal and political threats." As it do not subsist a final list of threats to traditional security, human security threats would be defined by international organizations, national governments and NGOs operating within the area as threats differs from time and place (Owen 2004).

The new focus on this concept has also brought another dimension to the protection of human beings, who often are the victims of conflict, poverty, looting and other forms of insecurity matters. The different approaches to the concept of human security reflects upon diverse

concerns in the society, while the concept has included a focus on identity, ethnicity, race and gender (see e.g. Hoogensen & Stuvøy 2006). My suggestion is to extend the notion to include a focus on children; therefore I will use the human security approach to focus on children and children's situation in Russia. Human security can be relevant to the study of empowerment of children, as the core of the concept underlines that protection is a necessity. When threats and insecurities occur, whether they are economic or personal, children should be protected against any insecurity that might decrease their quality of life. In order to provide human security, NGOs can arguably be important actors to protect individuals, and secure that human rights are respected by an explicit focus on the individuals.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This thesis is based upon a qualitative methodological research, where fieldwork, including participant observation and qualitative interviews, were the main sources for data collection. This chapter will address the methodological framework for the study and give an account of my research.

4.1 Choosing a methodological approach

Social science is based upon the drive to understand and explain the world around us by constructing models on how people interact and by studying the patterns of social life and social action. Science is an ongoing process as the social world is dynamic and is only explained through theories that have been the basis for research. The aim is to explain, predict and/or understand the social life using qualitative or qualitative methods (Black 1999: 2f). Any clear division between *quantitative* and *qualitative* methods can be hard to grasp, and it is debated if there in fact is any clear distinction between these concepts (e.g. see Bryman 2006, Hammersly 2003). Before one chooses method, it is important to have a clear understanding of what you want to examine, and the research problem will determine what model will be fruitful to use. Stake (1995) notes three major differences between qualitative and quantitative research: i) the purpose of explanation *or* understanding, ii) distinction between personal *or* impersonal researcher, and iii) difference between knowledge discovered *or* knowledge constructed (Stake 1995: 37). Following Stake's distinctions I wanted to gain understanding of the situation by familiarize me with the context. Thus, one important aspect in choosing qualitative methodology is the opportunity to gain an understanding about the context of study; therefore the intention of the research is constructing knowledge. Charmaz (2006: 14) claims that the qualitative researcher has a great advantage over quantitative, as qualitative researchers can "add pieces to the research puzzle or conjure entire new puzzles." This gives the researcher flexibility to follow a lead that emerges during and after the data collection. When choosing methodological approach for the study of civil society in Russia, I considered what data I would find most useful for my study, and deduced that an understanding about how the civil society in Russia works, and how NGOs can work for the individuals in Russia as relevant for my study. As I am concerned about the working conditions for NGOs and the effects this has on individuals, the qualitative method seemed most compatible with my study.

By doing both participant observation and qualitative interviews it was possible to reflect the data gathered by observation through the interviews, where the informants were asked questions concerning their daily work. I interviewed staff members from SCNiR, but I also interviewed other international NGOs and organizations represented in Murmansk. The data collected could hardly be quantified. When seeking a deeper understanding about a certain context, and how the individuals experience the context, a questioner would not capture the thoughts and reactions in the same way as a qualitative approach. In addition to primary sources, I have also used secondary sources, such as project descriptions, strategy plan from SCNiR and other relevant documents (see appendix II).

4.2 Qualitative methodology: Fieldwork

During the autumn of 2008 I traveled to Murmansk, Russia to conduct my fieldwork at Save the Children Norway in Russia (SCNiR). The fieldwork was carried out between September 5th until October 3rd and November 19th until December 12th. When I first entered the field in September, I soon realized how important it was to be present in the setting you want to study. Just taking the bus from my home to the office gave me many valuable impressions about the daily life in Murmansk. Also when visiting remote areas I realized how the feelings of security changed from sitting in a car to taking a step out of the car. Nielsen (1996: 47) describes the lessons of a fieldwork as: "A way to perceive the world rather than just a theory of *how* we learned to perceive the world. It is a more implicit attitude towards life, than an explicit way of life." (Nielsen 1996, own translation)

4.3 Participant observation

I did participant observation within SCNiR. This included staying at the office, participating in staff meetings, joining staff on field visits in other cities in Murmansk Oblast[3], and took part in the organizing of a film-festival. Joining the staff on field visits outside of the office provided me with additional impressions about the area they are operating in. When visiting partners, I was given the opportunity to ask the partners questions to become familiar with their work and the local society. As SCNiR is a part of Save the Children in Norway, they are used to having Norwegians at the office; therefore my presence was not a problem for them. However, this contributed to a slight confusion about my role there, whether I was a

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[3] In addition to Murmansk city, I visited Monchegorsk and Kandalaksha, I also visited Abram-Mys, the poorest part of Murmansk.

representative from Norway or a researcher. When I first came to the office I found it necessary to get familiar with the organization and the Russian context. During the first weeks, I was working hard to gain an understanding about how the daily life at the office was and how the organization worked. I found it important to establish trust among the staff members, as doing research in Russia can be challenging and easily raise distrust and surplus skepticism from the environment.

Yin (2003) states that participant observation "provides certain unusual opportunities for collecting case study data, but also involves major problems" (Yin 2003: 94). In my study, Save the Children is a case study used as an example and illustration of a more complex situation. A *major problem* according to Yin is the lack of time to take notes when doing observation. Based on own experiences this statement did not raise any crucial problems in my research. I chose not to take any notes while I was in the field, as I believed it would be interruptive and uncomfortable for the informants. Thus, the presence of a researcher can have effects on the informants' behavior, and openly taking notes in these situations would only create a stronger distance between the informants and me as a researcher. I kept a diary and wrote down my impressions, thoughts and information as soon as I got home. Considering these weaknesses, one of the main objectives by doing observation is to experience the situations in the same way as the people of the study, and by being present in the same setting provided me valuable impressions. Spradley (1980) explains participant observation in terms of: "participation allows you to experience activities directly, to get the feel of what events are like, and to record your own perceptions" (Spradley 1980: 51). As a researcher you get close to the phenomena you are studying and are enabled to experience the situations the informants are experiencing. In qualitative studies, observation has been considered as "fundamental to understanding another culture" (Silverman 2005: 111).

Participant observation does also provide *unusual opportunities* (Yin 2003: 94) and the opportunity to get access to events that would be hard to obtain information about, and to perceive reality form the viewpoint of someone "inside" the case rather than someone external. I realized that it would be hard to get the opportunity to visit children's clubs or schools if I did not go with SCNiR, as I would not know where to go or where to ask for permission for such visits. Being a part of SCNiR also gave me opportunities to travel to cities outside of Murmansk and enabled me to see more of the region. These experiences gave a more reflective view and provided me with a greater impression. These unique opportunities

can also be considered biased, as the researcher only meets with people approved by the main informants. However, when collecting data outside ones own culture the researcher is dependent upon using networks for connections. Mason (2004: 89) notes "knowledge generated through high quality observation is usually rich, rounded, local and specific". The data collected through fieldwork at SCNiR provided my research with local and specific knowledge, and impressions about the daily life for one international NGO within Murmansk Oblast.

4.4 Qualitative Interviews

The qualitative interview takes place between unequal parts, as the researcher set the context and defines and controls the situation (Kvale 2005: 21). Finding informants for the study was not as hard as I had presumed. I could easily access the information about international NGOs that were present in Murmansk through my connections. Also, since the international NGOs I met had close relations to Norway, they were happy to meet with a Norwegian student. The qualitative interview has many commons with an ordinary conversation; however the qualitative interview requires skills and attention beyond those of an ordinary conversation. It requires "more intense listening than normal conversations, a respect for and curiosity about what people say, a willingness to acknowledge what is not understood, and the ability to ask what is not yet known" (Rubin & Rubin 2005: 14). The qualitative interview gives in-depth exploration of a particular topic or experiences and it is useful for interpretive examination of a topic decided by the researcher. The informant is encouraged to reflect upon his or her own experiences in a way that seldom occurs in the daily life (Charmaz 2006: 25). I chose to use open-ended questions, this would enable the informants to speak free and mention stories important for them. This approach gave me general information about the everyday life of the informants, however, as I mainly interviewed people working at NGOs I experienced that they would tell me their aims and objectives from the organization's perspective, rather than personal experiences and thoughts. Another challenge was to get in-depth information about particular topics related to the civil society. I did not ask direct questions about issues I considered to be sensitive regarding the civil society or the Government. I was concerned I should come across as too blunt. This could be considered as weaknesses with my interviews.

The qualitative interview can be seen as a "directed conversation" and will not provide the researcher with neutral data, as the informants might give the researcher the information he or she believes that the researcher wants or needs. Using qualitative interviews gives possibilities

to understand events and experiences in which the researcher did not participate. The researcher can thereby gain a better understanding of the way the informants comprehend and experience the situation. Another difference between a conversation and interview is the use of voice-recorder or openly taking notes, which makes the interview more formal (Rubin & Rubin 2005). Before starting the interview I presented myself and my project, and I always asked for permission to use tape recorder in the interview setting. I was denied this opportunity several times and I therefore had to take notes, which directed my focus to take notes and disabled me to pay full attention to the questions of the interview. The qualitative interviews were used to gain deeper information about the situation I had observed, and the interviews were an addition to this data.

In my study, I contacted different organizations that operate in Murmansk Oblast, asking them for interviews. I have interviewed seven people belonging to different organizations who all are based in Russia. Of these seven interviews, I conducted one group interview, one telephone-interview and four face-to-face interviews. I used a set of semi-structured questions; these questions were worked out beforehand, and were flexible for change during the interview. The questions guided me through the interviews and I made small adjustments depending on who I was interviewing. I was mainly focusing on four topics, but these topics were changed to fit the person of the study. The interviews were situated at the office of the organization I was interviewing, and in some cases other people were present at the office during the interview, but they did not participate in the interview. My main informants were staff members from SCNiR and through them I was given the opportunity to talk with their project partners and to do activities with children. I chose not to include children's voices in this study as it is a very sensitive issue in Russia and I did not want to expose children for any questions concerning this topic.

4.4.1 Group interviews

Thagaard (2001) argues that group-interviews can contribute to extend a topic as the informants will openly discuss the topic and can compliment each others thoughts. A clear weakness with this approach is the possibility that misleading and dominant viewpoints are promoted. Therefore, this approach is best fitted in environments where the members are interdependent and share the same foundation (Thaggard 2001: 85). When I conducted a group-interview I met with the director and consultant of an organization, and they had a fruitful and complimentary discussion about the topics I was concerned about. (Robson 1995:

241) notes that group dynamic or power hierarchies can influence such settings. However, when interviewing two people from one organization, their views seemed complimentary, but one should always consider the possibility of power relations when conducting a group interview. The interview was recorded, and was based on an informal conversation. I introduced my project and told them that I was interested in their work in the region and an understanding of how the civil society in Murmansk Oblast functioned. From these topics they would explain their work followed by a more or less informal conversation about how they experienced the civil society.

4.4.2 Telephone-interview

Rubin & Rubin (2005) notes different challenges by using a telephone-interview for data collection, such as lack of small-talk, and less time to build trust. Another aspect is the difficulty to sense whether a question is sensitive (Rubin & Rubin 2005: 225). Robson (1995) argues that the telephone interview have commons with a normal interview, as you get quick response, possibilities to use probes and more. Thus the lack of visual aspect might give hindrance in interpretation (Robson 1995: 241f). Using a telephone-interview might not be the preferred way of doing interviews, but in this case it was necessary and practical. I interviewed the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, placed in Oslo and I wanted to ask for their opinions on some topics, therefore a telephone interview was useful. The interview was recorded after approval from the informant and later transcribed. Before calling the organization, I forwarded them information about my project and what I was interested to talk about, in this way my informant could agree if he would talk to me about these issues and would also be given the opportunity to decline. As the Norwegian Helsinki Committee is concerned with human rights in Russia and openly criticizes violations on these rights, I was comfortable in asking these questions. The interview did not last long, as I found it hard to small-talk and get other than concrete information; this could be considered as a weakness that could have been avoided in a face-to-face interview.

4.5 Validity and Reliability

Researchers have to take reliability and validity into account when collecting data to make sure that the research is trustworthy. Validity is a way for reassuring that you are measuring what you say you are, and reliability concerns the accuracy of the methods and techniques used to collect data (Mason 2004: 39). In qualitative studies the issue of reliability is often dependent upon the researcher's own interpretation of what is observed, often through

recorded data and field notes. In order to secure the reliability of data it is crucial to document the procedures used (Silverman 2005: 221; 224). Therefore the question of reliability of data collection through qualitative methods is important to address. This study is based upon participant observation and qualitative interviews, which enabled me to ask questions and observe behavior to gain understanding about a certain context. By supplementing observation with formal interviews, the level of reliability might increase as the notes from observation could be compared with the informants' description of the situation. The main informants of the study were selected through self selection and the rest of the informants were selected through network and connections during my fieldwork. Using networks connections actively gave me access to possible informants. However, this also directed me to a certain type of people, approved by my other connections, and in this sense it can be considered biased.

I experienced that people spoke openly through informal interviews, yet in the formal interview-setting I experienced that some of my informants hesitated to answer openly and seemed skeptical to my intentions. I was also denied the possibility to use a tape-recorder in some of the formal interviews. Others were informative and seemed content to contribute with information to my project. All the qualitative interviews were conducted at a professional work place of the informants, on their own demand. However, another aspect in doing interviews at a Russian office is the possibility that they are under surveillance by the Government, and therefore feel restricted to speak openly. As official statistics and documents in Russia hardly is available and what is, is highly questionable, I found it rewarding to do qualitative research to gain better understanding about the conditions NGOs in Russia meet. This method provided me with valid data for the study. Assuring confidentiality, safety and protection about the informant's privacy can contribute to reassure valid and reliable data for the study. Therefore I claim that my data are reliable regarding the purpose of the study, and gave deep insight about the working conditions for international NGOs within Murmansk Oblast.

4.5.1 Language and use of Interpreter

Previously, I have studied Russian language at University of Copenhagen and I have basic knowledge of Russian. However, my knowledge of Russian language is limited and not sufficient to use in data collection. The main informants of the study belonged to international NGOs; and though most of them are Russian, they speak fluent English. This enabled me to

speak English during interviews and I could also communicate with them in English during informal conversations. During field-visits I met with SCNiR's partners and in these situations, one of the staff members from SCNiR would act as an interpreter during informal conversations. Using the staff from SCNiR as interpreters may raise ethical dilemmas: whether the informant was influenced by the presence of the interpreter and how reliant the translation was. These issues should be regarded in terms of reliability of my data. However, using staff as interpreters was only during informal conversations and as the conversations were with partners of SCNiR, I regard the information collected through the informal interviews as reliable and trustworthy.

4.6 Using a case study: Generalization

This thesis is based upon a case study of Save the Children Norway in Russia's (SCNiR) work in the North-West Russia, namely Murmansk Oblast. Yin (2003: 13) has defined the case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." The aim is to cover contextual conditions relevant for the study. With the intention to gain understanding about the context for NGOs in Russia, I found it beneficial to focus on one organization. This enabled me to limit my focus and gather in-debt information about one particular case. Due to a limited timeframe, collecting in-depth information about two or more organizations in this area would have been extremely time-consuming and might not have to be compatible. Therefore, I chose to have my main focus on one case, although I have been in discussion with other organizations located within Murmansk Oblast in order to get a better understanding and reflections about the conditions for NGOs in this region.

The use of case study method has often been criticized by the lack of representativeness and level of generalization and traditionally, the case study method has been met with prejudice and concern about lack of scientific generalization (Yin 2003). Flyvbjerg (2001) makes two interesting arguments about generalization, i) generalization is dependent upon the case and how it is chosen; hence it is incorrect to say that one cannot generalize from one case. In his second argument he states: ii) generalization of large samples or small cases is overrated as the main source of scientific progress (Flyvbjerg 2001: 73ff). Thus, the problem of generalization can be solved by using a theoretical sample, Mason (1996) argues: "theoretical sampling means selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research questions (…)" (Mason cited in Silverman 2005: 130). In addition, Flyvbjerg finds

that Eckstein (1975) has argued for the relevance of case studies when they are closely linked with theories, and therefore the case study can be valid, as science has its basis in the *creation of knowledge* (Wissengeshaft) and generalization is just one way of doing this (Eckstein cited in Flyvbjerg 2001).

4.7 Potential bias

Yin (2003: 94) refers to a potential bias and concern that the researcher might become a supporter of the organization under study as *major problem* in participant observation. I am engaged in Save the Children in Norway as a volunteer, and already a supporter of the ideals of Save the Children. This raises a question, whether I as a researcher in this case am biased. However, my main reason for doing research was to gain an understanding of the context for i) International NGOs in Russia, and ii) Children in Russia, and not to either show my support, criticize or compare Save the Children's work to any other organizations. An interesting argument in this respect comes from Strong (1979: 229): "To suppose that any researcher enters a field without past experience or some pre-existing ideas is unrealistic" (Strong cited in Silverman 2005: 29). What Strong underlines, is that any researcher entering the field would have some pre-existing ideas, and as long as one are aware and conscious about these ideas, it is still possible to conduct a reflective research.

4.8 Dilemma of insider and outsider: "contextual knowledge"

Donna Haraway (1991) describes the dilemma between being an *outsider* and *insider* as "situated knowledge." When the researcher *actively* reflects upon their own context and how the different context could provide limitations and possibilities for their research, it is in this process, knowledge becomes situated. Further, Haraway claims that research subjects and research objects do not live separate and isolated lives, and then by situate the knowledge, the background and conditions enables knowledge to be produced (Haraway 1991: 188ff). In several occasions I strived to find my role within the organization, due to the fact that I am an active member of Save the Children Norway and because of other connections in Murmansk. As a Norwegian doing fieldwork in Russia, I am a natural outsider. This was reinforced when I went on field visits with the staff and met with their partners. I was introduced to their partners as a Norwegian student, and the partners were notified that I would come beforehand. During the visits to partners I felt like an "outsider" for several reasons. First, I was unfamiliar with the projects and how the system worked, and, second, because of language barriers. I was also asked for favors, because I am a Norwegian I served as a representative from

Norway and I was asked to use my connections in Murmansk. In both these cases I agreed, but the latter instance was difficult, as I am not used to using my connections actively.

I also experienced being an *insider* during a joint film festival between Norway, Sweden and Russia. During this festival I experienced that I was included with the staff members in Russia, and I was a link between the Scandinavian youth and the Russian staff members. I also had an "advantage" as I easily would connect to the Scandinavian youth, as well as the Russian youth. Therefore I decided to use the different opportunities as tools for collecting data, rather than restricting myself from such situations and limit my role. This made me more confident in what a researcher can do and cannot do in such setting, as I actively reflected upon my different roles when I was acting as an *insider* and *outsider*, and decided to gain knowledge from each experience. Haraway argues that as long as you are able to be critical to your own role as a researcher it will provide you with knowledge that can be situated (Haraway 1991: 188ff). This is the position I have taken as well.

4.9 Ethical considerations

When one is studying human subjects, the researcher will have to face the values of the informants, as well as the researchers own values. Mason (1996) has recognized two dilemmas facing the qualitative researcher: 1) intimate relations with private life of individuals, and 2) changing directions during the qualitative interview (cited in Silverman 2005: 257). These dilemmas can be avoided if the purpose for the research is clarified before the fieldwork. The division between a friend and a researcher can easily be blurred, as Nielsen (1996) notes, because when doing research one is often spending a lot of time alone in a foreign society which makes these roles vague (Nielsen 1996). I was also dependent upon establishing good relations with SCNiR, therefore I felt it necessary to help in the cases where I could. However, I did my fieldwork at a work place; therefore the relationship was generally professional.

Doing fieldwork raises many concerns about the people getting involved in the study, as well as ones own role as a researcher. I chose to be open about my study and I believe that openness was both necessary and of advantage for me in this setting, thus ethically correct. The relations between the researcher and informants can be important for the outcome, and being open about my intentions created trust between the informants and me, thus it was easier to get additional information about the topic I was interested in. A negative concern by

this approach might have been that the staff members were afraid to share any frustration with an open mind because they knew the research project. Though, I believe that I would not have been able to establish trust and good relations if I did not share my intentions with the informants.

4.9.1 Protection of informants

My data collection is approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD)[4] and given license by the Privacy Ombudsman for Research. All the data I have collected is confidential. Thus, I will not refer to the areas and towns where I collected data, thereby the informants I met during the field-visits are not traceable, and will be kept anonymous. The informants from international NGOs are anonymous and presented under fictive names, if nothing else is agreed. This raises a dilemma for my main informants, the people from SCNiR. The organization is traceable and there are few people who work in this organization. This dilemma has been discussed with the Country Director in Russia and we have agreed on the terms of my research. All the informants presented under direct quotes have had the chance to approve the way they are presented, and they have all given me their consent to use the direct quotes. Further, I have chosen to present some informants under *Anonymous Organization*, as I regard the name of the organization irrelevant in this thesis.

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[4] See http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp,

Chapter 5: Working Conditions for NGOs and Children's Situation in Russia

In this chapter I discuss the theoretical perspectives of positive peace and human security in relation to the empirical data gathered through my fieldwork in Murmansk Oblast. First, I will look at the conditions which NGOs in Russia work under, by using the notions of positive peace. Then I will apply both approaches to discuss SCNiR's efforts for children's situation in Russia.

5.1 The Russian context in light of positive peace

To recapitulate, Galtung (1996)[5] makes a distinction between notion of positive and negative peace, claiming that the latter concept is concerned with i) direct violence, ii) structural violence and iii) cultural violence. The typology of violence is used by Galtung to differ between arenas where societal violence can occur; the individual level, political and/or economical level, and within religion, law and/or ideology. Violence in these instances can be intended or unintended, dependent upon the arena in which the violence occurs. Further, Galtung explains the notion of positive peace as the absence of overt and structural violence. Galtung regards positive peace within three different contexts: i) direct positive peace, ii) structural positive peace, and iii) cultural positive peace. Through these divisions of the concept Galtung argues that positive peace is concentrated on different arenas. Direct positive peace stresses the importance of individual's well-being and is concerned with the micro level. Structural positive peace is concerned with establishing peaceful structures within the society and ensuring freedom from repression. Cultural positive peace aims at promoting peaceful institutional measures through ideology and law. Following this notion of positive peace, Galtung claims that these developments can be promoted in different arenas within the society: i) state, ii) capital, and through iii) civil society. Establishing peaceful social structures through different levels and institutions will, in this line of thinking, reassure sustainable peace (Galtung 1996: 9; 30ff).

Galtung suggests three actors for developing positive peace, i) the state, ii) the financial capital and iii) the civil society. Here, the civil society will be addressed as an actor for promoting and developing positive peace in the society. Furthermore, Galtung claims that there are different types of violence that needs to be eliminated from society in order to create

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[5] In this chapter, when referring to Galtung it means Galtung (1996) if nothing else is noted.

positive peace: i) direct violence, ii) structural violence and iii) cultural violence. Direct violence is evident, structural violence is built within the structures of the society, while cultural violence is often a combination of the former forms of violence. Cultural violence is thus often evident within religion, ideology and/or law. This chapter will focus on cultural violence within law (Galtung 1996). Galtung places special attention on structural violence, which is interrelated within the definition of positive peace when: "exploitation is minimal or eliminated and there is no structural violence" (Barash & Webel 2002: 4f).

5.2 Working conditions for NGOs in Russia

The developments of civil society in Russia commenced in the 1980s, as social movements and political parties emerged. The developments of informal groups stagnated and many of the organizations were too weak to continue as social actors. Disregarded the challenges of establishing a civil society in the Russian Federation, many organizations was established and the number of NGOs continued to grow, disregarded the complex conditions for the civil society. The challenges can be categorized in three ways: i) economical factors, ii) cultural heritage and iii) the political situation. Economically, Russia experienced challenges in transforming the economic system, and due to these difficulties several international organizations were established in Russia in the 1990s. In addition, Russian NGOs have found it difficult to receive financial support and therefore often forced to close down or look for international funding. Culturally, the historical heritage from forced membership in organizations in the Soviet Union often made people sceptical to joining such social organizations. Politically, organizations have been subjugated by the state, as Putin's policy toward civil society is often characterized by linking it closer to the interest of the state. In 2006 a new law was ratified by the Russian Government and directed at international NGOs in order to limit their influence (Hønnesland & Jørgensen 2006).

One informant explains the working conditions for NGOs in Russia: "Russian NGOs… it is… we have quite many organizations, but mostly they are local and they are not so strong on the state level as it appeared in the beginning. There are not so many organizations that are active in all of Russia. Mostly they are very local and on the city level. There are only a few quite big and on state level in all Russia" (Vladimir, anonymous organization). Like this informant notes, the space for civil society is limited, as they do not reach the state level; rather the NGOs are local and often weak. Another informant explains: "There are few NGOs, and they are rather weak, therefore we only cooperate with two NGOs [out of 30 partners]. It is hard to

find funding for NGOs. We cooperate with state structures, to promise more sustainability in the future. Of our partners there are 95 % state institutions. They have knowledge and methods, and they can continue the projects without us" (Inna, Save the Children). This illustrates the working conditions for NGOs operating in Russia. There are few NGOs to cooperate with and organizations often choose GOs in order to promise sustainability of their projects. I interpret this as a weakness of the civil society in Russia – it reveals that most NGOs are too weak to promise project sustainability and the subsequent involvement of state structures.

5.2.1 Direct Challenges

One challenge for NGOs is the level of influence due to lack of statistical measurers. The issue of statistics is important because it brings attention to the problems, particularly of direct violence. One informant states: "Russians do not want to publish any statistics in English. Statistics can be so many things, like other places in the world statistics can be manipulated and misused. This is the problem: statistics can be reduced and adjusted as they [the government] please" (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages). SCNiR notes that children exposed to direct violence are not offered a decent place to stay during procedures where social authorities examine their cases. The Government's lack of interest in creating child-friendly spaces or crisis centres for children exposed to direct violence is an obstacle in the region. Furthermore, SCNiR is concerned about conditions in centres of social assistance, as the salaries are low which often result in incompetent workers (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009). Galtung claims that direct violence is related to evident violence, which is intended and visible. For SCNiR one of the main objectives is to "fulfil children's rights to protection against violence and sexual abuse." Child abuse and direct violence are serious problems within Murmansk Oblast; official statistics states that in Murmansk Oblast 679 children left their families in 2005, and SCNiR notes that child abuse is one of the main reasons for children leaving their families. The neglect of direct violence towards children is based upon social and cultural conditions such as the widespread rate of corporal punishment, lack of understanding of violence as a social problem and low awareness about children's rights. SCNiR seeks to form a public opinion about the issue of violence towards children and supports reintegration and rehabilitation of children exposed to sexual violence. Due to the lack of statistical data on children exposed to psychological and/or physical violence it is difficult to define the scale of the problem (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009). Related to the statement above, the lack of statistics regarding children exposed to direct violence can be

a reason for lack of governmental engagement in these matters. In addition, the lack of governmental concern and involvement in the issues regarding direct violence towards children has led SCNiR to propose cooperation through a selection of a majority of GOs in the region and a minority of NGOs.

5.2.2 Political Structures

According to Galtung, structural violence is within the political and economic structures of the society, and structural violence is often repressive. While relating structural violence to the civil society within the political sphere in Russia, I will regard SCNiR's role to act within the society. At the political level, structural violence can be a form for constraint for the civil society to act according to their objectives. One informant stressed that their organization was a non-political organization, and as an INGO in Russia they were in a vulnerable situation (Fieldnotes 09.09.08). I interpreted this comment as a suggestion to be cautious when studying the civil society in Russia, and therefore I got the impression that the civil society in Russia is rather weak. This impression was strengthened, when a documentary film-maker in Murmansk was advised by an NGO not to focus on "political" issues, and rather refer to them as "social". The film-maker was told that the NGO was in a vulnerable situation and there were certain boundaries regarding what was possible to do (Fieldnotes 29.11.08). As these comments illustrates, NGOs wishes to keep a neutral or anonymous role in relation to the authorities as well as keep political issues separated from the NGO.

One informant underlined: "To put pressure in Russia is not a good strategy. We believe in transparency and dialogue [with the Government]." (Galina, SCNiR). This statement was a comment on the extent to which SCNiR does active lobbying toward governmental policies. Applying these statements to structural violence, the political structures seem to be dominant in relation to what is possible and impossible for organizations to do. One informant added that organizations in Murmansk are weak and often forced to close down due to competition from the Government. It is difficult to influence or lobby anything as an NGO, and particularly as an international NGO, as they are often interpreted as interference from abroad (Fieldnotes 16.09.08). Underlining the weakness of local NGOs, can be a political factor in this sense. One informant commented that: "We go with the current, we do not go against. We support the Government on projects we like, it is better to go hand in hand with the Government and lobby from there" (Galina, Save the Children). This quote illustrates the working conditions for SCNiR. Though my informant stresses cooperation with the

Government, I interpret this statement as a constraint in order to influence governmental policies. Therefore SCNiR chooses to follow governmental measures. One informant stresses the importance of working in accordance with the Government: "We cannot work with the civil society if we exclude the Russian decision-makers on all levels. We cannot do that, if we did we had to be careful and would be evicted at once. You need accept from the Government. You have too. If you don't it is just a waste of money." (Gunnar, Children's Villages). This informant explains the importance of working within the state structures, particularly if it is an international NGO that wishes to invest in a project in Russia. Further, this informant claim: "From my experience, I have learned that you should always be friends with the decision-makers. Always have good connections, not friends, but you should be on the same side as the decision makers. That is important." (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages). This informant also underlines the importance of working within the state structures:

"It is important to get accept and to explain our intentions, so that we can come to an agreement and secure that they [the Government] will not evict us. It has happened to others here. If you start working without notifying the government… you know, surveillance happens here, it is very active here. They [the Government] know everything about us, and if we do things they do not accept and they did not approve you can pack your bags and go home. For us, it was important to establish good relations to the Government, and it took us about two years before we gained understanding for what we are doing." (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages)

This informant explains the importance of establishing understanding and good relations with the government in order to exist as an international NGO in Russia. I interpret this statement as a restriction in order to operate as an NGO within the civil society in Russia, as it seems dependent upon the state whether the NGO is allowed to operate or not. One informant comments upon the freedom for NGOs to operate within Russia: "Organizations like SOS Children's Villages and SCNiR do not criticize the Government, rather they focus on promoting children's rights and is not considered as a threat to the Russian Government" (Enver Djuliman, the Norwegian Helsinki Committee). This impression was also prompted by another informant, who claimed that international NGOs focusing on empowerment of women and children did not pose any real threat to the Russian Government, but for human rights organizations or environmental organizations the Government tended to be more sceptical (Fieldnotes 29.09.08). Furthermore, the informant from the Norwegian Helsinki Committee explained that the registration process for human rights organization in Murmansk Oblast, and noted that the Government required several documents. The Norwegian Helsinki Committee established an office with one Russian employee, and the organization has difficulties to be registered by the authorities in Moscow. The application was dispatched in December 2008, yet in February 2009 they were still waiting for consent from the

Government to establish an office in Murmansk. The Norwegian Helsinki Committee is openly critical to Russian violations on human rights, thus the organization had also cooperated with Russian authorities (Interview with Enver Djuliman 03.02.09). This can be contrasted with the information from other international NGOs in the region, who actively choose not to criticize the Government.

Considering the level of influence by the NGOs and the civil society, one informant claimed: "Our experience of influencing and exist as an NGO here is… well, it would be a lot easier if the civil society had more influence, but of course, everyone agree on this, even the state say that the NGOs and organizations are important actors for new progress" (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages). According to the level of influence of organizations within the political sphere in Murmansk Oblast, several of the informants underline the constraints for international NGOs in the region, as the state often interpret international involvement as interference. There are controlling mechanisms for NGOs in Russia, and particularly for international NGOs. International NGOs are required to do extensive reporting to the Russian Government, with detailed descriptions of the projects, partners, objectives and finances (Fieldnotes 16.09.08). The above statements can also be interpreted in relation to the lack of influence for NGOs, and though the state agrees on the importance of organizations, there are still constraints.

Structural violence is evident within the political structures in the society, and in Russia this can be related to the conditions NGOs in Russia work under. One informant underlines: "It is very important for organizations to work here officially and to be open, because now and before we have quite (short pause) big control, and they need to be open. In some way it is quite good, because then they [organizations] need to have good book-keeping, and some kind of transparency in their work" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization). The informant stresses that the civil sphere in Russia experiences strict control and this can be regarded as a challenge for many organizations. Thus, the informant is pointing at another important aspect regarding the cultural heritage in Russia. There is not a tradition for organizing NGOs in Russia, therefore the informant claims that the increased control can contribute to a positive factor for NGOs as they are forced to control their finances more systematically.

5.2.3 Economic structures

In addition to the political aspect, structural violence can also be build within the economic structures of the society. During the 1990s Russian NGOs did not receive any financial support form the state, and lacked financial support. This led too many weak and short-lived NGOs. Lack of funding opportunities and financial support deterred their work and has been an important factor in explaining challenges for the civil society in Russia (Hønnesland & Jørgensen 2006). The lack of financial support was mentioned by one informant: "We [the Russian Federation] have a special system, but sometimes some companies or departments or official structures are trying to support some social, not social sphere, but some social organizations" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization). As the informant claims, the support system has improved during the resent years with increased financial support. Only recently, President Medvedev has stressed the importance of a vigorous civil society and signed a decree assigning 1.2 billion rubles to Russian NGOs to support developments of civil society. While the pro-government NGOs get financial support by the Government, the independent NGOs are left out (BarentsObserver 2009d). This is further explained by an informant in the following terms: "Not everyone [NGOs] gets funding, but more than one or two, maybe five or ten. They get regional supporting through competitions on the city level. (…) They [the Government] have some kind of grant money for NGOs" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization). The funds for NGOs are more common now than they used to be, as there are support mechanisms for NGOs. Moreover the informant stresses: "Maybe sometimes it [competition for money] is not so open" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization). I interpret this statement as a challenge NGOs are facing, as it might not be fair which organization receiving funding for their activities. This interpretation can be supported by the governmental efforts to establish a youth movement; *Nasji* (ours) also called "Putin-jugend". The organization was established in 2005 and organized demonstrations with support to Putin. The youth were motivated by economic benefits and were dependent upon financial support from the government (Jørgensen 2008).

"It [developing a civil society] will take time. Some of them [NGOs] are stronger and some have opportunities. In the 1990s we had quite many organizations that were supported from international institutions, some from American funds and for example Norwegian funds. Now there are quite many different sources in Russia and on the regional level for NGOs to get funding" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization).

The informant is optimistic about the future for the civil society in Russia, as he compares the situation with the early developments in 1990s. There are still active international funding for

projects in Russia, however the Russian authorities are somewhat shifting their focus as certain NGOs have the possibilities to receive or apply for funding from the state.

5.2.4 Legal structures

In 2006 the Russian authorities introduced a new law directed at the civil sphere in Russia, aimed to increase its control. The law had consequences for the NGOs, and particularly for international NGOs, as every organization had to reregister and wait for approval from the authorities in Moscow. For the organizations placed within Murmansk Oblast this legislation had diverse effects for different organizations. The bill was signed by the former president Putin, aimed at tightening governmental control over the Russian civil society. The law required re-registration of all NGOs and posed excessive work in delivering the necessary documentation. The new requirements were considered impossible to meet: "charters granting groups permission to operate in Russia, address and passport information for groups' founding members and other details", most NGOs considered this as "vast quantities of time" (BarentsObserver 2009e). One informant claimed that the registration process has been a complicated procedure for most NGOs as they had to fill in a lot of documents, apply for registration and wait for approval. After registration there is additional reporting to tax authorities, and reporting if the NGO receive funding from external donors (Interview 10.12.08). Though, most international NGOs in the region of Murmansk Oblast re-registered within the deadline, one informant said: "But now I have heard about some big problems for NGOs in our region [Murmansk Oblast]. They [NGOs] have some problems maybe in accounting or some registrations; I think it is not so good" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization). The informant is pointing at challenges NGOs experiences, in accordance to the demands the Government puts on NGOs. Proskuryakova (2005) notes that the Russian Government has lacked tolerance toward NGOs that is critical to the governmental policies. The forced re-registration of NGOs led many NGOs to work without official registration, as one informant commented: "they can register there [Moscow], but also you have quite many that are not reregistered. It is quite, quite free" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization).

Furthermore, many of the NGOs fill important civic functions providing social services where the state lacks resources or political will to fulfil (Proskuryakova 2005). One informant commented on the issue of re-registration: "Some organizations experience more problems with registration than others because they are operating within a problematic sphere, such as human rights organization. That is one of the problems" (Vladimir, Anonymous

organization). The informant from the Norwegian Helsinki Committee supported this comment, and noted that if they were to establish an office in Russia who were concerned with surveillance of human rights, would be a bigger risk for the Government than educational human rights. The Norwegian Helsinki Committee is limiting their area of operation in Murmansk to be educating people in human rights, and still experience difficulties in establishing an office (Interview 03.02.09). Further, Proskuryakova points at difficulties NGOs experiences due to Russian legislation for the civil society, e.g. that the instructions of registration is regulated by the decree of the federal Government and not by law; therefore the requirements for registration can occur unclear. The Government can at any time ask for documentation and increase control, commencing possible abuse from the Government (Proskuryakova 2005). The Russian legislation has created further challenges for international NGOs: "Because it is quite often, it was quite often when these public organizations worked without any self-control. Sometimes this was a problem for donors. But it is quite complicated work, a lot of paper work. But we have this system. It is quite, quite strong" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization). Due to the NGO bill in 2006 every organization had to re-register, and for international NGOs this was additional work in order to be present in Russia, international NGOs needed to be approved by the Government. One informant claimed:

"SCNiR believes in transparency and need to work in correspondence with the local authorities. I strongly and personally believe that being an INGO in Russia, you need to be transparent. The Government sees that you are open. We registered first in 2004, this was important procedure, and then we re-registered in 2006. This required more efforts and procedures, but we took this with understanding. We have to be in accordance with the law." (Galina, Save the Children).

Another challenge due to the Russian law is the premises for operating as an NGO in the area. When I asked for NGO regulations, one informant responded: "We have some books here about NGOs, but they are old. Every year we have a lot of changes, new regulations, new rules – it changes all the time" (Vladimir, Anonymous organization). I interpret this quote as a indicator of the framework given for NGOs in Russia is unclear, and that constant changes within the legal aspect poses a challenge for NGOs. In addition to the legal framework for NGOs, they need to regard under what conditions they can operate according to their objectives and the legal aspect. One informant commented on the conditions for one international NGO:

"The Russian legislation is constantly shifting, several times a year. We want to be prepared; therefore we always check if there are any changes in the laws, so that we are ready for any change of laws and rewrite our program so that it is in accordance with the legal framework. (…) We have to actively check for changes in the legislation. Eventually they [the Government] will send us a notification, but then it is often too late" (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages).

As the informant notes, the legal framework is rapidly changing and may influence the organization's work as it can have direct consequences for the possibility to fulfil the organization's objectives. Thus, as the informant stress, the organization actively follows changes in the Russian legislation, and therefore they have not experienced any concrete problems due to changes of law. The rapid change in the legal framework is thus time-consuming for the NGOs to follow, as they actively need to be updated. One informant underlined that changes in the law can happen weekly. At one point in my fieldwork I experienced a direct result of changes of the Russian legislation and how this influenced one organization. I was joining SCNiR on a field visit to suburb *A*, and by a coincidence an external source had told me the suburb was recently become a restricted area for foreigners. When I met the staff from SCNiR I asked about the new legislation, and they were all unfamiliar with these new regulations. During our stay at the suburb *A*, the staff from SCNiR asked people from the suburb about the new regulations, but they were all unfamiliar with this. On our journey back from the suburb the staff recognized a new sign close to Murmansk city noting that: "foreigners are ordered to keep to the main road and are restricted to stop". One informant interpreted this as political, as the suburb is in a dire condition and experiences evident socio-economic problems. Therefore it is unfortunate for the authorities if foreigners saw these conditions. The legislation had direct consequences for SCNiR as they had arranged to use the suburb as a location for a festival, hosting over 20 foreigners starting three days later (Fieldnotes 22.11.08). Thus, SCNiR have a few project in the suburb and as these project are mostly supported by international funds, foreigners are interested in visiting the suburb. This however is solved by applying for consent from the authorities upon their arrival.

5.2.5 NGOs as Actors for Positive Peace

Galtung claims that positive peace is a social condition, where direct and structural violence is absent. Galtung suggests that positive peace can be prompted within different arenas of the society: i) state, ii) capital and iii) civil society. The latter arena can in this regard be related to the Russian context, as the international NGO of my study, SCNiR can be regarded as an actor for promoting positive peace from below, through i) direct positive peace, ii) structural positive peace, and iii) cultural positive peace. Direct positive peace is concerned with the

person's own mind, and is promoted through provision of basic needs and well being. SCNiR can be regarded as an actor for promoting direct positive peace for children within Murmansk Oblast through improving conditions for the basic needs and well-being. One concrete example can be drawn from SCNiR's project in the suburb of Murmansk. SCNiR have, in cooperation with one school equipped some of the rooms to improve the learning conditions. When I visited the school in September, the building was cold and many of the class-rooms were in poor conditions and had old equipment (e.g. in science). SCNiR had invested in the school and provided the school with equipment and computers for the computer-lab (Filednotes 16.09.08). These measures from SCNiR are directly aimed at better the conditions for children growing up. Further, SCNiR is also supporting the foundations of youth clubs, which will be formed by children's initiative and supported by SCNiR. During field visits I met with two different youth groups from different areas in Murmansk Oblast. The objectives with these clubs are to promote the UN CRC and child participation (Fieldnotes 16.09.08). Thus in this instance, the efforts from SCNiR have been to promote direct positive peace.

Structural positive peace is dependent upon promoting peaceful structures in the society, from the local level to governance and a higher level. Galtung claims that structural positive peace is freedom and equity, solidarity and participation. Relating structural positive peace to the civil society, the NGOs can be regarded as promoters of peaceful structures as a link between different institutions in the society. One informant stressed this point: "The key respondents for children in Russia as I see it are a triangle between the state, society and the family. The state can create conditions, but the family can still abuse alcohol. The state can provide the basic needs, but it is still intertwined" (Inna, Save the Children). As the informant stresses, those responsible for children in Russia are interrelated as they depend upon each other; therefore the civil society is an important link in order to strengthen the structures between the institutions and advocate positive structures for peaceful developments: "NGOs are a part of the society, components of the society. Save the Children cannot pay attention to all, but strive to cover as much as possible. (…) We can help to get attention from the state, e.g. in suburb A, the state did external renovations of the culture house after Save the Children's initiative" (Inna, Save the Children). However, there are challenges for NGOs when it comes to being active links between the institutions in the society: "We can say that civil society is getting stronger, but compared to Norway it will not be that good. It is better than it used to be, because we have several seminars and conferences, that is good" (Anna, Anonymous organization). The informant states that civil society is developing and is more established in

the society than it used to be, thanks to increased competence among staff working for NGOs. Therefore, the NGOs are getting stronger, and the informant, working for an NGO, is more positive to the future for civil society in Russia. Thus, SCNiR is mainly working with partners such as GOs, which give them possibilities to influence on governmental structures regarding children's rights.

Cultural positive peace is peaceful developments through ideology and law, and can be done in all levels in the society. According to Galtung law can be the promotion of human rights. SCNiR are based upon the UN CRC and are working on making the UN CRC known among children, parents and on the state level. The objective for SCNiR is to conduct annual campaigns advocating children's rights in the North-West Russia, the campaigns will contribute to increase understanding among people and decision makers to act in the interests of the children and strengthen the implications of the UN CRC within the Russian law and monitoring children's rights within Russia. Further, SCNiR has established centres focusing on the promotion of the UN CRC (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2007). Relating positive peace to the civil society in Russia, it is evident that the main objectives for SCNiR are to promote direct, structural and cultural positive peace. This has been done through empowerment of children, and creating awareness of the UN CRC. SCNiR can thus be regarded as an actor for promoting peaceful structures within the society by promoting child participation and general awareness of the UN CRC.

5.3 NGOs and Children's Situation

UNICEF (2004) raises a concern about the children growing up in the Russian Federation, as they are prone to the economic and social transition in the country. Despite a growing Russian economy in the recent years; poverty remains widespread throughout the state. Children are more vulnerable for social problems than any other group. The causes of poverty often lead to high level of unemployment and under-employment and widen the gap between rich and poor. Consequently, this makes children victims for dysfunctional families and they are often forced to flee their homes as a result of domestic violence. Recently there has been a rising numbers of "social orphans" in state care, meaning that they have biological parents who do not take care of them (UNICEF 2004). This is often related to harmful family dynamics where children are physically, emotionally or psychologically abused by impaired parents (Stoecker 2001). Further, children living on the streets are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. It is

estimated that about 30.000 children in Russia flee their homes as a result of domestic violence and abuse (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009).

Children growing up in the Russian Federation today are the future, and one informant comments on children as actors for creating their own future, in these terms: "When you look at them [children] you see a bright future for the society. They are all unique and eager to do something. They have the potential to make some small changes." (Inna, Save the Children*).* This quote illustrates the particularity and possibilities that lies within the children growing up in Russia today, though they are experiencing challenges and limitations in what is possible to change. As my informant mentioned, children have: "(…) the potential to make small changes" and in this context it would be adequate to question what changes i) children can make in order to better their conditions and ii) what potential children have to influence their own future, and what possibilities does children have to develop to become resources for the future of Russia.

5.4 Galtung's Concepts and Children's Situation

Children growing up within the Russian Federation are prone to different challenges often in relation to socio-economic problems. Save the Children notice the most prominent issues facing children in North-west Russia: "In Murmansk Oblast we see that the main things facing children are: there has been an increase in the number of street children and child neglect is alarming. Also, there are many children running away from their homes as a result of this." (Galina, Save the Children). The general picture of children's situation in Russia, as outlined by UNICEF (2004), is homelessness and the increased number of "social orphans" in state care. These issues are national, but as my informant from SCNiR is underlining, these issues are also local, facing children living in Murmansk Oblast and North-West Russia. As this is both a national and a local concern, one can question why this is an increasing problem in Russia, and who is responsible for solving these issues. In light of Galtung's notion of positive peace, efforts to resolve these issues are needed in order to build sustainable peace. These matters can be further related to Galtung's typologies of violence on the one hand, and positive peace on the other.

5.4.1 Direct violence

Causes of homelessness and child neglect for children in Russia has as noted above, been explained by children experiencing abuse at home, and in many cases this has been a result of

physical and domestic violence. According to Galtung's terminology of direct violence, the individual is directly affected by this kind of violence and it is evident. Relating this to the statements above, the number of social orphans is increasing and one reason for this is claimed to be a result of violent abuse. Within Murmansk Oblast it is difficult to gain any statistical measures especially on how many children suffer under violent abuse. Save the Children gather numbers and statistics from partners, and they combine these numbers with statistics from schools, hospitals and the police. In addition, Save the Children is reliant upon the statistics UNICEF gather, though these statistics are more general rather than specific and local (Fieldnotes 21.11.08). Therefore, direct violence per se is difficult to document, but one cannot deny that it is an important explanatory factor as a cause for street children and social orphans. The lack of statistical measures does not denote the possibilities for direct violence to occur, as the empirical reality SCNiR experience indicates, children are prone to abuse and direct violence in individual cases. The UN Committee on CRC expressed concern that corporal punishment is not forbidden within the family, and for lack of alternative systems for child care. The fact that corporal punishment is still acceptable within the society is a problem (UN CRC 2005). SCNiR notes that 2000 children die annually as a result of domestic violence, and refers to research revealing that 75 percent of Russian families practise some form of violence toward children (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009). Thus, due to lack of statistics, it is more difficult to make direct violence visible for the Government, and the UN Committee on CRC urges the Russian Government to take action as there is absence of public understanding for issues concerning direct violence against children in Russia.

5.4.2 Structural violence

Structural violence is not necessarily visible or intended according to Galtung; however this type of violence is build within the structures of the society and appears in the social world. This makes it more challenging to reveal structural violence within the society, as the inhabitants most likely do not respond to this type of violence. Moreover, structural violence can be challenging to diminish or end as it is incorporated within the system. As Galtung claims, this kind of violence would occur within the political, economic and/or repressive sphere of the society. Structural violence will in this sense be imposed by political or economic policies, where policy led from above would give unfortunate consequences for the individuals. The most prominent issues facing children in Russia are often correlated to both economic and political factors, e.g. the economical difficulties in Russia has led to a high unemployment rate, leading to alcoholism and poverty (Stoecker 2001). In addition, Stoecker

points at statistics showing that 38.7 per cent of the Russian population lives in poverty. Supported by measures drawn from Save the Children, about 20 percent of the population live below the poverty line (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009). In spite of the uncertainties regarding these numbers they show that the social and economic changes have had dramatically effects on children's lives.

One informant claims that: "It is a logical chain of event: child neglect and low income families often leads to the child goes out on the street and in worst case the child comes in conflict with the law" (Galina, Save the Children). Child neglect is often a result of social factors where the violence is not evident per se, rather a consequence. This informant is pointing at the social and economic factors which often lead to homelessness and children deciding to go out on the street. The fact that the numbers are increasing can be interpreted as a sign of structural violence in forms of socio-economic problems. SCNiR has underlined the increasing poverty and lack of job opportunities facing Murmansk Oblast particularly as an explanatory factor influencing children's context in Russia. Consequently, this have resulted in an increasing amount of exposed children, children drop out of school, living on the streets, children with infectious diseases, engaged in criminal activities, using drugs and children being exploited in other ways (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009). As an informant stress: "There are many challenges facing children in Russia, you can get drugs anywhere. Even at school you can see pupils drinking alcohol in recess before they go into class. Then they are on a path which often leads to other things" (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages). This informant is pointing at an increasing social problem facing the Russian society, as the availability of drugs and alcohol, and lack of concrete measures for decreasing the problems facing the society. Further, the informant shows that carelessness often leads the way to other things, referring to criminal activities. Moreover, the Government lacks adequate capacity to meet the needs of children because of financial constraints in the region and due to the inefficient social support mechanisms (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009).

According to an informant, a social worker from a town in Murmansk Oblast, the high unemployment rate in North-west Russia can explain why towns experience social problems. People with ambitions often leave smaller towns in order to get a proper education and only as an exception they come back, because of lack of possibilities for using their education. One school in this town had about 800 pupils, and almost half of them came from low functioning families. The town experiences severe socio-economic challenges, and there are two

orphanages, a shelter and a specialized children's orphanage in the town. The social worker is responsible to record the social background for each pupil, so that the state can provide children from low functioning families with a free meal, and the teachers can be extra observant towards the child's behaviour. When I visited this town in September 2008 the school had just started and already seven pupils were requiring special care and attention related to their social background. In order to map out the situation the social worker visits the pupil's families, and often the social worker experienced that children would try to hide their problems in order to protect their parents (Fieldnotes 18.09.08). Also, in many cases grandparents or other relatives will take care of the kids and act as a social network for the children (Lotherington 2008: 16), however this would not be official or publicly documented as the grandparents wants to protect their own children and families.

As structural violence often is caused by economic and/or political efforts within the society, these structures have further effects for the individuals living within the society. One informant, the social worker, mentioned; the high unemployment rate and the lack of possibilities within smaller towns in Murmansk Oblast are factors which can be related to both political and economical policies. This can explain many of the problems facing the society, and the consequences these policies have for the children's situation in Murmansk Oblast. This can be related to the chain of events of social problems, mentioned by my other informant from SOS Children's Villages. Due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation has been working hard with establishing a political system, and transforming a rather complex economy. These changes have had consequences within the socio-economic sphere in Russia and had negative effects on children's lives. Particularly North-West Russia has been prone to the political changes, as this region in many ways was constructed by the Soviet system. The restructuring led to many of the big factories in Murmansk Oblast being closed down without offering any alternatives. People suffering from unemployment and social problems often followed.

In line with Galtung's claim, that structural violence appears within structures of the society, this can be related to the social worker's statements, that the socio-economic problems facing the town were related to the high unemployment rate and the lack of opportunities. Another informant, a 14 year old pupil explained that the Government did not have focus on improving children's situation in this area. The pupil expressed discontent with Putin's educational reforms, claiming that it did not improve the educational situation, nor did the

policy create any major changes for children, as it was intended to do. In addition, the pupil related these policies to the lack of possibilities for children to play and do activities as the sport equipment was old and the conditions dire (Fieldnotes 28.11.08). The pupil stressed distrust to the Government regarding their policies to focus on better conditions for children, as the pupil claimed; the policies did not improve the conditions in this area. This could be an argument to underline that structural violence is apparent, as the political decisions and the lack of action from the Government regarding children is apparent on the micro level and has indirect consequences for the children's possibilities.

5.4.3 Cultural violence

Using Galtung's distinction, cultural violence is usually apparent within religion, ideology and/or laws. In the latter instance, the aspect of law in regards of the UN CRC is relevant for children living within the Russian Federation. Galtung's theory of peace stresses, a denial of human rights would be a denial of positive peace; hence the UN CRC is ratified by the Russian Federation and should act as a protector of the individuals. The UN CRC was ratified in 1990, and when I asked one of the informants about how the UN CRC was respected by the Russian authorities, the response was that it was indeed an important question. Furthermore, my informants stressed that Russia interprets the laws as they please and work thereafter. As an addition to this conversation, one informant told me: "you can buy your way out of anything in Russia, anything" (Fieldnotes 01.12.08, see also Lotherington 2007: 34). I interpret this statement as a lack of respect for the UN CRC by the Government, and ratifying the law does not secure that the UN CRC is respected by the Russian authorities. By disregarding the UN CRC, children's voices are not represented; also the gap between parents and children is often quite evident as many of the parents belong to a different generation and system than the children growing up in Russia today. One informant expressed: "Not everyone understands that it [child participation] has impact, not grown-ups and especially not the decision-makers. This is a widespread opinion: adults fear that they will loose their voices if children were to speak. Adults think they know better, we believe that children know better about their situation" (Inna, Save the Children). Traditionally, children do not have a lot to say within the Russian society as the family conventionally was hierarchally ordered and children often belong to a different generation historically (Fieldnotes 16.09.08) In addition, people growing up within the Soviet system have different perspectives than children growing up in the Russian Federation today. One informant stressed that, child participation often is misunderstood, because children's voices lack authority and the importance of listening to

children is often disregarded by elders and the government. I see this as cultural violence as the UN CRC might not be a top priority and children's voices are ignored.

Within the Russian context, the UN CRC is ratified and accepted by the state parties, and the rights of the child should be respected. The UN Committee on the CRC in Russia raises concern about the lack of fulfilment of the CRC in several aspects. The lack of fulfilment of the UN CRC can be regarded as cultural violence and in this case the structures of the society are hierarchically ordered as children's voices do not have any distinct importance in the society. Therefore cultural violence in the terms of the juridical aspect within the Russian law is an important aspect in understanding children's context in Russia as it seems that the UN CRC still lack authority within state policies.

5.4.4 Direct positive peace

Following Galtung's typology of positive peace, direct positive peace would directly concern the individual's well-being at the personal level and provide the basic needs. Further, Galtung claims that social movements can be suppliers for these developments within the social context. International NGOs, such as SCNiR who are focusing on children with an aim at strengthening children's rights and promoting child participation, can make children become more aware of their own position and make them agents of their own future. SCNiR can be an actor for creating awareness among children about their rights and opportunities: "A child is growing up with a different perception of the world, and get aware of his or her rights should be preserved. Child participation is empowering." (Galina, Save the Children). By promoting child participation and creating awareness among children about their own rights and possibilities would in this aspect create direct positive peace as the children would be enabled to well-being. Empowerment of children can in the long run lead to direct positive peace as children becomes actors for creating their own future and awareness about their rights as individuals. This is important for the developments for the future of the Russian society, as child empowerment and child participation could eventually become the norm within the society for the generations to come.

5.4.5 Structural positive peace

Galtung claims that positive structural peace is dependent upon cooperation and participation between social actors in order to promote positive structures on a higher level. One informant underlines: "Our job is to disseminating children's rights, promoting general awareness

among children and raising general awareness of parents and reach to the government"
(Galina, Save the Children). In this respect NGOs such as SCNiR can be regarded as an actor
for promoting child participation and as a positive actor for strengthening the structures within
the society through participation and solidarity. As the quote above illustrates, SCNiR feels
responsible for promoting cooperation between social actors and influence different levels and
create awareness of children's rights for parents and the Government. In this sense, SCNiR
aims at influencing different structures within the society. Though, SCNiR is an actor for
promoting participation and cooperation, they are dependent upon the Government in order to
establish structural positive peace for children in the society as a whole. One informant add:
"We work with partners and highlight important objectives promoting children's rights. This
helps to build understanding with partners and eventually empower children. This supports
children initiative and strengthens the civil society and civil rights" (Galina, Save the
Children). According to Galtung, structural positive peace is when the political and economic
structures within the society are free from repression, fragmentation and marginalization.
SCNiR can be seen as an actor for promoting solidarity and participation by creating
understanding within the structures of the society, by the implementation of children's rights.
However, SCNiR is only an actor for promoting these structures within the state system and
structural positive peace is, as Galtung claims dependent upon a society free from repression,
fragmentation and marginalization.

5.4.6 Cultural positive peace

Cultural positive peace is according to Galtung legitimating peace within religion, law and/or
ideology. Further, Galtung argues that cultural positive peace eventually can lead to the
establishment of a peace culture by promoting certain ideas within religion, law and/or
ideology. One informant pointed out: "There has been a lack of understanding regarding
children's situation in Murmansk. What is child participation? Someone think it is singing a
song or dancing. But it is not amateur or self-realization. Child participation is having fun at
the same time as they [children] are actively participating" (Inna, Save the Children). The
informant points at an important aspect which often has been misunderstood by policymakers
and others, as they presume that child participation is passive, and not active. This argument
can be related to cultural positive peace, as implementation of the UN CRC within the legal
aspect will strengthen understanding and respect for children and therefore strengthen cultural
positive peace. Traditionally there has been a misunderstanding about child participation in
Russia, as children in many cases have been disregarded in opinions concerning children.

According to Galtung cultural positive peace would be promoted through accepting rights for the individuals. Though the Russian Federation has ratified the UN CRC the UN observers have been critical about to what extend the rights are respected. However, SCNiR can be seen as an important actor as they educate children about their rights. Thereby thus establish cultural positive peace as the main objective for promoting knowledge among children about their rights and the implementation of the UN CRC within the national law of the Russian Federation.

5.5 Summary: What can Galtung's distinction contribute with?

Galtung further suggests three actors for developing positive peace. First, the state can be an actor by promoting peaceful developments, and in this case the state could contribute as a protector of children's rights. Second, financial capital is suggested as a factor for building positive peace. This can relate to the responsibility to create work places, as the unemployment rate in Russia as a whole is rising, and in Murmansk Oblast unemployment has been increasing within the last year (BarentsObserver 2009f). Lack of job opportunities and increasing poverty in the region can be related to the financial capital. Creating jobs could contribute to a reduction of socio-economic problems, as unemployment has been mentioned as one factor for social problems. Another factor is the local businesses that could promote positive peace by consider social responsibilities in the local context. Still, it is not common in Murmansk Oblast that private industry feel any societal responsibilities, though this trend might be changing. Third, Galtung mentions the civil society as a promoter of positive peace in the society. NGOs such as SCNiR can act as promoters of positive peace within the society by focusing on children's situation within Murmansk Oblast and thereby be promoters for UN CRC. SCNiR can act as a link between the individuals on micro level and the state at the macro level. In this respect, SCNiR can act as a promoter of positive peace within the society.

Using Galtung's concepts creates an understanding of SCNiR's situation in Murmansk Oblast and the societal challenges they meet in order to relate to children's situation. What is most striking using Galtung's concepts is the notion of structural violence which can contribute to explain children's situation in Murmansk. The notion of structural violence is somewhat encompassing, as this is related to the political and economic level. However, in Russia these factors have been of importance for creating structures in the society for children's rights and protection. Thus, cultural violence in terms of respect for the UN CRC is also relevant for describing the situation for children in Russia. Due to the missing efforts by the Government

to fulfill the UN CRC, this is an important factor in explaining the society children in Russia meet. In addition, looking at the Russian society through a positive peace perspective the significance of SCNiR is important in order to understand how empowerment of children can contribute to a positive peaceful society. SCNiR is a promoter of direct positive peace, as they focus on empowerment and child participation, which is directed on the individual child by creating awareness. Structural positive peace is related to the societal efforts for establishing peaceful structures, such as promoting cooperation with social actors. This can in the long run lead to a positive development for children's situation. As cultural positive peace would concern the implementation of law, SCNiR can work on promoting the UN CRC and thereby be seen as an actor for strengthening cultural positive peace as well.

Galtung's concepts have in this context been useful in order to look at different aspects of the Russian society. The first notions of structural and cultural violence are the most illuminating in this context, as they focus on several crucial aspects; i) within the political and/or ii) economical sphere, and within iii) religion, iv) law and/or v) ideology. In Russia, and particularly in Murmansk Oblast these are important aspects in order to explain children's situation. As for the positive peace concept, SCNiR can in this area be seen as an important actor for enhancing children's lives and thereby, in the long run, lead to positive developments in the society. However, Galtung's concepts have more explanatory validity for the societal structures and the general situation, not so much for the individual per se. Therefore, the human security approach will be added as a theoretical approach for the analysis of the children's situation in Russia.

5.6 What is Human Security in this context?
The human security approach differs from Galtung's notion of positive peace in several aspects; first it is aimed on security and protection and second, human security is directed to solely focus at the individuals. The concept is drawn from the security debate, where its proponents are claiming the need for a shift from the traditional state security toward a focus on individuals. Human security derived from UNDP (1994), claiming that human security is a complement to state security and enhances human development and human rights. Further, human security is concerned with safety from threats. These threats can be hunger, disease and repression and protection from disruptions in the daily life of the individual, whether homes, jobs or communities (UNDP 1994). In this thesis, the human security categories are based upon Owen's (2004) categories, drawn from UNDP (1994). Owen's definition is an

attempt to reach a consensus between the narrow and broad proponents, and Owen excludes 'community security' to make the categories more relevant. In this context I chose to exclude 'environmental security' due to relevance to my study. Therefore, the following categories will be considered as human security: i) economic security, ii) food security, iii) health security, iv) personal security, and v) political security.

5.7 How is Human Security relevant to Children's Situation?

The human security approach is aimed at the individual level, focusing at the insecurities and harms individuals meet in their daily life, and will in this context be related to insecurities Russian children experience in Murmansk Oblast. Human security is a bottom-up approach, detecting the insecurities children meet from the individual level, rather than the state level. Owen (2004) claims that what should count as human security threats should be decided by international organizations, national governments and NGOs, as it does not exist any final list of security threats. International organizations in Russia, such as UNICEF, notes that the main challenges for children in Russia is poverty, cuts in social spending, demographic crisis, diseases and health matters (malnutrition, HIV/AIDS), child protection and conflict (UNICEF 2004). NGOs like SCNiR note many of the same concerns facing children in Murmansk Oblast, underlining poverty, increasing HIV/AIDS infections, and socially marginalized children. Thus, SCNiR have four strategic areas, meeting the challenges facing children in Murmansk Oblast: i) Fulfil children's right to protection from violence and sexual abuse, ii) Strengthening implementation and monitoring of children's rights, iii) Fulfil the rights of children in conflict with the law, and iv) Fulfil the rights of socially marginalized children (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009). These strategic areas indicate the major concerns for children in Murmansk Oblast.

"You can see the differences from different regions, the kids from the suburb *A* are more relaxed. They are cleaning streets and fixing things they see as urgent. In another town, *B* the kids are clever and are thinking more about organizing bigger events. In a town *C* kids are very caring. They respond to the society they grow up in. The more kids you meet, the more initiative you see. Social adjustments make them this way." (Inna, Save the Children).

The quote illustrates the diversity of children, at the same time as one can question how the communal environment effects children's behavior. Referring to children growing up in the suburb, one of the poorest areas in Murmansk Oblast, the informant notes that they tend to be calmer and somewhat lack initiative. Though, they respond to urgent and practical social

action, as social problems are more revealing in this area compared to town B and C. The quote also illustrates the different needs for different areas.

5.7.1 Economic security

UNDP defines economic security related to a basic income, thus connect economic security to other factors, such as unemployment and insecure job opportunities. UNDP thus recognize an increasing trend in homelessness around the globe (UNDP 1994: 25). The negative trends in the global economy and the decreasing Russian economy forces authorities to cut federal budget spending (BarentsObserver 2009f), this can be related to economic insecurity. UNDP mentions that being dependent upon social care and assistance, may be a reason for economic insecurity (UNDP 1994: 25). Relating economic security to children's situation in Russia indicates that unemployment often has effects for the children. Stoecker (2001) explains the increasing number of homeless children is closely connected with either "developmental factors" such as disability, or "situational factors" such as poverty and unemployment. A bleak economic condition, causing poverty and unemployment, has been the reality for half of the Russian population. Stoecker claims that this is a driving factor behind child homelessness. Referring to the turbulent economic transition in the 1990s, many people lost their jobs, in particular women were affected by these changes, and as most single parents are women, the unemployment and economic insecurity consequently had effects on the children. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and due to the economic transition, Murmansk Oblast faced many challenges in terms of employment matters and many people relocated to bigger cities. As a result of the present global financial crisis, unemployment and poverty are still relevant problems. In Murmansk Oblast the number of officially unemployed people has exceeded 15,700 only in 2009 (BarentsObserver 2009f). People unable to pay rent or depth has in the case of Murmansk, voluntarily or forced relocated to a communal dormitory in a suburb. The suburb has about 2000 inhabitants of which about 390 are children. In addition to a dormitory, an orphanage is located in the community, and about 30 percent of children attending secondary school in the suburb come from this orphanage. The area suffers severe socio-economic challenges after the local ship repair yard was shut down, and suffers from poor public transport (SCNiR 2007).

Visiting a remote area within Murmansk Oblast made me become aware of how economic insecurity could influence the daily and communal life. Before we arrived to the suburb of Murmansk, I was told about the social problems and economic scarcities facing the area, such

as unemployment, poverty and alcoholism. When we arrived in the morning some people were walking in the street and were clearly drunk. The socio-economic challenges were quite evident, as both the buildings and infrastructure in the area lacked renovation and was in a dire condition. We drove around in the area and from the car I got more familiar with the local environment. We passed the dormitory, it was quiet when we were there, but in the evening there is often fighting and alcohol consumption. SCNiR do not have any numbers on how many children who live in the dormitory, but someone suggested roughly 30 children. We also passed the orphanage, which is a state owned institution. Children from the orphanage are often living according to their own rules, and alcohol is accessible for children in the suburb. Though there is a police officer living there, several of the informants from the suburb raised concern about the accessibility of alcohol among kids in the area. There was also one bus from the suburb to the city. In September the bus would run every hour, yet in December the bus hours were reduced to five times a day. The bus is usually packed, and youth form the suburb are often dependent upon the bus to go to school in the city (junior college). Further, children using the bus to school have to pay tickets and the bus was described as "not child friendly" (Fieldnotes 17.09.08).

Later in the afternoon, some pupils between the ages 12 and 14 living in the suburb gave me and another adult a guided tour of the suburb. The pupils wanted to show us where they liked to play and the area in general. There were broken glass, and empty bottles in the playground and drunken people in the streets. The area did not strike me as a particularly child-friendly location. While walking, the pupils acted as protectors for me and the other adult, as they knew the area and how to handle their surroundings. At one point the other adult commented: "Sometimes I don't feel very safe here" referring to the setting we were in. Further, one informant noted that many youths from the city go to the suburb to get drunk and fight in the evening, and it is "a very unsafe place to be" in the evening, than in the afternoon, because of all the drunken people in the streets (Fieldnotes 17.09.08). These surroundings do not produce human security, as the economic factor of insecurity can directly or indirectly harm the individuals. Factors such as a low economic level and unemployment have effects on children's lives and security, as the contextual conditions either lack or are unable to protect children from economic insecurity.

5.7.2 Food security

Food security is related to the physical and economic access to basic food, according to UNDP (UNDP 1994: 27). Stoecker (2001: 9) claims: "hunger causes theft of food, lack of shelter and food leads to serious theft; and lack of shelter combined with unemployment is a precursor of prostitution among girls." However, in my empirical data food insecurity has not been mentioned by any of the informants as a major insecurity for children growing up within Murmansk Oblast. Rather, food security has been noted as a protected right. The Russian state system provides schools with funding according to the number of students present at the school. In the case of the suburb *A*, there are few pupils at the school, so the school only received a minimum of funding from the state. However, through the principal's own initiative, each pupil received a free meal at school as the area experience severe socio-economic problems. Usually parents would pay for this, but due to the economical weakness in the suburb the principal lobbied for social support from the state to provide the pupils with a free meal (Fieldnotes 16.09.08). This was also mentioned by another informant from a larger town in Murmansk Oblast. The children from the low functioning families were provided with free meals, whereas the other children would pay a minor amount for school lunch (Fieldnotes 18.09.08). Relating these matters to food security, the access to basic food has been provided and secured for children within Murmansk Oblast.

5.7.3 Health security

Diseases, unsafe environment and lack of a sufficient health care system can be regarded as insecurity for individuals. Thus, poor people are usually more prone to health insecurities than rich. Women often face difficult situations during childbirth, whilst the increasing spread of HIV/AIDS virus poses a threat for both genders (UNDP 1994: 27). UNICEF (2007) notes that young people in Russia experiences a deteriorating reproductive health, particularly among girls. Further, premature childbirth and low-weight newborns is an increasing problem among women, this is often related to smoking and use of alcohol during pregnancy. According to statistics 27.5 per 1,000 young women under the age of 20 gave birth in 2005. Most common, girls are in the age of 16 and 17 years old (UNICEF 2007). Further, UNICEF (2009) noted that many women of childbearing age often are infected by HIV, and UNICEF claims that more than 20,000 children have been born to HIV infected mothers (UNICEF 2009). Numbers from 2009 show alarming increased HIV infections in Murmansk, with a total of 163 new HIV cases within three months. There are more than 3000 people officially registered as HIV infected in Murmansk Oblast, which is the highest number in the North-

West Russia. More than 80 percent of the infected are between 15-30 years old, and in most cases the infection is through illegal drug abuse (BartensObserver 2009g). One informant expressed his concern about the increasing HIV and AIDS infections in the region: "Another concern is the high spreading of HIV and AIDS. Last year, WHO reported that in many of the larger cities in Russia, the number of people infected with HIV could become as high as many places in Africa. The problem is that few get tested, and the test apparatus is quite bad, so there are many hidden numbers." (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages). This is also a concern raised by SCNiR, as the number of HIV infections is increasing in the region. One of the objectives for SCNiR is to conduct a system of preventive activities and raise awareness about STDs and HIV/AIDS among children in the region (*Spasjom Djetej Norvegija* 2006-2009).

A report from UNICEF (2009) states that the level of knowledge among sexuality and reproductive issues remain low among children and adolescents as they lack information about developments of a healthy lifestyle and how to protect themselves from HIV and STDs. Further, UNICEF raises concern about the general health and social service professionals' lack of understanding and skills about young peoples needs (UNICEF 2009). WHO (2005) claims that Russia has one of the most rapidly growing HIV epidemics globally, with an increase in the recent years. Further, WHO consider drug-abusers as the most vulnerable group, and those are often involved in sex work (WHO 2005). The government has responded to the increased problem by allocating more than US $100 million to prevention programs in 2006 (UNICEF 2009). One informant claimed that: "the problem is also the dire quality of the test apparatus. There are many hidden numbers, we know that." (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages). UNICEF (2007) raises concern for young people in Russia, as the health care system often are ill-equipped to deal with emerging challenges related to health issues. International involvement related to health issues in Russia indicates a growing need for governmental assistance in order to create secure environment. Though, I did not focus particularly on NGOs related to health security, therefore I lack additional information about the health situation in Murmansk Oblast. Factors like increased rates of tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse leads to accidental and violent deaths or suicide. For girls adolescent or undesired pregnancies are frequent. Health issues are therefore a reason for a human insecurity facing children in the Murmansk region.

5.7.4 Personal security

Personal security means protection from personal violence. Individuals are threatened by violence, either from own Government, other states or other groups of people. Personal security could also include self-harm, such as drug-abuse or suicide. Many people experience different forms of insecurity, and women and children are the most vulnerable group for such violence (UNDP 1994: 30). At the personal level, there are many possible threats with direct or indirect consequences for the individuals, and particularly children. With attention to homelessness in Russia, Stoecker (2001) underlines the vulnerability to criminal exploitation, sexually through prostitution, physiologically, forced labor and begging. As one informant said:

"Here [in Murmansk] it is popular to say, at least then, maybe not so much now, that outside of the orphanages black Mercedes was placed to take care of the 18 year olds coming from the institutions with two plastic bags and were going to start a life on their own. The state did not have a responsibility for them anymore. Many of them were drawn into criminal activity at once. The girls became pregnant after they entered the world outside of the institution. You see, and then there is the vicious circle of giving birth. It is a vicious circle, only in Murmansk Oblast, roughly speaking 800 - 1,000 babies are left each year, and that is a lot." (Gunnar, SOS Children's Villages).

As this informant underlines, the direct vulnerability is often related to criminal activities and prostitution among youth growing up in Russia. This can also be seen in relation to the state care system. As this informant mentioned the state did not have any responsibilities for children turning 18, therefore this often created insecurity among children which drew them in to delinquency and a viscous circle of drug-abuse, prostitution and criminality. Personal insecurities facing children in Russia can be related to social problems and the availability or lack of responsibility for them. Further, personal security is related to violence. As discussed earlier (see point 5.2.1), personal violence directed at children in Murmansk Oblast is hard to locate due to the lack of documentation and statistics. However, as UNDP notes, children is a particularly vulnerable group for threats and violence, and the personal security is therefore an important aspect to consider for providing security for children. Another important aspect of personal security is the protection through empowerment and individual responsibility. SCNiR stresses child participation, in order to enable children to act on their own behalf and create awareness about their rights.

5.7.5 Political security

Political security is regarded by UNDP as the most important aspect for humans living in a society and requiring protection based upon their basic human rights (UNDP 1994: 30). This

argument is related to whether the state acts as a protector of the individuals and not as an aggressor. SCNiR can be seen as a protector of human rights through the focus on the UN CRC. However, SCNiR cannot provide children with political security directly, though they can act as an empowering actor regarding their focus on securing children and promoting children's rights. One informant claimed: "The state is giving more attention to children now in the last three years, with a special focus on children living in institutions" (Inna, Save the Children). This quote indicates a political shift, as the Government are focusing on children's position within the society. However, the UN Committee on the UN CRC in Russia is still concerned about the practical fulfilment of the UN CRC within several aspects. The Committee is worried about the conditions of children's lives, and stress the importance to ensure children's access to social services, and the Committee suggest that the Government to prioritize budgetary allocations within economic, social and cultural rights. Further, the Committee urges the state to strengthening information and knowledge about the UN CRC among adults and children, also among professionals such as teachers, lawyers and health personnel (UN CRC 2005). When SCNiR wanted to establish a child-led group within the suburb *A*, they found it challenging to establish trust among the children. Politicians and adults would promise changes to the children, but children's voices were disregarded, and they never saw the result of the promises made (Fieldnotes 16.09.08). As these claims indicate, the political security can be related to human rights and the lack of practical fulfilment of the UN CRC creates political insecurity among children.

5.8 Summary: What can the Human Security concept contribute with?

Using the concept of human security in this case has put several topics under analysis to relate the theory to the Russian context. The categories have been used as focus areas to what Owen (2004) and partly also UNDP (1994) see as the most apparent human securities and possible threats. Relating these categories to my empirical data, some of the categories proved valid explanations, while others were less relevant as explanatory factors. Connected to my empirical data, economic, personal and political securities seem to be important factors. Economic security seems to be interrelated to different factors which makes the children vulnerable for socio-economic changes. In Murmansk Oblast the economic factor posted difficulties or challenges, particularly for children living in the suburb. Personal security is relevant as it is related to the individual in itself, and the direct harms children can be prone to, such as drug-abuse and prostitution. While political security can relate to the UN CRC and to what extend the legal framework is protected and respected by the state.

Health security is highly relevant as a threat for children living in North-West Russia as the level of HIV/AIDS is increasing in the region. However, through my data collection, I did not focus on health issues; neither did my informants underline this as the major threat for children in the region. Nevertheless, using the categories derived from the human security approach made me aware of the importance of health as insecurity for children in Murmansk Oblast. In retrospect, it could have been valuable for my study to have focused more explicitly on the health issues facing the region, as this is highly relevant. As for "food security", this seems to be provided in Russia in the public sector for the two schools I visited. I did my fieldwork at the individual level and created personal contact with the people living within Murmansk Oblast and was also enabled to experience their surroundings directly. In this light, the human security approach was valuable to create an understanding of how the individuals relate to their context, rather than how the individuals are likely to act given the structures in the society.

5.9 Human Security opposed to Positive Peace

By applying both Galtung's concepts and the human security approach to the issue of children's situation in Russia, I have placed the empirical data within different analytical perspectives. Galtung's contribution in this context has been related to the society as a whole, by regarding the structures in the society which has different consequences for the children. First, Galtung is focusing on direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence and in this chapter it has been related to direct abuse and violence, political and economical structures in the society and cultural violence within the legal aspect. These qualifications gave the premises for aspects regarded for children's context in Russia, and thereby given the flexibility to relate issues which can be considered within these aspects. Second, Galtung focus on direct positive peace, structural positive peace and cultural positive peace. In this chapter it has been related to child participation, the work of social actors for promoting positive structures within the society, and promotion of the UN CRC. This approach has contributed to highlight a "top-down" approach, as one is considering the consequences the societal structures (political and economical) have on the micro level and in this context how the individuals are directly and/or indirectly influenced by these structures. Therefore Galtung's theory was relevant for the study of the civil society and conditions for NGOs, as structural violence related to political- and economic aspect underlined the constraints NGOs in Murmansk Oblast experience. Cultural violence is related to the legal aspect, and is highly

relevant for the civil society in Russia, as the implementation of human rights such as the UN CRC within the Russian law. Thus, relating the notion of positive peace to the objectives of NGOs, such as SCNiR which in this case can be regarded as a actor in promoting peaceful developments from below.

The human security perspective is focused on the micro level, considering concrete insecurities on the individual level and linking these categories to the efforts from the individuals themselves, such as empowerment of the individuals. Applying the human security approach to children's situation in Russia has given a new light to the analysis, as the categories of insecurities are already set, one focuses on a particular category and relates this to children's context. This gave the analysis a different angle than using Galtung's concepts. Human security on the other hand, gives the premises for a security matter and one needs to regard the analytical data within this context. Using this approach may have revealed a weakness in my data, as it appears that health problems are frequent in Murmansk Oblast. Relating Galtung's concepts to the empirical data have given a deeper understanding of the context in which children grow up, focusing on factors which might not be apparent as they are hidden within structural and cultural violence. Thus, using positive peace confirms the importance of NGOs such as SCNiR in the society as positive contributors for developing positive structures and promoting the UN CRC.

Galtung's concepts can be criticized as the notion of positive peace is considered as unlikely to attain. Therefore a possible combination between Galtung's concept of structural violence and the human security aspect could be fruitful in such analysis, this combination is also proposed by Bajpai (2000). Bajpai is referring to the discussion between narrow and broad proponents of the human security concept, suggesting that Galtung's concepts of violence can resolve the problems of using human security analytically (Bajpai 2000). Further, Bajpai suggests that one links Galtung's notion of violence (direct and structural violence) to the security threats, the human security approach could be of more value, as violence than is concerned with insecurities which can harm the individuals directly or indirectly. This combination could be useful in the sense that one can reject the categories noted as (in)securities by UNDP and rather focus on direct or structural violence as human insecurities. Because the categories posed by UNDP in many cases can be regarded as structural violence (e.g. economic, health, political security) and direct violence (e.g. food, personal security),

this combination may increase the analytical level of the human security concept, and enrich studies of peace.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

In this thesis I have examined the working conditions for NGOs in the Russian context, by focusing on how NGOs can relate to children's situation in Russia, using SCNiR as my case study. This chapter will give a short summary of my findings in this thesis and my contributions will be reflected upon.

Focusing on the civil society in Russia, and using SCNiR as a case study have enabled me to gather in-depth understanding of how the NGO can work according to their objectives on improving children's situation in Murmansk Oblast. My objective when writing this thesis was to understand under what conditions NGOs, such as SCNiR can meet children's needs and thereby provide peaceful developments. I was also interested in understanding what challenges international NGOs met by the Russian authorities in order to fulfil their objectives. I chose to relate the conditions of the civil society with children's situation in Russia. Using SCNiR as a case study enabled me to do this, as their main focus is to improve the situation for children in Russia. I regard the link between children and peace as powerful, since children are the future of the society and changes should therefore start by a change of mindset. Thus, the civil society in this case is arguably a possible promoter for peaceful developments through empowerment of the individual and strengthening the implementation of human rights, such as children's rights in this case.

The empirical data and analysis are based on information obtained from fieldwork in Murmansk Oblast. During my fieldwork I used participant observation and qualitative interviews, through two visits to Russia during two months in 2008. I chose a qualitative research approach because it allowed me to gain understanding and gather in-depth information about how the informants experience the daily life in an NGO, and actively gaining impressions of the situation for the organization. Nielsen (1996: 50) notes that "It is not the details that change when you come home - it is the totality." After two months of fieldwork there are many impressions and thoughts on how to describe the reality I experienced during my fieldwork. I was able to collect a good amount of data and I did not find it hard to schedule interviews. However, I found it hard to ask people sensitive questions and questions that could be interpreted as political. During the interview people would talk about their organization and "sell" me their ideas, rather than give me explicit information about the situation for NGOs. This was a challenge; therefore I found it helpful to have been

doing participant observation and in this way support my data with the interviews. In retrospect, I should have been more direct when asking questions I regarded as sensitive, as this might enrich my data or give indications on how the informants are experiencing the reality.

6.1 Summary of Empirical Findings and Analysis

Choosing both participant observation and qualitative interviews enabled me with a rich data collection and many impressions about the reality for NGOs within Murmansk Oblast. My thesis addresses two main topics: i) NGOs as actors for peace, and ii) how NGOs can relate to children's situation in Russia. When doing fieldwork at SCNiR these topics were connected and I was enabled to gather data on both instances.

6.1.1 NGOs as actors for Peace

When focusing on understanding how the civil society works within the Russian context, it seems impossible to separate the civil society from the political aspect. Yet, the informants from the international NGOs seemed hesitant in relating political issues to their role as an NGO; therefore I found it hard to get impressions on how the civil society was. Several of my informant notes the context for the Russian civil society, underlining that most NGOs are weak and unstable. Few of the international NGOs did any active lobbying towards the Government, and one informant noted that it was difficult to reach any higher political levels as NGOs, and particularly as an international NGO. Most of the informants indicated that the civil society is weak, but they are optimistic towards the developments of the civil society. International NGOs mostly cooperate with GOs, as they claim this is more reliable and gives their project more sustainability. These statements outline the context for the civil society, and another notable point is the link between the civil society and political structures of the society. One of Putin's policies was linking the civil society closer to the state, and NGOs existence may be based upon politically "good-will". This has indirectly been noted by several of the informants, as they actively choose to work within the lines of the Government, and they do not criticize any policies. This was also underlined by a human right organization trying to be established in Murmansk. The organization actively challenges and criticizes the Government and has experienced troubles in completing registration with the authorities in Moscow.

Another challenge for NGOs in Russia is the legal aspect. In 2006 Putin introduced a new NGO law directed at NGOs and particularly international NGOs operating in Russia. The NGO law required re-registration and extensive reporting from NGOs. The main informants from SCNiR completed the registration process and did not note any particular challenges with this. Other informants have pointed at severe consequences for other organizations, as local NGOs may lack documents and control over their budgets which disqualifies them for re-registration due to the new rules. International NGOs operating within human rights or environmental spheres has also experienced particular challenges in the re-registration process, and additional work related to this process. The law gives the Government full insight in meetings, seminars, budgets, documents and all other work related to the NGO. The legal facet has also posed a challenge in another aspect, as the Russian legal framework is constantly shifting. This may pose a challenge due to the areas where the NGOs are operating and what their possibilities are. One informant noted that the rapid changes in the legal framework were time-consuming as the organization needs to constantly be updated on the changes within laws and regulations. Challenges facing NGOs in Russia is related to the political, economic and legal aspect. As I have focused on international NGOs, the economic aspect due to funding has not been a particular challenge for SCNiR or SOS Children's Villages. I presume that the economic aspect is more related to local NGOs, and gives indicators on the state's policies toward the civil society. As for the political and legal aspect, it seems to have direct and indirect influence on the NGOs and international NGOs due to what is possible to do, and how it is possible to do it.

6.1.2 NGOs related to children's situation

There are several challenges facing children in Russia, and I have related these challenges according to Galtung's concept and the human security approach. Both approaches provided a focus on the individual, though Galtung's concepts were more linked with the structures in the society, such as the political, economical and legal aspects and how they relate to children's situation. While human security revealed a more explicit focus on set categories of threats, this can occur on the individual level. What is evident within this perspective are the socio-economic difficulties facing the Russian society, and consequently these difficulties has effect on children's daily life. Further, the legal aspect related to the fulfilment of the UN CRC is an important aspect, as the Russian Government in many cases lack practical fulfilment the UN CRC. NGOs such as SCNiR has an important role related to children's situation in Russia. SCNiR focus on empower children and promotes child participation, these aspects can in the

long run lead to positive developments and positive peace, as children growing up in Russia today eventually will become the important actors and the new generation of decision makers. Therefore, NGOs are important links between the individual and the state structures, especially for SCNiR, which is representing children's voices and needs. The human security approach has given the individual the particular focus, by using a bottom-up perspective, and related children's situation to different categories of threats. By applying different categories to children's situation enabled this study to focus particularly on these categories and easier relate a certain type of threat to the individual. The value of using human security was therefore to primarily focus on the individual and from this perspective see what actors or structures posed the insecurities or provided security. Using a certain set of categories thus revealed a weakness in my study, as health security was not sufficient covered in my data.

6.1.3 Can NGOs promote positive peace?
This thesis started out by asking the following research questions: 1) How can NGOs promote peaceful developments from below? 2) What conditions does NGOs in Russia meet? and 3) How can NGOs act according to children's situation in Russia? My empirical data has enabled me to answer these questions. I have found in my study that NGOs, such as SCNiR can be an actor for promoting peace through direct and indirect efforts for children in Russia. SCNiR contributes to promote peaceful developments by empowering children and make them actors in their own life. This has been done through several measures, like the formation of youth clubs and activating child participation. Further, the focus on the UN CRC is aimed at making both children and adults familiar with children's rights, and this is an important link to developments of positive peace, and the empowering of children. These efforts can in the long run lead to a change of mindset when it comes to children's situation in Russia. In order to work on these objectives, the conditions NGOs in Russia meets are important to address. Most of the informants in this study have noted that the civil society is weak, and most local NGOs are fragile, due to lack of funding and lack of organizational knowledge. This leads international NGOs, who are funded from abroad, to cooperate with Governmental structures as this is regarded as more reliable and sustainable. Further, the political and legal aspect is a clear challenge, according to my data.

The political aspect limits the roles for NGOs in several aspects; the level of influence is low and thus what is possible for NGOs to do is limited according to the interests of the Government. The legal aspect is connected with the political, as the legal framework is

outlined by the Government. The NGO law caused additional documentation for NGOs in Russia, but my main informants did not note any particular problems with the law or re-registration. This was however noted by informants connected to the human right sphere, which indicates that the law had consequences for some NGOs. The frequent changes within the Russian legal framework are thus a challenge facing NGOs in Russia, as these changes have direct or indirect influence on the possibilities for NGOs on working according to their objectives. The political and legal challenges are also related SCNiR's possibilities to work on improving children's situation in Russia. What is apparent for children in Russia revealed both by Galtung's concepts and the human security approach is the socio-economic difficulties facing the Russian society, and the lack of system in order to protect individuals. Particularly children are vulnerable when these difficulties occur.

Overall, considering the how NGOs can be regarded as actors for promoting peace from below, I have found through my case, SCNiR, that their efforts on the individual level are enforcing and influential for children, through concrete measures and by creating awareness for children's rights. NGOs can be regarded as a link between the individual and the society, and therefore an important actor in protecting the rights of the individual, and thus relating these rights on a higher level.

6.2 Further Research

My thesis has been concerned about the working conditions for international NGOs in Murmansk Oblast, with its main focus on a children's rights organization. During the process working on this thesis, the topic has disclosed other approaches to the issue which could be fruitful and interesting to address. A possibility would be directing a more explicit focus on the state policies towards the civil society. This is interesting in regards of Medvedev's presidency, as he is stressing policy changes towards the civil sector. This could be contrasted with the decreasing numbers of civil liberties noted by Freedomhouse (2009). Further research could also entail a different theoretical angle than I have proposed in this thesis. An example of this would be applying Foucault's concept of "governmentality" to this study. This could contribute to explore how the NGOs are related to the state, and to what point NGOs act according to their own interests, or if they act as an extended part of the Government. This could be a valuable theory related to NGOs operating in Russia, as the Government has certain boundaries where NGOs can act and what they can do. This could thus be related to SCNiR's role within the Russian society, as they choose not to criticize the

Government, rather work according to them. Even though they might not be ruled by the Government, they have to act within a designed set of conditions given by the authorities. Another plausible angle would be a comparative analysis on the working conditions for an international NGO and a local NGO; this could expand the study of civil society by including experiences from local NGOs. Furthermore, the study could be applied to a broader geographical area or focus on international NGOs working closer to the authorities in Moscow.

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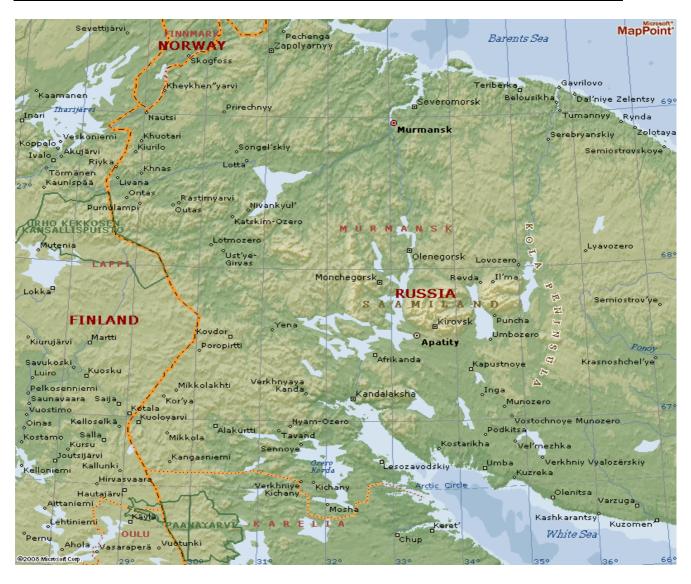M. E Sharpe

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Appendix 1: Map over Murmansk Oblast

Save the Children Norway in Russia:

Power point presentation of Save the Children Norway in Russia, introduction of the organization 2006-2009

Project Description: "Improving Life Situation for Children in *A*"

Project Description: "Promoting the UN CRC in *C*"

SCNiR: "Promoting Child Participation in *A*"
Save the Children Norway in Russia, Annual Report

Spasjom Djetej Norwegija 2006-2009: Save the Children Norway in Russia Country Programme 4 year plan 2006-2009. Revised version: August 20th 2006

1. Internal relations:
- How long have you been working in this organization?
- Why did you choose to work in an international NGO? Why do you have the present position in the NGO?
- Why did your organization choose to establish in this region?
- How is a normal working-week for you?
- What tasks do you have? Alone? In cooperation with others?

2. Children's situation:
- How would you describe children's situation in Murmansk Oblast?
- How do you experience the work with children?
- Who is responsible for children in Russia?
- How do you map children's needs and children's situation in Murmansk?

3. Partners:
- Who do you have contact with?
- Who are the most important actors/partners?
- How do you find partners to cooperate with?
- What can the partners contribute with?
- Do you get support, a) morally, b) economic?

4. Government:
- How do you experience the contact with the Government?
- Is there anything particular you need to do, according to the Government?
- Did the NGO law of 2006 have any influence on your work?
- What are your experiences being an international NGO?
- Do you lobby towards the Government?
- How is it to establish as an international NGO in Russia?

Appendix 4: Inquiry to participate in research project

INQUIRY TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH PROJECT

Civil Society in Russia: Challenges and possibilities for youth work. This project will address how NGOs and INGOs work in North-West Russia. This is a one-year master project funded by the University in Tromsø and Save the Children Norway's Research Fund. The project is a part of a Master thesis in Peace and Conflict Transformation at Centre for Peace Studies, University of Tromsø.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, Russian society and politics has developed in different directions, and though the civil society experienced difficulties in being established in the 1990s it survived into the next millennium. This project will then focus on how the civil society in contemporary Russia works, and what challenges and possibilities organizations meet to perform their work. My objective is to place the importance of children's rights within the peace and human security focus and show that NGO's are important actors for building and promoting peace by peaceful means despite any challenges they might meet. The questions during this interview are concerned with:
1. Your daily working routines
2. How the organization is structured
3. How do you cooperate with partners
4. How do you cooperate with the government

By answering these questions you will provide me with a deeper understanding about your work and it will be helpful for my project. Please note that the informants will be presented with fictive names and will be given the chance to approve the way they are presented in the final paper if this is preferable for the informant.

In accordance with research ethical guidelines all information will be processed confidentially. Participation in this research project is voluntary and it is possible for the interviewees to withdraw from the research interview at any time during the interview. The data will only be used for research purpose.

With best regards,

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