Corporate Social Responsibility through Public-Private Partnerships
- Implications for Civil Society and Women’s Empowerment in India

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Abstract  This study investigates how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects implemented through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) impact on the roles, relationship, responsibilities and agendas of the involved actors – the private sector, civil society and the state – and whether these can lead to women’s empowerment and the capacity building of civil society in India, through a case study of the CSR projects of the Indian wind power company Suzlon. The empirical findings in terms of women’s empowerment lead us to conclude that although the first dimension of power, the ‘power over’, reflected in unequal gender structures, only has been addressed to a minor extent through Suzlon’s CSR projects, women’s ‘power to’, ‘power with’ and ‘power from within’ have been enhanced significantly, particularly through the projects specifically aimed to address women’s empowerment. Further, to adequately enhance women’s empowerment requires addressing gender structures and the gender sensitization of men, and not only the capacities of women. Suzlon has contributed to the capacity building of civil society – the NGOs implementing the CSR projects - in terms of enhancing project sustainability, promoting NGO ownership of projects, decreasing donor dependency and enforcing long-term strategies, while some other aspects of capacity building largely have remained unaddressed. Although the respective actors in the PPPs generally are positive of the collaborations, our findings indicate that the state partly withdraws from its responsibility to further development while the private sector increasingly takes on the same. The risk of corporate control of the civil society agenda associated with PPPs is not confirmed by our study although civil society tends to bear the highest costs in PPPs, in terms of credibility losses and insecurity concerning project terms and funding. The findings further confirm the importance of ‘critical cooperation’ and ‘complementary core competencies’ in PPPs.
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1. Introduction

Multinational corporations (MNCs) are increasingly forced to widen their agendas to include responsible practice in terms of labor conditions and environmental concerns, commonly referred to as corporate social responsibility (CSR), and can thus no longer focus solely on profit. In recent years, some corporations have expanded their CSR agendas so that these no longer are limited to issues related to labor conditions and the immediate effects of their production, but also include broader concerns that incorporate civil society and the communities within which they operate, and thus issues that lay beyond the corporations’ immediate interests. This has resulted in new so-called public-private partnerships (PPPs), collaborations between the private sector, civil society and the government that aim to address common concerns and development issues. These are bound to affect the relationship between, and the respective responsibilities of, these actors, especially in developing countries where the state typically is weak. In this context, CSR may result in the private sector turning into a development agent that bridges conventional business agendas, civil society concerns, women’s empowerment and poverty alleviation and the state partly withdrawing from the development sector (Blowfield, quoted in Utting and Marques, 2010:124). This raises new questions concerning the prospects for business taking on the role of a development agent and the implications of this and of PPPs for civil society and women’s empowerment.

1.1. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of our minor field study is thus to investigate whether CSR strategies and projects implemented through PPPs can strengthen civil society and empower rural women in developing countries and how PPPs affect the relationships between the involved actors. More specifically, we want to explore whether Indian corporations explicitly working with CSR through PPPs have accomplished this and how these partnerships have affected the roles and responsibilities of the involved stakeholders by
conducting a case study of the Suzlon Group’s CSR activities in two Indian states. The research questions are:

1. **Can CSR projects implemented through PPPs contribute to women’s empowerment and the strengthening of civil society in rural India?**

   Subordinate research questions:
   - What have been the outcomes of Suzlon’s PPPs and corporate social responsibility projects in terms of:
     a) Women’s empowerment in rural India?
     b) The capacity building of civil society?
   - Do different types of CSR projects have different implications for a) and b)? In case they do, what factors explain this?

2. **What are the business, civil society and government stakeholders’ views on PPPs and how do these actors perceive the partnerships to impact on the relationship between Suzlon, the state and civil society in terms of the extent to which they have affected each other’s roles, responsibilities and agendas?**

The incentives and strategies associated with CSR have been explored within the field of economics, and various arguments have been made concerning the benefits of CSR for corporations, workers and communities, but comparative evidence of the social impacts of these, for example when it comes to women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building, is limited and thus needs to be generated through empirical investigations (Prieto-Carrón, 2006:981). The relationship between civil society, the state and other actors in the developing world has been explored by political scientists while the role of business and the prospects for and effects of CSR in terms of development, the strengthening of civil society and women’s empowerment are relatively unexplored topics as this remains an emerging field within political science. A critical CSR research agenda further needs to consider issues of power and participation in CSR, and thereby challenge the dominating discourse of the ‘business case’ for CSR, by exploring the
power structures implicit in multi-stakeholder CSR initiatives – who has the power to set the agenda and who is allowed a voice in the debate (ibid:984). By addressing the overall objective of our minor field study, we thus aim to bridge the theoretical fields of CSR and civil society in order to investigate what impacts PPPs have in terms of women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building through an empirical investigation of the practical outcomes of the Suzlon Group’s CSR projects in India. By addressing the aim, the study will also allow us to make comparisons between different CSR projects and thereby come to conclusions concerning what types of CSR projects are the most successful when it comes to contributing to women’s empowerment and the strengthening of civil society.

1.2. The Suzlon Group and Suzlon Foundation

Suzlon Energy Limited, which together with its 75 subsidiary companies forms the Suzlon Group, is an India-based multinational wind power company that was founded in 1995. Today, Suzlon is Asia’s market leading wind power company, with a presence in 25 countries, covering 5 continents. The self-proclaimed vision of Suzlon is to power a greener tomorrow by serving society with sustainable wind power through building partnerships with all stakeholders; employees, customers, vendors, service providers, local communities and governments (www.suzlon.com). Nevertheless, Suzlon is a MNC that primarily strives to generate profit, which implies that its operations are bound to have both positive and negative impacts on its different stakeholders, surrounding communities and the environment. Some of the potentially negative impacts of Suzlon’s business operations are land alienation, community conflicts, solid and water waste, impacts on health and livelihoods, inadequate safety for labor, loss of biodiversity, soil and water erosion, impacts on the local economy, waste and pollution and large dumping spaces (Suzlon PPT, CSR – the way of doing business).

This implies that those that are most likely to be negatively affected by Suzlon’s business operations are the groups that already constitute the most vulnerable in the Indian society,
namely rural communities surrounding the wind farms and factories and, to some extent, Suzlon laborers. Despite the vision of Suzlon to only impact positively on society, the communities surrounding the wind farms and manufacturing sites have partly been negatively affected by the business, which has resulted in mistrust against the company and clashes between local communities and Suzlon staff. To make its business operations run smoothly and to practice what it preaches in terms of building relationships with all affected stakeholders and reducing the clashes with local communities by addressing their mistrust against the company, Suzlon established Suzlon Foundation in 2007.

Suzlon Foundation is responsible for leading CSR initiatives internally and externally for the Suzlon group of companies in India. The mission of Suzlon Foundation is to ensure that the Suzlon Group is committed to ethical business practices that are fair to all the stakeholders and that the business operations have a minimal impact on the natural environment, to enable local communities to develop their potential and to empower employees to be responsible civil society members (www.suzlonfoundation.org). In India, Suzlon Energy operates in 8 states and 2 union territories and Suzlon Foundation is running CSR projects in collaboration with civil society (NGOs) and state actors in all these locations.

1.2.1. Our Relationship with Suzlon

During the fall term of 2010, we were interns at Suzlon Foundation and were thus implicated with the objects of study, namely Suzlon business, Suzlon Foundation and the NGOs implementing the CSR projects. The case study therefore drew inspiration from Michael Burawoy’s ‘extended case method’ in the sense that the research was conducted in a setting where we as researchers partly were immanent to the examined case (Burawoy, 1998:14-16) as the gathering of the material was initiated during our internship. The ‘extended case method’ further implies a reflexive, as opposed to a positive, view of science, which involves the valorization of intervention, process, structuration and theory reconstruction, and thus places less emphasis on reactivity,
reliability, replicability and representativeness striven for in positive science (ibid:4). It further strives to locate everyday life in its extralocal and historical context and involves the intersubjectivity of the scientist and the subject of study (Ibid:5).

Though this type of engagement with the object under investigation commonly is seen as a hindrance to the obtainment of unbiased data, it must in this context be seen as a precondition for the conduction of this specific study. The internship created the possibility for us as researchers to get in contact with all stakeholders within the Suzlon Foundation CSR chain as well as to get access to important internal documentation. By using critical theories concerning CSR, women’s empowerment and civil society as points of departure and thereafter develop indicators of how to assess whether civil society has been strengthened and whether women have been empowered through the CSR projects, we developed a high level of consciousness regarding the potential bias contained in our data collection and analysis. This is in line with Burawoy’s argument that the extended case method should take its departure in theory and locate the social process in a wider context to reduce potential bias (1998:18-21).

2. Theoretical Framework

As implied above, the study relates to four different theoretical fields – CSR, civil society, capacity building and women’s empowerment – and these will be accounted for in this section of the paper. The theoretical frameworks of CSR and civil society constitute the contexts of, and are related to the main actors of concern in, the investigation and therefore, these will first briefly be discussed. Here, the specific history, conditions for and characteristics of civil society in India will also be accounted for, as this constitutes the context within which the CSOs featuring in the study operate. As the processes of women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building are potential outcomes of the studied CSR projects, these will then be theoretically accounted for. Following this, we will address CSR and civil society theories conjunctively and thereby attempt to bridge these. We see a need for this as recent developments associated with
globalization and the rollback of the state as well as the object of study – PPPs – demand that CSR strategies and projects, and the motivations, processes, actors and outcomes associated with these, are analyzed with the effects on the role, capacity and agenda of civil society taken into consideration.

The remainder of the theory section will constitute an account of the existing empirical evidence of the impacts of CSR and PPPs in terms of the role and agenda of, and the gains and losses for, civil society and the private sector respectively. Following this, we will discuss conclusions drawn based on previous research regarding CSR and PPP outcomes within the area of women’s empowerment. Since a large share of the studied projects aim to further the empowerment of women through the formation and strengthening of women’s self-help groups (SHGs), evidence concerning the correlation between SHG membership and women’s empowerment will also be discussed.

### 2.1. Corporate Social Responsibility

In recent years, voices have been raised in developed as well as in developing countries, in labor organizations and unions, in governments, in NGOs and even within corporations in protest against irresponsible business practice and in favor of corporate accountability in terms of human rights and environmental standards, or what is usually referred to as ‘sustainable development’. In this way, corporations, mainly MNCs operating on a global scale, are increasingly forced to widen their agendas to include responsible practice in terms of labor conditions and environmental concerns and can no longer focus solely on profit. Definitions of CSR vary not simply by virtue of its essentially contested status but also as a reflection of the different practical orientations of corporations towards their responsibilities (Moon, 2007:298). Andriof and McIntosh define CSR as “…understanding and managing a company’s wider influences on society for the benefit of the company and society as a whole” (2001:14). CSR encompasses four areas – the environment, the workplace, the community and the marketplace – and it is within these areas that corporations have the capacity to make a difference by monitoring and
changing the effects of their operations (ibid:16). Further, it can be argued to refer to three aspects – an economic, an environmental and a social (Henderson, 2001:19) – and involve a commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the life of the workforce, the local community and society at large (Holme and Watts, 2000:2). We will mainly be concerned with the impacts of CSR within the community area and in terms of its economic and social impacts since the projects under investigation are implemented in the communities surrounding Suzlon’s wind farms.

The fact that corporations increasingly endorse CSR has since the early 1990s resulted in a rapid growth of voluntary corporate codes of conduct, or sets of rules outlining the responsibilities and proper practices of corporations. This can be seen both as a manifestation of and a response to globalization and has been part of a more general shift from state regulation of corporations towards an emphasis on corporate self-regulation in these areas (Jenkins, Pearson and Seyfang, 2002:1). Views diverge on the issue of whether codes and CSR in general mainly constitute responses to political and consumer pressure in order for corporations to defend their reputation and market position (ibid:3) or if these can go beyond such window-dressing and opportunism (Henderson, 2001:83). Another issue concerns the question of whether codes actually deal with issues that workers have expressed concern about or if they instead reflect a discourse concerning the needs and wants of workers in developing countries formulated by corporations, governments and civil society, including labor organizations and NGOs, in Western countries (Jenkins, Pearson and Seyfang, 2002:44; Chowdhry, 2002:227). However, nationally based corporations in developing countries are increasingly engaging in CSR practices, which reduces the problem of formulations and CSR agendas reflecting Western perspectives. CSR has also recently started to move beyond codes of conduct to include broader projects that incorporate communities and civil society, and thus issues and actors that lay beyond the corporations’ immediate interests, which points towards a deeper commitment to responsible business practice, development and women’s empowerment. This requires a reevaluation of CSR strategies and projects and a bridging of theories related to civil society, empowerment, development and CSR.
2.2. Civil Society Theory

After largely having been left out of political discourse for half a century, civil society was brought to prominence in the late 1970s and early 1980s in connection with the crises of statist ideologies – socialism in the East, welfarism in the West and developmentalism in the South – which fuelled the rise of civil society groups and motivated a normative state-civil society distinction (White, 1994:376; Sjögren in Beckman et al, 2001:29-30). In the current development discourse, civil society is seen as a major force for driving development and democratization processes in developing countries. Despite the widespread use of the concept, its definition, relation to other actors and expected functions remain contested and its meaning is historically and contextually contingent (Keane, 1998:53). A common definition of the term is that of an “…intermediate sphere of social organization or associations between the basic units of society – families and firms – and the state…which are separate from the state, enjoy autonomy in relation to the state and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests or values” (White, 1994:377-379). The advocates of this liberal ideal type of civil society argue that it is the characteristics of autonomy, voluntarism and pluralism that give civil society its developing forces and potential for resistance (Keane, 1998:78).

Nevertheless, even those with a liberal view of civil society recognize that the ideal differs from its form in reality, where the boundaries between the state and civil society often are blurred, the two spheres may overlap and civil society’s autonomy is a question of degree (White, 1994:380-381). The liberal ideal has further been criticized from the more leftist civil society perspective for failing to recognize existing power relations, tensions and contradictions within and across the two spheres and to understand how they mutually constitute each other (Beckman in Beckman et al, 2001:50; Gibbon, 1996:31). In this view, the liberal image of civil society is too narrow as it excludes certain types of organizations, such as ethnic and religious associations, and certain ways in which civil society organizations (CSOs) can operate and engage with other actors (Sjögren in
Beckman et al, 2001:38). This critique has resulted in an alternative view of civil society as a collection of forces, characterized by internal tensions and contradictions, that has the potential to work for development and democratization, but that not necessarily will do so (Beckman and Sjögren in Beckman et al, 2001:16). Important in this is the recognition that civil society can be a developing force without perfectly fulfilling the criteria of autonomy, voluntarism and pluralism. As Gibbon points out, in line with Gramsci, parts of civil society may at times in fact be steered by powerful conservative interests aiming to preserve rather than contest prevailing patriarchal, religious, ethnic or class structures and will in these instances not be a progressive force that seeks confrontation with the state and other powerful actors (Gibbon, 1996: 27, 35-36, 39).

Civil society will here be viewed as a sphere basically separate from, but not always completely autonomous in relation to, families, firms and the state, that is constituted by a plurality of diverse CSOs that may work as positive forces for development but that may fail to do so. These organizations’ relationships and levels of engagement with each other and with other actors is seen as dynamic and complex rather than static and simple (Beckman and Sjögren in Beckman et al, 2001:16, 38; Sachikonye in Beckman et al, 2001:117-120). Further, although we see the democratizing force highlighted by many scholars as an important aspect of civil society, this will not be studied or emphasized in this paper as our focus lies on its potential to contribute to capacity building and women’s empowerment through collaborations with the private sector.

### 2.2.1. Civil Society In India

Indian civil society has, as most private spheres, developed as a response to public policies and has been shaped by its relation to the state in its pre-colonial, colonial, state-centered and global eras (Berglund, 2009.1:19). Compared to many developing countries, India today has a vast, vibrant and diverse civil society (Baviskar, 2001:4). The conditions of possibility for this are often attributed to the plural nature of the Indian society and social structure (Ghosh, 2009:229) as well as to the fact that the state never
has had a monopoly on the production, administration or interpretation of power, but has co-existed with religious and traditional power structures (Randeria, 2002:21; Berglund, 2009.1:19).

The Indian state was until the 1980s hostile to the idea of cooperating with civil society in development work and conversely, civil society was skeptical of collaborating with the state (Baviskar, 2001:7). In accordance with global trends of decentralization and privatization of development work, the Indian state has from the 1980s onwards encouraged NGOs to take more responsibility for social development (Ghosh, 2009:230, 233-234). The state has thereafter substantially increased the funding of NGOs and created a number of development schemes that have opened up for cooperation with civil society. This, in combination with the influx of foreign aid agencies funding NGOs working with development, stimulated the increase in the number of Indian NGOs, which now amounts to over 30,000 (Heitzman and Worden, 1995; Berglund, 2009.1:24). The implications of these developments for civil society are that it has become thicker and more active, but also that many of the CSOs are closely engaged with the state or international funding agencies and partly dependent on them for project contracts and/or funding (Berglund, 2009.1:24 and Baviskar, 2001:7). This has at times lead to that CSOs have become “…more accountable to the government and foreign funding agencies than to the local communities and beneficiaries” that they work for and thus partly coopted in government and aid agency agendas (Ghosh, 2009:239). Furthermore, in accordance with the trends of the privatization of development, private companies are increasingly also entering the area of development work in India, mainly through CSR and PPPs, and are hence also becoming collaborating partners and actors of concern for civil society. The Indian civil society nevertheless remains diverse both in form and in its relation to the state and other authorities; it is characterized by internal conflicts and contestations and contributes positively to development while also at times reproducing inequalities and power structures (Chandoke, 2004:161; Berglund, 2009.1:25-26).
2.2.2. Civil Society Capacity Building

Capacity building is by the UNDP and the OECD Development Assistance Committee defined as the process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives and enhance their understanding and ability to deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner (UNDP, quoted in Milèn, 2001:5). As the focus of this paper is on CSOs, in the form of NGOs and community based organizations (CBOs), it is the capacity building of these types of organizations that is of interest here. Capacity building in this context aims to diminish an organization’s internal weaknesses by building on its existing strengths and it is used as a tool to aid CSOs in meeting the challenges of a rapidly changing external environment and serve their communities (James, quoted in Loza, 2004:297). A fundamental element of capacity building, therefore, should be to build the capacities of organizations to meet the demands of change. Since gaps in capacity, as well as the reasons for these gaps, inevitably are context-dependent, capacity building strategies and actions must be developed for each specific situation and organization (Milèn, 2001:16). The concept of civil society capacity building is furthered operationalized in section 3.3.1.

2.3. Women’s Empowerment

The concept of empowerment has evolved from constituting an alternative leftist development approach in the early 1990s to in the 2000s having entered the stage of the more liberal development institutions, such as the World Bank, and currently being one of the central concepts in some MNCs’ CSR agendas. This development raises questions regarding the implications of CSR for the empowerment of women. Empowerment can be defined as:

“…a process by which people, organizations or groups who are powerless (a) become aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context, (b) develop the skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives, (c) exercise this control without infringing upon the
Empowerment can be economic, social or political and can be relevant at the individual as well as the collective level, referring to collective action and cooperation (Rowlands, 1995:103). This study, however, mainly concerns the social and economic empowerment of women. The basic assumption of the empowerment approach is that development must be a process that is initiated and driven by the concerned people, not simply for them, and thus that people ultimately must empower themselves. In order to understand what is needed to change the situation of the poor, development projects have to be bottom-up, actor-oriented and participatory in all stages, from planning and implementation to evaluation (Oxaal and Baden, 1997:2, 5, 25; Rowlands, 1995:103, 1998:16; Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:7).

What makes empowerment, and especially women’s empowerment theory, different from other development concepts, such as capacity building and sustainability, is that it accounts for how unequal power relations affect the poor, and especially poor women (Rowlands, 1995:106). To work for the empowerment of women, one has to understand the power dynamics of oppression, stemming from gender, race, class, or any other repressive force, and how different forms of power interact and shape the relations between men and women as well as between women (Rowlands, 1995:101, 1998:17). Women’s empowerment theory is hence based on a four-dimensional concept of power, including the traditional notion of 'power over', which requires the understanding of external and internal oppressions that may restrain women from exercising the 'power to' act or resist and challenge gender hierarchies and improve women’s lives. The third dimension of power is the 'power with', referring to the power to act with others, and the fourth is the 'power from within', stemming from individual and collective awareness and self-confidence (Rowlands, 1998:15-16, 1995:102-103; Parpart, Rai and Staudt: 2002:8).
In order for empowerment to take place, a core set of necessary elements have been identified on the personal and collective levels (Rowlands, 1998: 23, 1995: 102-103) and these are listed below.

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<th>Personal Empowerment</th>
<th>Collective Empowerment</th>
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<td>Self-confidence and self-esteem</td>
<td>Group identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of agency</td>
<td>Collective sense of agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of self in a wider context</td>
<td>Self-organization and management</td>
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<td>Undoing internal oppression</td>
<td>Undoing institutional oppression</td>
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The empowerment of women thus ultimately aims for women to have an enhanced control over their own lives and material resources (Rowlands, 1995:104). To achieve women’s empowerment in practice, the organization, capacity building, education, and skill development of women is central. Furthermore, women’s access to money and credit and control over resources need to be enhanced and a greater participation of women in the social and political development process is required (Jatana and Crowther, 2007:40-48; Galab and Chandrasekhara, 2003:1277-80). In rural developing contexts, land and water have been identified as the most important resources for women to gain better access to and control over. This is seen as important for women’s empowerment as it decreases women’s dependence on others for survival and subsistence needs and reduces their drudgery, primarily related to fetching water (Patel in Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:147, 158; Jatana and Crowther, 2007:44-47). Further, the control over land is viewed as a prerequisite for the enhancement of women’s social and political empowerment as it tend to enhance women’s decision-making power within the family as well as in society (Patel in Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:147, 158).

The level of empowerment is thus intrinsically implicated with two sets of interrelated factors, namely agency and opportunity structures (Alsop et al, 2006:11). Although the disenabling/enabling role of structures is recognized in women’s empowerment theory, the approach has in practice often been criticized for neglecting the impact of global,
national and, to some extent, local power structures that may work in disempowering ways and stand in the way for women’s empowerment (Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:3). This, as global, national and local development institutions and practitioners, such as the World Bank, SIDA, NABARD and MNCs, tend to over-emphasize personal empowerment, or the ‘power to’ dimension, and activities related to the economic aspects of empowerment, such as access to credit and entrepreneurship opportunities, as opposed to collective empowerment and the ‘power with’ dimension, aimed at challenging ‘power over’ structures that subordinate women (Oxaal and Baden, 1997:5, Deininger and Liu, 2009:15-16; worldbank.org; Harper, 2003: v-x, 1-2, 46-49; Bali Swain, 2006:21; Moon, 2007:304). Further, to assume that individuals or collectives of poor women have the capacity to change these unequal power structures and gain the capacity to act within them simply by becoming economically empowered and by organizing can seem overly optimistic (Parparat in Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:170, 174) and may in fact put an unequal burden of expectations and workload on women without increasing their decision-making power or control over resources (Oxaal and Baden, 19978-9), thereby downplaying the responsibility of men, the state and global corporations and institutions in contributing to the creation of the conditions of possibility for the empowerment of women. Hence, empowerment projects need to pay more attention to the specific local power relations between men and women and work with the gender sensitization of men. On the national and global levels, attention needs to be paid to power structures that constrain and define the possibilities for change at the local level (Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:12, 175).

Moreover, the women’s empowerment approach has been criticized for treating women as one group, ignoring the power structures that exist among women as well as the different subject positions of women, which may make them prefer to ally with men of their class/caste as opposed to other women of different classes/castes (Parparat in Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:171, 177). As the main object of study for women’s empowerment in this study are SHGs (whose role and function will be discussed below)
that in general are constituted by 10-15 women from a homogenous class and caste (Harper, 2003:VII), this critique becomes less problematic in this particular context.

2.4. Merging CSR and Civil Society Theory – PPPs

While formerly being rooted in formal constitutional powers, the recent development that can be termed the privatization of governance has led to that political power and institutional capability increasingly is derived from a capacity to wield and coordinate various state and non-state actors’ resources (Prieto-Carrón, 2006:985). The growth of the transnational economy has led to an increasing number of huge corporations at the same time as governments’ degree of control exerted over the private sector has diminished and it is in this context that the role of CSR has gained importance (Hamann and Acutt, 2003:256). CSR can be seen as expressing a new relationship between private capital and the public interest. That business now is considering not only its shareholders but also the communities in which they operate has led business and civil society to converge at an accelerating rate when it comes to setting regulatory frameworks in economic development, which is manifested in an acceptance of corporations’ initiatives to regulate their own social and environmental performance and in multi-stakeholder initiatives and the use of PPPs to implement standards, offset negative business impacts and promote economic development (Prieto-Carrón, 2006:985). The term “public-private partnership” can according to Savas broadly be defined as “…an arrangement in which a government and a private entity, for-profit or nonprofit, jointly perform or undertake a traditionally public activity” (2000:1). Although the term often specifically is used to refer to infrastructure projects involving partnerships between private firms and the government, it can also, and will in the context of this paper, be defined more broadly, referring to collaborations between government, business and civil society actors for the purpose of addressing common interests and community needs (Hamann and Acutt, 2003:256). These types of collaborations are also commonly referred to as strategic (Eweje, 2007) or tri-sector partnerships (Hamann and Acutt, 2003).
Seen from the perspective of CSOs, corporations are through the development and the new forms of collaborations discussed above entering the stage as a major actor of concern and potential partnerships. The private sector’s collaborations with and support to civil society in developing countries can provide civil society with the resources – financial, networking, and representational – that it needs to enhance its capacity and function properly (Ashman, 2001:1104-1106, Hamman and Acutt, 2003:261). However, a civil society funded by the private sector undermines the liberal ideal type of civil society, characterized by voluntary self-organized associations that operate autonomously (Keane, 1998:6, 8; White, 1994:379). Similarly, this becomes problematic from the perspective of the leftist civil society approach as it opens up for corporate control of civil society, where CSOs may be restricted from engaging in types of struggles that are not in line with the interests or values of the sponsoring corporations, which risks diminishing civil society’s development potential and transforming it into a conservative force (Gibbon, 1996:23; Sjögren in Beckman et al, 2001:29; Beckman in Beckman et al, 2001:59). In the Indian context, the donor dependency and the resulting tendency of CSOs to at times be more accountable to their donors than to society amplifies this risk. However, civil society engagement with institutions such as corporations might be needed for changing the conditions for the poor and developing society in a context where the state increasingly withdraws from this role (Blowfield, quoted in Utting and Marques, 2010:124; Hoogvelt, 2001: 248; Rai, 2008: 71-74, 124).

Hamann and Acutt argue that PPPs can be beneficial from a civil society perspective as business has significant resources and capabilities that can and should be harnessed for development purposes. But here, it is vital that ‘complementary core competencies’ are realized so that the respective actors’ knowledge and strengths are put to use in the different stages of project implementation. Typically, the business side can contribute with financial, logistical and human resources, which are complemented by the local knowledge and social capital of NGOs and CBOs and the broader development knowledge and framework provided by the government (Hamann and Acutt, 2003:261). However, as Covey and Brown highlight, most joint civil society-business initiatives are
marked by both converging and conflicting interests and therefore, they propose what they refer to as “critical cooperation” as a strategy most likely to lead to sustained constructive engagement in partnerships (2001:1). Critical cooperation firstly requires that attention is paid to power asymmetries, where power does not have to be equal but the parties have to recognize each other as capable of imposing significant costs or providing valuable benefits to the partnership. Secondly, critical rights need to be mutually accepted as this creates boundaries around negotiations, whose violation can create serious costs to the partners. A third precondition for critical cooperation is interest-based negotiations as a focus on the interests of the parties allows for the creation of agreements that maximize mutual gains and minimizes joint losses. Fourthly, each party needs to manage the interests of its own key stakeholders. These factors, along with the existence of an administrating third party, such as the government, are likely to contribute to a sustainable critical cooperation (Covey and Brown, 2001:7). PPP outcomes are thus dependent on the context and the form of the partnerships and below, we will account for previous research concerning such outcomes.

2.5. Empirical Evidence of the impacts of PPPs

2.5.1. PPPs, Civil Society and Capacity Building

Empirical examples suggest mixed results for partnering efforts in CSR initiatives. Hamann and Acutt exemplify one successful effort to improve the communication between the mining industry and a range of NGOs in South Africa, through a Dialogue Forum and a resulting common vision for sustainable development, and one failed attempt to reach negotiated outcomes in the attempt to establish an Environmental Management Cooperation Agreement (EMCA) due to civil society resistance and a breakdown of trust between the parties (2003:265-266). Having explored the empirical evidence of the extent to which CSR can make growth more inclusive and equitable and thereby reduce poverty, Jenkins concludes that CSR as currently practiced is unlikely to significantly contribute to this (2005:539-540). Although the focus of our study is not on
the impacts of CSR on poverty, Jenkins’ findings in this regard are likely to have implications for its outcomes in terms of women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building as he argues that a major reason for the lack of significant development impacts of partnerships is that CSR prioritizes the ‘business case’, which is difficult to make in relation to poverty reduction as well as women’s empowerment and the strengthening of civil society. Further, CSR is largely defined in negative terms – firms should not harm the environment, employ child labor etc. – while a contribution to development requires a positive commitment. In addition to these factors, the focus on stakeholders within CSR also limits its usefulness when it comes to addressing poverty and the issues of the poor since “almost by definition, the poor are those who do not have a stake” (ibid:540).

Ashman (2001) studied the development impacts and civil society benefits of PPPs by examining 10 cases of collaboration between CSOs and businesses in Brazil, India and South Africa. The conclusions drawn by Asham, that can be contrasted to those of Jenkins, were that business-civil society partnerships can lead to valuable development impacts and that the involvement of the state, or other actors with a high institutional capacity, as argued by Hamann and Acutt, results in a wider reach, a larger scale and a higher level of sustainability of project outcomes (2001:1104). When it comes to positive outcomes of partnerships for the partners themselves, Ashman concluded that collaborations yield several types of mutual benefits, such as business or program innovation, improved public relations, financial and material resource gains and organizational capacity building. CSOs are more likely to achieve net benefits from partnerships when long-term strategies for these are developed. When it comes to costs and challenges, however, these are disproportionately borne by civil society partners in the form of organizational adaptation and excessive business influence on projects, which confirms the risk of civil society partly being coopted in the business agenda, discussed above, and this in the end impacts negatively on all partners as it reduces project sustainability (Ashman, 2001:1106). Related to this, additional conclusions drawn by Ashman are that shared control of projects is crucial as it is associated with joint learning.
which enables partners to correct problems and achieve mutually desired impacts. A precondition for shared control is that all partners value the resources, such as expertise and reach to local communities, possessed by civil society partners (Ashman, 2001:1110), or what Hamann and Acutt referred to as ‘complementary core competencies’ (2003:261).

2.5.2. PPPs, Women’s Self-Help Groups and Women’s Empowerment

According to Thompson, corporations are moral agents and thus have a responsibility to prioritize gender equity in their CSR agendas. In spite of this, a focus on gender has been lacking in CSR initiatives (Thompson, 2008:100). However, there are empirical examples of corporate efforts to work for women’s empowerment through CSR projects and PPPs. For instance, the leading watch and instrument manufacturer Titan Industries has through a partnership with the NGO MYRADA worked to address issues related to women’s empowerment in India in a sustainable enterprise and employment for women project. The partnership has resulted in the formation of a company, which is part of Titan’s supply chain, that employs 200 women, has 3 women directors and shares profit among its employees (Moon, 2007:304). Jatana and Crowther argue that CSR has had and will continue to have a role to play in the empowerment of women in India (2007:40) and discuss several corporations’ efforts in this regard. These initiatives include projects addressing issues such as self-employment, training programs related to banking, bookkeeping and kitchen garden establishments, vocational training, literacy enhancement, health training and camps and the provision of potable drinking water. However, the authors highlight the facts that few corporations commit to CSR, that corporate governance systems and procedures are weak and that there is an absence of methods and tools to evaluate CSR projects (ibid:44-47). Further, what is needed in the area of women’s empowerment in India in order to enhance gender equality at the local government level is an increased awareness among women concerning their fundamental rights, which seldom is addressed through CSR (ibid:47).
Since there is little empirical evidence of the impacts of CSR and PPPs on women’s empowerment, and as the CSR initiatives under investigation in this study that address women’s empowerment mainly are constituted by projects aimed to form and strengthen women’s self-help groups (SHGs), previous research and evidence concerning the correlation between SHGs, microfinance and women’s empowerment will be accounted for below. The failure of formal finance reaching the poorer sections of rural India resulted in a heavy dependence on non-institutional money lenders among this population (Bali Swain, 2006:12). This situation led to the evolution of the SHG Bank Linkage Program in 1992, through which the Indian government legally enabled NGOs to take loans from banks to further lend this money to SHG members (ibid:13). A SHG is a group, most commonly only constituted by women, of 10-15 people…

“…from a homogeneous class, who come together for addressing their common problems. They are encouraged to make voluntary thrift on a regular basis. They use this pooled resource to make small interest bearing loans to their members. The process helps them imbibe the essentials of financial intermediation including prioritization of needs, setting terms and conditions and accounts keeping” (Harper, 2002:vii).

The SHG members are in time meant to appreciate the scarcity and cost of resources and when this is achieved, banks are encouraged to lend money to the group at market interest rates and without any collateral, which is replaced by the peer pressure that ensures timely repayments (ibid:vii-viii). By 2007, approximately 40 million Indian households were organized in over 2.8 million SHGs (Deininger and Liu, 2009:2). The SHG approach, as opposed to a traditional microfinance approach, focuses on social empowerment, outreach and capacity building in addition to credit and savings and the SHGs are encouraged to form federations to assist in the implementation of government programs and to ensure risk diversification and the sustainability of groups (ibid:2).

Based on his multi-level survey of the SHG programme, Bali Swain concluded that the SHG programme has made a change in the lives of women in terms of a positive economic impact on households (though not on asset ownership) and their spending on schooling expenditures as well on job opportunities, self-confidence and the extent to
which members take crucial decisions concerning the purchase of raw materials and product pricing and are involved in family decision-making in general (2006:16-19). Other outcomes in terms of women’s empowerment include enhanced literacy, increased mobility, enhanced awareness about government programmes and politics and increased political participation and resistance towards existing culture and societal norms by women to improve their well-being, which constitutes a crucial aspect of empowerment.

In line with these findings, Tesoriero’s evaluation of women’s SHGs in Southern India led him to conclude that SHG membership is correlated with social and political empowerment (2006:330-331). Similarly, Galab and Chandrasekhara Rao (2003) found that SHG membership has had considerable and balanced impacts on all three levels of empowerment – ‘power to’, ‘power with’ and ‘power from within’ – under one of the three studied SHG models, while there has been a lack of improvement in the ‘power with’ dimension in the other two models due to the lack of collective initiatives of women. However, in general, women’s control over their labor, access to credit and other resources, degree of mobility and interaction, sense of self-confidence and independence, access to leadership positions and reproduction choices are aspects that have been enhanced to varying degrees under all three SHG models (ibid:1279-1282). When it comes to the sustainability of the SHG outcomes, the authors emphasize the importance of the intensive participation of the women, which requires that they are relieved from drudgery (ibid:1283).

1 The authors exclude the first form of power, ‘power over’, as an aspect of women’s empowerment as this form generally is seen as one exercised on women and one that women resist by enhancing the other three forms.
3. Method

3.1. Selection

3.1.1. The Case, the Contexts and the Analytical Units

The aim of the study will be addressed through a case study of Suzlon Foundation’s CSR projects in the Indian states Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. The fact that the research questions and the objective of the study are rather complex makes the conduction of a case study relevant as this type of study opens up for the possibility examine many aspects of the case and to derive new variables and generate hypotheses by qualitatively analyzing the complex events (George and Bennett, 2004:21, 45; King, Keohane and Verba, 1994:68, 86). This case study can partly be seen as a plausibility probe that studies relatively untested theories and hypotheses to determine if more studies are needed and partly as a theory testing case study, as it also aims to assess the validity and scope of CSR, women’s empowerment and civil society theories in a new context (George and Bennett, 2004:75-76).

The scope and reach of Suzlon’s CSR projects make it possible to study many implications of the case (Suzlon) as well as several analytical units (projects) within the case, which creates the opportunity to get a more complete picture of the research problem (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994:68). The selection of Suzlon as the case of study is thus mainly information-oriented, as it maximizes the utility of information from one single case (Flyvbjerg, 2004:426). This, in combination with the fact that we as researchers had access to the different stakeholders and project documentation within the Suzlon CSR chain, lead us to select Suzlon as the object of study. The choice to study Suzlon’s CSR projects in two contexts Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, as opposed to only one, increases the number of possible analytical units to include in the study. This, in turn, increases the potential for abstraction of the results from the studied analytical units to the population at large and hence for generalization (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994:7-9). The study does however not aim to compare the two different contexts, but rather the projects. Moreover, the legitimacy of a study’s conclusions increases if the
analytical units that are studied vary in terms of important variables that the contexts in these instances determine (ibid:91, 93, 116, 120). Gujarat is one of the most developed industrialized states in India with a strong and vibrant civil society while Madhya Pradesh is one of the least developed Indian states, with a weaker civil society. The decision to study the projects in the two states is therefore based on that the states are considered to be of a most different character, which limits the risk of reaching conclusions concerning the research questions that to a high degree only are correlated with a specific socio-economic and civil society context. The time limitation aspect of the study was what prevented it from including additional contexts and analytical units.

In the two states all Suzlon Foundation’s 7 CSR projects, the whole population, will be investigated. Although the aim of the study is not primarily to compare the projects, the secondary aim is to look at whether different types of projects have different implications for women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building, since the projects are of different character and have different objectives and goals. For this part of the study, the comparison of the projects will apply the method of a structured focused comparison, in which general questions that reflect the research objective are asked of each unit to guide and standardize the data collection, thereby enabling the systematic comparison and accumulation of the findings (George and Bennett, 1994:67).

To address the aim, 5 stakeholder groups are crucial to include in the study and these are Suzlon business, Suzlon Foundation, the implementing NGOs, the CBOs and local collaborating government departments. The inclusion of all stakeholder groups and the fact that the data primarily will be gathered through semi-structured interviews, will enable us to address the research questions from different perspectives, acquire qualitative information related to these and follow up on the perceptions of the involved stakeholders (Esaiasson et al, 2004:262, 279). However, questionnaires and already existing data in the form of project documentation will allow for material triangulation and work as complements and cross-references to the information gathered through the interviews (Kvale, 1997:112,197; Lindgren, 2007:52, 57-58). This further enhances the
reliability of the study. The CSR projects have different objectives, means of implementation and stakeholders and are presented below.

Table 1. Project Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Implementing NGO</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>Livelihood (SHGs)</td>
<td>Concept Society</td>
<td>Dewas</td>
<td>SHGs, Concept, governmental officials, Suzlon Business and Suzlon Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dugdh Dhara (SHGs)</td>
<td>Samarpan</td>
<td>Ratlam</td>
<td>SHGs, Samarpan, governmental officials, Suzlon Business, Suzlon Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conjunctive Land Use</td>
<td>Bypass</td>
<td>Jaora</td>
<td>Natural Resource Management Committee (NRMC), Bypass, governmental officials, Suzlon Business, Suzlon Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>Handicraft and Market Facilitation</td>
<td>Khamir</td>
<td>Bhuj</td>
<td>Khamir, Suzlon Business, Suzlon Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drinking Water</td>
<td>Sahjeevan</td>
<td>Abdasa Taluka</td>
<td>Water Committees, Sahjeevan, governmental officials, Suzlon Business, Suzlon Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smile (SHGs)</td>
<td>Gramya Vikas Ttrust (GVT)</td>
<td>Dwarka</td>
<td>SHGs, GVT , government officials, Suzlon Business, Suzlon Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SHGs</td>
<td>Direct implementation/SHG Coordinators</td>
<td>Daman</td>
<td>SHGs, SHG coordinators, governmental officials, Suzlon Business, Suzlon Foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The different characters of the projects will allow us to study different empirical implications of the theory and hence to capture various parts of the population and avoid a truncated selection (King, Kohane and Verba, 1994:19, 103-104, 117-119). However, this also implies that all projects cannot be studied for all aspects of the research question.
The handicraft and market facilitation project does not aim to address women’s empowerment and is thus unsuitable for studying the extent to which the CSR projects have contributed to this. However, it has implications for civil society capacity building and stakeholder perceptions of PPPs, which makes it relevant to include in the study. Conversely, the SHG project in Daman is not implemented by an NGO, but directly by Suzlon Foundation with the help of 3 SHG coordinators, which makes it irrelevant when it comes to studying the capacity building of NGOs, but suitable for looking at potential impacts on the empowerment of women.

3.1.2. Sample of Respondents and Informants

The study is based on 47 interviews that, with the exception of the interview with the Suzlon Foundation head, all are project- and stakeholder-related (See a table of interviews per project and stakeholder group in Appendix 1 and a list of interviews in Appendix 2). As a representative from Suzlon Foundation, the head of the foundation was interviewed as she was expected to possess the most knowledge concerning the foundation and the projects (Lindgren, 2007:13, 27; Esaiasson, 2004:287). For the same reason, the head of each NGO was interviewed and asked to answer the respondent questionnaire regarding civil society capacity building. We received questionnaire responses from all 6 NGOs.

At each of the 7 project locations, we also strived to get in touch with and interview local Suzlon employees and government representatives. However, our inability to do this in Gujarat and for the Bypass project in Madhya Pradesh has limited the study’s ability to capture these actors’ views on PPPs. Nevertheless, since 6 Suzlon business representatives and 6 government representatives were interviewed for the study as a whole, and as the aim of the paper is not of a comparative nature, the perceptions of these 2 stakeholder groups are seen as sufficiently captured (Esaiasson, 2004:256; Lindgren, 2007: 25-27). The selection of which government and business representatives to include in the study was based on relevance (their involvement in the projects) and availability.
The sample includes local government representatives (Panchayats representatives), the rural development department, the animal husbandry department, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK - an agricultural research institute under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education) and Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY - a government initiative to provide employment to poor people living in rural areas through the establishment of SHGs).

When it comes to the CBO interviews for each project, we chose to make a stratified selection based on the maximum variation principle, which implies that we aimed to include respondent groups that varied in terms of the most important characteristics for the research question. This, in order to cover as many different types of developments and views on the research question as possible and to be able to document potential patterns and variations (Esaiasson et al, 2004:288; Lindgren, 2007:25-27). For our study, it is the geographical location of the CBOs that is most likely to affect the outcome of, and the views concerning, the CSR projects as the location is the major determinant for a number of social and economic development factors in the Indian rural context. Furthermore, the location is likely to affect the CBOs’ respective perceptions of Suzlon, as this is related to how Suzlon has conducted business in that particular area. The selection of which CBOs to interview for each location was made in consultation with the NGOs and the ambition was to include different types of groups in the study. The involvement of the NGOs in the selection process may have introduced a bias in terms of the representativeness of the CBOs since the NGOs may have had an interest in featuring the most successful groups in the study. However, this was the only way to get in contact with the CBOs and the facts that selections were made in consultation with us and based on our instructions for sample stratification and that we are applying method and material triangulation in the study are likely to balance this potential bias and open up for the possibility of cross-examination. In total, 46 CBOs from 35 villages were represented in 25 interviews (for a list of the sample for each project, see Appendix 3) and the study covers 33-100 % of the project locations and the CBO sample shares vary from 13-100 %. The great variation in sample sizes is explained by the fact that the project sizes, in
terms of the number of CBOs and locations, varied significantly. Although variations in perceptions regarding projects among CBOs were found, many of the perceived outcomes and general views of the projects started recurring after a few interviews had been conducted for each project in different locations, implying that saturation had been reached.

3.2. Data Collection

3.2.1. Respondent, Informant and Focus Group Interviews

The interviews with corporate, government and NGO representatives were primarily of respondent, but partly also informant, character whereas focus group interviews were conducted with the CBOs. All the interviews were of semi-structured character, implying that the interview guides for each stakeholder group were divided into 6 thematic areas that worked to structure the interviews according to the themes, while not necessarily having constituted an exhaustive list of questions, which were all posed. The general themes were i) baseline (the situation before the start of the project/Suzlon involvement in the area); ii) the development approaches and Strategies of the involved actors; iii) outcomes of the projects in relation to the project objectives; iv) outcomes of the projects in relation to other potential impacts on civil society capacity building and women’s empowerment; v) views on PPPs and; iv) civil society capacity building and sustainability (see the general interview guide in Appendix 4).

Respondent interviews were suitable means for data collection as the study aims to capture the perceptions of different stakeholders concerning the studied phenomena. However, since the study also aims to map actual progress in terms of civil society capacity building and women’s empowerment, questions of informant interview character were also included (Lindgren, 2007:8-9). In the analysis, this information was controlled for through the cross-examination of the information obtained from different sources (the independence of the information) and through the consideration of whether the sources
had any incentives to provide us with biased information (tendencies) (Lindgren, 2007:19-20; Esaiasson et al, 2004: 304, 308-313).

Focus group interviews were suitable to conduct with CBOs as the method enabled us to capture the perceptions of different group members, of the groups as collectives and the interaction between the members (Esaiasson et al, 2004:346). Interviews were mostly conducted with groups of CBO members belonging to the same village but to several different CBOs, typically with 2-4 members from each group being present. The fact that members from several groups from the same village were interviewed at the same time allowed us to capture the views and experiences of many groups and enabled the inclusion of a large sample of CBOs in the study, enhancing its representativeness. The fact that the groups were not units put together by us reduced the risk of the CBO members feeling uncomfortable in the interview situation and further gave the focus group interviews more of a respondent character and enhanced the possibility for generalizations, which in general is reduced when the groups are constructed (ibid:347-350). The method is further likely to have reduced the barriers between us and the interviewees, which are unavoidable in research situations involving researchers that come from a different country, culture and class than the interviewees, factors likely to enhance the ‘interviewer effect’ discussed below (ibid:262). In order to minimize this risk of the discussion being dominated by a few persons (ibid:349), we strived to facilitate the participation of all group members by for example posing direct questions to those who had not been heard, thereby inviting them into the discussion.

A challenge that is common for all three types of interviews discussed above is to reduce the ‘interviewer effect’, which refers to when the interviewees consciously or unconsciously adapt their answers according to what they perceive to be expected or desirable by the interviewer (Esaiasson et al, 2004:262; Lindgren, 2007:38). Our engagement with Suzlon Foundation implied the risk of introducing an interviewer effect and therefore, our consciousness and sensitivity concerning the methodology applied in the data collection was particularly important. To reduce this effect, we were clear
concerning the fact that we during the interviews primarily were researchers conducting a study concerning the implications of CSR projects through PPPs for civil society and women’s empowerment. However, although this was secondary, ethical considerations evidently compelled us to state that we were/had been (depending on the time of the particular interview) interns at Suzlon Foundation, which in turn forces us to consider potential biases in the gathered data. But rather than having led to the concealment of information or perceptions, the fact that we were/had been involved with Suzlon is likely to have increased the CBOs’ and NGOs’ incentives to share information with us, since it in their view may lead to the improvement of projects. Furthermore, our involvement with Suzlon minimized the risk of an interviewer effect during the interviews with Suzlon business representatives as they are more likely to feel comfortable talking to others involved with Suzlon than with outsiders. Additionally, the fact that respondents and informants were unaware of the specific aim and indicators of the study made it unlikely that they adjusted their answers accordingly. Another precondition for the obtainment of unbiased data was that respondents explicitly and ahead of the interviews were ensured anonymity in the study. Furthermore, while conducting the interviews at the CBO level, we found that the members largely were unaware of the link between Suzlon, the implementing NGOs and the initiated community project as well as of Suzlon in general, which implies that the interviewer effect related to our engagement with Suzlon is likely to have been negligible. Further, nothing indicated that our nationality or culture considerably affected the responses of the interviewees.

3.2.2. The Use of Interpreters

Due to language barriers, we made use of interpreters during all CBO interviews and the interview with Bypass. In Gujarat, a retired male veterinary doctor worked as our interpreter in all project locations whereas we in Madhya Pradesh used different interpreters for the different locations - a retired male agricultural specialist in Dewas, a retired male railway engineer in Ratlam and a female social worker in Jaora. All the interpreters were Indian lay interpreters that we came into contact with through our internship at Suzlon Foundation. The interpreters were selected based on language skills
and availability and were not professionally connected to the business, the NGOs or the communities in which we conducted the interviews.

The major problems associated with using lay interpreters are that they may be unfamiliar with the role as well as the topic of research and thus tempted to ask their own questions and comment on the respondent answers and that their language and translation skills are insufficient for the job, amplifying the issues related to the ‘transference of speech’ (Jentsch, 1998:284-285). To minimize these potential problems as well as the risk of inconsistency in translation when using different interpreters (ibid:282), we discussed the interview situation and the expected role of the interpreter with each interpreter as well as the interviewees prior to the interviews. Despite these efforts, we had to remind the interpreters of their expected role, to translate frequently and not to introduce their own questions or comments. However, although some interpreters at times intervened in the interviews, this was not done to the extent that a significant amount of data was distorted. It was only during the two interviews in Jaora that the language and translation skills of the interpreter were a problem, implying that information may have been lost, distorted or not fully accounted for. However, when it became obvious that the language skills of this particular interpreter were insufficient for the role, we slowed down the tempo of the conversation and tried to facilitate for the interpreter.

Scholars have further pointed out that interviews conducted with interpreters are bound to be affected by the ‘interpreter effect’, which is likely to either modify or intensify the risks associated with the ‘interviewer effects’ (Jentsch, 1998:282). In this study, the vast differences between us (two young Swedish females) and the interpreters (mainly retired Indian men), helped to reduce national and cultural barriers as the interpreters, who had great knowledge of Indian rural life, could sensitise us to rural customs and help us phrase questions in culturally acceptable ways without losing the original sentiment of the questions. As opposed to what we expected, prior to the interviews, the SHG women seemed unbothered by the presence of a male interpreter, a phenomenon also noted by Jentsch (1998:286), as the male interpreters were not from their community, social class
or caste, resulting in an ignorable ‘interpreter effect’ due to gender differences. To conclude, whereas an negligible amount of information is likely to have been lost or distorted through the ‘transference of speech’, the use of an interpreter during the interviews helped to mediate potential ‘interviewer effects’ and the use of an interpreter is thus neither considered as a major threat to the validity nor the reliability of the study.

3.2.3. Respondent Questionnaire

As a complement to the interviews, a questionnaire was used to gather additional information from all the 6 implementing NGOs concerning civil society capacity building (see Appendix 5). The use of a questionnaire enabled us to pose detailed questions regarding the perceptions of the extent to which the partnership with Suzlon has contributed to the capacity building of the concerned NGOs. Such detailed questions were determined to be unsuitable to include in the interviews as they would make interview guides seem more like check-lists and interviews like interrogations. Potential challenges related to the use of questionnaires as means to gather data are that there is limited space for explanation, room for misunderstanding and risks of not capturing all the relevant information (Esaiasson et al, 2004:272-273). In order to adverse these risks, we encouraged respondents in the introductory e-mail to contact us if they had any inquiries regarding the questionnaire and we opened up for respondents to add additional comments after each thematic area. Furthermore, the method triangulation applied in the study reduced the risks of not gathering all relevant information as the information obtained through the questionnaires is complemented by, and cross-examined through, the information obtained through interviews and project documentation.

3.3. Analytical Method

As discussed above, this study makes use of method and material triangulation for the purpose of, with a significant level of reliability and representativeness, reaching conclusions regarding the correlation between the CSR projects under investigation and
the processes of women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building. The material sources from which our conclusions will be derived, and that will be analyzed and cross-examined for this end, are the informant/respondent and focus group interview transcriptions, the questionnaires and Suzlon Foundation’s project documentation. These sources will all be analyzed, though in somewhat varying ways, through the prism of our operationalizations of women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building and the critical concepts in the analysis of stakeholder perceptions of PPPs, accounted for in this section of the paper.

3.3.1. Operationalization of Civil Society Capacity Building

Drawing on capacity building theory, there are five main areas within which CSOs need to improve in order to enhance their organizational and operational capacities and, through that, their developmental impacts on the communities they operate in. These five areas can in turn be broken down into subcomponents of improvement that can constitute an operationalization of the concept of civil society capacity building. In order for firms to contribute to the capacity building of CSOs, they need to enable them within the areas listed below (the operationalization constitutes a synthesis of those spelled out by Brown and Kalegaonkar, 1999; Dawidson and Wikström Öbrand, 2007; Loza, 2004; Ashman, 2001 and Hadenius and Uggla, 1996).

- **Inter and intra-sector associations, alliances and networks**
  - Promote the formation of CSO coalitions
  - Promote partnerships with the state and other actors
  - Provide forums for agreeing on shared issues

- **Human resources and organization development**
  - Strengthen technical capabilities
  - Improve management and organizational skills
  - Widen the spectrum for development work
  - Improve project planning, data collection, project monitoring and evaluation techniques/systems
3.3.2. Operationalization of Women’s Empowerment

The empowerment literature has identified a number of factors, important for women’s empowerment, that will constitute our operationalization of the concept (the operationalization constitutes a synthesis of those spelled out by Galab and
Chandrasekhara Rao 2003; Jatana & Crowther, 2007; Patel in Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002; Rowlands 1995, 1998) These factors include:

- Awareness of the existing (unequal) power relations between men and women in order to address the ‘power over’ women exercised by men
- Sense of self-confidence, self-esteem and agency on the individual as well as on the collective level, enhancing women’s ‘power from within’ and ‘power with’

The following factors all address women’s ‘power to’:

- Access to capacity building
- Participation in development processes, in the political life and in leadership positions
- Access to credit, involvement in economic activities and enhanced diversification of occupation
- Access to and control over crucial resources such as land and water

To assess whether the CSR projects have empowered women, we thus posed direct and indirect questions aimed to assess the enhancement of the aspects of empowerment listed above. Since the enhancement of one of these aspects will have implications for and spillover effects on other aspects, the questions and answers were not considered as mutually exclusive but could have implications for several aspects. To measure change in women’s ‘sense of self-confidence, self-esteem and agency on the individual as well as on the collective level’, questions concerning the stakeholders’ perceptions of the impact of the CBO membership on the women’s lives, how the women feel about themselves now in relation to before the membership, what types of activities they undertake in their CBOs and whether they do things differently were posed. To measure the extent to which the women’s capacities have been enhanced, questions concerning what capacity building programs the CBOs have taken part in, the outcomes of these and the potential impacts on the women’s lives were posed. To measure a potential change in women’s participation in development processes, in the political life and in leadership positions, we posed questions related to whether the women have taken on any new roles and responsibilities after joining the groups and concerning the extent to which they now, in
relation to before becoming CBO members, are participating in social and community activities as well as in the local government bodies. To measure a potential enhancement in women’s access to credit, involvement in economic activities and diversification of occupation, questions concerning how their access to money has changed, what they are using the money for, if they have initiated any income generation activities and how that overall has affected their lives were posed. To measure potential changes in women’s control over and access to land and water, we asked if they have experienced an increased access to and control over land and water and if so, how that has affected their lives. The answers to all of these questions, along with the accounts of the difficulties/hindrances faced by the women when trying to change their conditions, lifestyles and activities were considered in the evaluation of the extent to which the awareness of the existing (unequal) power relations between men and women has increased among the women.

3.3.3. Critical Concepts in the Analysis of Stakeholder Perceptions of PPPs

Based on previous research concerning PPPs, there are some critical aspects that affect the outcomes and stakeholder perceptions of such partnerships. These are all discussed in the theory section (Jenkins, 2005; Ashman, 2001; Covey and Brown, 2001; Hamann and Acutt, 2004) but will be summarized here as they will constitute a framework for the analysis of the parts of the interviews that are related to the second research question, addressing perceptions of PPPs. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- Trust and motivation
- Partner relations, roles and responsibilities
- Agenda setting, autonomy, ownership and participation
- Cost/benefit allocation
- Complementary core competencies and critical cooperation

To assess these aspects in relation to the studied PPPs, questions related to the respective partners’ perceived roles and responsibilities and potential changes in these, views on the motivation for CSR, and on how PPPs differ from other types of development collaborations, how the partnerships have affected the work of the stakeholders, who set the objectives of the projects, what the benefits and risks associated with PPPs are, who is
doing what in the partnership and the like were posed.

3.3.4. Analysis of Project Documentation

Ahead of the field work in each state, we went through all the project plans and NGO reports and based on these and on the operationalizations of women’s empowerment and capacity building, we constructed the interview guides for the various project stakeholders. We then made use of the documentation after having completed the field work to cross-examine and complement the information obtained through the interviews and the questionnaires. This involved looking at the project plans, objectives and the reported outcomes and impacts and then classifying this information according to the operationalizations of women’s empowerment and capacity building and the critical aspects involved in PPPs.

3.3.5. Analysis of Questionnaire

Something that the questionnaire and interview methods have in common is that largely the same questions are posed to all respondents for the purpose of finding patterns in the answers and thereby explain the phenomena under investigation (Esaiasson et al, 2004:254). However, in the case of questionnaires as opposed to interviews, the respondents are presented with both predetermined questions and answer alternatives (ibid:255), leaving little room for interpretation of the data gathered. The answers will simply be aggregated, as they are expressed in a numerical scale ranging from 1-5, and the pattern observed will be accounted for and analyzed in relation to the theory. The additional comments in the questionnaires will further be classified according to the categories of the capacity building operationalization. The process of classification will be further discussed in section 3.3.6.
3.3.6. Analysis of Interviews

Compared to questionnaires, the interview method implies a lower level of standardization as the pre-constructed interview guides determine the questions or themes that are to be covered, while the dialogue is allowed to affect the specific content, formulations and order of the questions (Esaiasson et al, 2004:255). After having conducted the 47 interviews, these were transcribed. Following this, we applied Lindgren’s method for informant and respondent interview analysis, involving the two processes of material categorization and mapping (2007:16-17, 30-31). By categorizing the interview transcriptions according to the operationalizations of women’s empowerment and capacity building and the critical aspects involved in PPPs, we were able to account for the occurrence of a certain type of answer, a category (ibid). This categorization further allowed us to identify differences in the answers and perceptions of the different interviewees (Kvale, 1994:178-180). These categories were then mapped through a systematic account of the information in the material for the purpose of arriving at an understanding of the general pattern in the interview transcriptions (Lindgren, 2007:31). The fact that we were two researchers interpreting, categorizing and analyzing the material reduced the risks of arbitrariness or one-sidedness in these processes (Kvale, 1994:188).
4. Results and Analysis

4.1. The Outcomes of the CSR Projects in Terms of Women’s Empowerment

In this section of the paper, the outcomes of the 6 projects that in some way aim to address women’s empowerment – the 4 SHG projects in Daman, Dwarka, Dewas and Ratlam, the Conjunctive Land Use project in Jaora and the Drinking Water project in Abdasa Taluka – will be discussed. Whereas the 4 SHG projects explicitly aim to address women’s empowerment through the work with SHGs, the other 2 projects adopt a more integrated approach, striving to address gender-related issues, and thus the empowerment of women, by facilitating female participation in development committees. The fact that the projects address women’s empowerment in different ways enabled us to compare the different approaches and study whether these have had different implications for the outcomes. The discussion will be structured according to our operationalization of women’s empowerment and will provide an account for, and a comparison of, the outcomes of the projects in terms of women’s empowerment. Below is an overview of the number of SHGs and development committees that have been formed through, or are part of, the projects (all of the SHGs except for 9 out of the 21 groups in the Dwarka project were formed through the projects. The 9 older groups were formed 3-9 years prior to the start of the project but are now incorporated in this).

Table 2. Number of CBOs and CBO Members per Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>No. of CBOs</th>
<th>No. of Female CBO Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Livelihood</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dugdh Dhara</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smile</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>X*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHG Daman</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctive Land Use</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking Water</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* No number available of the total number of women that are members of the SHGs.
** Each drinking water committee consists of 10-12 members out which approximately 33 % are women, implying around 40 female committee members.

For the 4 SHG projects, the implementing NGOs and the SHG members unanimously expressed that one of the major outcomes of the SHG membership has been that the women have become more comfortable with showing their faces unveiled and leaving their homes and villages for various purposes (Concept Society interview; GVT interview; Samarpan interview; Dwarka SHG 1; Daman SHG 2). Several of the SHG members reported that they joined the SHGs because they had a willingness to become more independent and active in society. As a result of doing this, they expressed that their self-confidence and sense of empowerment has increased immensely as they prior to the SHG membership used to be veiled and stay in their homes while some of them now travel short distances, run their own businesses and participate in meetings with other sections of society comfortably (Dwarka SHG 1-3; Concept Society interview; Dewas SHG 1 and 4; SHG Coordinator 2). This implies an enhanced sense of self-confidence, self-esteem and agency on the individual level.

The women further accounted for that the major factor contributing to this aspect of their empowerment is the monthly SHG meetings, which have worked as platforms for communication, where they can discuss their individual and common problems, such as wife-beating and issues related to health and education, and thereby strive to find solutions to these collectively (all SHGs). In the project in Dwarka, the NGO implementing the CSR project has contributed to the organization of SHG clusters (collections of SHGs) and a federation (a collection of clusters) and thereby to bringing the knowledge and resources of the individual SHGs together. In this way, whenever a problem is too big or complex to solve or address at the individual SHG level, it can be brought to the cluster or federation level for discussion and collective action (GVT interview; Dwarka SHG 1-4). Evidently, the clusters and the federation, to an even greater extent than the individual SHGs, constitute arenas where the women further can organize and solve issues collectively, which further enhances their empowerment. This
implies an increased sense of self-confidence, self-esteem and agency on the collective level.

In the conjunctive land use project, the NGO has noted an enhanced sense of self-confidence among the female NRMC members as they seem to be stronger both mentally and physically as they come to the meetings and actively participate and travel to the nearby cities without being accompanied by their husbands, as opposed to before they joined the committee (Bypass interview; NRMC). However, in the water project, nothing has been documented that indicates an enhancement in women’s sense of self-confidence, self-esteem or agency on the individual or collective level.

The accounts above indicate that the 4 SHG projects, and to some extent the Conjunctive Land Use project, have contributed to the enhancement of women’s self-confidence and sense of agency as well as to their organization, the development of a group identity and a collective sense of agency. These factors have been identified as necessary elements for personal and collective empowerment and are directly related to women’s enhanced ‘power from within’ and ‘power with’ (Rowlands, 1998: 23, 1995: 102-103). The fact that the women reported that they now, as opposed to before their participation in the CSR projects, are comfortable with taking part in social activities outside the household and that they together can discuss and solve problems indicate that the projects, except for the Drinking Water project, have empowered women in terms of their ‘power from within’ and ‘power with’. The extent to which the women have become more active and independent members of society will further be examined under the remaining aspects of women’s empowerment below.

4.1.2. Access to Capacity Building

All the CBOs have, since the start of the projects, received continuous management and organizational training. Common for all trainings has been the focus on the democratic and organizational principles of an association. While the emphasis of the SHG capacity
building has been on financial training, such as book-keeping, the collection of installments, the opening of bank accounts, the management of bank contacts and the inter-loaning system, the emphasis of the Conjunctive Land Use and Drinking Water project trainings has been on technical aspects of agriculture and water management (all CBO interviews). These trainings have built the capacities of the CBOs in terms of properly establishing and running their organizations.

Through the SHG projects in Dwarka, Daman and Dewas, most of the concerned SHGs have received various income generation trainings aimed to build the women’s capacities to start up new, or enhance their existing, small-scale businesses. In Dewas, these trainings have included leather, stationary, stitching, batik, and bakery trainings (Dewas SHG 1-5; Concept Quarterly Report July-Sep 2010). The SHGs in Dwarka have received training within the fields of fish trading, poultry and dairy farming, animal husbandry and handicraft (GVT interview; Dwarka SHG 1-5). In Daman, the trainings have included tailoring, embroidery and washing powder manufacturing (Daman SHG 2). The extent to which these training have led to the start-up of new income generation activities will be further discussed in section 4.2.2.

In all the SHG projects, health and hygiene awareness training, including information sessions on HIV/AIDS, first aid, child and reproductive health care and malnutrition, have been provided to the SHG members (all SHGs; Suzlon health department). The women account for that the impacts of these trainings have been enhanced health awareness, lowered infant mortality rates and the treatment of malnutrition deficiencies (ibid). The SHG members in Dwarka and Daman further report that their improved health awareness, in combination with the rights awareness training they have received, aiming to build their capacity to demand their rights from local authorities and the government, has improved their ability to access government health care institutions through their SHGs. The SHG members moreover report that they now, as opposed to before, can discuss any issues, ranging from infrastructure and education to abuse, within their groups and collectively develop strategies to address these by putting pressure on the
government/local authorities and society, via their linkages with the NGO, Suzlon Foundation and the government or through the change of practices and the SHG inter-loaning system (GVT interview; Dwarka SHG 1-5; Daman SHG 1-2). The aspect of empowerment related to women’s participation in public life will be further discussed in section 4.2.3.

Training programs related to improved agriculture practices have been conducted for the SHG members in Daman, Dewas and Ratlam and the participants in the Conjunctive Land Use project. Whereas these trainings have been essential and extensive in the Conjunctive Land Use project, their impacts on the lives of the participants in the other projects remain rather small as the efforts have focused on minor improvements, such as kitchen garden establishments and livestock best practices. Furthermore, a small portion of the SHGs in Dewas and Dwarka have taken part in literacy training through which they have learnt to write their names, which has helped the women in official matters when their signature is required (Dwarka SHG 2; Dewas SHG 3).

Capacity building programs aim to empower women by developing their skills and capacity to take control over their lives and exercise their ‘power to’. A precondition for this is that women have a sufficient degree of ‘power from within’ and ‘power with’ (Rowlands 1995:103), as discussed in the previous section. Jatana and Crowther have further concluded that capacity building efforts related to kitchen garden establishments, vocational training, literacy enhancement and health trainings have played a role in the empowerment of women in India (2007:40, 44-47). As indicated above, such trainings have been carried out in all the SHG projects, indicating a potential for the projects to contribute to this aspect of women’s empowerment. However, it is commonly argued that the most important capacity building efforts for women’s empowerment are those related to the capacity building of CBOs and rights awareness generation, as this enables women to enhance their ‘power from within’, ‘power with’ and ‘power to’ (Jatana and Crowther, 2007:47 and Rowlands 1995:103). Rights awareness programs have mainly been carried out in 2 of the SHG projects, indicating that more attention needs to be paid to this
aspect. This implies that the capacity building programs carried out under the CSR projects in theory are likely to, to some extent, contribute to women’s empowerment. However, the degree to which women in practice have been able to make use of the trainings to further empower themselves will be further discussed in sections 4.2.3-4.2.5. Further, since most of the capacity building trainings have been conducted in the SHG projects, it also indicates that the Conjunctive Land Use and the Drinking Water projects are likely to be less successful in contributing to this aspect of women’s empowerment.

4.1.3. Access to Credit, Involvement in Economic Activities and Diversification of Occupation

This aspect of women’s empowerment has mainly been furthered in the SHG projects. An indicator of this is that all SHGs are convening monthly, have established contacts with financial institutions and are saving money and practicing inter-loaning, which according to the groups interviewed for the study have lead to that the individual members have increased their savings and improved their access to credit (all SHGs). This perception is supported by the documented savings and established practice of inter-loaning and the decreased or eradicated need to turn to money lenders for the acquirement of credit (all SHGs). The members reported that the main reasons for borrowing money from the SHGs are for house repairing and household expenses and for education, health, agriculture and social purposes (ibid). This can further be seen as a successful outcome of the capacity building efforts made in the field of organizational and management training, discussed in section 4.2.2.

Nevertheless, the extent to which the groups have gained access to credit and been able to make use of this, along with the knowledge obtained through the income generation trainings, to start new, or support existing, small-scale businesses varies considerably between the projects. In Daman and Dewas, none of the groups are eligible for bank loans, which limits their access to credit to the savings of their SHGs and the inter-loaning system (SHG Coordinator 1; Daman SHG 1-2; Dewas SHG 1 and 3; Concept
Society interview). This, in combination with the lack of access to markets, makes it difficult for the women to turn the knowledge obtained in the income generation capacity building programs into proper entrepreneurial activities (Ibid). Despite these obstacles, the interviews in Dewas, as well as the project documentation, indicate that 1-4 women per SHG have been able to transform the knowledge they obtained in trainings into more long-term income generating or expense saving activities (Dewas SHG 1-5; Concept Annual Report 2010:1). In Daman, where the income generation trainings mainly focused on tailoring and embroidery, only 3-5 women in total have succeeded in taking up tailoring/embroidery as an entrepreneurial activity. However, most women report that they, as a result of the training, save money since they now do not have to pay for tailoring services to the same extent as prior to the projects (SHG Coordinator 2 and 3; Daman SHG 2). Further, 2 of the SHG members that had existing poultry businesses reported that their businesses have benefited from the trainings in animal husbandry (Daman SHG 1).

In Ratlam, no specific income generation trainings have taken place, which is reflected in that few women are involved in economic activities or have experienced a diversification in occupation. Nevertheless, 7 SHGs are in the process of receiving bank loans and 1 SHG has already received a bank loan and has used the money to buy 24 buffalos for the village (Samarpan interview). Furthermore, 1 SHG reported to have started an entrepreneurial activity where the members have purchased mosquito nets in the market for 50 Rupees and sold them to villagers for 60 Rupees, which simultaneously contributes to income generation for the SHG and a reduction in malaria cases in the village (Ratlam SHG 4).

In Dwarka, the SHGs have established 5 different sources to turn to to borrow money. These include the SHGs, the cluster, the NGO, the federation and the bank. This has resulted in a great sense of financial security among the women, which in turn is reflected in that most of the women have succeeded in transforming the knowledge obtained in income generation trainings into long-term economic activities. The economic activities
that the members have initiated include a dairy cooperative, a patchwork, a poultry, a fish trading, a jewelry, an embroidery and a fruit and vegetable business (Dwarka SHG 1-5; GVT interview). The facts that 9 out of the 21 SHGs in Dwarka existed prior to the CSR project and that the particular NGO had a long experience of working with women’s empowerment may explain why the project has come further than the other projects when it comes to this aspects of women’s empowerment.

The above implies that to successfully enhance women’s long-term involvement in economic activities and diversification of occupation, it is crucial to combine income generation capacity building programs with different sources of access to credit and markets. The SHG members moreover highlighted that three additional aspects hinder women from starting income generation activities, namely lack of confidence, resistance from their husbands and preventive social structures (Dewas SHG 2; Concept Society interview). This indicates that in order to facilitate women’s involvement in economic activities, more attention needs to be paid to the enhancement of women’s ‘power from within’ and ability to address the existing ‘power over’ structures.

Nevertheless, the data indicates that the projects have contributed to enhance some, though far from a majority, of the women’s involvement in economic activities, their diversification of occupation and thereby their ‘power to’. It is especially the ‘stronger’ women in the SHGs, who typically hold the positions of president and secretary of the SHGs, that have succeeded in starting businesses and that handle most of the contacts with banks and other social institutions, that are most empowered by the projects. This implies that only a few women have been able to use the knowledge obtained in the capacity building programs to gain further control over their lives and increase their power to act. However, the women that now are involved in economic activities report that positive impacts of this include increased confidence, higher incomes and better access to health infrastructure and thus, improved control over one’s own life (Dewas SHG 2 and 4; Dwarka SHG 1-4). Nonetheless, all the SHG projects have enhanced all the
participating women’s access to credit, which the women claim have contributed to an increased control over their own lives, security and self-confidence.

4.1.4. Participation in Development Processes, in the Political Life and in Leadership Positions

This aspect of women’s empowerment has mainly been furthered through the SHG projects. The SHG project implemented by GVT in Dwarka proved to be the most successful when it comes to increasing women’s participation in development processes and political life, which most likely is explained by the facts that the NGO specializes in women’s empowerment, and thus has a significant amount of experience of working with this, and that the sample of SHGs in this project included older and more mature groups. GVT’s awareness generation efforts concerning which government institutions to turn to for specific development issues and which government schemes apply to and can benefit them, have according to 3 of the SHGs resulted in that government schemes, such as the distribution of subsidized grains and job guarantee cards, have been implemented in the communities as the women were encouraged to agitate for this at the local government level (Dwarka SHG 1). In line with this, the NGO representative accounted for working according to the strategy of encouraging the women to turn to the block level, where SHGs come together in clusters, and then to the district collector whenever a development issue cannot be addressed within the SHG (GVT interview).

During an interview with 4 other SHGs, the women expressed that they often feel that they have the capacity to solve problems related to community development through the SHGs and exemplified this with issues related to health, education, alcoholism and wife-beating (Dwarka SHG 4). In line with this, another group of SHG members reported to have fought for and succeeded in acquiring better school facilities, the introduction of birth certificates, a midday meal program in the schools and 8 new playgroups (Dwarka SHG 3). Like the SHGs formed by GVT, the SHGs assisted by the SHG coordinators in Daman expressed that they after the capacity building trainings, conducted by Suzlon
Foundation and the coordinators, concerning their rights, the existing government schemes and how to approach the government, have developed linkages with different government departments to access the benefits of these schemes (SHG coordinator 1-3; Daman SHG 1-2). This implies that the women, in the 2 projects in which rights capacity building trainings have been conducted, have been able to use the knowledge obtained in the trainings to exercise their ‘power with’ and ‘power to’ in order to gain improved control over their lives. Although the 2 remaining SHG projects have had less outcomes in terms of this aspect of women’s empowerment, the women reported to regularly initiate and take part in community service and development activities, such as the digging of soak pits, which has decreased the amount of still water and thereby lowered the incidence of malaria cases in the community (Dewas SHG 3; Ratlam SHG 7).

As mentioned in section 4.2.2, all the CBOs have received organizational and leadership training. Although the female committee members in the Conjunctive Land Use project initially met resistance when joining the NRMC, as several men decided to leave the committee as a result of this (Bypass interview), it currently consists of 7 women and 8 men, with the president and secretary positions being held by women. An explicit objective of Sahjeevan’s Drinking Water project was to set up water committees, in which women partly was to take leadership. However, the NGO reported that a problem with the water committees has been that only 3-5 members are active members and that the female members in particular have been inactive in spite of the organizational and management trainings that have been conducted (Sahjeevan interview). However, all water committees have female members and Sahjeevan estimated that around 33% of the committee members are women, which our sample confirmed (Sahjeevan Interview; Water Committee 1-3). Although measures, in the form of trainings, have been taken to gender sensitize the water committees and to include women in the program, the resistance towards the involvement of women among men is a major hindrance to women’s active participation in the work of the committees (Water Committee 2; Sahjeevan interview). However, women were by some reported to take part in the monitoring and implementation work of the water committees as well as in the collection
of taxes and other contributions (ibid). In spite of this, Sahjeevan reported that the cases in which women have taken lead in the program are very few and that women’s involvement in the planning, management and decision-making processes has remained low (ibid). The interviews with the water committees and the observations made during this study point towards the latter, which in turn implies that a significant amount of work remains in order for the objectives that women shall take leadership of the program and for the local community to become more gender sensitized to be fulfilled.

To conclude concerning the outcomes of the 6 studied CSR projects in terms of women’s increased participation in development processes, in the political life and in leadership positions, it seems that there is more resistance to, and thus more difficult to impact on, women’s political participation and leadership than their participation in development processes. The SHGs often take on general community development tasks and responsibilities, such as work related to infrastructure development, health and education, which in general is positively received by the communities and which indicates an increased ‘power to’ and ‘power with’ among the women while objectives related to women’s participation and leadership in development committees and work that involves and traditionally has been headed by men have been difficult to fulfill. When it comes to women’s participation in political life, this has been enhanced through several of the projects, especially the SHG projects in Dwarka and Daman, where advocacy has been a strong component of the projects. However, it has mainly been enhanced through increased contacts with and knowledge concerning local government authorities and not through membership in these, although the former may be a precondition for the latter. This once again illustrates the importance of rights awareness training and indicates that the capacity building trainings in general need to focus more on developing women’s leadership capabilities and move from mainly being concerned with practical capacity building, such as vocational training and pay more attention to how ‘power over’ structures can be challenged. On the whole, the outcomes in some regards and lack of these in others point to the fact that gender structures are difficult to change but that small changes can have large impacts on women’s lives.
4.1.5. Access to and Control over Crucial Resources such as Water and Land

This aspect of women’s empowerment has mainly been furthered in the Drinking Water and Conjunctive Land Use projects. As a consequence of that water now can be accessed at a closer distance from the villages in the Drinking Water project, the drudgery and the time women daily have to spend on fetching water has been significantly reduced. Previously, women had to walk 1-4 kilometers to fetch water for daily use and they now estimate that 3-4 hours of work is saved everyday as the water source has been brought closer (Water Committee 1 and 3; Sahjeevan interview). The women report that they can use the time saved to better take care of their homes and children or for other types of work, such as agriculture, and that they thereby also have increased their household incomes (ibid). Improved access to resources and decreased drudgery has been identified as preconditions for women’s empowerment (Patel in Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:147, 158 and Jatana and Crowther, 2007:44-47). However, due to the oppressive gender structures that are persistent in the area, it is unlikely that women automatically will enhance their ‘power from within’, ‘power with’ and ‘power to’ and that unequal ‘power over’ structures will be adequately addressed solely through women’s decreased drudgery. This is something that the NGO acknowledged (Sahjeevan interview) and that women are using their extra time for traditional household chores underlines the fact that if no active measures are taken to address the oppressive gender structures, impacts in terms of this aspect of women’s empowerment are likely to be limited.

When Suzlon business establishes wind farms in a new area, the corporation acquires land either directly from the local communities or from the state (Suzlon representative, Madhya Pradesh). The state-owned land is, nevertheless, often used for grazing by the local population. An inherent negative impact of the business is hence often, which also has been documented by Suzlon for the concerned sites, reduced access to land for the local communities and women, resulting in reduced agricultural activities and access to wood, grass, fodder and grazing land (Samarpan interview). The NGOs further reported
that the business’ land acquisition process has caused disturbances in the villages and resulted in that the NGOs have had major problems establishing good relationships with the communities and starting their projects as they were associated with the company (Concept Society interview; Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview).

Most CBOs experienced a loss of land when the company entered their area. However, whereas the groups in Dewas and Abdasa Taluka reported that they do not or cannot use the land surrounding the wind farms (Water Committee 3; Dewas SHG 1-5), the interviews in Ratlam indicated that it is only the area closest to the wind turbines that the local population is restricted from accessing and hence that they still can use most of the acquired land, at least for the grazing of cattle (Samarpan interview; Ratlam SHG 4). In addition to this, 1 SHG in the Ratlam district reported that as a consequence of the improved access to credit, women and their families are less prone to sell their land and have been able to take loans from their SHG and buy back land that they earlier had pawned with moneylenders (Ratlam SHG 7).

Nevertheless, the only project that explicitly has worked to address the business impacts and improve women’s access to land is the Conjunctive Land Use project. Through the project, the NRMC has been given 6 hectares of the Suzlon-acquired land (Bypass interview). Only 4 out of the 15 NRMC members had access to land prior to joining the committee (NRMC), implying that most of the members have improved their access to land since they joined the committee. The active participation of women in the committee further works to ensure that the access to land works in empowering ways for them as their ‘power to’, ‘power with’ and ‘power from within’ have been enhanced (NRMC). Nevertheless, 49 farmers initially sold their land to Suzlon at this particular site, indicating a net reduction, rather than an increase, in the access to land (Bypass interview). However, the few complaints raised about this among the women during the interviews reveal the fact that this is more likely to have worked in disempowering ways for men than for women, which is supported by the fact that it is mostly men that have opposed the CSR projects in the area.
To conclude, only 2 of the projects have substantially improved women’s access to natural resources, one of the pre-conditions for women’s empowerment, through its effects on the reduction in women’s drudgery (Patel in Parparat, Rai and Staudt 2002:147, 158; Jatana and Crowther, 2007:44-47). However, Suzlon’s business operations have in general had negative impacts on the access to land. Furthermore, in order for improved access to resources to work in empowering ways and contribute to women’s enhanced decision making and control over their lives, as Patel has pointed out that it can do (Patel, 2002:147, 158), it has to be combined with other empowerment efforts and address all four dimensions of power.

4.1.6. Awareness of Power Relations

The fact that SHG and NRMC members to some extent have experienced changes in their lives as a result of the projects, since they now to a greater extent than previously leave their houses, travel short distances, are involved in economic activities, agitate for their rights and take part in development processes, implies that they have become aware of that their previous roles as veiled housewives were based on unequal power relations, which prevented them from exercising their ‘power to’. It is clear that all women to some extent are aware of the internal and external power dynamics of oppression characterizing their lives, a realization pointed out to be an important precondition for women’s empowerment (Rowlands, 1995:101, 1998:17), and that they currently are trying to address these forms of ‘power over’ them exercised by men. In Daman and Dwarka, the SHGs are even trying to address the ‘power over’ exercised by society over the poor in general by advocating for their rights.

In conclusion, the women who have initiated income generation activities have done this within traditional ‘female fields’, they mainly advocate for an improvement in ‘soft fields’, such as education and health, and the saved time due to decreased drudgery associated with the improved access to resources through the water project is dedicated to traditional female household chores. This, in combination with the facts that most women
still face immense difficulties when it comes to taking control over their lives, becoming involved in politics and acquiring leadership positions due to the lack of confidence, resistance from husbands and preventive social structures (Dewas SHG 2, Concept Society interview), implies that the unequal power relations associated with gender still prevail and only have been challenged to some extent. This indicates that while women to some extent have been empowered through the projects, they have not been able to develop strategies to challenge and resist unequal power relations, which Oxaal & Baden highlight is crucial for women’s empowerment (1997:3, 24-25). This further confirms the critique often directed towards the women’s empowerment approach that it tends to neglect, and thus not be sufficient to challenge, the ‘power over’ structures exercised by men and society over women. Further, the argument that such an approach alone in fact often contributes to increasing the burden of women as they often are encouraged to take on new responsibilities, including that of changing the attitude of men, without being freed from her traditional roles and expectations is confirmed by our findings (Papart, Rai & Staudt, 2002:3; Parpart, 2002:170, 174; Oxaal Baden, 1997:5). Hence, to ensure women’s empowerment in terms of the different aspects, one has to pay more attention to generate awareness of existing unequal power relations and the need to and benefits associated with changing these among men as well as women.

4.1.7. Conclusion and Analysis

Although a focus on gender has been lacking in CSR initiatives and evaluations in general (Thompson, 2008:100), a majority of Suzlon’s CSR projects in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat has spelled-out objectives to address issues related to gender inequality and women’s empowerment. This can largely be attributed to the fact that several of the projects aim to form and strengthen women’s SHGs, which have the specific aim of empowering women. However, the 2 remaining CSR projects, addressing natural resource management and access to water respectively, also aim to include and strengthen women, implying that Suzlon’s CSR agenda is unusually focused on gender equality. However, this does not automatically imply that all the dimensions of power or
all the aspects of women’s empowerment, identified by scholars within the field, are adequately or successfully addressed through the projects.

CSR initiatives aimed to strengthen women in India have typically involved projects similar to those initiated by Suzlon, addressing women’s self-employment, training programs related to banking, bookkeeping and kitchen garden establishments, vocational training, literacy enhancement, health training and camps and the provision of potable drinking water (Jatana and Crowther, 2007:44-47). The empirical evidence generated for this study indicates that the patriarchal structures or the ‘power over’ women exercised by men and maintained by the communities, are difficult to challenge through these types of projects, as pointed out by Oxaal and Baden (1997:5), which disconfirms the correlation between SHG membership and this aspect of empowerment found by Bali Swain (2006:21). The failure to address this in turn infringes on women’s power to apply the knowledge that they may have acquired through capacity building programs and trainings as well as on the courage needed to invest the generated savings or accessible credit in economic enterprises (Dewas SHG 2; GVT interview). It further results in a heavier workload being put on women, as noted by Oxaal and Baden (1997:5). Although the first dimension of power, the ‘power over’, only has been addressed to a minor extent through Suzlon’s CSR projects, women’s ‘power to’, ‘power with’ and ‘power from within’ can be argued to have been enhanced significantly, at least through the 4 SHG projects, as found by Galab and Chandrasekhara Rao (2003:1279-1282). Our findings further confirm those of Bali Swain concerning the correlation between SHG membership and enhanced self-esteem, increased household incomes and job opportunities (2006:18).

That the SHG projects have empowered female project participants to a greater extent than the other two projects implies that empowering women is more effective when this is the primary objective of the project, a rather unsurprising finding. It may also indicate that it is more difficult to fulfill objectives related to women’s empowerment when the majority of project participants are male and may actively resist female influence and
leadership (NRMC) and the NGO may be discouraged from focusing on these aspects of the projects in order to ensure outcomes related to other objectives. That the SHG projects have had positive impacts in terms of women’s empowerment is arguably also related to the fact that a bottom-up, actor-oriented and participatory approach has been applied by the implementing NGOs, as argued to be important for women’s empowerment (Oxaal and Baden, 1997:2-5, 25; Rowlands, 1995:103, 1998: 16; Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:7). Apart from the NGOs having accounted for having this approach, an indicator of this was the fact that the SHG members reported that they themselves decide what to discuss at meetings and which activities to initiate and only receive support from the NGOs when needed, which in itself is empowering and further enhances the likeliness of the projects addressing the issues that the women find relevant (all SHGs).

When it comes to the aspect of access to crucial resources, such as water and land, the SHG project participants have not been significantly empowered, as also found by Bali Swain (2006:16-19). However, the Conjunctive Land Use project has provided partly landless women with access to land for agricultural purposes and the Drinking Water project has provided the female project participants with improved access to potable water and has thereby lead to that they now have more time to devote to other activities. Apart from the Conjunctive Land Use project, Suzlon’s business operations in the studied areas have led to net losses of land for the communities in general, and thus also for the female project participants, reducing the CSR aspect of minimizing the company’s negative impacts on the communities.
4.2. The Outcomes of the CSR Projects in Terms of Civil Society Capacity Building

4.2.1. Inter and Intra-Sector Associations, Alliances and Networks

When it comes to the aspect of Suzlon Foundation’s NGO capacity building efforts in terms of promoting the formation of CSO coalitions, the NGOs reported that this has been done to some extent (an average score of 3.2 on question 1a) while Suzlon Foundation has been slightly better at providing opportunities for the NGOs to meet other development actors for the sharing of experiences, knowledge and ideas (an average score of 3.7 on question 1c). 2 NGOs in particular emphasized that the state-wise 360-degree review meetings organized by Suzlon Foundation, in which all collaborating NGOs in the state and the Suzlon business partners participate, significantly have contributed to the knowledge-sharing between NGO partners and to the arrangement of inter-partner exposure visits (Khamir questionnaire; Khamir interview; Bypass questionnaire). This has in turn led the NGOs to gain new perspectives on, and insights concerning, their own work and to establish new linkages with other NGOs (Khamir interview). In addition to this, 2 NGOs highlighted that Suzlon Foundation has facilitated their establishment of market linkages, through which their beneficiaries can sell the products they produce as a part of the CSR projects (Khamir interview; GVT questionnaire).

When it comes to the aspect of Suzlon Foundation’s efforts to promote NGO collaborations with government departments/state actors (question 1b), the general view was that Suzlon Foundation has been slightly less helpful in doing this, as the average score was 2.7, compared to when it comes to promoting the collaboration with other NGO partners. Nevertheless, 2 NGOs highlighted that Suzlon Foundation has facilitated the establishment of linkages with various government schemes and 1 NGO reported that

2 See an aggregation of the questionnaire responses in Appendix 5.
when the government became aware of the fact that Suzlon was investing in development projects in the area, it decided to also invest in the projects and hence, the NGO’s association with Suzlon Foundation indirectly helped to put pressure on the government to continue investing in development projects (Bypass questionnaire; GVT interview; Sahjeevan interview).

4.2.2. Human Resources and Organization Development

When it comes to the extent to which Suzlon Foundation has contributed to the strengthening of the partner NGOs’ technical, project planning, monitoring and evaluation capabilities, the NGOs reported that Suzlon Foundation has done this to some extent (the average score was 3 on 2a and 3.3 on 2d). 4 out of the 6 NGOs stated that Suzlon Foundation has provided training for their staff within the fields of agriculture, animal husbandry, livelihood and health (Bypass questionnaire; Concept Society questionnaire; GVT questionnaire; Sahjeevan questionnaire; Sahjeevan interview). Furthermore, all NGOs reported that the openness that has characterized the partnerships has led them to feel that they can turn to Suzlon Foundation and that they through brainstorming and discussion sessions have received technical support and advice on how to solve problems (Concept Society interview; GVT interview; Khamir interview; Sahjeevan interview).

When it comes to Suzlon Foundation’s contribution to the improvement in the NGOs’ management and organizational skills (question 2b), the general view was that Suzlon Foundation has been slightly less helpful in doing this (an average score of 2.7) than in strengthening the technical capabilities of the NGOs. However, 2 NGOs reported that they continuously receive valuable support for the improvement of their accounting practices and 1 NGO reported that it, through the partnership, has had the opportunity to improve its organization by learning from the way a private company is organized (Bypass interview; GVT interview; Concept Society questionnaire). The partnership with Suzlon Foundation has for most of the NGOs involved the start-up of new projects and
hence, all the NGOs reported that the partnership significantly has widened the spectrum for their development work (an average score of 3.7 on question 2c), both thematically and scope-wise (Bypass interview; Concept Society interview; GVT interview; Khamir interview; Samarpan interview).

4.2.3. Material/Financial Resources

Since Suzlon Foundation is the funding agency of the projects, all NGO partners are provided with financial resources through the partnership. Furthermore, all the NGOs reported that they during the partnership have received additional material support, for example in the form of computers, cameras, office supplies, information material and spillover plastic (used in 1 of the CSR projects) (Questionnaire question 3a, all NGOs).

4.2.4. Research, Information and Advocacy

The fact that the focus of the work of the partner NGOs is not on advocacy or research was reflected in the interviews and the questionnaire answers as these issues rarely were discussed or mentioned by the NGOs. Nevertheless, the NGOs reported that Suzlon Foundation to some extent has contributed to enhancing their access to information (an average score of 3 on question 4a) and improving their advocacy skills (an average score of 2.8 on question 4b).

4.2.5. Sustainability

When it comes to the crucial aspects of the promotion of CSO ownership of projects and the enforcement of mutual influence and shared control (questions 5a-b), related to the sustainability of projects and their outcomes and impacts, these were the two aspects that overall were awarded the highest scores by the NGOs in the questionnaire (the average scores were 4.3 for 5a and 4.2 for 5b). That the NGOs have experienced a high level of project ownership and control was also reflected in the interviews as all NGOs accounted
for having played a major role in setting the project objectives as well as in decision-making related to the implementation (all NGO interviews). Illustrating this point, one NGO representative stated that “the objectives were set from the need of the community, and the need of the community will not be negotiated…it is a community-based program and the community should set the objectives, not the NGO itself and not the funding organization” (Sahjeevan interview). Furthermore, most NGOs expressed that they perceive Suzlon Foundation as a very flexible and sensitive partner as they feel that they can turn to Suzlon Foundation for support and feedback and that ideas and suggestions are positively received and incorporated in projects (Concept Society interview; GVT interview; Sahjeevan interview).

After the two aspects discussed above, Suzlon Foundation’s capacity building efforts in terms of enforcing long-term strategies received the highest score in the questionnaire, with an average value of 3.8. One of the NGOs also accounted for viewing not only the project, but also the relationship with Suzlon Foundation in general, as a long-term partnership rather than just a funding relationship (Sahjeevan interview). Another NGO expressed appreciation for Suzlon Foundation’s efforts to maintain projects and NGO relations in spite of suffering financially as a consequence of the global financial crisis, implying a motivation to establish long-term relationships and strategies (Concept Society interview). However, as a comment in the questionnaire, the same NGO expressed the view that any development program requires 7-10 years in order to bring sustainable change. Considering the fact that the project agreements between Suzlon Foundation and the NGOs are for a 3-year period, this comment can be interpreted as a critique of Suzlon Foundation’s lack of long-term strategies (Concept Society questionnaire).

In the questionnaire, all of the NGOs except for one expressed that they think that Suzlon Foundation to some extent (implying a score of 3 on question 5d) has contributed to decreasing the donor dependency of their organizations. The remaining NGO answered ‘not at all’ (a score of 1) and thus, the average score for this aspect of sustainability was
2.7. A direct measure taken by Suzlon Foundation for this end has been the selling of handicraft products produced through the CSR projects at the Suzlon office, contributing to an increase in NGO and CBO revenues (Concept Society interview). An indirect measure for this was exemplified by another NGO, which stated that Suzlon Foundation’s investment in and commitment to the NGO’s program led the government to invest as well, which decreased the dependency on Suzlon funds for the implementation of that particular project (Sahjeevan interview).

4.2.6. Conclusion and Analysis

Even though civil society capacity building is not Suzlon Foundation’s explicit objective of the partnerships, the foundation strives to be more than a funding agency by assisting the NGOs in the project implementation, and thus indirectly to work with the capacity building of the partner NGOs. It can be concluded that Suzlon Foundation mostly has done this by taking measures to ensure the sustainability of project outcomes. This has more specifically involved promoting CSO ownership of projects, an openness to the NGOs’ inputs, ideas and suggestions, the enforcement of long-term strategies and efforts to decrease NGO donor dependency, although the average score for the last of these aspects was lower than for the other three.

That Suzlon Foundation scored high within this category of capacity building is likely to imply that the NGOs, regardless of the project type, have achieved net benefits from the partnerships as this, according to Ashman, is strongly correlated with the development of long-term strategies (2001:1106). That the NGOs experience a high level of project ownership as well as mutual influence and shared control implies that the risks of excessive organizational adaptation and business influence have been minimized in the partnerships. It is further likely to have led to opportunities for joint learning, enabling partners to correct problems and achieve mutually desired impacts, implying that Suzlon Foundation has valued the resources, such as expertise and reach to local communities, possessed by civil society partners, as pointed out as important by Ashman (2001:1110).
The process of joint learning is also something that a majority of the NGOs explicitly mentioned as a positive aspect of the collaboration. Through this, the NGOs reported to have received technical support and advice on how to solve problems (Concept Society interview; GVT interview; Khamir interview; Sahjeevan interview). However, in the questionnaires, the NGOs overall expressed to have received less support within the areas of human resources and organization development than when it comes to ensuring project outcome sustainability. In spite of this, the NGOs accounted for having increased the scope of their development work as a result of the partnership.

Although several NGOs emphasized that their partnership with Suzlon Foundation has resulted in increased collaboration with government departments (Bypass questionnaire; GVT interview; Sahjeevan interview), the average score for this aspect of inter- and intra-sector associations, alliances and networks was quite low while Suzlon Foundation’s efforts to promote collaboration with other NGOs and development actors received slightly higher scores. This implies that the NGOs would like to receive more support from Suzlon Foundation in terms of establishing linkages with state actors, and since empirical evidence has shown that the relevance and sustainability of projects is enhanced when the government is involved in business-civil society partnerships and plays an active facilitative role (Hamann and Acutt, 2003:266-268), this is an important aspect of NGO capacity building. A category of capacity building in which Suzlon Foundation’s efforts were awarded even lower scores was that of research, information and advocacy, which most probably can be explained by the fact that both parties think of these aspects as beyond the scope of the partnership as the NGOs in question are working with specific development projects rather than with advocacy and information dissemination. When it comes to the category of Suzlon Foundation’s provision of financial and material resources to the NGOs, the project funds are the major aspect of this, although Suzlon Foundation in many cases has gone beyond project funding and supported the NGOs materially through the provision of office material, computers etc.
Despite the documented capacity building support that Suzlon Foundation has provided the NGOs with, the NGOs expressed a desire for further capacity building of their organizations, especially when it comes to establishing linkages with potential donors, project management, planning and documentation, training of NGO staff and technical support for the agriculture, water and marketing components of the projects (all NGO questionnaires). The fact that the outcomes in terms of civil society capacity building did not differ for the different projects leads to the conclusion that different types of CSR projects do not have different implications for civil society capacity building. Ultimately, the value of Suzlon Foundation’s NGO capacity building efforts has to be evaluated in relation to the potential losses or costs borne by the NGOs as a consequence of entering into corporate partnerships, such as decreased credibility and corporate steering of the agenda (Ashman 2001:1106; Covey and Brown 2001:7), which will be further analyzed in section 4.3., which concerns the perceptions regarding the PPPs.

4.3. Stakeholder Perceptions of PPPs

In this section of the paper, the second research question, concerning the stakeholders’ perceptions of PPPs and views on how the partnerships have impacted on the relationship between Suzlon, the state and civil society in terms of the extent to which the three actors have affected each other’s roles and agendas, will be discussed. The discussion will first be structured around the views of the stakeholders regarding some of the critical aspects, accounted for in section 3.4.3., that are likely to affect the outcomes and stakeholder perceptions of such partnerships. Thereafter, these views will be concluded and analyzed in relation to the broader theoretical framework as well as the concepts of ‘complementary core competencies’ and ‘critical cooperation’ which have been developed to assess PPPs. The basis for the discussion will be the 6 NGO interviews, 3 Suzlon Business interviews, the Suzlon Foundation interview and 6 government interviews as well as Suzlon Foundation reports, plans and strategies.
4.3.1. Trust and Motivation

In Suzlon business’ view, the motive behind CSR is to make the business operations run smoothly and effectively by building relationships with all affected stakeholders in order to maintain peaceful relations and reduce the clashes with local communities and other stakeholders (Suzlon Foundation representative; Suzlon employees Ratlam; Suzlon employee Madhya Pradesh). Suzlon Foundation’s view on this diverges slightly from that of the business as they emphasized that the primary motive behind CSR is to ensure that business is conducted responsibly, to minimize its negative impacts and to ‘engage’ and ‘empower’ both employees and local communities to be active and responsible citizens and to ‘sustain’ the CSR initiatives and the positive outcomes beyond the duration of the projects (Suzlon Foundation representative; www.suzlonfoundation.org). Suzlon Foundation perceives the business to be acting more responsibly now than previously. However, a lot remains to be done to reduce the negative impacts of the business, which the Foundation hopes that the business commitment to CSR and increased customer pressure will ensure (Suzlon Foundation representative). In the implementation of the CSR projects, Suzlon Foundation aims to have a substantive equity-rights based approach, implying that the CSR projects should focus on the people who are alienated from mainstream development by empowering them to stand up for and demand their rights, which they have been denied by society (ibid:5-6).

This implies that CSR at Suzlon is defined in both positive and negative terms. The ‘positive-term’ approach to CSR, although mainly driven by Suzlon Foundation, and not Suzlon business, increases the possibility of Suzlon’s CSR initiatives to contribute to civil society capacity building and women’s empowerment, and thereby go beyond the ‘business case’ and pure window-dressing and opportunism, which many scholars have pointed out are risks associated with CSR (Jenkins, Pearson and Seyfang, 2002:3; Henderson, 2001:83; Jenkins, 2005:540). Nonetheless, it is clear that the positive potential of CSR would be further enhanced if the business side to a greater extent started to view CSR in positive terms and realized that the ‘business case’ at times is insufficient.
Suzlon Foundation’s partner NGOs reported that one of the preconditions for entering the partnership was that they in general felt that they share Suzlon Foundation’s development approach and that Suzlon’s product, wind power, basically is an environmentally sustainable product (Concept Society interview; GVT interview; Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview). This implies that Suzlon’s motivation behind CSR, and especially the development approach of its CSR department - Suzlon Foundation - has contributed to the establishment of trust between the partners, which Hamann and Acutt have identified as essential for PPPs to be successful (2003:265-266). Nevertheless, Suzlon Foundation reported that some of the NGOs that they wanted to collaborate with did not want to enter the partnership, mainly due to the land procurement issues associated with the company, indicating that the company to some extent has failed in gaining trust among CSOs in terms of its CSR motives (Suzlon Foundation representative).

Most of the interviewed government representatives had no specific perceptions regarding the business motivation behind CSR. However, 1 of the government representatives expressed to view CSR as something that MNCs that operate in rural areas have to engage in (Rural Development Department representative). Nevertheless, the representative, as well as the other government stakeholders, in general had positive perceptions of Suzlon’s CSR projects, as they viewed them as contributing to social justice, community development and social work (KVK representative; Panchayat representative Dewas; Panchayat representative Ratlam; Animal Husbandry department representative). However, their trust in the company as a development agent would increase if the CSR activities were not only limited to the areas closest to the wind farms (Rural Development Department representative).

### 4.3.2. Partner Relations, Roles and Responsibilities

When it comes to the respective partners’ roles and responsibilities, Suzlon Foundation, which is headed by former NGO workers, expressed the view that the private sector increasingly is taking on the role of a development actor, which in the past mainly has
been, and according to the foundation *should* continue to be, the role of the government. However, the government has proven to be ineffective in this regard and is currently pushing more and more of its responsibilities into private hands through PPPs, which risks leading to the pursuit of profit, and those with the most money, dictating the terms for development work, implying a privatization of the development sector (Suzlon Foundation interview). This may further result in CSOs turning into agents, implementers or contractors implementing projects dictated by business logics and those providing the funds (ibid). However, the foundation also recognized that the non-governmental actors involved in CSR and PPPs have the possibility, due to the fact that they are separate from the government and not dependent on government funds, to change the government and its policies. Further, although the private sector strives to make profit, it is accountable to its stakeholders, which include the communities in which they operate and the civil society that inhabits these. Here, CSR has an important role to play in, and good prospects for, ensuring positive development impacts, according to Suzlon Foundation, due to its dual identity – it is corporate but not profit-making, it lives on profit but does not in itself have to be profitable (ibid).

When it comes to the civil society partners’ views concerning their and the other partners’ roles in PPPs, most of them see these as complementary. A majority of them further see the relationship with Suzlon Foundation as more than a funding relationship, viewing the foundation as an institutional stakeholder and a permanent partner beyond the scope of the projects (Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview; Khamir interview). In comparison with the government, Suzlon Foundation is perceived as a very sensitive and flexible partner by the NGOs as the foundation shows a willingness to listen to the NGOs and adjust policies and practices according to their suggestions (Sahjeevan interview; Khamir interview; GVT interview). The NGOs further expressed that working with the government often implies a long bureaucratic, and at times corrupt, process in which quantitative outcomes often are emphasized and the NGOs have to lobby extensively to ensure that their voices are heard (Sahjeevan interview; GVT interview; Bypass interview). In spite of this, the NGOs are in general satisfied with the PPPs and
expressed the view that having multiple project partners, that each can contribute with funds and areas of expertise, and thereby share the responsibility for projects, is a positive development (Samarpan interview). Illustrating this, one of the NGOs stated that PPPs work to reduce the donor dependency of development projects and that the decision to establish the partnership with Suzlon was a critical strategy used by the NGO to put pressure on the government to invest in its decentralized drinking water programs (Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview). Conversely, when Suzlon Foundation went through a fund crisis and was unable to allocate the promised funds to the project, the established linkages with other stakeholders, primarily the government, helped to keep the project running (Sahjeevan interview).

The Rural Development Department and the Animal Husbandry Department representatives described the processes of the PPPs that their departments has entered into with Suzlon and the NGOs as partnerships in which the implementing NGOs provide the government with the knowledge of rural conditions and needs and connects the most needy in the communities with the government and their schemes. Both representatives were very optimistic concerning the development impacts of PPPs and expressed the view that MNCs have a responsibility to contribute to rural development, and highlighted the fact that PPPs reduce the government’s amount of work in the project areas (Rural Development Department representative; Animal Husbandry Department representative). However, the rural development department representative also pointed out the negative aspect of the partnerships – that the corporation only takes responsibility for the development of the communities surrounding its manufacturing sites, which creates unequal preconditions for development in different rural communities. Since the other government representatives that were interviewed mostly were collaborating with the implementing NGOs, and not directly with Suzlon Foundation, they lacked the knowledge concerning the role and responsibility of the business partner and could therefore not comment on this.
4.3.3. Agenda Setting, Autonomy, Ownership and Participation

When it comes to the aspect of setting the explicit objectives of the CSR projects, all NGOs accounted for that these were formulated by the NGOs based on the needs of the communities (all NGO interviews). To ensure that the objectives would reflect these and to enhance the participants’ ownership of and participation in the projects, the NGOs first conducted a number of participatory baseline studies based on which the objectives were set and therefore, the NGOs argued that the objectives actually were set by the communities (ibid). This indicates that the project participants, or the poor, have been given a stake in the CSR projects, which Jenkins points out is crucial for addressing poverty through CSR projects (2005:540). Similarly, all the NGOs expressed that neither Suzlon Foundation nor Suzlon business was involved in setting the project objectives. Nevertheless, the Suzlon CSR policy to only implement CSR projects within a radius of 7 kilometers of the wind farms determined the locations of all the projects except for one (all NGO interviews). These accounts are confirmed by Suzlon business and Suzlon Foundation, as they expressed not to have been part of setting the explicit objectives of the projects (Suzlon Foundation representative; Suzlon employee Madhya Pradesh). Nonetheless, there are more implicit overall objectives of the CSR projects, such as establishing a better relationship between the business and the community in order to facilitate business operations, that are set at the business level and that may impact on Suzlon Foundation’s NGO evaluation and support.

In line with the above, the NGOs expressed that they have not had to change the core of their work or approaches as a consequence of entering the partnership, but rather that their capacity has been built through these (all NGO interviews). This may be a consequence of the fact that the NGOs perceive themselves to have similar development approaches as Suzlon Foundation. Conversely, some of the NGOs feel that they to some extent have been able to influence the business by informing Suzlon employees about irresponsible business practices and by giving suggestions of how to change these as well as having positively influenced the business people’s attitude towards and commitment to
CSR and development work (Concept Society interview; Sahjeevan interview). This perception is supported by Suzlon business, whose representatives stated that they have learnt a lot from the NGOs, that they now view CSR as an important business asset and that they try to avoid starting new business activities without involving Suzlon Foundation (Suzlon employee Madhya Pradesh; Suzlon employees Ratlam). All in all, this indicates that the autonomy of the NGOs has not been significantly compromised as a consequence of the partnerships. Despite this, some of the NGOs see a risk with PPPs in general as such partnerships may redirect the focus of CSOs from serving the communities to serving business interests and thus, that corporations may take control over public life and the civil society agenda, although this is not seen as having been the case in these particular partnerships (GVT interview; Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview; Suzlon Foundation representative). Surprisingly, this is a view that is shared by Suzlon Foundation whose representative explained that this is the reason why the foundation has not tried to alter or influence the agenda or the work of the collaborating NGOs but rather has striven to support them whenever they have expressed such a need (Suzlon Foundation representative).

When it comes to the aspects of ownership and participation, it is clear that it is the NGOs and the communities, in the form of the CBO members, that have been most actively involved in, and that have taken ownership of, the projects. This follows quite naturally from the fact that it is the CBOs that are the project participants and that it is the NGOs who are the implementing parties. The involvement of business varies extensively between the projects. Whereas the business sector is involved in the 3 projects in Madhya Pradesh, illustrated by the facts that they actively have participated in CSR activities and meetings, have a high awareness of the work and progress of the CSR projects and refer to the activities as “our projects” and state that “we are doing…” (Suzlon employees Ratlam; Suzlon employees Dewas; Suzlon employee Madhya Pradesh), the business units in Gujarat are not at all involved in the projects, illustrated by the lack of contact between the NGOs, the project participants and the business units. The government stakeholders are involved in the projects to the extent that the NGOs are collaborating with various
government departments and schemes in the implementation of, or to gain support for, the projects but they are not involved in setting the agenda and have no ownership of the projects. Suzlon Foundation is monitoring, financing and supporting the NGOs with knowledge and thus actively participate in, and to some extent own, the projects.

To conclude, while the stakeholders feel that the CSR projects and the implementing NGOs to some extent have been able to affect the views and actions of the business, they do not perceive the business to have affected the NGO agenda. This indicates that while the liberal view of civil society as completely autonomous and self-organized (Keane, 1998:6, 8; White, 1994:379) partly is undermined, the fears of Gramsci that powerful actors like Suzlon may take control over CSOs and their agendas and promote corporate interests as universal (Gramsci in Gibbon, 1996:23) are exaggerated in the context of these partnerships. Further, it points towards the fact that the respective actors’ knowledge and strengths are put to use in the different stages of the project implementation, referred to as ‘complementary core competencies’ and identified as important in PPPs by Hamann and Acutt (2003:261). This is in turn a precondition for that the projects are managed through shared control, where the actors keep the interests of their own key stakeholders in mind, which are additional factors identified as crucial for successful partnerships (Covey & Brown, 2001:7 and Ashman, 2001:1110).

**4.3.4. Cost/Benefit Allocation**

As discussed in section 4.1., the major benefit associated with entering the partnerships for the NGOs has been the capacity building of their organizations. In addition to this, all NGOs perceive the flexible terms of the partnership, as opposed to the bureaucratic and at times corrupt terms of government/international donor-civil society partnerships, and the constructive communication with Suzlon Foundation to be major benefits of the partnerships, as these aspects have provided the NGOs with room for action and improvements when it comes to the projects, and thus enhanced their ownership of these (Bypass interview; Concept Society interview; Khamir interview; Sahjeevan interview).
The NGOs expressed that the capacity building efforts and flexibility on the part of the business reflect the fact that Suzlon Foundation considers the NGOs as valuable partners rather than dependent organizations, which otherwise commonly is the case with funding agencies (Khamir interview). However, the flexibility is at times also considered as a ‘cost’ borne by the NGOs as they perceive it to contribute to the lack of clarity of project terms, sudden changes on the part of Suzlon Foundation affecting the project progress or outcomes, fund fluctuations due to its dependence on business performance (Khamir interview; Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview).

Furthermore, some NGOs reported that their credibility has been questioned in the communities they work in as a consequence of their partnership with Suzlon due to land acquisition issues related to the business, resulting in difficulties when it comes to establishing good community relationships and initiating and implementing projects (Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview). The risks associated with bad corporate practices constitute a considerable ‘cost’ for the involved NGOs as these may jeopardize future collaborations with both the concerned communities and the government. In line with this, the so called “neighborhood approach” of the company, to only operate within a 7 kilometer radius of the wind farms, is not appreciated by the government and is thus considered as an additional credibility loss and a cost for the NGOs (Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview; Rural Development Department representative). In line with this, another NGO credibility problem has arisen in instances when the business has promised the community to implement infrastructure projects or to provide it with other types of resources without providing funds to, or channeling this through, the NGO (Concept Society interview). Further, the large number of coordinating points required for bringing all partners in a PPP under the same umbrella, which the NGOs often bear the responsibility for, constitutes a considerable ‘cost’ for the NGOs as it refocuses their attention from the projects and their key stakeholders (the communities) and involves the risk of getting into conflict with the different stakeholders while trying to mediate and balance their different interests and agendas (Sahjeevan interview; Samarpan interview).
With the exception of the financial and administrative costs of financing the CSR projects, the business bears minimal costs as a consequence of engaging in PPPs. Instead, it has benefitted greatly from these as the Suzlon employees report that the number of incidents between the communities and the business have reduced significantly, making the business operations run more smoothly, as a result of the CSR activities. The PPPs have further contributed to improved customer reputation and government relations, on which the energy sector strongly depends (Suzlon Business representative, Dewas; Suzlon site manager interview). Similarly, the partnerships have benefited the government as the costs of development work partly through these are borne by the business and since the workload has been reduced as the NGOs now take care of the development work in the project areas and help to mobilize and identify people and communities in need of government interventions (Rural Development Department representative; Animal Husbandry Department representative).

To conclude, although the NGOs substantially have benefitted from the PPPs in terms of capacity building, it is evident that it is the NGOs that bear the highest costs and risks in the PPPs, which Ashman has concluded often is the case (2001:1106), whereas the business and government partners take very few risks and bear minimal costs, while being substantially benefitted, through the PPPs. However, this has in this particular case not resulted in the business partner taking control over the civil society agenda or compromising the focus on community development, as both liberal and leftist civil society scholars have warned for (Keane, 1998:6-8; White, 1994:379; Sjögren in Beckman et al, 2001:29; Beckman in Beckman et al, 2001:59; Gramsci, quoted in Gibbon, 1996:23). But although civil society tends to bear the highest costs in PPPs, the CSOs also have a lot to gain as private sector collaborations can provide civil society with the resources that it needs to improve its capacity and function properly, as pointed out by Ashman (2001:1104-1106).
4.3.5. Analysis and Conclusions: Complementary Core Competencies and Critical Cooperation

Having accounted for and analyzed the stakeholder perceptions regarding the PPPs initiated through Suzlon’s CSR projects, it can be concluded that the general view is that the partnerships have benefited all partners as well as the communities that constitute the project beneficiaries, though to varying extents and in different ways. When it comes to the issues of trust and motivation, the NGOs generally expressed to perceive the business partner as more reliable than the government, although the insecurity and irregularity of corporate funds is a problem, and the government is critical of Suzlon’s “neighborhood approach”. When it comes to partner roles and responsibilities, those of the NGOs can be concluded to have changed the least as a consequence of the partnerships, as they largely have been allowed to set the project objectives based on the community needs and to continue working within their areas of expertise, although the agendas to some extent have been influenced by the corporate CSR objective to establish better relations between the local business units and the communities. While the role and responsibility of the company has been extended to consider business impacts and community needs, the government has, through the partnerships, been able to withdraw from some of the areas where the CSR projects are implemented. In spite of the civil society gains associated with the PPPs in terms of capacity building and funding, the NGOs can be argued to have borne the highest costs out of the three partners in the collaboration. This is mostly related to the credibility loss among the communities and civil society associated with collaborating with the private sector and to the unreliability of the corporation in terms of project terms and fund fluctuations, which inevitably are affected by the business cycle and performance.

‘Complementary core competencies’ can at least in part be said to have been realized through the studied PPPs as the respective actors’ knowledge and strengths largely have been put to use in the different stages of project implementation. Typically, the business side can contribute with financial, logistical and human resources, which are
complemented by the local knowledge and social capital of NGOs and CBOs and the broader development knowledge and framework provided by the government (Hamann and Acutt, 2003:261). In the initial stage of the projects, Suzlon identified NGOs with knowledge and experience of working in the area where the projects were to be implemented, and these then applied this knowledge to determine the community needs, which guided the setting of the project objectives and means of the implementation. However, an important aspect for the realization of ‘complementary core competencies’ and for sustainable ‘critical cooperation’ is that the government assumes an administrative role (Covey and Brown, 2001:7) and this cannot be said to have been the case in the studied PPPs. Instead, the civil society partners have largely taken responsibility for the partner and stakeholder relations, as the government partners rarely were in direct contact with Suzlon, and several of the NGOs expressed difficulties in collaborating with the government due to lack of flexibility and ineffective and corrupt practices. However, they also emphasized the importance of multiple funding sources and the fact that project outcome sustainability tends to be enhanced when the government is a partner, as pointed out by Ashman (2001:1104). When it comes to other aspects of ‘critical cooperation’, a majority of the NGOs have maintained a critical vigilance of Suzlon and have played active roles in shaping the CSR discourse and agenda, factors pointed out as crucial by Hamann and Acutt (2003:267-268). Further, critical rights have largely been acknowledged by the partners and they have been aware of each other’s respective interests and the power relations inherent in the partnerships and have further to a large extent managed and promoted the interests of their respective stakeholders (Covey and Brown, 2001:7).
5. Summary and Conclusions

The studied outcomes of Suzlon’s CSR projects, implemented through PPPs, showed that the projects that specifically have aimed to address women’s empowerment through the formation of SHGs significantly have contributed to the enhancement of women’s ‘power to’, ‘power with’ and ‘power from within’ through women’s increased self-confidence and agency on the individual and collective levels, access to capacity building and credit, involvement in economic activities and diversification of occupation, confirming the conclusions drawn by scholars within the field (Bali Swain, 2006:16-22; Galab and Chandrasekhara Rao, 2003:1279-1283). The Conjunctive Land Use and Drinking Water projects have had a more limited impact on women’s empowerment as they mainly have enhanced women’s access to natural resources. However, since the CSR projects mainly address the opportunities and capacities of women, and not the patriarchal structures defining and affecting these, they have largely failed to address the ‘power over’ women exercised by men and maintained by society. As the analysis indicated, this has further infringed on women’s ‘power to’ and on their active participation in development processes, political life and in leadership positions and has tended to increase women’s workload. This lends support to the critique of the women’s empowerment approach, highlighting the fact that it over-emphasizes personal empowerment and the ‘power to’ aspect, and thereby partly neglects the impacts of various ‘power over’ structures on the conditions of possibility for women’s empowerment (Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:3; Oxaal and Baden 1997:5).

Our conclusions thus confirm many of the merits of the women’s empowerment approach but imply that the assumption of scholars and influential policy makers and development practitioners, such as the World Bank, NABARD and MNCs’ CSR departments, that women’s increased ‘power with’, ‘power from within’ and ‘power to’ automatically will lead to the breakdown of ‘power over’ structures and gender equality is questioned. This demands that development institutions aiming to address women’s empowerment need to pay more attention to ‘power over’ structures by directly addressing unequal gender
relations and the gender sensitization of men in women’s empowerment projects. The conclusions further imply that CSR projects aiming to strengthen women and address gender inequalities are likely to achieve such outcomes to the same extent as such projects led entirely by CSOs. This disproves Jenkins’ argument that CSR is unlikely to contribute to more inclusive and equitable development and thereby reduce poverty and contribute to women’s empowerment (2005:539-540). That the CSR projects have succeeded in empowering women can be attributed to the facts that those who are not usually allowed a stake in CSR, as the ‘business case’ for CSR is prioritized (ibid), have so in the studied PPPs and the projects have largely been bottom-up, actor-oriented and participatory in all stages, from planning and implementation to evaluation, as argued to be important in order to be able to change the situation of the poor (Oxaal and Baden, 1997:2, 5, 25; Rowlands, 1995:103, 1998:16; Parparat, Rai and Staudt, 2002:7).

When it comes to project outcomes in terms of civil society capacity building, these have mainly, regardless the type of the CSR projects, been furthered through Suzlon’s contributions to the enhancement of project sustainability, promotion of NGO ownership of projects, decreased NGO donor dependency and the enforcement of long-term strategies. This implies that some aspects of capacity building, such as furthering research, information dissemination and advocacy and establishing linkages with state actors, have not been addressed to a great extent, even though these are considered to be important aspects of capacity building. However, the capacity building of the implementing NGOs was not an explicit objective of the PPPs on the part of Suzlon, disregarding the funding aspect, and the NGOs generally expressed satisfaction with the efforts that have been made by Suzlon in this regard. However, they expressed to have a desire for further capacity building of their organizations, especially when it comes to establishing linkages with potential donors, project management, planning and documentation, training of NGO staff and technical support.

It is crucial that Suzlon Foundation’s NGO capacity building efforts are evaluated in relation to the losses or costs borne by the NGOs as a consequence of entering into PPPs.
Our findings indicate that the NGOs, regardless of the type of CSR project, have borne the highest costs, in terms of a credibility loss, extensive coordination efforts and insecurity concerning project terms and funding, among the three actors. However, these costs must be seen as being outweighed by the benefits as the NGOs all have chosen to remain in the partnerships. Aside from the capacity building aspects, the civil society partners expressed to view Suzlon and the PPPs in a positive light as the corporation is perceived as a flexible and sensitive partner and not as having infringed on the NGOs’ project agenda setting or work areas, implying that the civil society actors have not been coopted in the corporate agenda. The perceptions of the PPPs expressed during interviews have further led us to conclude that ‘complementary core competencies’ largely have been realized, as the respective actors’ knowledge and strengths in most instances have been put to use in the different stages of project implementation, and that ‘critical cooperation’ has been practiced, as a majority of the NGOs have maintained a critical vigilance of Suzlon, managed the interests of their key stakeholders and played active roles in shaping the CSR discourse and agenda. Something that has not been realized in the PPPs, however, is the government assuming the administrative role, as this role mainly has been taken on by the civil society actors. However, as some scholars have failed to realize, this may be a positive factor in PPPs in contexts where the government is perceived as corrupt and ineffective, and thus with suspicion, by CSOs. Seen in this light, it may be a positive development that the government partly has withdrawn from its traditional role in development work, at least in cases where the private sector takes on some responsibility for this by providing civil society with funding without majorly affecting the agenda-setting role of CSOs, as found to be the case in the studied PPPs.

Although the CSOs involved in Suzlon’s PPPs may have downplayed the negative aspects of the partnerships, such as becoming increasingly accountable to and implicated with the private sector, as this reflects badly on them as civil society representatives, our findings indicate that the CSOs have achieved net benefits of entering into PPPs. When it comes to partner roles and responsibilities, those of the NGOs can be concluded to have changed the least as a consequence of the partnerships while the role and responsibility of
the company has been extended to consider business impacts and community needs and the government has been able to withdraw from some of the areas where the CSR projects are implemented. Civil society involvement in PPPs and CSR can further constitute a valuable opportunity for CSOs to put pressure on and influence the policies and practices of both the private sector and the government. However, such engagements are not risk-free and may involve significant ‘costs’ for CSOs, implying that civil society engagement with corporations might be needed for changing the conditions for the poor and developing society in a context where the state increasingly withdraws from this role (Ashman, 2001:1104-1106; Hamman and Acutt, 2003:261; Hoogvelt, 2001: 248; Rai, 2008: 71-74,128) while ‘critical cooperation’ on the part of civil society actors in PPPs is crucial. For civil society theory, the implication of these findings is that the risk highlighted by many that CSO collaborations with the private sector will lead to civil society cooptation in the business agenda and a reduced ability to constitute a positive force for development is exaggerated.

It is evident that Suzlon’s CSR projects go well beyond the immediate interests of the corporation and the ‘business case’ for CSR. However, a consequence of the foundation’s decision to focus on community development is that the conventional objective of CSR – to offset the negative impacts of the business operations – with the exception of the Conjunctive Land Use project largely has been left unaddressed by Suzlon, illustrated by the facts that the business has made no real efforts in terms of spreading conjunctive land use initiatives or directly employing women, as done by Titan Industries (Moon, 2007:304). This discrepancy between CSR and business operations and impacts may be explained by the sharp distinction between the CSR department – Suzlon Foundation – and the business and indicates that while the CSR projects aimed to address rural development is driven by Suzlon Foundation and the implementing NGOs in collaboration with the government, CSR is badly integrated in the business cycle, reducing the CSR aspect of the projects. This is further likely to leave global and national power structures that may work in disempowering ways for the rural poor unchallenged.
6. References


Internet Sources


**Unpublished Material**


7. Appendix 1. Number of Interviews per Project and Stakeholder Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Suzlon Business</th>
<th>Government Department</th>
<th>CBOs</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khamir</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daman</td>
<td>3³</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Sahjeevan</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Concept</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2⁴</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samarpan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bypass</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>46²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ These are not NGO representatives but SHG coordinators.
⁴ One of the Suzlon representatives in Dewas was the head of operations in Madhya Pradesh and thus had knowledge of the Samarpan and Bypass projects as well.
⁵ With the Suzlon Foundation representative interview, the total number of interviews conducted is 47.
8. Appendix 2. List of Interviews

**Suzlon Foundation**

1. Suzlon Foundation Representative

**Suzlon Business**

2. Suzlon Business Representative, Madhya Pradesh
3. Suzlon Business Representatives, Ratlam
4. Suzlon Business Representatives, Dewas
5. Suzlon Business Health Department Representative, Daman
6. Suzlon Business Representative, Daman
7. Suzlon Business HR Manager, Daman

**Government Representatives**

8. Representative Rural Development Department
9. Representative KVK
10. Representative SGSY
11. Representative Animal Husbandry department
12. Panchayat representative Ratlam
13. Panchayat representative Dewas

**NGOs/Implementing Partners**

14. Bypass
15. Concept Society
16. GVT
17. Khamir
18. Sahjeevan
19. Samarpan
20. SHG Coordinator 1
21. SHG Coordinator 2
22. SHG Coordinator 3

**CBOs**

**Dwarka/GVT**

23. SHG 1 (including 3 groups)
24. SHG 2 (including 2 groups)
25. SHG 3 (including 3 groups)
26. SHG 4 (including 5 groups)
27. SHG 5 (including 1 group)
**Daman/SHG Coordinators**

28. SHG 1 (including 2 groups)
29. SHG 2 (including 4 groups)

**Dewas/Concept Society**

30. SHG 1 (including 1 group)
31. SHG 2 (including 1 group)
32. SHG 3 (including 1 group)
33. SHG 4 (including 3 groups)
34. SHG 5 (including 5 groups)

**Ratlam/Samarpan**

35. SHG 1 (including 2 groups)
36. SHG 2 (including 3 groups)
37. SHG 3 (including 1 group)
38. SHG 4 (including 3 groups)
39. SHG 5 (including 1 group)
40. SHG 6 (including 2 groups)
41. SHG 7 (including 2 groups)
42. SHG 8 (including 1 group)
43. SHG 9 (including 1 group)

**Ratlam/Bypass**

44. NRMC

**Abdasa Taluka/Sahjeevan**

45. Water Committee 1
46. Water Committee 2
47. Water Committee 3
9. Appendix 3. Sample of CBOs per Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Implementing NGO</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Total No. of CBOs</th>
<th>No. of CBOs Represented in Interviews</th>
<th>Share of CBOs Represented in Interviews (%)</th>
<th>Total No. of Villages</th>
<th>No. of Villages Represented in Interviews</th>
<th>Share of Villages represented (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Sahjeevan</td>
<td>Drinking Water</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>SHG</td>
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<td>71.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct Implementation</td>
<td>SHG</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Livelihood</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Samarpan</td>
<td>Dugdh Dhara</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bypass</td>
<td>Natural Resource Management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers are rounded off to one decimal.
10. Appendix 4. General Interview Guide

1. Baseline

- How was the situation before the start of the project/Suzlon involvement in the area:
  - What were/are the development issues/problems and business linked issues in the project areas?
  - What was/is the attitude towards Suzlon in the communities?

2. Development approach and Strategies

- What are the development approaches of Suzlon, NGOs and CBOs?
- What are the key project objectives and how do they relate to the general development issues in the area, women’s empowerment and civil society capacity building?
- How and by whom were the objectives set? (to what extent can the NGOs and CBOs influence the agenda?)

3. Outcomes in relation to objectives

- To what extent have the objectives been fulfilled?
- Which issues remain unaddressed? Why?

4. Outcomes in relation to all impacts

- How have projects impacted on all stakeholders?
- Have the projects had any impacts (positive or negative) that go beyond the scope of the objectives?
- Have the projects enhanced women’s:
  - Access to capacity building, education, and skill development?
  - Sense of self confidence, self-esteem, agency and dignity on the individual as well as on the collective level (enhanced social capital)?
  - Participation in development processes, in the political life and in leadership positions?
  - Access to credit, involvement in economic activities and enhanced diversification of occupation?

- Have the projects enhanced CSOs’:
  - Inter- and intra-sector associations, alliances and networks?
  - Human resources and organization development skills?
  - Material/financial resources?
  - Access to and use of research, information and advocacy?
  - Sustainability?

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5. **Views on PPPs**

- What are the perceptions regarding the projects of NGOs, CBOs, government officials, Suzlon Foundation and Suzlon?
- How do the different stakeholders perceive the role of business in rural development?
- Do the actors perceive that they can/do affect each other’s roles and agendas?
- How is the stakeholder collaboration (PPPs) perceived by the different actors?

6. **Civil society capacity building and sustainability**

- Are the CBOs/villagers likely to be able to continue the projects after Suzlon and the NGO in question have withdrawn? Are the outcomes/impacts sustainable?
11. Appendix 5. Questionnaire to NGOs Implementing Suzlon Foundation’s CSR Projects

Please answer the following questions by changing the color of the number you wish to mark, as in the example below where number 2 is selected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Inter and Intra-sector Associations, Alliances and Networks

To what extent has Suzlon Foundation…

a) Promoted collaboration between your NGO and other NGOs?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

b) Promoted collaboration between your NGO and government departments/state actors?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

c) Provided opportunities for your NGO to meet other development actors for the sharing of experiences, knowledge and ideas?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments:__________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

2. Human resources and organization development

To what extent has Suzlon Foundation…

a) Strengthened your NGO’s technical capabilities?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

b) Strengthened your NGO’s organizational and management capabilities?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

c) Contributed to the incorporation of new areas of development work for your NGO?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

d) Contributed to an improvement in project planning, data collection, project monitoring and evaluation techniques/systems?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
Has Suzlon Foundation provided your staff with training in any specific areas?

Yes, namely______________________________________________________________

No__

Comments:__________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

3. Material Resources

a) In addition to the funds, has Suzlon Foundation provided your NGO with any material resources?

Yes, namely______________________________________________________________

No__

4. Research, information and advocacy

To what extent has Suzlon Foundation…

a) Increased your NGO’s access to information

1 2 3 4 5

b) Improved/facilitated the communication/advocacy skills/information dissemination of your NGO?

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:__________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

5. Sustainability

To what extent has Suzlon Foundation…

a) In your view ensured your NGO’s ownership of the Suzlon projects?

1 2 3 4 5

b) Been open to inputs, ideas and suggestions regarding the projects from your NGO?

1 2 3 4 5
c) Established long term strategies for the fulfillment of Suzlon project objectives?
   
   1  2  3  4  5

d) In your view contributed to decreasing the donor dependency of your NGO?
   
   1  2  3  4  5

Comments: ________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
                                                                                     
                                                                                     
                                                                                     
                                                                                     
                                                                                     
                                                                                     
                                                                                     

Apart from financially, in what ways has the partnership with Suzlon Foundation been most valuable for your NGO?

___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     

Within what areas, if any, would you like Suzlon Foundation to contribute to the capacity building of your NGO?

___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     
___________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                     

Thank you!
12. Appendix 6. Questionnaire Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>1A</th>
<th>1B</th>
<th>1C</th>
<th>2A</th>
<th>2B</th>
<th>2C</th>
<th>2D</th>
<th>4A</th>
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7 Numbers are rounded off to one decimal.