



## Technical fixes to political problems?

A Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) of Dutch-supported governance interventions in Rwanda 2007-2013

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By

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## Executive Summary

Over the last two decades, international donor agencies have started to design and implement interventions aiming to foster good governance in recipient countries. While results of aid promoting good governance at macro level are overall not very positive, results at micro level remain largely unclear due to a lack of rigorous research. This study aims to address this knowledge gap through a systematic assessment of governance interventions implemented in Rwanda in the area of justice and decentralization with support of Dutch Official Development Assistance (ODA). The central research question guiding this study is: *How do interventions fully or partly supported by Dutch ODA and implemented between 2007 and 2013 contribute to good governance in Rwanda?*

In order to answer this question, various steps have been undertaken. First, a comprehensive literature review has been conducted that revealed that results of both rule of law and decentralization interventions are often inconclusive and mixed at best. In addition, four conditions have been identified considered most conducive toward the effective implementation of interventions, including: 1) sufficient organizational capacity of local implementing partners; 2) the presence of political will; 3) a context-sensitive design of the intervention; and 4) a long-term perspective deployed by the donor. These four conditions formed in turn the basis for the formulation of hypotheses. Second, the results of the 13 selected Dutch-supported governance interventions have been systematically assessed based on existing evaluations, project documentation and academic literature. Third, a Fuzzy-Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) has been conducted in order to test the theoretically informed hypotheses and identify the conditions, or combination of conditions, accounting for the results achieved. The outcome and condition variables were scored based on: 1) a desk-review of Rwandan policy documents, project documentation, and academic literature; and 2) semi-structured interviews conducted during fieldwork in Kigali in March and July 2014.

The study found that whereas results of Dutch-supported interventions appear to be relatively effective at output level, results at outcome level are mixed, and results at impact level remain largely unclear. The condition political will was found to be semi-necessary for results at outcome level, whereas two combinations of conditions were found to be sufficient: 1) the presence of political will combined with organizational capacity; and 2) the presence of context-sensitivity along with the presence of a long-term perspective and organizational capacity. The fsQCA indicated that the first configuration has the largest empirical relevance and has thus the largest explanatory power with respect to the realization of good governance outcomes.

## Preface and Acknowledgements

Finalizing this thesis does not only entail that I complete the master program 'International Public Management and Policy' (IMP) at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam (EUR), it simultaneously embarks the end of my career of being a student – at least for the time being. I have to admit that the final period of my studies has been very special, instructive, and certainly also challenging. An important source for this valuable learning trajectory has been the internship I conducted at the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. This internship placement allowed me to participate and contribute to an evaluation of Dutch development assistance to good governance in Rwanda over the period 2007-2013. Since I worked as junior consultant/researcher at Utrecht University School of Governance (USG) between the completion of my bachelor program and the start of my master's degree (2011-2013), during which I had the privilege to gain some real-world experience outside the lecture halls, I wished to conduct a research for my master thesis of which the findings would be directly valuable for policy-making processes. In this vein, I could not have imagined a better research topic and research environment as I have had now.

Over the period of my internship I have extended my personal boundaries several times. My supervisor and first reader Ms. Geske Dijkstra has played an instrumental role in this process, despite the severe health problems she faced during this period. She encouraged me to follow an additional course in statistics, of which I had nightmares in the beginning but felt totally comfortable with in the end. She proposed to write a conference paper together based on the literature review of the evaluation and to present it at the 14<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI) in Bonn in June 2014. In addition, she (and IOB) gave me the opportunity to participate in a Rwanda-based summer school on Comparative Genocide Studies and to combine this with fieldwork in Kigali in July 2014, which hugely contributed to my understanding of the Rwandan context in which the Dutch-supported governance interventions have been implemented. Although the research process did not always progress as fast as I planned, I'm satisfied with its result lying before you and grateful for the lessons I learned along the way (which was not always the case at the learning moments themselves..). The realization of this final product has not been possible without the assistance and input from a number of people. Hence, I would like to take the opportunity here to express my gratefulness to them.

As mentioned, my gratitude goes out to Ms. Geske Dijkstra, not only for providing me the opportunity to conduct an internship at IOB and providing me with other learning opportunities, but also for valuable comments on different versions of my thesis. In addition, I would like to address a word of gratitude to my second reader, Mr. Frans van Nispen tot Pannerden, for his insightful suggestions to the draft version of this thesis. Furthermore, I would like to thank the Rwandan people I have met, spoken to and got to know while participating with them in the summer school or conducting my interviews in Kigali. Although it is always hard, if not impossible, for an outsider to really understand a country context, in particular a post-genocide context such as Rwanda, their openness and willingness to share opinions, experiences and moments together have greatly helped me to come a bit closer to this understanding. In addition, I would like to thank all other respondents, including scholars working on Rwanda and policy-



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A special word of thanks goes out to the people working at IOB who were always willing to share their own research experiences and findings or to just provide a listening ear. In this vein, I wish to thank Caspar, Rob and Anique in particular with whom I shared an office for half a year. Moreover, a word of gratitude goes out to Denise with whom I spent hours of coffee drinking and exchanging ideas and experiences and who has always encouraged me in my work. My time at IOB did not only learn me a lot about conducting well-designed evaluations within a dynamic international context, it also provided me insight in the working of a ministry, an inspection and its mutual dynamics. This is an experience that I consider very valuable for my future professional career, which is hopefully at the intersection of public policy and international relations.

Another word of thanks goes out to my fellow IMP-students, in particular Norah, Sacha, Susan and Judith. While we all came to Rotterdam 'solely' to complete our master degree as good as possible assuming that the time would be too short to build new friendships, we ended up together, endlessly sharing internship experiences, thesis struggles and exam stress - among others.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank my family wholeheartedly (Gerrit-Jan, Dick and Marijke) for always being supportive and believing in me, and my friends who have provided infinite encouragement and laughter throughout the different phases of my work and studies at Utrecht University and Erasmus University of Rotterdam.

Karin ter Horst, March 2015

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<sup>1</sup> **Note:** The appendices referred to in this thesis shall be treated as confidential. This implicates that the document with appendices is only available for the purposes of the defense of this thesis and may not be further distributed or passed on to any other person or published. Any person that is interested in the appendices may submit a request with the director of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

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## List of Abbreviations

<i>ADB</i>	Asian Development Bank
<i>ADE</i>	Aide a la Décision Économique
<i>AusAID</i>	Australian Agency for International Development
<i>BEMO</i>	Activity appraisal document [ <i>BeoordelingsMemorandum</i> ]
<i>BSHG</i>	Budget Support Harmonization Group
<i>BTI</i>	Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index
<i>CDF</i>	Community Development Fund
<i>CDP</i>	Consultants for Development Programmes
<i>COCA</i>	Checklists for Organizational Capacity Assessment
<i>CPAF</i>	Common Performance Assessment Framework
<i>CSO</i>	Civil Society Organization
<i>csQCA</i>	Crisp-Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis
<i>DAD</i>	Development Assistance Database (Rwanda)
<i>DDP</i>	District Development Plan
<i>DIP</i>	Decentralization Implementation Plan
<i>DRC</i>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<i>ECHR</i>	European Court of Human Rights
<i>EDPRS</i>	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
<i>EHAHRDP</i>	East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project
<i>EIU</i>	The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited
<i>EKN</i>	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
<i>EUR</i>	Euro
<i>DANIDA</i>	Danish International Development Agency
<i>DoL</i>	Division of Labour
<i>f<sub>s</sub>QCA</i>	Fuzzy-Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis
<i>GBS</i>	General Budget Support
<i>GoR</i>	Government of Rwanda
<i>HiiL</i>	The Hague Institute for the Internationalization of Law
<i>HIMO</i>	Highly Intensive Manual Labor [ <i>Haute Intensité de Main-d'œuvre Labour</i> ]
<i>HRW</i>	Human Rights Watch
<i>LAG</i>	Indiba-Africa Group
<i>IDLO</i>	International Development Law Organization
<i>IED-ADB</i>	Independent Evaluation Department Asian Development Bank
<i>IOB</i>	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department
<i>ICTR</i>	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
<i>ICNL</i>	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
<i>IMF</i>	International Monetary Fund
<i>INGO</i>	International Non Governmental Organization
<i>INUS</i>	Insufficient but Necessary parts of a condition which is itself Unnecessary but Sufficient
<i>IPU</i>	Inter-Parliamentary Union
<i>JADF</i>	Joint Action Development Forum
<i>JRLO</i>	Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order

<i>JRLOS</i>	Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order Sector
<i>LAF</i>	Legal Aid Forum
<i>LIPRODHOR</i>	Rwandan League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights
<i>LODA</i>	Local Administrative Entities Development Agency
<i>MAJ</i>	Access to Justice Offices [ <i>Maison d'Accès à la Justice</i> ]
<i>MASP</i>	Multi-Annual Strategy Plan
<i>MDG</i>	Millennium Development Goals
<i>M&amp;E</i>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<i>MINALOC</i>	Ministry of Local Government
<i>MINECOFIN</i>	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
<i>MINIJUST</i>	Ministry of Justice
<i>MININTER</i>	Ministry of Internal Security
<i>MOFA</i>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands
<i>MoU</i>	Memorandum of Understanding
<i>NESS</i>	Necessary Element of a Sufficient Set
<i>NDIS</i>	National Decentralization Implementation Secretariat
<i>NGO</i>	Non Governmental Organization
<i>NORAD</i>	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
<i>NUR</i>	National University of Rwanda
<i>ODA</i>	Official Development Assistance
<i>OECD</i>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<i>OECD-DAC</i>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
<i>NURC</i>	National Unity and Reconciliation Commission
<i>PACT</i>	Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals in Rwanda
<i>PFM</i>	Public Financial Management
<i>PRSP</i>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<i>QCA</i>	Qualitative Comparative Analysis
<i>RALGA</i>	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities
<i>RDSF</i>	Rwanda Decentralization Strategic Framework
<i>RLDSF</i>	Rwanda Local Development Support Fund
<i>RNP</i>	Rwanda National Police
<i>RoR</i>	Republic of Rwanda
<i>RPF</i>	Rwanda Patriotic Front
<i>SBS</i>	Sector Budget Support
<i>SC</i>	Supreme Court
<i>SDC</i>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
<i>Sida</i>	Swedish International Development Agency
<i>SIPU</i>	Swedish Institute for Public Administration
<i>SOFRECO</i>	Societe Francaise De Realisation D'Etudes Et De Conseil Sa
<i>SMART</i>	Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely
<i>SNJG</i>	Service National des Jurisdictions Gacaca
<i>SNV</i>	Netherlands Development Organisation
<i>SWAP</i>	Sector Wide Approach
<i>TA</i>	Technical Assistance
<i>TIG</i>	Community Services as an alternative penalty to imprisonment [ <i>Travail d'Intérêt Général</i> ]

<i>ToR</i>	Terms of Reference
<i>UK</i>	United Kingdom
<i>UN</i>	United Nations
<i>UNCDF</i>	United Nations Capital Development Fund
<i>UNDEF</i>	United Nations Democracy Fund
<i>UNDP</i>	United Nations Development Program
<i>UN ECOSOC</i>	United Nations Economic and Social Council
<i>USAID</i>	United States Agency for International Development
<i>VUP</i>	Vision 2020 Umurenge Program
<i>WB-IEG</i>	World Bank Independent Evaluation Group

## Glossary of Rwandan Terms

<i>Abunzi</i>	informal mediation committees (part of Rwandan justice system)
<i>Akagari</i>	cell (small administrative level)
<i>Gacaca</i>	people's courts created to clear genocide case backlog
<i>Jumelage</i>	institutions in other countries
<i>Imidugudu</i>	rehousing program launched by the government
<i>Ingando</i>	national solidarity camps
<i>Imibigo</i>	two-way citizen or bureaucrat performance contracts
<i>Inyangamugayo</i>	gacaca judges
<i>Itorer</i>	Rwandan civic education institution
<i>Nyumbakumi</i>	local authorities
<i>Ubudebe</i>	shared decision-making, information-gathering, census
<i>Umuganda</i>	communal labor, community-centered public works
<i>Umudugudu</i>	grouped settlement, village (smallest administrative level)
<i>Umurenge</i>	sector (medium administrative level)
<i>Umusanzu</i>	support for the needy and contribution to common goals





## Chapter I: Introduction

*In Rwanda we believe the principal role of any government – central or local – to be transformational, improving the well-being of citizens and empowering them to participate fully in their development. This view is informed by experience and evidence that the benefits of good governance and the development that it unleashes have the greatest impact at the local level, as policies and programs are customized to community needs, with citizens participating actively, and entrenching democracy.'*

- H.E. President Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, 16 May 2013 -

### **I.1. Problem statement**

Governance matters for development. This proposition is not new and there is generally little doubt about its plausibility: it might be clear that when governments perform badly, public money is wasted, services will not be delivered and citizens will be denied the social and economic protection they are entitled to (Grindle, 2004). On the contrary, governments enforcing the rule of law, ensuring security, and promoting transparency and accountability, facilitate citizen's well-being and provide a conducive environment for businesses to flourish while encouraging equal distribution of the gains of economic growth. In the 1990s this conventional wisdom faced a revival. In particular after the fall of the Berlin wall the role played by institutions in economic performance became an important point of focus for economists and neo-institutionalists (Neumayer, 2005). The end of the Cold War provided opportunities not only to address good governance principles in domestic policies but also with regard to development cooperation policies and activities crossing the border. During the Cold War support to allies with a bad governance track record was justified by the fact that they were at least 'on our side' and not on the side of the communists. After the fall of the Berlin Wall this was no longer acceptable. This shift in development thinking was substantiated by leading quantitative research claiming that the effectiveness of aid depends on the quality of the policy environment (e.g., Burnside & Dollar, 1997, 2000; Collier & Dollar, 2002). As a result, almost all bilateral donors affiliated with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), independently of their political orientation, declared in the 1990s to make good governance one of the focal points within their foreign aid policies.

Recently, more than a decade after becoming a key tenet within the development debate, the importance of good governance received again international acknowledgement, reflected in a renewed commitment of the United Nations (UN) to give 'good governance and effective institutions' a central role in thinking about development interventions in light of the Post-2015 Agenda and in recent and dramatic demands for increased political liberalization in much of North Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia (Gisselquist & Resnick, 2014). Over the last decades, good governance has been considered as both a means to development, sometimes resulting in selection criterion in aid allocation, and as objective in itself (Tennekes, 2005; Hoebink, 2006). Since good governance can be understood as the elements that concern both the *access* to and the *exercise* of authority (see Rothstein & Teorell, 2008), multi-faced interventions have been set up by the newly established democracy and governance departments, such as

initiatives to enhance democratization, improve the rule of law, combat corruption and improve government effectiveness and Public Finance Management (PFM) (Hardt, 2012).

One of the donor countries that put governance at the center of its international development strategy over the last two decades is the Netherlands. From its start, the Dutch international development policies have never had a fixed pattern, but generally followed international paradigm shifts (see De Graaf *et al.*, 2003: 54-55). The Netherlands also followed the widely disseminated World Bank study '*Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn't, and Why*' that concluded that aid is only effective in a good policy environment (World Bank, 1998). Although many researchers have highlighted its methodological limitations (*e.g.*, Lensink & White, 1999; Hansen & Tarp, 2000), many aid agencies began to practice selectivity in the aid allocation as a result of this study: aid should only go to poor countries with reasonably good policies and good governance (IOB, 2013: 1). Under the responsibility of the ministers Pronk (1990-1998) and Herfkens (1998-2002) the good governance concept – although not literally used under Pronk - has been integrated in the Dutch policy strategy and has faced changing policy views on its content, functions and uses until the current moment. In spite of the fact that the Netherlands has never fully applied selectivity on governance in practice (see Hout, 2007; Hout & Koch, 2006), the number of partner countries has been recently significantly reduced from 33 in 2011 to 15 countries today.

Rwanda is one of the Dutch partner countries in which good governance has been an important objective and where relatively large amounts of money have been spent on governance activities. In this vein, donor countries such as the Netherlands and other development actors active in Rwanda - which is for 40% of its government expenditure dependent on aid (World Bank, 2014) - will applaud the Rwandan vision on good governance as outlined by the Rwandan president in the above quoted statement. However, it is questionable whether this situation can be actually observed in the Rwandan practice. Although Rwanda succeeded to maintain domestic stability since the genocide in 1994 and continued to foster significant development, both economically and socially, the government has been increasingly accused of ignoring human rights of its citizens and is blamed for keeping tight control of freedom of expression and association (Human Rights Watch, 2014). In addition, it is argued that opposition parties are obstructed and that exiled critics have been increasingly threatened, attacked, forcibly disappeared, or even killed (Freedom House, 2014). Moreover, during the recent parliamentary elections the ruling party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) that is in power since 2000, won a resounding victory without meaningful challenge (Uwizeyimana, 2013). Furthermore, one of the last remaining independent human rights organization in Rwanda, the Rwandan League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LIPRODHOR), has been forced to hand over its leadership to pro-government elements (EHAHRDP, 2013). Simultaneously, there seem to be some signals of improvement, including the adoption of new media laws and the revision of the law on 'genocide ideology'. In earlier years, these laws have been used to restrict a free and open debate on matters of public interest, and thus had in particular a restrictive effect on free speech in the media (Jansen, 2014: 192).

The same contradictions can be found within the literature on post-genocide Rwanda. On the one hand the RPF-government has been praised for its vision regarding the rebuilding of Rwanda (*e.g.*, Ensign *et al.*, 2010; Clark, 2010). These scholars emphasize the magnitude of challenges and difficulties faced by the government after the genocide and assess the attempts to rebuild Rwanda within this context. In this literature Rwanda is sometimes even portrayed as 'best practice' for other post-conflict countries on the path towards democratic transition (Ryan *et al.*, 2008: 16). On the other hand, an increasing amount of literature is very critical towards the

RPF and its attempts to recovery of the country (*e.g.*, Reyntjes, 2011; Pottier, 2002). They argue that while the international community is hailing the Rwandan government for the progress made, large amounts of the rural poor are excluded from economic recovery behind the scenes leading to growing inequality. Furthermore, it is reasoned that the economic and social engineering strategies are entangled with authoritarian patterns that marginalize large numbers of citizens (*e.g.*, Straus & Waldorf, 2011; Ingelaere, 2014; Ansoms, 2011).

In short, governance in Rwanda does not have an unequivocal face. Taking into account Rwanda started rebuilding a nation from scratch after the genocide, this should not be surprising. The difficulty and complexity involved in interpreting Rwanda is often cited in the existing knowledge base on Rwanda (*e.g.*, Ingelaere, 2009). More paradoxical, however, is the fact that despite the proclaimed importance of good governance for development and while good governance has increasingly been used both as means and an end over the years, the extent to which the provision of aid has been effective is controversial (*e.g.*, Hicky, 2012; Askarov & Doucouliagos, 2012; Börzel & Hackenesch, 2013). In her inaugural lecture, Dijkstra (2013) states that no causal relationship exists between aid and good governance on the macro level. Furthermore, she concludes that no relationship between good governance and economic development, as measured by commonly employed good governance indicators, can be proved. Although this does not mean that there is no relationship between aid and good governance at the micro-level, systematic research on the impact of assistance at this level and the effectiveness of different types of interventions has been limited (Garcia, 2011; Green & Kohl, 2007: 152; Grindle, 2011).

This raises significant questions for donors and aid agencies anchoring good governance in their policies. This is also the case for the Netherlands who promotes good governance in Rwanda since the 1990s. Over the last seven years (2007-2013) an amount of around 47 million euro has been spent on Official Development Assistance (ODA) promoting good governance in Rwanda (IOB, 2013; EKN Kigali, 2012). What are the results of the implemented policies and initiatives? Are good governance objectives achieved in the complex context of post-genocide Rwanda? And if so, which causal conditions, or combinations of conditions, are most conducive toward the achievement of these outcomes? With respect to the setting of a future strategy towards governance improvement in developing countries it is of vital importance to increase our understanding of current policies and interventions and to gain insight in the results achieved and the instrumental conditions.

## **1.2. Zooming in: Research focus**

Following the problem statement, the aim of this research is to assess the results of interventions supported by Dutch Official Development Assistance (ODA) that aim to foster good governance in Rwanda. Particularly important is to gain insight in what extent ultimate governance objectives can be achieved by such initiatives and to identify the causal links and patterns that lead to successful outcomes. Therefore, interventions in the justice sector and in decentralization fully or partly financed through Dutch ODA and implemented in the period 2007-2013 in Rwanda will be the central object of analysis. This leads to the following research question:

*How do interventions fully or partly supported by Dutch ODA and implemented between 2007 and 2013 contribute to good governance in Rwanda?*



In order to answer the central research question, the following sub questions are formulated to structure the study:

1. *What is good governance?*
2. *What do we know about the effectiveness of donor-supported interventions to foster good governance in developing countries, in particular in the area of rule of law and decentralization?*
3. *What are the results - outputs, outcomes, impact - of Dutch-supported interventions that aim to improve governance in Rwanda?*
4. *What causal conditions, or combinations of conditions, account for the results of the Dutch – jointly and fully - funded interventions in Rwanda?*

In addition, a study has been conducted on the Rwandan context to account for socio-economic, political and institutional factors that may influence the results of governance interventions. The findings of this contextual assessment can be found in Appendix 6.

### **1.3. How to answer this question?**

The study presented in this thesis is related to a broader evaluation of Dutch support to good governance in developing countries between 2007 and 2013 that is being conducted by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where the author of this thesis had an internship placement. In this vein, some of the methodological decisions made in this thesis should be understood in the context of this larger evaluation assignment. Most importantly, the selection of country and governance interventions is largely driven by its potential relevancy for policy learning and accountability in the Netherlands.

Rwanda was among the selected countries because it continues to receive aid from the Netherlands<sup>2</sup>, it was among the countries that received the most resources from the Dutch government in the area of good governance, it displayed a broad range of activities, good governance was included as (cross-cutting) priority in the Multi-Annual Strategic Plans (MASPs) of EKN Kigali, and the country faces governance challenges until today (IOB, 2013: 6, 11-12). To make the study manageable, a further selection among themes has been made. The justice sector has been selected because this thematic area continues to be a policy spearhead, and decentralization, because this theme has been very important in Dutch policies, and because the Netherlands has aimed to use it as an instrument to realize a broad range of good governance objectives, including transparency, government effectiveness, democratization and accountability (IOB, 2013: 14). Furthermore, most funds have been allocated for these two themes in Rwanda. Regarding the time period under study, the study focuses on interventions implemented between 2007 and 2013, since many interventions implemented before 2007 have been covered by earlier IOB evaluations (IOB, 2013: 6).

Based on the foregoing criteria, 13 Dutch-supported governance interventions in Rwanda have been identified for evaluation; 7 interventions in the justice sector and 6 in decentralization. The 13 cases are presented in Table 1.1 below, a more detailed description of these interventions can be found in Appendix 1.

Compared to other countries, including countries that are fairly similar, Rwanda remains a unique case because of its unique history and context (see also Appendix 6). This means that the model that will emerge from this study (*i.e.* conditions that are conducive to good governance outcomes)

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<sup>2</sup> Countries that still receive aid are mentioned in the 'Focus letter' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011) and in the more recent Policy note 'Wat de wereld verdient' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

may not be simply replicated in other country contexts. This model should be tested in these contexts first.

**Table 1.1 Dutch-supported Governance Interventions, Rwanda 2007-2013**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Execution party</b>	<b>Supply/ Demand*</b>	<b>Modality**</b>	<b>Budget in EUR***</b>
<b>Rule of law interventions</b>					
<i>Sector Budget Support (SBS) to the Justice, Reconciliation Law and Order Sector (JRLOS)</i>	2009-2012	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	Supply	1, 3	11,400.000
<i>Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) I</i>	2002-2008	Supreme Court (SC)	Supply	1	445.261
<i>Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) II</i>	2007-2012	Supreme Court (SC)	Supply	1	5,136.480
<i>Support to Gacaca justice (act. nr. 12343)</i>	2006-2010	Service National des Juridictions Gacaca (SNJG)	Supply	1	2,114.746
<i>Legal Aid Forum (LAF) I</i>	2007-2011	Legal Aid Forum (LAF)	Demand	1	903.827
<i>Legal Aid Forum (LAF) II</i>	2011-2014	Legal Aid Forum (LAF)	Demand	1	614.490
<i>Rehabilitation of Mpanga prison</i>	2007-2010	Ministry of Internal Security (MININTER)	Supply	1	209.512
<b>Decentralization interventions</b>					
<i>District development through support to CDF and RLDSF</i>	2007-2012	Rwanda Local Development Support Fund (RLDSF)	Supply	1	17,400.000
<i>District development through support to RLDSF (act. nr. 24371)</i>	2012-2013	Rwanda Local Development Support Fund (RLDSF)	Supply	1	5,400.000
<i>Joint Action Development Forum (JADF)</i>	2009-2014	National Decentralization Implementation Secretariat (NDIS)	Supply	1	2,300.000
<i>Support to Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) I</i>	2007-2010	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA)	Demand	1	750.000
<i>Support to Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) II</i>	2011-2014	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA)	Demand	1	816.000
<i>VNG national decentralization policy mission</i>	2006-2007	VNG International/ National Decentralization Implementation Secretariat (NDIS)	Supply	1	32.000

\* Supply side interventions focus on government institutions, demand side activities focus on non-state actors.

\*\* 1= Financial resources; 2= Capacity-building; 3= Policies and reforms (Policy dialogue)

\*\*\* Amounts listed are the total amounts of Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided by the Dutch government. According to project records some projects had matching funding.

Source: Pyramide, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands (MOFA) (2014a)

As a result of the specific number of cases included in this study, a limited number of research methods has been available. First, a pure experimental approach is not considered feasible, mainly because the evaluation has been initiated *ex post* and because of the resource intensiveness of such methods (*e.g.*, Barahona, 2010: 10). Second, both traditional quantitative and qualitative approaches are not deemed specifically useful. Whereas the results derived from a study covering just 13 cases would yield too few observations to build an accurate statistical model, an in-depth analysis of all cases is simply not feasible within the time available to the researcher. In this light, the methodology of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) (see Ragin, 1987) offers a solution by allowing for systematic cross-case comparisons, while at the same time doing justice to within-case complexity, in particular in small- and intermediate-N research designs (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009: xvii). As a result, QCA allows for the identification of the conditions, or combination of conditions, that are most instrumental towards achieving the outcome of interest, through evaluating set-theoretical relationships (Ragin, 2008a). To apply QCA in this study, potential causal conditions are identified based on an in-depth and comprehensive review of the literature, that in turn form the basis for the formulation of hypotheses regarding their relation to the realization of good governance outcomes. The results of the Dutch-supported interventions are examined based on the triangulation of data sources, including existing independently conducted evaluations of Dutch-supported governance interventions, interviews conducted with key stakeholders during field work in Rwanda, and a review of academic literature. To execute the analysis, the multiple qualitative and set-theoretical assumptions are calibrated into quantitative scores, and then tested against the available empirical evidence to examine the necessity and sufficiency of each of these assumptions.

#### **1.4. Relevance**

##### *1.4.1. Academic relevance*

Studying the promotion of good governance fits within the framework of Public Administration since its questions are tangential to the effectiveness and efficiency of governance, and relate to principles such as accountability, transparency, legitimacy and democracy. As such, the findings of this study will contribute to the existing knowledge base on principles guiding the improvement of quality of government. Understanding the effectiveness and the underlying causal conditions of donor interventions to foster good governance is theoretically relevant in multiple ways. As stated earlier, despite the global development sector has recognized the importance of good governance in developing countries for some period of time, academic research explicitly focusing on how governance in developing countries can be improved by donor assistance at the micro level is limited to date (*e.g.*, Garcia, 2011; Grindle, 2011; Tilley, 2013). Research thus far, has mainly focused on the relationship between aid and governance in the aggregate and examined, among other themes, whether aid aggravates institutional weaknesses (*e.g.*, Bräutigam & Knack, 2004; Busse & Gröning, 2009), the effect of aid on corruption (Alesina & Weder, 1999), the relationship between governance and aid effectiveness (*e.g.*, Wright, 2008), whether donors have a preference for certain types of regime (*e.g.*, Dollar & Levin, 2006), and if and how aid conditionality results in regime change (*e.g.*, Morrison, 2009). While these studies provide valuable insights on general dynamics that would be concealed by project evaluations on the micro level, research on specific donor interventions allows for a much more detailed assessment of the different factors influencing governance and therefore enables larger appreciation of nuances (see Gisselquist & Resnick, 2014). Studying and explaining the effectiveness of donor efforts to foster good governance is therefore a valuable contribution to the existing knowledge base. This study is particularly relevant because to date there have been

no such systematic attempts to uncover both necessary and sufficient conditions for effective donor-supported governance interventions as this research aims to do.

#### **1.4.2. Societal relevance**

The knowledge produced by this study has societal value in various ways. This research has significant policy relevancy since the findings can feed into the policy dialogue and allow the adaption of existing policies and activities that affect large groups of citizens. This is not only relevant for Dutch policy-makers, but also for other international development agencies implementing interventions under the banner of good governance. In light of the principle of ‘do no harm’ (see Anderson, 1999), donors do not only have the responsibility to consider positive results of their interventions, but also to contemplate the possible unintended consequences of their assistance. This provides donors not only the opportunity to adapt, but also to quit assistance when necessary. In addition, as stated before, research specifically focusing on donor interventions, instead of assessing outcomes on the aggregate level, results in more detailed and nuanced findings, which are particularly relevant for policy-making. Through the use of QCA this study specifically aims to delineate the key causal conditions contributing to effective implementation of donor-supported interventions. Moreover, effectiveness of donor interventions is relevant as ever in this period of worldwide cuts in aid budgets. Besides that this study contributes to policy learning, it facilitates accountability by providing insight in the results of public spending.

#### **1.5. Research outline**

This first chapter articulated the problem analysis, the research objective and questions and the relevance of this study. In the following chapter, a review of the literature will be provided on good governance and what is known about the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions in the areas of rule of law and decentralization. Based on this review the theoretical framework underlying this study is formulated. In chapter 3, the design of the research will be elaborated on and the reliability and validity of the research will be scrutinized. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the empirical research findings and reflects on the formulated hypotheses. Chapter 5, the conclusion, provides an answer to the central research questions by summarizing the main findings and states the academic and policy implications of this research. In addition, remaining knowledge gaps will be identified.

## Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

*'Good governance is like a large elephant. One person can touch the trunk, one the stomach, and one the tail, and they have had very different experiences with the elephant. Around the world, everyone has different experiences and different perceptions of good governance.'*

- Ahmed Adamu, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Youth Council, May 2014 -

This chapter introduces the theoretical framework applied by the study and aims to provide an answer to the first two sub questions: 1) *What is good governance?* And 2) *What do we know about the effectiveness of donor-supported interventions to foster good governance in developing countries, in particular in the area of rule of law and decentralization?* In order to do so, first the concept of good governance will be further introduced and its various definitions will be discussed (paragraph 2.1). Subsequently, a comprehensive review and a critical reflection of existing academic research and donor-commissioned evaluations considers the empirical evidence on the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions in developing countries in the areas of rule of law and decentralization (paragraph 2.2). To conclude, conditions are distilled from the existing knowledge base that either facilitate or hamper the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions (paragraph 2.3).

### **2.1. Governance interventions in development assistance**

#### **2.1.1. The good governance concept**

Good governance became a central concept in academic research and policy interventions aiming to foster social and economic development since the 1990s (see Grindle, 2004; Weiss, 2000). In this period, the World Bank started to advocate good governance principles by applying conditionality for loans to developing countries. The line of reasoning, consistent with economic and political theories (in particular institutional economics (*e.g.*, Williamson, 1975, 1979, 1985; Coase, 1937, 1960), new public management theories (*e.g.*, Pollitt, 1990; Hood, 1991), and development management theories (*e.g.*, Ransom & Stewart, 1994; Freire, 1972) is that a well-governed country that ensures private property protection, that is governed by the rule of law and that promotes transparency and accountability is more effective in attracting investments than a country that fails to ensure these principles (see also Bai & Wei, 2000; Rauch & Evans, 2000). Simultaneously, it is thought that governments will become more effective in developing relevant domestic policies when they can be held to account by a population that can freely express their needs (see *e.g.*, Bovens, 2005).

As a concept, good governance is complex, infinite and intangible. Like most buzzwords, governance is an oft-used term that has different meanings to different people in different contexts and time periods (see Rhodes, 1996; van Kersbergen & van Waarden, 2004: 144-152). Scholars, practitioners, donors, and international organizations have developed their own

definitions and ideas about measurement, often aligned with their own political or research priorities (e.g., Arndt & Oman, 2006; Thomas, 2010). Because the operations of governance vary considerably, from national to sub-national government, from institutions to corporations and individuals, definitions are often broadly formulated resulting in rather vague terms not always useful for practical application. Moreover, mainstream conceptions of governance and the pursuit of good governance are never value-free, but rather normative, prescriptive and often ideological (Dijkstra & van de Walle, 2013: 4-5). Basically, as argued by various scholars, a neo-liberal perspective is dominant in the governance debates advocating for privatization, marketization, and budget disciplinary in developing countries (Goldsmith, 2001; Chang, 2002). Some authors even argue that the good governance agenda mirrors components of the modernization theory of the 1950s and 1960s (see Rostow, 1960; Kiely, 1998), since all aspects and consequences of good governance add up, in their opinion, to a Western and liberal democratization ideal as preferred end-goal of the path of development for all developing countries (Leftwich, 1993; Hanlon, 2012).

Before articulating the important aspects of the good governance concept in the context of this thesis, it is useful to concisely review some circulating definitions. In 1992, the World Bank defined good governance as *'the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development. Good governance [...] is synonymous with sound development management'* (1992: 1). In other words, the World Bank asserted that good governance should create the conditions for a stable macroeconomic growth policy. Since then the concept has evolved and good governance became an umbrella term to refer to an increasingly broad range of practices. The most frequently used definition in the academic debate is the definition developed by Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi (2004: 3) that also forms the basis for the World Governance Indicators (WGI)<sup>3</sup>. According to this definition governance entails *'the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised'*. More specifically, good governance is about: (1) the process by which governments are selected, monitored, and replaced, (2) the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies, and (3) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (idem). The UNDP employs a broader definition that emphasizes neoliberal ideas of authority: *'Good governance is characterized as participatory, transparent [...] accountable [...] effective and equitable [...] promotes the rule of law [...] ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources.'* In contrast, many economists have narrowed the concept of good governance by defining 'good public sector institutions' as 'institutions that are instrumental to economic growth' (La Porta, Lopez-de- Silanes, Schleifer & Vishny, 1999: 222-223).

While significant differences can be detected in terms of normativity, preciseness and scope of various definitions, most of them cover aspects such as the processes by which governments are chosen and changed, the ability of developing and implementing public policy, the systems by which groups of citizens formulate their interests and interact and the interaction mechanisms between various governmental departments. This places issues of state capacity and functions at

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<sup>3</sup>The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), a project of the World Bank and the Brookings Institution led by Kaufman, Kraay and Mastruzzi, assesses the quality of governance for 215 countries worldwide. The categories evaluated by WGI include: 1) Voice and Accountability, 2) Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, 3) Government Effectiveness, 4) Regulatory Quality, 5) Rule of Law, and 6) Control of Corruption. These aggregate indicators combine the views of a large number of enterprise, citizen and expert survey respondents in industrial and developing countries and are based on 32 individual data sources produced by a variety of survey institutes, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and private sector firms.

the heart of the debate (Rakner *et al.*, 2007). In this vein, the definition provided by Rothstein and Teorell (2008: 169) that stresses the distinction between two dimensions of good governance is considered to be a suitable summary<sup>4</sup>: *'One is the 'input' side which relates to the access to public authority. The other is the 'output' side and refers to the way in which that authority is exercised'*. Whereas most bilateral donors emphasize the first element and articulate the importance of free and fair elections and the adherence to human rights, the aforementioned definition of the World Bank stresses (1992) the second element of the definition by emphasizing the manner in which authority is exercised by the government (Dijkstra & van de Walle, 2012: 4). The definition of Rothstein and Teorell is considered particularly useful because it is fairly precise, can be applied universally and because it puts the working of institutions of a country at the center (access to and exercise of authority), rather than the content of policies or its proclaimed political consequences (*e.g.*, transparency, democracy). What is considered as 'good' can be seen as the result of explicit ideological and political preferences regarding the socio-economic order in recipient countries. Therefore this definition will be followed in this thesis.

### **2.1.2. Donor-supported governance interventions**

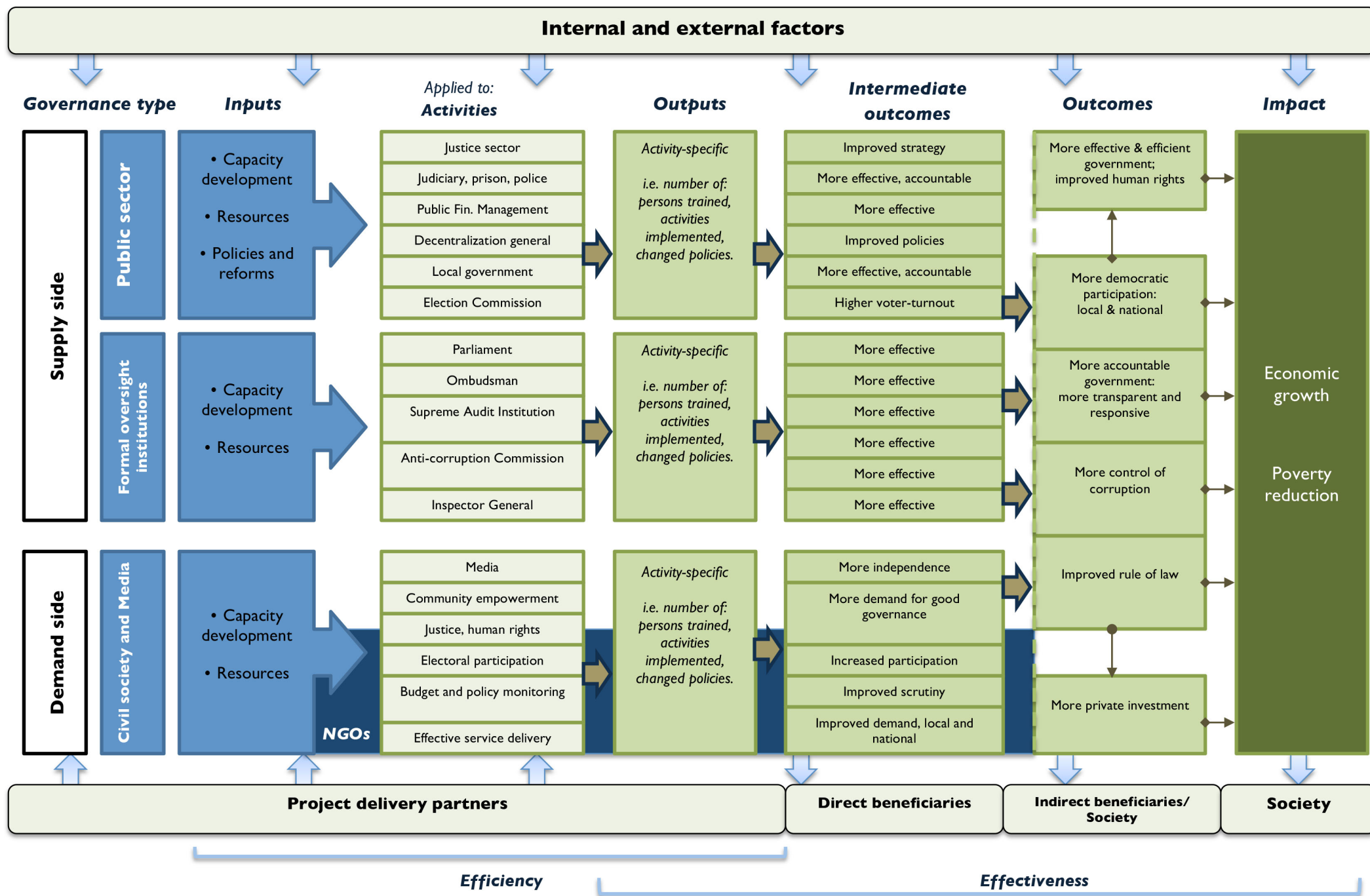
Before moving to the discussion of empirical evidence on 'donor-supported governance interventions', it is important to clearly articulate what is understood by this term. First, because this study focuses on the results of Dutch Official Development Assistance (ODA), and development assistance provided by non-DAC and emerging donors has its own characteristics and dynamics (*e.g.*, Woods, 2008), this study maintains the standard definition on aid (which can be considered equivalent to donor-support) provided by the OECD-DAC, worded as follows: *'financial flows, technical assistance, and commodities that are 1) designed to promote economic development and welfare as their main objective (thus excluding aid for military or other non-development purposes); and 2) are provided as either grants or subsidized loans.'* More specifically, ODA consists of aid provided by donor governments to low- and middle-income countries. Second, staying true to the definition and conception by Rothstein and Teorell (2008), good governance entails the processes that either concern the access to or the exercise of authority. Third, donor-supported interventions can take different forms, including funding in the form of grants or loans, support for policies and reforms, and capacity building and can be either project or program-based. Summarized, a 'donor-supported governance intervention' entails all actions or processes of intervening partly or fully funded through foreign aid provided by a donor that target processes that either concern the access to or the exercise of authority in the recipient country.

As such, governance appears in three different forms in donor-supported interventions: (1) as an instrument aiming to achieve specific development outcome(s) such as economic growth or poverty reduction, (2) as an ultimate outcome of an initiative, or (3) both of the aforementioned (see Hoebink, 2006; Moehler, 2010). As outlined, this research is explicitly concerned with the effect of these interventions on governance outcomes, and does not engage in the potential social and economic development impact. Governance outcomes are very diverse and planned governance outcomes may include decreased corruption, improved citizen participation and increased quality of public service-delivery.

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<sup>4</sup> Because the term 'good governance' has broad connotations and often includes non-government actors (Rothstein, 2011), Rothstein and Teorell use the term 'quality of government' (QoG) instead. Nevertheless, the difference between the two concepts is largely terminological.

**Figure 2.1. Logical Framework typical governance interventions**



Source: Adapted by author from IOB (2013)



While there is no distinct categorization of donor-supported governance intervention literature, overseeing all areas in which donor-supported interventions have been implemented internationally, four broad groups can be distinguished, including support to:

1. The justice sector and improvement of the rule of law;
2. Democratization and participation;
3. The improvement of government effectiveness and transparency;
4. Decentralization policies and local government empowerment.

In practice, the strict assignment of governance interventions to these four groups will be easy, as one activity may be classified under two or more groups. In addition, the one to one relationship between a group of activities and a good governance objective (democratization, rule of law, control of corruption, government effectiveness, and local government). In all categories, interventions may focus on the supply side of governance (government institutions) or the demand side of good governance (non-state actors such as CSOs, media, and for the aim of community empowerment) (see also I OECD/ADB, 2008). Within the supply side a distinction can be made between the civil sector, and formal oversight institutions such as Parliaments, Ombudsman, and Supreme

A key question to be addressed is *how* governance interventions are thought to lead to governance outcomes. Although all interventions are different depending on their design and the specific governance challenges they aim to address, it is possible, as illustrated by Figure 1.1, to construct an intervention theory<sup>5</sup> that underlies typical governance interventions. Simple intervention theory describes the logical relationship between all policy inputs, activities (referred to as ‘activities’ in Figure 1.1), outputs, outcomes, and impact (McLaughlin 1999). The relationship between inputs and outputs is covered by the concept of efficiency, while assessing the effects of governance interventions a distinction can be made between goal attainment and effectiveness. Goal attainment refers to the degree of realization of objectives, whereas effectiveness entails the degree to which observed outcomes are produced by the intervention (Araral *et al.*, 2012: 388). As stated by White (2006), the ultimate goal of impact evaluation endeavours is to identify effectiveness, which focuses on the extent to which observed outcomes could be attributed to the program, and to the program alone.

## **2.2. Effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions**

As outlined in the introductory chapter, empirical evidence on the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions at the micro-level is limited (García, 2013; Gisbert & Niño-Zarazúa, 2013). The next sections discuss what is known about the results of governance interventions in the areas of the rule of law and decentralization. Before reviewing the results, the concepts will be discussed and defined first.

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<sup>5</sup> Other terms that can be used interchangeably for intervention theory are policy theory, intervention logic, or results chain. However, some authors apply the term intervention ‘logic’ for describing how programs work, while using the term (intervention or policy) ‘theory’ to go a step further by attempting to build an explanation of how the program works, including the assumptions that need to hold and the mechanisms that are at work (White & Leeuw, 2010: 365).

## 2.2.1. Rule of law assistance in developing countries<sup>6</sup>

### 2.2.1.1. Rule of law conceptualized

Very often the concept of a sound or healthy legal system is described through the shorthand of the ‘rule of law’ (or ‘*l’État de droit*’)<sup>7</sup>. Like most governance related concepts, there is no unanimous agreement on the meaning, aims and means of the rule of law (Bouloukos & Dakin, 2001) or in words of Belton (2005) who uses the proverbial blind man’s elephant: it is ‘*a trunk to one person, a tail to another*’. Nevertheless, modern legal theorists distinguish generally two principal conceptions: a formalist or ‘thin’ and a substantive or ‘thick’ definition (Tamanaha, 2006; Tribilcock & Daniels, 2009)<sup>8</sup>. A third ‘functional’ definition is only rarely encountered to. The ‘thin’ definition views rule of law as a non-value-laden concept that simply entails that there are laws and that these laws are equally applied to everyone (Raz, 1979; Hayek, 2013). This means that legal systems that do not protect human rights, such as those in effect during the apartheid years in South Africa, can qualify as rule of law system as long as the laws are applied in a consistent manner. While this may seem an already strong condition, formal legality is simply a necessary core for any – even a very thin – rule of law definition (Møller & Skaaning, 2010: 15). The ‘thick’ definition on the other hand, takes also the content of laws into account and argues that rule of law implies respect for human rights (Dworkin, 1985). One value of the thinner conceptions of the rule of law is that they form the lowest common denominator within the wide diversity of rule of law conceptions (HiiL, 2008). However, most Western development agencies base themselves on a thicker definition and therefore the following internationally accepted thick definition put forward by the UN Secretary-General (2008) is adopted for the purposes of this research: ‘*A principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires as well measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of the law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness, and procedural and legal transparency*’.

Based on the foregoing, the objectives of providing rule of law assistance can be formulated at three levels (IOB, 2008: 493). First, strengthening the rule of law in its small conception: improved legislation, institutional strengthening and increased access to justice. Although this level can be considered an objective in itself, it is often used as a means to improve the rule of law in its broad conception, the second level: a government ‘bound by law’, equality of rights, legal security, adherence to human rights, and stability. In turn, these objectives should lead to results at the third level: poverty reduction, peace, democratization, and economic development.

Mirroring the breadth of the rule of law area, interventions adopt a wide variety of strategies in pursuit of development goals targeted at a diversity of beneficiaries. Given that rule of law assistance in a development context has only recently been conceptualized as such, no standard

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<sup>6</sup> Section 2.2.1. is partly based on the working paper ‘Evaluating aid for good governance’ (Ter Horst & Dijkstra, 2014) that has been written as part of the IOB evaluation and has been presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> EADI General Conference, 23-26 June 2014 in Bonn.

<sup>7</sup> The terminology for donor interventions in this area has undergone several permutations within the international development community. Various agencies have referred to ‘rule of law’, ‘administration of justice’, ‘legal technical assistance’, and ‘legal reform’.

<sup>8</sup> These opposite sides are variously described in scholarly literature as broad versus narrow, thick versus thin, substantive versus formal; the central difference is that the narrow or thin or formal conceptions deny that the existence of the rule of law depends on the content of the laws which rule.

categorization of this type of aid has yet emerged within the academic literature (Samset *et al.*, 2007: 5; Samuels, 2006: 6-7).

A possible manner to categorize these interventions is by recipient of assistance: judicial institutions, police, civil society, and the like. A more comprehensive way to categorize interventions, based on their ‘depth’ of reform, is presented by Carothers (1998). Type one involves revising laws or whole codes, and often focuses on the economic domain. Type two focuses on making law-related institutions more competent, efficient and accountable and can include training for judges, strengthening legislatures and tax administration, as well as legal education and alternative dispute resolution. Type three reforms attempt to strengthen the rule of law by increasing judicial independence and state compliance with the law. According to Carothers, this type of reform depends more on enlightened leadership than on technical assistance and is the most difficult to achieve.

**Table 2.1. Categorization of rule of law interventions in developing countries**

Category	Description
1. Articulation, formulation, and drafting of rules (including the creation of formal institutions)	<u>Targeted institutions and processes:</u> norm creation by government and state bodies, constitution making, modification of institutional structures, and advice and lobbying by professional associations and legal advocacy groups. <u>Typical interventions:</u> support to: criminal law reform, constitution making, drafting of commercial laws, promotion of law reform by advocacy groups, to drafting committees.
2. Application and interpretation of rules	<u>Targeted institutions and processes:</u> public responses to legislated norms, government and state application of these norms, decision-making in governmental bureaucracies, and judicial and academic usage and legitimation. <u>Typical interventions:</u> support to: human and infrastructural capacity-building, criminal prosecutions, promotion of judicial independence, prison rehabilitation, assistance to law enforcement officials, and training for the police and security forces.
3. Provision of legal representation and advice and public access and understanding	<u>Targeted institutions and processes:</u> service provision by the legal profession, law schools, trade unions, and legal aid organizations, as well as public bodies such as ombudspersons and human rights commissions. <u>Typical interventions:</u> support to: creation of legal aid offices, support to paralegal services, creation of legal awareness, support to legal advocacy groups, private and state-owned media activities.

Source: Adapted by author from Toope (2003)

Based on Toope (2003), the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) divides the justice sector into four interrelated areas, each with corresponding institutions, processes, and agents. The four types of assistance following from this distinction include support to:

1. The articulation, formulation, and drafting of rules;
2. The application and interpretation of rules;
3. The provision of legal representation and advice;
4. Public access and understanding.

According to Bassu (2008: 23-25), this framework allows one to look at the actors and places involved in the various processes that contribute to strengthening the rule of law, and how they interrelate and mutually affect each other in a particular context. Therefore, it provides a flexible way to identify the processes that are weak and the actors that can be used to intervene. In practice, however, it is difficult to distinguish between the third and the fourth area of intervention since they are often offered together under the banner of the ‘legal empowerment’

approach. Hence, the two groups are taken together in this research. See Table 2.1 for an overview of the different types of assistance including typical interventions.

### 2.2.1.2. Empirical evidence on effectiveness of rule of law interventions

Although a considerable amount of research is available on conceptions of rule of law, the causal relation between rule of law and development, general weaknesses in rule of law promotion, and transitional justice institutions such as international courts and tribunals, scholarship on how donor-supported interventions strengthen the rule of law is limited (Alffram, 2011; Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Berg & Desai, 2013). In addition, the empirical literature is diverse in approach and results, which makes it difficult to neatly summarize it or come to generalizations. A concise overview and selective examples of existing research are presented in this section. More detailed information about the employed search strategy and findings and methodologies used by the reviewed studies is provided in Appendix 3.

In general, two streams can be detected in both the academic literature and donor commissioned evaluations of rule of law interventions in post-conflict countries. On the one hand, scholars argue that we simply do not know enough about the results of rule of law assistance and that therefore the effectiveness of these interventions remains an open question (*e.g.*, Samset *et al.*, 2007; Davis & Trebilcock, 2009). On the other hand, a larger strand of scholars state that the numerous rule of law assistance programs implemented over the last decades have had few lasting results and still too little is known about *how* to bring about these difficult and interdependent social goods (*e.g.*, Glinavos, 2010; Stromseth, 2007; Quigley, 2009). While the latter stream is more definite about what has been achieved up till now – next to nothing – the streams have in common that they both denote the lack of systematic research that has been done in this area. The findings of existing research are discussed below based on the classification of rule of law interventions provided above.

#### **The articulation, formulation, and drafting of rules**

A common problem in many low-income countries is a weak formal justice system and an inadequate criminal justice infrastructure. Moreover, the population tends to have little trust in the government or a legal system, which allows for a culture of impunity and lack of accountability (Widner, 2001). Various evaluations covering donor activities such as technical support to reform processes, report about positive outputs and outcomes such as the passage of new legislation, newly created institutions and regulations, increased awareness of the importance of reform and ‘momentum’ for reform implementation (DANIDA, 2012: 43; Sida, 2003: 22), which can be considered as institutional strengthening falling under rule of law in its ‘thin’ conception. While these results are relatively easily observable, evaluations have a hard time to determine to what extent these changes become internalized or truly ‘domestic’ and have a longer term impact and contribute to the rule of law in its ‘thick’ conception (*e.g.*, ADE, 2011, AusAID, 2012: 37; DFID, 2007:31; ADB, 2009: ii). Studies that do report on outcomes are predominantly more negative in their judgment and emphasize the lack of tangible results from donor support to justice reform (*e.g.*, IMF/The Netherlands, 2005; SDC, 2004; Browne, 2013; Samuels, 2006; Bull, 2009; Alffram, 2011: 3). A common finding is that the political dimensions of reform processes are not sufficiently taken into account at the donor side and the fact that political power holders need to be prepared to accept the limits to their power that comes with adherence or reform of the rule of law is overlooked (Berg *et al.*, 2001; Benomar, 2001; Baker & Scheye, 2009). While largely most evaluations point at the negative influence of weak or absent political commitment on project effectiveness (*e.g.*, USAID, 2014: 8; DFID, 2007: 41-47; IEG-WB, 2006:

26), Dugard and Dratge (2013: 31-32) explicitly refer to the positive consequences of support from the South African state for community-based paralegals, whereas an evaluation conducted on European Commission support (ADE, 2011: 7) articulates the importance of commitment for the effectiveness of sector budget support. Summarized, with respect to the first category, the overall results are limited and only seem possible when local political will exists for the reform processes supported by donors.

### ***The application and interpretation of rules***

Successful law enforcement requires that the various state bodies are equipped not only with proper mandates on paper, but also with the administrative, management and enforcement *capacity* to fill their mandates in practice. Another problem with enforcement is that it often comes along with human rights abuses, including harassment, intimidation, unlawful detention and physical abuse (Allfram, 2011: 23). Donor activities such as training and continuing education programs for legal professionals, strengthening the police, reforming prison conditions, and support to law faculties, ombudsmen offices, tribunals, courts, and judicial training institutes are reported to result in some outcomes, for example increased capacity, enhanced competence and greater efficiency (*e.g.*, IDLO, 2008; USAID, 2009). Nevertheless, authors of these evaluations simultaneously acknowledge that these positive effects do not automatically lead to improved confidence in rule of law or greater access to justice, for instance because the formal justice sector is viewed as being corrupt or because informal justice systems are the main source of justice in a country.

### ***The provision of legal representation and advice and public access and understanding***

The outcomes reported by evaluations in the third category are, compared to the other two categories, somewhat more positive, in particular towards its potential to use both state and non-state legal orders to ensure that the justice needs of people living in poverty are met (*e.g.*, Stapleton, 2010; Kolisetty, 2013; Sage, Menzies & Woolcock, 2010). In addition, interventions in this category often include a broader range of activities (*e.g.*, mediation, mobile paralegals, grassroots legal educators, community engagement, legal advice offices) leading to a broader set of outcomes that include for instance legal empowerment, social accountability and legal awareness (Seta, 2008: 9-13).

#### ***2.2.2. Decentralization interventions in developing countries***

##### ***2.2.2.1. Decentralization conceptualized***

Decentralization is one of the most important governance reforms of the past three decades, both in terms of the number of countries affected and the potentially deep consequences for the nature and quality of governance (Faguet, 2014; Rodden, 2006). Despite its wide popularization, the term decentralization is slippery, and its conceptual confusion and proliferation of definitions have been deplored by many academics (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007; Schneider, 2003). In most general terms, decentralization is the process by which national governments transfer decision-making powers, resources and responsibility to the regional, sub-regional or local level (for a general discussion see De Vries, 2000). Because decentralization has been a key concept in the field of public administration for decades, its typologies have flourished (Dubois & Fattore, 2009). Most experts recognize three dimensions of decentralization; political, administrative and fiscal (Rondinelli, 1999; Tanzi, 1995). The distinction between these dimensions is particularly useful for the clear articulation of the many aspects of decentralization and the necessity of

coordination among them, yet there exists some overlap between the various definitions.

Political decentralization is the process of providing citizens or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making by giving them voice and facilitating accountability at different levels of government (Rondinelli, 1999: 2). Administrative decentralization concerns the redistribution of authority and responsibility for public service delivery among different levels of government. Three forms of administrative decentralization can be distinguished that reflect the varying levels of authority along a continuum assigned to the subnational levels of government; devolution, delegation and deconcentration (Brennan & Buchanan, 1980; Oxhorn *et al.*, 2004). Devolution is the deepest form of decentralization and occurs when a higher level of government transfers authority to autonomous lower levels of government through constitutional or legislative means. In a system that is devolved, local government authorities have lucid and legally acknowledged geographical borders that marks the area over which they have authority and in which they perform their public tasks. This type of administrative decentralization underlines most processes of political decentralization (Ribot, 1999). Delegation usually refers to the transfer of authority and responsibilities for carefully spelled out tasks, but with a principal-agent relationship between the central and lower levels of government, with the agent remaining accountable to the principal. Deconcentration is the shallowest form of decentralization and entails the transfer of authority over specified management functions by an administrative fiat to different levels under the jurisdictional authority of the government. Fiscal decentralization is defined in various manners in the literature. Falleti (2005) defines it as the process of transferring authority from central government to elected subnational governments to make decisions with regards to revenues. Whereas this definition refers to revenues only, most other definitions used by academics and donors also include the transfer of authority with regards to expenditures (*e.g.*, Litvack *et al.*, 1998; Woller & Phillips, 1998; World Bank, 2008). In order to align with the academic and practical discourse, this thesis maintains the latter definition.

The main theoretical argument concerning support to decentralization is that it can improve governance by increasing accountability and responsiveness of the government towards the governed (Faguet, 2004; Crook & Manor, 1998). It does so by modifying its structure so as to encourage citizen participation and alter the incentives faced by public officials (Faguet, 2012). From a political point of view, the advantages are regarded to lie in increasing state legitimacy, stability and support, together with democracy more broadly (Crook, 2003; Smoke, 2003; Devas & Delay, 2006). In turn, improved governance is thought of improving public service delivery in terms of quality, cost-effectiveness and equity of service provision, and leading to other improved public sector outputs, including improved education and health services, increased public investment levels, lower level of corruption, and decreased national and subnational fiscal deficits (Faguet, 2014: 24). More precisely, improvements in public service delivery can be regarded as a result of 1) enhanced 'allocative efficiency' which entails that public services are better matched to local needs and preferences (Hayek in: Ostrom *et al.*, 1993); and 2) increased 'productive efficiency' which comprises increased accountability at the local level, smaller number of bureaucratic levels, and better knowledge of local costs (Kakhonen & Lanyi, 2001). Although improved governance can thus be regarded as a clear cause for improved public service delivery, various scholars are less explicit about the precise relationship between the two (Brinkerhoff & Azfar, 2006; Jütting *et al.*, 2005). This is also the case for many academic and donor studies, which often focus solely on policy relevant outcomes when assessing the effects of decentralization. According to Faguet (2014: 24) this is because these outcomes are more concrete and more easily to measure than effects on governance. In theoretical terms, improved governance and public service delivery are subsequently assumed to contribute to economic

development and poverty reduction (Von Braun & Grote, 2000).

Donor support to decentralization in developing countries can take different forms. A useful categorization of donor-supported decentralization interventions is provided by Dickovick (2014), who makes a distinction between: 1) support to policy reform and legal framework development to increase the autonomy of local governments with respect to their powers, resources, and responsibilities (the ‘quantity’ of decentralization); and 2) project or program activities to improve the responsiveness and accountability of those local governments to their constituents in the form of greater capacity for action and accountability to the citizenry (the ‘quality’ of decentralization). Support at the policy level regards decentralization as an outcome of donor assistance, while the second type of support, project and program activities, considers improved governance and development as outcomes of foreign aid (Dickovick, 2013). With regards to donor efforts at the project and program level that aim to improve the quality of decentralization, a further distinction can be made between interventions. Overseeing all donor activities, the following categories can be identified: 1) capacity building at local and central government level; 2) citizen/community empowerment interventions; 3) support to fiscal mechanisms at local level; 4) local development investment funds. Table 2.2 provides an overview of the different categories including practical examples of interventions.

**Table 2.2. Categorization of decentralization interventions in developing countries**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1. Interventions at policy level (targeting the ‘quantity’ of decentralization)</b>	
<i>1.1. Policy reform and legal framework development</i>	<i>Targeted institutions and processes:</i> policy advocacy processes, policy-making trajectories, (parliamentary) policy drafting committees. <i>Typical interventions:</i> advice and technical support for framing relevant legislation and policy to state and non-state actors, study trips to other countries in the region or to donor countries, establishment of networks between national associations of local government from donor and partner countries
<b>2. Interventions at program/project level (targeting the ‘quality’ of decentralization)</b>	
<i>2.1. Capacity-building (local and central government)</i>	<i>Targeted institutions and processes:</i> public service delivery by public institutions and local governments, local capacity-building programs. <i>Typical interventions:</i> training for government officials at various levels, initiatives to improve horizontal and vertical knowledge management, strengthening of local capacity-building providers, development of training material, provision of equipment and facilities, strengthening of local government associations.
<i>2.2. Citizen/ community empowerment interventions</i>	<i>Targeted institutions and processes:</i> local decision-making, joint planning, identification of citizen needs and preferences, promotion of citizen participation. <i>Typical interventions:</i> promotion activities for citizen participation, community-based education reforms, support to participatory budgeting, citizen report cards, support to participatory forums at the local level, budget-tracking interventions, support to health and education user committees.
<i>2.3. Reform and construction of local fiscal systems</i>	<i>Targeted institutions and processes:</i> fiscal and administrative reform, revenue generation, central and local financial control, tax administration. <i>Typical interventions:</i> development of intergovernmental fiscal transfer systems, local government finance commissions, strengthening of local tax revenue systems, support to testing or piloting of fiscal transfer systems to local governments.
<i>2.4. Local development investment funds</i>	<i>Targeted institutions and processes:</i> local decision-making, local development investment, community-driven development. <i>Typical interventions:</i> support to local (social) investment funds, capacity-building initiatives for managing investment funds, monitoring and evaluations of the operations of investment funds.

Source: Adapted by author from Dickovick (2013) and OECD-DAC (2004)

These categories are not always mutually exclusive; some interventions can be classified in various categories rather than just one.



### 2.2.2.2. Empirical evidence

The array of academic literature and donor commissioned evaluations that assess the effectiveness of decentralization interventions is very diverse. While some studies solely examine interventions that target one particular dimension of decentralization, other studies assess interventions that target all three dimensions, thus political, administrative, and fiscal dimensions of decentralization. Furthermore, whereas some studies exclusively focus on governance, a number of studies have a broader perspective. Studies also differ in whether they consider governance outcomes as an end in itself or as an intermediate outcome that should lead to improvements in public service delivery. The following section presents the findings of existing research structured along the categorization of donor interventions presented above. More details about the search strategy and the studies included in this review can be found in Appendix 2.

### **Policy reform and legal framework development**

As explained earlier, support to policy reform and legal framework development generally aims to increase the autonomy of local governments *inter alia* the central government. It appears from the existing knowledge base that donor efforts in this area, targeting political, administrative and fiscal decentralization, have only been modestly effective (*e.g.*, ADB, 2010: 19; UNDCF, 2008). In order to successfully increase autonomy of local governments it is of major importance that the central governments has incentives and is committed to devolve authorities and responsibilities (Jütting *et al.*, 2005: 638-639; Dickovick, 2014: 202). In addition, it is necessary to reform each of the three dimensions of decentralization at roughly the same time; local governments should assess power through independently organized elections (political decentralization), have the possibility of determining their own budgetary plans, strategies, procedures, and human resource management (administrative decentralization), and have access to tax bases or resource transfers from the center (fiscal decentralization) (Dickovick, 2013). However, in practice, successes by donor interventions in one area often come along with failures in another area, or donors and recipient countries simply focus too much on one particular dimension of decentralization while neglecting the others (Ghuman & Singh, 2013: 18 -19). Both situations reduce the overall effectiveness of donor interventions in this area. A study by the World Bank (2008: ix) covering almost 20 years of assistance to decentralization in 20 countries, finds that its support to policy reform had strengthened legal frameworks and fiscal transfer regulation, but did not contribute to clarification of roles and responsibilities among different levels of government and strengthening citizen oversight. A review on support from the European Commission (EC) (Particip GmbH, 2012: 58) concludes that effectiveness of assistance was smaller than it could have been because the EC has tended to focus on only selected areas of reform. For instance, support was provided for general decentralization reform policies and strategies, but very limited support was given to subsequent follow up on, for example, expenditure assignments, legislative reforms, and sector reform. In the same line, various studies found that results were best where support for policy reforms involving administrative, political and fiscal dimensions were combined (SDC, 2011; Jütting *et al.*, 2005: 639). In this vein, it can be concluded that donors only have a modest influence on the depth of decentralization, because this is mainly determined by contextual factors of recipient countries, such as politics, historical legacies, and socio-economic aspects (Dickovick, 2014; Particip GmbH, 2012: iv).

In cases that policy reform on paper has been quite effective, another issue raised by evaluations is the lack of capacity of local governments to effectively manage the assigned level of autonomy



and thus to perform their functions adequately or to provide the necessary services (*e.g.*, UNCDF, 2008; UNDP, 2010: 56). In this context, various evaluations argue that support for policy reforms is more effective when it is combined with technical assistance to build up the capacity of national and local governments (SDC, 2011: 4; World Bank, 2008: xiii).

## **Capacity-building**

### **Local government level**

As a result of decentralization, local governments are confronted with an increased amount of often new duties and responsibilities, while capacity is generally low due to the relative infancy of local government administrations. Since weak local administrative capacity and accountabilities hamper the theoretical promises of decentralization and can result in less efficient service delivery and misuse of public resources (Shah, 1998; Litvack & Seddon, 1999; Ahmad *et al.*, 2005), it is necessary to improve the capacity standards at the local level (Chattopadhyay, 2013). In this vein, it is not surprising that most studies consider donor activities directed to capacity-building at the local government level as highly relevant (*e.g.*, World Bank, 2008: 33; Jones *et al.*, 2007: 209). These interventions are not limited to individual skill-building measures only, such as trainings covering local government planning and financial management staff, but also include support to, for instance, organizational management capacity, establishment of linkages with other governmental organizations, and provision of facilities and equipment (OECD-DAC, 2004: 22). Evaluations and studies covering the effectiveness of these interventions demonstrate that results of these interventions are either mixed or inconclusive (*e.g.*, UNCDF, 2008: 75; UNDCF, 2013: 44; NORAD, 2009: 56-57). According to a review of SDC (2011: 4) capacity-building can be successful in cases where it focuses on capacity to act, and in cases where there is intensive and long-term support for applying acquired skills (coaching) and where national training institutions were involved. Furthermore, various studies argue that capacity-building can only be effective when accompanied by appropriate policies; capacity-building by itself will not create autonomous local governments (*e.g.*, Brown, 1996: 12; NORAD, 2008). An evaluation by the OECD-DAC (2004: 10) adds that capacity-building seems to be most successful when accompanied with extra resources to local government activities. An evaluation conducted by the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank provides two explanations for reduced effectiveness of Bank-supported capacity-building interventions in the area of political, administrative and fiscal decentralization (World Bank, 2008: 39). First, capacity issues are often exacerbated due to the proliferation of districts at the local level. As a result, administrative expenditures are increased, weak administrative capacity is compounded and fewer resources are available for service delivery. Even when bank support was provided, reform on these aspects has proven difficult. Second, if capacity-building activities were successful it is not certain that the public sector benefits from improved skill sets from government officials. Since in many developing countries personnel affairs have not been modernized, trained staff, such as accountants and auditors, continues to move to private sector jobs. In the same line, ADB (2010) argues that capacity-building interventions at the individual level have tended to add more value to individuals rather than to the institutions for which they work.

### **Central government level**

While many international donors target activities to the local government level, various studies draw the importance of focusing more on capacity-building directed to the national level, in particular with respect to implementation capacity (UNDP/BMZ, 2000; OECD-DAC, 2004: 23). As a result of the modest efforts made in this area, evaluations pay generally little attention to

empirical results of capacity-building at the central level (World Bank, 2008: 29; Particip GmbH, 2012: iv), and where they do they tend to report limited results. The evaluation on EC support (Particip GmbH, 2012) concludes that while some positive results can be observed in countries where substantial support has been provided to the central level, the overall impact of its support has remained weak, especially in areas such as national monitoring and evaluation systems, or in the development of intergovernmental and interministerial relations (Particip GmbH, 2012: iv). An evaluation by GTZ (2009: 44) concludes that results achieved in the context of strengthening the partner's capacity to act are weakest at the macro level, mainly because this level is very politicized and most development instruments have significantly less potential for influence here than at other levels.

### **Citizen/community empowerment**

Not only government officials and institutions are in need of particular skills and sufficient capacity to make decentralization effective, the same applies to citizens who need skills and capacity to effectively participate in decision-making to voice their needs and preferences (Chattopadhyay, 2013). However, in many countries structures that should facilitate citizen participation are generally weak and citizens often lack the required skills (Mathew & Mathew, 2003: 48). Moreover, as argued by Gaventa (1999: 50): *'citizen participation does not just happen, even when the political space and opportunities emerge for it to do so; developing effective citizenship and building democratic institutions take effort, skill, and attention'*. In addition, as stated by Crook and Sverrisson (1999), effective participation is reinforcing in nature in the sense that once the process is started, it leads to a further increase in the level and scope of participation. Donor interventions in this area aim to empower citizens and improve citizen participation and inclusion, which is of particular relevance to political decentralization. Results in this regard are mixed with some positive and negative outliers (Brinkerhoff & Azfar, 2006: 1; Grant, 2002: 5; Litvack *et al.*, 1998: vi). An evaluation on European Commission support shows that local participation in local government affairs has increased due to its assistance in the area of political and administrative decentralization. Nevertheless, some important limitations remained regarding wider institutional reforms, for example, with respect to local electoral reforms (Particip GmbH, 2012: iii). Mansuri and Rao (2013) argue, based on a review of hundreds of participatory projects, that success of support by the World Bank has been hindered by both flawed program design and implementation and endogenous local factors. These local obstacles may include entrenched interests of political agents, civil bureaucrats, and NGOs, and poverty and illiteracy resulting in few benefits from participatory projects for the poor and illiterate as compared to the wealthier, more educated, and more connected. In the same line, LDI (2013) argues that the variation in results should be understood as result of contextual factors underlying effective participation that can differ by geographical area. In this vein, the dominance of 'local elites' are the most frequently referred barrier to decentralization (Turner & Hulme 1997; Litvack *et al.*, 1998; Charlick, 2001; Devas & Grant, 2003). Decentralized authorities and powers may be 'captured' by local elites, who are presumably affiliated with central politicians. In such a situation, both the central and local governments do not have incentives to transfer their power further down to the community level. As a result, the participation opportunities of the socio-economic disadvantaged are hampered and compromises donor efforts made in this regard (Johnson, 2003; Jütting *et al.*, 2005).

Whereas participation is mainly about processes that make residents feel their opinion is being requested, accountability requires local governments to ensure outcomes that make residents feel that their public service needs are being met (Smoke, 2001: 19). Looking at results in the area of

transparency and accountability, most findings are inconclusive. Although the theoretical debate assumes that transparency and accountability are a logical result of devolved decision-making powers, it appears from the empirical literature this is much more complicated in practice and requires specific institutional constructions and policies (Crook & Manor, 1998; Crook & Sverrisson, 2001). While some positive examples at the micro-level are out there (Cornwall *et al.*, 2000), other studies find that decentralization did not increase accountability (Grindle, 2007; Bräutigam, 2004; De Grauwe *et al.*, 2005) and that donor support has not been able to improve accountability processes (UNDP Evaluation Office, 2010; Particip GmbH, 2012).

### **Reform and construction of local fiscal systems**

Support to fiscal decentralization deserves distinct attention, due to its highly specific technical character. Successful implementation of fiscal decentralization requires local governments to have a strong fiscal system apart from meaningful revenue and spending authority (Bosch *et al.*, 2008). To this end, donors provide support to, for instance, the development of fiscal transfer system, the strengthening or design of local revenue systems, and local government finance commissions. Although most studies note the complexity of the challenges facing fiscal decentralization, various evaluations conclude that support in the area of fiscal decentralization has been particularly effective compared to other areas of support (OECD-DAC, 2004; World Bank, 2008; USAID, 2013). According to an evaluation on EC support, which considers support to fiscal aspects of reform to be ‘commonly a most productive entry point’, this can be explained by the fact that other forms of support often target ‘deeper’ reforms, which are generally more complicated (Particip, GmbH, 2012: 45). In addition, it appears that donors can play a significant role in fiscal decentralization, in particular because it requires specialized knowledge.

### **Local development investment funds**

Over the last decades, local development investment funds, sometimes also called ‘Social Development Fund’ or ‘Social Action Fund’, have been an important tool for contributing directly to community well-being and social cohesion among the poor at the local level (Faust, 2012). Through the financing of projects related to the creation and management of local infrastructure, these funds aim to foster local economic development and improve citizen participation. Results of donor support provided to these funds have been mixed (UNCDF, 2008; OECD-DAC, 2004; World Bank, 2008). Various evaluations report that social funds are particularly useful to improve the effectiveness of capacity-building programs (NORAD, 2008; OECD-DAC, 2004: 10). As reasoned by one of the evaluations, the combination of social funds and capacity building provides local governments with the opportunity to ‘learn by doing’ (Particip GmbH, 2012: 45-46).

However, according to some commentators (*e.g.*, Manor, 2004; Rao & Ibanez, 2003), social investments funds that are set up separately from formal local government structures may weaken local democracy. Brinkerhoff and Azfar (2006: 28) provide the following explanations; social funds inject resources that bypass local governments and thus weakens their effectiveness and legitimacy, the participatory processes that guide the implementation of the projects privilege unelected members of the community and thus undermine elected officials, and because of the overreliance of social funds on donor money these are highly unsustainable. In addition, encouraging citizens to engage in participatory decision-making may limit their role in lobby and advocacy efforts, which in turn may come at the expense of improving democratic accountability.

### 2.2.3. Limitations of existing research

In order to place the foregoing findings in proper perspective, it is important to note that most research and donor commissioned evaluations, both in the area of rule of law and decentralization, suffer from major limitations. It can be argued that this is partly a result of the difficulties involved in measuring results in the area of governance. First of all, it is often hard to determine to what extent various outcomes are caused by an intervention. While this basic methodological issue of attribution is common to evaluation of development assistance generally, it is particularly acute in evaluating governance assistance because of the more qualitative nature of the dependent variable, the multiplicity of donors and programs and the often changing and fluid country and international context (see Green & Kohl, 2007: 163; DFID, 2007: 25). Furthermore, governance interventions often pursue long-term objectives. In this vein, it is often stated that it is too early to assess the impact of an intervention at the time of evaluation (*e.g.*, IDLO, 2008: 22; DFID, 2007: 31).

However, these limitations are also a result of the evaluation methods used and the manner how they are applied to measure results. There are very few rigorous studies<sup>9</sup>, which entail the usage of or semi-experimental methods and are often considered to be useful to establish attribution; the majority of studies uses qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. These qualitative studies often rely, among others, on data collected during project implementation by project managers. However, since M&E systems are weak or non-existent, these data is either absent or has poor quality. This also includes baseline data, which could serve as historical point of reference to measure against. Furthermore evaluators are often not involved until the final implementation stage of the project, which further limits the possibility of systematic measurement of results over time. In addition, document reviews conducted by evaluators are often incomplete, literature reviews are mostly absent, fieldwork is short, and interviews are rarely conducted with final beneficiaries, (see also Ter Horst & Dijkstra, 2014). Other regularly cited challenges include a lack of clear indicators, and time and budget constraints faced by evaluators. As a result of this lacking scientific quality, most evaluations can at most only credibly report on outputs, and can just make speculative casual statements on outcomes, impact or sustainability. Moreover, given the dynamic and complex context, relevance can only be examined *ex ante*. With regards to replicability and reliability of findings, the low number of studies that include interview and observation protocols in their annexes when using these qualitative techniques is remarkable.

A brief review of evaluations of governance interventions in other areas than rule of law and decentralization, for example democratization, and transparency and accountability, suggests that similar conclusions can be drawn on the status quo of evaluation designs and methodologies in these areas. Yet, this started to change in recent years (Bollen *et al.*, 2005; Garcia, 2011; 2013), in particular with regards to election interventions and anti-corruption programs (Garcia, 2013). Nevertheless, various scholars have also been starting to question whether RCT's are particularly useful in the area of governance (see Gisselquist & Niño-Zarazúa, 2013).

## 2.3. Conditions of success and failure

Since research on both rule of law interventions and interventions in the area of decentralization has been limited in terms of magnitude, quality and comparability, it is hard to rigorously identify the determining conditions essential for the effectiveness of these interventions. Nevertheless, as

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<sup>9</sup> Including Chemin (2009); USAID (2014); Lie *et al.* 2006.

stated by Dickovick (2013: 20), answers would become clearer through a larger sample of observed projects. In this vein, it is possible to distill some frequently mentioned conditions conducive to positive results of donor-supported interventions from the comprehensive in-depth review conducted by the author (presented in Appendix 2, 3), which covers existing studies analyzing a range of interventions across various countries. Although some conditions are distinct to interventions either in the area of rule of law or the area of decentralization, some seem to be more generally applicable to the effectiveness of governance interventions. The four most important conditions are discussed below. A detailed overview of all studies outlining these conditions can be found in Appendix 4.

### **2.3.1. Organizational capacity**

First of all, sufficient organizational capacity of local implementing partners to effectively execute donor interventions in a development context is not self-evident (Local Development International, 2013: 16). Hence, many evaluations identify this condition as either the factor of success or barrier towards the effectiveness of interventions (World Bank, 2008: 4; NORAD, 2009: 7). In this regard, tension can occur between local ownership on the one hand and effective and efficient implementation on the other hand (Samuels, 2006: 218). As explained by Mburu (2001: 10), if there is a serious lack of capacity, and inexperienced people are undertaking legal tasks instead of foreign lawyers and judges in order to guarantee local ownership, this can lead to chaos. Therefore, many donor-supported interventions include capacity-building components, which allow local actors to develop the required capacity themselves (AusAID, 2012; USAID, 2011). The issue of organizational capacity of local implementing partners is even more stringent in post-conflict societies. As acknowledged by the literature, it is difficult, if not impossible, to implement comprehensive governance interventions in the early stage of war to peace transitions due to capacity weaknesses in terms of human resources and physical infrastructure (Ball *et al.*, 2007: 23; Samuels, 2006: 6). While various evaluations regard organizational capacity as crucial, it is also argued that organisational capacity alone is not sufficient (OECD-DAC, 2004: 10; Browne, 2013: 2). As stated by AusAID (2012: ix), there may be more immediate factors driving poor institutional performance in the justice sector, including, a dense network of informal institutions and practices overlaying the formal justice system. Hence, it is concluded that increased capacity may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for improvements in service delivery. In the same line Alfram (2011: 4) argues that efforts should not be made to increase the capacity of the judiciary unless such efforts are combined with government commitment to reform and unless it goes hand in hand with efforts to ensure independence, transparency, accountability and adherence to fair trial standards.

### **2.3.2. Political will**

Many studies state that a lack of political will among high level government officials poses a critical barrier to successful outcomes of governance interventions (*e.g.*, Benomar, 2001: 11; DANIDA, 2012: 9; Appendix 4). A common finding is that the political dimensions of reform processes are not sufficiently taken into account by donors and the fact that political power holders need to be prepared to accept the limits to their power that comes with reform processes or the adherence to rule of law or decentralization principles is overlooked (*e.g.*, ADE, 2011: 70; UNCDF, 2008: 77). As argued by Bassu (2008), donors turn the whole exercise too often into a technical issue best left to experts. In addition, as stated by Andrews *et al.* (2012), recipient countries are often 'committed' to improve governance processes for the wrong reasons resulting in 'isomorphic mimicry' not leading to real change (see also DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Andrews

*et al.*, 2012). However, as noted by Stromseth (2007), without a widely shared commitment to the idea of the rule of law, courts are just buildings, judges are just bureaucrats, and constitutions are just pieces of paper. With regards to decentralization, no meaningful decentralization process can take place when there is no political will to accompany centrally devolved responsibilities with sufficient authority and resources at the local level to carry them out; this limits genuine devolution (Ghuman & Singh, 2013; Dickovick, 2014). In addition, political will does not only help to ensure impact but also the sustainability of donor-supported interventions (NORAD, 2008: 52; IMF/The Netherlands, 2005: 34; UNCDF, 2008: 72). Based on the foregoing, it can be argued that a distinction can be made between two forms of political will. First, there needs to be the commitment of the political top to prioritize the issue on the national agenda. Second, the political elite must be willing to reform underlying governance structures, also when this limits their own power; no progress can be made with regards to governance when the government formally prioritizes issues, but existing incentives and power relations remain intact (Gramont, 2014: 24).

Another array of researchers point at the broader concept ‘ownership’ as being a crucial factor for the effectiveness of donor interventions (Browne, 2013; Alffram, 2011). In this vein, many claim that not only government commitment is important but also local buy-in and support from citizens and civil society (Brinkerhoff, 2010; Killick, 1998). However, as stated by Faust (2010) in line with other scholars (*e.g.*, Booth, 2012), whether development efforts are country-owned mainly depends on the orientation of the country’s political leadership – its willingness and ability to articulate a national development vision and take charge, pulling donor efforts into its orbit. This draws the main focus back on the importance of political will.

### 2.3.3. *Context-sensitivity*

Another frequently discussed condition for successful interventions is the extent to which interventions are contextualized to the local situation or designed flexibly enough to adapt to this context (AusAID, 2012: xii; Fritzen, 2007: 23; Appendix 4). This is also known as the ‘one-size policy does not fit all’ argument brought up by various scholars (*e.g.*, Rodrik, 2007; Putzel, 2010; Booth, 2011). With regards to rule of law interventions, it can be considered ineffective to only focus on strengthening the formal justice sector consistent to Western models when informal justice practices are dominant (Alffram, 2011). According to Samuels (2006: 18-19), informal mechanisms should not be overlooked, but should be evaluated, supported, and reformed as part of rule of law reform strategies. Regarding decentralization interventions, mechanisms adopted for popular participation in local decision-making remain ineffective without a participatory political culture (Jütting *et al.*, 2004: 8; Ghuman & Singh 2013). Evaluations of participatory initiatives have shown that in such a situation informal power structures and norms not only determine who is able to attend meetings or to speak up, but also limit the type of issues that are raised and that people even consider possible (Jones *et al.*, 2007: 209). Although donor literature<sup>10</sup> has emphasized the need for local contextualized programs for decades and donors generally recognize the importance of context<sup>11</sup> and flexibility in their policy and project documents,

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<sup>10</sup> *E.g.*, literature by Grindle, Levy, Moore, Rodrik, and Unsworth.

<sup>11</sup> Various elements are considered to be part of context within the literature, including: national political environment (*e.g.*, political party system, political competition, political space, freedom of speech, corruption); historical factors (*e.g.*, democratic traditions, accountability in public sector), socio-economic dimensions (*e.g.*, geographical differences, taxation system), nature and role of civil society (*e.g.*, countervailing power, social capital), rural versus urban areas (*e.g.*, availability of public services, education level), political commitment (*e.g.*, incentives among top-level government officials), procedural arrangements between national and local communities.

current research reveals that donors continue to apply institutional templates that are considered valid anywhere and for all stages of state-building. Furthermore, it is argued that many interventions are not adequately underpinned by local knowledge on governance needs and practices and underlying power relations and dynamics (e.g., Carothers, 2003; Jordhus-Lier *et al.*, 2009; IED-ADB, 2010; UNDEF, 2014). Since these blueprint programs and projects often do not lead to the desired results, Booth (2011) advocates for a shift from ‘best practice’ to ‘best fit’. According to Gramont (2014: 25), the continuing search for magic-bullet solutions that offer simple, targeted interventions to unlock governance progress can be understood as a response to the ever-greater demands on staff and grant recipients to provide measurable short-term results.

#### 2.3.4. Long-term perspective

Furthermore, studies suggest that the application of a long-term perspective is essential for the effectiveness of interventions (USAID, 2012: 47; IEG-WB, 2006: 26; Rakner *et al.*, 2007; UNDP, 2013: 14-19; Appendix 4). As noticed by various researchers (Bassu, 2008: 11; SDC, 2011: 3; Samuels, 2006: 19) a problem in most governance programs is that they seek to have clear-cut results in the short to medium term. However, with respect to justice sector interventions, it is argued that the establishment or restoration of the rule of law is not a product but a process and this should be reflected in the intervention design (Alffram, 2011). The same applies for interventions in the area of decentralization; since decentralization processes involve the reform of legal systems and national institutions steered and controlled by national actors, with their own political agendas, it is argued that successful decentralization may take more than a decade (OECD-DAC, 2004: 9). Annual grant transfers leading to annual project plans are in this context not considered to be particularly helpful in achieving impact (SIDA, 2004: 12). In addition, donors should take into account that it takes some time before tangible results are visible (OECD-DAC, 2004: 51). When it comes to rule of law assistance in post-conflict contexts, which are often marked by a pressing need for efficient local delivery mechanisms, this can pose real challenges; the emphasis on speed and expediency can come into conflict with real and meaningful progress (Jordhus-Lier *et al.*, 2009). In this context, Samuels (2006: 8) argues that the development phase aiming to re-establish a sustainable law and order environment requiring a more long-term strategy must already be planned during and integrated into the crisis management phase directly after the conflict.

Based on the foregoing, four theoretical expectations can be formulated regarding the relationship between each of the four conditions discussed and the outcome variable of the Dutch-supported interventions, which can be found in Table 2.3 below.

**Table 2.3. Hypotheses**

<b>H1:</b> Organizational capacity of local implementing partners positively contributes to the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions
<b>H2:</b> The presence of political will positively contributes to the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions
<b>H3:</b> A context-sensitive design positively contributes to the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions
<b>H4:</b> A long-term perspective deployed by the donor contributes to the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions

## **2.4. Conclusion**

Over the last decades, international donor agencies have increasingly used good governance as a means to development and as objective in itself. Despite the significant increase of donor support to governance interventions at the micro level, empirical evidence on the results is limited. Moreover, existing research and donor-commissioned evaluations lack the scientific quality to make credible statements on its effectiveness. Nevertheless, this chapter has aimed to provide some insight in the empirical evidence in the areas of rule of law and decentralization while taking into account methodological deficiencies. The overall picture that emerges is that the results of governance interventions are inconclusive or mixed at best. The four conditions that can be considered most conducive for the effectiveness of donor-supported interventions include: 1) sufficient organizational capacity of local implementing partners; 2) the presence of political will to address the governance challenge targeted by the intervention; 3) a context-sensitive intervention design; and 4) deployment of a long-term perspective by the donor. This is the point of departure for the remainder of this research that aims to assess the results of Dutch-supported interventions in Rwanda.

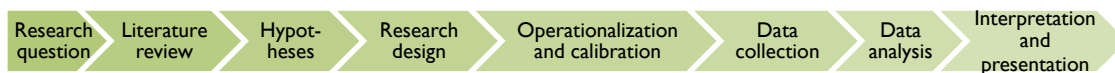


## Chapter 3: Research Design and Methods

*'Thinking without comparison is unthinkable'*  
(Swanson, 1971: 45 in: Rihoux & Ragin, 2009)

As becomes clear from the literature review presented in chapter 2, the measurement of governance outcomes is not an easy task. Hence, in order to avoid tentative conclusions on the relationship between governance interventions and their outcomes, a carefully and cleverly thought out research design is needed. First, the rationale for and explanation of applying Qualitative Comparative Analysis, abbreviated as QCA, in this research is outlined (paragraph 3.1). Second, a motivation is provided why the specific technique 'fuzzy-set' QCA (fsQCA) has been used and its application is elaborated on (paragraph 3.2). Whereas paragraph 3.3 elaborates on the operationalization and the calibration, paragraph 3.4 zooms in on the data collection. Finally paragraph 3.5 elaborates on the data-analysis. The consequences of the choices made for the reliability and validity of this study are discussed throughout the chapter. For the sake of clarity, Figure 3.1 below summarizes the research process in this study.

**Figure 3.1. Flow Chart Research process**



### 3.1. The case for using Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

As explained in the introductory chapter, this study is related to a broader evaluation that is being conducted by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs that assesses the results of Dutch assistance to good governance in developing countries between 2007 and 2013. As a consequence, some of the decisions made with regard to the research design and the methodology deployed in this thesis should be comprehended in the context of this larger evaluation. One of the most important implications is that the case selection has been made in light of this evaluation. As explained in chapter 1 as well, the decision to include Rwanda and to focus on the justice sector and decentralization in this study is mainly driven by its potential relevancy for policy learning and accountability of Dutch policy. Based on these criteria a total number of 13 Dutch-supported governance interventions has been included in the study presented in this thesis. To do justice to the causal complexities that define the implementation of donor-supported governance interventions, this research intends to test hypotheses that allow for the identification of conditions, or combination of conditions that are most conducive towards realizing planned governance outcomes (called 'set-theoretical hypotheses' in QCA terminology).

However, since the number of cases is already specified, the number of methods available to conduct such an analysis is limited. First of all, a physical assignment or exposure of subjects to classical randomized controlled or manipulated treatments is not considered feasible, mainly

because the evaluation has been initiated *ex post* and because of the resource intensiveness of experimental methods (*e.g.*, Barahona, 2010: 10). In addition, both traditional quantitative and qualitative approaches are not deemed specifically useful, since they either focus on analyzing a large number of cases with a small number of variables or on studying a small number of cases with a large number of variables (Ragin, 2000: 23), while the study presented here aims to systematically compare a medium-N of cases across four variables. Applying a quantitative approach to a medium-N study (*e.g.*, 5-50 cases), would result in findings based on too few observations in order to develop an accurate statistical model, whereas employing a completely qualitative approach is not considered feasible with regard to the time available to the researcher and the impossibility to obtain in-depth familiarity with all cases (Ragin, 2008a). To this end, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) originally introduced by Charles Ragin in 1987, offers a solution by bridging quantitative and qualitative analysis; cross-case patterns are qualitatively examined and quantitatively analyzed (Rihoux, 2003). In this vein, Ragin (2007: 69) argues that QCA, or the configurational comparative approach more generally, combines the strengths of within-case and cross-case analysis and is therefore particularly useful for medium-N studies (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012: 10).

One of the core advantages of using QCA in this research is its particular conception of causality (Ragin, 2000). In contrast to more traditional perspectives on causation, causality is considered nonlinear, non-additive, non-probabilistic and any type of permanent causality is rejected (Berg-Schlosser *et al.*, 2009: 17; Ragin, 1987). Furthermore, QCA emphasizes *equifinality*, which simply means that different combinations of causal conditions, or 'paths', are capable of generating the same outcome. This makes QCA a powerful technique for analyzing social phenomena of 'complex causality' (Schneider & Wagemann, 2006: 752) such as donor-supported governance interventions. In order to facilitate the systematic comparative analysis of complex cases, cases must be translated into configurations. A configuration is a specific combination of factors, also called 'conditions' in QCA terminology, that produces a given outcome of interest (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009: xix). Through this approach, QCA allows for the identification of conditions that are 'necessary' and conditions that are 'sufficient' to produce the outcome. Whereas a necessary condition must always be present for an outcome to occur, the presence of a sufficient condition always leads to the outcome of interest. This analysis of necessity and sufficiency enables the researcher to model quite a high level of complexity with only a few conditions. In this vein, Schneider & Wagemann (2007: 41; 2010: 400) argue that QCA's sensitivity to causal complexity gives it an analytic edge over many statistical techniques of data analysis and they consider QCA to be the most systematic instrument to analyze complex causality and logical relations between causal factors and an outcome.

In addition, QCA and its formal tools provide an effective tool for handling the considerable amount of data involved in medium-N case studies (Legewie, 2013: 5). This is helpful both in the analytical process and with regard to the presentation of findings. Furthermore, the systematic and formal approach of QCA increases the transparency and replicability of the analytical processes often obscured within conventional case study methods, which increases the reliability of findings and the persuasiveness of argumentation (George & Bennett, 2005: 70; Berg-Schlosser *et al.*, 2009: 14-15). Whereas single case-studies face major difficulties to engage in any form of generalization, the ultimate goal of QCA to 'construct empirically grounded, theoretically relevant typologies of cases, advancing both general theoretical knowledge and understanding of historically specific diversity of empirical cases' (Ragin, 2003: 11). While it should be noted that this view on generalization is much more modest than statistical inference (Berg-Schlosser *et al.*, 2009: 12), QCA can be considered, through its close dialogue between detailed within-case

analyses and formalized cross-case comparisons, as a powerful tool for the development of cutting-edge mid-range theories (Legewie, 2013: 6).

The logical number of possible causal combinations, also called the multidimensional vector space, is calculated by using the simple formula of  $2^k$ , with  $k$  being the number of causal conditions (Ragin, 2000: 127). Since this research focuses on four potential dichotomous conditions, the property space for this study is  $2^4$ . This means that 16 possible combinations (or 'paths') are to be tested.

### **3.2. Fuzzy-set QCA (fsQCA): Allowing partial membership**

Since 1987, the conventional QCA technique has been further developed and extended. In QCA a case can belong to multiple sets, in which a set is comprised of all cases that display a certain condition (*e.g.*, political commitment). In the original application of QCA a strictly binary Boolean language is used to express the qualitative state of conditions and outcomes and set-membership is thus 'crisp' (1 or 0, i.e. membership or non-membership), therefore this application is also known as 'crisp-set' QCA (csQCA) (Ragin, 1987). In the context of this research this is considered to be problematic since most variables are continuous rather than dichotomous (*e.g.*, there is much in between 'the presence of a governance outcome' and 'the absence of a governance outcome'). The application of csQCA would thus be arbitrary and moreover, it would not allow for an assessment of the effect of the relative strengths of the independent variables (as they can only have two values) (Goldthorpe, 1997: 1-26). Hence, 'fuzzy-set' QCA (fsQCA) (Ragin, 2000) is the preferred method to test the formulated hypotheses in this research. In contrast to csQCA, set-membership in fsQCA is 'fuzzy' (interval scores between 1 and 0): a case can thus be fully in (= 1.0), more in than out, neither in nor out, more out than in, or fully out of a set (= 0.0). Therefore, using a 'fuzzy' method makes it possible to permit the scaling of membership scores and thus allows partial membership (Ragin, 2009: 89).

Based on its in-depth case knowledge the researcher determines the number of levels in fuzzy-sets (Ragin, 2009: 91). The most rudimentary is the three-value-set (Ragin, 2009: 90) that specifies three qualitative breakpoints: full membership (1), full non-membership (0), and the crossover point (0.5). However, as stated by Ragin (2008a: 30) the assignment of membership scores of 0.5 should preferably be avoided for theoretical, practical and technical reasons; in contrast to the scores of full-membership (1.0) and full non-membership (0.0), the crossover point should only be a qualitative threshold. In situations where researchers have a substantial amount of information about cases, and the nature of the evidence is not identical across cases, a four- or six-value scheme is considered more useful (Ragin, 2009: 90). For the purposes of this research, it has been decided to use continuous fuzzy-sets, which are even more fine-grained since they permit cases to take values anywhere in the interval from 0.0 to 1.0. To this end, the three qualitative states of full-membership, non-membership and the crossover point are utilized to transform scores to fuzzy set membership scores. The most important advantage of the specification of these qualitative anchors is that it allows to make a distinction between relevant and irrelevant variation when assigning scores to cases (Ragin, 2009: 92).

### **3.3. Operationalization and calibration of concepts**

In order to assign scores to conditions and outcomes of the Dutch-supported governance interventions in a valid and reliable way, the concepts need to be operationalized first (Kellstedt

& Whitten, 2009: 87; Ragin, 2000). The next step involves the calibration of fuzzy-set membership so that the variables match or conform to external standards (Glaesser & Cooper, 2013; Ragin, 2007). This process, also referred to as ‘fuzzification’, comprises the trajectory of getting from base variable values (also called raw data) to condition or outcome set membership scores. Applications of fsQCA in most areas of the social sciences make use of two different calibration procedures; the method of direct assignment and the method of transformational assignment (Thiem & Duşa, 2013: 51). In this research the method of direct assignment has been employed (as applied in Thiem & Duşa, 2013: 54), which entails that fuzzy-set membership scores are directly arrived at through expert knowledge (Verkuilen, 2005). With this in-depth knowledge the three qualitative anchor points must be specified: full membership (1), full non-membership (0), and the crossover point (0.5) (Ragin, 2009: 90-92)<sup>12</sup>. These three breakpoints are used to transform the original ratio or interval-scale values into fuzzy membership scores with the help of fs/QCA software, using transformations based on the log odds of full membership (Ragin, 2008: 17). Since such benchmarks are almost nonexistent in the existing knowledge base on donor-supported governance interventions, the researcher has to determine set membership based on his or her theoretical and substantive knowledge and subjective assessment (Ragin, 2008a). Since this process is fundamentally interpretive, decisions have to be made transparent. In order to ensure transparency and replicability, this section provides insight in the operationalization of the concepts and the calibration rules of the fuzzy-sets.

### 3.3.1. Outcome Y: Degree of realization of good governance objectives

The outcome of interest is the realization of **good governance outcomes**, which is defined in the context of this research as the degree of realization of planned good governance objectives as formulated by EKN Kigali at outcome level in project documentation and policy documents. Staying true to the definition provided by Rothstein and Teorell (2008) in chapter 2, good governance objectives are targets set with regard to *access* to and *exercise* of authority. It is decided to look at the outcome rather than output level since the implementation of activities – outputs – does not necessarily have a direct relationship with outcomes (see also Kusek & Rist, 2004: 163). Hence, examining outputs only will provide little information about the effectiveness of interventions. Thus because the realization of outputs of a governance intervention does not guarantee any effect on the state of governance in a country, which is the ultimate interest of this study, the outcome level will be central in this study. Furthermore, focusing on the outcome instead of impact level is considered most suitable since most objectives formulated at impact level are related to higher development objectives such as poverty reduction and economic development and are considered to be a result of improvements made in governance (see also chapter 2). In addition, since results at impact level comprise long-term objectives, it is often simply too early to conclude about these results.

This variable is measured through a single indicator; the degree of realization of good governance objectives as formulated at outcome level. The measurement of this indicator is based on a systematic examination of the result chain of each intervention. Given that an overall description of these relationships between policies, activities and objectives was not readily available, the author had to reconstruct a policy theory for each case on the basis of consulted documents, academic and grey literature and own ideas, which has been verified during interviews with policy-makers in The Hague and Kigali. Subsequently, the extent of realization of intended

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<sup>12</sup> In the contrary to the scores of full-membership (1.0) and full non-membership (0.0), the crossover point should only be a qualitative threshold. As stated by Ragin (2008: 30) the assignment of membership scores of 0.5 should be avoided for theoretical, practical and technical reasons.

results has been examined based on existing evaluations, project documentation and academic literature. Based on this assessment scores were assigned ranging from 1 to 6 as outlined in Table 3.1, which was then transferred into a continuous fuzzy-set with the help of fs/QCA software based on the three set thresholds. The threshold for full membership is set at a score of 6, so that cases in which results are fully achieved as planned are ‘fully in’. The crossover threshold is set at a score of 3.5 and indicates cases in which there cannot be spoken of ‘effective’ nor ‘ineffective’ interventions. Full non-membership is indicated when none of the planned results have been achieved and a case has thus received the score 1.

**Table 3.1. Operationalization and Calibration Outcome Y: Good Governance**

Indicator	Operationalization	Sources of evidence
1) Results achieved by Dutch-supported governance interventions	Whether the intended good governance objectives, as formulated at outcome level by EKN Kigali, have been achieved: 6 = results fully achieved as planned ( <i>highly effective</i> ); 5 = most results have been achieved ( <i>effective</i> ); 4 = results have partly been achieved ( <i>moderately effective</i> ); 3 = results have largely not been achieved ( <i>moderately ineffective</i> ); 2 = most results have not been achieved ( <i>ineffective</i> ); 1 = none of the planned results have been achieved ( <i>highly ineffective</i> ).	Realization of planned outcomes
<i>Calibration Thresholds:</i>		
Full membership (score = 6)		→ FS = 1.0
Crossover point (score = 3.5)		→ FS = 3.5
Non-membership (score = 1)		→ FS = 0.0

### 3.3.2. Causal Condition X<sub>1</sub>: Degree of organizational capacity of implementing partners

While **organizational capacity** of local implementing partners and efforts to increase it are often a main target of donor-supported interventions (Armstrong, 2013), strong capacity is generally also considered a crucial condition for the effectiveness of donor interventions (Haily, 2005). Most basically, organizational capacity can be defined as ‘the ability of an organization to fulfill its goals’ (Bryan, 2011). Although attention for the concept has increased in recent years, mainly among academics interested in understanding the variables impacting organizational performance, no universal agreement exists on the various dimensions forming part of the concept (Christensen & Gazley, 2008: 266). However, based on a review of various definitions is possible to distinguish the following components of organizational capacity: 1) human resources; 2) financial management; 3) information technology; 4) knowledge; 5) inter-organizational linkages; and 6) physical and material resources (Lusthaus *et al.*, 2002; Bryan, 2011; Watson, 2006). Because it is not feasible in the context of this research to measure organizational capacity of implementing organizations in Rwanda directly, it has been decided to rely on so-called ‘Checklists for Organizational Capacity Assessments’ (COCA) that are conducted by EKN Kigali. The COCA is a tool used by Dutch embassies to assess organizational capacity of implementing partners with regard to a range of dimensions largely consistent with the aforementioned<sup>13</sup>. When no COCA could be identified, project documentation has been examined in order to retrieve EKN Kigali’s assessment of organizational capacity. An important limitation in this regard is that information for interventions for which a COCA is available is much more systematic and thus more reliable than for interventions without COCA. Hence, it has been decided to include another indicator for which consistent data is available. Since it is

<sup>13</sup> More precisely, the following components are assessed by the COCA: 1) General background; 2) Mission; 3) Strategy; 4) External factors and relations; 5) Outputs/results and impact; 6) Structure and culture; 7) Inputs; 8) Monitoring, evaluation and quality management; and 9) Financial and administrative management.

generally assumed that for an organization to work efficiently and effectively it must first focus on developing its own organization (Kaplan, 2009), it logically follows that newly established organizations have less organizational capacity to implement their core activities than organizations that have been operational for several years (Burger *et al.*, 2014;). While the exact number of years of existence differs of course for each organization, a review of the literature reveals that a minimum of 3 years of existence is generally assumed to be necessary to build up the required capacity to implement tangible results (Fafchamps & Owen, 2009; 26; Khan, 2010: 6; Green & Matthias, 1995)<sup>14</sup>. Therefore a score above average ( $\geq 4$ ) has been assigned to interventions with implementing organization existing 3 years or longer.

Since each of these indicators is scored with a number between 1-6, the highest potential score is 12, and the lowest 2. These scores are in turn transformed into a continuous fuzzy-set according to the calibration thresholds as outlined in the table below. To make sure that only cases belong to the set of organizational capacity, the crossover threshold has been set at 6.5, whereas full membership is indicated by a score of 11 or higher, and full non-membership by the lowest scores on the two indicators (score =  $\leq 2$ ).

**Table 3.2. Operationalization and Calibration Condition X<sub>1</sub>: Organizational Capacity**

Indicator	Weight	Operationalization	Sources of evidence
1) Assessment EKN Kigali	50%	Whether EKN Kigali assesses the organizational capacity of the implementing partner as satisfactory: 6 = Yes, completely; 5 = Yes, mostly; 4 = Yes, more or less; 3 = No, more or less not; 2 = No, mostly not; 1 = No, not at all	Checklist for Organizational Capacity Assessment (COCA)
2) Years of existence	50%	Years of existence of the implementing partner (organization/unit): 6 = > 5 years; 5 = 4 years; 4 = 3 years; 3 = 2 years; 2 = 1 year; 1 = 0 years	Year of establishment of implementing organization/unit
<i>Calibration Thresholds</i>			
Full membership (score = $\geq 11$ )		→ FS = 1.0	
Crossover point (score = 6.5)		→ FS = 0.5	
Non-membership (score = $\leq 2$ )		→ FS = 0.0	

### 3.3.3. Causal Condition X<sub>2</sub>: Degree of political will

**Political will** or **political commitment**<sup>15</sup> is a classic ‘black box’, a cloudy concept habitually invoked in reform *post-mortem* (McCourt, 2003). Hambergren (1998: 12) once characterized it as ‘*the slipperiest concept in the policy lexicon*’ and ‘*never defined except by its absence*’. Political will exhibits a latent quality; apart from some form of action it is not visible and it can only be measured indirectly (Brinkerhoff, 2000: 241). The literature provides various definitions of political will (*e.g.*, Kpundeh, 1998; Post *et al.*, 2010; Brinkerhoff, 2000; Abdulai, 2009). While they all emphasize different aspects, most of them include elements related to credible *intent* and credible *action* to address a certain policy issue. While measuring undertaken action might be quite straightforward, most scholars perceive the examination of intention as important, albeit more challenging (Brinkerhoff, 2000: 249; Post *et al.*, 2010: 659). As stated by Amundsen *et al.* (2005: 7), for

<sup>14</sup> In addition, many multilateral and bilateral donors only accept funding requests from organizations registered for a minimum of three years (see *e.g.*, UNDP, 2013)

<sup>15</sup> The literature highlights that ‘political will’ is frequently equated with ‘political commitment’ and so these terms are used interchangeably.



instance, intention to address a policy issue as expressed in statements, speeches and declarations can well be a rhetorical device only, since it is in the current political arena difficult for any political leader *not* to declare his/her unequivocal personal and governmental commitment to foster certain aspects of good governance. Hence, analyzing intention should go beyond textual analysis of presidential speeches and other public statements.

**Table 3.3. Operationalization and Calibration Condition X<sub>2</sub>: Political Will**

Indicator	Weight	Operationalization	Sources of evidence
1) <i>Locus of initiative</i>	20%	Whether the initiative for addressing the governance challenge comes from the leadership within the GoR and not from an external group that has induced or coerced the GoR to accept or endorse efforts to address the governance challenge: 6 = Yes, completely; 5 = Yes, mostly; 4 = Yes, more or less; 3 = No, more or less not; 2 = No, mostly not; 1 = No, not at all	Institutions; policy-making processes
2) <i>Degree of analytical rigor</i>	20%	Whether the GoR has undertaken an in-depth analysis of the governance challenge and uses that analysis to design a technically adequate and politically feasible strategy to address the issue: 6 = Yes, completely; 5 = Yes, mostly; 4 = Yes, more or less; 3 = No, more or less not; 2 = No, mostly not; 1 = No, not at all	Allocation of analytical resources; Quality of designed strategy
3) <i>Mobilization of support</i>	20%	Whether the GoR has developed a credible vision of success and a strategy that is participative and incorporates the interests of important stakeholders (e.g., stakeholders whose interests are most threatened by particular reforms): 6 = Yes, completely; 5 = Yes, mostly; 4 = Yes, more or less; 3 = No, more or less not; 2 = No, mostly not; 1 = No, not at all	Identification and incorporation of important stakeholders and their interests
4) <i>Application of credible sanctions</i>	20%	Whether the GoR has generally made a credible effort into devising credible and enforceable measures/sanctions - both positive and negative - in support of the good governance objectives promoted by the intervention: 6 = Yes, completely; 5 = Yes, mostly; 4 = Yes, more or less; 3 = No, more or less not; 2 = No, mostly not; 1 = No, not at all	Inclusion of potentially effective sanctions and enforcement mechanisms; Incentives and disincentives for political actors (institutional, electoral, and others)
5) <i>Continuity of effort</i>	20%	Whether the government allocates budget(s) to the intervention: 1 = No budget; 3 = Budget initiated during implementation; 6 = Budget available from the start of implementation	Allocation of budgets; Provision of support over time
<i>Calibration Thresholds</i>			
Full membership (score = $\geq 28$ )		→ FS = 1.0	
Crossover point (score = 17.5)		→ FS = 0.5	
Non-membership (score = $\leq 7$ )		→ FS = 0.0	

For the purposes of this research the definition provided by Brinkerhoff (2000: 242) has been adopted who conceptualizes political will as ‘*the commitment of actors to undertake actions to achieve a set of objectives and to sustain the costs of those actions over time*’. These actors entail elected or appointed leaders and higher government officials. More precisely, according to Brinkerhoff (2000: 242-243), political will can be identified by five characteristics: 1) whether the focus of the agenda is driven by the reformer or imposed on the reformer (*locus of initiative*); 2) the extent of analysis of the situation performed by the reformer (*degree of analytical rigor*); 3) the willingness and ability of

the reformer to raise support for the issue, in particular among the stakeholders whose interests are most threatened by certain reforms (*mobilization of support*); 4) the degree to which the reformer applies sanctions and rewards (*application of credible sanctions*); 5) the level of resources allocated to ongoing support to the issue (*continuity of effort*). This definition is considered to be useful in particular for two reasons. First, this definition, through the separate analysis of these five characteristics, allows for making a distinction between reform intentions that are intentionally superficial and reform efforts based on a real commitment to implement substantive, sustainable change. Second, this conceptual framework finds its empirical base in the experiences of the implementation of democratic governance interventions in developing countries<sup>16</sup>, which makes it a well-grounded definition in the context of this research.

As stated by Brinkerhoff (2000: 243), when using these five characteristics and related indicators of political will, it is of vital importance to treat them as an integrated whole, rather than treat one or another indicator as proxy for the others. Hence, this variable is measured through all the five indicators as illustrated in Table 3.3. Since each indicator is scored with a number between 1-6, the highest potential score for political will is 30, and the lowest 5. These scores are in turn transformed into a continuous fuzzy-set according to the calibration thresholds as outlined in the table below. The crossover point to distinguish the presence from the absence of political will is set at 17.5, meaning that a case must have at least average ratings for all five indicators or above average rating for some indicators. The other two qualitative anchors for this condition are: full membership when the case receives the highest score on most indicators (score =  $\geq 28$ ), and full non-membership when the case receives the lowest scores on most indicators (score =  $\leq 7$ ).

#### 3.3.4. Causal Condition X<sub>3</sub>: Degree of context-sensitivity

The concept **context-sensitivity** as such does not have an established definition (Carothers & Gramont, 2011: 11). However, the term can be linked to a growing debate among academics and practitioners on development assistance in the area of institutional reform, which calls for a shift from a ‘best practice’ approach towards a ‘best fit’ approach (*e.g.*, Booth, 2011; Gramont, 2014; Rodrik, 2008). Whereas preset prescriptions and universally applicable blueprints characterize the best practice model, the best fit model describes aid programs that are optimally *adapted* to the political, social and economic context and ‘work with the grain’ of domestic structures (Ramalingam *et al.*, 2014; Booth, 2011). The core idea shared in this debate is that international donors should stay away from imposing western models, a strategy that has shown to be largely ineffective over the last decades<sup>17</sup>, and should demonstrate larger acknowledgement for the needs of specific developing-country contexts. In response to the best practice approach, various scholars have started to conceptualize alternatives; there have been calls for ‘problem-driven iterative adaptation’ (Andrews *et al.*, 2013), ‘upside down governance’ (Institute for Development Studies, 2010), ‘good enough governance’ (Grindle, 2004), ‘just-enough governance’ (Levy & Fukuyama, 2010), ‘experiential learning’ (Pritchett *et al.*, 2012), and ‘principled incrementalism’ (Knaus, 2011), among others. Whereas programs based on a best fit approach can readily be described conceptually, it has proven rather difficult to operationalize them (Ramalingam *et al.*, 2014: 5). This is largely the result of the limited empirical experience with this approach, since

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<sup>16</sup> More precisely, USAID’s Implementing Policy Change Project (IPC), which has extended over a period of 10 years with interventions in about 40 developing countries world-wide.

<sup>17</sup> As explained in the theoretical framework, this approach tends to result in reform efforts either bouncing off adverse circumstances or ending in superficial measures that appear to comply with best practices but do not lead to real internal change, also known as ‘isomorphic mimicry’.



most development agencies still work based on a best practice perspective (Chambers, 2011). Nevertheless, since much is known and written about what context-sensitivity is *not*, this concept is negatively defined in this research, *i.e.* it is defined by the absence of a best practice approach. To this end, the conceptualization provided by Andrews *et al.* (2013) is considered particularly useful, since it reflects a broad array of literatures and is relatively accurate. According to them, the best practice approach yields interventions that exhibits the following four characteristics: 1) aim to reproduce particular external solutions considered ‘best practice’ in dominant agendas but are unlikely to fit into particular developing country contexts (*driver for action*); 2) through pre-determined linear processes (*planning for action*); 3) that inform tight monitoring of inputs and compliance to ‘the plan’ (*feedback loops*) and 4) are driven from the top down, assuming that implementation largely happens by edict (*plans for scaling up and diffusion of learning*). Interventions that do not comply to these four characteristics are considered to have higher degrees of context-sensitivity (Andrews *et al.*, 2013: 6-7).

For the purposes of this research, the first three indicators have been used to measure the variable context-sensitivity, because these indicators relate to the design of the interventions, while the fourth indicator is mainly concerned with the implementation phase of the intervention. Because the deployed definition is negatively formulated, the items are scored reversely, by scoring ‘Yes’ as 1 and ‘No’ as 6. As outlined in Table 3.4, potential scores for this variable range from 3 to 18 points, which in turn are calibrated into a continuous fuzzy-set. Full membership is calibrated as cases that score high on all indicators and have an overall score of 16 points or higher, full non-membership is reached when a case scores low on all indicators (numerical score  $\leq 5$ ). The crossover threshold is set at 11.5 as this requires above average scores for all indicators, or very high scores for some indicators.

**Table 3.4. Operationalization and Calibration Condition X<sub>3</sub>: Context-Sensitivity**

Indicator	Weight	Operationalization	Sources of evidence
1) <i>Driver for action</i>	33.3%	Whether the intervention design aims to reproduce particular external solutions considered ‘best practice’ in dominant agendas: 6 = No, not at all; 5 = No, mostly not; 4 = No, more or less not; 3 = Yes, more or less; 2 = Yes, mostly; 1 = Yes, completely	Intervention design and intended function
2) <i>Planning for action</i>	33.3%	Whether the intervention design is based on pre-determined linear processes as opposed to built-in flexibility allowing for adaption of design and budget during implementation: 6 = No, not at all; 5 = No, mostly not; 4 = No, more or less not; 3 = Yes, more or less; 2 = Yes, mostly; 1 = Yes, completely	Commonalities and differences between (budget) plan and practice
3) <i>Feedback loops</i>	33.3%	Whether rigid monitoring on inputs delivered, not outcomes obtained, is the norm: 6 = No, not at all; 5 = No, mostly not; 4 = No, more or less not; 3 = Yes, more or less; 2 = Yes, mostly; 1 = Yes, completely	Monitoring and evaluation system
<i>Calibration Thresholds:</i>			
Full membership (score $\geq 16$ )		→ FS = 1.0	
Crossover point (score = 11.5)		→ FS = 0.5	
Non membership (score = $\leq 5$ )		→ FS = 0.0	

### 3.3.5. Causal Condition X<sub>4</sub>: Degree of long-term perspective

Although many studies and evaluations point at the importance of deploying a **long-term perspective** when providing governance reform assistance, they are not always clear about what is precisely meant by such an approach (e.g., Particip GmbH, 2012; SDC, 2011). The number of years of financial and political support provided by the donor is naturally considered to be an important element (e.g., World Bank, 2008: xiv; NORAD, 2009: 34; Alffram, 2011: 36), but is, however, not the only aspect. In this vein, some other elements of a long-term approach as discussed in the literature can be distinguished, including: 1) the existence of a sustainability/exit/mainstream strategy that allows for continuity of the intervention beyond the funding period (OECD-DAC, 2004: 10; ADE, 2011: 48; USAID, 2009: 31); and 2) donor funding based on contracts covering all project activities as opposed to assistance provided based on annual contracts, a mechanism that encourages the realization of short-term tangible and more easily quantifiable results rather than focusing on more complex long-term objectives (e.g., SIDA, 2004: 12). Regarding the number of years that donors provide financial and political support, opinions differ what can be understood by ‘long-term’. According to Bassu (2008: 34), this entails that projects are based on a design with a ten- to twelve-year time horizon and that throughout this period consistent financial and political support is provided. According to an extensive evaluation of European Commission Support to Justice and Security System Reform, a 3-5 year timeframe of engagement is common for many programs, while longer timeframes from 5-8 years are considered more effective (ADE, 2011: 113). The evaluation literature on decentralization demonstrates that successful decentralization processes take more than a decade (OECD-DAC, 2004: 9) and various evaluations on donor support articulate that this should be taken into account when designing support interventions (e.g., GTZ-EU, 2009b: 6; NORAD, 2008: 52). To this end, projects taking 10 or more years are provided the highest score.

**Table 3.5. Operationalization and Calibration Condition X<sub>4</sub>: Long-Term Perspective**

Indicator	Weight	Operationalization	Sources of evidence
1) Duration of donor support	50%	Years of financial and political support provided to the intervention by EKN Kigali: 1 = ≤ 1 years; 2 = 2-3 years; 3 = 4-5 years; 4 = 6-7 years; 5 = 8-9; 6 = ≥10 years	Allocation and duration of financial support
2) Existence of sustainability/ exit/ mainstream strategy	25%	Whether a sustainability/ exit/ mainstream strategy has been timely developed: 6 = Yes, completely; 5 = Yes, mostly; 4 = Yes, more or less; 3 = No, more or less not; 2 = No, mostly not; 1 = No, not at all	Vision beyond funding term
3) Funding mechanism	25%	Whether donor funding is based on a (multi-annual) contract approving funding for all project activities as opposed to contracts requiring annual approval for further funding: 6 = Yes, completely; 5 = Yes, mostly; 4 = Yes, more or less; 3 = No, more or less not; 2 = No, mostly not; 1 = No, not at all	Funding structure
<i>Calibration Thresholds:</i>			
Full membership (score ≥ 22)		→ FS = 1.0	
Crossover point (score = 14.5)		→ FS = 0.5	
Non membership (score = ≤ 6)		→ FS = 0.0	
* In case an intervention comprised two separate funding periods, the years of support provided when closing the activity count (e.g., in case of PACT 1 this is 6 years and in case of PACT 2 this is 10 years).			
** While it may seem that this condition is either present (score = 6) or absent (score = 0), various in-between alternatives are possible, such as contract constructions in which funding is in principle guaranteed for all project activities (generally for multiple years), but exceptions are made in cases of underperformance. Hence, a full six-point Likert scale has been used.			

This condition variable is measured through three indicators provided in Table 3.5. Because the relatively high importance of the number of years of support provided, the weight assigned to this indicator has been doubled. Scores for this variable range between 4 and 24 and are in turn transformed into continuous fuzzy-sets. In order to make a meaningful distinction between cases that belong to the set of interventions with and without long-term perspective, the crossover threshold is set at a score of 14.5, which entails that all indicators have average scores. Full membership is indicated by a score of 22 or higher, full non-membership is indicated by a score of 6 or lower.

### **3.4. Data collection**

In order to assign scores to both the outcome and the four conditions for each of the 13 cases, various sources of evidence have been assessed. In order to increase the reliability and validity levels of the findings, triangulation of data sources has taken place (see Jick, 1979; Denzin, 1978). This section discusses the data sources that were analyzed and combined to avoid a biased analysis.

#### **3.4.1. Desk-study**

A desk-study has been conducted to analyze four sources of evidence, these include 1) project documentation of the Dutch-supported governance interventions under study, which is archived by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in Kigali; 2) independent evaluations of the governance interventions; 3) academic and grey literature; and 4) official policy documents of the Rwandan government. Project documentation typically includes project proposals by project initiators, activity appraisal documents (BEMO) [*BeoordelingsMemorandum*], checklists for organizational capacity assessment (COCA), audit assessments, contracts, annual action plans, monitoring and evaluation reports, financial and narrative reports, closure documentation, and correspondence between donors, project stakeholders and government officials. Independent evaluations commissioned by EKN Kigali that aim to assess the results of Dutch-supported governance interventions are mostly conducted at the end of the funding period; in some cases midterm evaluations have been conducted as well. When no final independent evaluation had been conducted, project documentation has been used to assess whether results have been realized. An important element of the desk-research is the scrutiny of the methodologies used by the evaluations in order to value the strength of the evidence provided. Independent academic research and grey literature have complemented the commissioned evaluations and project documentation. In order to assign scores to the condition variables - political commitment, context-sensitivity, and long-term perspective - project documentation has been assessed in addition to Rwandan policy documents.

#### **3.4.2. Semi-structured interviews**

In addition to the desk-study, semi-structured interviews have been conducted during fieldwork in Kigali, Rwanda in March and July 2014<sup>18</sup> with a total of 41 respondents. Respondents included staff members of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in Kigali, government officials (often (former) project stakeholders), representatives of international donor agencies, representatives of CSOs, and international and Rwandan scholars involved in research related to

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<sup>18</sup> The author of this thesis conducted the field mission in July 2014. A senior-evaluator of the Policy and Operations Evaluations Department (IOB) carried out the fieldwork in March 2014. Information exchange between the researchers took place through detailed notes and write-ups of interviews.

governance in Rwanda (see Appendix 5 for a complete list of respondents). The main objective of the interviews was to increase the researcher's understanding of the socio-economic and political context in which the Dutch-supported governance interventions have been implemented and to enhance insight in the objectives and motivations of Dutch support to governance interventions. Understanding context is crucial to understanding the results of governance interventions since social, political and economic factors can all influence how the causal chain plays out (see also White, 2009: 276-277). Central themes in the interviews were the main governance challenges in Rwanda, the efforts made by and the commitment of the Rwandan government, international donors and the Rwandan civil society to address these challenges, the coordination and implementation of the Dutch supported governance interventions, the extent to which the Dutch-supported interventions fitted the local context, whether a long-term perspective has been employed, and the intended and unintended results of the interventions.

The desk-study complemented with the interviews provided data on the Dutch-supported governance interventions and allowed for both the reconstruction of result chains of the different interventions and the assessment of the results achieved.

### **3.5. Data analysis**

After the scoring of the outcome and four condition variables for all selected cases, the results are processed using fs/QCA data-analysis software (version 2.5) (developed by Ragin, Drass & Davey, 2014). First, membership is calculated of the sixteen possible causal configurations as determined by the multidimensional vector space. Subsequently, the different conditions and configurations are tested for their necessity and sufficiency. In the data-analysis process of fsQCA four concepts are of particular importance and will therefore be discussed in this section.

An important task is the determination of the **'frequency threshold'**, also known as the 'number-of-cases threshold', which means that the researcher selects a threshold of cases needed for a causal combination to be considered relevant (Ragin, 2009: 106-107; Skaaning, 2011: 12). When determining this threshold various factors must be taken into account, including the number of cases under study, the number of conditions, the degree of familiarity of the researcher with each case, and the degree of precision reached in calibrating the fuzzy-sets (Ragin, 2009: 107). Considering that this study includes both a relatively low number of cases and conditions and calibration is based on continuous fuzzy-sets, the threshold is set at one case for each causal configuration (see also Ragin, 2008b: 77-78).

Proceeding to the actual data-analysis, the key set theoretic relation in the study of causal complexity is the **'subset relation'** (Ragin, 2000; Ragin, 2009: 99). The subset relation involves the determination whether a combination of causal conditions (*i.e.* configuration) may be interpreted as sufficient or necessary for the outcome. With fuzzy-sets, a subset can be established when membership scores in one set (*e.g.*, one or a set of conditions) are consistently less than or equal to membership scores in another set (*e.g.*, the outcome) ( $X_i \leq Y_i$ ) (Ragin, 2009: 102). In addition, when other sets of cases have other relevant conditions in common also leading to the same outcome, then these cases constitute a subset of the outcome as well (Ragin, 2009: 99).

When the empirically relevant subset relations have been identified, the degree to which a relation of necessity or sufficiency between a causal condition (or set of conditions) and an outcome is met within a given data set needs to be measured, also known as the **'set-theoretic**

**consistency'** (Ragin, 2009: 108; Ragin, 2006). The formula needed to calculate consistency is as follows (Ragin, 2009: 108-111):

$$\text{For indicating sufficiency: Consistency } (X_i \leq Y_i) = \Sigma(\min(X_i, Y_i)) / \Sigma(X_i)$$

or

$$\text{For indicating necessity: Consistency } (Y_i \leq X_i) = \Sigma(\min(X_i, Y_i)) / \Sigma(Y_i)$$

The consistency measure mimics the notion of significance in statistical models (Thiem, 2010: 6). Values of consistency range from '0' to '1', with '0' entailing no consistency and '1' referring to perfect consistency. The minimum consistency level in this research is set at **0.8** of the cases displaying the outcome, because when the consistency level is set too high, the configuration will become so narrowly defined that its coverage is trivial (Ragin, 2008a: 55).

Besides consistency, the researcher must also examine the '**set-theoretic coverage**'. This entails the assessment of how much of the outcome is covered by the configuration, which basically comprises an examination of the relative empirical weight that is carried by the set-theoretic relation. In other words, coverage can be seen as *'the size of the overlap of [...] two sets relative to the size of the larger set'* (Ragin, 2008a: 57). Again, values range between '0' and '1' (Legewie, 2013). The analogous measure in statistical analysis would be  $R^2$ , the explained variance contribution of a variable (Thiem, 2010: 6). When there are many paths to a particular outcome, the degree of coverage for any of the pathways may be low, despite a potential high consistency which suggests a string-set relation regarding sufficiency between that configuration and the outcome, the pathways not able to explain much of the outcome and is thus not of much interest (Ragin, 2006). Moreover, measuring coverage allows to make a distinction between trivial from non-trivial necessary conditions (Goertz, 2003). It is important to note that the empirical importance of a configuration, expressed by a measure of coverage, is not identical to its theoretical significance (Wagemann & Schneider, 2009: 20). Just as the consistency measure, the coverage measure should always be reported (Wagemann & Schneider, 2010: 19-20), not only because it expresses the adequacy of the analysis, it also assigns weights to different paths of an equifinal solution and thus improves the interpretation of the solution formula. The following formula is used to calculate the overlap of two fuzzy sets (Ragin, 2008a: 57):

$$\text{Overlap} = \Sigma(\min(X_i, Y_i))$$

As becomes clear, this is the same as the numerator in the calculation of fuzzy set-theoretic consistency described above. The measure of fuzzy-set coverage is simply the overlap expressed as a proportion of the sum of the membership scores in the outcome (Y):

$$\text{Coverage } (X_i \leq Y_i) = \Sigma(\min(X_i, Y_i)) / \Sigma(Y_i)$$

The formula for the consistency of  $X_i \leq Y_i$  substitutes  $\Sigma(Y_i)$  for  $\Sigma(X_i)$  in the denominator of the formula for consistency.

The minimum level of coverage depends largely on the number of cases studied (Schneider & Wagemann, 2010: 10). In this study, with a total of 13 cases, the minimum coverage level is set at

**0.7.** Scores that are lower than this number are considered to refer to necessary conditions that are empirically irrelevant (Ragin, 2008a).

After completing these steps, the researcher can proceed with an in-depth analysis of the results going back and forth between the cases and the causal recipes provided. Important to note is that in contrast to conventional cross case studies, the causal recipes are not an end in themselves, but can rather be used as an analytic lens to make sense of the cases studied (Ragin, 2006: 309).

### **3.6. Conclusion**

This chapter aimed to improve the reliability and replicability of this study by outlining the steps and decisions made in this research in a structured and detailed manner (Yin, 2009: 119). In order to enhance the internal validity of this research, the theoretical concepts have been carefully operationalized and a QCA approach, which makes the process of analysis transparent, has been applied. There are a range of limitations to this study, such as the very unique context of Rwanda as being a post-genocide country, the limited time frame (2007-2013), and the reliance on evidence that in some cases is of very low quality. The concluding chapter will assess the external validity of this research in more detail. The following chapter presents and discusses the empirical analysis and results.

## Chapter 4. Analysis and Results

*'Compared to other countries the government of Rwanda has a leading role with respect to donors. In Uganda for instance, the government tries to give direction, but donors have a stronger position there and can come up with their own plans. Here the government is more autonomous and has a more powerful position.'*

- International Scholar, Fieldwork Kigali, July 2014-

This chapter presents the findings of the empirical part of the research. First, the results of the Dutch-supported governance interventions implemented in Rwanda are presented and discussed in order to provide an answer to the sub question: *What are the results - outputs, outcomes, and impact - of Dutch-supported interventions that aim to improve governance in Rwanda?* (paragraph 4.1). Second, the results of the fuzzy-set data analysis are outlined and debated (paragraph 4.2). This part of the chapter aims to answer the sub question: *What causal conditions, and possible configurations account for the results of the Dutch – jointly and fully - funded interventions in Rwanda?* Subsequently, the results are interpreted (paragraph 4.3) and summarized (paragraph 4.4).

### 4.1. Results of Dutch-supported governance interventions

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Dutch-supported governance interventions, the results achieved have been systematically examined against the planned results. To this end, it was necessary to reconstruct the relationship between the activities and the intended results for each of the interventions, also called 'results chain'. Subsequently, it has been examined whether these intended results have been achieved based on evaluations commissioned by EKN Kigali, project documentation, and academic and grey literature. Table 4.1 depicted on the following page summarizes the findings and provides insight in the validity and reliability of these findings as scrutinized by the author. A detailed analysis of each intervention, including reconstructed results chain and justification for the scoring, can be found in Appendix 7. Appendix 6 provides a concise account of the socio-economic, political and institutional context of Rwanda in which the interventions have been implemented. While results achieved at outcome level are of main interest for the purposes of this study, results at output and impact level are also discussed in this section in order to sketch a more complete picture of the realized results and their interrelatedness.

As becomes clear from Table 4.1, almost all interventions either partly or fully realized their planned outputs and the validity and reliability of those findings, which are distilled from evaluations and project documentation, are for all interventions considered to be high. In case of PACT I, which did not achieve most of its planned outputs, this was due to 'too ambitious planning' (EKN Kigali, 2008) and led subsequently to an extension of the project (PACT II). With regard to projects that scored relatively low (LAF I and RALGA I) this has in both cases been explained by the infancy of the organizations (IAG, 2010: 60; SIPU, 2009: 33) and led to project extension as well (LAF II and RALGA II). Sector Budget Support (SBS) to the Justice,



Reconciliation, Law and Order Sector (JRLOS) scored also relatively low on outputs compared to the other interventions. This should be understood as a result of the complexity of this intervention that targets many different institutions within the sector and also included some longer-term objectives (see SOFRECO, 2012). Although all interventions included in this study appear to be successful with regards to the realization of outputs, it should be noted this is not at all self-evident for donor-supported interventions in a development context (e.g. Ramalingam, 2013; Armstrong, 2013). It can be argued that the Rwandan political leadership with its result-driven development approach, also with respect to the management of donor activities (e.g., Division of Labor policy, Aid Policy 2006, mutual accountability frameworks) plays a vital role in this, which also explains why Rwanda is an attractive recipient country for donors looking for ‘success stories’ within development assistance.

**Table 4.I. Scoring Dutch-supported Governance Interventions**

Project	Outputs	V&R*	Outcomes	V&R	Impact	V&R
<b>Justice sector</b>						
Sector Budget Support (SBS) Justice, Reconciliation, Law & Order (JRLOS)	+	High	+	Moderate	+	N.A.
Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) I	-	High	-	Low	?	N.A.
Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) II	+++	High	+	Low	?	N.A.
Support to Gacaca justice (SNJG)	++	High	+	Moderate	+	Poor
Legal Aid Forum (LAF) I	+	High	+	Moderate	?	N.A.
Legal Aid Forum (LAF) II	++	High	+	Moderate	?	N.A.
Rehabilitation of Mpanga prison	+++	High	+	Low	?	
<b>Decentralization</b>						
Community Development Fund (CDF)	++	High	-	Moderate	?	N.A.
Rwanda Local Development Support Fund (RLDSF)	++	High	-	Moderate	?	N.A.
Joint Action Development Forum (JADF)	++	High	--	Low	?	N.A.
VNG national decentralization policy mission	++	High	-	Low	+	Poor
Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) I	+	High	-	Moderate	?	N.A.
Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) II	++	High	-	Moderate	?	N.A.

**\* Validity and Reliability of findings**

**Results (outputs, outcomes, and impact):** +++ = results fully achieved as planned (*highly effective*); ++ = most results have been achieved (*effective*); + = results have partly been achieved (*moderately effective*); - = results have largely not been achieved (*moderately ineffective*); -- = most results have not been achieved (*ineffective*); X = none of the planned results have been achieved (*highly ineffective*); ? = not measured; N.A. = not applicable

With regards to outcomes achieved, it is observed that findings from evaluations commissioned by EKN Kigali become less credible in terms of validity and reliability, which is in some cases also reported by these evaluations. For instance, the evaluation of LAF I states: ‘From a technical perspective, measuring outcomes and impact has been difficult as there is no monitoring plan, no baseline information, nor targets in the Logical Framework Matrix and the indicators of the intervention are not entirely SMART’<sup>19</sup> (IAG, 2010: 29). The evaluation of SBS outlines the main constraints to track effectiveness, including misunderstanding of the exact meaning of ‘indicators’ among different institutions, weak data reporting systems, no baseline, and limited data on Civil Society

<sup>19</sup> SMART = specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.



Organizations (CSOs) and final beneficiaries (SOFRECO, 2012: 42-43). In addition, it is remarkable to observe that none of the capacity-building efforts within the different interventions have been measured in an adequate manner (IAG, 2010; IAG, 2014; SNV, 2012; NUR, 2012; CDP, 2013; SIPU, 2009; RALGA, 2014). Despite this lack of rigorous measurement, outcomes such as ‘improved effectiveness’, ‘proven independence’, and ‘the obvious positive impact of the capacity building activities on the quality local government administration’ are still reported by the evaluations and project documentation, but are thus largely based on speculations by the evaluators. Although it appears plausible that justice becomes more effective in case a judicial sector progresses from two intact courthouses to 40 fully equipped courthouses, as already stated in the theoretical framework, an improved formal justice sector does not automatically lead to improved access to justice for all in developing countries (Baker & Scheye, 2009) or to the establishment of conditions conducive to the eradication of poverty (Golub, 2003: 9). Hence, such statements made without relying on rigorous measurements, should be treated with great caution. To this end, academic and grey literature on Rwanda has been assessed to complement the findings of the evaluations and project documentation and have been taken into account when assigning the scores presented in Table 4.1.

The fact that successful realization of outputs does not automatically lead to the achievement of results at outcome level is an important observation that can also be made based on the findings presented in this chapter. This is particularly apparent with respect to interventions in the area of decentralization. The Common Development Fund (CDF), which later became the Rwanda Local Development Support Fund (RLDSF), provides an illustrative example in this regard. The CDF/RLDSF is a local development fund that aims to contribute to the institutionalization of transparent, accountable, and participatory decision-making at the local government level through the funding of local development projects. The main rationale for EKN Kigali to support these interventions is to foster local democracy. However, the reality differs significantly from this ideal; although local development projects are successfully implemented (outputs), little progress is made with regard to local democratic decision-making (outcomes). A key explanatory factor in this respect is the performance contracting system in Rwanda (*imihigo*), which entails the agreements signed between the president of Rwanda and local government institutions and line ministries with regards to set targets and performance indicators (see also Appendix 6). Because many of the local development projects that are funded by the CDF/RLDSF are included in these performance contracts, local governments have a large incentive to ensure that these projects are effectively implemented. Nevertheless, because local governments are predominantly focused on realizing their *imihigo* targets, little or no capacity and space is left for the facilitation of citizen participation at the local level. In addition, it appears from the literature that despite the decentralization efforts and progress made with respect to transferring competences, the center is still very much in control with regards to local spending (Chemouni, 2014: 252; Gaynor, 2013: 57). As explained by Chemouni (2014: 251-252), the capital block grants, drawn from the CDF/RLDSF, should give the districts a certain financial freedom. However, the leeway of districts to spend resources received from the national budget and local taxes is limited if one looks precisely at how districts are supposed to manage the money for each of their funding sources. Even in the cases that the districts are free in deciding which projects they plan to finance, it happens that the central government intervenes and overrides the district decisions (Chemouni, 2014: 252). Moreover, as a result of *imihigo*, accountability goes upward to the central government instead of downward to the population. Summarized, as a result of a range of contextual factors the outputs realized by this intervention do not lead to the intended outcomes as formulated by EKN Kigali. While this provides some tentative answers why donor-supported

governance interventions do or do not contribute to good governance outcomes, the fsQCA will help to examine this in a much more systematic manner.

With regard to impact, most evaluations do not measure the wider long-term development outcomes of interventions, mainly because it is too early to do so or practically not feasible. The evaluation of the *gacaca* process conducted by the National University of Rwanda (NUR) and financed by the Dutch government is the only one that aims to identify the results at impact level (NUR, 2012). However, the overwhelmingly positive conclusions of this evaluation are by many not considered to be reliable and most external stakeholders were disappointed by the result of this evaluation (Interview scholar, July 2014). This was mainly due to the poor research design, the emphasis on numbers rather than the process, the use of superficial methods and the lack of independence<sup>20</sup>. In this light, a policy officer from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Interview, July 2014) suggests that Rwanda might gain from another, but then fully independent evaluation, but notes at the same time that *'it is maybe still too early'*. The impact reported on the implementation of the JRLS Strategy 2009-2012 that was funded by Dutch SBS, and the impact of the implementation of the decentralization policy of which a Dutch policy mission assisted the development, were both reported to be positive (MINECOFIN, 2012b: 13; MINALOC, 2011: 7-8). Nevertheless, because there are many intervening factors at play, it is almost impossible to attribute progress made with regards to economic development and poverty alleviation to the Dutch-supported interventions. Here the 'attribution problem', already described in the theoretical framework, impedes credible statements to be made on results at impact level.

Summarized, assessing the results of Dutch-supported governance interventions appears to be no sinecure. While an adequate assessment of outcomes and impact provides the most relevant information about the effectiveness of interventions, most evaluations commissioned by EKN Kigali largely focus on outputs achieved and are hardly or not capable of reporting on outcomes and impact in a credible manner. Various reasons underlie this discrepancy; in many cases no baseline study has been conducted, no strong monitoring system is in place, or no agreement exists among the different parties what is precisely understood by the outcome<sup>21</sup>. As stated by staff of EKN Kigali, there is an ongoing tension in this regard between accepting local capacity and adequate accountability of an intervention (EKN Kigali, 2011). Another observation made is that none of the conducted evaluations conducted a review on broader literature on the Rwandan context (*e.g.* political economy or anthropological literature). As will become clear from the fuzzy-set analysis presented in the next section, of which the scoring process has relied extensively on academic literature, such a review can provide important insight in whether interventions are able to make a wider a long-term impact beyond the immediate outputs.

## **4.2. Fuzzy-set data analysis**

This paragraph presents and discusses the fuzzy-set data analysis that aims to identify the conditions or set of conditions conducive for the realization of good governance outcomes by Dutch-supported governance interventions. Table 4.2 provides an overview of the scoring of the outcome and condition variables and their sub indicators for all 13 cases. In turn, Table 4.3

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<sup>20</sup> *E.g.*, the project coordinator (Head of SNJG) has been closely involved during the evaluation, and data and numbers were mainly government-led.

<sup>21</sup> *E.g.*, whether it is the rule of law in its 'thin' or 'thick' conception that the intervention aims to improve.

**Table 4.2. Scoring on Sub Indicators of Outcome and Condition Variables, Dutch-supported Governance Interventions, Rwanda 2007-2013**

Nr.	Project	Out-come				Organiz. capacity						Political will				Context-sensitivity				Long-term perspective		
		1) Realization of objectives	1) Assessment EKN Kigali	2) Years of existence	Total	1) Locus of initiative	2) Analytical rigor	3) Mobilization of support	4) Credibility of sanctions	5) Continuity of effort	Total	1) Driver for action	2) Planning for action	3) Feedback loops	Total	1) Duration of support	2) Sustain. strategy	3) Funding mechanism	Total			
<b>1</b>	<i>Sector Budget Support (SBS) to the Justice, Reconciliation Law and Order Sector (JRLOS)</i>	<b>4</b>	4	6	<b>10</b>	5	4	4	4	6	<b>23</b>	4	4	3	<b>11</b>	3	3	4	<b>13</b>			
<b>2</b>	<i>Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) I</i>	<b>2</b>	3	1	<b>4</b>	5	4	4	4	6	<b>23</b>	1	4	3	<b>8</b>	4	6	6	<b>20</b>			
<b>3</b>	<i>Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) II</i>	<b>4</b>	4	6	<b>10</b>	5	4	4	4	6	<b>23</b>	1	4	3	<b>8</b>	6	6	6	<b>24</b>			
<b>4</b>	<i>Support to Gacaca justice (SNJG)</i>	<b>4</b>	4	4	<b>8</b>	5	4	5	4	6	<b>24</b>	6	4	4	<b>14</b>	5	6	6	<b>22</b>			
<b>5</b>	<i>Legal Aid Forum (LAF) I</i>	<b>4</b>	4	3	<b>7</b>	3	4	4	4	1	<b>16</b>	5	4	3	<b>12</b>	3	3	6	<b>15</b>			
<b>6</b>	<i>Legal Aid Forum (LAF) II</i>	<b>4</b>	5	6	<b>11</b>	4	5	4	4	1	<b>18</b>	5	4	3	<b>12</b>	4	4	6	<b>18</b>			
<b>7</b>	<i>Rehabilitation of Mpanga prison</i>	<b>4</b>	3	6	<b>9</b>	4	4	4	4	6	<b>22</b>	1	4	2	<b>7</b>	2	6	6	<b>16</b>			
<b>8</b>	<i>Community Development Fund (CDF)</i>	<b>3</b>	4	5	<b>9</b>	4	3	2	2	6	<b>17</b>	3	4	3	<b>10</b>	3	4	6	<b>16</b>			
<b>9</b>	<i>Rwanda Local Development Support Fund (RLDSF)</i>	<b>3</b>	5	6	<b>11</b>	4	3	2	2	6	<b>17</b>	3	4	3	<b>10</b>	4	4	6	<b>18</b>			
<b>10</b>	<i>Joint Action Development Forum (JADF)</i>	<b>2</b>	4	1	<b>5</b>	4	3	2	2	6	<b>17</b>	2	4	3	<b>9</b>	3	3	6	<b>14</b>			
<b>11</b>	<i>VNG national decentralization policy mission</i>	<b>3</b>	2	4	<b>6</b>	4	3	2	2	6	<b>17</b>	2	4	2	<b>8</b>	1	6	6	<b>14</b>			
<b>12</b>	<i>Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) I</i>	<b>3</b>	4	5	<b>9</b>	3	3	3	2	1	<b>12</b>	2	4	3	<b>9</b>	2	5	6	<b>15</b>			
<b>13</b>	<i>Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) II</i>	<b>3</b>	4	6	<b>10</b>	3	3	3	2	1	<b>12</b>	2	4	3	<b>9</b>	4	5	6	<b>19</b>			

Source: Constructed by author

**Table 4.3. Scoring on Outcome and Condition Variables, Dutch-supported Governance Interventions, Rwanda 2007-2013**

Nr.	Project	Organiz. capacity I-12	Organiz. capacity FS	Political will 5-30	Political will FS	Context-sensitivity 3-18	Context-sensitivity FS	Long-term persp. 4-24	Long-term persp. FS	Output I-6	Outcome I-6	Outcome FS	Impact I-6
1	Sector Budget Support (SBS) to the Justice, Reconciliation Law and Order Sector (JRLS)	10	<b>0.91</b>	23	<b>0.83</b>	11	<b>0.44</b>	13	<b>0.37</b>	4	4	<b>0.65</b>	4
2	Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) I	4	<b>0.16</b>	23	<b>0.83</b>	8	<b>0.17</b>	20	<b>0.9</b>	3	2	<b>0.14</b>	?
3	Project to assist the Administration of Courts and Tribunals (PACT) II	10	<b>0.91</b>	23	<b>0.83</b>	8	<b>0.17</b>	24	<b>0.98</b>	6	4	<b>0.65</b>	?
4	Support to Gacaca justice (SNJG)	8	<b>0.73</b>	24	<b>0.86</b>	14	<b>0.84</b>	22	<b>0.95</b>	5	4	<b>0.65</b>	4
5	Legal Aid Forum (LAF) I	7	<b>0.58</b>	16	<b>0.39</b>	12	<b>0.58</b>	15	<b>0.55</b>	4	4	<b>0.65</b>	?
6	Legal Aid Forum (LAF) II	11	<b>0.95</b>	18	<b>0.54</b>	12	<b>0.58</b>	18	<b>0.8</b>	5	4	<b>0.65</b>	?
7	Rehabilitation of Mpanga prison	9	<b>0.84</b>	22	<b>0.78</b>	7	<b>0.11</b>	16	<b>0.65</b>	6	4	<b>0.65</b>	?
8	Community Development Fund (CDF)	9	<b>0.84</b>	17	<b>0.46</b>	10	<b>0.33</b>	16	<b>0.65</b>	5	3	<b>0.35</b>	?
9	Rwanda Local Development Support Fund (RLDSF)	11	<b>0.95</b>	17	<b>0.46</b>	10	<b>0.33</b>	18	<b>0.8</b>	5	3	<b>0.35</b>	?
10	Joint Action Development Forum (JADF)	5	<b>0.27</b>	17	<b>0.46</b>	9	<b>0.24</b>	14	<b>0.46</b>	5	2	<b>0.14</b>	?
11	VNG national decentralization policy mission	6	<b>0.42</b>	17	<b>0.46</b>	8	<b>0.17</b>	14	<b>0.46</b>	5	3	<b>0.35</b>	4
12	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) I	9	<b>0.84</b>	12	<b>0.17</b>	9	<b>0.24</b>	15	<b>0.55</b>	4	3	<b>0.35</b>	?
13	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) II	10	<b>0.91</b>	12	<b>0.17</b>	9	<b>0.24</b>	19	<b>0.86</b>	5	3	<b>0.35</b>	?

Source: Constructed by author

summarizes how this raw data is transformed into fuzzy-set membership scores with the help of the fs/QCA software. Again, Appendix 7 provides detailed insight in the scoring process and justification for each of the interventions. The fuzzy-set analysis has been conducted for both the positive outcome ‘good governance realization’ and the negative outcome ‘no good governance realization’. Although the positive outcome is of main interest in this study, the negative outcome and its conditions are examined as well, because this assessment can provide additional support for the positive results (see also Schneider & Wagemann, 2010: 12). This is particularly relevant in cases where results are not clear-cut. Since these two outcomes are not automatically the inverse or complement of each other – also referred to in QCA as ‘asymmetry’ – they need to be derived separate from each other.

In order to conduct a thorough fsQCA analysis the following steps need to be taken (see also Ragin, 2009: 94-111; Legewie, 2013: 15-22): 1) checking for necessity; 2) conducting a truth table analysis (TTA); 3) summarizing findings (by using solution formulas, written statements, xy-plots and/or venn diagrams); 4) assessing set theoretic consistency and coverage; and 5) testing findings against the formulated hypotheses and existing theories.

#### 4.2.1. Analysis of necessity

Before analyzing sufficiency, the researcher must first test what conditions might be necessary to exhibit the outcome of interest. As explained earlier (see Chapter 3), a necessary condition is a condition that must always be present for an outcome to occur, but its presence does not guarantee that occurrence. Such a condition is indicated in fsQCA when membership in the outcome (Y) is consistently less than or equal to membership in the set condition (X). Important elements to consider when examining necessary conditions through fsQCA are thresholds set for consistency and coverage, theoretical reflections on included conditions, and reflections on questions and coding strategies (Legewie, 2013: 19). Processing the data through the fs/QCA software, testing the conditions and their negations for necessity, the results presented in Table 4.4 below were obtained.

**Table 4.4. Results for Necessity for Outcome ‘Good Governance Realization’**

Condition tested	Consistency	Coverage	Condition tested	Consistency	Coverage
<i>X<sub>1</sub>: Organizational capacity</i>	0.99	0.63	<i>~X<sub>1</sub>: Organizational capacity</i>	0.37	0.59
<i>X<sub>2</sub>: Political will</i>	0.88	0.72	<i>~X<sub>2</sub>: Political will</i>	0.64	0.66
<i>X<sub>3</sub>: Context-sensitivity</i>	0.70	0.93	<i>~X<sub>3</sub>: Context-sensitivity</i>	0.83	0.57
<i>X<sub>4</sub>: Long-term approach</i>	0.94	0.62	<i>~X<sub>4</sub>: Long-term approach</i>	0.56	0.83

Note: The symbol (~) displayed in front of each condition indicates its negation

Considering that the consistency threshold for this study has been set at **0.8** and the threshold for coverage at **0.7** (see Chapter 3), it becomes clear from the results displayed in the table that one condition can be considered as necessary for the positive outcome ‘good governance realization’: condition X<sub>2</sub>, political will. The other three conditions – X<sub>1</sub>, organizational capacity, X<sub>3</sub>, context-sensitivity and X<sub>4</sub>, long-term perspective - do not all reach the consistency and coverage thresholds and can therefore not be considered as necessary conditions for the occurrence of a good governance outcome. Finally, as demonstrated in the last column of the table, all the negated conditions do not meet the consistency and coverage thresholds, which is fully in line with theoretical expectations.

When looking at the results for causal necessity for the negative outcome (Table 4.5), it would be

expected that a high score ( $> 0.5$ ) in the negative condition  $\sim X_2$ , political will, would lead to the negative outcome, since this would entail that without political will, no good governance outcome would be possible. However, as demonstrated by Table 4.5, the empirical evidence does not support this set-theoretical relation. Although the thresholds for consistency and coverage are almost reached, a consistency of 0.71 and coverage of 0.87 are not considered to be sufficient to be regarded as necessary condition for the negative outcome. A case that effectively illustrates this finding is the intervention LAF I, which belongs to the set of interventions that led to good governance outcomes, but not to the set of cases of interventions that can count on a high level of political will. The low level of political will can be explained by the fact that legal aid was not yet on the political agenda in Rwanda when the NGO the Legal Aid Forum was initiated. In fact, many activities of LAF aim to create political will for the institutionalization of legal aid to increase access to justice. Since this condition qualifies as necessary only for the positive outcome ‘good governance realization’, a more suitable label for this condition would be ‘quasi-necessary’.

**Table 4.5. Results for Necessity for Outcome ‘No Good Governance Realization’**

Condition tested	Consistency	Coverage	Condition tested	Consistency	Coverage
$\sim X_1$ : Organizational capacity	0.51	0.98	$X_1$ : Organizational capacity	0.79	0.60
$\sim X_2$ : Political will	0.71	0.87	$X_2$ : Political will	0.72	0.71
$\sim X_3$ : Context-sensitivity	0.95	0.79	$X_3$ : Context-sensitivity	0.48	0.77
$\sim X_4$ : Long-term approach	0.51	0.91	$X_4$ : Long-term approach	0.90	0.67

Note: The symbol ( $\sim$ ) displayed in front of each condition indicates its negation

The absence of context-sensitivity ( $\sim X_3$ ) can be considered a necessary condition for the absence of good governance outcomes, based on a consistency of 0.95 and coverage of 0.79. As such, this finding contradicts the earlier analysis that the presence of context-sensitivity is not necessary for the positive outcome to occur. The two other negative conditions -  $\sim X_1$ , organizational capacity, and  $\sim X_3$ , long-term perspective – do both not reach the set thresholds for consistency and coverage and can thus not be considered necessary conditions for the absence of the outcome. This is in line with the earlier results on necessity for the positive outcome.

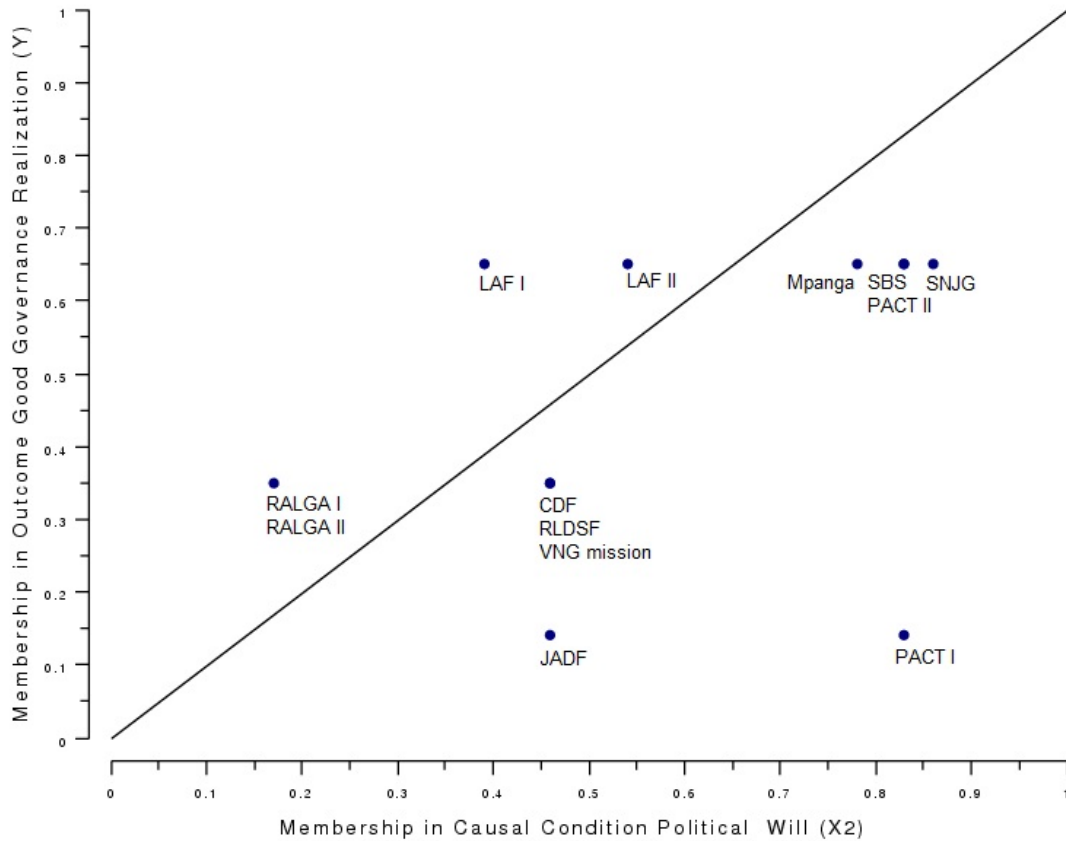
Set theoretical relations can also be visualized, for instance through the construction of venn diagrams and xy-plots. Figure 4.1 provides a xy-plot of the set-theoretical relation of the causal condition political will and the outcome good governance realization. This xy-plot demonstrates the ‘quasi-necessary’ relationship between the causal condition and the outcome. When all or almost all cases fall above the main diagonal (not to be confused with a regression line), this indicates a sufficient relation; if all or almost all cases fall below the main diagonal, this suggests a relation of necessity (Legewie, 2013: 17). The xy-plot thus suggests that while the condition political will is quasi-necessary, it is by far not (quasi-) sufficient for the outcome to occur.

Summarized, based on the necessity results, it might be expected that political will is mostly present in cases with good governance outcomes, and context-sensitivity is mostly absent in cases without good governance outcomes. These findings are in line with most cases of QCA studies in that conditions or combinations of conditions are often ‘quasi-necessary’; causal relation holds in a great majority of cases, but some cases deviate from this pattern (Legewie, 2013: 11). A logical implication of a condition that is necessary for an outcome would be that its negation



must be sufficient<sup>22</sup> for the negation of the outcome. However, this cannot yet be concluded based on the necessity results. Hence, the following step is to test for sufficiency of the sixteen potential causal configurations, as determined by the vector property space.

**Figure 4.1. XY-Plot of Political Will and Good Governance Realization**



(Source: constructed by author with fs/QCA 2.5)

#### 4.2.2. Truth Table Analysis (TTA)

The next step involves the assessment of sufficient conditions or combinations of conditions (also called causal ‘paths’ or ‘recipes’). As noted earlier, a condition is considered sufficient if the outcome always occurs when the condition is present. In order to assess sufficiency a truth table analysis (TTA) is conducted, which is the core element of the formal data analysis and gives an indication of cases that are identical at an analytical level and of the phenomenon of limited diversity (Schneider & Wagemann, 2010: 19). The TTA comprises two distinct steps. First, a ‘truth table’ is constructed<sup>23</sup> based on the fuzzy-set membership scores assigned for each condition and the outcome of the cases. Second, ‘logical minimization’ takes place, which entails that Boolean algebra is applied with the help of the fs/QCA software to identify combinations of conditions that are sufficient for the outcome.

<sup>22</sup> Or ‘quasi-sufficient’ in case of the causal condition political will, because it is a quasi-necessary for the positive outcome.

<sup>23</sup> There are two algorithms that are used in fsQCA: the ‘inclusion’ algorithm and the ‘truth table’ algorithm. Originally, the inclusion algorithm has been default in fsQCA, whereas the truth table algorithm has been standard within csQCA. However, since the truth table algorithm has proven to be more robust and also applicable within fsQCA, the inclusion algorithm is overhauled (see also Ragin, 2008b; Ragin, 2009: 88). Therefore, the truth table algorithm has been applied in this study.

#### 4.2.2.1. Construction of the truth table for the outcome ‘Good Governance Realization’

The fuzzy-set truth table represents the multidimensional vector space with the number of corners determined by the earlier mentioned formula of  $2^k$ , with  $k$  being the number of causal conditions ( $2^k (X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4) = 16$ ). In turn, each corner indicates a specific combination of conditions, displayed by a separate row in the truth table (Ragin, 2008: 124-135). The Dutch-supported governance interventions can be members or not members of these different sets, based on their specific characteristics. Table 4.6 displays the truth table constructed for the outcome ‘good governance realization’ (GG) and the four conditions organizational capacity (OC), political will (PW), context-sensitivity (CS), and long-term perspective (LT). Each intervention’s membership in the respective conjunction of conditions is given in brackets. The column with consistency scores indicates the extent to which the fuzzy-set values for a conjunction are sufficient for the outcome good governance realization across all cases.

**Table 4.6. Truth Table for Outcome ‘Good Governance Realization’**

Row	OC	PW	CS	LT	GG	Consistency	N	Cases
1	1	0	0	1	0	0.75	4	RALGA I (.55); RALGA II (.76); CDF (.54); RLDSF (.54)
2	1	1	1	1	1	0.95	2	SNJG (.73); LAF II (.54)
3	1	1	0	1	1	0.87	2	PACT II (.83); MPANGA (.65)
4	0	0	0	0	0	0.76	2	VNG (.54); JADF (.54)
5	1	1	0	0	1	0.94	1	SBS JRLOS (.56)
6	1	0	1	1	1	0.96	1	LAF I (.55)
7	0	1	0	1	0	0.64	1	PACT I (.83)
8	1	1	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
9	1	0	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
10	1	0	0	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
11	0	1	1	1	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
12	0	1	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
13	0	1	0	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
14	0	0	1	1	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
15	0	0	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
16	0	0	0	1	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None

OC: Organizational Capacity ( $X_1$ ); PW: Political Will ( $X_2$ ); CS: Context-Sensitivity ( $X_3$ ); LT: Long-Term Perspective ( $X_4$ ); GG: Good Governance Realization ( $Y$ ); ‘N’ denotes the number of cases with greater than 0.5 membership in that corner of the vector space.

Considering that the frequency-threshold was set at one case per possible causal configuration, seven configurations are particularly relevant for the analysis (rows 1 to 7 in Table 4.6). As demonstrated by the truth table, nine causal pathways are left uncovered by the empirical data (configurations 8 to 16 in Table 4.6), which are considered to be ‘logical remainders’ (Rihoux & De Meur, 2009: 59). This implies that the number of possible logical combinations of conditions largely exceeds the number of empirically observed cases, also known as the ‘limited diversity problem’ (Berg-Schlusser & De Meur, 2009: 27). A key strength of the QCA technique is that, through the use of the truth table, the absent causal configurations can be considered as possible counterfactual cases in an explicit and systematic manner, although this is not a compulsory procedure (Ragin, 2008: 50). In this vein, the researcher faces two options with respect to handling the logical remainders: 1) including all the non-observed cases without evaluating their plausibility (Rihoux & De Meur, 2009: 59); and 2) treating the logical remainders as false and evading their usage by simply leaving them out of the analysis (Rihoux & De Meur, 2009: 57). Whereas the first option derives ‘parsimonious’ solutions, the latter one derives ‘complex’ solutions. Apart from these tools for deriving the two endpoints of the complexity/ parsimony continuum, QCA provides also an approach to derive ‘intermediate’ solutions by including those



logical remainders that are considered most plausible<sup>24</sup> (Ragin, 2008: 51-52). While these intermediate solutions constitute *subsets* of the most parsimonious solution, they constitute *supersets* of the solution allowing maximum complexity. Since this approach balances the two extremes, this approach is favored by most social scientists (Ragin & Sonnett, 2005: 11), and is also central in the analysis presented in this chapter.

#### 4.2.2.2. Logical minimization for the outcome ‘Good Governance Realization’

The following step of the analysis involves ‘logical minimization’, which entails that Boolean algebra is applied with the help of the software to identify combinations of conditions that are sufficient for the realization of good governance outcomes. In order to do so, the consistency must be examined in order to ensure that the causal combinations highlighted by the truth table are in fact subsets of the outcome. Taking into account that the threshold for consistency is set at **0.80**, only four causal configurations can enter the analysis (row 2-3 and 5-6 in Table 4.6). As acknowledged by Ragin (2009: 118), instances of the outcome may also be included in rows with low consistency and he suggests to treat these as contradictory configurations. However, a careful assessment of the truth table reveals that no contradictory cases are present<sup>25</sup>, which entails that all cases exhibiting the outcome are included in rows with a consistency higher than 0.8. In order to derive the intermediate solution the researcher should specify how logical remainders ought to be treated during the minimization procedure, based on explicit assumptions about the circumstances – presence, absence, or unclear – in which each causal condition should theoretically contribute to the outcome (Ragin, 2008b: 52). Since the four conditions included in this study – organizational capacity, political will, context-sensitivity, and a long-term perspective – are all expected to positively contribute to the realization of good governance objectives based on the existing theoretical knowledge base (see Chapter 2), this assumption is articulated during the minimization procedure conducted with the help of the fs/QCA software. Hence, all logical remainders are selected and included in the analysis based on these assumptions.

**Table 4.7. Solution Terms for Outcome ‘Good Governance Realization’**

Path	Conjunction	Relation	Consistency	Raw coverage	Unique coverage
<i>(Quasi-) necessary condition</i>					
	PW	← GG	0.88	0.72	-
<i>Parsimonious solution</i>			0.83	0.94	
(1)	CS		0.93	0.70	0.06
	+	→ GG			
(2)	OC*PW		0.84	0.88	0.24
<i>Intermediate solution</i>			0.85	0.93	-
(1)	PW*OC		0.84	0.88	0.26
	+	→ GG			
(2)	LT*CS*OC		0.95	0.68	0.06
<i>Complex solution</i>			0.87	0.92	-
(1)	PW*OC*~CS		0.86	0.76	0.24
	+	→ GG			
(2)	LT*CS*OC		0.95	0.68	0.16

Note: Tilde (~) specifies the negation/absence of the condition, multiplication (\*) indicates logical ‘AND’, addition (+) represents a logical ‘OR’, (←) indicates a necessary condition, and (→) indicates sufficient conjunctions.

<sup>24</sup> The degree of plausibility depends on the state of the relevant theoretical and substantive knowledge concerning the connection between particular conditions and the outcome (Ragin, 2008b: 51).

<sup>25</sup> More precisely, row 1 (0.75), 4 (0.76) and 7 (0.64) have a consistency below 0.8. All cases included in these rows (RALGA I, RALGA II, CDF, RLDSF, VNG, JADF, and PACT I) are not members of the set interventions exhibiting good governance outcomes.

Table 4.7 displays the minimization results and includes each of the three solutions and their constituent conjunctions of conditions that are sufficient for the outcome good governance realization. Furthermore, the earlier identified semi-necessary condition X<sub>1</sub>, political will (PW), is listed. The numbered pathways on the left hand side provide various routes toward the outcome. The consistency and coverage scores in the columns on the right are listed by solution and for each respective path. Whereas *raw coverage* indicates ‘how much’ of the outcome can be explained by a path, *unique coverage* indicates the specific explanatory contribution of a particular path by discounting empirical overlap between various paths (Mello, 2014).

It follows from the results presented in the table above that there are two valid intermediate solutions towards the outcome ‘good governance realization’. In fuzzy-set notation this can be written as:

$$(PW*OC) + (LT*CS*OC) \rightarrow Y$$

where, in Boolean notation, multiplication (\*) indicates logical ‘AND’, addition (+) represents a logical ‘OR’, and (→) indicates sufficient conjunctions.

In plain English, these solution terms would read as ‘the presence of political will along with the presence of organizational capacity *or* the presence of a long-term perspective along with context-sensitivity and organizational capacity are sufficient for the outcome to occur’. As argued by Ragin (2008b: 52) the relative viability of these two intermediate solutions depends on the plausibility of the counterfactuals that have been incorporated into them. In this vein, he recommends to derive an optimal intermediate solution by permitting only the incorporation of ‘easy’ counterfactuals (*i.e.* causal paths which can be logically simplified) (Ragin & Sonnett, 2005: 11). More precisely, this entails that an optimal intermediate solution can be obtained by removing individual causal conditions that are inconsistent with existing knowledge from combinations in the complex solution  $((PW*OC*\sim CON) + (OG*CS*LT) \rightarrow Y)$ , while maintaining the subset relation with the most parsimonious solution  $((CS) + (OC*PW) \rightarrow Y)$  (Ragin & Sonnett, 2005: 18). Since  $(PW*OC)$  and  $(LT*CS*OC)$  can only together be considered a superset of the complex solution and a subset of the parsimonious solution, it is concluded that this two-path solution term is the optimal intermediate solution. Since the solution consistency is 0.85 and coverage is 0.94., the solution reaches both the threshold for consistency and coverage.

Whereas theoretical reflections on the findings will be provided later, some observations with respect to the two configurations that comprise the optimal intermediate solution are well-placed here. First, it appears from Table 4.7 that the raw and unique coverage scores for the first solution term  $(PW*OC)$  are far higher than those for the second solution  $(LT*CS*OC)$ . Whereas raw coverage for the former scores 0.88 and unique coverage 0.26, raw and unique coverage for the latter is 0.68 and 0.06 respectively. This entails that the first solution term is of larger empirical relevance and has a much larger explanatory power with respect to the outcome than the second solution term. These findings are confirmed by an assessment of the consistency and coverage scores of the individual solution terms. As demonstrated by Table 4.8, the first solution term reaches the consistency and coverage thresholds on its own with a consistency of 0.84 and coverage of 0.88, whereas the second solution term does not reach them based on a consistency

of 0.68 and coverage of 0.95. However, the two solution terms together account for an even larger part of the empirical data and therefore constitute the optimal intermediate solution.

**Table 4.8. Results for Consistency and Coverage for Individual Solution Terms**

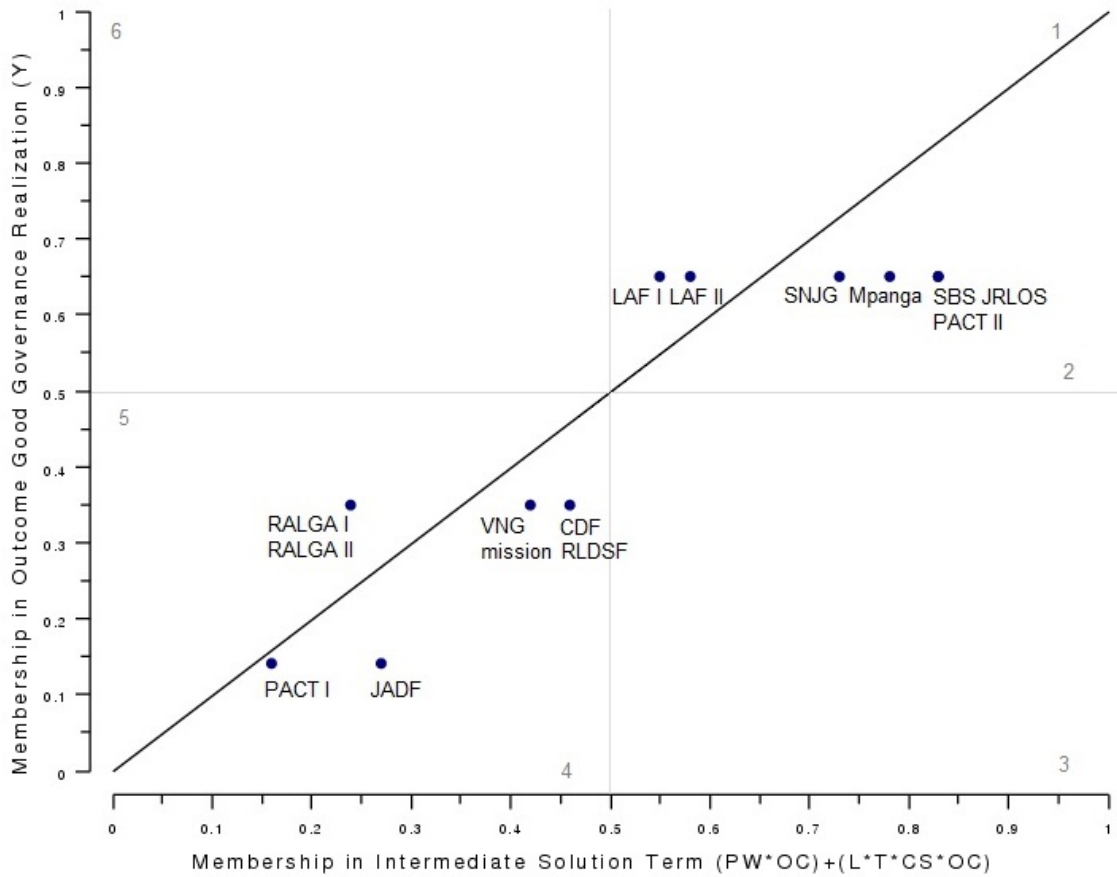
<b>Solution term</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Coverage</b>
PW*OC	0.84	0.88
LT*CS*OC	0.68	0.95

As stated earlier, political will is a semi-necessary condition, which entails that political will is mostly present in cases with good governance outcomes. Because political will is part of the first conjunction, it is found that the ‘exceptional’ cases in this study (*i.e.* cases in which political will is absent) can be explained by the second solution term. In this vein, political will may be considered a semi-NESS condition, which stands for ‘necessary element of a sufficient set’ condition (Wright 1988: 1019). The other conditions - X<sub>1</sub>, organizational capacity, X<sub>3</sub>, context-sensitivity, and X<sub>4</sub>, long-term perspective - can be considered to be INUS conditions, which stands for ‘insufficient but non-redundant part of a condition which is itself unnecessary but sufficient for the occurrence of the effect’ (Mackie, 1980: 62).

Since the solution terms are rather abstract by themselves, it is considered valuable to construct a xy-plot that positions all cases based on their membership in the solution term against membership in the outcome (see also Schneider & Wagemann, 2010; Schneider & Grofman, 2006). Such visualization provides more detailed insight on the case distribution and the overall fit of the tested model. Figure 4.2 indicates that the fit of the intermediate solution term is sufficient for the realization of good governance outcomes. The diagonal represents those points that hold equal membership in both the outcome and condition set. In addition, and what can be regarded as even more relevant, it separates cases with a higher value in the outcome than in the solution (above the line) from the cases where membership in the solution exceeds that of the outcome (below the line) (Ragin, 2008: 60; Legewie, 2013: 9). With respect to set-theoretic relations it is of vital importance to make a distinction between cases that hold membership in a particular set ( $X_i > 0.50$ ) and cases that are located outside this given set ( $X_i < 0.50$ ) (Mello, 2014: 129-130). Schneider & Rolfing (2013: 21) go one step further and advocate for the construction of an ‘enhanced’ xy-plot through adding a horizontal line and vertical line that run through the qualitative anchors of 0.5 for X and Y. As a result the xy-plot comprises six zones (or areas or cells) with their own theoretical relevance.

The xy-plot demonstrates visually that the intermediate solution accounts for all interventions that realized good governance outcomes. All of the six Dutch-supported interventions that contributed to good governance in Rwanda hold membership in the solution term (zones 1-2), two of which can be regarded ‘typical cases’ (zone 1); LAF I and LAF II. Although the interventions SNJG, Mpanga, SBS JRLS, and PACT II cannot be considered typical cases in strict terms due to their position below the main diagonal (zone 2), they do hold membership in the solution and exhibit the expected outcome. Since zones 3 and 6 do not comprise any cases, no deviant cases were included in the study. Finally, because interventions in the lower left corner hold low membership values in both the outcome and the solution (zone 4 and 5), these can be regarded largely irrelevant for the theoretical argument.

**Figure 4.2. Enhanced XY-Plot of Solution Term and Outcome ‘Good Governance Realization’**



(Source: constructed by author with fs/QCA 2.5)

**4.2.2.3. Construction of the truth table for the outcome ‘No Good Governance Realization’**

Which conditions hindered governance interventions realizing their planned objectives? A fuzzy-set analysis of the negative outcome will reveal whether theoretical expectations are confirmed by empirical observations. To this end, Table 4.9 provides the truth table for the outcome ‘no good governance realization’. At first glance it seems that this table is identical to the scores for the positive outcome, yet what differs are the consistency scores for each causal path since the assessment is now directed at the non-outcome.

**Table 4.9. Truth Table for Outcome ‘No Good Governance Realization’**

Row	OC	PW	CS	LT	~GG	Consistency	N	Cases
1	1	0	0	1	1	0.95	4	RALGA I (.55); RALGA II (.76); CDF (.54); RLDSF (.54)
2	1	1	1	1	1	0.84	2	SNJG (.73); LAF II (.54)
3	1	1	0	1	1	0.82	2	PACT II (.83); MPANGA (.65)
4	0	0	0	0	1	0.97	2	VNG (.54); JADF (.54)
5	1	1	0	0	1	0.92	1	SBS JRLOS (.56)
6	1	0	1	1	1	0.91	1	LAF I (.55)
7	0	1	0	1	1	0.99	1	PACT I (.83)
8	1	1	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
9	1	0	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
10	1	0	0	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
11	0	1	1	1	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
12	0	1	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
13	0	1	0	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
14	0	0	1	1	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
15	0	0	1	0	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None
16	0	0	0	1	Logical remainder	N.A.	0	None

OC: Organizational Capacity (X<sub>1</sub>); PW: Political Will (X<sub>2</sub>); CS: Context-Sensitivity (X<sub>3</sub>); LT: Long-Term Perspective (X<sub>4</sub>); GG: Good Governance Realization (Y); 'N' denotes the number of cases with greater than 0.5 membership in that corner of the vector space.

#### 4.2.2.4. Logical minimization for the outcome ‘No Good Governance Realization’

During the second step of the analysis, the truth table is simplified by removing the logical remainders to then arrive at the intermediate solution terms with a consistency of more than 0.8. Due to the inclusion of seven rows (rows 1-7 in Table 4.9), a fair amount of complexity remains after conducting this procedure, even to such an extent that no solution term can be reported more parsimonious than the complex and intermediate solution<sup>26</sup>. Table 4.10 provides an overview of the solution terms and their constituent paths toward the outcome ‘no good governance realization’. Moreover, the identified necessary negated condition X<sub>3</sub>, context-sensitivity (~CS), is displayed.

**Table 4.10. Solution Terms for Outcome ‘No Good Governance Realization’**

Path	Conjunction	Relation	Consistency	Raw coverage	Unique coverage
<i>Necessary condition</i>					
	~CS	← ~GG	0.95	0.79	-
<i>Parsimonious solution</i>			0.83	0.94	
(1)	OC*LT		0.71	0.77	0.20
	+				
(2)	OC*PW*~CS		0.77	0.57	0.00
	+	→ ~GG			
(3)	PW*~CS*LT		0.84	0.70	0.09
	+				
(4)	~OC*~PW*~CS*~LT		0.97	0.33	0.02
<i>Intermediate solution</i>			0.72	0.92	-
(1)	LT*OC		0.71	0.77	0.20
	+				
(2)	LT*~CS*PW		0.84	0.70	0.09
	+	→ ~GG			
(3)	~CS*PW*OC		0.77	0.57	0.00
	+				

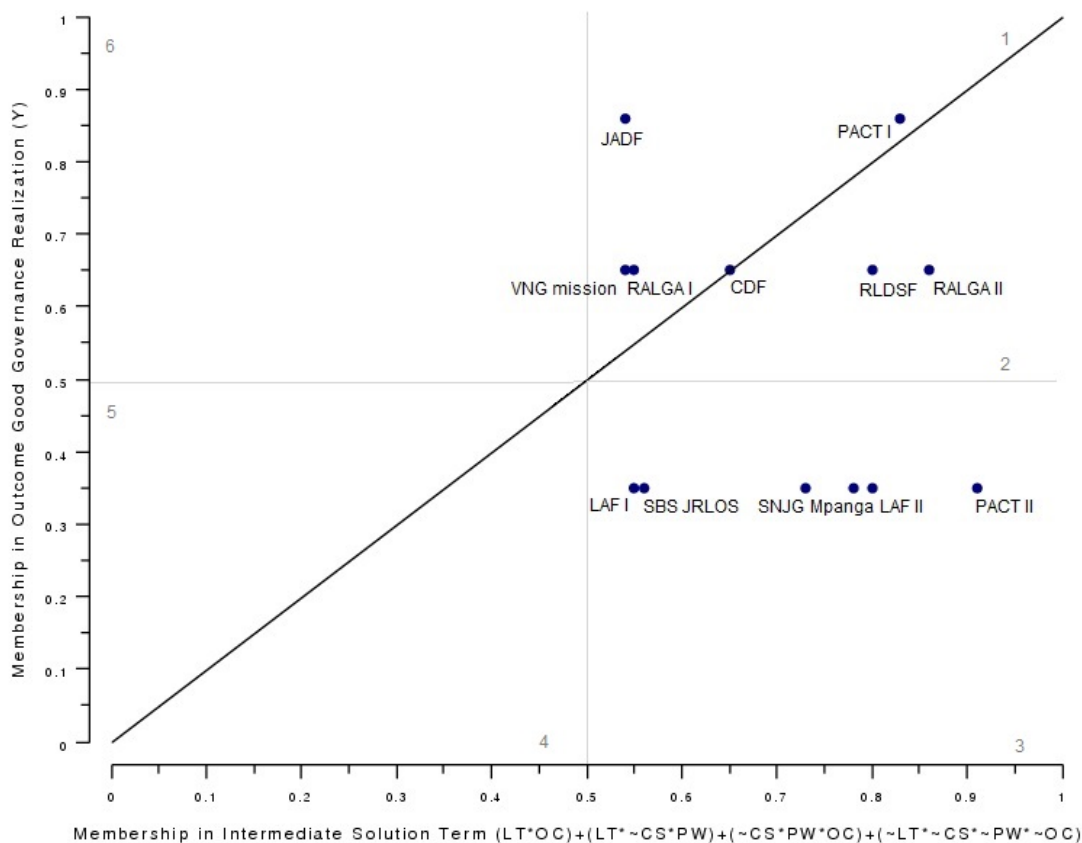
<sup>26</sup> The outcome for the parsimonious solution term is the message that ‘the 1 matrix contains all configurations’. We can interpret this as that the complex solution is equal to the parsimonious solution (see Opdenakker, 2012: 169).

(4)	$\sim LT^* \sim CS^* \sim PW^* \sim OC$	0.97	0.33	0.02
<b>Complex solution</b>		<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>-</b>
(1)	$OC^*LT$	0.71	0.77	0.20
	+			
(2)	$OC^*PW^* \sim CS$	0.77	0.57	0.00
	+			
(3)	$PW^* \sim CS^*LT$	0.84	0.70	0.09
	+			
(4)	$\sim OC^* \sim PW^* \sim CS^* \sim LT$	0.97	0.33	0.02

Note: Tilde ( $\sim$ ) specifies the negation/absence of the condition, multiplication ( $*$ ) indicates logical 'AND', addition (+) represents a logical 'OR', ( $\leftarrow$ ) indicates a necessary condition, and ( $\rightarrow$ ) indicates sufficient conjunctions.

It becomes clear that the intermediate solution term is as follows:  $(LT^*OC) + (LT^*\sim CS^*PW) + (\sim CS^*PW^*OC) + (\sim LT^*\sim CS^*\sim PW^*\sim OC) \rightarrow Y$ . This solution has a consistency of 0.72 and coverage of 0.92. As such the solution is sufficient for the outcome 'no good governance realization', but is not backed adequately by the empirical patterns in the data. This finding is illustrated by the xy-plot in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3. Enhanced XY-Plot of Solution Term and Outcome 'No Good Governance Realization'**



(Source: constructed by author with fs/QCA 2.5)

The xy-plot visualizes the membership in the intermediate solution term against membership in the outcome and is again divided into six alternate zones. As such, the xy-plot demonstrates the empirical fit of the solution for the negative outcome. What is apparent is that a large number of cases is clustered in zone 3, which are 'deviant cases in kind'. More precisely, six of ten cases are members of the term of interest but are not good empirical instances for the outcome 'no

good governance realization'. Applying the idea of ideal-typical deviant cases in kind and following the idea of maximum difference (see Schneider & Rohlfing, 2013: 29), PACT II is considered the most puzzling case with a membership of 0.35 in the outcome and 0.91 in the solution term. The other cases can either be considered to be typical cases for sufficiency (zone 1) or cases that are inconsistent with a pattern of sufficiency, but share qualitatively identical memberships in X and Y with the typical cases in zone 1 (zone 2). The upper left and bottom left corners are empty indicating that there are no deviant cases that show membership in the solution but not in the outcome (zone 6), and no cases that hold low membership in both sets and are considered irrelevant for the theoretical argument (zone 4-5).

### **4.3. Interpretation of results**

The analysis found the presence of political will to address governance challenges targeted by the intervention as an important condition contributing to good governance outcomes. While the fsQCA indicated that the presence of political will is necessary for the positive outcome and this condition is also part of the solution term with the highest explanatory power (PW\*OC; see Table 4.7), the absence of political will does not automatically lead to unsuccessful interventions. Hence, the study concludes that political will should be considered a 'semi-necessary' condition. As such, this finding presents empirical support for the postulated relation between political will and the effectiveness of donor-supported governance interventions. While various scholars claim political will to be an 'escape hatch' (Clay & Schaffer, 1984) or 'hollow concept' (Copestake & Williams, 2014) functioning as a familiar excuse to program or policy failures, the analysis has demonstrated that the concept has a large explanatory power with regard to governance outcomes. If political will would not be important, we would see a significant number of interventions without political will leading to good governance outcomes. Yet, in five out of six interventions that contributed to good governance outcomes the condition political will was present; while for all seven interventions that did not contribute to good governance political will was absent. In addition, unlike many studies and policy documents referring to the political will concept and using it as a non-conceptualized catch phrase, the research presented in this thesis has systematically operationalized and measured this complex concept.

While, at first glance, this finding indicates a robust pattern, no claim is made about the direction of the causal link between political will and good governance outcomes. The possibility exists that causality has been reversed: Because results are more likely to be achieved with regard to particular governance challenges, political will exists among the GoR to address those challenges adequately. However, this would not explain why political will exists for addressing certain governance issues in the first place; after all, when starting to address certain challenges it is not known whether results will be achieved or not. Moreover, some of the unrealized governance outcomes can be directly attributed to the absence of certain aspects of political will. For instance, it appears that the Dutch-supported interventions face serious barriers in realizing objectives related to fostering local democracy. One of these barriers is the lack of true devolution within the Rwandan decentralization process, which can be regarded as a result of the lack of political will to delegate power from the central to the local level. Since it appears that - despite allocated budgets and efforts made with regard to the delegation of competences - the decentralization process in Rwanda not leads to real change in terms of empowerment of the local level<sup>27</sup> (see also Chemouni, 2014; Gaynor, 2013), decentralization can be regarded a

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<sup>27</sup> Authors such as Chemouni (2014) and Gaynor even argue that instead of empowering the local level, decentralization has strengthened control from the center through top-down policy-making and control of local governments and the population.

technical solution to a political problem, exhibiting symptoms of ‘isomorphic mimicry’ (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Andrews *et al.*, 2012). While it can be argued that the political will of the GoR to address challenges in the justice sector is also limited, for instance regarding the adherence to human rights and judicial independence, the overall progress made with respect to the establishment of the rule of law has been positive over the last decade (World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2013; HiiL, 2012). In this regard, the condition political will and its particular conceptualization in this study has appeared to be useful with respect to the explanation of governance outcomes in Rwanda.

With regard to context-sensitivity, the analysis yielded several findings. First, it was found that the absence of context-sensitivity is a necessary condition for the absence of good governance outcomes and that it also is an element in one of the two sufficient paths toward the positive outcome. This supports the opponents of the ‘one size fits all’ argument who advocate for a ‘best fit’ rather than a ‘best practice’ approach (*e.g.*, Booth, 2011; Andrews *et al.*, 2013). Second, it appears that context-sensitivity is not a necessary condition for positive outcomes. This entails that results can also be achieved without context-sensitive design. In this vein, it is relevant to note that Oomen (2005: 897) finds that donor-supported interventions in the Rwandan justice sector could be effective without being contextualized. Oomen states that although the rebuilding of the Rwandan justice sector was largely driven by the International Community - which flew in lawyers, trained judges, built courts, bought stationery, and helped to develop the applicable legislation - and was largely inspired by a western model of justice, *‘the quality of the process improved substantially in the decade after the genocide, and an average of a thousand people were tried every year, often in group trials’*. Third, while theoretical expectations with respect to context-sensitive designs were overall quite general, the identified pathways helped to specify the conditions under which this argument holds. Context-sensitivity alone is not sufficient; it should be combined with organizational capacity of local implementing organizations and a long-term perspective deployed by the donor. This is demonstrated by the second solution term of the intermediate solution listed in Table 4.7.

Unlike some of the other conditions, organizational capacity of local implementing organizations was not by itself expected to lead towards the outcome (see Chapter 2). However, in combination with other conditions, of which political commitment was the most often articulated condition in the literature, it was expected that significant progress could be made with regards to donor-supported governance reform. The combination of political will and organizational capacity was found in five out of six interventions that resulted in good governance outcomes and constitutes the solution term with the highest explanatory power (see Table 4.8). Although organizational capacity is part of both solution terms that are sufficient for the outcome, it has not been found to be a necessary condition.

Finally, the deployment of a long-term perspective by the donor was considered particularly important from a theoretical perspective because governance reform often comprises complex processes requiring reform of institutional and legal frameworks. However, it appears from the empirical findings that this condition is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition on its own. The fact that this condition is not able to lead by itself to good governance outcomes is clearly illustrated by various interventions implemented in the area of decentralization. Although EKN Kigali deployed for most of these interventions a long-term perspective, in most cases not all other INUS-conditions being part of the second solution term (*i.e.* organizational capacity and context-sensitivity) were present. These interventions have in turn not realized good governance outcomes.



#### **4.4. Conclusion**

This chapter presented and discussed the empirical findings of this study. Whereas results of Dutch-supported interventions appear to be relatively effective at output level, results at outcome level are mixed, and results at impact level remain largely unclear. The condition political will was found to be semi-necessary, whereas two combinations of conditions were found to be sufficient for the outcome: 1) the presence of political will combined with organizational capacity; and 2) the presence of context-sensitivity along with the presence of a long-term perspective and organizational capacity. The next chapter concludes the thesis by summarizing the main findings and its implications.

## Chapter 5. Conclusion

The main aim of this final chapter is to formulate an answer to the central research question of this study. In addition, the validity and reliability of the findings are scrutinized, the potential for generalization is discussed and avenues for further research and policy implications are outlined.

### 5.1. Main findings

The central research question guiding this study was: *How do interventions fully or partly supported by Dutch ODA and implemented between 2007 and 2013 contribute to good governance in Rwanda?* In order to answer this question, various steps have been undertaken. First, a comprehensive review of existing academic research and donor-commissioned evaluations has been conducted with the aim of answering the first two sub questions: 1) *What is good governance?* And 2) *What do we know about the effectiveness of donor-supported interventions to foster good governance in developing countries, in particular in the area of rule of law and decentralization?* With regard to the first sub question, the theoretical review demonstrated that no universal agreement exists on the definition of ‘good governance’ and that it is an inherently normative concept. For the purposes of this study, the definition provided by Rothstein and Teorell (2008) has been adopted that stresses the combination of and the distinction between elements concerning the *access* to authority, and those concerning the *exercise* of authority. What is considered as ‘good’ can be seen as the result of explicit ideological and political preferences regarding the socio-economic order in recipient countries, which are anchored in Dutch policy for the interventions included in this study. With respect to the second sub question, it appears that results of donor-supported governance interventions in the area of justice and decentralization are often inconclusive and mixed at best. In addition, four conditions could be identified in the literature that are most conducive toward the effective implementation of interventions, including: 1) sufficient organizational capacity of local implementing partners; 2) the presence of political will to address the governance challenge targeted by the intervention; 3) a context-sensitive design of the intervention; and 4) a long-term perspective deployed by the donor. These four conditions formed in turn the basis for the formulation of hypotheses tested for necessity and sufficiency during the empirical part of the study.

The third sub question was: *What are the results - outputs, outcomes, impact - of Dutch-supported interventions that aim to improve governance in Rwanda?* In order to answer this question, the results of the 13 selected Dutch-supported governance interventions have been systematically assessed. In order to do so, a ‘policy theory’ has been reconstructed for each of the interventions. Subsequently, the extent of realization of intended results as formulated at outcome level has been examined based on existing evaluations, project documentation, interview data, and academic literature. The study found that whereas results of Dutch-supported interventions appear to be relatively effective at output level, results at outcome level are mixed, and results at impact level remain largely unclear. Interventions in the justice sector appear to be more effective in realizing good governance objectives than in the area of decentralization.

A fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) has been conducted to answer the fourth sub question: *What causal conditions, or combinations of conditions, account for the results of the Dutch – jointly and fully - funded interventions in Rwanda?* The fsQCA allowed for the identification of these conditions through testing of the four theoretically informed hypotheses. In order to conduct the

fsQCA, the outcome and condition variables were scored based on: 1) a desk-review of Rwandan policy documents, project documentation, and academic literature on the Rwandan context and the interventions; and 2) semi-structured interviews with 41 respondents conducted during fieldwork in Kigali in March and July 2014. The fsQCA identified the condition political will to be ‘semi-necessary’ for results at outcome level, which entails that political will is in principle a condition that must be present for an outcome to occur, but that certain exceptions exist. In addition, two combinations of conditions have been identified as sufficient for the outcome, which means that the outcome always occurs if one of the two configurations is present. These two causal configurations are: 1) the presence of political will combined with organizational capacity; and 2) the presence of context-sensitivity along with the presence of a long-term perspective and organizational capacity. The fsQCA indicated that the first configuration has the largest empirical relevance and has thus the largest explanatory power with respect to the realization of good governance outcomes.

Reflecting on the four formulated hypotheses the following conclusions can be drawn. With regard to the **first hypothesis**, the study revealed that although organizational capacity of local implementing organizations is part of both solution terms that are sufficient for the outcome, it has not been found to be a necessary condition. This is in line with theoretical expectations that organizational capacity is not able to lead towards good governance outcomes by itself. With respect to the **second hypothesis**, this study provides substantial empirical evidence in support of the importance of the presence of political will for the realization of good governance objectives by donor-supported interventions. While various scholars have considered the political will concept a simple excuse for program and policy failure, this research has shown that if political will is systematically operationalized and measured it provides a useful explanation for the realization of good governance outcomes. Whereas genuine political will to implement democratic decentralization appears to be limited in the Rwandan context for various reasons, political will and the accompanying efforts towards the establishment of the rule of law seem to be somewhat better in the period under study. As has been demonstrated, either the presence or absence of political will has in turn influenced the effectiveness of Dutch-supported interventions. In this vein, the findings of this study align with existing literature advocating for the acknowledgement of the inherently political nature of development assistance by donors (*e.g.* Carothers & Gramont, 2013). Considering the **third hypothesis**, it was found that the absence of context-sensitivity is a necessary condition for the absence of good governance outcomes and that it also is an element in one of the two sufficient paths toward the positive outcome. This provides support to the opponents of the ‘one size fits all’ argument who advocate for a ‘best fit’ rather than a ‘best practice’ approach. However, the study revealed that context-sensitivity is not a necessary condition for positive outcomes, which means that results can also be achieved without context-sensitive design. Finally, reflecting on the **fourth hypothesis**, the empirical findings indicate that the deployment of a long-term perspective by the donor is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition on its own. However, this condition is part of the second solution term toward good governance outcomes.

Summarized, the findings support the expected link between organizational capacity, political will, context-sensitivity, a long-term perspective and good governance outcomes. Three of these conditions, organizational capacity, context-sensitivity, and a long-term perspective, are neither considered necessary nor sufficient on their own. Whereas political will is found to be a semi-NESS condition (‘Necessary Element of a Sufficient Set’), the other three conditions can thus be regarded to be INUS-conditions (‘Insufficient but Necessary parts of a condition which is itself Unnecessary but Sufficient’). The two identified pathways have further specified in which

combinations the conditions are sufficient for the outcome. In this vein, these two pathways provide the answer to the central research question of this study. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that interventions fully or partly supported by Dutch ODA and implemented between 2007 and 2013 have contributed to good governance in Rwanda along two routes, of which the first has the highest explanatory power: 1) the presence of political will combined with organizational capacity; and 2) the presence of context-sensitivity along with the presence of a long-term perspective and organizational capacity.

## **5.2. Validity and reliability of the findings**

One of the rationales for applying fsQCA in this study has been to improve the reliability, validity and robustness of the findings. The QCA technique has provided formal analytical tools to systematically analyze combinations of causal conditions that are linked to good governance outcomes. Furthermore, the technique has made the analytical process transparent of which the set of guiding rules can be considered substantially more formal and stable than generally specified for case-study research. For instance, the need for categorization of data requires the researcher to be transparent about coding and to justify decisions. This opening up the analytical process and conclusions for corroboration or falsification, has added scientific rigor to the process (see also Berg-Schlusser *et al.*, 2009). Another strength of QCA is its particular conception of causality that leaves room for complexity and moves away from simplistic, probabilistic causal reasoning. This made it possible in this research to identify alternate paths leading to good governance realization, rather than a given variable that is assumed to have a similar incremental effect on the outcome across all cases, irrespective of the values of other causal conditions.

Apart from these strengths, the research has also been challenged by some limitations. First, access to reliable and valid data has sometimes been limited. For the assessment of results achieved by Dutch-supported interventions, the researcher was largely dependent on evaluations commissioned by EKN Kigali that were often of either poor (*e.g.* Gacaca, RALGA I, RALGA II) or moderate quality (*e.g.*, LAF I, LAF II). Limitations of these evaluations include inadequate operationalization, lack of baseline data, weak Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) systems, attribution problems, and focus on outputs over outcome and impact. In order to mitigate this limitation, the author of this thesis scrutinized the credibility of the results reported in the evaluations (see Appendix 7) and also relied on academic literature and interview data to complement the evaluation findings.

Second, although formal logic has been applied in order to derive solution terms, the quantitative coding of qualitative data might have allowed for subjectivity of the researcher. In addition, calibration of the variables is highly dependent on the researchers' interpretation and subsequent setting of qualitative thresholds. To limit this risk as much as possible, concepts have been systematically operationalized and the scoring strategy, assignment of scores, and justification of set thresholds have been made transparent, which allows other researchers to scrutinize the scoring and calibration procedures. Furthermore, the researcher has repeated the scoring procedure in order to make sure that scores have been assigned in a consistent manner. Finally, good in-depth case knowledge by the researcher has been ensured through an elaborate desk-study and fieldwork conducted in Rwanda, which is necessary for adequate calibration.

Third, like every other research, the QCA technique does not guarantee that the 'true' causal conditions have been grasped, because the conclusions drawn on the empirical data completely depend on which 'ingredients' have been put under the microscope, including the selection of

cases as well as the condition variables and their operationalization. In this vein, it is generally beneficial to achieve a maximum of heterogeneity over a minimum number of cases. Despite the fact that cases were selected based on their potential for policy learning, and thus not on their variation in the outcome variable, it appears that a good level of diversity in cases has been realized. With regard to the selection of conditions, the researcher conducted an elaborate literature review to ensure in-depth knowledge on the theoretically relevant conditions for good governance outcomes. In turn, the selection of the final conditions included in this study has been an iterative process of going back and forth between a preliminary data analysis and adaptations of the data set.

Finally, although QCA has made an important step with regards to the potential for generalization of research findings compared to other comparative case-study approaches, generalization remains limited to the initial 'homogeneity space' in which the empirical data-set is situated. This entails that its perspective on generalization is much more modest than in the case of statistical inference. Nevertheless, it is possible to generate hypotheses from the findings of this study and apply these to similar cases as included in this research, that is to say Dutch-supported governance interventions implemented in Rwanda. Further research is needed to assess whether the pathways toward good governance identified in this research also 'work' for interventions implemented by other donors in other country contexts.

### **5.3. Avenues for further research**

Although the lack of quality of donor-commissioned evaluations in the area of governance has already been articulated several times over the last decades, this study has demonstrated once again that systematic and rigorous research on interventions in this area is lacking up to date. Few studies succeed in providing insight in the net results realized by interventions and explaining attribution. In addition, many studies do not pass the scientific test. This provides various avenues for future research.

First, in order to evaluate interventions during and after implementation, evaluators should be involved from the outset. This allows for the formulation of evaluable indicators and program objectives, the collection of baseline data and to monitor programs on ongoing basis, rather than solely *ex post*. This not only leads to more valid and reliable data, but can also serve to strengthen the implementation process. In this vein, 'real-time evaluation', an evaluation type recently drawing attention, can be regarded as the ideal-type of these principles. This form of evaluation emphasizes timely evaluation feedback in order to improve program design and implementation.

Second, (semi-)experimental methods have proven to be an useful instrument to evaluate social and economic sectors. The most important advantage of experimental methods is that it allows for the identification of the extent to which observed outcomes can be attributed to an intervention, and to the intervention alone. While experimental methods, and more precisely randomized control trials (RCT), have been applied in certain governance areas, such as corruption, community-development and election, its usage is limited today. While it is expected that the application of experimental research designs in the evaluation of governance assistance has its own limitations (see *e.g.*, Gisselquist & Niño-Zarazúa, 2013), its real value has yet to be discovered.

Finally, it would be of great value to confront the pathways identified in this study with new data. As stated by Ragin (2009: 12), a good indicator of the quality of research findings could be their

ability to withstand refutation when confronted with new cases. In addition, as this research has shown the potential value of the QCA technique in explaining good governance outcomes in a context of causal complexity, it would be interesting to apply this technique to donor-supported governance interventions in other contexts.

#### **5.4. Policy implications**

Although much can be written about the policy implications of this research, due to space limitations only the two most important ones are provided here.

As described above, this research has, with the identification of two sufficient pathways leading to good governance outcomes, provided concrete entrances for EKN Kigali to contribute to good governance in Rwanda. In addition, this research has articulated the particular importance of the presence of political will and the appropriate use of this complex concept (*i.e.* based on systematic operationalization and measurement). In this vein, the findings advocate for a reappraisal of the political nature of donor assistance and acceptance of the fact that technical solutions to political problems do not lead to the intended results. Although this may appear to be self-evident, research, including this study, indicates this principle is still not adequately applied in practice. More precisely, political will should not only be analyzed by donors through political economy assessment tools, or described in the section ‘political context’ within project proposals, but should also be followed up by concrete action. In case of Rwanda, this might entail that decentralization is no longer a priority in the provision of Dutch ODA, because important governance objectives propagated by The Netherlands cannot be achieved in the Rwandan context. Nevertheless, some of the projects supported under the guise of decentralization could be continued (*e.g.*, the local development fund CDF/RLDSF), but then under the header of local economic development, for instance. Considering evaluation of interventions, it follows from the findings that donor agencies have an important role to play in strengthening current evaluation practices. Donors can, for instance, encourage evaluators to use scientifically credible techniques, to conduct rigorous studies where possible, to refer to the scientific debate, to undertake longer field missions in order to access more local knowledge sources and to involve more end target groups in their studies. The guiding principle in this regard should be not *more* but *better* evaluations.

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