Prevention work among youths in Fundación Senda De Libertad in Nicaragua

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The purpose of the study is to see how Fundación Senda De Libertad works in a preventive manner with youths who have social difficulties in Dario, Nicaragua. This study has utilised qualitative method, in order to gain adequate and sufficient information. The analysis of data has been gathered through an ethnographic perspective were observations and qualitative interviews have been used. This study shows how youths are affected with different social problems because of the number of risk factors that surround their environment. The organisation’s preventive works is done by going out and teach in schools, society and churches about self-esteem, sex and relationships, drug abuse and so forth. Conclusions show that many youths are unable to affect their own future and will therefore spend their time committing criminal actions, doing drugs and so forth. Fundación Senda De Libertad therefore works to support in order for them to become active participants in society. This will also help them make changes in the future of the general society.
Preface

We wish to sincerely thank MFS, SIDA for giving us this opportunity and for financing this study. Our deepest thanks and appreciation goes out to all the members of Fundación Senda De Libertad. All of the participants have in one way or another contributed to valuable and interesting information about Senda De Libertad. All of those involved have opened up their hearts to us and taken good care of us during our stay in Nicaragua. Without the permission of the members of Senda De Libertad, we would never have been able to carry out this research. We therefore wish to thank all of those who we interviewed for sharing their unique and personal stories, dreams and visions.

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INTRODUCTION

In a previous study, Aggressive behaviour among youths – Causes and Solutions, it is stated that, for instance, various underlying factors may create a sense of alienation for children and youths which, in turn, may result in aggressive behaviour and criminal activities. Literature studies also show that organised leisure time activities and increased success rates in schools may have preventive significance for these groups. Many families and youths, however, are unable to participate in leisure time activities for various reasons. When this is not possible, youths may end up in situations or in places where they are more likely to develop disruptive behaviour such as becoming criminals, aggressive, get involved in gang fights and drug abuse. During this study in Nicaragua, we have tried to find answers to our research objective, alongside with becoming familiarised with the actual work of Fundación Senda De Libertad, Senda, in their attempt to prevent and deal with social issues and aggressive behaviour. The reason for our choice of country, Nicaragua, and this field of study, is that we were able to study other cultures and contexts and how these are related to aggressive behaviour in youths. This may, in turn, offer knowledge on preventive work and treatment of youths who demonstrate aggressive behaviour and social difficulties, such as alienation and uncompleted schooling.

Definition

Youths and children – used to define children as being between the ages of 0 and 13 and youths as being between the ages of 13 and 21.

Asocial behaviour – hyperactivity, excessive behaviour and aggressive actions define an asocial behaviour. Asocial behaviour is a behavioural pattern identified by destructive, unreliable, disobedient and excessive behaviour. These actions may result in legal offences such as drug abuse, violence, and serious breaches of protocol, physical- and mental damages for others and their property (Andreassen 2003).

Delinquency – an asocial behaviour and a more serious behavioural problem that emphasises criminal tendencies. The concept is linked in a dual manner to the behaviour of youths. One is often defined in connection to asocial behaviour, “conduct disorder” or excessive behaviour and the second definition of the term includes the legal aspects of illegal behaviour (Andreassen 2003).

Deviant behaviour – sociological term relating to the actions that differs from the established norms of a group or society. Deviant behaviour, in this case, relates to a low or high level of criminal activity, but also behaviour that deviates from the notion of what is considered to be normal and socially acceptable (National Encyclopaedia 2012).

Substance abuse – unmanageable use of alcohol, narcotics or other substances with euphoric effects that create an addiction. These effects may be physical as well as psychological (National Encyclopaedia 2012).

Aggressiveness – aggressiveness or aggression is behaviour or a response that is intended to injure or discomfort another individual. Aggression is defined as a behaviour that is intended to harm others and that is perceived as harmful by the victim. It is important to know that not all aggression is anger. You could say that anger and
rage are the feelings on a biological basis and aggression is a more controlled and consistent behaviour (Gale virtual reference library, 2012).

Background

General information about risk and protective factors

A risk factor may be a life event or a relationship to humans in your surroundings. It is a process that comes from the environment or personal traits that increase the risk of a negative development. The risk of negative development is even greater the more risk factors that the youth comes equipped with; furthermore it is known that risk factors are rarely singular but will rather help to reinforce each other in a negative manner. In some situations only one risk factor is enough, for instance if there are many risk factors present or they are in a certain combination and allow one to become more intense or durable. The same risks may give rise to different effects as the different combinations may have various meaning to an individual person. The individual’s vulnerability will be different depending on previous experiences. Age and various developmental stages are also contributing factors when it comes to individual responses (Ungdomsstyrelsen 2007). You may be able to affect some risk factors while some are unchangeable after they have occurred. The risk factors may also have direct or indirect affects, be self-triggering or maintaining. There are internal- and external risk factors, the internal being for instance biological disposition, personal traits and characteristics. These traits may include temperament, low intelligence, intolerance to stress, hyperactivity, impulsiveness, and concentration-, attention- and empathically disorders. The external risk factors include flaws in close relationships and contacts with family members such as insecurity, violence, abuse, mental illnesses in the family and negative upbringing methods. Socio-economical factors will also affect the youth and his or her ability to partake in positive social contexts and could contribute to asocial relations and asocial activities. Yet another strong risk factor is failure in schooling, flaws in the surroundings, such as badly organised schools or close communities, which will in turn affect a number of the other factors on a very basic level. One of the most prevalent risk factors when dealing with unhealthy social development is spending time with friends who revolt against social norms. Alienation is another risk factor, meaning that youths may choose to isolate themselves because of personal difficulties, lack of social skills, low self-esteem and apathy. When youths who have these personality traits alienate themselves, they stand at risk of becoming isolated from more well-functioning friends. This may result in serious aggressive behaviour (Ungdomsstyrelsen 2007).

There are also many factors behind a youth’s behaviour and psychological development because of the cultural impact. One of the factors that forcefully affect their way of thinking and acting is the environment that they grew up in. Other factors can be the home environment and the relationship between the child and its parents. An example is if an emotional contact does not exist between the child and the mother and instead the child gets ignored, have no protection, warmth and distance, this could cause the child to have a poor basis for developing a sense of self. Parents therefore have a significant impact on a child’s development. The home has also an impact because if the home does not work, it could result in an unfavourable direction for the child. If the child is raised in a home with violence and abuse it may result in an unfavourable development for the child in the future. The child needs to be told what is socially acceptable,
otherwise problems can arise. One problem might that they feel that life consists of a seamless journey to their own needs and satisfaction. Children who become mentally or physically abused are highly overrepresented among children with disturbed behaviour, but overprotective parents could also lead to behavioural problems. These problems might be asocial features or psychopathic traits that are highly heritable. Psychopathic features include the tendency for aggressive behaviour, low frustration threshold, lack of respect for social norms and the tendency to deny responsibility and give others the blame for the acts (Day Paulsen, 2005). The risk of developing problems may be decreased if they youth is offered enough protective factors that will prevent the formation of new risk factors and lessening the effect of those that already exist (Ungdomstyrelsen 2007).

Internal protective factors that are important for social development are temperament, durability, capacity to control one’s impulses and emotions, ability to take initiative, psychological energy, intellectual capacity, and emotional stability. A protective factor that is very important is secure bonding, as it affects the youth’s future ability to establish durable close relationships, self-trust and ability to deal with difficulties (Ungdomstyrelsen 2007).

**Specific risk and protective factors for delinquency**

Different routes lead to asocial behaviour, depending on when it occurs. Youths, who show early aggressive and hyperactive behaviour, bad social skills, unhealthy relations with friends and problems in schools, will often develop an aggressive pattern. Youths, however, who show non-aggressive behavioural patterns are better adapted socially (Andreassen 2003).

Depending on if the youth has had an early or late start, it may be possible to separate asocial youths into two groups depending on when the behaviour occurred, either in their youth, or if it continued up into adulthood. The first group is affected by situational factors and the asocial behaviour depends on social relationships and development to a much higher extent than individual traits and characteristics. The first group will break the law while young, whereas the second group shows asocial behaviour that escalates in their youth and continuous on into adulthood. Early risk factors will make the child spiral into increased development of bad behaviour. This is due to the fact that subtle neurological dysfunctions will interrupt normal development in the youth and the cognitive weaknesses will increase their vulnerability in terms of criminal aspects for the child in a specific social surrounding. These weaknesses will promote vulnerability and a temper that triggers unsuitable methods for upbringing (Andreassen 2003).

Andreassen (2003) argues that protective factors and risk factors should not be seen as opposites but rather as two different factors. He claims that youths may feel positive about schooling although he or she has asocial friends. Studies have shown that it is possible to slow down the negative behavioural development through the use of a number of environmental- and personal protective factors. Thus you are able to predict the risks factors and protective factors related to early debut and late debut. Early behavioural problems are connected to individual traits and methods of upbringing whereas for youths who have behavioural problems later on these will be found in connection to social factors and surrounding factors, such as deviant friendships (Andreassen 2003).
It is also important to focus on school funds and opportunities to influence these children and youths to deal with aggression and violence. There are different school-based programmes to prevent youths’ violence in schools. The three largest projects have focused on the application that could significantly affect and reduce violence in schools. The first programme was to attempt to make schools safer by changing the physical environment by building fences around schools. The second programme was to teach youths how to handle situations peacefully, without acting violently, and other various problem-solving. The third programme was more focused on the school and the administrative work (Rose, 2008).

**Aggression, criminality and substance abuse among youths**

A great psychoanalyst, whom during the 1900th century became the basis of instinct theory, was Sigmund Freud. Freud believed that aggression was an inherent sense, and that organisms were equipped with a specific aggressive energy. This caused the organisms to build up a tension, which needs to relief somehow (The National Encyclopaedia, 2011).

The first theory of aggression was based on a research basis, frustration. Scientists believed that aggression arose from one single source, the disappointed expectations and the barriers that stand in one’s way of achieving life goals. For many years scientists have encouraged aggressive people such as child molesters, criminals and aggressive youths to place the aggressive instinctual energy in a safe manner. Those views have changed. Aggressive instinct is something innate and cannot disappear by releasing energy, but by learning to manage aggression (Goldstein, 1998). Raundalen (1996) shows that aggression is something that people observe and imitate. It has also shown how this affects children and how children imitate and observe aggression that adults radiate. This behaviour is something that sits deep in the child and enhances the possibility for the child to develop similar behaviour. Today’s research focuses more on how people take in and process information that later on results in an act of aggression. It is believed that aggression is linked to mental skills such as thinking and understanding (Raundalen, 1996).

Another important factor concerning serious behavioural problems and criminal activities is lack of self-control. This means that it is not necessary to learn asocial attitudes in order to commit criminal activities but that those with low self-esteem may develop criminal behavioural patterns. Yet another important factor that affects criminal behaviour is to hang around with the wrong group of people (Andreassen, 2003). According to Andreassen (2003) youths who have not completed their schooling or abuse alcohol/narcotics will be more likely to commit crimes and conduct in criminal activities. Researchers also write that in terms of preventive work, it is important that we find these violent youths (if possible) before they commit to any deeds. This is the best solution for limiting the damage and further development of the negative behaviour. Early efforts aiming to find youths at risk will increase their chances to become stable, schooled and sober people, as well as eliminate crime and violence from their lives. Early interventions will also offer the youths a chance to leave dysfunctional life styles and have normal development possibilities. Andreassen (2003) also emphasise the importance of limiting the risk factors for developing abuse and serious criminal behaviour. Researchers claim that these efforts will not only stop the negative
behavioural patterns but will also affect and limit the risks of developing an asocial behavioural pattern.

So what causes these behaviours and actions? According to Andreassen (2003) there are a number of reasons for why so many youths seem to develop these behaviours. Researchers discuss the responsibility of the authorities, as well as family conditions. Youths who have for many years passed between court rooms, clinics, rehabs and other authorities are at a much greater risk to become violent and criminal. Violent behaviour is also connected to the two largest problems in society. Early access to abuse, becoming a witness to abuse, having been abused yourself or growing up in a violent family. The other problem is youths who develop their cognitive and social skills later on or to a smaller extent than others, which will result in asocial behaviour reflected in their homes, schools and neighbourhood (Andreassen, 2003).

**Youth gangs in Nicaragua**

In the last two decades, Nicaragua has suffered from civil war, natural disasters and serious financial declines. These grave conditions have affected the Nicaraguan youths more than ever, for instance due to increased poverty. Many youths quit school to make their living on the streets as drug dealers or criminals in order to survive. About 60 percent of the youths in the Nicaraguan capital Managua have quit school and spend their time committing illegal acts or fighting amongst criminal gangs. The most common crimes that are reported are property damages, armed robberies, physical abuse and murder. These crimes increase and the perpetrators are becoming younger and younger. In order to prevent this, police departments as well as state authorities in Managua have for some time made an effort to decrease the number of youth gangs and also the youth crime rate. These efforts, however, have not resulted in any clear changes. At times when both finances and ideologies are turbulent, many situations and relations are established that are illegal as well as immoral. Children and youths who do not receive schooling and also lack meaningful activities and stable home conditions will form deviant behaviour that may result in serious criminality and invite the attention of criminal gangs (Maclure & Sotelo, 2007).

In order to make a change and offer security, authorities have created a crime control system to efficiently deal with youth criminals. They implement threats and serious consequences. According to Maclure & Sotelo (2007) though, this may in fact have the opposite result and make things even worse. Society and authorities in general are often unaware of the negative circumstances that many children and youths grow up in. The significant increase in youth criminality makes people in society anxious, which was mentioned above, and may result in meaningless measures against criminality. Knowledge and information concerning these youth gangs is lacking, as is the understanding of these youths. That is why efforts become meaningless, the wrong measures are taken due to misunderstandings and ignorance. The youths are unable to govern themselves and create possibilities and profit from these as social relations, forms and limitations constantly arise.

According to Maclure & Sotelo (2007) limitations and forms may be seen as measures, although it is important to remember that individual aspects on development and decision-making are vital when it comes to enabling youths to develop. Regardless of the situation, the youths need to interpret their experiences, strive toward their own goals, and create a sense of being able to affect their situation in a unique manner. This
is why it is necessary to adjust choices and efforts based on the individual youth, and also to gain a sense of understanding of the youth’s self-image, independence and control based on the life situation that he or she lives in. Maclure & Sotelo (2007) say that there are significant connections between the social- and financial problems that they are constantly forced to live with and that these have clearly promoted youth criminality and gang development in Managua, Nicaragua. Say Maclure & Sotelo (2007), the social environment is a vast source of frustration and anxiety among youths, since they are forced to move between families, schools, training, and meaningful work and are rarely given the chance to make something for themselves and establish regular social structures. This is why they try to reach this goal through illegal activities, creating a sense of personal control and social status. Platforms are established, gangs, where these ideas may be achieved and do not feel unattainable.

Institutional arrangements are thought to be profitable as they help to form a secure platform for youths and offer inner stability. They allow the youth gangs to communicate and create a dialogue between the gangs in order to promote positive development and stability internally and between the gangs. Through allowing the youths to speak openly about their situations and their problems they become more open to one another, and they are also allowed to actively participate in developing and utilising the youth-oriented activities that are important to them. Another method that has proven more successful than conventional crime treatment is to create relationships between individual and collective parties such as gang members and non-gang members. The reason for this is that both sides are considered just as important and capable of making active efforts to prevent youth criminality and violence. Through this collaboration, development occurs and it is significantly more successful than conventional crime treatment today. Despite the fact that there are social programmes aimed to decrease the interest for gang membership and promote welfare and life opportunities among youths in poor countries that are high in debt, such as Nicaragua, these kinds of collaborations require social groups and authorities to cooperate (Maclure & Sotelo, 2007).

**Father absence**

Children and youths who grow up in homes without a father will be at greater risk to develop asocial behaviour than youths who grow up in homes with two parents present. An absent father may also result in other social problems, such as poverty, teenage pregnancy, school drop-out, aggression and behavioural problems. Additional problems that may arise in household where the father is absent are drug abuse, problems dealing with anger, and fear of being abandoned (Moore, 2010). Although an absent father and deviant behaviour seem to be connected, this does not mean that youths who have these risk factors will for sure develop deviant behaviour. As previously mentioned, deviant behaviour depends on a number of risk factors and not only one or two. Moore (2010) states that the quality of interaction between youths and their fathers is more important for their development. He also concludes that youths who interact with their fathers and have this important person in their lives will suffer less from drug abuse, mood changes and deviant behaviour. The child needs to establish a secure, strong relationship and feel important and loved unconditionally by someone around them if they are to stand up against these risk factors (Moore, 2010). Risk factors will not affect all youths to the same extent, since the youth's personal development, capacity to be intimate, and a
sense of purpose in life will also have great effect on them. It is, however, important to act to prevent the risks around youths who are at risk of developing behavioural problems and it is vital to focus on youths who are surrounded by more risk factors than protective factors.

Since youths who have an absent father are often affected by a number of different risk factors, they will find it difficult to reach their goals. They stand at greater risk to develop deviant or aggressive behaviour rather than committing politically correct actions. Compared to youths who grow up with two parents, they are not given a head-start in life and are at risk of developing these behaviours (Moore, 2010). Youths who suffer from low self-esteem and self-confidence will attract people that confirm them and their sense of acceptance. Since they wish to feel conformation in their relationships, they are likely to commit actions that are not socially accepted. Youths who have an absent father and are influenced by those they hang out with may become drug abusers and sexually act out. During this period, the youth is not yet finished developmentally and group pressure has a large effect on his or her decisions and actions. This may result in a society that looks on youths who have an absent father in a specific manner, although it is not only the actual absence of a father that affects the youth, but also friends, culture and society (Moore, 2010).

Prevention work among youths

According to Bottrell (2006), many youths complain that there is nothing to do during the day. The author believes that the lack of facilities and organised leisure activities puts youths in places and situations where they are more likely to get into trouble. Bottrell (2006) says that this is something that local governments should invest in, and that this can be the only lifeline to keeping youths away from crime and other kinds of criminal activities. Many youths cannot afford to do expensive activities. This could lead to youths creating groups in the area in which they feel a connection and a sense of belonging. These groups also create hatred for each other and can lead to frequent fights, shoplifting, assaults and other criminal activities. By creating a safe and secure environment for the youths and giving them activities to do during the days, it will prevent street violence and crime among youths (Bottrell, 2006). The violence usually occurs in groups, groups where they feel a connection and safety. Violence often occurs between different groups, groups that feel threatened or hatred towards one another and can also be called gang wars (Rose, 2008).

Preventive activities

Youths who stand at risk of having bad social development, excessive and norm-breaking behaviour are often in the centre of discussions concerning leisure time activities. This target group mainly consists of young boys, as girls are more likely to suffer from anxiety, depression and self-destructive behaviour instead. The difference between genders when it comes to how they break the rules is that boys are more often excessive in their behaviour, whereas girls are more likely to run into serious forms of depression and anxiety. This will make girls’ problems and difficulties less visible than boys’ problems. Youths may encounter many risk factors during their leisure time, for instance if they spend time in environments where you are more likely to take risks. Leisure time activities may also reinforce a number of protective factors and strengthen
the youths’ power to resist (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2007). According to the Ungdomsstyrelsen (2007), close relations with others, social skills, self-confidence and personal trust in one’s abilities will result in protective factors that may promote positive adjustment to everyday situations. In their leisure time, youths can be motivated to develop further. This could be through a safe and positive atmosphere that enables them to learn rather than feeling anxious about potential failures. Youths may develop a negative self-image and psychological- and social problems says the Ungdomsstyrelsen (2007), and claim that leisure time activities may offer what is needed for the youths in order to compensate for their lack of upbringing. This could be prevented through leisure time activities and youths will be enabled to develop their social skills, interests, and friendships. These factors combined could strengthen and protect the youths in their independence, collaboration skills and social responsibility, offer them structure and frames that will help them become healthier (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2007).

For youths who grow up in poverty and social misery, leisure time activities could be of particular importance as they could help establish relations with other adults who see them, confirm them and may become their role models. Leisure time activities need to be attractive for the youths at risk and provide meeting places that can replace the risk environments and risk activities that they are used to. The positive perspectives on leisure time activities needs to be considered whilst keeping in mind all of the risk factors so as not to unintentionally reinforce them. When youths spend time at leisure time centres there is a risk that those with deviant behaviour will reinforce each other’s negative behaviour, social experiences and actions. For an open leisure time centre this really does pose a dilemma, since the deviant effects from other youths may be so strong that it erases the positive effects of the project. Committed and personal meetings at the leisure time centre will contribute to the youths having new role models and tutors, and this is how they deal with this dilemma (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2007).

Meetings between adults and youths offer the youth confirmation, alternatives and new ways of looking at things. Although these prerequisites will only be true if the leisure time centre has enough staff members to be able to establish lasting relations with the youths at risk. The second way that is used at the leisure time centres to prevent negative behaviour in youths is making sure that “deviant talk” will not be allowed, ensuring that youths who stand at risk will not form groups and negatively reinforce the deviant behaviour of other friends in the group. Since leisure time centres are open to a number of different youths from many different backgrounds, this could help minimise the negative effects that some youths have on others. You cannot exclude youths who are at risk from the leisure time centres, and you cannot force them to join structured activities since you need to do things voluntarily in order to gain some positive effects from them. This is why the organisation has both structured and unstructured elements depending on what things the youths wish to participate in. Offering more structure could attract other youths into the centres and create a better balance between the participants. At the organisation it is important to integrate the youths who may have negative effect on one another. They should be allowed to spend time with youths who could push them in the right direction through structured activities. Considering that youths tend to look for similar people as themselves, it is no easy task to join together different groups of youths at the leisure time centres. Youths at risk are highly over-represented at the leisure time centres, and this could be used in a positive manner since these youths will be given more chances to develop in a positive direction. Leisure time
centres may also offer easy access to meaningful activities that will enable youths to spend time in socially well-functioning contexts together with other youths and adults. The leisure time centre activities should not be created for the youths but together with them if you want to have the best possible result (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2007).

**Sex education and knowledge**

Nicaragua is a country where HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases are rapidly spreading, which is serious considering that a fifth of the Nicaraguan population is under the age of 25. The reason for this rapid spread is that many youths do not have the knowledge and information about these diseases and how to properly protect yourself from them, or for that matter knowledge about contraception. This makes youths sexually active at a very early age and they risk becoming pregnant, which is also very serious since abortion is illegal in Nicaragua (Manj, 2007). There are also psychosocial and structural reasons for why youths are particularly susceptible to HIV infections. Research shows that schools and churches could affect the lives of youths and their opinions on sexuality. 34 percent of youths who participated in the survey on sex education went to church at least once every week and 49 percent said that religion was more or less an important influence on their lives in terms of their knowledge about sex, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted diseases (Manj, 2007). As the church would prefer youths to restrain themselves from sex until they are married, they are able to influence them into not having sex, getting venereal diseases or unwanted pregnancies. Studies show that the attitude of youths to using condoms and other protection is spread through rumours and presuppositions, for instance that condoms will lessen sexual pleasure and that condoms should be used only for random partners and not if you are in a steady relationship. The gender roles of youths often tend to point in a male chauvinist direction meaning that women are only allowed to have sexual relations if they are married or with someone on a steady basis, while men are allowed to do the opposite. Research shows that the men, or the guy, decide if they should use protection or not. This could mean that a woman who asks for protection does not trust the man (Manj, 2007).

According to Manj (2007) youths, in this case in Leon, Nicaragua, have flawed knowledge and many misconceptions about HIV/venereal diseases, which is very common in Latin American countries. In order to prevent them spreading, you need clear and practical education on HIV and venereal diseases. The attitude toward sex and Latin American praxis, however, should also change as it is the main reason for the ideological male chauvinism and that the sexual dominance of men prevents the use of protection. The low status of women in this case will give rise to a conflict juxtaposed preventive work against HIV and venereal diseases. The male is somehow expected by society to have several sexual partners prior to and after the marriage. The woman, on the other hand, is supposed to restrain from sexual relations until she is married. Manj (2007) says in the study that all youths do not share this attitude, which offers a chance for preventive work. These efforts need to reach out to the youths in school and also outside the school. They need more skilled people who can contribute with correct information on HIV and venereal diseases. More programmes are needed in schools that focus on the preventive work on venereal diseases. Mass-media and health care are also important as they are able to reach out to many youths and adults who can later on transmit this information among themselves and to children. Such programmes could
have positive effects on youths and their knowledge level and attitude toward the subject as well as their self-confidence. Considering that there is real lack of resources in Nicaragua and the conservative culture and religious attitude of Nicaraguans, this work could, however, be quite difficult to achieve (Manj, 2007).

**System theory**

System theory is based on the overall picture and not only the parts of the human life and for that reason this theory is considered to be relevant for this study. Youths at risk have several factors that create social problems and deviant behavior, therefore the elements taken into account have to be treated in order for the youth to develop. Also by creating structure and routines in the youth’s life it will create a stability that will build the basis for behavioral and social development.

System theory includes a number of concepts and approaches. The main idea of system theory is that the unity is larger than the sum of the individual parts. This means that human beings will see the world as a unit, its combined traits rather than the individual parts of the whole. Through summarising and connecting the different parts, unity will be achieved and created into a meaningful and useful part of our lives. When this unity is created, we find beauty in life. System theory clearly emphasises that there are a number of different opinions on solutions and that there is rarely one solution to all problems. All people are different and thus require different solutions. In natural sciences this is self-evident, that there is often a way in which to define problems more clearly that will later result in a clear solution (Öquist, 2003). This is an objective solution regardless of the size of the problem or its complexity. System theory says that human problems will continuously be affected by society, and that these two concepts will coincide and often be clearly pragmatically linked to one another. Thus human beings need to create a systematic way of thinking, a framework for looking at connections rather than individual parts. Seeing the pattern in a change that is constantly moving and not standing still. System thinking will help people deal with their emotions and hopelessness, realising that there are factors hidden in the background in complex and difficult situations. These background factors will affect human behaviour and need to be dealt with. According to system theory, humans do not create these behavioural structures on their own but they are partly run by the system, society and hence it is vital to stress the unity and not the individual parts. It is also very important to look at human beings as active participants in the work process or treatment and the makers of their own reality. In order to survive in this reality, human beings need to create it on their own (Öquist, 2003).

Communication is a concept that, according to system theory, may be the solution to all problems. System theory agrees that the strength to change will come through efficient communication. Changes do not require physical strength, mechanical inventions, muscles and power to make a difference but rather communication and encouragement, comments. Creating routines and community is also important, by making joint facts that bring order in chaos and enable mutual work towards a common goal. Community will also give off energy and offer possibilities for new energy to emerge. Theory also focuses on the concept of variation. Life is described as an ever-ongoing battle between limitations and liberty, stability and changes, security and the unpredictable. Theories stress that it is important with variation in order to identify and take notice of new information, new patterns and also a new life. Through learning how to live with
disorders, no structure, variation and insecurity you will gain knowledge and learn how
to cope with unpredictable situations, even an unsteady surrounding world. Variation
will make people more attentive to things, help sharpen their senses and increase the
flow of variation (Öquist, 2003).

Aim and objective

The aim of this study is to investigate and gain understanding of how the staff members
at Fundación Senda De Libertad work in a preventive manner with youths who have
social difficulties such as drug abuse, alcohol abuse and criminality in Nicaragua.

Our objectives are the following:

- What methods and approaches do the staff members at Fundación Senda De
  Libertad utilise in order to prevent and deal with various social problems among
  youths?
- How do the staff members at Fundación Senda De Libertad experience their
  preventive work with youths?

METHOD

The method chosen for this problem is the use of qualitative method and approaches.
According to Bryman (2008) qualitative knowledge theories are often described as
interpretation-oriented or interpretative. This means that researchers focus on the
understanding of social work and how participants interpret this environment.
Qualitative research may also be seen as an approach in social sciences. According to
Bryman (2008) qualitative research strategies emphasise words and interpretation of
inductive viewpoints rather than analysing figures and statistics through gathering and
analysis of data.

Methodological approaches

When researchers utilise a qualitative approach, they separate themselves from natural
sciences approaches and focus on the importance of individual interpretation and
assessments of reality. Through identifying and interpreting social reality it is possible
to find changeable traits that are connected to individual creativity and constructive
ability (Bryman, 2009). This means that social skills and opinions are the result of
cooperation between people. That is why it is important to keep in mind that this
research method looks on social reality, as perceived by individuals through
interpretations and experiences, and is constantly changing (Bryman, 2009).

For this reason, the qualitative method will be utilised in this study. Practice and theory
will be combined in order to gain adequate and sufficient information. The practical, i.e.
observations and qualitative interviews, will in turn affect the research objective and
questions, which will result in an analysis of data. The theoretical part is understood
through the gathered data, and the studies of clients will be conducted through
observations and interviews. This method is seen as very appropriate. By combining
practice with theory, the sources will complement each other and contribute to a
realistic and actual image of the problem area (Bryman, 2009).
Prior studies

Gaining prior knowledge and understanding is necessary in order to best approach an informative study. As the study is conducted in Nicaragua, it was important to respect the culture and the norms that people there abide by. It has been of great use to us as researchers to focus on the study and gathering of data rather than adjusting it to a set environment and new experiences. In Nicaragua people have very different living conditions from us, other values and approaches, and by understanding this it were also possible to understand what was written. This could also be a negative aspect since prejudice, misunderstandings and presupposed notions are allowed to flourish. Seeing the world from a perspective that becomes the norm after a time could result in a study in which important and useable material is lost. According to Bryman (2008) the researcher of ethnography may lose control of his or her task and role. The researcher identifies with the people that he or she is supposed to study and come to see the world from their perspective, i.e. going native. This could result in wrongful interpretations and a subjective study rather than an objective study.

Ethnographic perspectives

Hermeneutic research methods are mainly described as being humanly-, culturally-, and social science oriented and are often connected to qualitative research. Hermeneutic and ethnography are intertwined and often seen as part of hermeneutic research. Hermeneutic means the theory on learning and today it is a scientific branch in which scientists interpret, understand and study elementary bases of human living conditions. This deals with understanding the deep and emotional traits of humanity. Hermeneutic research says that deeper understanding comes from interpretation. The aim of this study is to highlight individuals’ social world and reality, and the researchers will present their own interpretations and understanding of the phenomena (Patel & Davidson, 2003).

Distinguishing between ethnography and participatory studies could be difficult. This is due to the fact that the participating observer and the ethnographer commit to a specific group of people for a long period of time in order to capture vital and learning information and knowledge. Ethnography as a term is often preferred rather than participatory observation, since it could be perceived as being only observation. It is also important to keep in mind that you do more than simply observe, that a lot of things occur in practice. Observers and ethnographers gather additional information through interviews, documents and written source material. Ethnography could also be used at times of participatory observation and will primarily focus on understanding and interpreting the culture of a studied group (Bryman, 2009).

The role of the ethnographer is important. The aim of the study is the observer as a participant, which means that there are also observations made that excludes participation. Gathering data from the observations will be complemented with interviews, two kinds of data that are combined into “naturally occurring conversations (...) and details”. This means conducting pre-booked interviews but also taking notes when a conversation occurs spontaneously. The observations should be conducted through open ethnography, in order to facilitate taking notes and also avoid the risk of losing the trust of people which could happen if the ethnography was hidden (Bryman, 2009).
Conducting an ethnographic study will mean taking a risk, the risk of losing focus and your approach as a researcher. If this happens, the researcher may lose his or her role and task. Focus should rather be put on studying, interpreting and studying people. It could be difficult to maintain the role of a researcher and the purpose of the study, which would also make it difficult to abide by a social science approach while gathering data but also when analysing the same data (Bryman, 2009). This is called “going native”, meaning that researchers of ethnographic studies lose their role and research objective. The researcher identifies with the people whom he or she studies and sees the world from their perspective. The aim of an ethnographic study is that researchers become involved in a social environment for a long period of time in order to be able to properly observe behaviours, listen to conversations and ask questions that will enable understanding of the bigger picture of the culture of the social group that is observed (Bryman, 2009).

Planning and execution

Selection

This study was conducted at the organisation Fundación Senda De Libertad in Dario, Nicaragua. The organisation works within many fields, although the field that our study focuses on is a project at Senda De Libertad that works with prevention of deviant behaviour and social problems. After having looked for various operations, organisations and/or projects in Nicaragua, the contact with a project manager at the Pentecostal Church Development Work, PMU introduced us to an organisation in Nicaragua. For many years, PMU has through the help of churches and members of the church contributed to aiding Fundación Senda De Libertad in Dario, Nicaragua. As the organisation deals mainly with these sorts of issues, and from a preventive perspective, the organisation seemed of relevance to our study. The project manager at PMU set up a contact with the project manager at Fundación Senda De Libertad and thereafter, through the organisation, with several external and internal respondents who have been included in this study. These respondents have been of great use to us and contributed with a lot of in-depth knowledge for the study. Apart from the organisational founder and project manager, the study has also included a psychologist, administrator, pastor and teacher in order to gain knowledge and information on the organisation and its work. According to Bryman (2008) this is called a snowball selection. This type of selection has been used throughout the study, but has also been combined with a selection of convenience. Selection of convenience means that researchers utilise people in their studies as they become available (Bryman, 2009).

Yet another selection occurred when the interviewees in one way or the other needed to come in contact with the work of the organisation and its project. This offered a wide and at the same time very specific selection of relevant knowledge to the study. The staff members at Senda were both professional and skilled, equipped with knowledge, as many of the members themselves had had deviant behaviour and social problems in the past. At the same time as the gathered data was a great help to the study, this data could also be used to complement existing studies on knowledge and information (Bryman, 2009).
**Instrument**

In addition to the knowledge of this study, the gathering of data was through interviews and observations. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were utilised in the study in order to offer the respondents the possibility to speak freely although within certain frames. Through establishing interview questions within the field of relevance, these frames had to be set up. The questions were divided into headlines that included the subject of the questions, which made it easier to gather the data and quotations from the interviews as these could be put under the same categories in the results’ section. It was much easier to get a general overview of the information in order to see what was missing and what was to be included. The formulation of the questions have been very general and asked in a way that was informal, in contrast to a structured interview. As the study focused on gathering data on preventive work, the questions were specified so at to revolve around preventive work, thus avoiding answers that were vague and not of relevance. The questions were updated once more after realize that the first interview answers could sometimes be seen as non-relevant, that they allowed for the respondents to answer very "evasively" on the subject. Through specifying the questions in a concrete manner, the answer that was received was relevant for the study. Then questions about the respondents’ personal opinions, interpretations, goals and visions for the project and the organisation were allowed. All of this in order to gain deeper understanding and by allowing the respondent to speak freely without any set frames. Initial preparations were mainly in the form of preliminary interviews that were listened carefully to afterward in order to better prepare for the questions, but also to discover if any of the questions were leading or closed.

For the gathering, the organisational project plan and documents were used to describe the project history and work methods. As this information was also confirmed during interviews, the information is viewed as highly reliable. During the interviews a clear line was found, and several of the respondents seemed to concur in one aspect or the other. Each respondent talked in great detail about his or her field of responsibility in Fundación Senda De Libertad. This offered a more genuine and reliable picture of their work and experiences from within the organisation.

**Gathering of material**

In order to find relevant information for this study, implemented various methods for gathering such, observations and interviews have been utilised. The background information of this study was acquired through a very specific and thorough manner. According to Bryman (2008) the method and strategy for the survey needs to be adjusted in accordance with the questions of the study. To find the most relevant articles, a number of search strategies to limit the number of search hits have been utilised. During the search, our strategy has been to focus on an international perspective.

The study is based on ten articles, selected from different search engines at the Linnaeus University Library. These computerised search engines are Assia, SSA and Sage Publications. The method of selection of relevant articles has been based on key words used to summarise the topic of this study. These key words used were: Church, criminality, sexual transmitted diseases, gangs, father absence, risk factors and protective factors, prevention work, youth and delinquency. As the key words were combined, a number of appropriate and relevant articles for the study were found. All
articles that have been used are peer-reviewed. These are highly reliable since they are reviewed as scientific articles. The principles of selection for these articles have been the abstract and the title of the article as well as the publishing year. Some of the articles and studies were conducted in the United States, Great Britain and Australia.

Observation has also been used as a gathering instrument for this study. Gathering of data has been conducted through non-participatory, controlled and non-structured observations. Non-participatory observations focus on watching the environment without participating in the events, i.e. the observer as a participant. At the same time, the researchers for this study have utilised controlled observations, in order to be able to guide and change an on-going situation. This has helped the researchers to question the organisation and the structure of the project in their way of working and thinking. In connection to these two methods described above, a third method was also utilised, non-structured observations. Rather than using observation schemes, in which behaviour is registered as it occurs in situations, this behaviour has been noted instead. These notes have been detailed and specific in order to offer objective clarity on the situation (Bryman, 2009). Observations took place three times a week. When given the opportunity to participate at speeches and exercises, the researchers have chosen to decline, since there are rules connected to participatory observations. In view of this approach, controlled observations were also utilised in order to gain deeper understanding of the effects of actions, but also to gain deeper understanding of the staff members’ work methods (Bryman, 2009).

The gathering of data took place through qualitative interviews. An interview is a structured conversation with a specific purpose and objective to gain increased knowledge and understanding. This requires carefully chosen questions and an avid listener (Bryman, 2009). The interview method that was utilised for this study was semi-structured qualitative interview, since the respondents are able to speak freely albeit within certain structured frames. The interview method contributed to offering the study a wider and more informative data gathering. The interviews were based on a few predetermined questions that in general terms could be called a questions scheme, while these questions have mainly been unstructured, used in a wider sense as frames to keep the respondents on topic. Semi-structured interviews have also been used in order to facilitate completing the answers with follow-up questions, which could give more meaningful and developed answers (Bryman, 2009). [Appendix 3]

During the interviews a Dictaphone has been used. This has helped the researchers to gather data in a reliable manner without the risk of losing information, but also to help them return to and analyse previous data. A clear advantage with this choice of method is that the researchers have been able to recapture the interviews. The transcriptions of the respondents have been kept anonymous and the recordings have been safely stored. Some of the interviews were conducted in Spanish, which gave cause to wonder if some important information would be lost in translation. This, however, was not the case, as the interviews were retold and structured verbatim.

**Analysis of data**

The gathered data used for this study was processed, analysed and interpreted. In order for the study to be reliable and stable, validity has been considered throughout the process. According to Bryman (2008), reliability and validity concern whether results will change in other studies or if they are affected by random or temporary conditions.
The results may be affected by external factors that in one way or the other reflect the results and affect the reliability. This could be difficult, i.e. achieving the same results regardless of the social situation or other factors. A society and its attitude is constantly changing, and thus it may be difficult to reach a reliable result that is unaffected by external factors. According to Bryman (2008) it is vital that the researchers keep the same attitude and perspective throughout the study and remain unaffected by factors or changing situations; that they through interpreting the interviews and observations are later able to interpret and gain knowledge of the reality and find out if these correspond with the gathered data. Comparing interpretations and insights will give a clear picture of the gathered data. According to Bryman (2008) an ethnographic approach would strengthen the reliability, as the researcher participates in the social life of the study. This would give it more validity since social observations may correspond with the gathered data. This means the actual doing and not the experiences and visions of the respondents.

The scientific data that was gathered for this study has been processed and analysed in a disciplined and strategic manner. Through combining words that are relevant to the study and the organisation Senda De Libertad a number of relevant articles that in one way or the other framed the organisation’s work and focus was found. This in turn was connected to previous research on factors that form the bases of Senda De Libertad. The articles were found through electronic search engines, initially through reading the abstracts and then sorting the articles based on their reliability, i.e. if they were peer-reviewed. On this occasion, some articles were selected for analysis and how they were connected to the study of the organisation. The content was carefully read through as an analysis, in order to gain knowledge on the material and place the articles into different categories, to later map them and sort out those that were deemed most useful. If the article was interesting but irrelevant to the study, it was discarded. It was difficult to find relevant articles on church preventive work in Nicaragua or Latin American countries, so the main focus was to find information and articles in which the church was in one way or the other a part of treatment or preventive work.

All data that was gathered through interviews was equally looked at and in accordance with the same methods and principles. The interviews were recorded and carefully listened through, the reason for this being that we as researchers did not want to miss out on important and meaningful information. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim. The transcribed text was connected to the question so that the presentation of the results would be clear and easy to sort out into headlines and categories. After transcription, the interview was once again listened to in order to safeguard that all the information had been written down. The analysis and interpretation of data was always related to the purpose and objective of the study to make sure that these were answered and emphasised. The interviews and transcriptions were kept safe and private. The gathering of observations was conducted through daily notes, concerning ideas, reflections and everyday work and events. In order to objectively analyse and interpret the observations, most of them took place early on during our visit at Senda De Libertad. This was a great advantage, since the perspectives and views on their work were still unaffected. The daily notes were later categorised into the same groups as the interviews. This sorting of information made it easy to process the gathered data, since
the observations that occurred at preparatory speeches were grouped together with interviews from the same situation.

**Research-ethical considerations**

To achieve the best and most honest result in a study, it requires respect and consideration. In this case, the survey took place in another country, with other prerequisites and other moral standards, which required us to consider these two concepts, respect and consideration. It is important to study the environment and the unwritten rules of the people living there, to adjust to but also take into consideration the culture and the traditions of the country. A researcher may consider information that is processed to be of importance, while the participants see the same information as being unacceptable and damaging. According to Bryman (2008) you should consider the definitions of ”harm” and ”damage”. There is a great risk that the participants will be harmed during the study in one way or the other. If the participants are stressed throughout the study, there is a risk that the study will hurt their self-image and affect their personal development, something that needs to be taken into account in order to minimise the damage for the participants.

Voluntary participation, integrity, confidentiality and anonymity are important for those who participate in the study in order to offer the best prerequisites. If a study should be ethically valid, it is important that the people in question are aware of the current purpose of the study. This means that the people participate voluntarily and are able and entitled to discontinue their participation at any time during the study. The material that is gathered for the study will below be used for this purpose (Bryman, 2009). Ethical dilemmas and approaches should also be taken into consideration. According to Bryman (2008) ethics is so much more than just a method or an approach, ethics is something that should be inherent in every study. It should be included in all aspects, conversations, interviews and observations and should be considered throughout the study. In terms of ethical principles in social science research, there are some principles that should be addressed;

- If it involves any harm for the participants,
- If there is lack of approval from the participants,
- If there is trespassing into privacy,
- If there is some form of fraud, false notions or hidden important information

(Bryman, 2009)

Bryman (2008) also points out that all ethical decisions come with dilemmas; that the boundary between ethical and un-ethical approaches may be difficult to identify. It could be difficult to isolate the purpose of the visit and also to gain an understanding of the environment, the participants and the researcher’s part in the process. When it comes to interviews, each question should be asked with due respect, so that it is possible to learn if the questions are suitable or not. A qualitative approach to all of this will facilitate the asking of questions since these are allowed to be less specific and vague, at the same time as they are more open and flexible than in quantitative studies.

**RESULTS**

In this section of the study we will present the results. The results are ethnographic perspectives, interviews, organisation, project documents and presentations. The results
will be in the form of quotations and observations that are complemented with a deeper understanding of the information offered at the time of questioning and of the questions themselves. We will focus on the preventive work of Fundación Senda De Libertad.

History of Fundación Senda De Libertad Prevention

Fundación Senda De Libertad was founded in 2001 in Ciudad Dario, the municipality of Matagalpa in Nicaragua. A group of young Christians were motivated to help and support young people in need of their support. Many of these youths were involved in alcohol- and drug abuse, which helped motivate the organisation even further since they were able to save lives and change the social problems among youths at the same time.

The work began at a farm behind a house by one of the sisters of the church, Francis Lagun, in the community of Dario. Since there was a serious lack of funds and resources, it was difficult for Senda at the start, however they felt motivated and loving enough to continue through their love of God (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

The group began working without payment and was only reimbursed through willpower and love. The group consisted of several people, for instance Harry Rivers who today is the president of the Foundation. For a long period of time, the organisation had no sponsors or support from the general public, but one of the first sponsors was an organisation in North America (the name of the organisation was never mentioned) that sent funds to facilitate preaching about the Kingdom of God to youths, and also to present the organisation on the streets through movies. During this process, another man named Daniel Gutierrez contributed with his intelligence and helped Senda become organised and further developed. Daniel Gutierrez worked as an English translator and had for a number of years studied in the Nicaraguan capital Managua. In 2004, a group of Swedish teachers visited Dario and needed an English translator, an offer that was accepted by Daniel Gutierrez. One of these Swedish teachers was a history professor at the time, and asked the translator to tell him about his dreams and goals in life. Daniel Gutierrez told them about Senda and its hopes and wishes, and the other members of Senda were also allowed to talk about the organisation which at the time wanted to build a rehab centre for people with alcohol- and drug-related problems, meanwhile sharing their visions and hopes for the future. After this presentation, the teachers returned to Sweden and later announced that they would be happy to establish an exchange programme between Sweden, Gävle, and Nicaragua, Dario, which was gladly accepted by the staff members. Through this contact, Senda also got in touch with the organisation named PMU, an organisation that with the help of churches and church members offered support to projects in different countries. The Swedish teacher helped send in an application and in 2006 the government of Nicaragua was delivered legal document on the Senda project and also the financing of the first stage of the project Rescue, which involved preventive work and training for youths and children in the municipality of Dario. This stage was concluded in 2009 and at the end of 2009 the second stage of the programme was approved until the year 2012 (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

In 2007 the first church opened, Rey de Reys, the King of Kings in Ciudad Dario through Senda, Harry Ríos, who today is the president of the organisation and also works as a pastor in the church, helping to develop the church’s involvement in the organisation. During his time in office, three additional churches have been opened, the
church Prado King of Kings, King of Kings Church 3 M’s, and King of Kings Church Limits. For all these years, the church has based its teachings on the gospel Pentecostal Assemblies of God. Faith in God is the key to success, and if the youths and society work together with love and based on the precepts of the Kingdom of God, their dreams will come true (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

We start a church Rey de Reys, king of king church, and 2007 we started the first church and then after that three more churches come. So we have four churches and we have these projects with the PMU. Senda is the name of the organization, the papers are the name of Senda. Founder of Senda De Libertad.

Fundación Senda De Libertad’s prevention work

Nicaragua is one of the poorest countries in the world. About 60 percent of the population is under the age of 25 and the unemployment rate is about 50 percent. Unemployment is extremely high among youths and they find themselves in extreme poverty. The most impoverished parts of Nicaragua are neither capable of or given a chance to create a more stable economic future or ability to affect their present living conditions and future situation, as they do not have work or schooling. Another extreme problem in society is that youths and also children have developed dangerous drug- and alcohol related problems. Psychological illnesses increase and the suicide rate is going up (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

Fundación Senda De Libertad focuses on youths, young people who for different reasons are in need of support in order to play an important role in society, and later to create possibilities for developing the civil society. The organisation works with strengthening youths’ influence on their own lives and also equips them with possibilities to partake in the struggle against poverty, social difficulties and abuse. During the project, they work on many different lines for instance with preventive speeches, English classes, computer science, music lessons and also with spiritual aspects, i.e. the church (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad). [Appendix 2]

All the areas that we have here, because we have the educational area, we have music, we have kids, we have prevention, I think everything work because we want to help the youths. We need the computer class, we need the music class, we need the speeches, and we need English to reach that goal. If we go to the streets, to the neighborhoods and we reach the youths we need to take them out of their environment so we can offer something to them like computer class, English class, music so that we have something to offer them. Everything works in that area with that and the inspiration we give like prevention speeches in the high school and we are working now with the institution National de Dario. We have good relationship with the director so we visit that institute everyday from Monday to Friday in the afternoon. We have a psychologist, her name is Margarita and we have a lady working with her so they work in the high school and give also psychological consultation to the youth'. (Leader of Senda De Libertad)
**Prevention speeches at Senda De Libertad**

In Fundación Senda De Libertad they have preventive speeches in collaboration with various schools such as Nacional, Academia Christiana and other locally based schools that enable them to reach out to more than 5,000 pupils. These speeches are held in order to affect youths’ mental state and attitude toward the consequences of their actions and addiction to various types of drugs as well as venereal diseases, contraception, sexuality, self-esteem, self-confidence and personal development. Many youths do not have any dreams, they lack ideas for the future, and are thus unmotivated to make things change. The goal of the speeches is to plant new ideas and dreams to make them develop (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

*I think that another way to help the youths is teaching them they have capacity, giving them hopes because here the youths say: I will not start because we do not have opportunities to get a jobs or employment, we need to change out mind, one of the big problems is the mind of the people (…) But sometimes it is not easy and then the youths needs hope, needs this kind of words to them so they can dream, because many dreams of the youths are like dead. The most of young youths do not have dreams, they did not dream about their future, about things that they can reach.* (Leader of Senda De Libertad)

Many youths in Dario, perhaps in the whole of Nicaragua, lack knowledge about pregnancy, contraception and other important issues that Senda talk about during their speeches. Many youths are infected with HIV/AIDS at an early age and this is because of the lack of knowledge about these diseases and how adequate protection can be used as contraceptives. Many youths will also become pregnant due to the lack of knowledge, which will affect their schooling, future employment and other possibilities in life. All of this even though the law clearly states that abortion is totally banned and not an option. During an observation, we noticed how very little youths know about these issues, and also that youths are sexually active very early on. The speech revolved around self-confidence and trust in one’s own ability to say no and the consequences of unwanted pregnancies and knowledge about contraception. The older the pupils, the wider and more specific the information became. The lecturer motivates and encourages students to restrain from having intercourse before they are married (Observations).

Fundación Senda De Libertad also offers speeches for parents, particularly mothers in order to spread wider information and knowledge about these subjects. The project also hosts seminars for parents, youth networks on legal rights, possibilities and the importance of youths becoming involved in society. Through establishing role models in the family, a closer family connection could be created that is identified by trust, confidence and security. There are many single mothers in Nicaragua, and they need to support their families on their own. It is also important to stress the fact that the father is often absent, which means that many youths lack a male role model which in turn could lead to more serious problems (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

*The workshops we have right now in the camp, they had a lot of enthusiasm and that made the camp an success, that they evaluated. And the area that I represent, that is health was very good. And the examination that they made was good.(…) The youth that I work with does not have any orientation from fathers or mothers. Even it is a lot of youths that is living with their grandmother/parents and maybe they are too old to give them orientation of*
what they want to ask. Another thing is that they only live with the mother and she is working so she cannot maintain the mother figure, and the father figure is missing. In the majority of the youth it does not exist a father figure. So they have the mother figure but she is working. So for me the youths are very essential because the adolescent does not have the vision of where they are going or what to do in the future. During the workshops you can help them. (Psychologist in Senda De Libertad)

The most of the mothers are, their husband left them with their kids so we give them lessons, and speeches about how to treat the kids. The rights of kids that the kids has rights (...) some of the kids they sell, they sell in the street because their parents are very poor, the mother. (...) In that place there are many many poor people and kids who work and collecting eh garbage in the pump, iron, and plastic like recycling. So we work with the parents, with the kids too and we teach them many things, about health, about eh sexual prevention because sometimes they did not study so they did not know how to prevent to get pregnant, because sometimes there are families they have a lot of kids and they are very poor. So the condition are, they did not have a job, they did not know how to prevent to get pregnant so they have babies and babies and so sometimes it is hard. But we have many ideas to help the women’s, more the women’s because here in Nicaragua there are a lot of women’s alone without husbands so they have to work and. (...) We also gives lesson and sometimes we need to work with the parents because sometimes the youths are not the problem, they have the problem in the homes, with the parents, they way that they treat them. So we need to work with the parents too. (Leader of Senda De Libertad.)

**English education**

Senda De Libertad focuses on teaching English, as these skills could offer success and better connections with English-speaking democratic countries, set up more contacts, possibilities and perspectives on society and the surrounding. This is why Senda De Libertad offers an English class, as it is considered to be an important language that could bring about job opportunities, open doors and ultimately healthy living conditions (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

> *English is a very important for everybody because if they know English they are going to get a very good job, it’s my case, because I know English and then I get a very good job. So I know it’s good.* (English teacher on Senda De Libertad)

At Senda English is taught four times a week, twice during the weekdays, which is controlled and planned by Swedish volunteer workers and during the weekends the classes are held by an English teacher. All of the training is very sought after. Two courses are held during the weekends, one on a basic level and one on a more advanced level. The classrooms are crowded and warm, 29 pupils will sit on plastic chairs without tables and despite all of this the teacher is actively involved and the pupils are attentive. The ages vary, but the basic course is for pupils between the ages of 8-14 years whereas the advanced level is more suitable for pupils between the ages of 14-21 years. The teacher takes them through various exercises in order to keep up their good spirits, which they succeed in doing. The pupils are required to divide up into different groups
in order to perform assignments and tasks. The pupils are not ashamed of their pronunciation and are very committed; the teacher corrects and reminds them that they are only allowed to communicate in English, which is what they all do. The pupils use a workbook that the teacher has made copies of for all of the pupils. (Observation).

You know for me it’s a little bit difficult because the people are not custom to study English. They go home and speak Spanish all the time and then it has to take time to get the students interested; did you see the class last Saturday? Because you were here they were very shy, they don’t want to talk and then they have to practice a lot and then we are using many techniques for example some classes I have to do outside, we go shopping, see many different places to the students to make the class interesting and different [...] I think it’s very important to know that we are making the difference with the people. Because I am telling my students when I was a student I really wanted to have a place like Senda because I had to move to another city to study. The student has a great opportunity here because a few years ago we didn’t have a place to study English and the students had to move to the capital and it’s very expensive to study there. In our economical situation doesn’t have the way to pay for the study and then we have a very great place and Senda is making the different for all the students that they don’t have many to pay. (English teacher on Senda De Libertad)

The teacher points from pupil to pupil and asks them to repeat yesterday’s homework, the pupils read their homework out loud in front of the class and the teacher corrects their pronunciation. The classroom is very badly isolated and there is a lot of shouting in the background which makes the classroom really loud. We see a young girl in the class who has brought her daughter with her. The teacher explained during the observation that a lot of youths become pregnant at an early age and are unable to study and that is why the organisation allows youths to bring their children with them to class. The teacher also points out that this is a positive thing, since the next generation is just as important as the previous. The children will also hear and observe English from an early age (observation).

It has helped a lot of young people and adults. Between the adult, there is the one I was telling you about, that the person who wanted to take suicide. She was receiving computation over here and she wants to continue receive computation here. But she has...the problem is that she has a little girl. And she does not have anyone to look after her. In this part when she sees Senda she says; I want to keep studying! And many young people; I am going to Senda to study piano, to study guitar, so there is much enthusiasm in them. (Psychologist in Senda De Libertad.)

**Computer knowledge**

Computer skills are very important when it comes to teaching people. Computers are a large part of society and in order for youths to developed and become more motivated, these skills are required. Senda De Libertad works together with INATEC (Instituto Nacional Norte) in order to provide developed and adequate methods for teaching the youths these skills. Computer knowledge is one way to strengthen the society since people who are offered the correct tools will be able to overcome and fight poverty, by
getting work and ability to support their families and themselves, which will set up a healthy base for their future (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

As previously mentioned, Senda De Libertad feels that these computer courses are important when it comes to teaching people how to become more actively involved in society. Through the support of Swedish students, the organisation received twelve computers, these were however later deemed unfit for teaching. In order to develop adequate computer knowledge teaching, a lot of improvements are needed. New computers are needed, and air conditioning and comfortable chairs and tables for the computers will be required for this type of teaching (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

*Here in Nicaragua we use something that we call, we call that baratas, that’s a truck with speakers on the streets and they can announce so we make one, we make two starting this year about our courses, about English, about music, about all the things that we are offering to the youths. And so many of them came, for example now we do not have space now to them, we have 40 students in computer and we just have 12 computers so you can imagine how many. And now we are saying no because we do not have more place to them. So many people, even in English we have 40 students now in Saturday and Sunday.* (Leader of Senda De Libertad)

*In fact there is computer class, English and music here, so you involve them in what they like. And they have also craft, so they ask what they like and after what they like start. Maybe they want to do photoshop, that has a lot of attention over here in Dario because you can do photos that give good profit. So majority of the people likes photoshop because after that they can go to another area and start working to earn their own money.* (Psychologist in Senda De Libertad)

One of the classrooms at Senda consists of twelve computers, and at each computer two people will sit and share the space. The room is made of concrete, and it is small and warm because of all the computers. The ages of the pupils are between 14-25 years. The course is on an elementary level, and at the introductory lesson the teacher has shown them how a computer is assembled, and will at the next lesson show them how to start a computer. The teacher explains how the keyboard works and other basic information. The pupils are mostly young girls who are very social and interested in learning. The youths at Senda take computer knowledge very seriously as they appreciate the possibilities and importance of having this knowledge. The teacher reminds them on several occasions that it is important to know these things and is very clear in terms of what he requires from them (Observation).

**Music education and other activities**

Senda De Libertad also focuses on sports and music, which is a good occupation, as the same time as it helps reinforce the ability to cooperate. These activities take place during the day and in the evenings. Music and activities are not only ways in which to keep yourself busy but also helps you communicate and find mutual interests. The staff members at Senda De Libertad value sports not for the sake of the activity, but for its ability to create meetings and affect most youths. Meetings with youths will occur at different times, based on the conditions of the youths and their needs. Music is a way in which to express emotions, offer an outlet for internal feelings, and process various
types of emotions. Senda De Libertad has a special recording room where youths can go at any time to play and record music, and during the weekdays they also have classes where the pupils can learn how to play and sing (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

Well, friendship. We work.... I am youth, I think I am youth (laughing) I am 34. But we are friends, to talk to them, play with them because for example, I use to play a lot of basketball and I like to play basketball to, so I like to be with them and on the streets, talk with them first. We do not invite them to the church, we talk with them and so they know us to because personal I was born in this town, so most of the people know me. So we start conversation with them and then we know about the problem that they have, what kind of problem do they have first of all. And then we begin to work. I think that that is the first step in the process, conversations and to know them, to know each other. (President of Senda and senior pastor in Rey De Reyes.)

These activities also help decrease youth violence in the cities. Since youths become involved in meaningful activities rather than hanging out on the streets, they are less likely to commit crimes and get into trouble. This is why Senda establishes contacts with youths and are able to affect them to start studying and becoming motivated to change (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

The staff members at Senda do not only work in the building at Senda but also outdoors through speeches and teaching in churches, schools and preschools. Activities such as sports will be offered in the areas where there is likely to be conflicts. This is why the activities are often offered to youths in different places in order to avoid conflicts. The staff members will drive around in order to meet the youths in their home territory. In the future, they would like to see a friendlier city without conflicts where they are able to work with for instance sports without feeling the need to worry about conflicts and problems. Today Senda also works together with the police force, in order to avoid trouble and fighting. Through the aid of the police, a sense of security is established for the organisation, at the same time as the police are able to have the support of Senda to create trust and confidence from youths (Observation).

Sometimes we go to the neighborhood, now we have materiel to go and they like sports. So we go then we make like games or we dance. We identify the leader in the neighborhood, the people that has liberty of them. So we speak with them and we explain the things that we want to do with the youths, so this is the way, play sports. Now this year we, from last year we were working with the police, so they have the list over the youths that has problems so one of the methods that we want to do is visit the youths in the neighborhood, house by house, speak with their parents if they have with the police. We tell them about our activities so they come because they like the music, sometimes they come to play something here. Leader of Senda De Libertad.

Senda De Libertad also works together with the church, the spiritual part, which is seen as a complement to the physical work of Senda De Libertad. Inner peace and security will create hope and faith in the future. This has been seen through observations, as many youths turn to the church in order to speak freely and openly around their faith in God and Jesus. Many youths look for support in the church and will later contact Senda
and vice versa. Youths will speak freely about God and Jesus, and how their belief in life and development was promoted by the church (Observation).

We work with the church; we work better with the church because sometimes youths come to the church and after come to receive our attention in the project, Senda. And sometimes we reach people with computer, English, music class here in the project and then they go to the spiritual field. But we know that the spiritual are very important part and help a lot to the youths. Here in Nicaragua most of the people are Christian, believe in the Christ, even they are catholic and protestant and they believe in Christ. And they know and they saw many testimonies about change the youths who were like alcoholic or something and they come to the church. So we believe that the spiritual is very important for the youths too so. (Leader of Senda De Libertad.)

**Church prevention - Rey De Reys**

For Fundación Senda De Libertad the church plays a very important role as much of the preventive work is enabled through the help of the church. Senda De Libertad consists of four churches and one of these, Rey de Reyes, is placed in Dario and headed by the pastor Harry since its founding in 2007 (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad). [Appendix 1]

I think that Senda has the material areas and material so what we have here is the social. So we have the spiritual too. I mean, some people need prays, conversation or ask if we can help them. So here they can learn something so we can give them other thing together, so we can share together as one. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

We are working together with the church because it is not only we in the project, not only Senda. The things that we have here, the church helps, a lot because there they can sing and they can play with the guitar. (Leader of Senda De Libertad.)

At first, Fundación Senda De Libertad was based in the Pentecostal Movement Congregation Eben-Eser (Asamblea de Dios) that was later replaced with the newly founded church Rey de Reyes (Asamblea de Dios). The church is intended to meet the needs of the families who are poor with many children in the area of Dario. Rey de Reyes is different in the Nicaraguan society as it has a democratic structure, open leadership models and gender awareness; these positive influences have arisen from the work in Senda De Libertad. The organisation also works together with the Pentecostal Movement in Gävle, Sweden (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

Senda is all the organization, this is a project. This project is part of Senda, the church is part of Senda to and when we talk about Senda we talk about all. And the project, this project that Swedish people are supporting is part of Senda but Senda is all. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

In Nicaragua many people are stuck in their impoverished state. The poorest population is unable to develop further and is not given a chance to affect society or their own situation since they lack schooling and work (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).
The lack, a lot of...most of the time the lack is in your mind. People in Nicaragua for example they think; - Ah because I do not have money, I do not have money to do this, I do not have to do this. We think like that. Because the people around the world, they think; -Ah the third world! And so, most of the people think in that way. So we have a lot of lackness in our minds. - Ah okey I am poor. - I am not going to do something in my life because my family is poor. But the Bible says that everything is possible you know what I mean. In the bible we have a lot of examples about that. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

As mentioned above, drug problems, psychological problems and suicide in Dario are common social problems (Founder of Fundación Senda De Libertad).

We have a serious problem in our country. In our country, I do not know, I think that in other words, a lot of youth feels alone. They do not have, I mean, they do not have a person to trust, they do not know how to share their emotions, their problems. They do not have communication with their parent, so I think most of them comes from that kind of background. Loneliness. A lot of people use drugs, alcohol because they have something empty inside of them and they want to feel with that. You do not have love in your house and your family, you parents are tired, you have to look for. You do not have an identity in your life, you have to look in another place, and so.... I know that because, I did it. […] I tried to kill myself, almost three times. And so one day the Lord came to me and change my life, in a moment. And so this is... This experience gave me the opportunity to share with other people, the love of God and hope they can do something different, in their life to. Because I did not have hope, I did not have a vision in my life, for myself and I did not have any purpose. So when I received this, I began to share. So I think that the most important thing is to help and love people. […] When I share my testimony with people they know, and they are part...they have almost the same problem. If something happened in my life and it change me, so for them, they have a possibility. They can change and they can find something that is better. So I think that the love from The Lord is stronger than every problem that we can have in this earth. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

Fundación Senda De Libertad is a preventive organisation that works for social development among children and youths through mutual social work. The preparatory work focuses on youths with drug- and alcohol abuse and violent behaviour out on the streets through spiritual and religious meetings. Today the target group is larger and Senda De Libertad focuses not only on drug-related problems but will also turn their attention to social problems, such as poverty, sex education and the absence of father figures, which the city clearly needs.

One of the problems that we have with youth is that they do not have parents, most of them, they do not have parents, they do not have families. And they live with grandmama and grandpapa so they do not have parents to help them. They do not have somebody to give them or motivate them and so they are twenty years, nineteen years old but they do not have purpose in life. So we need to work with that, it is not easy because they do not know how to work,
they never saw somebody teach them about how to work, and so it is not easy to work with youths to. They do not have education, they do not have the tools, how....can...they...survive. [...] They have to believe in themselves to you know what I mean. Believe them and they have to believe that they can do it because sometimes there are people that have tools but they do not have the courage to do something. [...] We motivate a lot with the preach. When we are preaching them we are motivating them because God believes in us. So we have to believe in them so we are motivating them a lot, almost all the time. If they want to work, we motivate them to. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

The objective of Fundación Senda De Libertad is to strengthen the people’s own influence on their lives and prepare them for taking up the struggle against poverty and apathy. They want the people of Dario to become more actively involved in society, which means that the organisation works in a cooperational form; through preventive programmes, the church and preschool.

We need to build leaders, build people, its not only. I was talking with...the church is not only like a service, we do not talk about a service, its not like a service Ahh we are going to have a service three times a week come to the church. That’s not a plan, the plan is to build people to work with them, so we are working without manuals, about that, so we want to release leaders in the city. We have the plan to work more and more with the people and to change the city. [...] The vision for our church is to bless our community, is to bless the community, to bless the people and so it will be the one to help an area of youth people that we want to bless them but we do not have all the, all the materials or the people to work with them. So Senda helps. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

Most people who work with Fundación Senda De Libertad are religiously active and this could reflect their work methods. Two of the founders of the organisation are pastors in the church Rey de Reyes, which makes the church an important part of the work. In this manner the two parties complement each other in their preventive work with youths. In some cases, the church has more effect on the youths’ lives since religion and faith in Nicaraguan culture is an important part of living. Although religion is a large part of society in general, Fundación Senda De Libertad accepts all people who are interested in developing their knowledge or learn new things within the fields that are offered (Observation).

The church work together with Senda because a lot of workers here are from the church, not all but a part of them are part of the church. And we support them, we have a connection. [...] You know that Senda helps or support them or join them in different activity and so when Senda needs our help, we can give them our help. And when we need Sendas help they give us, so it depends of the activity and what activity we are about to do. [...] The youth are in the church, some of them, another are not, because here we receive all kind of people so they decide where they want to go. If they want to go to the catholic, they can do it. If they want to go to our church, it depends of them. And so people when they are here we share with them, you know they are here, they play, they study but now we have another time to give them purpose in life. To
give them identity, to give them purpose, ideas about how to do, how to, I mean...develop in some areas that they are receiving. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

The church room consists of an old dance hall, the exterior looks like any building but has the sign Rey de Reyes over the door. The room is simply decorated with white silken fabric twirled around the pillars and railings, the walls have four banners hung up in different colours and carry the names of Jehovah, Rafa, Jhire and Nissi, which are other names for the God’s true name according to the gospel. There are no other religious symbols such as crosses, Jesus or the Virgin Mary (Observation).

The room is spacious with a stage at the front where the pastor will stand and preach to the people and also has a church band consisting of youths who play instruments and sing. The participants sit on plastic chairs that are aligned on either side of the aisle. Most of the time, the participants will stand up with their hands in the air and sing alongside the band. The songs are about God and faith and that nothing is impossible. The pastor will motivate the youths and adults to take on challenges in life, make decisions and encourage them to support one another and during the Mass they will place their hands on the participants standing behind them and say motivating words such as: nothing is impossible. The church cannot use manuals and structured work methods but the content is just as important as motivational talk (Observation).

The introduction to the church service consists of loud music which makes you feel as if you are at a concert. All participants will sing along with the choir, clap their hands and join the rhythm of the music. The longer the service, the more intense it gets, and some of the participants will be emotionally moved to tears by the music. There is a great sense of community among the participants and they are exalted when they sing, cry, move and shout without judgement, they are one with God. After about an hour of singing and music, the pastor will start the service. The content is based on the Bible, and the chapters dealing with obstacles and changes in real life (Observation).

The Bible is not only spiritual. The Bible have the answer for all the areas in our life, for family, for jobs, for children. [...] For me the Bible has a lot of power. Not only about, not only for myself, the word of God has the power to change every area of the mind. The Bible has the answer for everything, and so when we have somebody and we show them the word about what God thinks about them and about... they can do it, nothing is impossible. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

All the time I'm motivating them to study, I'm telling them that they need to study. If they want to do something in life they need to study and I share them because I had a lot of opportunity to study when I was a youth but cause of the trouble of the alcohol, I lost a lot of opportunity for this and this. You do not have to lose it, you have to get the opportunity because this opportunity is going to send you to another level, you know what I mean, an opportunity. Because so all the time we are motivating them. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)
Fundación Senda De Libertad is financed by PMU – the Pentecostal Mission Development Work. The organisation receives a payment of about 920,000 Cordobas, which is approximately 180,000 USD for a two-year period. The government will also contribute with a low salary of about 25 dollars per month to the teachers who work in the preschool. Senda is only financed by the PMU and receives funding from neither the government nor authorities apart from the preschool activity (Finance Manager in Senda De Libertad).

We do not have any finance support only in preschool, they give us some food for the kids. In our preschool we, is a part of us and a part from the government too. And they give us rise, beans, cereals, corn to cook to the kids and, and the government give like coupons to the teachers but it is not much, it is like 500 Corones, less than 25 US dollars per month to the teacher. That is all. (Leader and Finance Manager of Senda De Libertad)

The latest reimbursement from the Pentecostal Mission Development Work was in September of 2009 and will be concluded in July 2012. PMU will only pay for the financial part of the project until 2013 due to legislature changes in the organisation. The organisation thought that Nicaragua was a country of possibilities and will therefore focus more on other countries in the future that are in better need of the funding. PMU will help Senda apply for new organisational funds in the future (Finance Manager of Senda De Libertad).

Fundación Senda De Libertad has established good relations with different authorities. Its official status is a non-governmental organisation and is thus accepted as a legal party by the parliament in Nicaragua. This means that the organisation and its democratic structure are approved by the authorities. Relations with local authorities are efficient, although they also operate on an international level. Senda De Libertad works together with the police force in Ciudad Dario. The cooperation has reached positive results as the target group of both organisations is the same and they complement each other’s work. Senda De Libertad also works with the churches and helps develop social work among youths. The work and contacts with society is paradoxally constantly changing and stable, and it also includes working with government organisations and voluntary organisations. In their preventive work, Senda cooperates with different schools, such as Instituto Nacional and Academia Christiana (Founder of Senda De Libertad).

We are working with the police, sometimes the police have to for example like five months ago in a footballs game, two neighborhood youths of different neighborhood start a fight. And in that fight one youth died so that made in the two neighborhood conflicts and problems. All the time they were fighting because that, because the youth died. So the police arranged like a encounter, like a meeting for the youth to make peace so the police invite us to go. So I went to the, to the meeting and so there were the boss and team of the youths both of the two neighborhood. So I start to explain to the, giving some words. (Leader of Senda De Libertad.)
Goals, ambition and personal experience

Fundación Senda De Libertad has a number of objectives that they strive to achieve and one of these is to strengthen the youth organisation. They wish to identify and strengthen their democratic and equal role in general society. In the future, Senda De Libertad will establish a leisure time centre that is to work together with authorities and various other parties. They want to open a library that it to be built with the help of various participants. The organisation wants to strengthen and develop contacts with authorities, meaning that they will also become actively involved in questions dealing with the development of the society of Dario.

*We have a plan it is to work more and more, with different organization and to see a change.* (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

Through various forms of sports, music and studies of different subjects, Senda wants to teach the ability to cooperate, discuss, reflect, analyse and be creative so that people in the future will have the possibility to set up their own businesses, small companies etc. They want to make people more aware, teach them how to take responsibility and become equal members of society.

*That through my lectures, through the cases, the youth change because the youth of right now, that young people have great impact. This will transform and change the world, that's what I feel. They will change the world for the better and they have ideas that are very important. But you have to stimulate them and you have to show them there potential. You have to say to them who they are because each one of them has insert able movement. In one or another way, in some youth you can see he who sits behind or him who is bothering. They can be called stupid but more beyond, when it becomes a case you can see that these guys have a problem. And you have to treat those problems. When they stop being the stupid one of that section, they will start to show their great potential and when they show it they are great equipment to Nicaragua, is a great support and help. Because now they have goals and dreams and before they did not.* (Psychologist in Senda De Libertad.)

Fundación Senda De Libertad wants to continue working with ethical tasks such as family planning and equality issues, since the different parts of ethical work also helps strengthen the questions of self-confidence and mental attitudes. It is also important to know that Nicaragua is a country signified by a male chauvinist structure. The organisation wants to teach work methods and models for working with youths through information, seminars, tutoring and good role modelling (Senda model). They wish to form leaders for other youth groups and also work on democratic issues as bases for all types of activities. Senda feels that it is important in order to reach the long-term objectives.

*I would like to have influence in the politics we have a lot of problem here with the politics in the town, in the country. I would like to see business, ideas, all the people have business idea, I think, they have something in their mind. [...] My ideas and vision is to see this city change in all the areas, to see a different city. Where the people, where the poor has provision, where the sickness people has healing their life, where the people that are in drugs are not in*
drugs, with good parents, with good children, good education good jobs, I would like to see different city, a different town. I would like to see ... hmmm... everything a different way maybe its a big dream but we can do it. Step by step, one by one. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

During the observation we have noticed that the staff members are really involved in the youths and that they are ambitious about their work. Despite setbacks they are hopeful about the future and future planning such as rehab centres, larger rooms and independent funding. A large factor that could contribute to continued development of the organisation is the connection they have with the youths, which has resulted in a genuine and humble relation (Observation).

We only had patience, the passion to love and to help and so we have been working and working, and that is that.[...] In the beginning we did not have salary, we began to work without salary and then came the salary. I do not remember exactly but for three or four years we did without salary and without facilities. And I think it is very positive for our city. And more, all the teachers are working with love, to embrace people and to build them for a future. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

In the beginning we worked just with passion, with love and we still work with passion and love because to work in the social field you need love, you need passion. You need to expand your time with the youths. (Leader of Senda De Libertad.)

Yet another factor that helps build this humble relation between youths and professional workers is that some of the employees have had similar upbringings including abuse, poverty and absent fathers. The staff members speak openly about their lives and experiences (Observation).

I have been studying but I think I did not have education for projects and all this stuff. All this we have learned by experience. Because in the beginning most of us, we were part of drugs and alcohols, the Lord change our life and for example in my life I changes, something change my life. Twelve, almost twelve years ago and in that moment. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

In the beginning when I was not a Christian, I start to drink alcohol from, here in Nicaragua it is crazy because kids start to drink very early like from 13 years old so I started to drink alcohol at 14 years old. But I made a stop when I was 20 years old because, somebody invited me to come to the church so I experiment and I change. After that I started to work with youths. That’s the reason because I know in that age the kids and the youths can be involved in that kind of problem. Because that is that age were they want to know everything, they want to experiment something different and if somebody say to them “ey take this and drink this” so they going to do it. So in those days nobody came to me and tell me anything, do not do that because if you do this it will be consequences, you will lose this so that is what we are doing now. Show them the consequences, show the problematic that they will have if they make the decision to drink or consume drugs or alcohol. So my experience you know made me to work with this. (Leader of Senda De Libertad.)
For Fundación Senda De Libertad it all comes down to dreams and visions. They wish to keep the dreams alive and show that nothing is impossible since Senda De Libertad will start out with simple dreams. Today Senda De Libertad has affected and changed the lives of many people, not only for youths but also mothers and fathers.

With the Bible we give them identity, first about themselves, about that they have the possibility to do something in life, and they can do it. They have to dream they have dreams. The Lord is giving us dreams, this organization started with a dream. We did not have the money, we did not have... NOTHING! We started on a piece of land that somebody gave me the opportunity to use. - Yea, you can use this here. No, in raining season it was terrible. We did not have something, a computer, a projector... but we had a dream. And we began to dream with that. And everything began to work, to give us all the need that we had. We did not have the land, now we have a lot of piece of land. We have our building in the church, on the main highway. We have almost a hectare of land there, we built three more churches. We did not have the money, you know what I mean. God is giving us, but everything is start with a dream. So we are giving them hope in life. So if we have the possibility to help them, we can do it. (President of Senda De Libertad and senior pastor in Rey de Reyes.)

Summary of the results

In the last two decades, Nicaragua has suffered from civil war, natural disasters and serious financial difficulties. Many Nicaraguan youths have been seriously affected by these events. The youths lack activities, dreams and objectives to be successful and feel motivated to progress. Senda De Libertad works mainly with youths, youths whom for different reasons need support in order to become active participants in society. This will also help them make changes in the future of the general society. This work with Nicaraguan youths helps them find their dreams, objectives and activities so that they will develop in a positive direction. They also learn how to affect their own lives, to become equipped with possibilities that will enable them to take up the struggle against poverty, social setbacks and abuse. This is achieved through offering for instance preventive speeches, English classes, computer classes, music lessons and spiritual input through the church. By offering prerequisites for change, they are able to get the youths involved in society and break with the vicious circle of poverty and criminality.

Through spreading knowledge about things that matter in society, they are able to promote change and provide prerequisites for a stable and successful future. Observations show that youths appreciate the work of Senda De Libertad, that they see the organisation as a possibility for change, and this contributes to motivating the youths in a very efficient manner. Senda De Libertad does not only focus on youths but also on their surroundings, which gives them a chance to later on help support their families. Many women are single mothers in Nicaragua, which is why they need to be the only providers for their families. The lack of father figures in the lives of many youths could result in serious problems in the lives of the children. Fundación Senda De Liberatad offers a lot of information on these subjects to parents, particularly mothers, and a wide range of other topics, such as absent fathers, drugs, gangs and other social problems. Senda De Libertad also offers seminars for parents and youths that revolve around rights, possibilities and the importance of youths becoming more involved in
society. Through establishing role models in a family, the family will become a stronger unit that promotes trust, confidence and security.

Observations show that Senda De Libertad works closely together with the church, in spiritual matters, and this is a good complement to the physical work of the organisation. It offers inner peace and security that gives hope and faith for a better future. We have also noticed that many youths turn to the church and talk very freely and openly about their faith in God and Jesus, and how faith in life and development has been promoted by the church. Many youths look for support through the church and later turn to Senda, or vice versa.

**Theoretical analysis**

The central idea of system theory is that the unity is larger than the sum of the individual parts. This means that the combined traits and human view on the world is more important than the individual parts. By combining these parts into a unity, we find a significant and informative general picture (Öquist 2003). Senda De Libertad works based on these perspectives, problems are seen as a unity in which many different factors contribute and affect the events of things. Through solving one problem other things may also be solved. Senda De Libertad works in a number of different fields, in order to be better prepared to meet people who have different dreams, objectives and personalities. A subject that could highly affect people is for instance the English classes, and the organisation believes that English is the key to future work. This creates a general picture since it becomes less important to focus on youths being involved in gang activities, that they lack a father figure or are criminals, and helps shift focus to life as a whole unit. By giving them the prerequisites to work and progress, youths will also develop other parts of their lives. This is in view with the ideas of system theory, and Öquist (2003) writes that the basis of system theory is that there are always a number of different opinions on solutions and that there is rarely only one solution. Solutions need to be adjusted in accordance with the individuals, all people are different and hence require different solutions to the same problem. You could also look at development as a moving picture, that something is always taking place, either in a positive or negative direction. By constantly reaching for large changes and setting up high requirements, you are deemed to fail. Senda works with youths from many different environments, of different mental attitudes and with various possibilities to develop. The staff members at Senda see a constant development, based on the individual starting points of each youth, and say that every small step counts. Encouraging development and offering glimpses of the future helps to promote further development. Through this youths learn how to deal with problems, prevent risk factors and process underlying factors.

Development does not only occur at English classes or computer lessons but also on a spiritual level, as it helps establish inner peace and quiet that aids youths in a different manner. Through confirming and identifying the spiritual/inner part of the youths, they learn how to deal with emotions, hopelessness and seeing the underlying factors of complex and difficult situations. According to Öquist (2003) it brings calm and order into a chaotic life when this calm is channelled through routines and community. This calm is needed in order to reach one’s goals and focus on things that are most important to you, whereas community fuels energy and gives access to new strength. The church at Senda offers youths free access to the church activities and encourages them to look
for their inner calm in the church, to step away from poverty, criminality and chaos around them and find inner peace, if only for a little while. This calm could give the youths the answers they are looking for, and helps them focus on new things that they are faced with while calm. Routines are also important, the daily work and activities at classes, speeches or seminars. A routine will help bring order into the lives of youths. According to Senda, this is very important, since routines will prevent criminality and youths running wild in the streets. Many youths suffer from stress and it becomes worse and worse; youths are encouraged to take quick solutions in order to survive which could lead to serious problems. According to the priest at Senda De Libertad, many youths turn to the church on their own in order to find peace, quiet and inner calm. This has helped many youths to find themselves and their dreams, and Senda has helped them fulfil them. Life is a constant battle between limitations and freedom, stability and changes, security and unpredictable events (Öquist 2003).

Healthy communication is also something that, according to system theory, is very important in order to deal with and solve problems. You will find strength to make changes through efficient communication and encouragement and comments. Communication is something that the church, Rey de Reyes, at Senda De Libertad works with a lot. It is a platform where the history of the staff and the youths meet, in order to gain a sense of understanding and trust. Many who work at Senda have in one way or the other been through the same difficulties as many of the youths have. Communication is achieved through allowing youths to speak freely and talk about their dreams, find new paths to reach their goals and feel loved by the community. This is highly valued by the staff members, this type of healthy communication.

DISCUSSION

In this chapter we will discuss the results of gathered data and hope to reach as wide and informative result as possible. The discussion on methods will include the connections between system theory, previous research and results.

Method discussion

The background chapter of this study is information that has been collected through peer-reviewed articles in order to gain trustworthy and relevant information for the study. The content of these articles focused on aggressive behaviour among youths. This posed a limitation to the selection, as the study focus was a non-relevant subject in Nicaragua. The choice of aggressive behaviour was so specific that it was next to impossible to find an organisation or operation that only worked with aggressive behaviour. For this reason we chose to conduct the background information and questions in a much wider sense and less-specific so that it also came to involve social- and behavioural problems. When we came into contact with Senda De Libertad and had information about their work and organisation, we chose to discard non-relevant information and too specific questions. This was because we initially had an idea of what was considered to be relevant for our study. Although we have set these limits, it was not until the first interview was conducted as we realized that the restrictions had to be more specific. The questions were at first very general but after a deeper understanding of the organization and its work, we chose to specify the issues from the elements and perspectives that the organization was based on.
We realised that the role of the church from a preventive perspective forms a clear basis of the organisation, and that the church is clearly responsible for much of the organisation’s results. Due to this we were faced with problems in searching for appropriate articles, since there was a clear lack of articles dealing with the role of the church from a preventive perspective and specifically in Central America. The questions chosen for this study includes all parts of Senda De Libertad and thus this questions was deemed relevant for our study in Nicaragua. It deals with both preventive work and the actual implementation of preventive work.

The choice of method used for this study has helped us gain a wider understanding of the work of Senda De Libertad. Is also gave us the opportunity to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation since the methods chosen were subjective, concrete and straight forward. This study has been based on an ethnographic perspective, meaning that we conducted observations without being participants. The gathering occurred through observations and complementary interviews. The observations were based on open ethnography in order to facilitate the taking of notes and reduce the risk of losing trust, which could happen if the observations were conducted through hidden ethnography. For us it has been profitable to openly and honestly observe the work of the staff members, and it has also allowed for us to see development and actual work efforts. At first we wanted to utilise participatory observations, however while conducting the study we realised that non-participatory observations was the correct choice of method. Since the culture in Nicaragua is a caring society and welcoming, it was easy for us to remain objective throughout our study. Afterwards, we realized that it was not always easy to remain objective in certain situations. As we mentioned earlier, we quickly realized how welcoming and friendly the people were at Fundación Senda de Libertad. This created difficulty to maintain distance in order to stay objective. We therefore chose to make all observations at the beginning to maintain the distance and the objective perspective.

One difficulty that arose during the interviews was that we lost the ability to control the interviews in a good way, since the respondents answered the questions briefly and not as specifically as we would have wanted them to. We wrote our interview guides prior to meeting the respondents, and for this reason we set up questions that were not particularly specific as we had no information on the respondents. During the study we realised that we had to adjust the questions based on the specific approach and work of the respondents. This in turn enabled us to develop and specify the questions, and allowed us to conduct the interviews in a more professional manner. Some of the interviews were conducted in Spanish since many people in Nicaragua do not speak English. Before beginning our study we had some ideas on how to avoid losing important information from the interviews and misunderstand or misinterpret things. The translation was transcribed verbatim and in order to make sure that we had not missed out on any important information or misunderstood anything from the Spanish interviews we listened through the interviews several times.

**Result discussion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate and increase understanding of how staff members at Fundación Senda De Libertad work in a preventive manner with youths who have social problems such as drugs, alcohol and criminality in Nicaragua. Through the choice of research methods we were able to answer the questions in a concrete
manner. The information that was collected has offered insight into their work methods, and how they prevent and deal with social problems among youths.

Previous studies have shown that risk factors have great impact on deviant behaviour. There are two kinds of risk factors; internal and external. The internal risk factors include for instance biological disposition, personality traits and characteristics. These traits may revolve around temper, mental ability, lack of stress control, hyperactivity, impulsiveness, and concentration-, attention- and empathy disorders. External factors may include the lack of close relations with other family members and unstable attachment, violence, abuse, mental illness in the family and negative upbringing methods. One of the most apparent risk factors for unhealthy social development is hanging out with friends who break social norms. During the study we have mostly met youths who have external risk factors in combination with friends who break social norms.

By participating in the project at Senda De Libertad, they have found other paths than simply roaming the streets. They study, learn how to operate computers, or are active in sports through the help of the organisation. Fundación Senda De Libertad is closely connected to the church which means that many youths turn to the church for aid and support. The church helps the youths and stimulates their spiritual selves, whereas the youth project Senda helps them with the physical part. This is a new work method not previously seen in Sweden, since we are more used to working with manuals and other established methods in order to help with mental health. Through observations we noticed that the church has a positive effect on the lives of youths as it allows them to feel a sense of relief and a deeper connection to God.

**Risk and protective factors**

The objective of Fundación Senda De Libertad is to prevent youths from choosing bad lifestyles through reinforcing the protective factors. Youths who have no schooling or abuse alcohol/drugs are those who end up committing crimes and criminal actions. A risk factor that affects criminal behaviour is to end up in the wrong gang. Through preventive work it is much easier to identify these violent youths before they begin taking action. The efforts of Senda De Libertad increase the chances for youths at risk to develop stable lives, going to school and eliminating crime, violence and criminality from their lives. Their intervention will also give the youths a chance to move away from dysfunctional lives and gain normal development possibilities.

Risk factors that may affect youths could be anything from life events to their relations with people in their surroundings. Risk factors are rarely isolated from one another, and are often present at the same time as they reinforce one another. Youths who are faced with several risk factors may end up in a negative spiral that could result in asocial or behavioural problem patterns. This behavioural development could be subdued if you work on their environment and their personal protective factors. A factor that affects the youths in Nicaragua to a great extent is the absence of fathers. This will affect youths so that they may end up working at an early age due to poverty. Worst case scenario they drop out of school and turn to drug dealing that offers quick cash. Another factor that affects the youths is a mother who is not at home and cannot provide adequate attention. Children and youths growing up in households without a father figure are more likely to develop deviant behaviour than youths who grow up in a home with two parents. Problems related to youths raised in single-parent households are drug abuse, problems with anger management, fear and abandonment. In Fundación Senda De Libertad they
are very aware of these problems and how they affect youths in Dario, Nicaragua. This is why speeches are offered to parents, primarily to mothers, about how to create trust, confidence and security within the family. Other cases could be youths who have been raised by their grandparents. Because of their age, the youths are unable to receive an upbringing that motivates them or gives their lives any meaning. They need an adult role model who can teach them how to work and utilise their inherent tools. They also need someone to motivate them, believe in them and encourage them to study, work and take control of their future.

During the study, we have seen the ambition of the staff members and their work with youths. The objective of the organisation is to integrate them into society and offer them motivation and alternatives for a better life. They work with strengthening the youths’ protective factors, which is important if you wish to avoid developing deviant behavioural patterns. Of course there are leisure time activities but compared to Sweden they are not organised in the same manner. Nicaraguan leisure time activities are not as structured as those in Sweden when speaking of preventive work for youths. Despite the fact that several of the staff members at Fundación Senda De Libertad lack educational training, they put their hearts and souls into the work in order to help these youths. They base their work on their own experiences and most of them have suffered from the same risk factors as the youths have. The staff members at Senda De Libertad share their own experiences with the youths at the same time as they keep remembering that all individuals are different and need different types of attention and help. Their primary motivation is offered through the church services, and the content of these services is just as strong as a motivational talk in Sweden. The self-esteem and self-confidence of the youths and society is strengthened. Encouragement and motivation helps making things feel possible and worthwhile. We could never have the same experiences in Sweden since religion is less important and does not affect people as much as it does in Nicaragua. In Nicaragua people are one with God and they find strength through him to go forward. The most important subject in focus when dealing with youths is self-esteem. It is very important in the lives of youths since self-esteem plays a major part in their decisions, actions, health and motivation. If youths have high self-esteem, they are less at risk of ending up in the wrong crowd, be affected by group pressure and do things that are socially unaccepted or illegal. Of course there are risk factors that affect behavioural problems, but one of the most important protective factors is self-esteem.

Yet another factor that separates Swedish work methods from those used in Nicaragua is that Sweden focuses on the distance between participant/client and professional/consultant. There is always a gap between privacy and professionalism. This is not the case in Nicaragua. The staff members openly share their experiences and everyone knows everyone’s families and they all make up one large family. The society and culture of both countries are based on two completely different ideas, and this makes a huge difference in the choice of work methods. If Nicaraguans had utilised the same work methods as we do in Sweden, they would probably not have reached the same positive results when it comes to integrating youths. The methods differ but they work. This may be due to the fact that youths in Nicaragua are in need of an additional family, someone who is there for them and supports them, and the staff members at Senda De Libertad fill this need. Since there are many risk factors that affect the youths, they need other methods and since many Nicaraguan youths do not have a father in their lives, the staff members have become very important to them. The key to success among youths
in Nicaragua is that the staff members have not kept to their privacy but have been very honest and open about personal things.

**Prevention work**

From the beginning Fundación Senda De Libertad focused on youths with drug-, alcohol- and violence problems on the streets through spiritual and religious meetings. After a while, the organisation developed into becoming a preventive organisation that works mainly with social development of children and youths through mutual social activities. The target group is larger today and Senda De Libertad focuses not only on drug-related problems but also on other social problems, such as poverty, sex education and the absence of fathers, which the city is in great need of. The organisation tries to offer children, youths and families support to develop, chances to affect society or their own personal situation through education in English and computer knowledge. This could in the future mean that they are able to get a job and reach out to people who are caught up in poverty. They wish to show the people of Dario, Nicaragua, that it is possible to have a better life. Most people in Nicaragua believe that if you do not have money you cannot do anything, and Senda De Libertad wants to change their opinion by telling them that lack of money does not mean that you have to have an unhealthy life. Their thinking should not revolve around the fact that they have grown up in a poor country, but that they should stand up for themselves and fight for things they want to happen in the future.

Through focusing on youths they make them influence their own lives, equip them with possibilities to fight against poverty, social difficulties and abuse. The preventive work takes place through preventive speeches, English classes, computer lessons, music lessons and the church that provides them with the spiritual part of well-being. At these leisure time activities, youths are able to hang out together, play table tennis or sit by a computer, all in a peaceful environment that allows youths to relax. Leisure time activities could be of great import for youths who grow up in financially- and socially exposed areas. They will give the youths the chance to set up good relations with adults outside of their families, who notice them, confirm them and function as role models. At Senda youths can turn to the staff members if they want to talk to someone, since the staff members have similar experiences, offering them hope and changes in life. Since the leisure time centres are open to all youths, it gives them a chance to do something else than turn to serious crime, criminal gangs, drug dealing and abuse. Senda De Libertad has taken on the opportunity to offer alternatives to the risky environments and activities of Nicaraguan youths. This could be in the form of sports, music and studies of various subjects, which is what Senda offers. At the same time they learn how to cooperate, discuss, reflect, analyse and be creative. This makes youths aware and prepared for taking responsibility and becoming equal members of society.

In Nicaragua many youths lack knowledge about sex education, pregnancy and contraceptives. These topics are addressed at Senda and they go round to various schools to teach youths of all ages. The speeches that are held focus on the youths’ mentality and attitude toward the consequences of venereal diseases, contraceptives, pregnancy and sexuality. This will help them learn more about venereal diseases and how to use a condom to prevent spreading diseases and becoming pregnant. Since Nicaragua has a law against abortion, pregnancies could affect your chances of finishing school, having a job and often other future possibilities in life. The church and religion
are very important and encourage youths to restrain from having intercourse prior to marriage. This method is used in order to affect the sexually active youths so that they do not have sex and spread diseases and avoid unwanted pregnancies. The church, however, does not only have a great impact in this aspect. Many youths turn to the church also in terms of support and advice, as a place where they are neither forgotten nor judged. The spiritual part is important and helps relieve their anger and frustration, which leads to calmness and new perspectives on the future. Inner peace and security will give hope and faith in a better future. Many youths talk about God and Jesus, how their faith and changes in life have been motivated by the church. The church motivates its youths to restrain from taking drugs, doing crime and illegal actions. The Bible is used as a guide, an instruction for how to reach success whether talking about poverty or pregnancy.

In Fundación Senda De Libertad professional workers keep a humble attitude towards youths and share their own life situations and experiences with the youths. There are also staff members who are not officially educationally trained but have established professional approaches to working that is based on their own experiences and the passion for helping others.

Conclusions and implications

Fundación Senda De Libertad works with youths who for different reasons are in need of support and aid in order to develop and affect their future in society. Through providing them with possibilities and prerequisites for this change, they will also gain stability to be able to develop and affect their own lives. We noticed that a majority of the youths at Senda appreciated the work and we realised after some time at Senda that they can offer youths a functioning life. As many as 50 percent of the Nicaraguan population in Nicaragua is unemployed and about 60 percent of the population is under the age of 25. Many youths are unable to affect their own future and will therefore spend their time committing criminal actions, doing drugs and so forth. The work of Senda De Libertad will not only give youths opportunities but also hope, and this hope has to do with the fact that many of the staff members at Senda have themselves been subjected to abuse, poverty and other social problems. They understand the youths. After spending some time at the organisation and observed their work, we began to wonder about their work and approaches. Understanding human beings’ lives and goals is the key to success. The staff members at Senda will go out to youths and welcome them into the organisation, on the conditions of the youths in order to gain their trust. The experiences have been positive, since preventive strategies for youths with social problems need to sometimes be adjusted to the personal attitude of the youth and his or her willingness to change. Through adjusting the efforts accordingly, the organisation is able to promote trust and confidence. The staff members put their hearts into their work, alongside with love and faith in Jesus and God. Perhaps stable structures are lacking, but despite this we could see development, development that makes youths stay off the street, gangs, criminality and abuse. The structure is in their minds, the frames for what is considered to be professional or private is not even something that they take into account. At Senda the youths are welcomed with open arms and they become involved in their work. In Sweden this could be seen as uneducated or unprofessional, but sometimes formal structures are not needed to make operations work.
LIST OF REFERENCES


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Fundación Senda De Libertad
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Fundación Senda De Libertad
Interview guide 1

Founder and leader of Senda De Libertad

Name

Position/Title

Professional experience

Background and history

1) Can you describe the background of this organization?

2) How did you working at the beginning. What is the difference between working then and working now?

3) How is the organization working today?

4) How does the prevention work go?

5) How long have you been active in this project?

Personal experience and education

6) Do you have any education or experience that is relevant for this project Senda?

7) Do you have any personal experience?

8) How many employs does Senda have?

Senda De Libertad’s preventions work

9) How do you think the project can help those in need?

10) How many persons and families receive help from Senda?

11) Have you seen any result here in Senda or the church? If yes, what is the positive vs. the negative? If no, why?

12) So you have not received any negative results?

13) Have you receives any comments from the society about what they think about your work?

14) Can you explain the process in Senda?

15) What kind of background does the most youth’s here have?
16) What’s the age of the majority here in Senda?

17) What programs or methods do you have to offers youth’s who comes to Senda?

18) How many youth’s complete or drop out of the project? If so, what are the reasons?

**Budget and cooperation**

19) Do you cooperate with other organizations and in what way?

20) What are your goals, vision and ideas for the future and what are your plans for the future?

21) Does Senda follow up or keep supporting the youth’s that completes the project? If so for how long?

22) What do you think is the positive with this project and what do you think can improve?

23) How does the organization finance?

24) How large a budget does Senda have?

25) Does the organization receive any finance support from local government, local authorities?

**Final questions/ other**

26) Is there something you want to add? What is/are the most important thing(s) I should take with me from this interview?
Interview guide 2

Responsibility of operations

Name

Position/Title

Professional experience

History/ Background information

1) For how long have you been active within the organization/project?

2) What are your reasons for choosing to work within this specific organization and this specific project?

3) Do you have any education or experience that is relative for working in Senda? If yes, what education and on what level?

Results and examples

4) How do you think the organization can help those in need?

5) How did you get in contact with the people in need? Did the organization receive any help from the community to locate the person in need?

6) Do you limit the help or can you help all of the persons in need, to whom you are in contact with?

7) How many persons/families receive help form Zenda?

8) Have you seen any results? If yes, what are they – both positive and negative?

If no, why do you think that is the case?

9) Have you received comments from the society about what they think about your work?

Strategies and approaches

10) Where/how do you first come in contact with the youth? What is the process like?
11) From what kind of backgrounds do most youth come?

12) At what age do the majority of the youth start attending the project?

13) How many youth can you accept to the project?

14) What programs or methods do you have to offer youth who come to Senda?

15) How many youth complete vs drop out of the project? For what reasons?

16) Do you cooperate with any other organizations? In what ways?

Goals and ambitions

17) What are the ideas and visions?

18) What are the goals, ideas, and visions for the future?

19) What are the plans for the future?

20) What are your personal desire, interests, and motivation to carry out social work?

21) How high is the chance of success vs the risk of recurrence among the youth?

22) What do you think is positive with the project?

23) What do you think can be improved with the project?

Final questions/ other

24) Is there something you want to add? What is/are the most important thing(s) I should take with me from this interview?
Interview guide 3

Psychologist

Name

Position/Title

Professional experience

Background information:

1) For how long have you been active within the organization/project?

2) What are your reasons for choosing to work within this specific organization and this specific project?

3) Can you tell us about any previous, similar experiences you may have?

4) Do you have any education? If yes, what education and on what level?

Organization

5) What do you do on a daily basis?

6) Have you come up against any difficulties? If yes, what kind of difficulties?

7) Which ruling/steering documents do you use in daily work?

8) How often do you have meetings and follow-ups of your ongoing projects?

9) Have your work changed your own view and action in social environment?

10) Does Senda follow-up and/or keep supporting the youth after completing the project? How? For how long?

11) How high is the chance of success vs the risk of recurrence among the youth?

12) What do you think is positive with the project?

13) What do you think can be improved with the project?

Goals and ambitions

14) What are the ideas and visions?

15) What are the goals, ideas, and visions for the future?
Final questions/ other

16) Is there something you want to add?

What is/are the most important thing(s) I should take with me from this interview?