This PhD dissertation grew out of the question why Cambodian American and Cambodian French returnees employ different strategies in working for Cambodia. Why does the first group often start an NGO and the latter rather work for Cambodian government? The study explores, describes, analyzes and compares narratives on migration, institutional entrepreneurial activity and return by a small sample of these returnees. This has resulted in the construction of multiple case studies that illustrate the experiences and activities of Cambodian American and Cambodian French transnational institutional entrepreneurs. The central research question is: “In what ways do first generation Cambodian French and Cambodian American returnees create and employ their social capital in institutional entrepreneurial activities upon return?” This subject is linked to the societal debate on the ways in which the broad spectrum of institutional entrepreneurial activities, as visible in, for instance, (inter)national aid organizations and the government sector, may impact the development of an emerging nation.

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