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Dark Horses or White Knights: Donors and Gender Projects in the Opt
Communication for Development

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Abstract

Financial dependency and a trend in donor-driven gender equality and women's empowerment projects in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) have undoubtedly had an effect on the way in which NGOs are working and evolving: often projects are designed to fulfill donor requirements – and thereby policies - instead of creating an agenda which is politically and socially “home grown”. This paper analyses the USAID gender policy paper (as an example of foreign donor policy) and interviews conducted with legal, programme and gender experts in the oPt, exploring the challenges and gaps between policy and practice. The research uses qualitative research methods to analyze USAID discourse - exploring concepts such as representation, ideology and power - and general assumptions and perspectives towards women's equality and empowerment in the Opt versus how this translates into practice.

Keywords

occupied Palestinian territory, West Bank, Gaza Strip, gender equality, women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming, discourse, representation, power

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND KEY TERMS

C4D: Communication for Development

CBO: Community based Organization

NGO: Non-Governmental organization

PA: Palestinian Authority: the interim self-government body established to govern the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a consequence of the 1993 Oslo Accords

UN: United Nations

USAID: US Agency for International Development

Discourse: the type of language used in a particular context or subject (both written and spoken).

Gender Equality: implies that men and women should receive equal treatment and be equally represented, unless there is a sound biological reason for different treatment. The UN regards it as a human right.

Gender Mainstreaming: is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

Intifada - mass uprisings by Palestinians against Israeli Occupation, in the 1980s and 2000

Occupation - effective provisional control of Palestinian territory by Israel which is not under the formal sovereignty of Israel

oPt – Occupied Palestinian Territories: The Palestinian territories or occupied Palestinian territories (OPT or oPt) comprise the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip

Oslo Agreement/Accords - a set of agreements between the government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) marking the start of the Oslo process, a peace process that aimed the conclusion of a peace-treaty based on the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and fulfil the "right of the Palestinian people to self-determination"

Women's Empowerment - Empoweri ng women to participate in the workplace, marketplace and community across all sectors and throughout all levels. The UN believes that empowering women is an indispensable tool for advancing development and reducing poverty

Security barrier - the term to describe the various fences, walls and barriers Israel created to separate Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza from Israel so that they may not enter Israel without authorization

Settlement - colonies Israel has repeatedly refused to dismantle in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Golan Heights

PREFACE

As a South African who lived in the country during the post-apartheid years and witnessed the profound social and economic transformation starting in the early 1990s -which continues today- I have found myself particularly interested in women's organizing and the process, strategies and results of gender equality and empowerment efforts and projects. Legislation related to women's rights has been changed within a democratic framework, resolutions adopted and agreements signed and there is currently much rhetoric from the ANC government, donors and other groups regarding equality and empowerment for girls, women and related marginalized groups - but [how] does it all translate into practice in the everyday lives of women?

I was fortunate enough to have my questions answered first hand during my four years of living in Israel and working in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Opt) – which has many similarities to South Africa's political history. In my work as a development specialist in the oPt, I have come across many international resolutions and agreements including Resolution UNSCR (UN Security Resolution) 1325, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and a myriad of gender equality and female empowerment policies and projects. And yet, overall there seems to be much criticism and disillusionment regarding these projects, with the general feeling that they do not yield adequate benefits, neglect women's needs on the ground: they “tick boxes” and are often unrealistic or not tailored to the specific context, using the "cut and paste" approach.

My interest in this topic was piqued as I searched the Internet and other sources for information of both a positive and negative nature in order to form a balanced opinion of the issue, but found scant positive literature about these gender projects, bar promotional materials from UN agencies and NGOs who had implemented them. Literature produced by academics, development practitioners and related experts showed a different side to the glossy brochures with impressive looking results. Being in the field gave me the ideal opportunity to speak both formally and informally to development experts and members of various organizations, to find a common theme in their responses related to the perceived gaps and challenges between donor policy and women's daily reality.

There are crucial questions which need to be answered: how and why are these projects not achieving what they should? What changes need to be made in order to change the situation for the majority of women and bring about significant developments in their daily lives? Are donors controlling the agenda? Where do we go from here? These are relevant and current questions that will be reviewed in this paper.

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

“Development is not about words and procedures. It is about changing the realities of people’s lives. We need procedures, concepts and methods, but only as tools to help us do the work that needs to be done. When development is reduced to fitting things on blue squares, then we create more problems than we claim to solve. When these tools begin to imprison and consume all of our energies, where will we get the extra energy to do real work?”

[Everjoice Win, Zimbabwean activist and international development worker cited Rauh 2010, p.29]

1.1 Background of the Study

It is important to have an understanding of the complex political and legal status of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt) in order to comprehend the mechanisms of the occupation and the means of control that limit the autonomy of the Palestinian people – which in turn create barriers for women’s empowerment and equality. It is a two-fold situation where Palestinian women face violence, discrimination and humiliation from the Israeli occupation, as well as violence, exclusion and discrimination in their own society. "In post-Oslo and post-second intifada Palestine, the occupation touches every aspect of women’s lives: security, health, education, family, work, and protection" (Brooks, Duaibi & Hussain 2010, p.125).

The 1948 Arab-Israeli War following the establishment of Israel resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestine refugees¹ as they were forced to flee or driven out. The scale of the problem is so large today that two UN agencies - The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - continue to meet the needs of Palestinian refugees in the Levant and worldwide. When UNRWA operations began in 1950, it was responding to the needs of about 750,000 Palestine refugees. Today, some 5 million Palestine refugees are eligible for UNRWA services (UNRWA, n.d.). Palestinians are disempowered and face discrimination - “women doubly, or even triply so if they are also refugees” (Farr , 2011 p. 544).

Since the 1967 war, Israel has occupied the West Bank including East Jerusalem, whose status remains disputed. The OPT is physically and politically fragmented as the Gaza Strip is governed by the conservative Islamic Hamas authorities in control of the territory, while the population in the West Bank

¹ Palestinian refugees are defined as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict (UNRWA, 2013) The numbers have increased considerably due to natural population growth.

faces a corrupt and leaderless Fatah government. Israel has cut Gaza off from the rest of the OPT and the situation they face is desperate: essential supplies cannot reach the population, since 2006 an economic boycott has existed, there is a severe limit on the women's movement; and two military incursions in 2008 and 2012 have all but annihilated the infrastructure and led to a humanitarian crisis (Dugard 2008; Falk 2009 cited Brooks, Duaibi & Hussain 2010, p.131). Women as a whole continue to live with declining rights and political status.

The Oslo Accords signed in 1993 following the first Palestinian Intifada - or mass uprising against the occupation- led to the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PA) as an interim self-government body established to govern the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Authority was transferred to the Palestinians for education, culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation and tourism, which Palestine saw as a path to statehood, but Israel regarded as a retention of territories without having to administer them (Harms & Ferry, 2005 p.154). Oslo II, signed in 1995, divided Gaza and the West Bank into three areas, A, B, and C, the Palestinian Authority having full control only of Area A (3% of the West Bank) while Area B (25%) was to be but Israeli security control and Area C (72%) was under full Israeli control (Wise, 2013, p.4). The result has been Israeli control of land, water, roads and other resources.

In 2002, during the second intifada, the Israelis - citing protection of their civilians from Palestinian attacks - started constructing a concrete and metallic security barrier. Around 85% of the barrier's planned route runs through the West Bank, mainly in areas where there are Israeli settlements and industrial zones (Btselem, n.d.). It's construction continues today, despite international protest. The increasing number of Israeli barriers and checkpoints has affected the lives and restricted the movement of thousands of Palestinians, led to the loss of jobs for many who worked in Israel; and aggravates the living conditions of Palestinians in general and women in particular. A UNWOMEN/Ministry of Women's Affairs (2011,p.15) report indicates that as a result of the security barrier, women do not only suffer disproportionately from separation from their families, agricultural lands, water sources and schools, but that a large number of women have also been denied access to hospitals and health clinics, resulting in the death of many women and babies.

Another bone of contention is the Israeli settlement building in the West Bank, which has proliferated in recent years, despite U.N. Security Council resolutions and the International Court of Justice's declaration that they are illegal under international law. The settlements too have made many aspects of life very difficult for Palestinians: tight security measures and checkpoints, closed roads and restricted access to areas and settler violence affect the Palestinians in their everyday lives. One of the results is that women and girls' movement is increasingly restricted and they are often confined to the safety of their homes, due to the perceived danger they face on the outside.

The Israeli occupation is not the cause of gender inequalities in the oPt, but it has certainly altered traditional family structures and gender relations. Women have a triple challenge: as women under occupation which curtails every aspect of their lives; living in a society with patriarchal customs and as unequal members of society because of discriminatory law (Amnesty International, 2005 p.4). Women in the oPt face the following key problems: conservative societal norms which are often institutionalised in law and practice; violence against women and gender-based violence; low representation of women and women's issues in decision-making bodies; and obstacles to equitable economic participation. The oPt is also increasingly influenced by a form of Islam that favours hierarchy, order and social control. (ILO et al, 2007, p.8).

There has been a noticeable increase in women-specific programming amongst Palestinian NGOs in recent years. The proportion of NGOs implementing women's programs as ancillary programs is much higher than those with women's programs as their primary focus - although this could be due to the fact that women's programs are often added to already existing programs. Research indicates that a large number of NGOs consider women's empowerment through education, microfinance, research, gender training, and women's services as one of their secondary objectives (490 NGOs or 35.5% of the total), whereas 121 NGOs (8.8%) consider women's empowerment their primary goal (UNWOMEN 2011, p.31).

NGOs in the oPt have, since their conception, become increasingly dependent on external funding and financial support, especially from international donors: this dependency has undoubtedly had an effect on the nature of their work and how they have evolved. A global economic downturn and donor budget cuts in recent years have led to many NGOs not only to targeting the same fewer funding sources, but to operating from within donor driven frameworks and tailoring their projects and programmes to donor policies and criteria. Financial constraints and funding shortages are causing a number of NGOs to focus on prescribed development issues as recognized by donors and the international community and compromising the real needs and interests on the ground, as they move away from a local or grassroots approach to a global development agenda.

Palestinian women's organizing has, in a sense, become subject to what Jad (2008, p.3) calls an "NGOization" process, whereby NGOs design projects to fulfill donor requirements, instead of creating an agenda which is politically and socially viable or focused on the big picture, including a " national liberation struggle or changes in structure or policy for overall development, with the inclusion of women as a core goal". Zuabi (2013) argues that the post-Oslo international development agenda effectively separates socio-economic development from the reality of political life in the everyday lives of Palestinians and projects neglect to take into account the conditions of the occupation, social or cultural norms, religious codes or other challenges which reflect the reality of women's situations or needs – or integrate them into the theory, practice, and agenda of their organizations.

Mosse (2004, p.1) notes that despite the enormous energy devoted to generating the right policy models in development, strangely little attention is given to the relationship between these models and the practices and events that they are expected to generate or legitimize. At best, the relationship between policy and practice is understood in terms of an unintended 'gap' between theory and practice, reduced by 'better policy more effectively implemented' (ibid).

1.2 Research Aim and Objectives

The subject of this dissertation is an investigation into the gaps between international donor policies and gender equality and empowerment projects in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), using USAID as an example of donor policy. In particular, the focus is on factors that influence NGOs ability to translate these policies into longer term, sustainable results, or the main barriers to the transformation of these projects into tangible and satisfactory outcomes.

The research aim has experienced an evolution over the course of the project, driven by a number of factors. The initial idea was to work on a case study of USAID funded gender mainstreaming projects, analysing USAID gender policy documents and conducting interviews with programme managers, gender specialists and communication managers from three different funded organizations and the implementing agency Christian Relief Services (CRS) in order to extrapolate insights into the gaps and challenges between policy and practice. However, as the researcher prepared to interview CRS staff, the country manager refused access to these individuals, and thereby further research into the project, citing reasons including "disliking the scope" of the research. It became clear that the aim to "expose" hidden truths on the ground in specific projects was too ambitious, and didn't take resistance of various agencies into consideration. At this stage a wider perspective emerged and was incorporated into a revised research aim which includes the analysis of the USAID gender equality and female empowerment policy document (theoretical perspective) versus the perceptions and experiences of how these policies translate into practice (practical perspective) from a legal, feminist and programme viewpoint.

Analysis of USAID's *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy* will provide general insights into the nature of gender policy and donor discourse; while interviews with legal, programme and gender specialists respectively will explore related challenges and difficulties experienced in practice when implementing donor gender policies. The findings of field research are supplemented by secondary literature including research by international organizations and academics within the oPt including Birzeit University's Institute of Women's Studies.

The objective of the paper is to contribute to the growing body of research related to the critique of feminist and development theoretical frameworks and the attempt to identify and reconcile or bridge the recognized gap between theory and practice. The research is an attempt to cast a light on the relationship between

feminist theoretical and development frameworks and practice - as well as implications thereof - within gender policy and gender-related projects, which could encourage further research into the development of more relevant and applicable theoretical alternatives in current development practice. Further, the paper will build on current research and encourage further exploration to provide recommendations for development practitioners to enable them to increase their knowledge about donor policy, gender and development and thereby encourage effective practice leading to social change.

While the primary research question is related to the main gaps and challenges between policy and practice in gender equality and empowerment projects, there are a number of secondary questions, which will facilitate the discovery of additional information:

- what is the relationship between policy models and the practices of development agencies on the ground?
- how do good policy models make for good development practice?
- how can we understand policy discourse among international donors in relation to local participation, diversity of approaches or multiplicity of rationalities and values?

This study draws upon experiences in the author's professional career and interests within development, and builds on and brings together some of the facets of development studied during her MA studies over the past two years. The research addresses contemporary topics of the day related to the changes in and progress of both gender and development theories, concepts and approaches; as well as donor policies and discourse. This is a current and topical issue in the Opt and this paper will explore the specific difficulties and challenges within this particular context.

1.3 Delimitations

This paper will provide general information on the challenges of translating donor policy into practice in the Opt. The study is mainly focused on USAID gender policy, implying that the outcome of the interviews will only provide the reader with a snapshot of donor policy and practice. However, the author will be able to form a number of generalizations from the policy document and interviews, which will illuminate some important aspects of gender projects in the Opt. Due to the number of themes and approaches in gender and the range of projects, the paper focuses on gender equality and empowerment projects, so provides a specific overview of related issues and approaches. It must be mentioned though, that many of the challenges and gaps are experienced “across the board” in gender projects, programmes and donor policies.

The author recognizes that this paper provides an overview rather than a complete mapping of gender equality and women’s empowerment projects and that these findings may not be conclusive. The aim is rather to create a foundation for continued discussions and responses to the gaps and challenges facing these types of projects in the Opt.

1.4 Research Design and Framework

Social constructivism asserts that social practices and communication construct and re-construct social realities. Nederveen Pieterse (2010) notes that in social science it is now widely assumed that reality is socially constructed, that the way people think and talk about social reality affects agendas, policies and laws (p. 2); and that knowledge is continuously politically shaping perceptions, agendas and policies. Similarly, research and policy on issues such as gender and development creates our “social reality”, constructs meaning in our everyday lives, influences the type of social action taken, and determines how social power is distributed throughout society.

The social constructivist approach challenges social occurrences by exploring underlying concepts, enabling us to understand issues such as the cultural construction of the social life of developing countries in Western societies - suggesting that much meaning is conveyed by what is said by those with knowledge and power. Within the Foucauldian concept of power/knowledge, Foucault argues that “not only is knowledge always a form of power, but power is implicated in the questions of whether and in what circumstances knowledge is to be applied or not” (Hall 1997, p.48). Foucault’s work enhances our understanding of social relations, particularly related to the relationship between knowledge and power. In his writings, he puts forward that when “discursive formations” are normalized, they not only claim to be the truth but “support an overarching regime of truth” (Al Amoudi cited Hanafi and Tabar, 2000 p. 6).

Donor gender policies have, since their origin, seen shifts in representation and discourse. Within this framework, the thesis looks at how different representations and positioning of gender and development have influenced, and continue to influence, donor policy and what the implications are for gender equality and empowerment projects as a tool for social change. While my methodology is qualitative and uses the methods of critical discourse analysis and semi-structured interviews, the focus is also on underlying knowledge, power and the politics of representation; and how social reality is constructed and reinforced.

A gender and development perspective will be the theoretical starting point of this paper, examining a number of feminist theoretical frameworks and development frameworks and explaining how these perspectives overlap to become two main competing feminist development frameworks: women in development (WID); and gender and development (GAD) - exploring how theory plays an important part in development approaches; and the implications of theory on policy and practice. This will facilitate a greater understanding of the relationship between policy ideas, assumptions, and implementation practices.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND EXISTING RESEARCH

From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse

Feminist theoretical frameworks and development frameworks have undoubtedly influenced thinking and policy; and the way in which policy makers, social scientists, development practitioners and the general public understand gender and development has notably changed since related discussions started in the 1930s. The two most prominent approaches², the WID (Women in Development) and GAD (Gender and Development), which are best suited to this discussion and most relevant to this paper, will be explored below. This will be followed by a discussion on the practical implications and critique of donor policies and approaches related to gender equality and women's empowerment projects in the Opt.

The Women in Development (WID) approach, which is still in use today, was conceived through a merging of modernization theory and a liberal-feminist approach and its initial focus was on increasing women's participation and integration in the economy. Modernization – or westernization – was the dominant theoretical framework until the 1970s, with the assumption that the developing world should adopt the West's technology, beliefs and economic structures in order to progress, with the US as its primary model (Connelly, Li, MacDonald and Parpart, 2000 p.654). Liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminist theory which argues that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world and continues to be focused on eliminating female subordination (Tong, 1989).

In the 1980's, WID was broadened to include increasing women's access to education and to private property, as well as facilitating women's vocational training, income generation and family planning (Abdo cited Hanafi and Tabar, 2000, p.204). In the 1990's a gender component was added to the WID approach, drawing attention to the ways gender social relations structure and constrain women's participation in development - in terms of income generating projects, this revised WID approach now acknowledges the double burden of women's dual reproductive and productive responsibilities. However, the overall priority of this approach remains one of increasing women's productive role in the economy and in the development process. As feminist scholars have pointed out, in the Palestinian context the WID paradigm has dominated donor approaches to women's empowerment and income-generating projects have remained a central priority (Hanafi and Tabar, 2000 p.7).

Hanafi and Tabar (2000, p. 5) suggest that by seeking the simplified approach to incorporation of women into the economy, WID overturns one form of exclusion -from development programs - and re-inscribes

² which are not mutually exclusive and do overlap

women within another system of inequality -in the economy- and that this uncertainty originating from WID's theoretical and ideological foundation, is reproduced within projects. Donor income generating projects or 'micro-credit' programs are often viewed as having introduced a 'destabilizing logic' into the women's sector as they have interrupted local cooperative schemes and resulted in fissures in the strategic options of women's organizations as donor-funded NGOs and micro-credit agencies have sprung up (ibid).

According to Kuttab (1995, p.49 cited Hanafi and Tabar, 2000 p.8), a narrow economic focus in the Opt context ignores what she labels 'the interrelationship between the national context and the development option' during a period of popular national struggle. She also remarks that the search for 'profitability' neglects the empowerment women involved in these projects experience, both in terms of their perceptions and their social and political awareness. Kuttab questions whether economic logic of income projects and women's movement aims are always compatible as, since the end of the first intifada, the women's sector has been overrun by donor funded micro-credit projects, "superimposed over the grassroots popular initiatives and run by donor-established professional centers." (ibid)

In many cases, the development policies of international institutions and national governments continue to reflect the influence of the WID approach: this means that they still focus on bringing women into development and focus on "women" rather than "gender", which could also lead to the exclusion of men from a number of projects. Although women are contributing to Palestinian culture in the context of production, these contributions are limited in scope due to the social oppression generated by a patriarchal society, occupation restrictions, as well as the absence of family or community support.

WID APPROACH

Modernization theory + liberal feminist ideas

Economic change = empowerment

Promotes micro-credit policies and women in productive economy

The GAD (Gender and Development) perspective is a combination of post-development theory and Marxist feminist ideas which emerged in the 1980s as a result of development theorists arguing that fundamental structures maintaining gender inequalities were not addressed. Socialist feminists identified the social construction of production and reproduction as the basis of women's oppression and focused attention on the social relations of gender, questioning the validity of roles that had been ascribed to both women and men in different societies (Rathgeber, 1990, p. 494). Rathgeber describes a gender and development perspective as one that does not only lead to the design of intervention and affirmative action strategies to ensure that women are better integrated into ongoing development efforts, but also "leads, inevitably, to a fundamental re-examination of social structures and institutions and, ultimately, to the loss of power of entrenched elites, which will effect some women as well as men. [...] It demands a degree of commitment to structural change and power shifts[.] (Rathgeber, 1990, p. 495).

The post-development school of thought points out that models of development are often ethnocentric, universalist, and based on western models of industrialization; are unsustainable in a world of limited resources; and not effective due to their ignorance of the local, cultural and historical contexts of the peoples to which they are applied. According to Escobar, the post-development school of thought is interested (in terms of searching for an alternative to development) in "local culture and knowledge; a critical stance toward established scientific discourses; and the defense and promotion of localized, pluralistic grassroots movements." Grassroots movements, Escobar argues, are "local, pluralistic, and distrust organized politics and development establishment." (cited Nederveen Pieterse, 2010, p.108)

The GAD framework is also referred to as the "empowerment approach" or "gender-aware planning." The politicization of practical needs and their transformation into strategic interests constitute central aspects of the GAD approach, as is the empowerment of women to achieve this goal (Moser 1993 cited Connelly, Li, MacDonald and Parpart 2000, p.63). GAD focuses on both gender relations and the development process and recognizes the interconnection of gender, class, race and social construction; and is concerned with patriarchal structures and ideas that define and maintain women's subordination (ibid). The goal of gender equality and empowerment of women are central goals in GAD and the approach provides a way to analyze policies and organizational efforts to determine which ones will both meet short-term practical needs and which will help to change the structures of subordination.

The difference between WID and GAD is that WID puts more emphasis on providing women with the opportunities to participate structures which are still dominated and controlled by men, whereas GAD challenges and explores these social and economic structures.

GAD APPROACH

Post-development theory + marxist feminist ideas
Economic change does not = empowerment
Refocus on gender relations above "women" as category
Gender does not = women
Effective poverty reduction is gender aware

Despite its good intentions of politicizing women's issues in development, the GAD concept seems to have had the opposite effect: in the context of development discourse, gender has become an issue of checklists, planning and 'political correctness' and through the terminology of gender women's issues have become depoliticized. The oversimplification of complex issues and "expressing them in slogans" generates confusion - gender mainstreaming, for example, is not a simple process and the goal of integrating women in all spheres and at all levels of the society is not an easy task, implying a major institutional change in all areas and levels of the public sphere (Arnfred 2001, p.76).

A variety of Gender Analysis Frameworks have been designed as tools to enable development practitioners to tick boxes as they systematically incorporate gender. While Gender Analysis Frameworks can be used to see whether gender equality is being promoted within development practice, they can be limiting as they are only a small aspect of a programme and often tend to exclude other gender considerations. Cornwall et al (cited Warren, 2007, p.189) emphasize that these methodologies should be combined with a clear knowledge of theories underlying frameworks and politics, as well as clear goals and objectives, and care must be taken not to reduce the political project of gender and development into a "technical fix".

Spanning the past twenty years, most development agencies have moved from terminology of "women in development" (WID) to "gender and development" (GAD), although there are a number of cases where policies and programs that clearly continued to work within the WID paradigm have adopted GAD as their official approach. An additional challenge is the confusion caused by existing terminology and the fact that the interrelationship between WID and GAD sometimes makes it difficult to know where one approach ends and the other begins.

Donors and Donor Policy in the Opt

It is certainly difficult to compare the many diverse constraints faced by women's organizing in different parts of the geographically- and politically-divided oPt, to assess and compare the different strategies used in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem, or to try to provide comprehensive recommendations on effective organization (Farr, 2010, p.17). This part of the paper, then, focuses on providing a general overview of both general donor and gender policy in the context of the Opt, including critique of donor policies and approaches, and challenges when translating policies into practice.

Before delving into the critique and shortcomings of donor policies and initiatives, it must be emphasized that the author acknowledges that not all donor efforts are fruitless; that the meeting of global and local agendas has, in fact, enabled the women's movement to move forward and facilitated the development of a women's agenda focused on tackling discrimination against, and inequality of, women. However, the focus of this paper is to explore the shortcomings, critique and challenges of donor policy.

The participatory paradigm - favored by C4D practitioners - gives emphasis to "cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels - international, national, local, and individual" (Servaes & Malikhao in Hemer & Tufte, 2005, p.95). In recent years, there has been increased criticism of donor policy, which labels itself participatory, bottom-up, community-driven or even indigenous, but which in many cases merely continues to advance external interests and agendas or locally politically manipulate elites, behind the beguiling rhetoric of 'people's control' (Cook & Kothari 2001, cited Mosse 2004, p.5). Moser (1993 cited Ravazi and Miller, 1995 p.30) emphasizes that "[c]hange instigated through 'top-down' interventions of the state as the dominant 'structure' of power, control and

domination is distinct from change achieved through bottom-up mobilization of 'agency' in civil society".

It is unfortunate that the techniques of participation themselves often consist of donors producing 'proper' beneficiaries by providing locals with planning knowledge and influencing and prescribing their ways of thinking and doing (Mosse, 2004, p.5); and the ability of dependent organizations to bring about the desired social change is undoubtedly affected by pressure to adopt the values, norms, and legitimating practices. Chambers and Pettit (cited Rauh 2010, p.34) also note that there is often a gap between rhetoric and practice and existing power inequalities behind the discourse of equality.

Donor agencies include governmental or multilateral agencies, foundations, trade union and faith-based organizations - all with their own policies and agendas. Because NGOs are dependent on their funding, donors are in a position of power and often put conditions on how aid is used and how programs are implemented (Chambers and Pettit cited Rauh 2010, p 33). Power and dependency have resulted in some NGOs shifting their focus from important areas for their beneficiaries, towards areas of donor interest that will attract funding. Farr, in her research, found that NGOs spent a great deal of time, resources and effort on donor relations and even admitted that they had tailored their mandate and ideas, sometimes neglecting areas they deemed important, in order to comply with donor demands (2010, p.18).

Jad (2008, p 14) argues that due to "project logic", NGO professionals often lack awareness of the forces active in civil society and the public sphere, and this weakness enables a disproportionate influence by the donor on the organization's agenda. Farr (2010 p.18) says that it is clear that despite donors' good intentions, they often do harm because of their "un-nuanced" approach to funding, recommending that in order to change top-down dynamics, donors need to recognize the diversity of organizations and the complex needs of Palestinians. She also stresses that donors should provide diversified funds and simplified procedures to access these funds, especially for service providers and organizations that are less sophisticated and do not use international discourse or succeed "by international standards" (ibid).

Apart from imposing their own norms and values, donors' priorities often fluctuate toward areas of development that are currently popular, which increases pressure to implement programs that are likely to be seen as "successful" rather than addressing the root of the problem, which usually involves complex, long-term processes (Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen cited Rauh 2010 p. 34). Further, donors tend to favour programs with easily quantifiable results, but these often are not able to promote longer-term, sustainable projects (Lindenberg 2001 *ibid*). Similarly, as in the case of the Opt, donor agendas may limit particular political strategies, even when they lead to greater long-term and meaningful social change (Markowitz and Tice 2002 *ibid*).

Murad (n.d.) cynically remarks that international actors, governmental and nongovernmental actors have not been able to transcend the dominant “post-conflict” framework that shapes nearly all interventions since the Oslo Accords. She argues that it creates a façade that “development” is possible, even under active occupation and colonization and eliminates funding for social change and resistance, thus “mobilizing Palestinian civil society in service of a false promise of progress”.

Donor Discourse and Representation

Today, the women's movement consists mostly of professional NGOs, research institutes and women's centers, with the relative marginalization of both women's committees and the charitable societies, signifying a hierarchical reorganization of the women's movement within the post-Oslo period (Hanafi and Tabar, 2000 p.4). The proliferation of women's NGOs has undoubtedly made it harder for old forms of mass women's organizations to survive and sustain their activities. Unlike the present Jad (2008, p.7) explains, the “old” feminist discourse did not depend on universal agendas for promoting women's rights and empowerment, instead it promoted membership and networking over the longer term with women whose concerns determined the agenda for women's empowerment.

Donor policies and development frameworks are produced within a specific historical and cultural context and therefore inevitably reflect Western biases (Puar, 1996, p. 74 cited Hanafi and Tabar, 2000 p. 17); and funding agencies often create program objectives in very different contexts than where they will be implemented, and therefore, these programs often do not always suit the cultures that receive them (Lindenberg 2001 cited cited Rauh 2010 p. 34). The overall problem with adopting donor terminology is the ability to communicate with or adequately represent the people rather than “the elite and the technocrats”; and the challenge for NGOs is clearly between localized community support and sophisticated international discourse (Farr, 2010 p 22).

One of the problems facing adopting international donor discourse is that it removes organizations from the ability to engage directly with their communities. The strength of Community Based Organizations (CBO) lies in the fact that they are able to communicate at grassroots level and in local terms, but are disadvantaged inasmuch as they are not able to communicate in the internationally accepted discourse amongst specialist or feminist NGOs, service providers and others which may affect their ability to contribute to “a united and comprehensive women's movement” - and prevents them from accessing funding from donors who expect a certain type of approach (Farr, 2012, p.278).

Kuttab argues that the term ‘empowerment’ has lost its original meaning as the donor community and international institutions have used it in a mainstream rather than emancipatory sense, along with their own financial philosophy and conditions (Kuttab, 2008, p.112). In the 1970s the concept was understood to embody the struggle for social justice and women's equality through the transformation of economic, social

and political structures, whereas we can often see how it is used in projects today as participation in decision-making, access to resource and increased choices of individual women. Instead of being radical and transformative, it has regressed to a reformatory approach, which focuses on individuals rather than the collective.

NGOization and Professionalisation

There is local criticism and a view of gender equality and women's empowerment projects as nothing more than an externally driven agenda which does not reflect local reality, neglects the historical development of Palestinian women's initiatives, and ignores the agency of local organizations; but also fails to adequately conceptualize the relationship between external and internal actors and forces. Mohanty (1998, p.70 cited Hanafi and Tabar, 2000 p.4) recognizes the necessity of pursuing two 'simultaneous projects': "one which recognizes the independent formation of Palestinian women's organizations, the evolution of their concerns and strategic interests within the historical, social, political and cultural parameters of Palestinian society and the Palestinian national struggle; while the other emphasizes the necessity of re-reading the dominant discourses of the aid regime, with specific attention to the way these discourses define women's interests and shape the approaches of local women's organizations."

Jad (2008, p.2) describes the past fifteen or so years as a move from a mass-based, living social movement, which engaged women from grassroots organizations throughout Palestine in working for a combined feminist-nationalist agenda, to a process of "NGO-ization" or process through which "issues of collective concern are transformed into projects in isolation from the general context in which they arise, without consideration of the economic, social and political factors affecting them". Jad argues that this process is not succeeding in empowering women and has done nothing but swap a cause for social change for a project with a plan, timetable and budget which is not owned by the community but rather by a "small professional elite for the purpose of accountability vis-à-vis foreign donors" (ibid). Furthermore, he claims that "NGO-ization" has taken control of the Palestinian national agenda of national liberation, focusing it on issues such as peace building and conflict resolution, which is managed by local NGOs as spokespeople of international agencies and donors.

Farr elaborates that NGOs have mostly replaced less structured civil society organizing that was more responsive to the crisis context, "absorbed the capacities of the educated elites" and become dependent on ever-changing international funding parameters. These changes have de-politicized women's activities and led to the decline of their collective action to resist the impacts of the occupation (2010, p.4). NGOs are all too aware that many international donors do not want to fund political organizations and feel that because they are so dependent on the resources for which they are competing, "hidden conditions and top-down donor structures" can lead to an organization losing funding and support if too political (Farr 2010, p 11). Other reasons for de-politicization of the women's movement are Israeli control, a distrust of the political system in place in the form of the severely limited Palestinian Authority, and an overall incapacity to tackle

patriarchal control over women in a transformatory way (ibid).

The institutionalization and professionalization of women's issues through co-opting global agendas presents a difficult dilemma for the women's movement as there are a number of issues which need to be considered when developing a strategy to address both gender issues within a patriarchal political system, but also linked to the reality of the occupation that both men and women face on daily basis Kuttab (2008, p.70) Ultimately, Kuttab believes that only the wide participation of people in the political process through overcoming political alienation and freeing the civil society from the grip of the donor community and the state will lead to liberation from the occupiers and emancipation from structures of domination from within (ibid).

The Gender Agenda: women's rights versus national rights

"Women's struggle must necessarily be from two forms of liberation – the political emancipation of all Palestinians and the social and cultural emancipation of women within that process" (Farr, 2010 p 5)

Overall, Farr's field research shows that the exclusion of women from both local and international political arenas is extremely negative, as previous gains in women's empowerment are being undermined and the interests of Palestinian women are being neglected, not advanced, despite a significant amount of rhetoric about the need to promote gender equality as a part of establishing an independent Palestinian state (2010, p. 22). In her interviews with women's organizations, respondents made it clear that they do not feel heard by the donor community as political decision-makers and believe that their organizations could overcome this if they were regarded as partners in policy dialogue (ibid).

Women's activists in Palestine remain sceptical of a feminist agenda that primarily focuses on individual and social gender empowerment and instead insist that gender inequality in their context stems not only from patriarchal oppression, but from poverty, economic dependency, continued political violence, insecurity and instability caused by Israeli occupation, siege and settler-colonial policies (Richter Devroe 2011, p.5). In the oPt, beneficiaries have criticized not only the way in which donors engaged women in 'soft' activities like lectures and workshops, rather than embedding women's empowerment into programmes with tangible outcomes; but also the lack of donor investment in understanding the local culture and philosophy and understanding how they might better win acceptance for work that can bring benefits for women and girls" (Care International, 2013 p.24).

When we review the evolution of women's movements in Palestine, it is evident that in previous types of women's organization, nationalist participation was combined with a feminist agenda, which was empowering for women as they were both citizens and "gendered beings" (Hasso cited Jad, 2008 p.6). This represented a belief system, which included resistance towards the occupier as well as the necessity to transform social relations and the social order through "daily activism and direct democratic participation"

(Tornquist 1999, p. 155 cited Jad 2008, p.7). Claiming a feminism independent of its national context is a move which ended in the birth of what Jad the politics of the “gender agenda” and he argues that separating women's rights from collective national rights can even lead to marginalization and fragmentation of women as a social group (2008, p.7).

Capacity Building and Collaboration

Research indicates that international donors tend to silence discussions on political issues within the women's movement and it is therefore important that organizations learn from each other and work together to make more coherent demands on donors for the support they need and that they have decided they need (Farr 2010 p.20). CBOs, charities, NGOs, feminist NGO, specialized NGOs and service providers are not working together on joint issues or platforms and they use different vocabularies, have varying areas of expertise or views of the political role they could fulfill. There is a largely fragmented women's community as CBOs are not seen as equal and NGOs are criticized for not addressing political root causes and focusing on short-term solutions, ignoring the real needs on the ground. It is evidently necessary to enhance the capacities and effectiveness of organizations while enabling them to do what they do best while promoting greater cooperation between them.

NGOs, feminist NGOs and services providers have further insights into women's issues, but are not able to engage with at the grassroots or community level as effectively as CBOs. Farr (2010, p.7) explains that feminist and specialized NGOs and service providers demonstrate the greatest understanding of the ways in which their work is politicized and have good knowledge of the vocabulary and dynamics of the donor system (using internationally accepted NGO vocabulary); have good lobbying skills; are clear about how the occupation, political division and patriarchy affect their work and discuss how the absence of functioning political outlets and counterparts has made their work necessary (ibid). They were most likely to identify themselves as engaging actively with political issues as activists for both women's liberation and Palestinian liberation.

Farr (2010, p.20) stresses the necessity for networking and collective work, the linking of issues areas and collaboration between local and international NGOs for a sustainable movement. Although NGOs do often belong to various committees, coalitions and networks, the extent to which this collective activity is effective remains unclear and they are very diverse and disengaged from each other. “If women's organizations work together instead of steering clear of each other because of competing for funds, and recognized each other as being on the same side and representing the same group, this could help bridge the gaps created by donor discourse, NGOization, the inability of organizations to connect at grassroots level, the great need for practical aid and the inability to raise political issue” (ibid).

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Crotty (1998, p. 4) emphasizes that very few pieces of research are pure examples of any paradigm, fitting into one category and excluding others, but rather that one should aim to select a dominant perspective most relevant to the research purpose and questions. The theoretical framework of any research discloses the methods, methodology, theoretical perspective³ and epistemology⁴. In identifying the theoretical framework of this study, the schema used by Crotty (2003, p.3) is applied.

Epistemology	Theoretical perspective	Methodology	Methods
Objectivism Constructionism Subjectivism (and their variants)	Positivism (and post-positivism) Interpretivism • Symbolic interactionism • Phenomenology • Hermeneutics Critical inquiry Feminism Postmodernism etc.	Experimental research Survey research Ethnography Phenomenological research Grounded theory Heuristic inquiry Action research Discourse analysis Feminist standpoint research etc.	Sampling Measurement and scaling Questionnaire Observation • participant • non-participant Interview Focus group Case study Life history Narrative Visual ethnographic methods Statistical analysis Data reduction Theme identification Comparative analysis Cognitive mapping Interpretative methods Document analysis Content analysis Conversation analysis etc.

Theories are useful in understanding, as well as explaining and predicting phenomena and, in many cases, the critical assumptions inherent in theories are able to challenge existing knowledge, lead to further research or extend theories. The researcher, through the theoretical framework, can show how he/she questions, thinks about and develops thoughts or theories on possible answers to research questions and groups them together into themes that frame the subject. It can be viewed as the process of identifying a central set of connectors within a topic and showing how they fit together.

Blaikie (ibid) describes epistemology as the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality and examines how what is assumed to exist can be known. In terms of epistemology, the selected approach is constructionism, which is closely linked to the theoretical perspectives of interpretivism, postmodernism and critical enquiry. This approach assumes that individuals and groups create their perceived reality,

³ or philosophical assumption underlying the view of the human world and social life within it

⁴ or philosophical basis and limits of human knowledge

which evolves as social interactions occur: they may seem obvious in a certain context, but they are actually artifacts of that context and is an approach to explain how representation of meaning through language works, recognizing the social character of language. It claims that meaning is not fixed, but that we construct meaning using representational systems – concepts and signs. It is social actors who use the “conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to make it meaningful to others” (Hall, 1997 p.26).

The theoretical perspective of the paper is based on postmodernism and communication for development: postmodernism because it explains the underlying critique, assumptions and issues present in current development theory and practices; while communication for development provides alternatives and recommendations for how development "should look" for both of the above.

Postmodernism

Development is, in a sense, at an ‘impasse’ as there is a fading belief in the ability of a scientifically conceived model to solve the problems of the Third World: in this sense, postmodernism is associated with a critique of the ideology of modernization and, through it, with issues of language and power. Postmodernism views development as a discourse and uses a deconstructionist technique to expose power, by decrypting language; and postmodernists deconstruct reason, reality and truth because they believe that in the name of reason, truth and reality reason Western civilization has wreaked dominance, oppression and destruction. Postmodernism is, in a sense, "an activist strategy against the coalition of reason and power"(Hicks, 2004, p.3).

The foundation of postmodernism can be found in post-structuralism, which instead of using concepts like homogeneity, universalism, comprehensiveness, globalism and universalization, places emphasis on subjects including pluralism, multiplicity, particularities, diffuseness, disintegration and individuality concepts (Moghaddam and Rahman, 2012 p.6643).

Communication for Development (C4D)

C4D promotes the use of a participatory/organic model rather than the diffusion/mechanistic model of previous years. The participatory model stresses the importance of cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels—international, national, local and individual. It points to a strategy, which is largely derived from those who are traditionally the ‘receivers’ (Servaes, 2002 p.14).

The C4D approach stresses that participation is very important in any decision making process for development when it comes to sharing information, knowledge and commitment. “This calls for new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different

ways”(International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, 1980 cited Servaes 2002, p.15).

Methodology is determined by a combination of several factors – for example, whether the researcher believes that there is some sort of external ‘truth’ out there that needs discovering, or whether the task of research is to explore and unpick people’s multiple perspectives in natural, field settings. It is influenced, then, by whether the research is inclined towards a positivist, interpretivist, or other perspective (Gray 2009, p.27). In developing the research proposal, the justification of methodologies and methods included examining the purpose of the research, while questioning assumptions of reality and theoretical perspective of the papers.

As the research aims to address not how many donor-driven gender projects are successful or not but rather how or why their success is affected, the most suitable approach would be a qualitative, deductive approach consisting of an in-depth exploration of the gaps between policy and practice. Qualitative approaches tend to focus on dynamic processes rather than static categories and aim to discover or develop new concepts rather than imposing preconceived categories onto the people and events they observe (Gersin and Horowitz, 2002, p 199).

3.2 Presentation of Methodology

Mosse (2004, p.3) explains that understanding the relationship between policy discourse and field practices has been hampered by the dominance of two opposing views on development policy: an instrumental view of policy as rational problem solving - directly shaping the way in which development is done - versus a critical view that sees policy as a rationalizing discourse concealing hidden purposes of bureaucratic power or dominance, in which the true political intent of development is hidden behind a 'cloak of rational planning'. He elaborates that neither of these views does justice to the complexity of policymaking and its relationship to project practice, or to the creativity and skill involved in negotiating development.

First, from an instrumental view, the usual concern is how to implement policy or use programme designs in practice; while a critical view works from opposite assumptions and takes the failure of development interventions as self-evident. In the methodology, both are considered as the critical view is explored through critical discourse analysis, while the instrumental view is considered by conducting interviews in order to expose shortcomings, but also explore other findings and recommendations.

3.2.1 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis has its origins in linguistics and literature studies and post-structuralism - implying that

meaning is not stable or fixed - and is the study of the ways in which language (in both oral and written language) is used in various contexts. Nederveen Pieterse (2010, p.14) argues that discourse analysis is the awareness that development is not simply theory or policy, but in either form is discourse, and involves paying attention to development texts and what is said, not merely as ideology but epistemology - "discourse matters, talk and representation matter, representation is a form of power, representation constructs social realities" (ibid, p.15).

Discourses are spread by specific institutions such as medical, political or legal discourse, meaning that language - whether in written, visual or spoken form - produces meanings, in the form of representation and codes and other elements, that produce culturally and historically specific meanings. According to the work of Foucault (1972 cited Gee 1990), these discourses are hierarchically arranged and so have differing degrees of power and influence. Dominant discourses are understood by existing systems of law, education and the media, and are in turn reinforced and reproduced, while less powerful discourses are often marginalized, misunderstood and ignored.

Discourse analysis is a useful tool when applied to development policy as it allows us a form of reflexivity, makes us aware of the underlying assumptions and ideology and encourages us to become more engaged in the politics of development. Often we find that discourse analysis reflect post-development thinking, where texts are seen as forms of western modernism, often to the detriment of Third World countries.

The use of Fairclough in this paper relates to the fact that he has added to the description of discourse analysis as the close study of the use of language in use (1992, p.28) and emphasizes that discourse is more than just language use, but rather seen as a type of social practice. He argues that discourse analysis is not solely bound to the text but must also involve '*analysing the relationship between texts, processes, and social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutions and social structures*' (1989, p.26).

Fairclough outlines three integrated levels of discourse, involving analysis of text, of discursive practices, and of social practices (1992, p.73): at textual level which involves critical linguistics; at discourse level which includes analysis of text production, distribution and interpretation, especially in terms of the way in which the readership is guided to a 'preferred' reading; and at the level of social practice, analysis explores the extent to which the text upholds, or reproduces, hegemonic discursive or social practices, how it stands in relation to certain prevalent conditions.

3.2.2 *Qualitative Interviews*

Through interviewing, we become aware of how people are embedded in larger social and cultural contexts and how they actively participate in shaping the world they inhabit (Gersin and Horowitz, 2002, p 199).

Qualitative interviews are often used in social research to investigate subjective interpretations of phenomena in an exploratory manner, which suggests that they do not presume that there are 'hard facts' or answers are known in advance. The aim is rather interpretation and understanding of how and why, rather than how much or how many.

Depending on research goals, whether the aim is to explore an issue or examine a specific theory, the structure of interviews can range from informal conversations to structured interviews in which all interviewees are asked the exact same set of questions. It is a valuable research method for exploring "data on understandings, opinions, what people remember doing, attitudes, feelings and the like, that people have in common" (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p.2). The information sought in this paper is related to the experiences and perceptions from various perspectives -legal, programmatic, gender - and the thoughts these individuals have concerning the shortcoming of gender policy in the Opt and the gaps between gender policies and programmes. These interviews could provide a more complete picture of how gender policies are experienced and perceived.

3.3 Presentation of Methods

Using mixed methods and an eclectic approach allows the strengths of one method to overcome the weaknesses of another and build up a richer data set: methods are guidelines for practice, should be less theoretically presumptuous in cultural studies; and "less neurotic about epistemological standing", allowing for a shift between epistemological and empirical (Pickering 2008, p 4). Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998, p 1-2) also advocate for combining methods, which is essential for good research as a more in-depth view and understanding of the research topic can be achieved. As part of this, they emphasize the importance of not being one-sided, but ensuring that as many angles and viewpoints as possible are obtained. Methodological triangulation uses a combination of methods such as case studies, interviews and discourse analysis.

3.3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Symbolic elites are people who have access to and control over mass public discourses e.g. politicians, journalists, scholars, writers, directors and policy setting boards of internationally effective media, have preferential control over the re/production and re/creation of hegemonic narratives in mass communication events and hence acquire more power (Van Dijk, 2005).

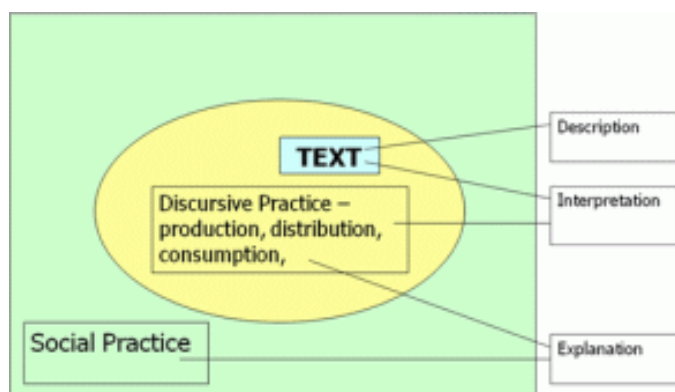
Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) needs to be understood as both a theory and a method (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, p. 16), in that it offers not only a description and interpretation of discourses in social contexts but also offers an explanation of why and how discourses work: social and linguistic aspects of discourse, as well as social structure and social action can be explored. CDA is concerned with studying and analyzing written texts and spoken words to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance,

inequality, and bias and how these sources are initiated, maintained, reproduced, and transformed within specific social, economic, political, and historical contexts (Van Dijk, 2000 p.352).

Hesmondhalgh explains that the reason it is called critical discourse analysis is because it is more critical of social use of language than other types of discourse or linguistic analysis and includes representations, identities and relations (1995, p 130); while Fairclough (1989, p.5) states that critical is used in the special sense of aiming to show up connections which may be hidden from people such as connections between language, power and ideology. In CDA, political documents, adverts, media articles and a range of spoken and written texts are selected by analysts, to demonstrate how language - wittingly or unwittingly - affects ideology: dominant ideologies can often appear neutral as they hold onto unchallenged assumptions, such as the western idea that capitalism is good, while communism is backwards and 'bad.'

Opinion leaders, government and other institutions play a crucial role in shaping issues and in setting the boundaries of legitimate discourse – such as what is talked about and how. Foucault's view is that discourse is a social construction of reality and a form of knowledge, which determines what is knowable, sayable and doable in a particular historical context (cited Fairclough, 1995 p.18). Van Dijk (2000) states that the words of those in power are taken as "self-evident truths", while the words of those not in power are dismissed as irrelevant, inappropriate, or without substance.

CDA does not constitute a well-defined empirical methodology but rather a bulk of approaches with theoretical similarities and research questions of a specific kind (Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p.27). There is no theoretical viewpoint that is used coherently in CDA. In addition, Wodak and Meyer say that CDA does not deny but explicitly defines and defends its own socio-political position, "CDA is biased – and proud of it" (2001:96).



Three-dimensional view of discourse analysis
(Fairclough, *Critical Language Awareness*, Longman, 1992).

Fairclough (1992 cited Strathclyde University, n.d.) offers five theoretical propositions that frame his approach to CDA.

1. Discourse (language use) shapes and is shaped by society:
lanuage changes according to the context and situations are altered according to language used –for example, advertising and news can affect attitudes, behaviour, etc.
2. Discourse helps to constitute (and change) knowledge, social relations and social identity:
The way language is used affects the way the world is represented - nationalism, us and them and can hide the implication, assmptions and underlying philosophy of certain actions.
3. Discourse is shaped by relations of power and invested with ideologies:
An example of this is the way certain standards, languages, accents or dialects are valued or devalued and there are ideological assumptions about what is best, common sense etc.
4. The shaping of discourse is a stake in power struggles:
Language is a powerful mechanism for social control and, therefore, is contested and contestable.
5. CDA aims to show how society and discourse shape each other:
Language use is not a neutral phenomenon – it is concerned with developing consciousness of the issue, a precondition for developing new practices and conventions – and thus contributing to social emancipation and social justice.

More recently Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p 271-280) offered eight foundational principles for CDA:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture, and is constituted by them
4. Discourse does ideological work: representing and constructing society by reproducing unequal relations of power.
5. Discourse is historical and is connected to previous, contemporary and subsequent discourses.
6. Relations between text and society are mediated, and a socio-cognitive approach is needed to understand these links.
7. Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory and implies a systematic methodology and an investigation of context
8. Discourse is a form of social action.

Analyzing Texts

USAID Policy Document

In this paper, Critical Discourse Analysis will be conducted on the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy - an important policy document - last updated in March 2012. This is a general document and not country specific.

By studying policy documents, we can explore power relations enacted in discourse, and what the consequences are (Fairclough, 1995). By linking language to the broader social and political context, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a valuable tool for researching processes of social and cultural change

and is particularly appropriate for critical policy analysis because it allows a detailed investigation of the relationship of language to other social processes, and of how language works within power relations.

The analysis is focused on exploring donor discourse and thereby highlighting the terminology, ideological and philosophical viewpoint and overarching culture wherein this document was produced. Specifically, the policy will be examined to understand how it represents gender, and what the effects of that representation might be, including what is not said as much as what is and what issues are potentially met or neglected. Instead of focusing on the heavy load of content, key words, terms and phrases were selected which defined the document, or exposed the exercising of power within this particular social, cultural and historical context; also bearing in mind how this applies to current and related gender projects that NGOs are working on with donor funding.

In analyzing the texts common codes, terms, ideologies, discourses and individuals that come to dominate cultural outputs are highlighted. The questions that are asked during discourse analysis are “how is the world (events relationships) represented; what identities are set up for those involved? What relationship is there between those involved? A working useful assumption is that any part of any text will be simultaneously representing [the world], setting up identities and relations” (Hesmondhalgh 1995, p 5).

3.3.1.1 Limitations

The downside is that, similar to any literary or cultural studies, CDA is highly subjective and the analyst may be too critical or read too deeply into the material and issues of power, which may not be an accurate reflection of reality on the ground. Fairclough (1995) emphasizes that CDA can never be objective, but rather always has particular interests or comes from a particular perspective, and the insights are always partial, incomplete and provisional. This explains why there are many studies conducted on the same topic, as there are a variety of angles to address it from and any particular research offers us insight into only part of reality as we are only able to focus on a small number of elements or a certain viewpoint.

Pieterse's criticism of Foucauldian discourse is that it is strong on critique and weak on construction; long on history and short on future and takes a position of resistance instead of imagining alternatives (Pieterse, p 73). Another criticism of critical approaches to textual analysis is that they are generally, and explicitly, partial and political - critiques are always levelled against the powerful groups in society.

3.3.1.2 Reflections, Ethical Issues

CDA is subjective and interpretative, and analysis will also depend on the view of the researcher. Ethically it is important to keep an open mind and try to be as objective and unbiased as possible (it is, however, in this paper a responsibility to expose the shortcomings of donor policies).

According to van Dijk (2000, p.353) critical research on discourse needs to satisfy a number of requirements in order to effectively realize its aims: CDA research has to be "better" than other research in order to be accepted; it must focus primarily on social problems and political issues, rather than on current paradigms and fashions; needs to be multidisciplinary and, rather than merely describe discourse structures, it must explain them in terms of properties of social interaction and especially social structure. More specifically, CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society.

Barker (2008, p.163) explains that it is important to acknowledge the provisional nature of CDA findings: discourse theory does not explain the world, but merely part of it and explores who uses which discourse in which way, exploring wider discursive constructions and debates. It is only possible to analyze a small sample for analysis as it is very intensive. Barker (ibid) also notes that discourse work needs to be done with an explicit recognition that talk of all kinds arises within the circuit of culture which includes history, production practices, textual form, amongst others.

Wodak and Meyer (2009, p.31) consider four levels. Switching between these minimizes the risk of being biased:

1. Immediate language or text-internal co-text
2. Inter-textual or discursive between utterances, text, genres and discourses
3. the extra-linguistic social level, which is called "context of situation"
4. the broader socio-political and historical contexts

3.3.2 In-depth Interviewing

A qualitative research technique, in-depth interviewing involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. Interviews are often used to put other data in context, offering a more complete picture of what happened in and why. Less structured interviews provide a broader perspective and allows interviews to provide the information they believe is most relevant to the question, and are useful in contexts where more information is needed on a topic, whereas more structured interviews usually provide interviewees with the same questions and use them to compare answers. These types of interviews allow finding to be more generalizable and can be used to test certain hypotheses.

Interviewees

In this paper, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with a gender specialist, a legal expert and a programme manager who all had extensive experience in gender projects, also with USAID. Ideally,

it would have been better to have a larger group of interviewees, but my access was restricted and therefore my sample was smaller. My aim was to gain a somewhat 'holistic' perspective of issues and challenges in gender projects from a legal, gender and programme perspective and discover further information on the perceptions and challenges in gender projects and gaps between policy and practice in their daily work and lives; whilst also asking a number of similar questions to each of the interviewees in order to compare their answers. In this instance, CDA is complemented by interviews in order to understand its impact and consequences and how it works in practice.

Aeron Davis (2008, p.6) lists three challenges when conducting research through qualitative interviews. The first involves selecting participants: deciding who should be interviewed, how many interviews need to take place to be an adequate reflection on the selected topic - the larger the scope of the research, the more interviews are needed - and the time and resource limits of the researcher also have to be factored in. The second challenge is making and maintaining contact with participants.

In both of the above cases, the author had an initial setback as the organization involved in the case study she had selected refused to be interviewed at the last minute and this meant the scope of the research had to change. However, as the analysis was based on donor discourse versus practice, it seemed logical to explore the commonly acknowledged problems between policy and practice by exploring them more from a gender, legal and programmatic perspective, especially as the author had worked with and had access to these experts. As Critical Discourse Analysis and secondary research backed up the points raised during the interviews, the data generated was adequate, although additional interviews would have solidified arguments. The author also found it was challenging to find an appropriate time for interviewees, even when access was not a concern and permission had been given.

A third issue is the ongoing collection of interview and observation material, as data is generated during the interview process and not just collected for analysis. In this respect, the author found that she had to review and re-write many of her arguments and literature, as well as repeatedly questioning what her research aims and hypothesis were.

Limitations

Qualitative interview responses can be biased, as interviewees want to prove that their project is not working or because they have some personal interest in the outcome of the research. It is therefore very important to be aware of this when designing questions and conducting interviews (Boyce and Neil 2006, p.4). These types of interviews can also be extremely time consuming due to the fact that they have to be conducted, transcribed and analyzed.

When in-depth interviews are conducted, generalizations about the results cannot be made because small samples are chosen and random sampling methods are not used. In-depth interviews however, provide valuable information for programs, particularly when supplementing other methods of data collection. It should be noted that the general rule on sample size for interviews is that when the same stories, themes, issues, and topics are emerging from the interviewees, then a sufficient sample size has been reached. (Boyce & Neale, 2006 p.4).

Reflections, Ethical Issues

Interviewing is a highly social field, subject to differing perceptions, discourses and power relations and it is impossible to start with a “clean slate”, free of prior experience and theoretically informed constructions of the world (Glaser & Strauss 1968 cited Funder 2005, p.2). Because we are constrained by a number of biases it is necessary for the researcher to use explicit reflexivity which includes greater attention to power relations and “epistemological frames of reference”, while also attempting to engage other disciplines and actors in “highlighting unreflected biases and worldviews” (Funder, 2005, p.3). That being said, it cannot be ignored that we are socialized and institutionalized into given ways of structuring and labeling the empirical context we explore.

Bordieu (1996, p.18) states that although the interview relationship is different to most of the exchanges of ordinary existence due to its goal of pure knowledge, it is still a social relation. There are various kinds of distortions, which one must understand and master without always applying a certain method or theoretical thinking. Reflexivity refers to ‘having an eye for’ being aware of the effect of the social structure in which the interview is taking place and dealing with our own biases and subjectivity; as well as being aware of what can and cannot be said or asked (ethically), censorship, and promptings. Because we are not able to record everything that was said or capture all the nuances and punctuation, we must remember that the transcription is also a translation or interpretation.

In sociological approaches such as interviewing, Barker (2008, p. 60) says that gaining access, cooperation, privacy are important aspects to consider, for example recipients may be more open if what they say is anonymous – especially as research institutions and funding bodies are applying strict ethical and legal guidelines on research that involves human participants or taking into consideration that the interviewee may be a gatekeeper or source of further information. Data is generated in interviews rather than collected as it is in textual analysis: this is also why the combination or triangulation of data gives good overall view.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND KEY RESULTS

In Appendix I, a full analysis of the policy document can be found, but due to lack of space, a shortened explanation is provided below using sentences to indicate the techniques used in CDA to discover underlying assumptions, power and so on.

4.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

The analysis explores the discourses that are articulated and privileged in gender policy, the interests that these discourses reflect, and the broader social effects that they may imply. Moving beyond a discussion of policy gaps and weaknesses (which my interviews will do), my inquiry thus seeks to uncover hidden assumptions, representations, ideologies, and the power relations that shape USAID policies towards women.

Representation, Identities and Power Relations

Despite the potential for the manipulation of images and their ability to misrepresent a context, they do play a powerful role in the construction of truth and reality. In this respect there are clear relationships with notions of authority in presenting a picture of 'this is how it is'. The images on the cover of the policy consist of utopian, yet stereotypical representation of the developing world: an African father with baby on his back, a young barefoot Asian girl jumping open armed through a rope crossing the finish line, and an Arab woman in a headscarf fixing a car - the positioning of "us" as the developed and "them" is underdeveloped is immediately apparent. These images also infer that USAID has the power to bring about - and is responsible for - positive changes in the world. The cover of the policy has the official USAID logo and its strap line "From the American people", the collective noun establishing Americans as strong, supportive and benevolent benefactors.

In "the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), prepared jointly by the State Department and USAID, placed women at the center of U.S. diplomacy and development — not simply as beneficiaries, but also as agents of peace, reconciliation, development, growth, and stability" (p.3), women are systematically constructed as an homogeneous group (which perpetuates stereotyping), sharing similar characteristics, backgrounds, motivations and economic status through processes of aggregation, collectivization and functionalization (KhosraviNik, 2005).

In the general macro-structure of the policy, women are seen as vulnerable and oppressed but have great potential for global development. In short, both in what it includes (a new focus on disadvantaged women), as in what it leaves out (an account of the intersections of gender with other markers of social inequality such as race, class, culture, social aspects and so forth), USAID is actively constructing a particular

understanding of what it means to be a woman in a developing country. There is no consideration in differences between women – their needs, abilities, desire to work and beneficiaries are seen as homogenous numbers on which USAID will impose their agenda.

Assumptions and Ideology

USAID positions itself as "a thought leader and learning community", with conviction that the "realization of this policy will help to bring to fruition USAID's development vision of a world in which women, men.....enjoy economic, political....rights are equally empowered..."(p.20). The phrase "equality will be gained without sacrificing gains for males or females" is a simplistic and idealistic assumption, which ignores local contexts in which the policy will be implemented (p.20).

A clear example of USAID ideology and power is the following sentence: "Realizing this policy in all of the countries in which we work will enable USAID to be a catalytic force for gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide and bring to fruition the vision of a world in which all people are equally empowered to secure better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities".

A number of presuppositions and assumptions are made in the use of invalid causal links presupposing that if one fact is true then the next is also true: for example "a growing body of research demonstrates that societies with greater gender equality experience faster economic growth, and benefit from greater agricultural productivity and improved food security " and there is the example that " if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 percent, which in turn could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 percent and reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 percent, up to 150 million people" (p.6). . Furthermore, the policy is rich in statistics from the World Bank, UN and other international organizations to justify their western agenda (p.6).

Text: Grammatical, Lexical and Argumentation

The text analysis is focused on both the grammatical and lexical, as well as the structures of argumentation used. Paying attention to the text can shed light onto the ways in which language works to construct identities and social relations, amongst other issues.

A quote from Hilary Clinton introduces the policy:

"Achieving our objectives for global development will demand accelerated efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. Otherwise, peace and prosperity will have their own glass ceiling."

As both a respected politician and woman in the US, Clinton's quote is immediately viewed as credible as she is the ultimate voice of authority. The technique of quoting or referencing credible or well-known

individuals establishes the legitimacy of these statements and makes them 'true' - a technique used throughout the document. The quote is clearly in the active and collective voice and uses strong verbs such as “demand” and “achieve” and adjectives such as “accelerated efforts”, indicative of the power and influence USAID is able to exercise. Support is sought through making use of the metaphor of a “glass ceiling” for peace and prosperity if gender issues are not addressed, creating a sense of urgency, confirming USAID's role as a saviour and leader.

The collective noun evidently refers to the US government or international community and “our objectives” infer a kind of ownership and power, which overrides local participation and is reflective of USAID's social reality, development priorities and ideological position. Throughout the document, pronouns used in the text are inclusive (our, us, we, etc.) and position beneficiaries or participants positioned (allies or outsiders) with different beliefs and agendas as "them, they".

In the Letter from the Administrator (p.iv), Rajiv Shah uses the metaphor of a “turning point”, and an adjective to describe the currency of a “newly updated” policy, which comes at a “critical time” which is designed to “enhance women’s empowerment and reduce gender gaps...” An emphatic language rich in adjectives is frequently used, also describing USAID as a "solid foundation", with “high impact partnerships”, "harnessing the power of innovation" and conducting rigorous program evaluation to deliver meaningful results. The way in which the sentences are written are factual, loaded with dynamic adjectives and the active voice strengthens USAID's image as a global leader.

Throughout the document 'naturalization' is used or particular representations as 'common sense' (Fairclough 1989), where in dominant discourses implicit assumptions are not questioned and stated as a simple matter of fact or as 'the way things are'. The use of loaded, dramatic, and stereotyping adjectives, adverbs and nouns are central to the construction and representation of USAID and the policy as positive, dynamic and necessary - and provides a sense of conviction which prevents the reader from questioning the accuracy or truth of statements.

"The policy comes at a critical time as global efforts to reduce gender gaps have met only partial success" indicates the transformation of active constructions into passive forms to shirk responsibility and provides the unquestionable necessity of USAID to rectify this situation. In the same manner, activation is used to bring issues into the foreground, as in "the new policy provides guidance on pursuing more effective, evidence-based investments in gender equality and female empowerment and incorporating these efforts into our core development programming" and "the policy affirms the critical role women play..." The simplicity of arguments implies that this policy is easily achievable (if x, then y) and the formula for guaranteed success: "...our integrated approach positions the agency to address gender gaps and constraints that hold women back". In many instances, when using tenses, simple present tense infers reality, truth,

significance or fact, while past simple tense infers less importance (especially when speaking of past failures or lack of achievement). The tenses are noting not only the time frame but also how actions, processes etc are represented as true, relevant, significant.

Presuppositions help to represent constructions as convincing realities through the use of active verbs, for example " *We know* that long term, sustainable development will only be possible when women and men enjoy equal opportunity to rise to their potential". The sentence " designed to enhance women's empowerment and reduce gender gaps, the policy affirms the critical role women play in accelerating progress in development and advancing global prosperity and security" not only uses the word "designed" to indicate how specialized and tailor made the policy is, but presents one of many causal links in the document, in this case between women and global prosperity and security which is part of USAID's discursive framing, ignoring a range of other factors and clearly limiting the potential for discussing complex gender and development issues and causes.

Mention is made of the expertise of USAID's staff who are described as proactive and 'in control' (p.iv), with a list of pronouns increasing USAID's credibility and mentioning the Senior Gender Advisor in the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, the *re-invigorated* Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, and gender advisors in Washington and field missions who are "driving this agenda forward". The present tense and strong verbs are used throughout the document to emphasize the continuing momentum of these efforts, led by USAID. Further, the Administrator states that "with this policy, we can ensure *our* values [American values] and commitments are reflected in durable, meaningful results for all" –this is indicative of American ideology which is simplistic and views the policy as the magic bullet.

Strong verbs and adjectives are used to emphasize how the policy will "provide guidance" on more effective practices, "evidence-based" investments and incorporate these efforts into our "core" development programming: everything is loaded with knowledge and power, with the reminder that their efforts are 'critical'. Mosse (2004, p.23) notes that despite the proclamations about evidence-based policy, invariably it is policy which produces evidence rather than vice-versa.

Discourse

Information is scientifically presented as if development is logical and controllable, as if USAID can quantify, measure and manage development, such as " USAID investments are aimed at three overarching outcomes" which will be "adapted and translated" into "specific" results with "targets and indicators" (p.1). Phrases such as USAID will make "strategic investments" and "strategic planning" to promote gender equality and female empowerment give the organization a sense of both benevolence and power. In fact, there are many empty phrases, which would lead the reader to believe that everything is 'under control' (p.1).

Generic terms or phrases are used to explain complex issues, language which has become normalized and which we have heard from the UN and other US funded organs, such as “reduce gender disparities...”, “increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, influence”... (p.10) but leaving a lot of room for interpretation as it is not clearly explained how (or if it is, too simplistically).

The document states as fact that "USAID will partner with a wide range of key actors to ensure that our efforts to increase gender equality and female empowerment are coordinated and non-duplicative, and reflect country priorities" (p13) Later, in our interview results, we will see how this is not always the reality on the ground, but the scientific way in which the document is written sells this as absolute fact. The language employed throughout the documents is characteristic of political discourse because it aims to convey political conviction and commitment to ideas and causes.

4.2.1 Discussion

Throughout the USAID gender policy, it is evident that the US has positioned itself as a superpower and saviour, a country which stereotypes the developing world (“them”) and believes it is an example that should be followed (“us”) in terms of gender equality and women’s empowerment. USAID positions itself as an organization to believe in, which has beneficiaries’ best interests at heart – and this can predispose the reader to believe what the text producer is communicating.

The policy remains focused on American ideology, views of the world, assumptions, terminology, and quantifiable indicators; and the genre-specific features of the data prove to be a micro-linguistic mechanism through which a) women and their challenges in developing countries are represented b) women’s role in – and link to -development is defined and c) focus areas and action needed determined.

USAID’s ideology is clear in the “western” goals and terminology of equality and empowerment for women by promoting their policy as unquestionably “the right way”, and employing dominant donor discourse, which has become normalized within international development institutions, with the appearance of neutrality. The terms "empowerment", "gender equality" and human rights discourse are in themselves western concepts reflected in donor discourse.

Concepts, planned activities and ‘solutions’ related to women’s empowerment and equality are quantified, simplified and limited, assumptions are made about the level of acceptance of USAID intervention in countries without consideration of contextual factors and women in developing countries are represented as an homogenous group. Because discourse shapes the reader's understanding of reality, the emphases and omissions of policy language can affect the reader’s

understanding of complex issues such as the challenges of gender equality, female empowerment and gender integration in international development.

Features like the structure of the document, exaggeration, the scientific citing of information and quotes play an important role in constructing and reproducing particular perspectives and providing a convincing argument. The endorsement of the policy continues to allow the US to control funding of gender priorities by differentiating between issues or projects which are suitable or not and present a one-sided picture of development, with negative effects omitted or downplayed. It is in this sense that we can think with James Scott (1990) in terms of the existence of 'hidden transcripts' alongside the 'public transcripts' of development policy (Mosse, 2004 p,8).

More than once scientific source is alluded to in order to legitimize and further persuade the audience that the policy will bring about much needed changes. It also implies a holistic approach to gender and women's rights, in all policy and actions developed. Yet, in practice, it means the US keeps its discretionary power to decide who will get funding for what and when.

Despite claims to the contrary, it is unlikely that the USAID policy will profoundly change power relations in developing countries, at least as they are structured around gender – rather it depends on the ability of the women's movement to build on it and use human rights as a tool to push for gender justice in social, and not just discursive, practices.

4.3 Interviews: Key Results

Gender Specialist

Referring in general to the gaps between policy and practice, Dr.Farr mentioned the difference between what is said and done citing " *huge promises in policies, public fora, or in the Security Council; and on the ground, nothing* ". Although donors promise social transformation, they rarely make a real difference as they prohibit –and actively avoid -political action or 'facing issues head on' as this would not show results in their books as quickly. Instead they provide services and have smaller projects like income generating projects and training for women for work opportunities or to show them how to empower themselves, which doesn't lead to noticeable changes. She explained that GE work is never politically neutral; but that this fact is one that donors and recipients alike rarely consider in full.

" The challenge in the oPt is that there is so much work going on with women that isn't about social transformation or supporting the resistance movement. It's all about making an intolerable situation seem normal or somehow survivable. Women, particularly, are often offered programmes that encourage and enable them to 'shut up and put up' with terrible circumstances. This is what feminists mean when we oppose the NGO'isation or de-politicisation of work done by, for and with women."

Dr. Farr emphasized that donors like USAID are viewed with a good measure of suspicion as the US is not a neutral player in the region and especially not with regards to Israel. She didn't remember a single outstanding USAID project in the oPt, but rather recalled how bitterly Palestinians oppose the US's blind support for Israeli policies and interventions in the country it occupies. Her description of what she considered a 'bad' donor is one driven by political imperatives at home that don't accord with those in the country a programme's being delivered, commenting that this is why 'first do no harm' is so crucial when planning any interventions.

When questioned about the accurate reflection of socio-political and economic reality in the Opt in donor terminology, Dr Farr replied that it depends on the donor, arguing that one can more-or-less immediately see which donors work to normalise Israeli oppression and which do not: *"those whose primary intention is to do whatever Israel wants have policies that hurt Palestinians. Those that are pro-Palestine try to deliver interventions that promote sumud (resilience) and understand that what Palestinians need is socio-political and economic support that is also focused on the goal of gaining an independent state"*.

When asked about the difference in projects implemented by specialized and women's NGOs, Dr Farr mentioned that specialised women's organisations that are also feminist do things differently, and for different reasons, than those that work with women from a politically conservative or 'neutral' perspective. Even in situations where donors impose their own criteria and conditions on projects, a number of professional NGO's are able to use the terminology of donors and fulfill project requirements, while still following their own specialized agenda which they are knowledgeable about and thereby continue to make a difference in the communities in which they work. *"Women's organisations that maintain the status quo (for whatever reason, be it religion or politics, funding, charity, donor imperatives etc.) will probably deliver non-transformatory programming."*⁵

If the NGO and the donor are in agreement about implementation, focus, approach etc it works very well. In implementation, programmes are increasingly attempting to reach equal numbers of women and men, but if the programme's already poorly designed that can be a hindrance not a help – what she has seen is a cycle of inefficient conception, inadequate funding and analytical capacity, poor implementation; which shows up at the end of the project.

⁵ Farr (2010, p.7) explains that feminist and specialized NGOs and service providers demonstrate the greatest understanding of the ways in which their work is politicized and have good knowledge of the vocabulary and dynamics of the donor system (using internationally accepted NGO vocabulary) and have good lobbying skills; are clear about how the occupation, political division and patriarchy affect their work and discuss how the absence of functioning political outlets and counterparts has made their work necessary (ibid). They were more likely to identify themselves as engaging actively with political issues as activists for both women's liberation and Palestinian liberation.

Women (like men!) participate in projects they have time for, that help them, that stretch their experience & understanding of the world. So the best way to get them in is to ask what they want/need/offer & work to meet those directives. Men, in my experience, participate equally when they understand what's being done and why, and when they see the benefit for themselves and the women in the community. It's all about communication: by which I mean listening, understanding and responding to needs. And in cases where nobody 'gets' the need for a GE component, it's about explaining the reasoning and showing people exactly how things will be changes because they change the institution or organisation to give women more space and more benefits.

Programme Manager

Yara Zayed was in agreement with Dr Farr, saying that in post-conflict women are sidelined. There is a lot of talk by donors about “empowerment” and “equality” and how their strategies and activities are going to change the lives of women, but no real action. In addition, NGOs are often made to sign agreements to confirm that they are not "terrorists" or politically active; and projects are depoliticized. *"If political, they would work with joint projects with Israelis and Arab-Israeli NGOs –or empower other NGOs to support women's rights but they produce documents, not resolutions. Also, they don't change political structures or limitations, for example if they are not able to work in area C, they just work around that. If due to social and cultural aspects, women are prohibited from participating...they change the scope of the project. That is why there is no serious change"*

Speaking of gaps between policy and practice, Yara mentioned differences between promises/words and action; between theory and practice; between western knowledge vs local knowledge; between global and local agenda... *“they don't consider what is realistic in terms of social, political and other conditions – they are very western. They use big words and make big promises, but they really put the responsibility on the NGOs to implement, as they don't want to take the blame if it doesn't work.”*

The main challenges experienced when project conception and design of the USAID project was that the NGO followed donor policies which meant changing the scope of the project to suit donor goals; working in areas that the donor requires – with their themes and methodology.

" Donors are very specific on themes, methodology and they conduct a lot of awareness sessions to tell NGOs where their interests lie. If you want funding, you work in areas that the project requires, which in my opinion often prohibits you from doing what you know needs to be done, in areas that need to be worked in and on issues which we have identified from our longstanding experience – and as locals. The donor comes in with a “western view” of the world and imposing their views and ideas on locals."

Like Dr Farr, Yara commented on the fact that donors like USAID often only fund smaller, shorter projects which do not yield optimal results and are not sustainable (“they impose their model in one year and then they leave”); that they impose global and general gender issues on a small community which is not well prepared for such big issues, saying *“they want to make women equal to men, which is not easy or practical due to the social situation, culture and identity reasons. Social change is not easy and quick. Donors seem to forget that social change is not easy and quick: they fund projects for a year, impose their model in one year and then they leave. Of course this is not sustainable.”*

It is clear from Yara's experience, that donors often focus on quantitative rather than qualitative results and count only on numbers, not on the ground change. She also provided an example of donors considered their output as outcome: for instance, usually output would be 20 people trained (for them that is outcome) , instead of focusing on the 'real' outcome or long-term result, which is empowered women. *“There is a real leveling (and lowering) of the terms. Training 100 people is not sufficient. The main concern is change such as 70% changed their attitude or there are x new initiatives for women in the area after the project, not just participation in training.”* She argued that donors need a more step by step approach rather than forcing gender integration, which tends to be more like Affirmative Action.

Often donor terminology does not reflect local priorities or is not understood by local NGOs who are implement projects. Yara mentioned that donors imposing their terminology, which sounds very innovative and complex, when in fact a lot of people who are 'supporting' it don't even know what it means. *“It is also limited, with not a rich vocabulary. For example, advocacy which is a term used for a long time has now taken on a new meaning for donors and there are so many different understandings of terminology e.g. USAID doesn't want to allow the use of the word lobbying, rather advocacy, maybe because politically it sounds less threatening. They really dictate what words to use”*

Like Dr Farr, Yara believes that locally owned projects yield better results as they are more knowledgeable and in touch with communities who know what they want and need, while they are designed in less complex and more understandable terms. She argues that women's centers work as much as they focus on gender issues as a matter of course and focus on women's issues, laws, higher level, while others who are not specialized often ignore underlying and important issues. She highlighted that gender is specialized and not merely something one can integrate into a project.

“Women's organizations also have more insight on the whole, although they are also limited because of policies, but overall they show more results and are more involved in gender issues - especially as they are more knowledgeable and in touch with communities who know what they want and need and specialized NGOs have the know-how when it comes to getting funding as they know how donor systems and terminology work, while achieving their own objectives.”

When asked which way of working between donors and local NGO's works best, Yara said *"when the donor treats the NGO as a partner and allows brainstorming, participation and allows a good deal of flexibility. When both practical and strategic needs are met. When the projects are long-term and not just short-term affirmative action projects. "*

Legal Expert

When questioned about the gaps between policy and practice, Ms Khattab was in agreement with the other two interviewees with regards to the lack of political action – and thereby tangible results:

"I think the main gap lies in that the donors don't try to push the advocacy efforts they fund forward on the decision making level[..]many donors fund organizations (local and international) to produce reports on violations by the Israelis in these areas which makes daily life very hard. But the same donors who are well informed don't take any of the issues and advocate for that to be on the agenda of their foreign affairs office vis-à-vis Israel"

She also argued that projects are not designed to make a tangible impact, they have a short life cycle since they are based on donors funding and many organizations tend to implement ad hoc projects depending on the different call for proposals: the more specialized organizations that have core projects are unfortunately only in Ramallah with some offices in other governorates in the West Bank, yet many of the disadvantaged women in the rural areas and especially area C are left without any consistent support. The support in these areas is more of a humanitarian nature which doesn't make a long term impact and doesn't promote equality. It seems that projects that aim at empower women economically are the most successful - also given the high number of female headed households and the lack of sufficient working opportunities.

"I find the projects are highly repetitive with little impact, for example, you will find that the same women attend the women's rights awareness workshops. I think there should be a different modality for the awareness raising workshops if they want more impact. Maybe do them in schools as part of civic education for both boys and girls."

Ms Khattab highlighted the challenges that gender equality and women's rights face are on several levels, including the occupation and the lack of a political solution, arguing that as long as the occupation continues women's issues remain insignificant; Palestinian society is becoming more and more militarized which is less gender sensitive and conservative in nature; and on the policy level, as long as the division between Fatah and Hamas (and thereby Gaza Strip and West Bank) is ongoing the Palestinian Legislative Council will remain non-functioning which means no new legislation can be amended or passed in a democratic way.

"The alternative of passing laws and amendments by a presidential decree (which is not democratic) should follow certain criteria, amendments for laws to make them more gender sensitive is not considered emergency and in any case where an amendment is endorsed it is applicable only in the West Bank"

Although donors, the international community and authorities in the oPt have signed and adhere to international agreements and legal mechanisms for women⁶ such as Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Womenfor (CEDAW) and UNSCR (UN Security Resolution) 1325, the problem is that the oPt is not a state and cannot follow the obligations. The problem with these two frameworks (amongst others) is that they does not address the protection of women under occupation or focus on post-conflict situations. An additional issue is the lack of capacity of ministries - such as the Ministry of Women's Affairs in the Opt which has no expertise to propose policies, gender responsive budgeting or legislation.

Ms Khuttab also highlighted that quantitative methods and indicators such as GDI (Gender Development Index), GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) and GRB (Gender Responsive Budgeting) are followed by the PA institutions out of obligations to donors but almost mean nothing on the ground *"The Palestinian Police might be the only institution that has been working extensively on gender equality internally."*

Further, when asked whether donor agendas have demobilized and depoliticized gender issues and projects in the oPt, she replied that gender in many projects is still dealt with in a manner that is only concerned about having equal number of beneficiaries from the projects, just showing numbers of female beneficiaries, but that implementers and donors policies fail to assess impact on the ground.

" For example, when we address the proposed amendment on the family law (personal status law), this is an amendment that has been proposed in different versions since the early 90's, up until now there is no unified version and no concrete progress, yet donors keep funding this initiative since according to them this is the most important law for women's rights (it is true), but the initiatives on the ground do not encourage dialogue between the stakeholders and the donors don't use any opportunity to advocate for that amendment among policy and decision makers."

Ms Khattab was of the opinion that if the empowerment projects were not donor driven, organizations would be more creative in designing projects that empower women and help the organizations sustain themselves - *" there is donor fatigue on both sides, yet it is convenient for organizations to keep applying for funds [...]Palestinian society is becoming less and less tolerant of gender equality projects. "* Another problem is job insecurity among employees in these organizations because at times of shortage in funds they either volunteer or are dismissed. Moreover, the salaries are very poor which forces the employees to focus their energy on their survival and not the quality of work. An additional issue is that donors focus more on gender mainstreaming on the institutional level. A lot is been done on building the capacity of the

⁶ The Declaration of Independence adopted by the Palestinian National Council in 1988, which forbids genderbased discrimination in general rights; The Palestinian Basic Law; The National Strategy for Palestinian Women endorsed in 1997, based on international and regional conventions; and conferences, including CEDAW; The Fourth World Conference on Women and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; Council of Ministers' decision No. 01/05/13/CM/SF of 2009 on mainstreaming gender into governmental; budgeting; United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 addressing issues related to women in times of armed conflict; The Palestinian Women's Bill of Rights of 2008.

institutions to develop gender sensitive strategies, the problem is that the institutions don't have the human resources and financial capacity to implement them.

Regarding the question whether donor terminology accurately reflect the actual socio-political and economic reality in the OPT and allow projects to adequately address community needs, Ms Khattab mentioned that it is individual and that donors try to get informed and briefed by local partners. *"It depends on the politics of the Donor State and what terminology they can and cannot use, which is not necessarily a reflection of the reality on the ground."*

4.3 Interview Key Results

Rhetoric versus action, terminology, global versus local agenda: All of the interviews were in agreement that there are large gaps between donor discourse and the reality on the ground, citing promises and talk of "empowerment" and "equality" which is not matched by results in practice or changes in the lives of women in the OPT. In addition, donor terminology in many cases does not reflect local priorities or issues as understood and labeled by local NGOs; and is reflective of a global and western rather than local agenda. Although donors, the international community and authorities in the OPT have signed and ratified international agreements, they are rarely implemented in practice, due to factors including a lack of capacity of PA institutions.

De-politicization and de-mobilization: Although donors such as USAID name social transformation as one of their priorities in the OPT, this is contradicted by the fact that they are not neutral players and do not attempt to resist or end the Occupation, or challenge underlying political structures which affect empowerment and equality of women. This leads to demobilization and de-politicization of projects as they work around political issues by changing the scope of their project, or working on smaller projects like income generating projects and training for women for work opportunities or to show them how to empower themselves, which doesn't lead to noticeable changes. Gender Equality is not politically neutral and if addressed in a politically neutral manner, cannot be expected to yield results or be sustainable. As well as this, social transformation requires longer term interventions and although donors make mention of sustainable and long-term results, they often only provide short-term funding for ad-hoc projects.

Focus on numbers, not impact: Donors tend to focus on quantitative rather than qualitative results: programmes are increasingly attempting to reach equal numbers of women and men and count only on numbers, not on the ground change, while there is continued confusion between output and outcome. Many projects are still dealt with in a manner that is only concerned about having equal number of beneficiaries from the projects, just showing numbers of female beneficiaries, but implementers and donors policies fail to assess impact on the ground.

International versus indigenous: The feeling is that there is donor fatigue in the OPt and that if projects were not donor driven, they would be more creative in designing projects that empower women, reflect local needs and help organizations to sustain themselves. They would also be designed in less complex and more understandable terms and ensure that communities are "ready" to tackle such projects. Specialized and women's NGOs are more able to implement projects with good results with donor funding as they have a good understanding of donor terminology and can "tick boxes" and meet requirements while still implementing their own agenda (which could often be more political), which other non-feminist NGOs are less likely to do so.

Participation, agreement, partnership: All three interviewees recommended local participation and agreement in donor intervention - in implementation, focus and approach; NGOs being treated as partners, brainstorming and the addressing of both practical and strategic needs; and projects being run long-term and not just as short-term affirmative action projects.

4.4 Composite Discussion

The methodological and theoretical contribution of this paper is related to the analysis of the relevance of theoretical approaches which are dependent on their practical use and applicability to provide guidelines and answers related to practical problems in development - rather than concepts, ideas and arguments merely relating to abstract situations. This paper, in its exploration of policy versus practice also recommends that the success of 'participatory' approaches must be viewed against the gradual institutionalization of the NGO movement in large parts of the world and the watering down of the notion of participatory change within the frameworks and perceptions of development of NGOs and governments. The evidence that emerges shows that there is a noticeable absence of a political agenda explicitly linked to the transformation of structures and practices, but rather imposed models of development.

In the paper – and within a theoretical framework of C4D and postmodernism – feminist and development theories are explored alongside recommended practical approaches of C4D, in order to provide an understanding not only of the relationship between theory and practice, but a holistic view of a) the origins and elements of theoretical frameworks, b) what they look like when translated into policy and practice, c) the underlying issues and problems in policy and internationally donor-led projects, d) the gaps between policy and practice; and e) recommendations for the way forward, as C4D is explored as an alternative to current practices which favours two-way and horizontal communication which at least distinguishes between policy and planning-making at micro and macro levels (Servaes 2002, p13).

So what can be concluded here about the relationship - and gaps - between donor policy and practice? For one thing, it is clear that the connection between policy and development practices is partial and socially managed and that the relationship between policy ideas and events is indirect (Mosse, 2004, p.25). What

policy models offer us is a set of guidelines or principles -and a significant interpretation of events- or overview of how donors think the developing world 'should be', but they don't necessarily turn policy into reality: practices are shaped and influenced by practical demands; social, cultural, political, historical and other conditions; and institutional logic. "Policy models are poor guides to understanding the practices, events and effects of development actors, which are shaped by the relationships and interests and cultures of specific organisational settings" (ibid).

Mosse (2008, p.10) proposes that the reason for such large gaps between policy and practice is due to the fact that policy (development models, strategies and project designs) primarily functions to mobilize and maintain political support – "to legitimize rather than to orientate practice". Although policy models do manage to legitimize, mobilize support, and bring people and agencies together across organizations, nations and cultures, they do not actually provide good guides to action, nor are they easily turned into practice: this is possibly a result of increasingly take on more agendas, as well as increasing complexity and burying differences. As Mosse so rightly points out, the logic of political mobilization and the logic of operations is different (ibid).

Gender policy has become paradigmatic of the ways in which relations of power operate through discourse to control and normalize; and wherein discrimination and inequalities are reproduced between donors and recipients at all levels - in the making and execution of policy; the 'control of dependent leadership' in projects and countries; the international language and terminology; and in their visions, rules and conditions of partnership. "Often we find that donor interest in a project is not visible as events or relationships, but rather a coherent rationalizing policy idea or system of representations" (Mosse, 2004 p. 21).

It does seem that policies are being used in discursive practices rather than as a tool to push for gender equality in social practices. It is during the 'implementation phase' or exploration of practice that we discover all the diverse and sometimes contradictory interests in these policies and project designs; and realize how policy can be interpreted in a number of different ways. Analysis of the USAID gender policy document and interviews with development experts revealed how these gaps occur between policy and practice: firstly, it is evident that a multitude of international donors employ a top-down rather than participatory or bottom-up approach; and that their policy- and thereby projects - reflects [their] western ideology, terminology and a global rather than local agenda. Policy and projects have been designed in the context of developed countries and cannot necessarily translate into practice as local challenges and obstacles are encountered. Even if 'tailored' to the various contexts in which they will be implemented, projects and their goals are still often viewed from a 'western perspective'.

The policy document is paradigmatic of dominant western discourse, representations of, and assumptions

about both men and women in developing countries; and its aim of achieving simplified goals [western constructs] of, amongst others, 'equality and empowerment for all', neglects indigenous or local needs and fails to address the complexity of social, historical, political and cultural factors. These different representations and positioning of gender and development undoubtedly continue to influence donor policy, project design and thereby, the success of gender equality initiatives.

The policy guarantees long-term change and transformation in developing countries, but rhetoric – which can be idealistic and often even unrealistic – cannot always be actioned, which is reflected in the mixed results of donor programmes, projects and approaches. Interviewees expressed their concern about donors promoting equality and other long term goals and sustainable development in theory, while funding random initiatives or short-term projects and issues which required longer term intervention. In the case of the oPt, the reality is that although donors pay lip service transformation, they in fact de-politicize and de-mobilize the women's movement as a result of their connection to Israel (and thereby political neutrality) and failure to address underlying structures affecting women's equality and empowerment, including resisting the occupation.

In one sense, donor policies tend to take on a GAD approach, focusing on a "gender planning" or strategic frameworks to address a range of issues and underlying structures. However, this often involves a technical rather than practical approach, which may look good on paper, but has little or no longer term impact or benefits. GAD projects are focused on numbers and "ticking boxes" rather than taking on a more qualitative or consultative approach, which in a sense also implies that they fall back into the WID approach of integrating a certain number of women into development projects– "add women and stir" – and this does not lead to real change on the ground.

Despite donor fatigue and disillusionment with donor policies and projects, there are a number of ways in which the gaps between policy and practice - and donors and recipients - can be lessened and projects can be implemented with more beneficial results. Recommendations include a more participatory and bottom-up approach, which includes dialogue, partnership and agreement between donors and local institutions. International agendas, instead of exercising control over and overriding local agendas, need to 'meet halfway' and be adapted to address the realities and practicalities of local needs and indigenous issues. The more consultative and indigenous the policy and projects, the less representation, stereotypes and discrimination will hamper the success of implementing these projects and address identified needs of beneficiaries. Donors need to match their rhetoric with action: when they speak of transformation and sustainable changes, they need to 'put their money where their mouth is' and address both practical and strategic needs and longer-term interventions. And when they make promises about bringing about gender equality and women's empowerment in the oPt, they need to be honest about whose side they're on, and whether they are able to keep these promises - or whether their policy is nothing more than words.

In order to share information, knowledge, trust, commitment, and a right attitude in development projects participation is very important in any decision making process for development. “This calls for new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different ways”. (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, 1980:254 cited Servaes 2002, p.15)

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APPENDIX I

USAID Critical Discourse Analysis

Techniques (adopted from Strathclyde University *)

(1) Pronouns – Participant

How are pronouns used in the text and are they inclusive or exclusive (our, us, we, etc.) or exclusive (they, their, them, he, she, it, you, your etc.). How is the reader and other participants positioned (allies or outsiders) with different beliefs and agendas.

(2) Activisation / Passivisation

Transformations of active constructions into passive forms can be used to shirk responsibility or bring things to foreground. Passivity gives unquestionable function .

(3) Time – Tense and Aspect

This refers to how tense is used to construct understanding of events - for example simple present tense infers reality or fact, while past simple tense infers less importance. The tenses are noting not only the time frame but also how actions, processes etc are represented as true, relevant, significant.

(4) Adjectives/Adverbs/Nouns/Verbal Processes

The use of loaded, dramatic, and stereotyping adjectives, adverbs and nouns are central to the construction of an event or a person, whether or not that construction is evaluating its object positively or negatively. Also the use of non-hedged adverbs, such as surely, obviously, clearly and so on, position a contention as being incontrovertible 'fact'.

(5) Metaphor – literal and grammatical

Metaphor is more than just a literary device – it plays a fundamental part in the way people represent social reality. This is starkly seen in the description of individuals or the personification of entities, e.g. Saddam Hussein is a 'monster', Margaret Thatcher was the 'Iron Lady' etc

(6) presupposition/implication

Presuppositions help to represent constructions as convincing realities and there are a number of lexico-grammatical means by which this can be achieved:

- the use of factive verbs, adjectives and adverbs, verbs that presuppose their grammatical complements, adjectives and adverbs that describe entities and

processes they presuppose, and therefore represent them as facts – we now know..., we realize..., we discovered that..., you forget that...

□ the use of change of state verbs which presuppose the factuality of a previous state – when did you stop beating your wife?, their policy on Europe has changed..., this school has improved...; transform, turn into,

□ the use of invalid causal links presupposing that if one fact is true then the next is also true – ‘90% of my class passed FCE this year, 80% of my class passed last year, therefore my teaching is getting better...’;

(7) Medium

This ‘masquerade’ (Hyatt 1994) of friendship, a shared communication with a trusted confidant, an individual projected as someone you can believe in, who wouldn’t lie to you, who has your best interests at heart, can predispose the text receiver to believe what the text producer is communicating.

(8) Audience

In light of the fact that there is no way that the author can know exactly who the audience is, the notion of audience can be read as an idealised, projected construction. In this idealisation and projection, clues can be found as to the ideological presuppositions of the text producers

(9) Visual Images

Despite the potential for the manipulation of images, and the potential for displaying an image with a constructed impression of its contextual setting, visual images do play a powerful role in the construction of truth and reality. In this respect there are clear relationships with notions of hegemony in presenting a picture of ‘this is how it is’.

(10) Age, Class, Disability, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Sexuality Issues

Within a text it can be revealing to note any comment regarding individuals who may be projected as less socially valued, as a result of these issues, in order to legitimize the assertions of those who hold power, or to identify any pejorative or stereotyping presentation or labelling of such people as being a ‘normal’, naturalised and commonly-shared viewpoint.

(11) Reference to other texts, genres, discourses and individuals.

One consistent way in which texts from all genres seek to establish the legitimacy of their claims, their common-sense assumptions and their world views is through reference to other texts, genres, discourses and individuals. Quotation from, citation of and reference to other texts are lucid examples, whereas the use of phrasing, style and metaphor originating in other texts may be more opaque, yet equally revealing

Text

	Text	Interdiscursivity/Discursive practice	Analysis
Message from the Administrator:			
1	*Passive voice-distancing from failure *Active verb: pursuing..	*We are part of success, not of failure	* puts the past behind, establishes image of hero or saviour
2	*Adjectives: New policy, more effective, evidence-based	* use of very strong verbs, indicative of action * adjectives describing newness, better than prior	*active verbs indicate strength and power of USAID as global leader * USAID separates itself from others as unique and superior to others
3	*Designed to – rather than written or produced *Affirms the critical (adjective) role in accelerating (strong verb) progress in development *causal link between global prosperity and security and critical (adj) role of women	*professionally made and tailored for specific purpose * justifies the role of USAID as “accelerator” of progress	* ideology of USAID and US, they have “taken charge” and are “magic bullet” * agenda of USAID is put forward as the way forward; obvious opinion leader and decision-maker
4	* building (verb) high impact (adjective) partnerships, harnessing (descriptive verb) the power of innovation and conducting rigorous (verb) program evaluation to deliver meaningful results.	*stated as fact, but is very simplistic and omits other important factors *has ties with very influential, capable, strong partners; “harness the power of innovation” rather vague but gives USAID image of strength; rigorous program evaluation indicative of their speed and efficiency	* USAID’s ideology can be seen everywhere in its simplistic ideas and incorrect assumptions * establishing position as strong, omnipotent leader who “harnesses” power and gives orders – keeps everyone in check; high impact partnerships reflects the way USAID views itself – think they make a huge positive difference in the world; rigorous evaluation – indicates how active and efficient they are
5	*reinvigorated (adjective) *Office, list of complex staff titles	*new, ready, prepared	*often use adjectives used to describe a person, which creates impression of powerful policy
6	* we can ensure our values and commitments are reflected in durable, meaningful results for all.	*the policy has been design and will be run by the best of the best *extremely idealistic and making a huge promise, collective noun	*”we’ is basically “the Americans” – it’s us versus them and we are going to save them...
Executive Summary:			

<p>1 Gender equality and female empowerment are core development objectives, fundamental for the realization of human rights and key to effective and sustainable development outcomes.</p> <p>2 No society can develop successfully without providing equitable opportunities, resources, and life prospects for males and females so that they can shape their own lives and contribute to their families and communities.</p> <p>3 Under this policy, USAID investments are aimed at three overarching outcomes:</p> <p>4 Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over and benefit from resources, ...</p> <p>5 Reduce gender based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities; and</p> <p>6 Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies.</p> <p>7 Build partnerships across a wide range of stakeholders: USAID will partner with host governments, civil society, the</p>	<p>*Causal link between Gender equality, the realization of human rights and sustainable development outcomes.</p> <p>*no society can develop successfully without equal opportunities</p> <p>*Investments rather than programs/projects; overarching outcomes</p> <p>*reduce disparities</p> <p>*mitigate its harmful effects</p> <p>*realize their rights...</p> <p>*build</p>	<p>*stated as fact - "normalized" discourse</p> <p>*US idea of success; indicative of USAID's belief but represented in factual manner – “normalized” discourse</p> <p>* definite and seemingly quantifiable factors</p> <p>*very vague, large goals, covering a large range of issues</p> <p>*alleviate effects of gender based violence – a bit ambitious</p> <p>*focusing on strategic rather than practical factors</p>	<p>*simplistic, ignores a range of complex factors and is a prime example of the way in which US creates an incomplete view of the world</p> <p>* “us” and “them”. We, the US apply equality and are an example of success. If you do not adhere, you are not successful. No consideration of local cultures, belief systems, customs. Vision also very idealistic and somewhat impractical (ideological)</p> <p>*we have the knowledge and resources</p> <p>* we are “invested”, we are with you, positioned as allies and agents of change</p> <p>* USAID represents itself as powerful and it's activities as the ultimate solution to all these problems – assumes that it can just go in and change things without considering culture, customs...</p> <p>* USAID unrealistic ideology</p>
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<p>private sector and other donors to ensure that our efforts are coordinated and non-duplicative, build on the skills and initiatives of local actors, and reflect country priorities.</p> <p>8Harness science, technology, and innovation to reduce gender gaps and empower women and girls: 9Serve as a thoughtleader and a learning community: 10Hold ourselves accountable:</p>	<p>* harness...technology and innovation</p> <p>*thought leader and learning community</p>	<p>*build indicates sense of permanence, strong foundations</p> <p>Assumption: These communities have access to and are at a level to use science, technology and want to learn how to...</p> <p>*how do we measure this?</p>	<p>* reflective of US and western ideology and belief system; not taking into account other factors which could play a role</p> <p>*an example of how WID is used and practical issues secondary to strategic – indicative of USAID assumptions and ideology. Not at all considerate of local obstacles and norms. *establishing itself as superior, strong, capable and not considering any resistance from local communities etc. Assume that this will lead to non-duplications etc..also do not consider lack of capacity in developing countries or CBOs...choose parties to work with and ignore others</p> <p>Reflective of US ideology and ignorance of practical needs – assumption that science and technology will empower them when structural issues not addressed</p> <p>* establish themselves as knowing it all and</p>
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			<p>offering advice and information on how to “do things right”</p> <p>*typical western or UN discourse which doesn’t mean anything</p>
<p>Introduction:</p> <p>IA growing body of research ... societies with greater gender equality experience faster economic growth... the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 percent, which in turn could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 percent and reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 percent, up to 150 million people.¹⁰</p> <p>The 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), prepared jointly by the State Department and USAID, placed women at the center of U.S. diplomacy and development — not simply as beneficiaries, but also as agents of peace, reconciliation, development, growth, and stability.</p>	<p>* a growing body of...causal supposition</p>	<p>* use of many stats, figures and references, scientific presentation</p>	<p>*vague reference presented as fact; also calculations not taking into consideration complex factors. Western ideology, western ideas...not tailored to needs or wants of communities or considering participation et</p> <p>*Imposing ideas.</p>
<p>USAID Vision and Goals:</p>			

<p>1 “a world in which women and men, girls and boys enjoy economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights... Responsibilities for earning income and the care of family members are not restricted by the roles or stereotypes society has defined for males and females.</p> <p>2 Number of laws, policies, or procedures drafted, proposed, or adopted to promote gender equality at the regional, national or local level.</p> <p>3 Proportion of female participants in USG assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment).</p> <p>Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG-supported training/ programming.</p> <p>Proportion of target population reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities.</p> <p>Number of laws, policies or procedures drafted, proposed, or</p>			<p>* US standards, beliefs..”us” and “them”. US and western superiority. Not considering local belief systems, norms. Just “bulldozing” over differences</p> <p>* Quantity rather than quality – quantifiable results is what USAID aims for – not looking into how implemented (confuse means with end)</p> <p>* simplified system, how will this be measured? Surely better results needed? Men excluded despite inclusion of men mentioned. Again, confusion of means with end ..numbers</p>
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<p>adopted with USG assistance designed to improve prevention of or response to genderbased violence at the regional, national, or local level.</p> <p>Number of people reached by a USGfunded intervention providing GBV services (e.g., health, legal, psychosocial counseling, shelters, hotlines, other).</p> <p>Percentage of target population that views gender-based violence as less acceptable after participating in or being exposed to USG programming.</p>			
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>1Gender equality and female empowerment are essential for achieving our development goals. 2Realizing this policy in all of the countries in which we work will enable USAID to be a catalytic force for gender equality and women’s empowerment worldwide and bring to fruition the vision of a world in which all people are equally empowered to secure better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities.</p>	<p>*Pronoun “our” goals</p> <p>*catalytic force</p>		<p>*USAID as authority and opinion leader</p>

Message from the Administrator

1The policy comes at a critical time as global efforts to reduce gender gaps have met only partial success.

2The new policy provides guidance on pursuing more effective, evidence-based investments in gender equality and female empowerment and incorporating these efforts into our core development programming.

3Designed to enhance women's empowerment and reduce gender gaps, the policy affirms the critical role women play in accelerating progress in development and advancing global prosperity and security.

4Under this policy, we place a strong emphasis on building high impact partnerships, harnessing the power of innovation and conducting rigorous program evaluation to deliver meaningful results.

5Driving this agenda forward, USAID's Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment is working closely with the Senior Gender Advisor in the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, the reinvigorated Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, and gender advisors in Washington and field missions.

6With this policy, we can ensure our values and commitments are reflected in durable, meaningful results for all.

Executive Summary

1Gender equality and female empowerment are core development objectives, fundamental for the realization of human rights and key to effective and sustainable development outcomes.

2No society can develop successfully without providing equitable opportunities, resources, and life prospects for males and females so that they can shape their own lives and contribute to their families and communities.

3Under this policy, USAID investments are aimed at three overarching outcomes:

4Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities and services economic, social, political, and cultural;

5Reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities; and

6Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decisionmaking in households, communities, and societies.

7Build partnerships across a wide range of stakeholders: USAID will partner with host governments, civil society, the private sector and other donors to ensure that our efforts are coordinated and nonduplicative, build on the skills and initiatives of local actors, and reflect country priorities.

8Harness science, technology, and innovation to reduce gender gaps and empower women and girls:

9Serve as a thoughtleader and a learning community: The Agency will measure performance in closing key gender gaps and empowering women and girls, learn from successes and failures and disseminate best practices on gender integration throughout the Agency.

10Hold ourselves accountable: Gender equality and female empowerment is a shared Agency responsibility and depends on the contribution and collective commitment of all staff, with particular emphasis on senior managers and Mission Directors.

Introduction

1A growing body of research demonstrates that societies with greater gender equality experience faster economic growth, and benefit from greater agricultural productivity and improved food security.

2For instance, the Food andAgriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 percent,which in turn could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 percent and reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 percent, up to 150 million people.¹⁰

USAID's vision and goal

1USAID's development vision is a world in which women and men, girls and boys enjoy economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights and are equally empowered to secure better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities; are equally able to access quality education and healthcare; accumulate and control their own economic assets and resources; exercise their own voice, and live free from intimidation, harassment, discrimination, and violence.

Responsibilities for earning income and the care of family members are not restricted by the roles or stereotypes society has defined for males and females.

2Operational Principles of the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy

Consistent with the Outcomes described in Section 4 of this policy, the new system includes seven output and outcome indicators on gender equality, female empowerment, and genderbased violence that should be used in Performance Management Plans for tracking progress toward implementation results and measuring impact across programs:

Conclusion

Gender equality and female empowerment are essential for achieving our development goals. Unless both women and men are able to attain their social, economic and political aspirations, and contribute to and shape decisions about the future, the global community will not successfully promote peace and prosperity. Realizing this policy in all of the countries in which we work will enable USAID to be a catalytic force for gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide and bring to fruition the vision of a world in which all people are equally empowered to secure better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities.

APPENDIX II

Interviews

Interview: Project Manager

In this interview I would like to focus on the gaps between donor gender policies and their translation/implementation within gender focused programmes in the Opt (based on your experiences, perceptions and opinion).

The aim is to explore whether donor policies (USAID's specifically), and related project conception and design reflect needs on the ground.

A. General Questions

Name: Yara Zayed

Title: Project Manager (worked with UNDP, USAID, WCLAC, Caritas Jerusalem)

Years of experience in gender issues in the OPT: Directly with WCLAC and indirectly with the Palestinian Ministry of Planning – around 5 years

General Remarks:

The main problem that we have here is that the Palestinian Authority does not support women's issues, which is the role of NGOS -who are often more flexible- and in addition, our ministries are weak and don't actually have the capacity to do much. Of course this gives donors a lot more control when there is such disorganization.

The projects I worked on in WCLAC were gender projects and gender issues and the organization had services which covered the needs of psycho-social support in the OPt and Gaza, such as violence against women which tends to be a major issue which is growing as the conditions under the occupation get worse.

NGOs have a limited ability – for example, let's take a center as one of a group of centers who work for women: they are given the right to work with women in communities, document problems and procedures, and meet with donors but they can't implement new laws or change policies. The donors generally don't consider politics enough and prohibit political action – they don't face issues head on and make a real difference as this would not show results in their books as quickly. They provide services and have little projects like income generating projects and training for women for work opportunities or to show them how to empower themselves, but it doesn't change much. It stays a "women's thing" which is taking place

in a situation where men stay in power and in control. The thing is really that in post-conflict women are sidelined. There is a lot of talk by donors about “empowerment” and “equality” and how their strategies and activities are going to change the lives of women, but no real action. To be honest, these projects are really driven and controlled by donors and politicians (donors can’t do anything if it clashes with the view of politicians, they would be blocked) so you can’t actually go against the government in charge as they can totally sabotage projects if they want. And then you look at the donors who have their own politics. See what I mean? How are you going to tackle anything political when this will cause major disagreements? Even when political leaders do offer their support, these are just words: you have for example SIDAW regulations from Mahmoud Abbas (to raise gender issues on the agenda) that are signed but not implemented.

I’d like to tell you a little bit about the history of NGOs. During the Intifadah NGOs were run by volunteers and during that time they were used by politicians and parties to push their agendas, so it was really involving the locals and community working together. But when the PA came into power, these groups had to find ways to sustain their activities, then they started searching for donors.

Is the OPT a particularly challenging/unique area in which to implement gender-driven projects? If so, why?

Yes, PA bodies (MOSA, MOWA, ED) don’t support women as much as NGO’s. We also have to deal with the political situation which limits women but also due to cultural and social aspects (patriarchal society). Women are often not allowed to participate in gender issues (if men feel threatened or don’t approve) which is a big obstacle for NGOs who then try to deal with it indirectly with things like gender training (human rights) with sewing, cooking, hairdressing which only enables only partial empowerment. Then we face the political issues – women and girls often stay at home because of potential danger, parents are afraid and women don’t, in reality, have the opportunity to meet their everyday needs, let alone being empowered or equal to men! Palestinians are also generally sceptical about western intervention and NGOs as they haven’t really seen results or changes and are often “foreign run”. Then you have a situation where there is a lot of duplication of projects depending on the donor agenda – nobody is working together and at times they are even competing with each other to look better than the other. WLCLAC and other NGOs also have their own agendas, so there is no inter-organizational dialogue or cooperation. There is such a waste of money by funding the same unsuccessful projects over and over, instead of joining forces.

b) Programmes and Projects

- i) What are the main challenges that you experienced in project conception and design?
How did you deal with them or minimize the risks of failure?**

Firstly, in most organizations I worked in, we were focused on following the policies of donor, which meant that mostly the scope of your project was changed or the whole project was changed to suit donor goals. Donors are very specific on themes, methodology and they conduct a lot of awareness sessions to tell NGOs where their interests lie. If you want funding, you work in areas that the project requires, which in my opinion often prohibits you from doing what you know needs to be done, in areas that need to be worked in and on issues which we have identified from our longstanding experience – and as locals. The donor comes in with a “western view” of the world and imposing their views and ideas on locals.

I have worked on projects that I know are not going to work and then, instead of reviewing the project, the donor will provide an advisor who will tell you how to do things to ensure “success” on paper. I feel that often the Organization itself cares about salaries, not the project (or doesn’t have capacity to really implement the project) so you are not really going to make a difference from the start. I also believe that most guidelines and procedures don’t fit NGOs and are clearly not tailor made – look, a project can be a burden which can actually compromise the NGO, but they need the money so they do it. Donors also tend to work on ad hoc situations and I really sense a lack of direction in the way they work. In a sense, NGOs these days have no boundaries or limits, they are not committed to anything and just switch as the donor dictates.

ii) How did you integrate gender into your projects if not specifically a women’s organization? Did it come naturally or was it forced and done only because donors required it?

During the needs assessment in the selected areas, we required women’s participation and this was spontaneous. Of course, we are all in favour of changing conditions for women, of empowering them and allowing them to live a better life. But throughout most of these projects, when looking at goals and outcomes, we were “forced” to integrate females in all the activities in an unnatural way- on paper it looked good, but not in reality. The reality is that when women have training and other activities in conjunction with men, they often don’t give women the space to talk, ignore them and so on. Of course it is important to involve them men, but what I am saying is that it is important to not just add or integrate women into a project, but to create specific projects or parts of a project which deal with policies, legislation and other structures which hamper their participation.

I think that it is important to start supporting women at community level to encourage women’s involvement and also focus only on women’s issues and their roles without interfering in men’s roles or creating resistance of hostility. For example, I was working on a recycling project where women as part of their every day activities and roles could participate and generate income for themselves – they didn’t “impose” themselves on men or create a worse situation for themselves. Sometimes, it is better for men and women to work separately and focus on their own roles and then slowly integrate their activities so it

comes together in a natural way. The way a lot of donors wants to integrate women into various roles and positions is unrealistic as they might be obstacles to women's participation – they just put them in places where men work without focusing on a long term goal, where women can complement men's work. It can sometimes look like Affirmative Action, where they call it success if there are a number of women working in a place where normally only men would work or be involved.

iii) Was the terminology used in your project ones that you always use or are they donor terms – and donor discourse?

No, of course we used donor terms – and I can tell you that this really muddles up the project because we had to replace all the words we used with their terminology. It feels like something from up coming down and being imposed on us and this doesn't reflect discourse at community level. It is basically imposing a model on people that they really don't understand instead of speaking to NGOs and communities in understandable terms and language.

iv) Are the gender integration goals achievable? What kind of success do you envision?

It depends what they are. Sometimes NGOs can meet needs and they are achievable if they understand the context, local and logical needs and so on. But we do find with donors – such as USAID - that they are imposing global and general gender issues on a small community which is not well prepared for such big issues. They want to make men equal to men – but this is not easy if you take into consideration the social situation, culture, identity. Donors seem to forget that social change is not easy and quick: they fund projects for a year, impose their model in one year and then they leave. Of course this is not sustainable.

v) Do you think in general, donor policies are realistic? If not, why not?

No they are not realistic at all and as I said earlier, they don't consider what is realistic in terms of social, political and other conditions – they are very western. They use big words and make big promises, but they really put the responsibility on the NGOs to implement, as they don't want to take the blame if it doesn't work. In addition, the count numbers rather than impact – it's quantitative rather than qualitative. They use many of their projects as a pilot phase, even though they should be way more advanced. They tell us as an NGO that "We are still finding results, don't expect big results" - even if you just encourage debate that is a sufficient result. They are telling us "We don't actually expect results, it's all experimental". So it's ok if you don't achieve our results because they haven't really made clear how they are going to measure results or what their expected points are yet. It's as if they want to provide support and provide service, whatever the result is. Perhaps they are not focusing on results to avoid responsibility for failure.

Our output is their outcome – e.g output of 20 people trained is outcome for them, but real outcome is empowered women. There is a real leveling (and lowering) of the terms. Long term, when you count

people served it could equal 7000 people served, but this doesn't count impact of service made as it is immediate and may not last beyond the project. As far as I am concerned they are wasting time and money. So how do you show impact? By preparing indicators for proving effectiveness. Training 100 people is not sufficient. The main concern is change which is qualitative, for example 70% changed their attitude or how many new initiatives for women in area after project, not just participation in training.

vi) What do you think is the difference between projects that are implemented by specialized women's organizations and those that are not?

Women centers work as much as they can on women's issues, laws, higher level. Others who are not specialized often ignore underlying and important issues. Women's organizations have more insight on the whole, although they are also limited because of policies, but overall they show more results and are more involved in gender issues - especially as they are more knowledgeable and in touch with communities who know what they want and need and specialized NGOs have the know-how when it comes to getting funding as they know how donor systems and terminology work, while achieving their own objectives. They focus on gender issues anyway, this is not forced. Gender is specialized and not just something you can integrate. Youth, the marginalized etc is all cross-cutting. Donors tend to skip a level and are not prepared enough - they force gender integration. They need a more Step by Step approach as the NGOs can't design and implement projects that put women in municipality in top positions etc.

iii) What are the perceived impacts and consequences of gender-driven projects, in your experience?

There should be a certain criteria when deciding on which women will participate in these projects otherwise it is like affirmative action. USAID (and other donors) count only on numbers, not on the ground change. Also, they don't change political structures or limitations e.g if Limited to political e.g. area C, they just work around that. If due to social and cultural aspects, women are prohibited from participating...they change the scope of the project. That is why there is no serious change. It seems that they don't care about reality and spend money and time as prescribed. A certain amount has to be spent and accounted for, as long as the figures look good on the books they can say they invested etc

iv) What are the main gender issues that need to be addressed; and are they being achieved in these donor-focused projects?

Donors tend to address mid-level issues when they should be doing bottom (raising awareness, setting the scene for women's participation). We served x number of people - impact isn't taken into consideration. De-politicize projects. If political, they would work with joint projects with Israelis. Arab-Israeli NGOs -

empower other NGOs to support women's rights. Can't focus on occupation and basically they produce documents, no resolutions.

v) Is it necessary to specifically address gender equality rather than economic, social or political “structures” first? Doesn't improvement of these conditions lead to better conditions for women?

It is really necessary to work with all, top and bottom. If you enhance political, social and other structures, women will be directly affected – the whole society will be affected – but women also need to be a focus in a patriarchal society.

vi) Isn't it necessary to tackle gender integration at a higher (institutional, governmental etc) level, rather than community-based level?

There are a number of cross-cutting issues. This is why it should be addressed at top and bottom – at the top to change legislation, policies and so on; while at the bottom to raise women's awareness on these issues and help them to mobilize and change things at community level.

c) Donor Related Issues

There is a donor-driven focus on the inclusion of women and gender issues in projects.

i) Were the majority of your projects donor-driven? If yes, what would have been different if they weren't? If no, what would have been different if they were?

Around 90% are donor driven and I am saying that women's needs would be better met if they weren't. For example, in one of my projects, donors decided to focus on the “Jordan valley area” – they made an assessment and decided to put money into certain areas when there were other areas much more in need. Local NGOs knew more as they were active in the area but they weren't consulted or involved in any way. The donors decide on who and when and where and they often choose the wrong areas physically and programmatically. They often duplicate efforts. It's more about showcasing what they have done (being visible) and strategy than real results.

ii) Does donor terminology (in general) accurately reflect the actual socio-political and economic reality in the OPT and allow projects to adequately address community needs?

The terminology that donors are imposing plays a big role and, in my view, leads to less transparency. It often sounds very innovative and complex, when in fact a lot of people who are supporting it don't even know what it means! It is also limited, with not a rich vocabulary. For example, advocacy which is a term

used for a long time has now taken on a new meaning for donors and there are so many different understandings of terminology e.g. USAID doesn't want to allow the use of the word lobbying, rather advocacy, maybe because politically it sounds less threatening. They really dictate what words to use. We were advised to use advocacy and not lobbying.

How are gender strategies integrated into donor-driven projects versus locally owned projects? What do you think is the best way of increasing women's empowerment and participation in projects?

As I mentioned before, they are top down and forced onto communities, rather than evolving naturally. Locally owned projects yield better results as communities know what they want and need – the women who live in the various areas will have a good understanding of what would help them; what would work for them in communities – but donor agendas override local knowledge. Locally owned projects are designed in less complex and more understandable terms, which everyone would be able to understand, not some donor terminology that means nothing to anybody.

What approaches in gender driven projects have worked?

When the donor treats the NGO as a partner and allows brainstorming, participation and allows a good deal of flexibility. When both practical and strategic needs are met. When the projects are long-term and not just short-term affirmative action projects.

v) Where are the gaps between policy and practice?

Between promises/words and action; between theory and practice; between western knowledge vs local knowledge; between global and local agendas...I could carry on and on about this...

vi) How did the donor policies restrict you?

They prevent local ownership or understanding of projects; they prevent grassroots and community level participation or involvement; they project their western views on us which are not applicable or workable. They basically change the entire scope of the project and the issues addressed. They also follow global trends, so don't always address issues which need to be immediately addressed.

vii) How are donors like USAID regarded in the OPT within organizations, or in general?

It depends on the institution. Working in health services and construction is much easier, whereas working with gender or on a political level, is more difficult.

d) Recommendations

Donors often interfere in the strategic plans of institutions. They can also be quite insulting for example USAID makes NGOs sign that you are not a terrorist and imposes new terminology. They impose their

language, culture, terminology, policies over NGOs. They want visibility everywhere – in newspapers, papers, billboards, printer, computers. NGOS are basically used as promotional tool. They often use other local NGOS to channel funds, which makes it look like they have a local partner – of course this makes their operations a lot less transparent, because there are so many channels.

Interview: Gender Specialist

A. General Questions

Name: Vanessa Farr

Title: Dr.

Qualifications: Ph.D., Women's Studies

Years of experience in gender issues in the OPt: four

Projects you worked on: Gender and Social Development portfolio

Main and secondary organizations you worked with: UNDP, UN, PA, civil society, USAID

Is the OPt a particularly challenging/unique area in which to implement gender equality/women's empowerment projects intending? If so, why?

Yes, oPt is difficult: the Israeli military occupation creates even more significant obstacles to promoting gender equality (GE) than you would normally experience in a patriarchal Arab society. Compared to countries that are politically autonomous (including those emerging from/affected by the Arab 'Spring'), oPt seems stuck. There is no advancement, development is compromised by Israeli aggression, the Palestinian Authority is a sham and fails to deliver services, people are getting poorer every year. All of these problems have direct consequences for women and men, and all detract from the achievement of development goals, including GE.

B. Programmes and Projects

i) What are the main challenges of gender- equality projects in conception, implementation and evaluation? How do you deal with them or minimize the risks of failure?

The main challenges are a lack of resources and political will. The lack of resources includes effective gender analysis and capacity to promote GE among staff. If there is a gender Advisor, s/he tends to be marginalized from decision-making about programmes not considered to be about 'GE' (although all human development is fundamentally about ending inequality). GE is rarely considered at implementation, especially in budgets, and then one has to try to retrofit poorly-designed programmes with a gender lens (and no real funding). In implementation, programmes are increasingly attempting to reach equal numbers of women and men, but if the programme's already poorly designed that can be a hindrance not a help. Evaluations are usually where the poor design is shown up. So what I've seen is a cycle of inefficient conception, inadequate funding and analytical capacity, poor implementation; this all shows up at the end

of the project and then there's guilt and dismay. But things don't really change.

The only way to minimize the risk of failure is to plan, budget, design & deliver a programme using methods that are known to (provably succeed at) delivering equally (if necessary, differently) to women and men. Working to end gender equality produces a completely different programme approach and correspondingly, a different programme outcome. The only way to get this is to do it intentionally, by design, not by chance.

ii) What is the difference between projects that are implemented by specialized women's organizations and those that are not?

It depends on the political intentions of the organization. Specialised women's organisations that are also feminist do things differently, and for different reasons, than those that work with women from a politically conservative or 'neutral' perspective. Women's organisations that maintain the status quo (for whatever reason, be it religion or politics, funding, charity, donor imperatives etc.) will probably deliver non-transformatory programming and pretty much leave women where they are, albeit with some added advantage like a bit of economic empowerment or better healthcare. But a feminist organization specialising in delivering to women can radically change women's access to human rights, resources, political space, etc. The challenge in the oPt is that there is so much work going on with women that isn't about social transformation or supporting the resistance movement. It's all about making an intolerable situation seem normal or somehow survivable. Women, particularly, are often offered programmes that encourage and enable them to 'shut up and put up' with terrible circumstances. This is what feminists mean when we oppose the NGO'isation or de-politicisation of work done by, for and with women.

iii) What are the perceived impacts and consequences of these gender- equality projects, in your experience?

As I said, they do make a (limited) difference. But a truly feminist project is transformative. I'm working on one now, the WILPF MENA 1325 project, which has been wholly conceptualised, designed and delivered from a feminist non-violence perspective. We work with women in 8 countries in the MENA to enable them to understand and take on militarisation. As a project, it goes where no other organisation is attempting to go: into issues from which women, especially in the Arab States, have been entirely excluded. The results are electrifying because our partners are moving their analysis and activism into an area from which they were, until 18 months ago, excluded; and about which they were ignorant. With the new analytical capacity they have, they can see how imperative it is for feminist human rights activists to oppose the most masculine and exclusionary structures of all – those that decide peace and security. We've made a significant difference in how our partners see, understand, criticise and interact with the security services. The consequences are that women are fully engaging with the subject and taking on deeply entrenched exclusions as a result. It's making a difference because the spotlight is on Arab peace and security and women are insisting their views and concerns be heard.

iv) What are the main gender issues that need to be addressed; and how could they be achieved through donor-driven projects?

Social exclusion is number one and short-term vision is number two. Patriarchal exclusion only works because women are left out, not seen as knowledgeable, ill-informed, disregarded, etc. and it takes years, decades, solid funding and inter-generational strategies to change that. Some donors are willing to take this on: for instance, a DFID project I work with in Nigeria is exclusively designed to advance women and girls' participation in all aspects of Nigerian life, from politics to the economy. It commits huge resources to a five-year inception phase and sees the work being done now as a building block for a twenty-plus year strategy. It's actually committed to doing development work not the half-hearted hybrid of humanitarianism and development that we see so much of in oPt. I think it's been designed that way because the donors see that Nigeria is seriously at risk of falling apart and understand that all other donor investment is failing because women's lives are not being improved. They can't and won't do this in Palestine though because of the politics of the occupation. GE work is never, ever politically neutral; but this fact is one that donors and recipients alike rarely consider in full.

v) Is it necessary to specifically address gender equality rather than economic, social or political “structures” first? Doesn't improvement of these conditions lead to better conditions for women?

Yes it is. Those 'structures' are designed to exclude women and promote dominant men's (and social classes) well-being. If you don't see how they perpetuate and rely on inequality you can't offer women much beyond tokenism or band-aid solutions, or a trickle-down effect that will take decades to improve the actual quality of their lives. I argue this because we have 50 years of development experience that proves it to be true: institutions do not change (they change women who enter them!) unless there is a deliberate effort to change them. If you work only on structures they just keep being re-shaped to preserve the status quo. So yes, women may generally benefit from an apparently improved economy in boom times, but if the economy regresses again (which economies do) you will find women are hardest hit, worst affected, and lose most – because the structures underpinning the economy were never intentionally dismantled to protect the vulnerable.

vi) Isn't it necessary to tackle gender integration at a higher (institutional, governmental etc) level, rather than community-based level?

Both are necessary. Change-makers and leaders are everywhere – but so are detractors and blockers. You have to work with everyone at every level, over a long period, to make GE real and effective. To take a positive example, ask any Swede who studies women's well-being whether Sweden is really as good a place for women to live in as people think it is, and you'll hear that it's only as good as the policies, budgets and laws that keep women's equality as a central national goal. What governments and institutions do to promote GE is likely to be diminished unless communities get it, buy into it, see its value, and promote it as part of the community's own value system. So yes, we always need to work with both.

C. Donor Related Issues

There is a donor-driven focus on the inclusion of women and gender issues in projects.

- **Were the majority of your projects donor-driven? If yes, what would have been different if they weren't?**

It's a challenging question to answer: all UNDP's work is donor-driven on some level, because all of it is donor funded. We used to design projects that we thought people would fund, even if UNDP could use its own resources for the start-up period of research, field-testing etc. If we and the donor were in agreement about implementation, focus, approach etc. it worked very well. Often, in fact, donors were more focused on GE than UNDP's own programmers were because they had empowered Gender Advisors whereas UNDP always tended to bring in a GA too late. So, if they hadn't been there with their policies and budgeting directives, much of what UNDP wanted to do wouldn't have been very good for women.

- **If no, what would have been different if they were?**

A 'bad' donor (in my view, one driven by political imperatives at home that don't accord with those in the country a programme's being delivered in) can be dreadful. Look at how the USA undermined Uganda's successful HIV prevention programme because GW Bush was more interested in appeasing conservative Christians than he was in saving Ugandan lives. Development history is littered with dreadful examples like this – this is why 'first do no harm' is so crucial when planning any interventions.

- **Does donor terminology (in general) accurately reflect the actual socio-political and economic reality in the Opt and allow projects to adequately address community needs?**

Again, it depends on the donor. Those whose primary intention is to do whatever Israel wants have policies that hurt Palestinians. Those that are pro-Palestine try to deliver interventions that promote sumud (resilience) and understand that what Palestinians need is socio-political and economic support that is also focused on the goal of gaining an independent state. You can more-or-less immediately see which donors work to normalise Israeli oppression and which do not.

- **How are gender strategies integrated into donor-driven projects versus locally owned projects? What do you think is the best way of increasing women's empowerment and participation in projects?**

Again, it varies, Good donors tend to be more committed to promoting GE than communities might themselves choose to be; poor donors just want to work on infrastructure and not think about human beings, so they may not even ask for a GE lens to be used in project design. When I worked in oPt I found that Arab donors loved buildings, roads, etc. but didn't get human rights or equality discourse at all. Western donors who were pro-Palestine did though, and they allowed much more women-focused work to happen.

Women (like men!) participate in projects they have time for, that help them, that stretch their experience &

understanding of the world. So the best way to get them in is to ask what they want/need/offer & work to meet those directives. Men, in my experience, participate equally when they understand what's being done and why, and when they see the benefit for themselves and the women in the community. It's all about communication: by which I mean listening, understanding and responding to needs. And in cases where nobody 'gets' the need for a GE component, it's about explaining the reasoning and showing people exactly how things will be changes because they change the institution or organisation to give women more space and more benefits.

- **I will then move on to ask questions about donor policies and donor-driven projects and how they are perceived; what in the specialists experience has worked, not worked.**

Challenging: donors' policies differ vastly and change over time. It might be more useful to understand what donors base their policy decisions on (not just the preference of the ruling party at home!). Joint donors like the EU are interesting in this regard: they should represent the best thinking of everyone; sometimes they do and sometimes GE work is just something everyone overlooks and 'leaves till later'.

- **Where are the gaps between policy and practice? Why the big difference between donor policy and practice?**

Saying & doing. It shows up all the time in peace and security work: huge promises in public fora, policise or in the Security Council; and on the ground, nothing. The SG has made statement after statement about women's inclusion in security decision-making, but in the 2 huge donor conferences on Libyan security held to date, not a single woman or woman's organisation was invited.

The big difference comes about I think because feminists haven't been great at being watchdogs. Australia's offering us an interesting example of how to work differently right now: feminists are determinedly holding the government to account for pushing the women, peace and security agenda in the Security Council because Australia promised it would when it made its membership bid. But it's an onerous task and wouldn't happen if the country wasn't blessed with enough peace and security itself to support an active feminist (academic) community that in turn takes its watchdog role seriously. It'll be interesting to see whether Australia closes the gap between statement and praxis because of this watchdog community.

- **How is USAID regarded in the Opt within organizations, or in general?**

With a good measure of suspicion I think. The US is not a neutral player in the region and especially not vis-à-vis Israel. Hundreds of Palestinians rely on USAID for work but if they had other options they would work elsewhere. I don't remember a single outstanding USAID project in the oPt; what I do remember is how bitterly Palestinians oppose the US's blind support for Israeli policies and interventions in the country it occupies.

Legal Expert

Name: optional

Title: Gender and Juvenile Justice Analyst

Qualifications: MA International relations and gender studies

Years of experience in gender issues in the Opt: 5

Projects you worked on: the last three years I've been working with UNDP as their gender justice expert in their Rule of Law Programme

Main and secondary organizations you worked with: UNDP and International Women's Commission

A. GENERAL

i) In your opinion, what percentage of gender equality and empowerment projects in the oPt have been successful in the past 5 years (achieved sustainable results)?

I think the projects that aim at empower women economically are the most successful given the high number of female headed households and the lack of sufficient working opportunities.

ii) Have gender projects and approaches empowered women and increased equality. If not, why. If yes, how?

iii) What are the main obstacles and challenges to women's rights and gender equality in the oPt?

The challenges that gender equality and women's rights face are one several levels, first is the occupation and the lack of a political solution. As long as the occupation is ongoing it leads to the following which is relevant to answering many of the questions below:

- On the political level the occupations feeds the division between Fatah and Hamas, this division contributes to the increasing gap between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This gap is clear on many fronts but it is strongest when it comes to women's rights as the Hamas government is more conservative.
- On the policy level; as long as the division is ongoing the PLC will remain non-functioning which means no new legislation can be amended or passed in a democratic way. The alternative of passing laws and amendments by a presidential decree (which is not democratic) should follow certain criteria, amendments for laws to make them more gender sensitive is not considered emergency and in any case where an amendment is endorsed it is applicable only in the West Bank.
- Moreover, as long as the occupation is ongoing women issues remain insignificant
- And the Palestinian society is becoming more and more militarized which is less gender sensitive in its nature, adding to that how conservative the Palestinian society is becoming.
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iv) The general feeling is that international legal mechanisms have also not yet provided any effective protection for Palestinian women. Why is this and what is the best way forward?

- CEDAW and 1325 are two international legal mechanisms available, the problem is that the oPt is not a state and cannot follow the obligations under CEDAW and 1325. 1325 has been signed by a presidential decree in 2005 but no national plan has been implemented, many international organizations have been working on that namely UNFPA in partnership with Miftah. The problem with these two frameworks lies in the gap that it does not address the protection of women under occupation. 1325 focuses on post-conflict situations.

v) At the national level, various laws and policies have been adopted to end discrimination against women and ensure their mainstreaming in all matters pertaining to development. Does this make any difference on the ground? Do instruments and agreements such as CEDAW, ICCPR make a tangible difference in project results, or are they merely paying lip service to gender concerns? Do "agreed policy priorities" and "binding legal obligations" lead to results on the ground?

One of the outcomes of policies to ensure gender equality is the Ministry of Women Affairs, the problem with this ministry is two folds, one, the PA relies on this ministry to advocate for women's rights and take their concerns forward. The PA feels that it has done its deeds when it comes to women's rights. The second problem, the ministry has no expertise to propose policies, gender responsive budgeting or legislation.

B. PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

i) What are the main challenges of gender- equality projects in conception, implementation and evaluation? How do you deal with them or minimize the risks of failure?

In addition to the mentioned above on the PA, non-functioning PLC, occupation , patriarchal and militarized society; the projects are not designed to make a tangible impact, they have a short life cycle since they are based on donors funding. Many organizations tend to implement ad hoc projects depending on the different call for proposals. The more specialized organizations that have core projects are unfortunately only in Ramallah with some offices in other governorates in the West Bank, yet many of the disadvantaged women in the rural areas and especially area C are left without any consistent support. The support in these areas is more of a humanitarian nature which doesn't make a long term impact and doesn't promote equality.

ii) Are indicators such as GDI (Gender Development Index), GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) and GRB (Gender Responsive Budgeting) beneficial or leading to the "ticking of boxes" rather than results on the ground?

These are followed by the PA institutions out of obligations to donors but almost mean nothing on the ground. The Palestinian Police might be the only institution that has been working extensively on gender equality internally. Their approach is systematic since it starts with the security University- Al Istiqlal

This is a link to a video; it is not public yet but for your reference

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=3grNJzrf6-M

iii) What has been the effect of western aid and donor policies on these projects? Are donor agendas (e.g. USAID, EU, DFID) demobilizing and depoliticizing gender issues and projects in the oPt?

Gender in many projects is still dealt with in a manner that is only concerned about having equal number of beneficiaries from the projects, just showing numbers of female beneficiaries, but implementers and donors policies fail to assess impact on the ground. For example, when we address the proposed amendment on the family law (personal status law), this is an amendment that has been proposed in different versions since the early 90's, up until now there is no unified version and no concrete progress, yet donors keep funding this initiative since according to them this is the most important law for women's rights (it is true), but the initiatives on the ground do not encourage dialogue between the stakeholders and the donors don't use any opportunity to advocate for that amendment among policy and decision makers.

iv) What are the main perceived differences between donor-driven gender equality and empowerment projects and those that are locally owned (or what would be if NGOs didn't have to rely on donor funding)?

I believe that women's empowerment starts with their economic independence, if the empowerment projects were not donor driven, organizations would be more creative in designing projects that empower women and help the organizations sustain themselves. There is donor fatigue on both sides, yet it is convenient for organizations to keep applying for funds. One of the main problems is the job insecurity among employees in these organizations because at times of shortage in funds they either volunteer or are

dismissed. Moreover, the salaries are very poor which forces the employees to focus their energy on their survival and not quality of work.

v) What frameworks and benchmarks would inform an integrative gender equality and empowerment approach?

ii) What is the difference between projects that are implemented by specialized women's organizations and those that are not? I mentioned this above

iii) What are the perceived impacts and consequences of these gender- equality projects, in your experience?

The main consequence is unfortunate, Palestinian society is becoming less and less tolerant of gender equality projects. Also, I find the projects are highly repetitive with little impact, for example, you will find that the same women attend the women's rights awareness workshops. I think there should be a different modality for the awareness raising workshops if they want more impact. Maybe do them in schools as part of civic education for both boys and girls.

iv) What are the main gender issues that need to be addressed; and how could they be achieved through donor-driven projects?

The main issues to be addressed are women's access to justice, increase legal literacy, inheritance rights, and honour killings. The Penal code needs to be amended to include penalties for family members who deny their female siblings from inheritance (not only through Sharia' courts, it should be a crime) and of course clear penalty on honour killing.

C. DONOR RELATED ISSUES

Were the majority of your projects donor-driven? If yes, what would have been different if they weren't?

UNDP is a donor

Does donor terminology (in general) accurately reflect the actual socio-political and economic reality in the Opt and allow projects to adequately address community needs?

Donors try to get informed and briefed by local partners, I think it is individual and depends on the person who writes and the donor state. Documents that come out of Canada and the US are different than the ones from Sweden for example. UN has to get approvals from different legal and communication departments for their official papers to ensure right terminology. It depends on the politics of the Donor State and what terminology they can and cannot use, which is not necessarily a reflection of the reality on the ground.

How are gender strategies integrated into donor-driven projects versus locally owned projects? What do you think is the best way of increasing women's empowerment and participation in projects?

Donors focus more on gender mainstreaming on the institutional level. A lot is been done on building the capacity of the institutions to develop gender sensitive strategies, the problem is that the institutions don't have the human resources and financial capacity to implement them.

Where are the gaps between policy and practice? Why the big difference between donor policy and practice?

I think the main gap lies in that the donors don't try to push the advocacy efforts they fund forward on the decision making level. For example, it is very clear that women in area C are disadvantaged on so many levels, many donors fund organizations (local and international) to produce reports on violations by the Israelis in these areas which makes daily life very hard. But the same donors who are well informed don't take any of the issues and advocate for that to be on the agenda of their foreign affairs office vis-à-vis Israel.