Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment

Concepts studied in a development cooperation programme in Kenya supported by Sweden
Abstract

The opportunity for me to visit Kenya on a yearly basis arose in 1998; gender issues have frequently been discussed over the years in interaction with Kenyan colleagues. Along with this Master’s course on the sub-Saharan countries and development cooperation policies, these have provided the foundation and outline of this paper: a study of a Kenyan gender governance programme (GGP) supported by several donor countries involved in development cooperation and Sweden.

*Gender mainstreaming* and *empowerment* are concepts often used in policies and documents as well as in discussions on how to succeed in providing marginalized groups with control and power over their lives. Why this should be so difficult to achieve is an interesting issue to study.

The aim of this thesis is to examine how ActionAid Kenya (AAK), a non-governmental organisation, administers the programme and advocates, implements and develops gender mainstreaming and empowerment in the GGP from macro (governmental) to meso (NGO, constituency) to micro (district) levels in Kenyan society.

The research questions are: (i) how are the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment interpreted in the AAK and Sida organisations, and advocated in policies and activities in the Gender and Governance Programme in Kenya, and (ii) what part of the programme is implemented as a result of the empowerment approach?

In the research design two complementary methods were chosen to search for the answers to my questions: a qualitative text analysis and semi-structured interviews.

When both concepts are discussed, the organisations can be said to interpret some of the results according to the GAD development theory, which is an approach that influences current global development cooperation.

A difference in the texts is that AAK uses the term “women” whereas Sida uses the term “gender” more frequently, and includes men and children (both girls and boys). Both organisations emphasise women’s issues and their role in fighting poverty, describing the situation and needs of women in society. One perspective is that the word *gender* can become a substitute for women simply to keep the international development donor content. AAK and Sida have advocated gender mainstreaming; its implementation is to be based on mainstreaming democracy and human rights concerns in all GGP programmes and influence the activities.
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List of abbreviations
AAK ActionAid Kenya
APR Annual Progress Report
CBO Community Based Organisations
CDF Constituency Development Funds
CEDAW Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination
CIDA Canadian International Development Agency
DI Development Initiatives
ERS Economic Recovery and Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation
GAD Gender and Development
GDI Gender-related Development Index
GGP Gender and Governance Programme
HDI Human Development Index
KANU Kenya African National Union
MDGs Millennium Development Goals
NARC National Rainbow Coalition
NGO Non-Governmental Organisation
PfA Beijing Platform for Action
PRS Poverty Reduction Strategies
SID Society for International Society
Sida Swedish international development agency
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF United Nations International Children’s Fund
UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women
WID Women in Development
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the way in which gender mainstreaming and empowerment are conceptualised in the policy, strategy and evaluation documents within the non-governmental organisation (NGO) ActionAid Kenya (AAK), the Swedish government through the Swedish international development cooperation agency (Sida) and the Kenyan government. It is a comparative study, discussing how and if the concepts are advocated in activities and approaches in good governance\(^1\) programmes in Kenya, East Africa. The background section contains information on how the research problem was encountered, a short description of the global order of the development cooperation of today, reflected in both Kenyan and Swedish development politics, and how gender mainstreaming and empowerment became prestigious words in the global gender agenda. It is completed by a short outline of the latest years of Swedish development support to Kenya and present development work at governmental (macro), NGO (meso) levels, and some information on micro (DI) level on issues regarding gender equality. Last, but not least, the problem, aim and research questions are presented and limitations considered.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 How the research problem was encountered

The opportunity for me to visit Kenya on a yearly basis arose in 1998. Field studies to Kenya are arranged for students on the teacher training education programme at Karlstad University, where I work, and which I have had the privilege of supervising. The students collect information for their theses from Nakuru nursery, primary and secondary schools as well as at the teacher training institutions at Kericho Teacher College and Laikipia Campus College, Egerton University. Furthermore, many teachers and students on the Linnaeus-Palme\(^2\)

\(^1\) The term “governance” implies responsible, accountable, transparent, legitimate, effective and democratic government. Today it is frequently used in discussions of how governments should perform in undertaking public changes, innovations and processes that bring about social, economical and political progress in Africa (Cheru, Fantu (2002) *African Renaissance. Roadmaps to the Challenge of Globalization*, Zed Books, London).

\(^2\) Linnaeus-Palme is an exchange programme for teachers and students at undergraduate and master’s level of higher education. It aims at strengthening collaboration between institutions of higher education in Sweden and developing countries, thereby increasing and deepening global contacts in the world of higher education. The
exchange programme between Karlstad University and Egerton University (which I administer) have contributed input above and beyond the material collected on the field trips undertaken over the past five years. Gender equality has been one of the most frequently discussed issues: from perspectives such as the dominant female representation in the Swedish student group, gender cultural differences experienced, female representation in parliament etc. to how these issues are dealt with, in both theory and practice, within society in the two countries. The concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment have often been discussed in this context, along with how they can be interpreted and what the expressions actually mean.

The great gender differences, and in particular the subordination of women and young girls at all levels of Kenyan society, were noted and experienced through personal observations and interaction with Kenyans, in official as well as in private relationships. Gender equality plays a central role in the discourse of democracy and human rights: I feel that women in Kenya still have much ground to cover if they are to achieve the right to participate in political decision-making and be regarded as equals by both the men and the government.

The many interesting discussions regarding gender issues over the years, along with this Master’s course on the sub-Saharan countries and development cooperation policies, have provided the foundation and outline of this paper: a study of a Kenyan programme, supported by Sweden that promotes women rights in a gender perspective. Can a change in long-existing social structures in society result from these development cooperation programmes?

1.2.2 Global development cooperation order

In 2000 the nations of the world agreed on a common agenda for global development as set out in the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in response to international challenges of reducing poverty in the world by half before 2015. There are a total of eight millennium goals that aim at eradicating hunger and extreme poverty, improving health and ensuring universal primary education as well as promoting peace, human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability (UNDP 2005). A central goal to be mentioned in this context is the eighth: to develop a global partnership for development. At recent
international conferences, agreements have been reached to facilitate the implementation of the MDGs. These commitments are frequently referred to as the “aid effectiveness and multilateral organisations” (e.g. United Nations UN, World Bank WB, International Monetary Fund IMF and European Union EU) to which bilateral donors (countries) and partner countries have participated. Non-governmental organisations (NGO) participated as observers. The conference in Monterrey in 2002 dealt with development financing and increasing aid, providing a better quality of aid and finding ways of ensuring that development cooperation work is of high quality. The Forum of Harmonisation, held in Rome in 2003, and the Paris High Level Forum in 2005 on aid effectiveness resulted in the Paris Declaration. An aid effectiveness agenda involves multilateral development institutions as well as developing and developed countries, and assigns clear responsibilities. It is a challenge to both partner countries and development partners. Central and prestigious words are ownership and dialogue, harmonisation and alignment; there is consensus about ownership, e.g. through the recipient’s poverty reduction strategies (PRS), capacity building and an alignment to follow the recipient country’s strategies and systems to make ownership possible. A main goal is coherence and harmonization between all participants in the development cooperation undertaken in a recipient country: the donors agree on mutual, simplified processes and shared information (Sida at Work 2005). Equal rights and opportunities for both women and men are central; Goal three in the UN MDGs includes the following resolution: “To promote gender equality and empowerment of women as effective ways of combating poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable” (UNDP 2000).

The recently developed agenda falls back on long-standing international conventions such as the UN Convention on Human Rights (1976), Convention on the Right of the Child (1989) and, in this context, the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW (1979). All are legally binding for the countries that have ratified them, e.g. Sweden and Kenya.

1.2.3 How gender mainstreaming and empowerment became prestigious words

Gender discourse, in a historical perspective, has moved through various phases during the past two decades: from women in development (WID) to gender and development (GAD). Women’s movements developed in the 1970s. They demanded political, economical and social equality in society in order to be able to take an active part in development processes,
and proclaimed the policy *women in development* (WID). An important step in achieving this was the CEDAW convention adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, became a landmark event in the history of women’s rights. More than 40,000 participants from 189 countries attended this huge global conference. The Beijing Platform for Action, PfA, adopted at the Conference, clearly recognizes that gender equality and women’s empowerment are essential for addressing the central development concerns of poverty and insecurity, and for achieving sustainable, people-centred development. The global agreement, reached at the PfA, was that gender equality is a goal. Mainstreaming gender equality is the strategy ratified by both Kenya and Sweden. The PfA has been followed up by world conferences every fifth year. Responses to the Platform of Action on women have had a profound impact on bringing gender equality issues to the centre of public awareness and policymaking. Over the past two decades, the global gender agenda has systematically trickled down to all segments of society around the world (Onimonde et al. 2004). In addition, the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development (Arusha 1986), too, provides space for women’s development and empowerment (Chachage & Mbilinyi 2003).

1.2.4 *Sweden’s policy and support to Kenya from a gender perspective*

Sweden’s new policy for global development was outlined in the government proposition Prop. 2002/03:122 *Shared Responsibility: Sweden’s policy for Global Development*. The policies concerning the poor people and countries of the world are now being adapted to these global conditions and are directed towards achieving these goals (Prop. 2002/03). The Swedish political system is organised so that the government decides on all political matters; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepares the foreign politics for the government that Sida, which is a governmental agency, then realizes by interpreting, defining and carrying it out.

The PfA policy on mainstreaming gender equality was endorsed by the Swedish government in Sida’s Action Programme for Gender Equality, passed in 1997. In its revision, decided by the government in 2005, the goals are the same but the equality and poverty perspectives are stronger. The purpose of mainstreaming gender equality in the Swedish development agenda is to achieve changes in gender inequalities and empowerment: the intention is that all Sida financed international development cooperation programmes have a gender perspective approach (www.sida.se/jamstalldhet/english/index_content.html 14/11-05).
The Swedish government’s support to Kenya for the development of democracy and human rights started on a small scale at the beginning of the 1990s, after the first general multi-party election was held there in 1992. It was formulated in the Swedish Country Strategy Paper for 1999-2003 that Sweden should support Kenya in making progress towards achieving greater democracy, showing greater respect for human rights and giving its citizens more influence. Sida supported non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in their efforts to promote human rights, in particular the rights of women and children, through the UN multilateral organisations UNDP, UNICEF and UNIFEM. The Swedish Country Strategy for Development Cooperation in Kenya (2004-2008) concluded that the situation in the country regarding poverty and inequality remains the same: more than half of the population still lives below the poverty line. Kenya was ranked as 147 out of 175 countries in the Human Development Index in 2004. Human rights of women remain a challenge. Women occupy only 7% of the seats in parliament and, despite their being the dominant workers in agriculture, women own only 5% of the land. Democratisation is one of Sida’s operational targets for the period 2004-2008; assessments have been finalised to support country programmes, UNDP, UNICEF and UNIFEM in Kenya and their support to civil society for the promotion of equality and human rights, which includes the rights of women. Sida also supports the work being carried out to increase the participation of women in Kenyan politics through a number of organisations and pressure groups such as the Kenya League of Women Voters, the Education Centre for Women in Democracy (ECWD) and the Kenya Women Political Causus (Causus). These organisations were involved in the activities aimed at achieving the goals in the government’s “Engendering the Political Processes Programme” (EPPP), which promotes female political participation, and is a multilateral programme (www.sida.se 5/2-2006). It is currently followed by the multilaterally supported “National Good Governance Programme”, a part of which is the “Gender and Governance Programme (GGP)” supported by Sida through UNIFEM (I3, see Chap. 2.2).

1.2.5 Kenyan national machinery from a gender perspective

The NARC (National Rainbow Coalition), which is the government that came into power in Kenya after the 2002 election, has strengthened the national machinery for promoting gender equality. It established the Ministry of Gender, Sports and Culture in 2002, the Gender Department and the National Gender Commission in 2004 (http://siteresources.worldbank.org 20/7-2006). Kenya has a poverty reduction plan (PRS) known as The Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation, 2003-2007 (ERS), where the MDGs, international conventions and agreements are implemented in the long term planning of the country’s development. Gender mainstreaming and empowering marginalized groups are stated as goals in the ERS. Kenya has passed a number of bills since the beginning of this century aimed at protecting the human rights of women, which is very positive; whether or not there has been an impact on women’s opportunities to participate in decision-making is, however, open for discussion.

The Kenyan government has established Harmonization, Alignment and Coordination (HAC) groups for the dialogue process in the development collaboration, where the Kenyan government, the Bretton Woods Institutions (WB and IMF), UN institutions and the donors, one of which being Sweden, meet twice a month. Groups, in which each donor with a support interest can participate, have been established in different governmental sectors, and include the Rural Group, the Agriculture Group and the Gender Round Table Group. They are all accountable to the Kenyan Consultative Group, which has representatives from the government, all donors, the national union, the private sector and the World Bank, and is chaired by the Kenyan government (I3).

Identifying an ongoing Kenyan programme on gender issues seemed initially to be an impossible mission. It was actually experienced as being quite stressful to identify a programme, since it is known that Sida supports Kenya in these questions. Fortunately, field studies carried out in Kenya in April 2006 resulted in a mutual friend, who knew about the research issue in question, introducing me to an official from the ActionAid Kenya Regional Office in Nakuru. ActionAid Kenya is among the larger NGOs in Kenya. It became obvious that the group plays a central and important role in the Gender and Governance Programme (GGP), a part of the National Governance Programme, which they administer. The GGP, launched in 2005, is one of the five biggest programmes in Kenya. It is a donor programme, has a basket funding and is a part of the whole development collaboration in Kenya. Five
donors are involved in the programme: Sweden, Canada, The Netherlands, Ireland and U.K. (Informant 1, 28/4- 2006). Interviews were carried out during the stay in Kenya and meetings were set up with representatives from Sida (being one of the major donors), the national NGO ActionAid Kenya (being the administrator of the programme) and UNIFEM (being the technical support and coordination organisation).

1.3 PROBLEM, PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In Kenya, marginalized groups such as the poor, women and children have little influence on their lives and the development of society, despite all the efforts made over the years in cooperation with international development cooperation agencies, such as Sida. Gender mainstreaming and empowerment are concepts often used in policies and documents, as well as in discussions, as to how to succeed in providing marginalized groups control and power over their lives. Why this should be so difficult to achieve is an interesting issue to study.

Comprehensive and interesting problem areas that may be examined and analysed are the ways in which ActionAid and Sida interpret the concept of gender mainstreaming and empowerment, the effect on the implementation of these concepts in the Gender and Governance Programme (GGP) at the district level in Kenya. Information has been acquired from the analysis of documents, policies and strategies obtained from these organisations, the GGP policy and national evaluations, along with the Kenyan national machinery for promoting gender equality and the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS). A qualitative text analysis of these documents has been complemented by interviews; together, these should provide some answers to the research questions.

The purpose of this study is to examine how ActionAid Kenya advocates, implements and develops gender mainstreaming and empowerment in the GGP from macro to meso and micro levels in Kenyan society.

The explicit research questions are:

- How are the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment interpreted in the organisations ActionAid Kenya and Sida, and advocated in policies and activities in the Gender and Governance Programme in Kenya?
- What part of the programme is implemented as a result of the empowerment approach?
1.4 LIMITATIONS

The ambition from the beginning of the projects was to study the influence and impact of the programme even at the micro level. Difficulties encountered in identifying the programme, along with the limited time available for field studies in Kenya, resulted in the focus of research being placed on the macro and meso levels and the analysis of official documents. The interviews gave some information about the implementation on micro level and are also counted for. Ethnic and cultural differences both in the Kenyan society and between Kenya and Sweden and gender bias are the main issues of this research; in the context of this thesis, these should be important issues of discussion, but the focus here is on conceptual analysis.

One limitation is the choice of Kenyan documents, which was made by chance: it was difficult to clarify and identify the political framework on gender issues in the country.

In the National Good Governance Programme, of which the GGP is a part, the mainstreaming of human rights can sometimes easily be interpreted as being equal to gender mainstreaming, and can be found in the analysis of the documents.

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The methods and approaches are presented in this chapter, where a qualitative text analysis of documents and a field study in Kenya are combined. The interviews in the field study were a great help in elucidating the issues and evaluating the information, thus enabling the research questions to be answered.

The construction process of the research design is presented here. A substantial number of documents, as well as interviews, are analysed. In order to identify information and answers for the research questions an analysis model, explained below, is developed to enable the organisation of the information. The choice of material is discussed, both the documents on the different governmental and organisations levels and the researchers in the theoretical
framework. The validity and reliability of the method and the result are considered at the end of the chapter.

2.2 METHOD AND APPROACHES

This thesis is an empirical qualitative development study concerning gender equality in a holistic perspective, and how the concepts *gender mainstreaming* and *empowerment* are interpreted in policies and priorities of goals at national and district levels in Kenya (Esaiasson et al. 2005).

When discussing these concepts, gender equality is a goal itself. However, the priorities, institutional arrangements and mechanisms for promoting gender equality from the national to the local level, and advocacy groups are also elements and dimensions to be included and reflected on in this gender analysis (Mikkelsen 2005).

The methodology chosen for this research is mainly built on Esaiasson et al. 2005 *Metodpraktikan (second edition)* and Britha Mikkelsen 2005 *Methods for Development Work and Research (second edition)*. They complement each other in their approach to research questions and the construction of research design. The authors of *Metodpraktikan* are Professors at the Faculty of Political Science at Gothenburg University, Sweden and Britha Mikkelsen is a senior social science, research and quality assurance specialist with the international consultant firm COWI in Denmark. The article *Gender mainstreaming since Beijing*, written by Caroline Moser and Annalise Moser, provided the basis of how to construct an analysis model, categorise the interpretation of, and progress in, the concepts *gender mainstreaming* and *empowerment* in terms of the following three stages:

i) Definitions of the concepts.

ii) The implementation strategies chosen.

iii) The expected, or the achieved, outcomes.

(Gender and development Vol.13, No.2, July 2005.)

Two complementary methods are chosen in the research design: a qualitative text analysis and semi-structured interviews (Esaiasson et al. 2005 and Mikkelsen 2005).

The qualitative text analysis uses relevant policy documents, reports and evaluations (both Kenyan and Swedish) and, in particular, the policies and documentations of the AAK.
programmes. A critical examination, in the form of a discourse analysis, is used to identify how the participating governments, organisations and programmes interpret gender mainstreaming and empowerment in policies and activities, determine whether or not these have been advocated and implemented in the Gender and Governance Programme (GGP) in Kenya and, finally, identify whether or not any achievements of the empowerment approach are visible as a result of the programme. Critical examination in a qualitative text analysis, in the form of a discourse analysis, results in the researcher realising that language plays a part in forming the reality of a society. Questions are asked as to the content of different texts and their interpretation according to what is accepted in society, what the norm is for a given society and for whom the limits are in favour. This analysis method uses the text as a tool to reveal circumstances in the society in question and to provide an understanding of the situation in a wider context (Esaiasson et al. 2005).

A critical discourse analysis is constructed in the qualitative text analysis. The following model is used to systematize and clarify the participating governments and organisations development programmes and their intentions in relation to the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment. Evaluation definitions of the concepts, implementation strategies and expected/achieved outcomes of every policy, strategy, programme and report will be identified wherever possible (Esaiasson et al. 2005).

Analysis model:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Concepts:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender mainstreaming</td>
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<td>Definitions</td>
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<td>Implementation strategies</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Expected/achieved outcomes</td>
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Figure 1

In order to discipline the research and define it concisely in a few stages, the concept of gender mainstreaming and empowerment is critically analysed using three dimensions: definitions, implementation strategies and expected/achieved outcomes (Fig. 1). The use of dimensions is a tool to define the phenomenon of interest, to describe or explain and, finally, to define the relationships between the concepts studied (Esaiasson et al. 2005).
The Kenyan and Swedish documents analysed are on macro and meso levels; the interviews provide information on the micro level in Kenyan society. The documents are presented in this chapter under the heading “Material”.

Complementary semi-structured interviews with stakeholders in the GGP programme presented below were carried out in Kenya in April 2006. The method used to select the informants was different in each case: the interview with Sida’s representative was booked in advance; the AAK representative was met by chance, through a mutual friend; UNIFEMs representative was a so-called “snowball selection”, i.e. a tip from the Sida representative (Esaiasson et al. 2005).

The informants are not presented with their real names but rather their titles in the various organisations, in order to protect their identities; all three are women. They are the Regional Coordinator for ActionAid Rift Region in Nakuru (I1), the Assistant Programme Officer at the Development Cooperation Section at Sida in the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi (I2) and the Programme Specialist on Women’s Rights & Governance Kenya Programme at UNIFEMs office in Nairobi (I3). Each interview lasted about one and a half hours, and took place in a quiet environment without any disturbances. Notes were taken and the transcriptions were made as soon as possible to avoid uncertainties and maximise reliability (Esaiasson et al. 2005).

A plain interview guide was used. The questions asked were open-ended and unexpected; relevant issues were followed up with further questions to promote a dialogue and informal discussion. The opening question was designed to provide information about their organisation and their role in the GGP; keywords such as when, why, target groups, stakeholders, policy, goals, donors, financing, members and achievements were used. The conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming and empowerment was discussed (Mikkelsen 2005).

Additional questions concerning the People’s Participation for Equality Project National Inequality Report, AAK April 2006 and the concepts are answered by Informant 1 and Informant 2 through email correspondence in July 2006 (Appendix 1).

The full interviews are not presented separately. Parts of the information are included in the text, while the information from the informants regarding implementation of the GGP and their interpretation of the concepts are given in total.
The aim of the research was to provide as recent and appropriate material as possible; focus is placed on the period from the year 2004 and onwards. The up-to-date perspective is essential for the selection of the material.

Adequate material for my research is comprised, to a large extent, of secondary literature sources, such as the policies of development cooperation’s, country strategies, reports and evaluations made, or supported, by the governments of Kenya and/or Sweden and associated organisations. Documents at Kenyan macro level, such as the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation 2003-2007 (ERS), which is the country’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), were used. The PRSP describes a country's macro economic, structural and social policies and programmes to promote growth and reduce poverty, as well as associated external financing needs. The guidelines for the country’s goals on gender mainstreaming and empowerment of the people are presented here.

Documents at Swedish macro level, such as the Swedish Country Strategy for Kenya 2004-2008 (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2004) and the report Pulling Apart. Facts and Figures on Inequality in Kenya (Society for International development SID 2004), in cooperation with Sida and the Kenyan Government, provide interesting information.

ActionAid Kenya works on macro, meso and micro levels in society. Information obtained from the documents and interviews is of great value, being important for both facts and knowledge about the GGP. Documents such as the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) 2002-2005 (ActionAid Kenya, May 2002) and the People's Participation for Equality Project National Inequality Report (AAK April 2006) are analysed to discover information concerning the interpretation of the concepts and the achievements and outcomes in a Kenyan context. The Swedish material on gender issues was available from the beginning, and was easy to identify. However, where the Kenyan material and information about gender issues and the Gender and Governance Programme in particular are concerned, considerable effort was required to find useful and reliable information. I told me that The Inequality Report mentioned above, for example, was soon to be released: it was found on the internet in July 2006.

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3 The PRSPs are prepared by governments through a participatory process that involves civil society and development partners, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (www.worldbank.org 27/7-06).
The interviews contributed essential material in my understanding of the Kenyan government, NGOs and the international development cooperation work on gender issues at different levels in Kenyan society.

Researchers who represent feminist development theories have been chosen for the theoretical framework; they conceptualise gender mainstreaming and empowerment in their work. Sida Studies No.3 Discussing Women’s Empowerment (2002) presents articles by Naila Kabeer and her theories on the concept of empowerment, and Signe Arnfred with her questions of power and gender mainstreaming. Both are useful in the discussion of the result in the context of this paper. The article Gender mainstreaming since Beijing by Caroline Moser and Annelise Moser in Gender and Development (2005) presents an interesting review of gender mainstreaming policies in international development institutions, where both ActionAid and Sida are represented. Other researchers referred to are Jane Parpart and Jo Rowlands for a broader development of the theoretical understanding of the concepts which are needed for the discussion. In her book Getting Institution Right for Women in Development (1997, Anne Marie Goetz investigates gendered features of development organizations and their institutional environments, which can provide an interesting complementary perspective on organisations involved in the GGP.

2.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity refers to whether or not a method measures what it is intended to measure in relation to a theoretical framework and empirical definitions (Esaiasson 2005). One analysis model is developed and used on both documents and interviews with the aim of ensuring the validity of the study. In the analysis model in the review of gender mainstreaming policies in international development institutions by Moser and Moser, dimensions were used in analysing the concepts. This research design is adapted in the current research by using the dimensions definition, implementation strategies and expected/achieved outcomes in analysing the concepts gender mainstreaming and empowerment in documents and interviews in order to enable comparison and increase validity.

Reliability is high if the analysis of documents and interviews is correct (Esaiasson 2005). Although this has been the issue throughout my analysis, it is nonetheless necessary to discuss a few remarks.
There are only a few interviews, but they have been of great value for the information they have provided. They have helped me understand the GGP and advised me on how to find the information I required. All three informants are women who work in the leading organisations of the GGP. In this context, reliability would have been higher if it had also been possible to interview three men, as well as stakeholders in a NGO on the district level.

No tape recorder was used in the interviews, despite the fact that this would have allowed for a more correct analysis.

A great number of documents are analysed, but it can be discussed if they actually tell the truth about Kenyan society. It must be remembered when interpreting the concepts that there are great differences in understanding matters in a Kenyan and a Swedish context, as they have very different cultural, political, economical and social backgrounds. In spite of these issues, the assumption is made that reliability is fairly good.

CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the theoretical framework, feminist development theories, research reviews and conceptual definitions are used, along with analyses of gender mainstreaming and empowerment as discussed by researchers such as Naila Kabeer, Jane Parpart, Jo Rowlands, Caroline Moser, Annelise Moser, Signe Arnfred and Anne Marie Goetz.

A short presentation of the feminist development theory in the development discourse from a historical perspective from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD) is given at the beginning of this chapter. This is followed by the feminist development researchers’ theories on the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment; how they describe the advocacy of the concepts in the mainstream development agenda. Finally, to complete the picture, Moser and Moser’s review of gender mainstreaming policies in international development institutions and Goetz’s investigation on gendered features of development organizations and their institutional environments are presented.
3.2 FROM WID TO GAD

The issue of women and development entered the development discourse in the 1970s. The UN First World Conference on Women in Mexico 1975 assembled women from all over the world, and they demanded gender equality. After the conference, the UN proclaimed a Women’s decade and Women in Development. The WID School provided a powerful critique from a liberal feminist perspective of development theories that concentrated on men as producers and household heads. WID units were established within agencies, seeking to bring women into development mainly by including women’s components in wider development projects and programmes. The assumption was that if women were “made visible” and included in the development process, and there was a change of policy from welfare provision to equality, women would no longer be marginalised, and everyone would benefit. As neo-liberal approaches to economic development became popular, the integration of women into development was also seen as an “efficient” approach to the utilisation of women’s productive potential (Rowlands 1997, Gender Matters, Sida 2005).

By 1980, the critical feminist opinion was that the WID approach did not question the existing social structures or the causes of women’s subordination in society; the focus was instead on women’s role in production without any access to power and decision-making in society. It was, and continues to be, an approach which instrumentalizes women, using them as a resource for meeting other development goals such as population control, crop production and sustainable development. This criticism led to a shift in focus from women to gender relationships, which became a major concern. Marxist feminist critics of WID argued that women have always been a part of the development process, but they have been “invisible” because of the structural inequalities in society (Rowlands 1997). Feminists were questioning the patriarchal nature of development discourse and practice. In the 1990s, post-development scholars were critical to the existing top-down character of most mainstream development practices, and demanded a more bottom-up, participatory approach. Development cannot be “given” to the poor; attention has to be paid to local knowledge, respectful partnerships and participatory practice. In this way, the poor will be empowered, and will be able to define their own development problems, goals and solutions. This perspective, i.e. participation and empowerment in the development discourse, has influenced many feminists concerned with gender equality and development in their research (Sauders, ed. Parpart 2002).
The GAD approach focuses on change in the marginal position women have in society in order to achieve equal status and power. New analyses emerged that considered the interaction of the various roles of women with those of men, an approach that was concerned with the dynamics of gender relations. Women are housewives in a context where men and other women expect them to be housewives. Gender relations are seen as central to social processes and social organisation and therefore to development. A GAD approach illuminates the power relation between men and women, and the situation of subordination that most women face in most societies. Gender analysis also provides criticism of supposedly neutral institutions, and reveals the many manifestations of male bias in the development process (Rowlands 1997). The UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 marked the transition to the new perspective, that of gender and development, and became incorporated into the global development discourse (Sida Studies No. 3 Signe Arnfred 2004).

A difficulty encountered in practice with the GAD approach, as with the WID approach, is that gender can be used in an instrumentalist way of facilitating other objectives within the prevailing ideologies: “gender” can become a substitute for “women”, who are then used as a vehicle through which some policy can be fulfilled (Rowlands 1997).

Whether adopting the liberal, mainstreaming WID approach or the more social and feminist GAD critique, the advocates of women’s development are mainly focused on improving women’s economical capacity and their participation in the drive for economic prosperity (Sauders, ed. Parpart 2002). The WID and GAD approaches are analysed in relation to the research questions in the discussion of the result.

3.3 CONCEPTUALISING FRAMEWORK

3.3.1 Gender Mainstreaming

“What is gender mainstreaming and how does one go about it?” (Mikkelsen 2005 p. 235). This question is discussed by Mikkelsen, who argues that there is no straight answer as to how gender equality may be pursued through mainstreaming. How gender equality can be pursued resembles the question of how poverty can be best combated; the aims of both poverty reduction and gender equality are to diminish social inequalities. Gender equality can be defined as the equal rights, opportunities and obligations of women and men, boys and girls and an increased potential for all to influence, participate in and benefit from development processes (Sida Studies No. 3, Signe Arnfred 2004). The mainstreaming strategy aims at
advocating questions concerning gender equality as being the core issues in all decision-making assemblies and policies, institutional structures and resource allocation. Mainstreaming also implies that attention is paid to the conditions and relative situations of the different groups in all development policies, strategies and interventions (Sida Studies No. 3, Signe Arnfred 2004). These definitions of the concept *mainstreaming* are used in the analysis and interpretations of interviews and documents used.

Signe Arnfred refers to the writer Carolyn Hannan when she conceptualises gender mainstreaming. Integration strategy is about the involvement of women (participation, representation and “numbers”), usually in a development agenda decided upon by others. The key element of the mainstreaming strategy is “going beyond numbers”, bringing the perceptions, experience and interest of women, as well as men, to bear on the development agenda and participate in the development process itself. The transformatory aspects are not in great demand in the development cooperation sector. Arguments used to support gender mainstreaming tend to focus on better quality and efficiency from an economical point of view. One problem with the GAD and gender mainstreaming discourse is that it has moved from the margin to the centre, losing its critical voice in the process (Sida Studies No. 3 Signe Arnfred 2004).

When discussing critiques of gender mainstreaming, Arnfred refers to Hannan and insists on interpreting “mainstreaming” as being another word for “agenda-setting”, as well as being an institutional invention. There are limitations and pitfalls here, with the risk that mainstreaming is reduced simply to mean integration into existing agendas. A big problem is the lack of political will when it comes to the question of promoting gender equality. Many relevant frameworks and tools have been developed but are just not used (Sida Studies No. 3 Signe Arnfred 2004). This is obviously an interesting interpretation of gender mainstreaming that can be referred to when discussing the results of this research.

### 3.3.2 Empowerment

Empowerment has become a term used by development practitioners ranging from the World Bank (WB) to the smallest NGO. It empowers the poor (including women) to improve their lives, has become common practice and is an uncritical goal of most of the development cooperation communities. Empowerment can be interpreted in different ways: to the WB it is a means of improving efficiency, whilst alternative agencies see it as a metaphor for fundamental social transformation (Sauders, ed. Parpart 2002). One of the goals of this thesis
is to identify whether or not empowerment has different meanings for the participants in the GGP; for this purpose, the definitions of the following researchers are to be considered in the discussion.

The empowerment of women has increasingly become a part of the gender and development debate. Not everyone accepts that empowerment can neither be defined clearly nor measured. Naila Kabeer conceptualises empowerment in Sida Studies No.3 2004 and, in order to do so, she deconstructs the notion of power. Power can be thought of in terms of the ability to make choices, so to be disempowered therefore implies to be denied choices. Understanding the concept of empowerment is tied to the condition of disempowerment, and refers to the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices should acquire such ability. In short, empowerment entails a process of change. Empowerment can be understood as “the expansion in the people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them” (Sida Studies No.3 2004, Kabeer p. 19). Changes in this ability are discussed, and can be seen in the terms of changes in three inter-related dimensions of power. The dimensions are:

i) Resources which form the conditions under which choices are made (material, social or human resources)

ii) Agency, i.e. the ability to define goals and act upon them. Agency can have both a positive and negative meaning in relation to power, which can be described as “power to” or “power over”

iii) Achievements that are the outcomes of choices, and can be difficult to measure without deeper understanding of the concept “choice”.

(Sida Studies No.3 2004, Kabeer.)

Kabeer’s multi-dimensional nature of power suggests that empowerment strategies for women must build on “the power within”, which is necessary for improving their ability to control resources, for determining agendas and making decisions (Sauders, ed. Parpart 2002).

The UNDP’s Gender Empowerment Measure, which focuses on women’s political representation, or the percentage of women represented in parliament, is an example of the approach where change at one level is presumed to change others, and confine themselves to those indicators. Empowerment is seen as a form of social change that is not easily captured by quantitative data. Statistical perspectives on decision-making should also be remembered for what they are: simple windows into complex realities. Empowerment cannot be conceptualised simply in the terms of choice: it must incorporate an assessment of the values
embedded in agency and choice, values which reflect the wider context (Sida Studies No.3 Kabeer 2002).

The meaning of the term empowerment has to be discussed either in a developmental or a gender context. The term should be used to communicate good intentions, and to imply some unspecified recognition of the need for change in the distribution of power. The failure to define and explore the practical details of how empowerment can be achieved considerably weakens the value of the concept as a tool for analysis or as a part of the strategy for change. The conventional definition of “power over” is used to explain the meaning of empowerment: empowerment is bringing into the decision-making process the people who are currently excluded from it. Individuals are empowered when they are able to maximise the opportunities available to them without constraints. “Power to” and “power with” empowerment is concerned with the processes by which people become aware of their own interests, and how those relate to the interests of others in order to both participate from a position of greater strength in decision-making and actually influence such decisions (Rowlands 1997).

A feminist interpretation of power gives a broader understanding of empowerment that is more than just participation in decision-making. It must also include the process which leads people to consider themselves as able and entitled to make decisions. The feminist understanding of empowerment includes “power to” and “power from within”. Empowerment must involve undoing negative social constructions, so that people come to see themselves having the capacity and the right to act on and influence decisions (Rowland 1997).

“Participatory empowerment as a development practice cannot rely on the assumption that giving people voice and increasing participation will solve development problems. It will have to pay more attention to the way national and global power structures constrain and define the possibilities for change at local level” (Sauders, ed. Parpart 2002 p. 49). This lends an interesting perspective to the debate.

3.4 GENDER MAINSTREAMING REVIEW

Caroline Moser and Annalisa Moser (2005) have reviewed gender mainstreaming policies in international development institutions. The 1995 Beijing PFA prioritised gender mainstreaming as a tool in achieving gender equality; Moser and Moser studied whether or not any progress has been made ten years later. Three stages were used to categorise this progress: the adoption of terminology, the putting in place of a policy and its
implementation in fourteen international development institutions and organisations, including bilateral donors, international financial institutions (IFI), United Nations agencies and NGOs. All three stages were dated and analysed.

It is of particular interest to this paper that Sida, CIDA, UNIFEM and ActionAid International were among them (Gender and Development 2005, Moser & Moser).

Most institutions have adopted the terminology of gender equality and gender mainstreaming and have policies for them, including the organisations above. The most common definition of gender mainstreaming in these policies adheres closely to that used by the UN Economic and Social Council, namely: “Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It 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” (Gender and Development 2005, Moser & Moser p. 12).

Further aspects of gender mainstreaming appear in some definitions as “gender empowerment: promoting women’s participation in decision-making processes, as well as having their voices heard and the power to put issues on the agenda” (Gender and Development 2005, Moser & Moser p. 12).

The review analyses six common components in mainstreaming policies, one of which is “support to women’s decision-making and empowerment”. This particular component is found in the policies and strategies of Sida, CIDA, UNIFEM and ActionAid International. Few signs of gender mainstreaming implementation were found when former evaluations and argumentations made by different organisations were examined. A reference to a Sida Studies in Evaluation 03/01 (Mikkelsen et al. 2002) is presented, and the evaluations showed only “embryonic evidence” of working with gender mainstreaming processes. Capacity building, gender training and awareness and shared responsibility within the organisations are addressed as components that are lacking, and a male-biased organisational culture was mentioned by several organisations as being a constraint.

The result of the review is that most institutions have adopted the terminology in their policies and strategies etc. but implementation has not been carried out (Gender and Development 2005, p. xx Moser & Moser). The review presents an opportunity to compare and observe
differences and similarities in the results found in this study, as well as to discuss implementation.

3.5 ORGANISATION THEORY

The GAD approach recognises the importance of redistributing power in social relations, and is improving women’s access to the development resources that are usually directed to men. However, it also implies direct challenges to male cultural, social and economic privileges. The women are enabled to gain equal social and economic profit from the same resources, which means that a change in institutional rules is necessary. The implementation history of WID and GAD policies has always been dependent upon the institutional location of these policy efforts and the political strength and legitimacy of women’s movements. It must be remembered that the empowerment approach to women’s development interests emerged out of criticism from women in developing nations, concerned with the respect of women’s interests and identities in an unequal global economic order (Goetz 1997).

When reviewing development organisations and their institutional environments in a gender perspective, the family is the women’s arena. Other institutions are usually seen as gender-neutral territory. A conceptual distinction between institutions and organisations has to be made; the economist Douglas North has defined institutions as frameworks for socially constructed rules and norms, the functions of which are to limit choices. They reduce uncertainty, provide structure for everyday life, make certain forms of behaviour predictable or routine and they internationalise them. Gender projects that imply a sensitive institutional change have to establish gender equitable forms of social interaction and challenge the legitimacy of forms of social organisations that discriminate women. All institutions embody a history of social choices by particular groups; an analysis shows how these choices are made by the social patterns to preserve the power of particular groups, rather than with equity or efficiency. Understanding institutions as historically constructed frameworks for behavioural rules and as generators of experience contributes to understanding why when new agents (such as women) or policies (such as gender equity) are introduced into institutions, the outcomes in a gender perspective can seem to have changed so little (Goetz 1997). This research is valuable for the final discussion in order to understand why the implementations of the concepts are difficult to achieve.
CHAPTER 4. KENYA AT A GLANCE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A short presentation of Kenyan society from a gender perspective is given at the beginning of this chapter in order to provide necessary background material and thereby facilitate understanding of this paper. The Kenyan national machinery for promoting gender equality, the Government, the Ministry of Gender, Sports and Culture, the Gender Department, the Gender Commission and the relation between the governmental political levels are all presented. Resources and decisions made at macro and meso levels will be discussed and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) presented to complete the political picture. The presentation of the Kenyan government is not complete: emphasis here is placed on outlining the official actors involved in gender matters.

4.2 KENYAN HISTORY AND POLITICS IN A GENDER CONTEXT

The Republic of Kenya is located in the Eastern part of the African continent. It gained independence from Britain in 1963 and, whilst officially a democracy, it was in reality run initially by one party. The office of the Prime Minister was abolished in 1964 and a central and more powerful presidential office was established. In 1982, Kenya officially became a one party state. At the beginning of 1990, the President was put under pressure by groups within the country as well as the international community to democratise the country, allow a multiparty system and hold free and fair elections. A multiparty democracy was restored in 1991 (Thomson 2005).

Despite the fact that elections were held in 1992 and 1997, the political party KANU (Kenya African National Union) ruled the country from 1963 until 2002, when a coalition of opposition parties, known as the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), won the election with a programme to establish good governance and improve the living conditions of the poor. Today, there are over 40 political parties in the country and a growing number of political pressure groups in all areas, which indicates a strengthening of the democratic system. A new constitution was passed by parliament in the summer of 2005, but was turned down by the people in a referendum (Sida Country Report 2006).
The country has a population of approximately 32 million, of which 75-80% live in rural areas. Kenya is faced with a high dependency burden, with over 50% of the population below the age of 15. This implies high demands on social services such as primary education and health care. The population growth rate is declining (HIV/AIDS are pandemic) but is nevertheless still high. The country has high mortality rates for all ages, low and declining life expectancy and increased fertility rates. The population in absolute poverty has increased and the unemployment rate is high. According to an ERS situational analysis of the economy and poverty in Kenya, along with three national surveys, it is estimated that the proportion of the population living in poverty rose from 48.8 percent in 1990 to 55.4 percent in 2001, and continued to rise to 56 percent in 2003 (ERS 2004, p. 9).

The Kenyan economy grew by an annual rate below the population growth between 1997 and 2002, which led to a decline in per capita income. Growth in the last few years has increased, indicating that governmental reforms to restore economic growth and reduce poverty through employment and wealth creation can, according to ERS4, be said to be successful to some extent (MDG Report Kenya 2005, www.ui.se Landguiden).

The Kenyan state and its people do not have a history of solidarity based on human rights. On the contrary, they have a history of a patron-client relationship. Patronage in politics and civil service delivery and corruption remain cornerstones in the way the state of Kenya is governed. The lack of accountability, transparency and participation, along with discrimination due to gender, age and ethnicity remains. The root causes of the absence of economic growth, security and effective service delivery is found in the lack of empowerment of the people to claim their rights, and the lack of human rights principles in the way the government operates and interacts with people (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Country Strategy Kenya 2004-2008).

The result of the governmental misuse of power has led to large disparities among the people in income, power, and social structures: a tiny elite disposes of enormous wealth. Inequalities in society on different levels are huge, as is the regional imbalance between rural and urban areas, along with the inequalities that exist between men and women. The situation of women is poor regarding security, income, development opportunities and risks (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Country Strategy Kenya 2004-2008).

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Goal three in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Status Report for Kenya 2005 on gender equality and women empowerment is evaluated and provides adequate information for this thesis. Despite campaigns and reforms concerning gender issues, the gender gap still exists regarding access to, and control of, resources, economic opportunities and political voice. Women remain underrepresented in both parliament and local authorities. Girls are less likely to attend school than boys and are underrepresented in secondary schools and universities. The gap between female and male labour force participation is, however, gradually narrowing (MDGs 2005).

Telling statistics are presented on CIDAs website: women are responsible for 70 % of food production, 50 % of domestic food storage, 50 % of animal husbandry and 60 % of agriculture marketing but, in decision-making in political and public life, men have four to five times the number of positions held by women (www.defait-marci.gc.ca CIDA 20/7-2006).

4.3 THE KENYAN NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

Kenya’s governmental structure of the political process for the implementation of gender mainstreaming and empowerment in society is presented in appendix 2 and 3 (p 63-65).

The Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services was created through the Presidential Circular No. 1/2003 of 14 January 2003 on the “Organization of the Government of the Republic of Kenya” with a mandate to address issues of socio-economic development that will lead to poverty reduction and improved equity and governance (Ministry of Gender Strategic Plan 2005-2009).

The ministry has five departments, one of which is the Gender Department which provides a support service to the ministry. The Gender Commission provides policy guidance and co-ordinates programmes geared towards mainstreaming gender issues in all spheres of development.

The mission, vision, goals and values are presented in the Strategic Plan of the Ministry, the setting being that the strategies and objectives of the Ministry are to be in accordance with the national goals. A key strategic objective, which can be mentioned in a gender context, is that the ministry is responsible for initiating interventions geared towards addressing existing gender disparities. A large part of the strategy relates to organisation planning and, where gender is concerned, issues are identified so as to integrate and mainstream gender in the place of work.
The Department of Gender was established by the government in December 2004 in order to improve on efficiency and effectiveness in integrating gender concerns in policy formulation, planning and implementation. Specifically, the department is responsible for providing technical support for the promotion of gender mainstreaming and establishment of gender units in all departments within the ministry.

The text of the Strategic Plan contains no definition of gender mainstreaming. The core functions of the ministry, from a gender perspective, are to integrate and mainstream gender issues in all development initiatives, and to promote gender equity and equality. The strategic objective is to initiate interventions geared towards addressing the existing gender disparities in the development process, as well as to support policy priority (e.g. in governmental ERS work) to facilitate the mainstreaming of gender issues in all areas of development. The current achievements of the new ministry are the establishment of a Gender Commission and the creation of the Department of Gender (Ministry of Gender Strategic Plan 2005-2009).

The strategy plan of the department for the period (2005-2009) is presented in the form of a timetable, which shows what the goals are along with how and when they are to be achieved. The strategic issues, objectives, initiatives, activities and the timeframe are identified and the overall strategic issue is to change the inadequate legal framework for institutionalising gender mainstreaming in the country. There are six strategic objectives:

1. To strengthen and create a legal framework for gender mainstreaming by 2008
2. To change the inadequate institutional framework institutionalizing gender concerns in the development process
3. To increase the level of awareness of gender concerns in the districts of the country
4. To provide support to the initiatives of stakeholders
5. To provide access to gender information
6. To improve financial support.

(Ministry of Gender Strategic Plan 2005-2009, p. 22.)

Strategic initiatives are policy development and capacity building on all levels. Activities planned for the period are: the enactment of the sessional paper, holding workshops, participating in the development of gender responsive sectoral policies reviews and training staff at all levels on gender responsive interventions. Other initiatives planned include resource mobilisation, monitoring, evaluation, lobbying and advocacy. The Ministry of Gender Strategic Plan is composed in accordance with the Kenyan Economic Recovery


The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) of the Republic of Kenya is referred to as the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation, 2003-2007 (ERS). Implementation of the ERS commenced with the 2003/2004 budget, and is complemented by an implementation framework (IP-ERS). The Kenyan ERS is prepared by member countries in broad consultation with stakeholders and development partners, including the staffs of the World Bank and the IMF. The Government has particular responsibility for spearheading actions and creating a positive framework; the private sector, non-governmental and community-based organisations all have a vital role to play in meeting the challenge of poverty reduction. An upgrading is performed every three years and progress is followed by an annual report (ERS 2004).

Key determinants of poverty ERS include gender in the following text “male versus female headed households” – “The poor also attribute their poverty to natural calamities, and to tradition and cultural beliefs that deny women access to productive assets.” (ERS 2004 p. 10.)

Under the heading “Gender Dimensions of poverty” (ERS 2004 p. 10) in Poverty Diagnostics in Kenya, gender is discussed and social factors, cultural norms and the unequal power status of men and women are emphasised. Some traditions favour men, which results in the low status of women, so special efforts are needed to empower the women and make them less vulnerable. Efforts are ongoing to promote gender mainstreaming in the ERS but a problem here is the lack of gender disaggregated analysis; exceptions are, however, found in the education and health sectors. The ERS is analysed in gender-neutral terms according to the text.

The objective of reducing gender disparities regarding access to primary and secondary education, in correspondence to the MDGs, led to the establishment of the Gender Commission and an approval of a Sessional Paper on Gender and Development (ERS 2004 Annex 1). A review of women’s rights within the Framework of Aid Modalities, Economic Recovery Strategy and the MDGs in Kenya is to be made and a conference is planned to address these issues (ERS 2004).
The ERS has been evaluated twice. The evaluations are presented here and provide some information about the achievements or outputs in a gender perspective. The annual progress report for 2003/2004 presented in May 2005 (APR) is the first report on the implementation of the IP- ERS 2003-2007, being prepared by the Monitoring and Evaluation Department (MED) of the Ministry of Planning and National Development (MPND).

Chapter 1, Section 1.2 (headed “Poverty diagnoses in Kenya”) contains a short text concerning the Gender Dimension of Poverty, which repeats the same statements found in the ERS gender analysis above. The Gender Commission in the Ministry of Gender, Culture, Social Services and Sports has the responsibility for mainstreaming gender issues within the ERS (APR: 2003/2004 p. 3).

Free primary education has been a top priority of the government in promoting gender equality initiatives in civil society by educating more girls. The report states that this is also one of the objectives in the MDGs. According to several Kenyan reports, there is a high level of gender disparity at the various levels of education, and one of the priorities of the programmes is to continue to promote gender equality. The report states that initiatives have involved civil societies extensively in advocating gender equality that includes education, economic and socio empowerment.

Progress during the period reviewed in the section on Vulnerability is seen i.a. in the creation of a Gender Commission, which is at the initial stage of operation. One challenge is to deepen the mainstreaming of gender and youth across the key sectors of the government that goes beyond policy interventions, and should include governance, advocacy and capacity building (APR 2003/2004).

The annual progress report for 2004/2005, presented in May 2006, evaluated the second year of implementation of the IP- ERS 2003-2007, being compiled by the governmental offices MED and the MPND. The report is based on the three pillars in the ERS: promoting economic growth, reducing poverty and promoting good governance. There are still significant gender and regional enrolment disparities that are found mostly in secondary schools, and the goals have not been reached.

The Department of Gender focuses mostly on policy and institutional reforms through finalisation of the sessional paper, as well as the establishment of a National Gender Commission.

The plans of the Department of Gender for the immediate future are to establish gender divisions in all line ministries, carry out capacity-building initiatives and continue to build a system for tracking and measuring progress in gender mainstreaming. Once gender desks are
fully functional, the ministry will have a better picture of gender-related activities taking place in each sector, which will be reflected in the reporting of progress in gender issues in the annual progress report.

Problems are the lack of policy frameworks in some areas, inadequate technical and financial capacity within the implementing agencies and the lack of statistics in the planning and budgeting for vulnerable groups. The rejection of the draft constitution in 2005/6 stalled the progress of establishing the necessary framework. A review of women’s rights within the Framework of Aid Modalities, Economic Recovery Strategy and the MDGs in Kenya is to be carried out and a conference is planned to address these issues (APR 2004/2005).

4.3.2 Constituency Development Fund (CDF)

The Kenyan government has recently initiated a programme aimed at decentralizing public expenditure decisions to local levels, known as the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). This was introduced in 2003/4 as one of several initiatives with the intention of decentralizing resource allocation decisions to local (district and constituency) levels. The CDF is administered in the office of the Member of Parliament (MP) at the constituency level (there are 210 constituencies in all). The total national monetary allocation to these CDF is 2.5% of the total Government revenue (AAK 2006 Inequality Report, p. 24). The CDF is governed by an act of parliament that establishes the District Projects Committee (DPC) and Constituencies Development Committee (CDC) at the district level, in which marginalized groups and special interest groups should be represented. Such committees consist of the elected MP, two councillors, one district officer, two religious organizations representatives, two men, two women, a youth representative and a nominee from the active NGOs in the area: all in all fifteen members (AAK 2006 Inequality Report, p. 35). The main aim is reducing both poverty and inequalities among the Kenyan population. The CDF supports Development Initiatives (DIs) within the GGP (11).
CHAPTER 5. ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE GENDER AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The results of the analyses of the documents and interviews are presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The participants in the GGP selected for this study, namely AAK which administrates the GGP, and Sida, which represents the donor countries, are presented in this chapter. An analysis of the country strategies of the organisations is made using the analysis model.

5.2 ACTIONAID KENYA AND Sida

AAK has been in Kenya for about thirty years. The organisation supports projects and programmes that promote the interests of poor and marginalised people. It participates in many integrated development activities, and has as its main issue the promotion and defence of economic, cultural, civil and political human rights.

AAK is among the larger international NGOs in Kenya and has four regional offices in addition to its head office in Nairobi. AAK works directly with one million poor Kenyans in 20 districts across the country, strengthening their capability of securing their own basic rights. AAK sees the government as a central player in the development process and promotes the strengthening of government capacities. AAK has participated in the work on the country’s ERS and the governmental reviews. As an organisation, it has a central position in fighting poverty, supports the work of over fifty other NGOs active in the field of poverty eradication and is engaged with the government on all levels, as well as with major bilateral and multilateral donors (AAK 2002).

AAK administers the GGP, and provides grants and institutional development support not only to a broad range of NGOs but also to grassroots community based-organisations (CBOs) and other civil society groupings, such as networks and coalitions (AAK 2002). Social movements, known as development initiatives (DI), are supported on a constituency level in the districts within the GGP. The government has also established Constituency Development Funds, a new decentralized authority to give people access to, and influence over, the local decision-making process (I1).
AAK is a part of the International ActionAid Alliance, an organisation that regards AAK as an important civic voice both in Kenya and in the international development arena. One important vision is to achieve a democratic and equitable society in which all people can exercise their right to a life of dignity and, in particular, that the views and needs of women are considered. Support is given to CBOs and other organisations that increase empowerment and enhance gender equity (AAK 2002). The organisation follows the current strategy paper in their work; a new such paper was to be published in August 2006 (I1).

Sida, linked to the Swedish government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, works towards reducing poverty in the world and has activities ranging over many areas. The overriding goal of the Swedish development cooperation is to help poor people improve their living conditions (http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=107&language=en_US 30/7-2007). The Swedish parliament and government stipulate the size of the budgets, the countries that shall be included in the Swedish development cooperation and the focus of cooperation. An important principle here is that each partner country is responsible for its own development. Sida’s mission is to create opportunities for change and development.

Sida prepares policy documents for its work; one that can be referred to in this context is the Promoting Gender Equality in Development Cooperation, Sida 2005. This policy conceptualises gender mainstreaming and empowerment as follows: “mainstreaming gender equality is a strategy for achieving sustainable development for all, by supporting the right of choice, empowerment and provision of resources” – “Gender equality involves ensuring that all human beings – women, men, girls and boys – are considered equal and treated equally in terms of dignity and right.” (Gender Policy, Sida 2005, p. 4). The policy emphasizes economic and political empowerment in power structures and relations. Sida will thereby contribute to removing barriers hindering the equal participation of poor women in the economy and in politics (Gender Policy, Sida 2005).

An important role is played by Sida’s field organisation, which consists of field officers belonging to the Swedish embassies and their representative organisations on missions abroad. Consequently the field office in Kenya is at the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi. The field office has extended powers of delegation: within the framework of the Country Strategy, it is responsible for the entire contribution management cycle, coordinating the country programme as in the case of GGP (Sida at Work 2005). Sida’s work in Kenya currently follows the Country Strategy for Development Cooperation, Kenya 2004-2008.
5.3 THE ORGANISATIONS’ COUNTRY STRATEGIES FOR KENYA


Analysis of the CSP 2002-2005 revealed that the concept of empowerment is central in the strategy; the concept of gender is found in connection with concepts such as equality, inequality, equity and poverty. Mainstreaming is used a few times in the text in the situations presented here: i) “Four key roles will be mainstreamed among staff: capacity builder, policy advocate, defender of rights and continuous learner” (AAK 2002, p. v.). This is a goal in the empowerment strategy within the organisation to strengthen the staff in their decision-making at all levels. ii) “We also need to mainstream gender more firmly in our work” (AAK 2002 p. 6). Although this is a goal, a definition is not given. It is, however, seen as a step in maintaining and deepening the empowerment of the staff within the organisation. iii) “Undertake gender analyses of policy issues to mainstream gender concerns in all national campaigns ....” (AAK 2002 p.15). Mainstreaming here is used as a tool in the implementation strategy of promoting gender equity⁵ and the only time the concept gender mainstreaming is used in the text.

AAK states at the beginning of the strategy that the overall mission is to “eradicate poverty by fighting together with others against the inequity and injustice that cause it” (AAK 2002, p.iii). The organisation promotes the interests and rights of the poor and marginalised, who are defined as women, children and pastoralists, in all projects and programmes and at all levels in society. The imbalance in the power relation between men and women is pointed out as being one of the causes of poverty in Kenya (AAK 2002).

The concept of empowerment is discussed in the CSP 2002-2005, which refers to the ideas of capability and entitlement of Amartya Sen⁶. It is important to have control over resources,

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⁵ Gender equality means the principle and practice of the fair allocation of resources, programmes and decision-making to both women and men according to the norms and values of the specific community (Gender Matters, Sida 2005).
⁶ Sida has also been influenced by the ideas of Sen in its policy work. Dr. Ingemar Gustavsson, Sida, Stockholm February 2006.
including information; by empowering the poor, the gaps in power between the different groups in society should decrease. Empowerment is increasing the capabilities of the marginalised; in order to achieve this, knowledge, capacity and ability must be combined. “Increasing the capability of poor people to analyse, make decisions and self-organise for empowerment is the key to poverty eradication” (AAK 2002 p. 9).

There is no clear definition of the concept of gender in the text: it is often used in combination with equity, in reference to poor and marginalised people and, more explicitly, about strengthening women and children in society. Women are the focus in this context whereas men, as a group, are only mentioned a couple of times in the text.

Three strategic objectives give the future direction of the organisations’ work, priorities and expected outcomes in supporting development initiatives (DIs) in the CSP 2002-2005, namely:

i) To empower the poor
   The objective of empowering the poor is explained by the following text: “to strengthen the capabilities of the poor, especially women, to meet their basic needs, claim their rights and demand accountability from development actors, particularly the State” (AAK 2002 p. 13).
   The strategies presented are designed to strengthen the CBOs in their organisation and work, provide support in the form of grants, raise awareness of basic rights and help to link together the CBOs and government in the implementation of community projects, as well as to support the formation of umbrella groups for negotiation with external parties. Furthermore, they are meant to support local development movements and the participation of the poor, and in particular women, in decision-making processes. Expected outcomes are the improved well-being of the poor, in particular that of women and children in the communities with whom AAK works, and an increase in the participation and representation of poor people in local politics and institutions, especially that of women.

ii) To create an enabling environment
   The objective promoting gender equity is explained by the following text: “to secure greater gender equity and women’s empowerment and influence in the development process” (AAK 2002, p.15). The strategies presented are designed to support and strengthen the CBOs, NGOs and other organisations to increase women’s empowerment, promote gender equity and support movements working for women’s rights and social change. They also ensure that
women and girls have equitable access to the resources and projects of AAK, and increase the control of resources by women and women’s groups and their role in decision-making and participation in the development DIs. Furthermore, they are to work with women’s organisations and policymakers in order to promote and implement laws and policies that support women’s rights, implement practical guidelines for good gender practice within AAK and to carry out gender analysis of policy issues to mainstream gender concerns in all national campaigns. Expected outcomes are an increase in the number of women and women’s organisations to administer and control development initiatives and projects, and to achieve greater recognition and respect for women and their rights from both men and women in the DIs. Improvements in the division of resources between men and women at local level are expected, as well the development of strong women’s movements at all levels. Improved policies and laws that protect and promote the rights of women, and improved gender policies and practices within AAK and its partners, are also expected (AAK 2002).


The Country Strategy for Development Cooperation for Kenya, January 2004-December 2008 issued by the Swedish Foreign Ministry was approved by the Swedish government in April 2004. The strategy provides a good picture of the core issues of Sida’s development cooperation assessments in Kenya for the period of time in question. The first chapter discusses poverty in Kenya; inequalities are reflected upon at a number of levels between men and women. Women are worse off in all respects, e.g. insecurity, income, development opportunities and risks. A major reason for this is the fact that the patriarchal political culture in Kenya has shut women out of the decision-making process at every level, including the political area. Many organisations in Kenya are fighting effectively for further reforms and the empowerment of poor communities (Country Strategy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004).

The main aims of the Swedish programme in Kenya are democracy and human rights and to support democratic governance. The measures aimed at “mainstreaming gender equality concerns and strengthening women’s rights is built into most development programmes” (Country Strategy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004, p. 14). This is the first time the expression mainstreaming gender is found in the strategy. “Greatest progress was achieved in vital areas of strengthening women’s and children’s rights and political and legal empowerment of the poor”. (Country Strategy, Ministry of
Some political transitions and changes of government have been positive but these areas within the programme remain relevant to support.

Studying Kenya’s ERS makes it clear that the lack of democratic governance is the root cause of poverty in Kenya. The present government came to power with the intention of strengthening democracy and fighting poverty. Efforts must be made to reduce the socio-economic disparities between regions and between men and women.

The conclusion reached by the Swedish development cooperation, according to the country analysis, is that promoting gender equality is crucial in the fight against all aspects of poverty. The aims, objectives and cooperation areas suggest that Sida must focus on democratic governance and human rights, gender equality and popular participation in the decision-making process. Implementation is to be based on mainstreaming democracy and human rights concerns in all programmes. Enabling mainstreaming democratic governance concerns in all programmes will also facilitate the integration of local perspectives with national development. It is important to promote participation and representation in the decision-making process; the enjoyment of basic rights by women, men and children is fundamental to secure sustainable democratic processes.

Gender mainstreaming is conceptualised in the chapter on guiding principles and strategic considerations: “Sweden will seek to promote equality for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, geographical location, disability or age. Special importance will be given to mainstreaming gender equality and women’s rights issues and concerns. This will be achieved through:

- The assessment of the impact on stakeholders and target groups, in terms of gender and age, at the planning stage of all interventions and projects
- The promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men as part of reform processes
- The emphasis on the promotion of gender equality and the ability of women to exercise their rights in the dialogue with stakeholders”.

(Country Strategy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004, p. 22.)

Sweden will focus especially on the participation of women in policy development and the equal right of women and men to land and property, an area prioritised by the Kenyan institutions.

Programme areas to support in a gender perspective are to strengthen women’s access, control over and right to own, buy and inherit land, property and other productive resources. Most agriculture work is carried out by women; their rights to land and property must be safeguarded if production is to increase.
Sida’s development cooperation, supports bilateral projects and undertakes to support multilateral programmes by means of co-financing (Country Strategy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004). The Swedish interpretation of the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment is stated clearly in the strategy, along with how they are to be implemented in the development cooperation in Kenya. The strategy is to be seen in the light of all Sida’s policies as being the policy Promoting Gender Equality in Development Cooperation, Sida 2005 (see 5.2).

CHAPTER 6. REPORTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The reports Pulling Apart 2004 and Peoples Participation for Equality Project National Inequality Report 2006 have been selected for analysis in a gender context to identify implementation strategies and the outcomes achieved of the GGP. The model that treats gender mainstreaming and empowerment issues is used in the analysis of the reports.

6.2 PULLING APART

This report was brought about by the Regional Officer from the Nakuru AAK and provides some information of what various AAKs have achieved in their programmes. It is interesting to analyse this report not only to identify any outputs of the AAK development work but also to compare it to the Equality Report 2006. The report, compiled by the Society for International Development (SID) in 2004 in cooperation with the Kenyan government and Sida, bears the title Pulling Apart. Facts and Figures on Inequality in Kenya. The purpose of the publication is to report on the various types of inequality in Kenya; its content is based mainly on secondary resources. The report relies on data from the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) used to measure achievements in basic human development, which is adjusted for gender inequality. GDI uses
the same parameters as the Human Development Index (HDI), namely life expectancy, education attainment and standards of living. A GDI value close to 1 signifies achievements of equality for men and women (SID 2004 p. 50). Facts and figures show an economical gap between rich and poor in Kenya, and regional inequality in all areas. Some data bases used in the survey are from the late 1990s and do not cover all the current districts.

Gender inequalities are discussed in Chapter Four, and a definition of the term is given where inequality concerns variations in living standards across a whole population. The definition of inequality in the above report is “the fundamental disparity that permits one individual certain material choices, while denying another individual those same choices. It thus encompasses differences in opportunity and outcomes. Inequality is different from poverty because, while poverty focuses on those below a certain defined threshold level, inequality focuses on variations across a whole population” (SID 2004 p. 49). The definition focuses on differences between individuals in terms of both opportunities and outcomes.

Key information on the various aspects of inequality is presented from a gender perspective: there is no definition of the gender concept in the text and the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment cannot be found in the vocabulary. “Gender inequalities” is the term used, and the report gives the definition of inequality (see above). The text states that the role of women in the socio-economic and political development of society has been increasingly recognised over the last two decades, but that there is still a long way to go. The inequalities are discussed as access to key social services and socio-political rights, which may arise on the basis of population groups, gender and geographical location. The discussion focuses on women and discusses the disadvantaged position of women (in relation to men).

The publication presents several differences in gender outcomes, e.g. about 93% of women in the north eastern province have no education at all compared to 3% in the central province. Of the 2,140 councillors elected in 2002, only 97 were women; of the 210 members of parliament elected in 2002, only 9 were women (SID 2004 p. xiii). The width of disparities in gender development in Kenya is also discussed. Where education is concerned, the enrolment rates for women are lower than those of men, and illiteracy among females is almost twice that of males. The fact is that the statistics indicate that gender inequality has decreased somewhat, but it is necessary for the government to focus on these issues in the future (SID 2004).
The report is drawn from 23 (out of a total of 72) Kenyan Districts profiles that have been developed for the districts in which AAK works. The report relies on secondary data, with little access to primary data. It is supported by Sida, UNDP and the Peoples Participation Equality (PPE) project, of which the study is a part.

The objective of the report is to make important data available to development parties at the sub-national level by comparing data from the 23 districts in the country. The focus is on the district level because of the recent move by the government to decentralise funds and planning responsibilities to that level. This has given the communities the opportunity to participate more actively, and to own their development process. The idea is that this report will contribute to the current national dialogue on equality on grassroots level. AAK is concerned about the absence of “inequality” in the national development debate and hopes that the report will be able to change this.

A definition of inequality as a concept in the report is “Inequality is a measure of dispersal of a unit commodity be it goods, income or service over the whole population, or the whole segment of society. Distribution rather that the unit subject matter is the object of the discourse” (Inequality Report 2006, p. 17). The connection between inequality and poverty is essential.

One of the areas of focus in the report is gender and inequality. They use Nilufer Catagay’s definition of gender as a social meaning given to a biological male or female. “It is a social factor, similar to other social considerations such as race, class, ethnicity and age.” (Inequality Report 2006 p. 19). The question of how gender differentials breed inequality is discussed. Gender biases in society, such as in labour market legislation, property rights and inheritance influence activities and the opportunities of both men and women. In some communities, a married woman is legally required to acquire her husband’s approval to hold down a job or relocate to obtain employment.

General inequality exists in the generation of income and accumulation on wealth among women and men: this provides a base for the analysis of inequalities in this report (Analysing the effects in reducing or increasing inequalities).

Their research has been more concerned with the equality of opportunity, the inequality of opportunities rather than the inequality of outcomes, and with the equity of the distribution of welfare and the components that constitute welfare.
The report presents the Constituency Development Fund CDF, which was initiated in 2003/2004 with the aim of bringing development closer to the people. The core aim is poverty reduction and reducing inequalities among the Kenyan population (see 4.3.1).

Chapter 14 covers gender and inequalities, the definitions relating to disparities between women and men in relation to access to services and opportunities, both at local and national levels. Following the Beijing conference the MDGs, with its time-bound and measurable goals addressing gender inequalities, has been the prime focus of the development work. The keys to the development process are through resource mobilisation and increasing women’s access to economic and political opportunities.

Perspectives that are linked to gender are sixfold: economic, social, political and cultural attributes, and limitations and opportunities associated with being male or female. These are central to reducing poverty, disease and other development challenges. The report points out that the MDGs confirms the central role of gender equality and women’s rights to the development process (Inequality Report 2006).

Gender equality in both participation and progression at all levels of education are observed. The statistics indicate a great improvement in female participation in education even prior to the Free Primary School Act 2003.

Summarizing the report, the degree of inequality is still high in most of the areas of focus in Kenya, with huge differences in the various regions of the districts. There is gender inequality in education, health care, employment, violence and women’s participation in decision-making at national and local levels. Women still have very little influence in local decision-making processes, mainly due to the weak correlation between policy initiatives and their implementation in the country, along with the lack of resources allocated in the budget.
CHAPTER 7. THE GENDER AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME AND THE INTERVIEWS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the history of the GGP programme, providing information on the organisation, its stakeholders, core issues and goals, followed by examples of the implementation of the programme and the way in which the different stakeholders, represented here by the informants, interpret the concepts gender mainstreaming and empowerment. An analysis of the interviews carried out with Informants 1 (I1), 2 (I2) and 3 (I3) are presented at the end of the chapter. (For information pertaining to the informants, see Chapter 2.2.)

7.2 THE GENDER AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

The programme’s background is that although women comprise half of Kenya’s voting population, they are tremendously underrepresented in political institutions and have very little say in the formulation of public policy. The causes mentioned are the gender-blind policies of political parties and the behaviour of voters, social-cultural attitudes, the minimal financial support to women candidates and the masculine nature of the local political environment. The GGP is built partly on lessons learnt and partly on recommendations from the EPPP, which was implemented in 2001. The GGP was launched on 22nd March 2005; the first phase will run for three years (www.defait-marci.gc.ca CIDA 18/7-2006), starting from September last year (I2).

The main goal of the GGP national programme is to ensure the focused, coordinated and long-term support of women so that they can enjoy human rights as well as participate in democratic governance. The focus of the programme is the strengthening of the legislative policy and institutional framework, gender equality and women’s participation in local governance, gender equality and women’s empowerment in political party processes and, finally, strengthening parliamentary initiatives for gender equality (www.defait-marci.gc.ca CIDA 18/7 2006).
A presentation of the GGP organisation and relations between the stakeholders is given (Fig. 3) to elucidate the roles of the programme’s participants. The programme is a part of the Good Governance Programme under the Gender Commission and the Ministry of Gender. The programme is administered by AAK, a commission they received in competition with other organisations. AAK has the management responsibilities and receives finances and all other resources, which it then divides among 27 national or local NGOs. These NGOs, which implement the programme, have to be suggested by AAK and listed (approved by UNIFEM and the donors). Each NGO has a contract with AAK; the signed contracts and financial reports have to be approved by UNIFEM and the donors. UNIFEM is the technical unit, providing technical support to AAK. UNIFEM monitors, carries out strategy work and evaluation and takes care of the resources on behalf of the donors, as well as administering the basket funds work. UNIFEM is responsible for the overall planning of work and management in cooperation with the donors. UNIFEM, the donors and AAK (which represents the NGOs) hold meetings once a month (I2, I3). Sida works through UNIFEM.

7.3 RESULTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The informants often related to concrete projects to explain their role as stakeholders in the programme and its implementation in Kenyan society. The concept of gender is discussed and how they regard it in practice.

“AAK works on different levels in society, promoting and lobbying for the GGP for core issues such as poverty reduction, empowering the poor and gender equality” (I1). AAK is an NGO working at macro, meso and micro levels in Kenyan society (see Chapter 5.2).
“Support is given to women’s groups and others in the community; core issues are how to have a voice and increase the awareness of their rights, and also to link up people in different areas to be stronger.” – “AAK tries to confront the patriarchal society and culture in the programme; women are still excluded and marginalized in the communities. The focus of activities is women, and they are coming into mainstream development” (I1). These words can give the impression that the gender work of the organisations is focused on women being more active in the development of society.

“Women have positions as chairmen in a lot of activities and in groups in different areas. AAK supports these groups and has campaigns to show how women are participating to give them self-esteem.” “Women’s groups try to invite men who are interested in participating to serve as a model and thus gender is mainstreaming the group” (I1). This gives the impression that there are many women’s groups working in different projects, but the central problem is getting the men to work together with the women. “Gender is not a good expression to use, as it is unclear. The important thing is to support women’s activities, give them a voice to achieve something in Kenya. For men, women are not an asset. It is important for me to understand how the men have become strong. Access to the character of men’s behaviour is about advocacy, how to change men’s attitudes” (I3).

I1 conceptualizes empowerment as an important part of implementation, and says “for empowerment at grassroots level capacity building, internal knowledge and socio-economical support are important in the Development Initiatives, DIs” (see Chap. 5.2). I1 gives examples of how to empower at grassroots level “AAK should provide information, skills and socio-economical support and not exclude women in decision-making” and within the organisation “capacity building of the staff in the AAK organisation has been of importance for the implementation of the GGP. Empowerment is underestimated” (I1).

Informant 1 also gave some information about how the AAK administers the projects, both resources and achievements: “Gender mainstreaming is a commitment and, for the money we are allocating, we want to see how many girls are beneficiaries and, for example, how many girls drop out of school. The DIs have to use gender indicators for their monthly gender reports. Gender participation has to be reported in all projects.”

The informants answer the question about implementation of the GGP projects in the DIs by giving examples. “Take an infrastructure programme, where a road is going to be built. Before starting, the NGO has meetings and workshops with all stakeholders to discuss accountability, participation, transparency and non-discrimination. The gender perspective
must come through in every document in every programme. The outcome of the discussions is agreed on by all stakeholders at all levels, even at the local level, and the committees are elected by all stakeholders, the MPs\textsuperscript{7} and representatives from Provincial Roads. A policy is decided upon and all contractors must have the conditions for their workers in accordance to it. Conditions could be that 30\% of the workforce contracted has to be women, and that children working have to be considered, e.g. it may be agreed that they could work when they were free from school” (I2). The example provides information of the participants that are usually involved in a project and the process of planning and decision.

“On March 8 this year AAK started a campaign called “the sanitary wear campaign”, the demand being that the state give free sanitary articles to girls as a part of the Free Primary School Law. Toilets in the schools are a big issue, and a difficult question to deal with. Many girls stay away from school and are discriminated against. In many communities they have DIs working on this problem” (I1). The school dropout rate amongst girls is a problem that affects their ability to support themselves in the future. This is also exemplified from a gender perspective: it is especially noticeable in urban areas by the unemployment level of women aged 20-24 years, which is over three times that of men of the same age group (SID 2004 p. 40).

When discussing the outcomes of the GGP, the informants expressed clearly that they are not satisfied, and that an essential hindrance is the culture and tradition of Kenyan patriarchal society. “Even with a lot of training, the man still makes every decision in a family. Men will still marginalize women. A culture change is a process that takes time” (I1).

The stakeholders involved in the DI within the constituencies decide the aim, issue and agenda of the programme, something that is now easier thanks to the Constituency Development Fund, and which was pointed out by the informants. The possession of influence at that level is having real influence: most of the funds actually go to schools and health clinics (I1, I2).

7.4 RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS REGARDING THE CONCEPTS GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND EMPOWERMENT

In the interviews, interpretations of the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment are discussed from the perspective of the GGP and their role as employees in the

\textsuperscript{7} Comment: the MPs administer the Constituency Development Fund (see Chap. 4.3.1).
organisations. Additional questions (see Appendix 1) about the concepts are answered by email: I1 20/7-2006 and I2 31/7-2006.

I1 has a managerial position in the Rift Region. She has had the opportunity to participate in capacity building for staff to deepen understanding of the concepts so that they are equipped to deal with mainstreaming gender at all levels of programme implementation. I2 is an officer in the Development Cooperation Section at Sida at the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi, and follows the interpretation of the Swedish gender policy.

I1 considers “gender mainstreaming as an approach used to integrate the needs and experiences of women and men into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all societal spheres, including the political, economic, religious and social, so that women and men benefit equally, and to ensure that inequality is not perpetuated.”

I2 conceptualises gender mainstreaming as follows: “Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for making the concerns and issues of women, men, boys and girls an integral dimension of policy and programmes and in all areas of life, so that they benefit equally.” In the discussion, I2 explains the concept in a practical context: “gender mainstreaming is sometimes used to refer to women alone (which is not really the idea of the concept) but rightly so. In many incidences in development cooperation, the problems and issues of women and girls are largely unheard and unrecognised, and therefore equating the term gender mainstreaming to the mainstreaming of women’s issues is often the case. How is mainstreaming translated? You have to be aware that implementation is different to talking about it.”

Empowerment is conceptualised by the informants “to be a social action process that promotes the participation of people, organizations, and communities in reaching the goals of increasing individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life and social justice.” In other words, when the informant talks about empowering the poor at work, “the marginalized and the excluded are the focus when working towards the eradication of poverty, when thinking of expanding their assets (whether social economic and physical) and their ability to participate in processes that affect their lives, that is to negotiate, control and hold institutions accountable” (I1). “An interpretation of empowerment is a person’s enhanced ability and opportunity to be able to change his or her life” (I2).

A view regarding both concepts is also expressed: “the experience is that there could be a lack of misunderstanding of the concepts resulting from people’s backgrounds, exposure to
and experience of work with gender and perspectives formed through their socialization process. There is a need therefore to train and refresh programme staff continuously on the concepts, especially those of sex, gender roles, gender equality, gender equity, gender relations and gender issues” (I1, 21/4-2006).

The question concerning the People’s Participation for Equality Project National Inequality Report, AAK April 2006 is discussed by the informants as follows: “My take on this is that the inequality report should be concerned with gender participation in the development process, since one’s gender influences or limits participation in many communities in our country, and that has contributed to inequalities. The other element that has definitely had a lot to do with inequalities is power, whether economic or political. Thinking about other power dimensions, they would include personality traits, power within, power with, power to and power over. I also think inequality is looked at across regions and against access to services that depict the differences in deprivation” (I1). “That is correct. The terms gender mainstreaming and empowerment are not used, but the inequality report refers to these very same issues, e.g. regional disparities, the rich-poor gap, land ownership, power and HIV/AIDS statistics. The statistics visible in the report refer to the fact that issues concerning women are not an integral dimension in planning and power-sharing, and that empowerment, in all spheres of life, has to have its central target: women” (I2).

CHAPTER 8. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter is organised according to the following structure: firstly, the concepts of gender mainstreaming and empowerment are discussed, along with how they are interpreted in AAK and Sida in the feminist development research discourse. Secondly, the way in which the concepts are advocated in policies and activities are discussed, followed by what part of the programme, as a result of the empowerment approach is implemented both in a theoretical
and a practical context. Finally, some conclusions in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework are discussed. Ideas about future research and new, interesting questions that have appeared and could be followed up are also presented.

8.2 INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPTS

The research of Moser and Moser referred to at the opening of this discussion (see Chap.3.4) found that most international development institutions, among them Sida and ActionAid International (the mother organisation for ActionAid Kenya), have adopted the terminology of, and have policies for, gender equality and gender mainstreaming. They also stated that the definitions of gender mainstreaming in the policies have the same origin (i.e. the UN Economic and Social Council) and that one of the six shared components in the mainstreaming policies, namely “to support women’s decision-making and empowerment”, is found in the strategies of Sida and ActionAid International. Some results of gender mainstreaming and empowerment are conceptualised within the gender and development theory (GAD), which is dominant in current global development. Goetz defines the GAD approach as recognising the importance of redistributing power in social relations, and doing so improves women’s access to the development resources usually directed at men. In the AAK strategy, gender mainstreaming is interpreted as being a key role in the implementation strategy of promoting gender equity and to mainstream gender concerns in all national campaigns. The concept is used in terms of capacity-building of the staff in the organisation and for implementation in all programmes. There is no clear definition of the concept of gender in the strategy. The concept is often used in combination with equity and about poor and marginalised people and, more explicitly, about strengthening women and children in society. Women are the focus in this context; men, as a group, are only mentioned a couple of times in the text. The word mainstreaming is often used in the text but mainly when discussing empowerment. I1 sees gender mainstreaming as a way of integrating the needs and experiences of women and men in all steps of development design, and within all fields of society. Women and men benefit equally when inequality is not maintained. Sida’s interpretation of gender mainstreaming is to be found in their gender policy and, more explicitly in this context, in the Country Strategy for Kenya. Mainstreaming gender equality is a strategy for achieving sustainable development for all; gender equality involves ensuring that women, men, girls and boys are considered equally and treated equally in terms of dignity and rights. Mainstreaming gender equality concerns and strengthening the rights of women
are measures built into most development programmes. The way in which I2 interprets gender mainstreaming is in accordance with this policy and strategy.

In Sida’s country report, the measures aimed at mainstreaming gender equality are built into most development programmes, e.g. in AAK. Gender mainstreaming is conceptualised and, on analysing the text, a great coherence with the interpretations made by AAK can be seen, which becomes more obvious considering the interpretation of the informants. The interpretation of the organisations is, in accordance with Arnfred, that the key element of the mainstreaming strategy is “going beyond numbers”, bringing the perceptions, experience and interest of women, as well as men, to bear on the development agenda and to participate in the development process itself.

A difference in the texts is that AAK uses the term women whereas Sida uses the term gender more frequently, and includes men and children (both girls and boys). One example given in the text is the importance of promoting participation and representation in the decision-making processes and that the enjoyment of basic rights by women, men and children is fundamental to the sustainability of democratic processes. Both organisations emphasise women’s issues and their role in fighting poverty, and describe the situation of women and their needs in society. The core issue for AAK is women; when they discuss gender, only the female perspective is used. Rowland discusses the fact that there is a practical problem associated with the GAD approach, namely that gender can be used in an instrumentalist way to facilitate other objectives within prevailing ideologies, and that gender can become a proxy for women and simply used to keep the international development donor content. I1 presents the view that the use of the term gender could influence or limit participation in Kenyan local communities, which has contributed to inequalities. I2 says that gender mainstreaming is sometimes used only for women, and that is not really the idea of the concept. Often, in development cooperation, the problems and issues of women and girls are unheard and unrecognised, and gender mainstreaming is turned into the mainstreaming of women’s issues.

*Empowerment* is central to the strategy of AAK, referring to the ideas of Amartya Sen of capability and entitlement to interpret the concept. Empowerment is increasing the capability of the marginalised; to achieve this knowledge, capacity and ability must be combined. AAK regards empowerment as being the key to poverty eradication. The objective of empowering the poor is explained as strengthening the capabilities of the poor, especially poor women, to meet their basic needs, claim their rights and demand accountability from development actors, particularly the State. I1 adds that it is a social action, promoting participation at all levels.
towards reaching goals of political efficacy, improved quality of community life and social justice. Another goal in the empowerment strategy within AAK is to strengthen the staff in their decision-making at all levels.

Sida’s interpretation of empowerment is to be found in its gender policy. Mainstreaming gender equality is a strategy for achieving sustainable development for all by supporting the right of choice, empowerment and provision of resources. Sida’s strategy is to focus on democratic governance; vital areas are to empower the poor, especially the rights of women and children, and strengthen the power structure and relations in economical, political and legal issues. Empowerment is not conceptualised in the strategy text but the understanding is coherent in context to AAK. I2 interprets empowerment as the enhanced ability and opportunity a person needs in order to change his or her life.

AAK interprets empowerment in its policy and activities, analysed in a theoretical development research perspective: both Kabeer and Rowland can be referred to here. Kabeer’s multidimensional nature of power, i.e. the ability to make choices in areas earlier denied, suggests that empowerment strategies for women must be built on “power within”. This is necessary for improving their ability to control resources, determine agendas and make decisions. When the organisation interprets empowerment, the three dimensions of power (resources, agency, and achievements) as a process of change are present. Rowland’s definition of empowerment “power over”, “power to”, “power with” and “power within” can also be said to be present. More comprehensive field studies at DI level in the GGP are necessary in order to separate or reveal differences between the two theories. Empowerment has become a term used by all partners at all levels in the international development arena. Empowerment of the poor (including women) to improve their lives has become a common practice and an undefined goal. Empowerment has a different meaning for different participants: WB improves efficiency whereas alternative agencies see it as a metaphor for fundamental social transformation, according to Parpart. In relation to the GGP, the Kenyan government could be said to represent the former group whilst Sida, AAK and the GGP represent the latter.

A perspective that should be considered when discussing the concepts of interpretation is the global development agenda: an aid-effectiveness agenda that involves multilateral development institutions as well as developing and developed countries, and assigns clear responsibilities. Conferences have been held, and agreements decided upon, such as coherence and harmonization between all participants in the development cooperation
undertaken in a recipient country, which is something that can affect the interpretation of the concepts. There is a gap between how gender is expressed in the unified global language of development discourse and feminist theory, which represents the concerns and issues addressed by feminist activists and women’s movements from the south. Gender mainstreaming is a policy adopted from above. The Kenyan ERS is prepared by member countries in broad consultation with stakeholders, development partners and the MDGs, and international conventions and agreements are implemented in the long-term planning of the country’s development. Although gender mainstreaming and the empowering of marginalized groups are stated as goals in the ERS, no definition of the concepts are given. The interpretations seem to be either an understatement or simply used to follow the international cooperation agenda to keep the donors content.

8.3 CONCEPTS ADVOCATED IN POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES, AND THE APPROACH IN THE GENDER AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

The main focus of the GGP is in line with the organisation’s interpretation of the concepts, as the focus of their activities is women who are coming to mainstream development.

In the programme, AAK and Sida have advocated gender mainstreaming. Its implementation is to be based on mainstreaming democracy and human rights concerns in all programmes and influence their activities. Women have positions as chairmen in many activities and in groups in different areas. As the managing organisation, AAK supports these groups and has campaigns to show how women are participating to boost their self-esteem. Women’s groups try to invite men who are interested in participating to serve as a model; in this way, gender mainstreaming can be achieved. The gender perspective must come through in every document, in every programme, at all levels of the process. Gender mainstreaming is a commitment: AAK allocates money and, in return, must be informed of how many girls are beneficiaries in e.g. schools, and how many girls drop out. The DIs have to use gender indicators for their monthly gender reports: gender participation has to be reported in all projects. In her criticism of gender mainstreaming, Arnfred refers to Hannan, who interprets mainstreaming as agenda-setting and an instructional invention; this can be a risk, and can be seen in the relation between the organisations involved in the GGP. The risk is that mainstreaming simply means integration into existing agendas.

The main issues of the GGP are poverty reduction, empowering the poor and gender equality. They want to ensure the focused, coordinated and long-term support of women so that they
can enjoy human rights as well as participate in democratic governance as interpreted by women’s empowerment in party political processes. Capacity building, internal knowledge and socio-economical support are all important in the DIs for empowerment at grassroots level.

The empowerment aims of AAK and Sida in the programme are to strengthen the CBOs in their organisation and work, provide grant support, raise consciousness of basic rights and aid coordination between the CBOs and the government in the implementation of community projects. Support is given to local development movements to ensure a more equal division of resources between men and women at local level, ensure that women and girls have access to AAK resources and projects, increase the administrative power and control of resources by women and women’s groups and, finally, empower them in their role in decision-making and participation in development initiatives. AAK provides information, skills and socio-economical support, and do not exclude women in decision-making. Capacity building of the staff in the AAK organisation has also been important for the implementation of the GGP.

The resources that have been decentralized through the CDF for public expenditures on a local level have made it easier for the GGP to advocate policies and activities through the DIs and committees where the marginalized and special interest groups are represented. However, a change in society in a gender mainstreaming and empowerment perspective still seems remote. The man makes every decision in the family, and a culture change is a process that takes time. A GAD approach implies direct challenges to male cultural, social and economical privileges.

Goetz’s organisation theory claims in the relations in development organisations and their institutional environments that the family is the woman’s arena. Other institutions are usually seen as gender-neutral territory. A distinction between institutions such as family and organisations has to be made: a change has to be established in gender equitable forms of social interaction and the legitimacy of forms of social organisations that discriminate women challenged. The outcomes of advocating gender perspectives in DIs have not led to much change. Knowledge of how the historically-constructed frameworks for behaviour rules work, which are generators of experience, is a way of explaining this fact and should be considered even more in the future. There is a high awareness of the circumstances in Kenya; it is discussed in the ERS, Annual Reports, Gender Ministry and Gender Department, Reports, AAK and Sida and can be characterised by the fact that ERS states that “The poor also
attribute their poverty to natural calamities, and to tradition and cultural beliefs that deny women access to productive assets.”

8.4 EMPOWERMENT APPROACH IMPLEMENTED

Kabeer’s model of the three inter-related dimensions of power (i.e. resources, agency and achievements) as a process of change is used to emphasise and visualise achievements in the discussion of empowerment as identified in the GGP and the foundation presented. It examines the extent to which positive changes have taken place in these three elements, access to and control over resources, individual empowerment, developing abilities and, finally, changes in social relationships in family, work and society.

The resources that the GGP supports are identified as the social movements at community level that promote the conditions and opportunities of the poor, marginalised groups, women and children to help them make choices. This is done partly by providing access to resources and control in programmes, information, knowledge and socio-economic support; partly through efforts made to change legislation, policies and institutional frameworks, and support women’s political representation at all levels. This should decrease the gender biases in society in labour market legislation, property rights and inheritance.

The term agency is identified in the GGP as the support given to the poor, to marginalised groups and to women and children to provide them with the ability to define their own goals and act upon them. Following activities can be mentioned, as the GGP provides access to, and influence over, decision-making, participation and representation in developing policies, laws and activities in the DIs.

In the identification of achievements, the infrastructure programme is an example of the outcome: how resources (under the conditions of which choices were made) were used and the results of these choices. As in the GGP, all the stakeholders are represented in the process and policy-setting, and women were responsible for the programmes.

The dimensions in the process can be said to be achieved at the policy and strategy levels. Research of the GGP programme at this local level is required to draw any real conclusions, but serves here as an example. The multidimensional nature of power suggests, in theory, that empowerment strategies for women must build on “the power within”, which is necessary for improving their ability to control resources, determine agendas and make decisions that the GGP is established to achieve. The informants, reports and ERS can witness as to the outcome
of the programme, since development in general is not satisfactory. Culture and tradition are a hindrance in Kenyan patriarchal society: even with a lot of training, the man still makes every decision in the family. Important perspectives in this context are: the country’s economical and political situation, more than half of the population lives under the poverty line, half of the population is under 15 years of age, a high unemployment rate and, finally, the fact that 75% of the population live in rural areas where disparities in education between men and women are great. A patron-client relationship dominates the political scene. Bearing this in mind, it is an enormous task for more than half of the Kenyan population just to survive the next day.

8.5 CONCLUSIONS

There is coherence in how AAK and Sida interpret the concepts gender mainstreaming and empowerment. Framework agreements set the agenda in development cooperation work in today’s international development. These are followed by the stakeholders at all levels as verified in the review made by Moser and Moser, who concluded that the international institutions have adopted the terminology of gender mainstreaming. Governance is a prestige word here; governance programmes are implemented in all development cooperation work. Critics of gender mainstreaming interpret “mainstreaming” as another word for “agenda-setting” and mainstreaming as being an institutional invention. It has resulted in mainstreaming being reduced simply to mean integration into existing agendas, as in the ERS, APR and the Kenyan new governmental national machinery for promoting gender equality. A problem, according to Arnfred, is that the GAD and gender mainstreaming discourse has moved from the margin to the centre of attention.

AAK focuses more on capacity-building and on women and girls, and their ability to be recognised as equal members in Kenyan society. I2 pointed out that the problems and issues of women and girls are largely unheard and unrecognised; it is often the case that the term mainstreaming of women’s issues is often used. Discussing the interpretation of mainstreaming is different to its implementation in reality. It is obvious that both organisations regard women’s issues as playing an important role in fighting poverty, which is the main goal of development cooperation for the two countries.

Empowerment is a concept of great importance in both organisations. They both advocate empowerment at all stages of society. Support is given to local movements, DIs and CBOs to
improve women’s share and control of resources, improve access to administrative power, provide socio-economic support and empower their role in decision-making and participation. Empowerment has a different meaning for different participants, so it is important to discuss it in this context. Empowerment, seen as participation in development practice, cannot rely on the belief that giving people a voice and increasing their participation will solve development problems. More attention has to be paid to the way in which national and global power structures constrain and define the opportunities for change at the local level.

A big problem is the lack of political will when it comes to the question of promoting gender equality. Many relevant frameworks and tools have been developed in ERS and the new governmental national machinery for promoting gender equality in Kenya, but they are not used. Not only are the concepts not interpreted within the ERS and APR, they are also written in gender-neutral terms. Language is a part of forming reality in a society; avoiding defining the terms means a lack of will, which favours the government in preserving the patron-client system.

The Kenyan people have to set the agenda themselves in their own social structure and local environment if they are to succeed in mainstreaming gender and empowerment; empowerment strategies have to be built on “power in” and “power within”. Rowland discusses the importance of being a part of, being heard and having influence in the process of changing inequality in social constructions.

Despite the efforts made by all of the participants in the GGP, it is a fact that the circumstances discussed above are still reality in Kenyan society. Poverty and the lack of education mean that the focus of many people is to survive the next day. They are not aware of, or have no access to, information and are unable to understand the opportunities that are available.

The new decentralized authority (CDF) that the government has decided on has given people access to, and more influence in, the local decision-making process, which is an important governmental framework change. Hopefully, this will make the achievement of gender mainstreaming and empowerment more likely in communities all over the country. This could form a foundation for future research questions.

Will the new Kenyan governmental national machinery for promoting gender equality (Ministry, Gender Department and Gender Commission) ensure that changes are in fact made? The core functions of the Ministry in a gender perspective are to integrate and mainstream gender issues in all development initiatives and to promote gender equity and
equality. This is an interesting research question to be studied at the micro level in Kenya as a possible follow-up to this thesis.
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Informant 1 (I1): Regional Coordinator for ActionAid Rift Region in Nakuru.
Informant 2 (I2): Assistant Programme Officer in the Development Cooperation Section in Sida at the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi.
Informant 3 (I3): Programme Specialist on Women’s Rights & Governance Kenya Programme at UNIFEMs office in Nairobi.
Appendix 1

Additional questions sent by email in July 2006

The questions are to be answered in your role as an employee in your organisation. I hope you are able to answer the following questions. I do not expect you to write an essay; just send me some short answers. Your participation will be of great value for the paper.

1. How do you interpret the concepts of “gender mainstreaming” and “empowerment”?

2. What, in your experience, are the problems involved with using these concepts in the development cooperation implementation at different levels in society?

3. In the “inequality report” you do not find the concepts above: they use gender participation, power and inequality. Can you make any comments on this fact?
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