



Gender integration in development – A feminist, postcolonial reading of Sida's efforts for gender integration

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Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate Sida's view on gender integration and gender (in)equality as well as how this understanding may affect the way Sida works to promote gender equality globally. Since gender integration is the main method for increasing gender equality at Sida *The plan for gender integration at Sida 2015-2018*, as well as the partial report on this plan, is analysed in to reach this aim. The material is analysed through Bacchi's methodological approach to policy analysis: 'What is the problem represented to be?'. The study shows that Sida's representation of gender (in)equality follows a modernist discourse where 'expert knowledge' is considered a solution and there is no apparent recognition or discussion of alternative knowledge. There is also a focus on methods and plans that are developed by Sida which speaks to a difference in power between Sida and its partners. According to a postcolonial feminist perspective the silencing of alternative knowledge and expertise visible in the Sida plan may bear negative effects on the representation of the people and the efficiency of the work to increase global gender equality.

Key words: International relief, gender integration, postcolonial feminism, Sida, development, globalisation, policy analysis

Genusintegrering i utvecklingsarbete – En postkolonial feministisk läsning av *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*

Abstract

Denna uppsats syftar till att undersöka Sidas syn på jämställdhetsintegrering och (o)jämställdhet samt hur denna syn påverkar dess arbete för att främja jämställdhet globalt. Eftersom jämställdhetsintegrering är Sidas huvudmetod för att främja jämställdhet globalt undersöks *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018* samt delredovisningen av denna plan för att uppnå detta syfte. Materialet analyseras med Bacchi's policyanalys: "What is the problem represented to be?". Studien visar att Sidas representation av (o)jämställdhet och det arbete som utförs för att främja jämställdhet följer en modernistisk diskurs där 'expertkunskap' anses vara lösningen och alternativa kunskaper inte erkänns. Det är även en fokus på metoder och planer som visar på ojämlika maktförhållanden mellan Sida och dess partners. Enligt ett postkolonialt feministiskt perspektiv kan det nedtystade av alternativ kunskap och expertis som är synlig i Sidas plan medföra negativa effekter för representationen av människor i globala södern och effektiviteten i arbetet med att öka den globala jämställdheten.

Nyckelord: Internationellt bistånd, genus integrering, postkolonial feminism, Sida, utveckling, globalisering, policyanalys

Table of Contents

GENUSINTEGRERING I UTVECKLINGSARBETE – EN POSTKOLONIAL FEMINISTISK LÄSNING AV <i>PLAN FÖR JÄMSTÄLLDHETSINTEGRERING PÅ SIDA 2015-2018</i>		3
ABSTRACT.....		3
1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	1.1 THESIS STATEMENT, PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	1
1.2	1.2 MATERIAL AND DEMARCATIONS	2
1.2.1	1.2.1 <i>Primary material</i>	3
1.2.2	1.2.2 <i>Secondary material</i>	4
1.3	1.3 REFLECTIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	6
2	METHOD AND THEORY	7
2.1	2.1 METHOD	7
2.1.1	2.1.1 <i>The ‘What is the problem represented to be’ approach</i>	7
2.1	2.1 THEORY.....	9
3	EARLIER RESEARCH AND BACKGROUND	13
3.1	3.1 POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES	13
3.2	3.2 GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT.....	15
3.3	3.3 THE SWEDISH CONTEXT	17
4	ANALYSIS	20
4.1	4.1 PROBLEM REPRESENTATION	20
4.1.1	4.1.1 <i>Knowledge and analysis</i>	22
4.1.2	4.1.2 <i>Routines, methods & governance</i>	24
4.1.3	4.1.3 <i>Funding and quantity</i>	26
4.2	4.2 ASSUMPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ‘PROBLEM’	28
4.2.1	4.2.1 <i>Key concepts</i>	28
4.2.4	4.2.4 <i>Categories</i>	31
4.2.5	4.2.5 <i>Binaries and contradictions</i>	33
4.3	4.3 SILENCES, ALTERNATIVES AND EFFECTS	34
4.3.1	4.3.1 <i>Silences and dialogue in the international community</i>	35
4.3.2	4.3.2 <i>Silences and effects of the representation of gender equality</i>	36
4.4	4.4 SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS	37
5	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	40
REFERENCES		43

Acronyms

WID – Women in Development

WAD – Women and Development

GAD – Gender and Development

Sida – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

DAC – Development Assistance Committee

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

EBA – Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys

1 Introduction

Development work has for decades played a big role in international relations as well as the human rights agenda. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has a budget of 49 billion SEK for 2018, which is 1% of Sweden's BNI.¹

With the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Swedish feminist foreign policy the attention to gender and development is increasing. This discussion is however not a new one. This thesis investigates the work of gender-integration² at Sida from a postcolonial feminist perspective. Instead of analysing the effects of development work in general this thesis concerns one specific part of it: the promotion of gender equality.

1.1 Thesis statement, purpose and research questions

Conditions for women in the global south is an important human rights issue. The majority of the 1 billion people living in poverty are women in 'developing nations' and illiteracy among women over the age of 15 are twice as high as for men in 'the least developed nations'. Other mayor concerns are genital mutilations, HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive rights, maternal health and much more.³

¹ Swedish international cooperation agency (Sida), communications unit, Updated: 3 January 2018 <https://www.sida.se/English/About-us/Budget/>, [hämtad 23-05-2018].

² *Gender mainstreaming* or *Gender integration* is the method used to integrate a gender perspective in every step of the process instead of simply treating gender equality as a separate issue. Gender mainstreaming was adopted as a goal by the United Nations World Conference for Women in Beijing in 1995 and has been introduced across the world, including Sweden. UN Economic and Social Council for 1997. 1997. "Gender Mainstreaming". Cited in: On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Uggla, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), p. 9f.

³ Burn, Shawn Meghan., *Women across cultures: a global perspective*, 3rd ed., McGraw-Hill, New York, 2011, p. 126.

Sida has along with other agencies been asked by the Swedish government to raise its ambitions with regards to gender integration. The organisation therefore presented *The plan for gender integration at Sida 2015-2018*.⁴

I believe the work to promote gender equality in the development context raises important questions about how we understand the concept of ‘gender equality’ in a globalized world. I am in this thesis analysing how Sida, as the official aid agency of Sweden, perceives the issue of gender inequality and how this understanding may affect the work in this field. Sida considers gender integration to be the main method for increasing gender equality.⁵ Therefore, an analysis of its plan for gender integration offers an insight to its views on the concept of gender equality in relation to international relief.

The aim of this thesis is thus to see how Sida understands the concept of ‘global gender equality’ in the development context as well as how this understanding may affect the way Sida works, through gender integration, to reach this goal. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, I critically discuss what Sida’s understanding of global equality may entail in its efforts for gender integration.

The research questions used to reach this aim are:

- *How does Sida represent the problem of global gender inequality in its plan for gender integration?*
- *How can the effects of this representation be understood from a postcolonial feminist perspective?*

1.2 Material and demarcations

Since the main focus of this thesis is to understand Sida’s view on gender equality, and how it frames the issue of gender inequality, the research is based on official documents from Sida. The primary material is *Plan for gender integration at Sida 2015-2018* and

⁴ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 1.

⁵ *ibid*, p. 6.

the corresponding *partial report*⁶ of this plan. The chosen material lays out the aspirations and goals as well as how Sida considers the results of its work with gender integration.

With this type of material, I only get the official standpoint of Sida and since most of the material is aspirational I also do not get the full picture of gender integration in the field. I do not consider this to be an impediment since I intend to study Sida's view of '*global gender (in)equality*' and not the practical implications of it. I am however discussing possible effects of this view based on earlier research and theories regarding gender and foreign relief and/or development.

The plan for gender integration as well as the partial report are written in Swedish which means that all quotes from this material are translated by me.

1.2.1 Primary material

The *Plan for gender integration at Sida 2015-2018* is a 14-page official document which outlines the agencies ambitions and goals for gender integration.⁷ It includes measures to strengthen gender integration from an operational, organisational and employer's perspective. The expected result of the plan is that 'Swedish development cooperation has an impact on gender equality, is measurable and focused on results for women, men, girls and boys. Sida is characterised by an equal, open and including organisational- and management culture.'⁸ The plan contains information about the assignment by the Swedish government, Sida's commitment regarding gender equality as well as background and description of the current situation before the actual plan is presented.⁹ The document will however be analysed in its entirety since I believe all parts provides an insight in Sida's understanding of gender (in)equality and gender integration.

The plan is presented in three parts. The first part is *Enhanced focus on gender equality as the main aim and gender integration in specific areas*, the second is *Raising*

⁶ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335

⁷ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226

⁸ *ibid* p. 1.

⁹ *ibid*, p. 4-10.

the quality of Sida's mode of working with and routines for gender integration and the third is *Raising the ambition of Sida's work with gender equality and diversity from an organisational and employer's perspective*.¹⁰ The plan thus includes an analysis of the current state on global gender equality, the strategy Sida will use, the result they want to achieve and how to measure it.

The partial report of this plan is a 15-page report on the how the plan has been implemented in the two years since its adoption. It is reported according to a template by the gender equality agency on how to report work with gender integration in state agencies (JiM-arbetet). According to this template *goals; activities; follow up; result; effect; and sustainability* is to be reported.¹¹ The partial report is divided in the same three parts as the plan for gender integration with corresponding results for each section.

1.2.2 Secondary material

In addition to earlier research on the subject, which will be presented under chapter 3. *Earlier research and background*, additional information is needed for a greater understanding of Sida's work in this field. I have therefore chosen to include the *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker*, *The On-going evaluation of Gender integration at Sida - First report* and the *gender tool boxes* as secondary material for this thesis.

The plan for gender integration is evaluated and reported according to the OECD-DAC policy marker which is why the *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker* is included. The policy marker is a monitoring and accountability tool to record aid activities that target gender equality as an objective in the context of the 2030 Agenda. DAC members are required to indicate for each project/program whether it targets gender equality as a policy objective according to a three-point scoring system. Not targeted (0 points), significant (1 point) and principal (2 points).¹²

¹⁰ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 1f.

¹¹ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JiM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 1.

¹² *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker* OECD-DAC NETWORK ON GENDER EQUALITY (GENDERNET), December 2016, p. 5f.

The *On-going evaluation of Gender integration at Sida - First report* is an evaluation by ‘the group of experts of aid-analysis’¹³, (EBA). It is a 40-page long report of the gender integration efforts by Sida and it was presented in April of 2017. The evaluation suggests that although there is a high level of acceptance for gender equality as a principle, staff-members are often unaware of the plan and the treatment of the theme is to a large extent determined by internal factors. Some request more support for gender integration and suggest that Sida could do more to promote an internal gender policy. According to the report Sida’s present actions may not entirely respond to the challenges and opportunities that the agency faces.¹⁴

The *gender tool box* is a methodological assistance tool. There are 20 gender tool boxes with practical information on how to implement gender integration in different areas. These pamphlets offer more practical methods and tools than the plan for gender integration. The toolboxes are between two and eight pages long and apply to different areas of implementation. They are to be used by staff at Sida but also partners and stakeholders.¹⁵ Whereas the plan for gender integration outlines the ambitions and goals of gender integration, the tool-boxes provide methods for implementation and can therefore be used as a complement to the plan.

With the combination of these materials I am able to cover how Sida frames the issue of gender inequality within development, how it intends to solve it as well as how it evaluates the progress.

¹³ ‘Expertgruppen för biståndsanalys’, *On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report*, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Ugglå, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), s. 4.

¹⁴ *On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report*, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Ugglå, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), s. 4.

¹⁵ Swedish international cooperation agency, (Sida), communications unit, Updated: 19 December 2017 <https://www.sida.se/English/partners/resources-for-all-partners/methodological-materials/gender-tool-box/>, [accessed 28-05-2018]

1.3 Reflections and ethical considerations

This thesis investigates the Swedish view on gender equality and development. Sweden was the first country in the world to label its foreign policy feminist.¹⁶ The fact that Sida even has a plan for gender integration is in my opinion a step forward for gender equality in development. With this thesis it is not my intention to criticise gender integration as a method or international relief. Thus it is not a postcolonial critique of development projects in general. My aim is simply to shed light on possible issues with the current plan of gender integration from certain perspectives. To cite Foucault: “The point with identifying limits is not to suggest that nothing can succeed but that everything is dangerous and hence there is always something to do”.¹⁷

All the material being investigated in this thesis are official documents of Sida. This material is quite vague and abstract. Drawing definite conclusions about the effects and meanings may consequently be difficult to accomplish. The conclusions are therefore drawn with the help of earlier research and the theoretical approach. This means that some parts of the material is not analysed in this thesis but the material is read and evaluated in its entirety. Since I have chosen not to include any names in this thesis and all of the material is public documents accessible for anyone I do not see any ethical implications for this work.

¹⁶ *Sveriges feministiska utrikespolitik Exempel på tre års genomförande*, regeringskansliet, utrikesdepartementet, Publicerad 31 oktober 2017, <https://www.regeringen.se/4ab455/contentassets/038184feaa9f479bab5f463189d754b1/sveriges-feministiska-utrikespolitik---exempel-pa-tre-ars-genomforande.pdf>, [accessed 12-04-2018]

¹⁷ Foucault, cited in: Bacchi, Carol Lee, *Analysing policy: what's the problem represented to be?*, Pearson, Frenchs Forest, N.S.W., 2009, p 180.

2 Method and theory

2.1 Method

The methodological choice of this thesis stems from the material being investigated, namely Sida's plan for gender integration. Policy-analysis is specifically developed for analysing policy documents and is therefore suitable for this thesis. In this section I explain the method and how it was used in this particular study.

2.1.1 The 'What is the problem represented to be' approach

I have used an approach to policy analysis called 'What's the problem represented to be?' introduced by Carol Bacchi. She argues that policies constitute 'problems' and rather than react to these 'problems', the authors of the policy documents are active in the creation or production of policy problems.¹⁸ How this 'problem' is represented matters since it carries implications for how the issue is understood and how the people affected are treated as well as how they perceive themselves.¹⁹ The analysis was performed by asking the material the following six questions:

- 1) "What is the problem represented to be?"

This question is used as a clarification exercise. In this step the proposed changes in a policy-document is analysed. The proposed changes reveal how the issue is perceived and what the 'problem' is represented to be.²⁰

- 2) "What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?"

Through examining the assumptions, we can identify the conceptual premises that underpins specific problem representations. At this stage I asked the material what

¹⁸ Bacchi, 2009, p. 1.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 3.

background knowledge is taken for granted? What is assumed? What is not questioned?²¹

- 3) “How has this representation of the ‘problem’ come about?”

This question was asked to reflect on the specific developments and decisions that contribute to the formation of identified problem representations. Competing problem representations may exist and hence the problem could be understood differently.²² The purpose of this question is to highlight the conditions that allow a particular problem representation to take shape.²³ To answer this question, I have examined the history of women and gender in the context of development to see how the current representation has developed over time.

- 4) “What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the ‘problem’ be thought about differently?”

At this step the limits of the problem representation is analysed by asking what fails to be problematized. The way problems are represented constrains policies and therefore there is a need to bring perspectives that has been silenced into the discussion.²⁴ At this step I have searched for tensions and contradictions as well as alternative explanations to highlight the limitations and inadequacies of the problem description.²⁵ This question was the first critical part of the analysis and the theory guided the interpretations.

- 5) “What effects are produced by this representation of the ‘problem’?”

The term ‘effects’ in this question does not refer to ‘outcomes’ but the more subtle influence by the representation of the problem, such as the discursive effects, subjectification effects and lived effects.²⁶ The answer to this question relied on the theoretical perspectives applied. The question of lived effects was not analysed in depth since the chosen material does not offer information of the practical impact on the lives of people affected by the plan.

- 6) “How/where has this representation of the ‘problem’ been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be it be questioned, disrupted and replaced”

²¹ Bacchi, 2009, p. 5.

²² *ibid*, s. 10.

²³ *ibid*, s. 11.

²⁴ *ibid*, p. 13f.

²⁵ *ibid*, p.13.

²⁶ *ibid*, p. 15.

This question is a continuation of question three. Whereas question three draws attention to processes and practices that allow the representation to dominate, this question focuses on the means through which particular representations reach their target audience and achieve legitimacy. At this stage it is also important to address the question of resistance.²⁷

The amount of attention given the various questions in the analysis was dependent on how well they could be answered with the chosen material and how well is suited the purpose of this paper. In this thesis the method and theory interoperate in the analysis. The methodological questions guide the reading but the analysis is only possible where the theory is applicable. Thus the analysis does not cover the entire material. The primary material was however read and evaluated in its entirety. Question three about how the representation of the problem was developed as well as question six about how the representation has been produced, disseminated and defended and how it could be questioned, disrupted and replaced could only be answered partly with this kind of material and the chosen theoretical perspective. The theoretical perspective will be further discussed below.

2.1 Theory

The theory applied in this thesis is a combination of different postcolonial gender perspectives. The first one is from *Sciences from below: feminisms, postcolonialities and modernities* by Sandra Harding and focuses on the issue of gender and modernisation. She problematizes the notion of *modernity* as equated with *westernisation* in development thought and argues that projects of modernity must produce conceptions of an undesirable past. These conceptions often exaggerate the prevalence of pre-modern practices. Thus *the modern* is always an oppositional term that depends on the traditional *other* and the local traditions where modernisation is to take place.²⁸

²⁷ Bacchi, 2009, p. 19.

²⁸ Harding, Sandra G., *Sciences from below: feminisms, postcolonialities, and modernities*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2008, p. 179.

Harding explores the gender dimension of the modern/tradition binary and claims that oppression of women is not only a residue of traditional practices in projects of modernisation but it is instead required for the modern ideals of social progress.²⁹ Modernity cannot be examined on its own since it is part of a relationship. Like femininity and masculinity, is defined by its opposition. It is defined as the ‘not *other*’, the *other* being the traditional which is understood as modernity’s feminine and primitive past.³⁰ Harding claims that gender and science projects cannot eliminate gender hierarchy in the sciences as long as the west vs. the rest hierarchy still thrives and vice versa.³¹

From the anthology *Feminism/postmodernism/development: International studies of women and place* I am using the theoretical perspectives of Jane Parpart, Maria Nzomo, Mridula Udayagiri and Eva M. Rathberger. The authors offer different perspectives on postmodernism and focuses on the production of knowledge within a postcolonial context and the implications of it for women in the global south. Rather than rejecting development they acknowledge the problems facing poor women in the south and the need to address these developmental questions. They argue that postmodern feminist thinking will provide new ways to understand gender and development.³² The book contains different perspectives on the postmodern approach to development.

Jane Parpart claims that there is an assumption in the development context that certain people and societies are less developed than others and that those who are modern can help the less developed achieve modernity because of their knowledge or expertise. This assumption has been criticised by many in the last few years and Parpart draws on a feminist, postmodernist analysis about women and the patriarchal character of western thought to analyse the (re)presentation of women in the global south by the so called “development experts”.³³ The notion of ‘expertise’ has its roots in the enlightenment era where there was a belief that rational, scientific analysis could be applied to the problems of life. Control over expert knowledge became more important

²⁹ Harding, 2008, s. 195f.

³⁰ *ibid*, s.202.

³¹ *ibid*, s. 210.

³² Marchand, Marianne H. & Parpart, Jane L. (eds.), *Feminism/postmodernism/development: International studies of women and place*, 2003, s. 17.

³³ Jane Parpart, 2003, “Deconstructing the development ‘expert’: gender, development and the ‘vulnerable groups’”, in Marchand, Marianne H. & Parpart, Jane L. (eds.), *Feminism/postmodernism/development: International studies of women and place*, 2003, s. 221f.

and therefore the acquisition and use of ‘knowledge’ was institutionalised.³⁴ The development business has been largely built on the assumption that a transfer of knowledge, from the ‘developed’ to the ‘developing’ would solve development problems.³⁵ Women were in the early decades of the development enterprise left out of the development processes but as the years went by the need to address women’s concerns in development gained credence in development circles.³⁶ Parpart offers an description on the history of gender and development from the WID (Women In Development) approach to the GAD (Gender And Development) approach and argues that although that GAD approach is a breakthrough in many ways, it still tends to fall into modernist stereotypes. Women in the global south are still represented as ‘the other’, the helpless victim in need of saving. The impact of language is not discussed or analysed and expert knowledge is still considered to be the solution to development problems.³⁷

Maria Nzomo address women and democratization struggles in Kenya. Since much of this work relates to Kenya specifically I am only using her interpretation of the postmodernist perspective and its relation to women’s organizations in Africa. Her interpretation of the postmodernist perspective is that there is no such thing as a universal reality or explanation to societal problems, even concepts such as *knowledge*, *justice* and *beauty* do not have a universally acceptable criteria and meaning. Postmodernism therefore emphasize analysis that focuses on *difference* rather than unitary themes. Postmodernism rejects the universal applicability of modernist theoretical approaches and questions the modernist view that *modernization* and *progress* are obtainable goals.³⁸ She argues that the postmodernist approach is not in harmony with the democratic ideals guiding women in their democratization struggles in Kenya.³⁹

Mridula Udayagiri address the postmodern denial of universalism and essentialism. She argues that since feminisms mayor concern is social change, postmodern feminism needs to open their minds to the possibility that some forms of knowledge are

³⁴ Parpart, 2003, in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), p. 222f

³⁵ *ibid*, p. 225.

³⁶ *ibid*, 2003, p. 227.

³⁷ *ibid*, 2003, p. 227-237

³⁸ Maria Nzomo, ”Women and democratization struggles in Africa: What relevance to post-modernist discourse?” in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), s. 133.

³⁹ *ibid*.

emancipatory and likely to be valued for their ability for political change.⁴⁰ She argues that some sort of universalizing experiences that bond us together is needed in order to build the coalitions needed for political action.⁴¹ Nzomo and Udayagiri are more critical towards postmodernism than the other theoretical perspectives in this thesis and I believe, when combined with the rest of my theory, it will offer a more nuanced analysis of Sida's work with gender integration.

Since climate and environment are prioritized sectors in Sida's plan for gender integration I am also using a theory on women and environment by Eva M. Rathgeber. She addresses the discussion about gender in the environmental sector in academia and argues that although there is a connection between gender equality and environment, due to women's close relationship to natural resource bases, there is a danger of attributing special responsibilities to women based on their supposed 'close relationship' to nature. Rathgeber argues that the literature on gender and environment tends to homogenize women and does not take into account differences of class, ethnicity or caste.⁴²

These theoretical approaches are used to contextualize my study as well as a guide to my interpretations of the content in Sida's plan for gender integration and the corresponding partial report. The theories offer a description of the historical development leading up to the current approach to gender and development as well as a critique towards this approach. The concepts of modernity, representation and knowledge will be especially useful for this analysis. The theoretical framework for this thesis is a combination of different perspectives which are not always in harmony. I consider this to be an asset rather than an impediment in the analysis of the material.

⁴⁰ Mridula Udayagiri, "Challenging modernization: Gender and development, postmodern feminism and activism" in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), 2003, p. 167.

⁴¹ *ibid*, p. 169.

⁴² Eva M. Rathgeber, "Gender and development in action" in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), 2003, p. 213f.

3 Earlier research and background

This section serves as both a presentation of earlier research and a background for my analysis. It is my opinion that the research in the field offer a contextual and fact-based understanding of the issue which is necessary to understand my analysis and that is why I have chosen to consolidate the background with earlier research in one section.

The field of research regarding gender and development is broad and well established. Since there is such an immensity of research there is a need for demarcating the research that I use in this thesis. I am therefore only including research which focuses on *Postcolonial studies*, *Gender and development* and development in the *Swedish context*. All the research included address postcolonialism as well as women/gender and development in some way but I am categorising them based on the works main focus. I have chosen not to include research focusing on the economic or legal side of international relief or research that has a narrow geographical focus since it is not necessary for the purpose of this paper or the questions asked. An explicit human rights perspective is represented under postcolonial studies, by Gayatri Spivak, and gender and development, by Andrea Cornwall and Altha-Maria Rivas. In addition to this I consider this perspective to be covered by the postcolonial feminist research, a human rights perspective as a category is therefore not necessary to reach the aim of this thesis.

3.1 Postcolonial studies

When it comes to feminist postcolonial studies Chandra Mohanty is a central figure in the field. Her book *Feminism without borders: decolonising theory, practicing solidarity* is in line with the aim of this paper her most relevant work. She is a proponent of what she calls a “feminism without borders” which she believes constitutes a decolonisation of the production of knowledge and the practice of anti-

capitalist critique.⁴³ The primary focus of the book is the study of feminism across national and cultural divisions. Many feminist writings colonise the material as well as the heterogeneity of the lives of women in the global south. Thus producing a singular image of the ‘third world woman’, carrying with it the signature of western humanist discourse.⁴⁴ The assumption of privilege and ethnocentric universality combined with inadequate self-consciousness about the effect of the western scholarship on the ‘global south’ characterises a lot of the research. An analysis of ‘sexual difference’ in the form of a cross-culturally singular view on patriarchy leads to the construction of a reductive and homogenous notion of what she calls a ‘third world difference’. This is perceived as an unchanging ahistorical something that oppresses most or all of the women living in these areas. It is within this discourse that the power of the west is expressed and this power needs to be defined.⁴⁵ Power is expressed through discourse whenever ones’ own authorial subject acts as the implied referent by which to encode the experience of others.⁴⁶ The construction of the ‘average third world woman’ is seen to be constrained by her gender and stands in binary opposition to the western woman who is believed to have power over her decisions and her body. The coherent effects of the representation of women in the global south is that they are constructed as victims.⁴⁷ The challenge is how specifying difference allows us to theorise universal concerns more fully.⁴⁸ If we start by examining the lives and interests of marginalised groups of women and work our way up the ladder of privilege we can access the workings of power and disrupt its abuses.⁴⁹

For a theoretical discussion on the (re)presentation of the women in the global south an understanding of the postcolonial critique of development projects is indispensable. A central figure in this critique is Gayatri Spivak who, in her essay *Righting Wrongs*, questions the ability to change the ‘subalterns’⁵⁰ position in society through charity. I believe this theory also applies to this research since, even though foreign relief may not

⁴³ Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, *Feminism without borders: decolonising theory, practicing solidarity*, Duke Univ. Press, Durham, 2003, p. 7.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, p. 19.

⁴⁵ *ibid*, p.20.

⁴⁶ *ibid*, p. 21.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, p. 22f.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p. 226.

⁴⁹ *ibid*, p. 231.

⁵⁰ ‘Those removed from lines of social mobility’, Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 2004. "Righting Wrongs." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* no. 2: 523. Project MUSE, p. 531.

be considered charity per se it still practically works in similar ways to the work Spivak describes in her essay. She argues that human rights is not only about having and claiming rights but also about righting wrongs, being the dispenser of human rights.⁵¹ She argues that there is a kind of social Darwinism in the human rights agenda where a burden is imposed on the fittest to right the wrongs that the unfit have endured.⁵² In this modern system where some people become distributors of human rights and some people receivers, the true wants and needs of the subaltern gets lost in translation.⁵³

Spivak's essay is not a critique of the eurocentrism of human rights. It is often descendants of the colonial subjects that act as advocates for human rights in the global south and these advocates criticize and position themselves against eurocentrism.⁵⁴ The critique is that these advocates, although physically based in the global south, are still far from the mind-set of the rural urban poor since there is an 'epistemic discontinuity'. She considers the ability to successfully present projects that suits the wants of the north to be proof of this discontinuity.⁵⁵ Her work includes not only a critique but also a solution on how to change the social position of the subaltern within the international community. Her proposed solution is a program for education for both those providing charity and those receiving it where we learn to learn from below and human rights are *sutured* in to the consciousness of the subaltern.⁵⁶

3.2 Gender and development

After having shortly presented the field of postcolonial studies I will now discuss the specific area of gender and development. Shahrashoub Rasavi and Carol Miller's research on the historical development of women and gender in development places my research in a historical context. They outline the origins of WID and the shift from WID to GAD. WID advocates suggested that women's disadvantages could be eliminated by breaking down stereotyped expectations of women. The WID framework focused their

⁵¹ Spivak, 2004, p. 523f.

⁵² *ibid* s.531

⁵³ *ibid*, 2004,

⁵⁴ *ibid*, p. 525.

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p. 527.

⁵⁶ *ibid*, p. 537f

attention on women and girls and did not pay much attention to men and the power-relations between the sexes.⁵⁷ WID advocates rejected the narrow roles of women and emphasis was put on women's productive roles within society and the inequality was placed within an economic framework.⁵⁸ By the late 1970's people started questioning the adequacy of the WID approach and criticised the absence of an analysis of the relational nature of women's subordination.⁵⁹ The gender analysis was extended beyond the sphere of production to also include social relations and the WID framework eventually gave room for the GAD framework.⁶⁰

Andrea Cornwall and Althea-Maria Rivas offer a greater understanding of the concept of gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of development. They have analysed these concepts and discusses the issues of participation and non-discrimination in development. Cornwall and Rivas criticise the Millenium Development Goals (MDG's) from a postcolonial feminist perspective and one of their critiques is that there is little emphasis on the structural issues driving discrimination and inequality.⁶¹ They also draw attention to the discourse of this new agenda. Even the call for a rights based approach have been elaborated without attention to the assumptions inherent in the discussion on gender and development. Thus women are portrayed as deserving subjects of development projects based on their inherent qualities.⁶² They argue that the perceived consensus makes it possible to refer to these concepts of 'gender equality' and 'women's empowerment' without addressing what a truly transformative agenda would entail.⁶³ This analysis contends that the need to make gender equality and women's empowerment matter more to those in charge of making policies might be overstated. They argue that the issue lies in the limited frames used to articulate the gender agenda and therefore, the discourse or the concepts used needs to change to appeal to a larger audience. There should therefore be an increased focus on

⁵⁷ Rasavi, Shahrashoub & Miller, Carol, *From WID to GAD: conceptual shifts in the women and development discourse*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva, 1995, s. 3.

⁵⁸ *ibid*, s. 4.

⁵⁹ *ibid*, s. 12.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, s. 13.

⁶¹ Cornwall, Andrea, and Althea-Maria Rivas. "From 'gender equality and 'women's empowerment' to global justice: reclaiming a transformative agenda for gender and development." *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 2, p. 398.

⁶² *ibid*.

⁶³ *ibid*, p. 400.

alliance building with other actors concerned with issues of social justice.⁶⁴ They argue for a rights based approach to gender and development that address the structural relations of power underlying inequality rather than trying to convert people through gender education and gender analysis.⁶⁵

Sarah Mosedale address the issues of measuring women's empowerment in relation to development. She defines empowerment according to four aspects: The first aspect is that to be empowered one first has to be disempowered. The second is that empowerment cannot be bestowed by a third party, thus Sida can at best facilitate for women to empower themselves through their work with gender equality. The third aspect is a sense of people making decisions on matters which are important in their lives and having the ability to carry them out. The last aspect is that empowerment is a process rather than a product.⁶⁶ She offers a conceptual framework of measuring empowerment through analysing models of power. This framework includes identifying constraints to action, identifying how women's agency have developed as well as how women's agency have changed constraints to action.⁶⁷ Her method for empowerment is participatory and grounded in the local context but the women's own perceptions are not considered unchallengeable. The process of identifying constraints must therefore include opportunities for the women to reflect on their situation and develop awareness of their own interests. The challenge is how and when to deliver additional information.⁶⁸

3.3 The Swedish context

To better understand international relief in the Swedish context as well as Sida as an organisation I use *Bistånd och utveckling - Afrika: Givarnas stora utmaning* written by Göran Hydén which addresses development and aid regarding to Swedish aid to Africa.

⁶⁴ Cornwall & Rivas, 2005, p. 408.

⁶⁵ *ibid*, p. 410f.

⁶⁶ Mosedale, Sarah, "Assessing women's empowerment: towards a conceptual framework", *Journal Of International Development* 17, no. 2: 243-257, Business Source Complete, 2005, s. 244.

⁶⁷ *ibid*, p. 252-256.

⁶⁸ *ibid*, p. 253.

Hydén address both financial relief in general and Sida as an organisation, which is why I regard it as relevant for this thesis even though it mainly concerns Swedish aid to Africa. He argues that the Swedish government supports Swedish groups and organisations through financing. To get access to this financial aid one has to have a credible partner in the recipient country. This link to the recipient country is important but their needs remain distant in the decision-making context. Their needs are defined *for* them, not *by* them. He argues that although international relief is a political question, it is not a question that is hotly debated either by the donors or the receivers. This is what makes it possible for foreign aid to continue in this manner despite its low impact in the recipient countries.⁶⁹ He further argues that the moral basis of foreign aid policy in Sweden doesn't change when aid is not implemented in the most effective way and furthermore, this moral basis is what makes the position of aid safe in a political sense.⁷⁰ He argues that the issues of Sida's employees in the field is not that they do not want more knowledge so that they can make better judgements but that the bureaucracy of the organisation will not allow it.⁷¹ Furthermore, in order to live up to the results expected the reporting of the aid is often biased to fit in to Swedish framework, missing factors that limit what the aid can do in its current form.⁷² Although partnership and national ownership is premised, the methods are developed to meet the donor countries interests and demands. The actors in the recipient countries needs to be fitted into the system regardless of whether the specific circumstances allow it. The abstract and methodological thus surpasses the practical.⁷³

This field of research is large but not complete. Mohanty and Spivak both argues for a kind of decolonization of the production of knowledge. They both argue that we need to start from below and review our perception of knowledge. Mohanty criticizes the representation of women in the global south while Spivak questions the ability of 'dispensing' human rights when the true wants and needs of the subalterns cannot be understood by the people dispensing them. These critiques are useful for my analysis. Both these critiques regards to the relation between the global north and the global

⁶⁹ Hydén, Göran, *Bistånd och utveckling: Afrika : givarnas stora utmaning*, 1. uppl., Liber, Malmö, 2010, p. 16.

⁷⁰ *ibid* p. 18.

⁷¹ *ibid*, p. 27.

⁷² *ibid*, p. 28.

⁷³ *ibid*, p. 145.

south. My research in this thesis address the internal views on global gender (in)equality and the implications of these views on the representation of women in the global south, addressed by Mohanty, as well as our ability to understand the needs and wants of the subaltern, as discussed by Spivak. Razavi and Millers research offers a background and context for this thesis while Mosedale defines and offers an understanding as well as a conceptual framework for ‘empowerment’. Cornwall and Rivas offer an understanding and a problematization of the concept of gender equality where they argue for a reconceptualization. This research offers an understanding of the history of gender in the development context as well as an understanding of key concepts in my analysis. Hydén provides an understanding of Sida as an organization and an insight to the Swedish context.

The existence of the plan for gender integration at Sida shows that we have come a long way in the context of gender and development but there is always a need to re-evaluate the progress. This thesis applies existing theories and critiques to a relatively new policy and it is my hope that the analysis contributes to a greater understanding of the need to consistently question our beliefs and perceptions of concepts that otherwise goes unexamined.

4 Analysis

This section contains the analysis of Sida's plan for gender integration and the partial report of this plan. The analysis is presented in four different categories based on the methodological questions being asked as presented in chapter 2.2 *Method*. The first category is *Problem description*. Here the first methodological question 'What is the problem represented to be?' is discussed. The second category is *Assumptions and development of the problem* and answers the second and third question: 'What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?' and 'How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?'. The third category is *Silences, alternatives and effects* and answers the fourth and fifth question: 'What is left unproblematic in this 'problem' representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?' and 'What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?' The fourth and last category is a summary of the analysis. The last question of the method, 'How/where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?' is discussed in all the sections as well as the discussion section of the thesis and is not restricted to a specific section. The theory is used to guide the interpretations of the content throughout the analysis.

4.1 Problem representation

Sida was assigned to develop *The plan for gender integration at Sida 2015-2018* in order to declare how the organisation intends to work with gender integration. The assignment is that:

Sida shall present a plan for how the agency intends to continue the work with gender integration in 2015-2018 with the purpose that activities shall contribute to reaching the political goals for gender equality.⁷⁴

The plan outlines Sida's commitment and goals regarding gender equality, provides an historical background as well as an analysis of the current state of global gender (in)equality as well as how Sida works to increase gender equality.⁷⁵ After the background the plan is divided into three parts, one for each main goal. Each goal is presented with the measures that are to be taken to reach them, a total of ten such measures.⁷⁶

The goal for Sida's commitment in gender equality in foreign relief is that 'Sweden's foreign relief should create conditions for better living standards for people living in poverty and oppression'.⁷⁷ Gender equality in development is strengthened through the feminist foreign policy. Women and girls are consistently a prioritised target group.⁷⁸

The partial report is divided in three parts corresponding the three main goals of the plan. These parts include the goal, a description of the problem, the activities performed, the results and effects of these activities and the sustainability of the work.⁷⁹ The report states that the plan has allowed an increased focus on questions of gender equality, an improved dialogue on gender equality as well as increased method and guidance abilities in among other things strategy reporting, strengthened internal routines and better knowledge, clear governance and increased funds for interventions with gender equality as a main purpose.⁸⁰

The partial report states that factors for success in gender integration includes: 'persistent and clear governance across the board, sufficient and competent resources, consistent and strategic choosing of forms and methods for gender integration as well as

⁷⁴ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 4.

⁷⁵ *ibid*, p. 5-7

⁷⁶ *ibid*, p. 11-14

⁷⁷ *ibid*, p. 5.

⁷⁸ *ibid*,

⁷⁹ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335.

⁸⁰ *ibid*

the importance of monitoring and a focus on results'.⁸¹ I have divided the analysis in this section according to these factors.

4.1.1 Knowledge and analysis

Throughout the plan and the corresponding partial report analysis and knowledge is consistently communicated to be an important measure for gender integration. The plan states that the main strategy for Sida's work on gender equality is gender integration. The starting point for this work is a context-specific gender equality analysis. This analysis is to be followed by an identification of relevant measures for the work and a strategy for how this is to be realised.⁸² Since gender integration is considered the main strategy to increase gender equality I believe this demonstrates that the problem with gender inequality is understood as a lack of knowledge.

Although a context specific analysis speaks to a change from the WID perspective both the plan and the review contains many references to capacity building, knowledge and expertise which could be in line with the 'western expertise' criticism of the WID approach. An example of this is the second goal of the plan which is "Quality improvement of Sida's ways of working with and routines for gender integration".⁸³ In the five measures presented to reach this goal there is a focus on analysis, methods, evaluations and follow-ups to ensure skill development and knowledge updating at Sida. The last measure states that gender equality is prioritised in dialogue with partners and that they can be offered competence development through Sida's educational centre.⁸⁴

In the description of Sida's work for gender integration, which is included in the plan, it is stated that the personnel resources for gender equality are subject representatives in different fields and geographical departments. These representatives are coordinated in a network where there is a continuous work of updating skills both

⁸¹ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 2.

⁸² *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, 6f.

⁸³ *ibid*, p 12.

⁸⁴ *ibid*, p 12f.

within the network and to other co-workers.⁸⁵ I believe this implies that Sida privileges ‘expert knowledge’ on gender issues.

The partial report outlines how Sida regards its progress with the plan and according to it the work was mainly carried out through guidance, analysis, governance, mode of working and routines as well as development and evaluations of related plans on Sida’s departments, units and foreign agencies.⁸⁶ Material for gender analysis has been developed as well as increased support for evaluations of partners ‘gender equality capacity’. According to the report gender equality is prioritised in new strategies and other materials for increased knowledge and quality assurance, such as the gender tool boxes and the so called ‘hot issues’.⁸⁷ There has been increased staff resources such as increased gender equality competence and Sida’s network for gender equality. External resources such as consultant services has also been utilized and gender equality is a part of Sida’s educational services where courses on gender equality, development talks and round table discussions has also been carried out.⁸⁸

The goal to “Raise ambitions of Sida’s work with gender equality and diversity from an organisational- and employer’s perspective”⁸⁹ is another example of how analysis is prioritised for gender integration. This goal only has one measure which is that Sida’s work with gender equality and diversity is based on an analysis of the organisations challenges and that strategic challenges are addressed. These challenges are to be mapped out and analysed through a gender sensitive approach that has a critical perspective towards existing norms.⁹⁰ There is a gender tool box on gender analysis, which outlines how such an analysis should be conducted but not by whom.⁹¹ This goal refers to staff at Sida with the goal of diversifying the organisation. According to the

⁸⁵ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 8f.

⁸⁶ delredovisning p. 4.

⁸⁷ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 8.

⁸⁸ *ibid* p. 9.

⁸⁹ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 13

⁹⁰ *ibid*, p.13.

⁹¹ Swedish international cooperation agency, *Gender analysis – principles & elements*, Gender tool box [tool], publication date: 2015-03-31, <https://www.sida.se/contentassets/a3f08692e731475db106fdf84f2fb9bd/gender-tool-analysis.pdf> [accessed 28-05-2018]

partial report the efforts that has been made to reach this goal has been mainly focused on gender, age, and nationality.⁹²

The partial report states that there are still challenges in implementation and follow-up and that this would demand ‘further development of methodical assistance, long-term education, cooperation over department lines, role-specific gender equality competence as well as clear governance and accountability for the work’.⁹³ The work is to be evaluated and monitored by researchers at Swedish universities.⁹⁴

This focus on knowledge and analysis in both the plan and the partial report of it demonstrates that the problem of gender inequality is at least partly represented to be a lack of knowledge. Although there is no information about who and how this knowledge is to be gathered and disseminated, the statement that competence development will be *offered* to staff and partners from the Sida educational centre implies that ‘expert knowledge’ is privileged and that Sida possess it.

4.1.2 Routines, methods & governance

Sida’s plan for gender integration states that four areas are considered to be especially relevant for gender equality efforts to have an impact: ‘governance, follow-up, competence and organization and reinforcement of strategic areas’.⁹⁵ In the description of Sida’s work for gender integration it is stated that:

‘Sida integrates gender equality in its main- and partial processes and it is centred around planning and processing of strategies and efforts of continuing quality-assurance. [...] Sida has a continuing work for method-development where equality is both integrated and the object of specific method-development, to ensure quality and efficiency’⁹⁶

⁹² *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 13f.

⁹³ *ibid*, p.11.

⁹⁴ *ibid*, p.10.

⁹⁵ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer: is/DD1226, p. 9.

⁹⁶ *ibid*, p.8.

This demonstrates that the problem of gender inequality is seen as a problem that can be solved by clear governance, competence and monitorable strategies.

The activities outlined in the partial report regarding the second goal of the plan states the importance of strategies and monitoring. There are multiple references to thematical and methodological material such as the ‘gender tool boxes’ and so called ‘hot issues’ that have been produced by Sida.⁹⁷

The third goal, to “Raise ambitions of Sida’s work with gender equality and diversity from an organisational- and employer’s perspective”, is to be reached through an analysis. This analysis will then, through a process with a high level of participation, articulate measures in a monitorable plan that is to be developed in cooperation with the worker-organisations. This plan is to be integrated in the organisation’s systemic culture-, worker- and leadership development.⁹⁸

The partial report states that ‘governance of the agency is central for a strategic work for gender equality’.⁹⁹ According to the partial report many departments and units have their own plans for gender equality.¹⁰⁰

This focus on monitorable plans and evaluations of the work with gender integration implies that Sida represents the problem of gender inequality to be partly a lack of systematic methods and transparency in the work for gender integration. Hydén argues that the methods and plans are developed to meet the needs of the givers and not the receivers.¹⁰¹ Where the responsibility of reviewing this plan lies is from the plan and the partial report unclear but the emphasis on ‘governance’ implies that someone is in charge, presumably this someone who possess some sort of expertise in the area.

⁹⁷ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 8f.

⁹⁸ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p.13

⁹⁹ *ibid*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁰ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 8

¹⁰¹ Hydén, 2010, p.145.

4.1.3 Funding and quantity

In the description of Sida's work with gender integration included in the plan, targeted efforts are emphasised. There is a focus on the percentage of means allocated for these efforts.¹⁰² This is also true for the partial report with regards to the first goal.¹⁰³ Health and education as well as women's participation and influence are prioritised areas and the work is mainly carried out through support for 'women's organizations'.¹⁰⁴

The first goal of the plan is 'an enhanced focus on gender equality as a main purpose and gender integration within specific areas'.¹⁰⁵ This goal is to be realized through an:

*enhancement of cooperation where gender equality is the main purpose within all sectors in development work and with a specific focus within environment/climate/resilience and within productive/non-social sectors where Sida as well as other development actors have a gap to fill. New forms of development financing will be used strategically to promote gender equality*¹⁰⁶

Four measures are introduced to reach this goal. The first two measures focus on increased funds for interventions where gender equality is the main aim within all sectors and a special priority within environment, climate, resilience and productive/non-social sectors. This is to be done through the choosing of strategic partners and efforts that meet the 'gender equality gap' that the respective sector indicates through a context-specific analysis. Gender equality shall be integrated through analysis, capacity-building and evaluation.¹⁰⁷ The third measure concerns how gender equality is to be integrated in Sida's humanitarian efforts where the goal of increased efforts with gender equality as a main purpose is not applicable since the main purpose always is to save lives and relieve distress.¹⁰⁸ The fourth measure introduced is that new ways, based on knowledge and capacity, of development financing should be

¹⁰² *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 8.

¹⁰³ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 8.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid*, s. 1.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid*.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid*, p.12.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid*.

used strategically to promote gender equality.¹⁰⁹ New modes of finance such as Challenge Funds have been used in gender integration efforts.¹¹⁰ Challenge funds is an instrument to finance entrepreneurs that want to improve sustainability.¹¹¹

This goal and the measures proposed to meet them regards to a large degree the issue of funding and number of projects. This indicates that Sida understands the problem of gender inequality as a lack of or ineffective financing as well as there not being enough projects where gender equality is a main purpose. The call for increased efforts where gender equality is the main aim, so called targeted efforts, actually contradicts the method of gender integration. It is claimed that in Sida's own experience these are the most effective measures to increase gender equality. This issue is also addressed by the EBA evaluation of the plan which argues that this shows that gender mainstreaming has been difficult to accomplish and that gender seems to disappear if it is not a main objective.¹¹² The issue of funding is consistently presented along with other measures, especially analysis and knowledge, showing that funding may not be the top concern or at least that it is not an issue of *how much* as it is an issue of *how*.

The first part of the analysis where the first methodological question, "What is the problem represented to be?" was asked, exhibited that Sida considers analysis/knowledge, plans and methods, funding and dialogue/governance to be important areas to work with in its efforts for gender integration. The following section analyses the assumptions that underlie this representation of the problem as well as how this representation has come about. The implications of this representation will be further discussed under *4.3 Silences, alternatives and effects*.

¹⁰⁹ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p.12.

¹¹⁰ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 4.

¹¹¹ Swedish international cooperation agency, communications unit, Updated: 12 June 2017 <https://www.sida.se/English/partners/resources-for-all-partners/Challenge-Funds/> [accessed 28-05-2018]

¹¹² On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Ugglå, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), p. 24.

4.2 Assumptions and development of the ‘problem’

In this section the second and third question of the method is asked, namely, ‘What assumptions/presuppositions underlie this representation of the ‘problem’?’ and ‘How has this representation of the ‘problem’ come about?’ To find the assumptions that underlie the problem representation I am analysing the discourse of the plan. I am identifying and interrogating binaries, concepts and categories to see how meaning is created in Sida’s plan for gender integration.¹¹³ The question of how this problem representation has come about is asked both to get insight in what developments has led to this kind of representation of the problem but also to recognise that other representations exists, thus questioning the naturalness of the representation presented in the plan.¹¹⁴ The analysis is divided in *Key concepts*, *Categories* and *Binaries and contradictions* based on the approach to answer what assumptions underlying the problem representation.

4.2.1 Key concepts

Bacchi argues that concepts are abstract labels that can be filled with different meanings. The task is to identify key concepts and recognize what meanings are assigned to them in the representation of the problem.¹¹⁵ The postmodernist perspective denies any universal reality and explanation of societal problems and argues that concepts do not have a universal meaning.¹¹⁶ I am therefore analysing what meaning is prescribed key concepts in Sida’s plan for gender integration.

The first key concept to be analysed is Gender integration or gender mainstreaming. The plan does not explain the meaning of gender integration but the UN definition is:

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and man 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

¹¹³ Bacchi, 2009, p. 7f.

¹¹⁴ *ibid*, p. 10.

¹¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 8.

¹¹⁶ Nzomo, 2003, p. 133.

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.¹¹⁷

According to the plan the model used for gender mainstreaming/gender integration is that ‘there should be a context specific gender analysis, followed by identification of relevant measures for the task and a strategy for how this is to be realised.’¹¹⁸ It is not discussed what or how this analysis would be performed and by whom. The gender tool box on gender analysis does however provide practical tools for this analysis. It does not state who should perform it but guidelines on how to.¹¹⁹

The concept of knowledge and analysis is recurrent in the plan but the meaning of it is never discussed.¹²⁰ Expert knowledge seems to be considered the solution to the problem of gender inequality in the global south. Parpart argues that the adoption of a gendered approach requires expertise held mostly in the north or people who have studied in the north, creating a hierarchy between formal development credentials and indigenous expertise.¹²¹ This seems to be true for Sida’s plan for gender integration based on their focus on ‘knowledge’ throughout the plan. This goes in line with Parparts theory that although the GAD approach is a breakthrough in many ways, it still follows modernist stereotypes.¹²² The representation of the problem being a lack of knowledge has its roots in the enlightenment era where there was a growing belief that one could apply scientific analysis to life’s problems. Knowledge and expertise has since become more specialised and institutionalised. The legitimacy of it depended on the belief in the expert’s ability to define and transmit scientific knowledge required by the modern world.¹²³

¹¹⁷ UN Economic and Social Council for 1997. 1997. “Gender Mainstreaming”. Cited in On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Ugglå, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), p. 9f.

¹¹⁸ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p 6f.

¹¹⁹ Swedish international cooperation agency, *Gender analysis – principles & elements*, Gender tool box [tool], publication date: 2015-03-31,

<https://www.sida.se/contentassets/a3f08692e731475db106fdf84f2fb9bd/gender-tool-analysis.pdf>

[accessed 27/05/2018]

¹²⁰ Plan and partial report.

¹²¹ Parpart, 2003, in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), p. 236.

¹²² *ibid.*

¹²³ *ibid* p. 222f

Other key concepts in the Sida plan are quality assurance and governance. This is to be achieved through plans, strategies and method-development.¹²⁴ The assumption that plans and methods would lead to better outcome is related to the assumption that the problem is a lack of knowledge. It is my interpretation that the methods and plans are based on northern knowledge and the effect would be that ‘we’ need to make plans based on expertise and these needs to be followed up by ‘us’. Hydén argues that the global aid agenda as well as how the aid is to be planned and evaluated is controlled by the country giving the aid. Even when emphasising partnership, as the plan does, the methods are still developed to meet the givers interests and demands.¹²⁵ Evaluations of the aid have become an industry where consultants compete to do these evaluations of projects or other efforts and this has become even more important now that there is an increased focus on building up on knowledge. This simultaneously has gotten more difficult leading to an almost blind focus on methodology.¹²⁶

Equality is another concept that is recurrent in the plan where the meaning is not discussed. Equality is a contested concept that can mean different things for different people which is why it is important to state the meaning of it. In the plan the emphasis on women’s financial power, political influence, health and education is indicative of what Sida mean by equality.

Another concept that is mentioned but not further discussed is *power*. The plan does acknowledge that in order to make efforts for gender equality successful one needs to consider how different relations of power interlace, Sida therefore works with integrated gender equality- and diversity efforts that strengthen each other. It also states that a deeper analysis of the current and upcoming challenges and its structural and normative source is needed for this work.¹²⁷ As with other references to analysis the plan contains no information as to how this analysis would be performed and by whom.

¹²⁴ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 1, 4, 9, 11, 12, 13

¹²⁵ Hydén, 2010 p. 145.

¹²⁶ *ibid* p. 145f.

¹²⁷ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 9.

4.2.4 Categories

Bacchi argues that categories function to give meaning to problem representations and the creation of ‘people categories’ effects for the ways in which governing takes place as well as for how people perceive themselves and others.¹²⁸

For this study it is particularly interesting to investigate the categorization of gender. The plan states that women and girls are a prioritized target-group. The instruction of the assignment does however state that the work should proceed from an ‘*integrated equality perspective that includes analysis of women’s and girls’ as well as men and boys’ situation.*’¹²⁹ This categorization of gender where men and boys are also included is also apparent in the partial report.¹³⁰ This latter categorization is explained in a footnote in the partial report, stating that in addition to an equality perspective, Sida’s work should permeate a rights based perspective and the perspective of ‘poor people’. An effective enforcement of the assignment requires that all perspectives are integrated and cooperate.¹³¹

In the presented analysis of the current state of global gender equality Sida address both progress and challenges. Increased attendance in schools for *girls*, laws against discrimination and violence as well as lower *maternal mortality* is presented as progress while *gender-based* violence, sexual and reproductive rights, economic power and political influence is presented as challenges. War and conflict, as well as a higher level of conservatism and extremism threaten *women and girls* lives in large areas of the world and in cases where *gender* and other grounds for discrimination coincides, the challenges are especially grave. The commitments of states and domestic laws is considered to face challenges in implementation, one of which is an underfinancing of *women’s groups*, which is considered a success factor by Sida.¹³² In the analysis of the current state of gender equality ‘women’ are thus sometimes named as a category where

¹²⁸ Bacchi, 2009, p. 9.

¹²⁹ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 5.

¹³⁰ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 2.

¹³¹ Footnote 8 in: *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226 planen, p. 5.

¹³² *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 6.

gender is sometimes preferred. In some instances, such as sexual and reproductive rights, economic power and political influence there is no mention of either gender or women. The EBA evaluation mentions that gender is often treated as synonymous with women and girls and that men and boys are rarely mentioned in Sida's work.¹³³

The partial report considers Sida's work for gender equality to cover 'women's financial power, women's political participation and influence, SRHR, violence against women, women, peace and safety, women's and girls' education; and work with men and boys for gender equality'.¹³⁴ This indicates a shift from the plan, here there is a bigger emphasis on women as a group. In the gender tool box on gender analysis it is stated that analysis should contain a gendered language since women, girls and boys are left invisible in a gender neutral language.¹³⁵

In the first decades of development work little or no attention was paid to women in the global south since development was seen as a technical problem where women were seen as beneficiaries but not agents of change. Women were not included in development plans and this was legitimised by representing them to be the traditional 'other' in opposition to the modern.¹³⁶ With the WID approach this changes and women were to be integrated in the development process. The WID approach did not however question the representation of women in the global south or the power-relations that held them in a subordinate position to men. Women in the global south became categorised as a 'vulnerable group' and represented as victims in the development discourse.¹³⁷ The WID discourse established the need for assistance from northern 'experts' and the WID 'experts' became the 'saviour' of the vulnerable groups. Parpart argues that this glorification of the northern expert legitimises the hierarchal nature of skill transmission from the north to the south and has encouraged disregard for knowledge from people living in poverty.¹³⁸

¹³³ On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Ugglå, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), p. 15f.

¹³⁴ *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 2.

¹³⁵ Swedish international cooperation agency, *Gender analysis – principles & elements*, Gender tool box [tool], publication date: 2015-03-31,

<https://www.sida.se/contentassets/a3f08692e731475db106fdf84f2fb9bd/gender-tool-analysis.pdf>

¹³⁶ Parpart, 2003, in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), p. 227.

¹³⁷ *ibid*, 227f.

¹³⁸ *ibid*, p. 229.

‘Women and environment’ is another recurrent theme in the plan. Women and environment as a prioritised sector in the plan is interesting since there has been a lot written on this subject. In 1991 The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) found that there is a connection between gender equality and environment based on women’s close relationship with natural resources and on the role of women in economic production. This recognition however is not generally accepted by scholars or development personnel and many still apply a ‘gender neutral’ approach to environmental issues. A ‘gender neutral’ approach does however tend to result in male bias.¹³⁹ The fact that Sida recognises the need for a special priority of gender integration in environmental issues distinguishes Sida from many other development agencies who are hesitant to link gender and environment.¹⁴⁰ Rathgeber does however contend that a ‘women and environment’ approach risk having the same inadequacies as the WID approach since there is a tendency to attribute women special responsibilities based on their perceived ‘close relationship to nature’.¹⁴¹ Since there is no indication in the plan as to what a special priority of gender integration in environment, climate, resilience and productive/non-social sectors would entail I do not know if Sida will also fall into this trap.

4.2.5 Binaries and contradictions

A binary assumes that one side of the binary is excluded from the other side. Bacchi argues that they simplify complex relationships and there are also inherent hierarchies in binaries where one side is privileged over the other.¹⁴²

Sida considers, based on experience, targeted efforts to be the most effective for increasing gender equality. The plan and the partial report both state that ‘despite interesting exceptions there is an international agreement that gender equality tends to “disappear” in efforts where it is only a sub-objective.’¹⁴³ The idea of gender integration

¹³⁹ Eva M. Rathgeber, ”Gender and development in action” in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), p. 212f.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid*, p. 214.

¹⁴¹ *ibid*, p.214.

¹⁴² Bacchi, 2009, p. 7f.

¹⁴³ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 8; *Delredovisning av jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter (JIM uppdraget) 2015-2017*, Avdelningen för

is that a gender analysis should be performed in every process of the work. The fact that Sida's own experience shows that targeted efforts have the best results points to a difficulty effectively integrating gender. It shows that when gender is not the main aim it tends to be lost or forgotten and thus gender integration can be difficult to achieve. The description of Sida's work also states that efforts where gender equality is a sub-objective needs to be improved regarding coding and minimum requirements.¹⁴⁴

There also seems to be an assumption that dialogue would lead to better outcome while at the same time arguing for better governance. There is a focus both on dialogue with partners which is in line with the GAD approach as well as the SDG's and other guidelines where partnership is premiered. The plan does however, as previously stated, also on multiple occasions make references to governance and guidance indicating that the partners are not treated as equals.

The analysis of what assumptions underlie this problem representation and how this representation has come about illustrates that the plan includes concepts, categories and binaries which meanings are never discussed. The result of this is that these concepts are filled with a meaning that is never questioned. These meanings are based on the historical development that has led to this meaning being privileged over others. In the next section I analyse what is left unproblematic in this representation of the problem and what effects the representation of the problem may have.

4.3 Silences, alternatives and effects

After exploring Sida's representation of the problem, the assumptions underlying this problem representation and how it has come about I will in this section answer the fourth and fifth question of the method, namely 'What is left unproblematic in this 'problem' representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently? and "What are the effects of this problem representation?".

Policies are constrained by the ways the 'problem' is represented and the objective of this section is to discuss issues and perspectives that are silenced through this

internationella organisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2018-02-22, INTEM, Anna Collins-Falk, Ärendenummer: 18/000335, p. 3.

¹⁴⁴ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 8.

understanding of the ‘problem’.¹⁴⁵ The analysis of the underlying assumptions is helpful in answering the question of what is left unproblematized since it is possible to identify where the simplification of experiences, with the use of binaries, distorts or misrepresent certain issues. The analysis of how the problem representation came about is also helpful in identifying silences.¹⁴⁶

4.3.1 Silences and dialogue in the international community

To answer the question of who is silent, you need to ask who is being listened to. The analysis of the current state of global gender equality presented in the plan highlights the efforts of the international community. The UN and the *Sustainable Development Goals* are praised for their efforts for global gender equality as is UN women, the European Union and the commitment of states. Independent ‘women’s organisations’ as well as commercial and industrial life are also praised for their efforts.¹⁴⁷ The global agenda for gender equality calls for cooperation among different actors and Sida considers itself to have a large task to work with all actors to strengthen the work for gender equality with a focus on implementation and results.¹⁴⁸ Apart from the unspecified ‘women’s organizations’ there is no mentioning of local actors in the analysis of the current state of gender equality. The EBA evaluation found that there is no discussion present about the content of this ‘dialogue’ and from the material they could not assess whether such a dialogue had taken place or what the effects of such a dialogue might be.¹⁴⁹

While the plan speaks of dialogue it is clear that governance is considered important for gender integration indicating that the participants are not in the dialogue on equal terms. Furthermore, an emphasis on dialogue with partners doesn’t necessarily mean that everyone is allowed a say. Harding argues that it is still northern women, or southern women with access to dissemination media who chooses which voices to

¹⁴⁵ Bacchi, 2009, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid*, p. 13.

¹⁴⁷ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 6

¹⁴⁸ *ibid*.

¹⁴⁹ On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Ugglå, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), p. 18.

present and what parts of their speech to reproduce.¹⁵⁰ The plan does not indicate who is to engage in this ‘dialogue’ so there is no way to conclude that this is the case from the plan and corresponding partial report but it is important to bear in mind. This issue is also commented by Spivak who argues that there is an epistemic discontinuity between advocates for human rights in the global south and the rural poor and that the proof of this is the ability to communicate with international human rights advocates.¹⁵¹

4.3.2 Silences and effects of the representation of gender equality

Knowledge and analysis are considered important tools for gender integration at Sida. Although a focus on knowledge and analysis may carry positive connotations it may also entail negative implications for the people assumed not to possess it. When presenting the problem of gender inequality to be a lack of knowledge, and the solution is considered to be educational efforts, one simultaneously implies, intentionally or not, that ‘they’ do not have knowledge that we do. This is reminding of the modernisation theory of the 60’s and can carry negative effects for the people being represented as ‘less developed’. The assumption that some people are less developed result in a negative representation of the ‘third world woman’ and a silencing of their expertise.

The plan is not clear on who is to receive this knowledge other than its staff so it is not as much a problem of a negative representation of the ‘other’ as stated in postcolonial theory as it is an elevation of ‘expertise’. Harding argues that rather than there being an ‘international knowledge system’ there are multiple indigenous and contextualized knowledge systems and the ‘western modernity’ is only one of them.¹⁵² That the work with gender integration should be based on a context specific analysis is supported by Maria Nzomo. A postmodernist approach argues that concepts such as the ones identified in *4.2.1 Key concepts*, cannot be treated as universal ideals but should instead be defined in the historically specific context. We must therefore adopt a contextualised and historically specific analysis.¹⁵³ It is stated in the Sida plan that all

¹⁵⁰ Harding, 2008, p. 158.

¹⁵¹ Spivak, 2004, p. 527.

¹⁵² Harding, 2008, p. 187f.

¹⁵³ Maria Nzomo, 2003, in Marchand & Parpart (eds.), p. 133.

gender integration should start from a ‘context specific gender-analysis’.¹⁵⁴ On the other hand, Harding argues that although analysis pertaining to only a group of women may be illuminating and correct false universal claims they may also be a convenient way to ignore the need to engage with the macro level forces that shape people’s everyday lives. Micro-analysis may in fact reproduce the discriminatory relations they claim to avoid since these relations do not go away because one ignores them.¹⁵⁵

Harding argues that a direct attention to the worst off/disadvantaged is needed in order to redistribute power. In order to get powerful men to accept giving up power for equality with other men they increase power over women. Therefore, special attention is needed. Discrimination against women is not a left over from the traditional, it is the typical modern ideals that seem to require systematic oppression of women. One must empirically understand what the cost and benefits of social change are for the worst-off and why men cannot tolerate equality with women.¹⁵⁶ Sida does, through the existence of plan for example, give special attention to the disadvantaged in their work. The main purpose of the plan, and gender integration as a method, is that Sida does not miss the gender aspect in any of its work. The plan does not however, indicate an empirical understanding of the costs and benefits of social change called for by Harding and there is a lack of a critical perspective throughout. Harding argues that gender and science projects cannot eliminate the gender hierarchy as long as the west vs. the rest hierarchy still thrives. Sida’s work with gender integration does not seem to question this global hierarchy.¹⁵⁷

4.4 Summary of analysis

The purpose of this paper is to see how Sida understands the concept of ‘global gender equality’ in the development context and how this view may affect the way Sida works to promote it. To answer this two questions were asked, ‘*How does Sida represent the problem of gender inequality in its plan for gender integration?*’ and ‘*How can the*

¹⁵⁴ *Plan för jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018*, Avdelningen för internationellaorganisationer och tematiskt stöd, 2015-11-02, INTEM, Carolina Wennerholm, Ärendenummer; is/DD1226, p. 6f.

¹⁵⁵ Harding, 2008 p. 158.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid*, p. 195

¹⁵⁷ *ibid*, p. 210.

effects of this representation be understood from a postcolonial feminist perspective?’

The problem at hand is gender inequality and the main method for changing it is gender integration. I therefore investigate The plan for gender mainstreaming at Sida 2015-2018 and the corresponding partial report of this plan.

Investigating the measures proposed to change a problem reveal how the problem is received. The analysis shows that Sida propose to spread and increase *knowledge*, develop and refine *methods and plans* and increase efforts that target gender inequality. Smarter ways of development funding are also requested in the plan. Based on the measures proposed I asked what suppositions and assumptions underlie this problem representation. Key concepts such as knowledge, equality, and power are fairly open ended concepts that could be filled with different meanings by different people. The plan does not seem to acknowledge this since the meanings of the concepts are never discussed in detail. Knowledge is assumed to be universal knowledge based on ‘expertise’, an assumption that is questioned and criticized by my theory. The meaning of equality is never discussed but there is a focus on education, health, and financial power and political influence. There is a recognition that power-relations affect the work with gender equality but the meaning of this is not deeply discussed, the plan does however request an analysis into how different power-relation interact in issues of inequality. The use of ‘women’ as a category in the plan and partial report is inconsistent. Categorising ‘women’ may be excluding since gender equality affect everyone and it may also create a discursive ‘us’ and ‘them’. Sometimes the term gender is preferred. When using the term ‘gender’ it is however often assumed to pertain to ‘women’.¹⁵⁸ Sometimes there is no reference to gender or women in the plan. Environment is a prioritized sector in the plan and thus ‘women and environment’ become a category which is problematized by my theory. Sidas experience is that that targeted efforts are the most effective, demonstrating that gender integration may be difficult to accomplish.

This representation of the problem can be understood as a continuation of a modernist discourse. Knowledge is assumed to be singular and universal and it is ‘expert’ knowledge that is privileged, there is however no discussion of alternative

¹⁵⁸ On-going evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming at Sida - First report, EBA Working Paper, Elin Bjarnegård & Fredrik Ugglå, April 2017, Underlagsrapport 2017 till Expertgruppen för Biståndsanalys (EBA), p. 15f.

knowledges or who has the ability to become an 'expert'. The focus on methods and plans as well as governance also speak to the power differences between the Sida and its partners. The methods and plans are created by Sida and are to be followed up by Sida. The plan does however stipulate that all gender integration should start from a context-specific analysis which could be a step away from the idea that there is a universal solution and that this solution is built on 'western' knowledge.

5 Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how Sida, as the official aid agency of Sweden, perceives the issue of gender (in)equality and how this understanding may affect the work in this field. This is done through asking how Sida represents global gender (in)equality in its plan for gender integration and what the effects of this representation may be. I started this study assuming that the plan for gender integration at Sida, although being a step forward in the international task of increasing gender equality, might have some problematic connotations in the way some peoples or some areas of the world are represented. The analysis shows that this is in fact the case but also that there are many questions still unanswered. In this section I am discussing the results of my analysis in relation to earlier research and suggesting new research based on my results. The methodological and theoretical approach in this thesis is also discussed in this section.

There is no shortage of research in the field of gender and development. Much of it concerns the representation of and effects on women in the global south. My attribution to this field is a shifted focus. Mohanty argues that feminist scholarship needs to be decolonised since much of the feminist writings of today homogenises women in the global south and produces a singular image of the ‘third world woman’. There are many references to expertise visible in the plan and as Mohanty argues that power is expressed through discourse whenever one’s own authorial subject acts as the implied referent by which to encode the experience of others.¹⁵⁹ It is not apparent from the analysis whether Spivak’s critique of the social Darwinism of human rights is applicable to the plan for gender integration but her call for including the voices of the subaltern seems to be true also in this case. Harding, Mohanty and Spivak all share a critique of the lack of representation of what Spivak calls the ‘subaltern’ and their voices are not heard in this plan. Instead it speaks of capacity building and expertise in gender and gender integration. Although the plan shows that we have come a long way from the

¹⁵⁹ Mohanty, 2003, p. 21.

WID approach there is still a lack of local anchorage in the description of the needs of the disadvantaged. We have now moved on from the exclusive focus on production and elimination of the stereotyped expectations of women described by Rasavi and Miller and increased attention to power relations and the workings of gender but the knowledge on which we base these theories is left unproblematized.

It is apparent from the analysis of Sida's work gender integration that it considers knowledge, analysis and plans to be the way to work for increased gender equality. The description of the problem is often one-sided and not problematized which has discursive effects on 'the other' which might also lead to a subjectification effect of not having a say or not believing one has the ability to raise one's voice and be heard. It is also not questioned who possess knowledge and what kind of knowledge. This is problematized by postcolonial feminism and postmodernism which claims that expert-knowledge to often is attributed to western experts.¹⁶⁰ Postmodernism claims that there is no universal 'truth' but how can policy be developed without claiming truth? This is a question this thesis cannot provide an answer to.

When it comes to postcolonial studies and the critique of treating 'western' knowledge as the only knowledge the focus is usually external. It is the lack of local anchorage in developmental projects and so on. The critique presented in this thesis starts before that. It is a critique towards the internal view on knowledge within the organisation. To spread 'western' knowledge externally it is a prerequisite that it is deeply established internally and this is the critique of the plan. I am by no means criticising knowledge or analysis as such but the focus on expertise makes me question what kind of expertise is being referred to. I would like to see research on the type of analysis and knowledge Sida is referring to and the effects of it. The plan contains no such information and for further research it would be interesting to perform interviews or do other research so as to see what they consider this knowledge to entail and how it is to be gathered and disseminated.

From my analysis it is apparent that it is not only implementation and effectiveness of plans that are of interest when it comes to plans and strategies aimed at increasing gender equality around the world. What kind of language we use and what kind of knowledge are at the basis of the methodology of these plans also matters. We need to

¹⁶⁰ Parpart, 2003, in Marchand & Parpart (eds.) p. 35.

keep in mind that although we might have come a long way from openly arguing that westernisation equals modernisation, and that this modernisation always means progress, there are still remnants of this ideology in the plans and strategies we present. This is relevant for the organisations and people who work in development to keep in mind to keep them from making the same mistakes that have been made in development work since its inception.

As mentioned in *reflections and ethical considerations*, this is neither a study of gender mainstreaming as a method nor is it a study on its implementation within the organisation and its partners. The question of practical implications of the plan is therefore left unanswered. To understand more about this, I would refer you to EBA's evaluation of the plan which addresses the implications in further detail.

The "what is the problem represented to be" approach to policy analysis contains some limitations for this study. The plan for gender integration at Sida does not contain many concrete proposals for change which makes some of the questions asked in the method hard to answer. For example, the questions of what assumptions underlie the problem representation might be hard to answer if one does not know exactly what is being proposed to change it. This is a rather extensive method and due to the limited scope of this thesis and the relationship between the methodological and theoretical approaches my theory was not allowed as much room as I would have liked in the analysis.

The study has raised new questions on this topic. The analysis was performed using a policy analysis and a postcolonial feminist theory. The theory was also to an extent postmodern, meaning it denies a universal truth. This denial of a universal truth leads me to the discussion on universalism vs. essentialism in development work. This question is not analysed nor discussed in depth in this thesis but it would be interesting for further research to relate these theories to each other in a similar investigation of gender integration to get a greater understanding of the issue. In light of these results further research should be made that considers the holistic effects of strategies and plans, not only the practical impact but also the discursive and subjectification effects it might have on people affected.

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