

EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN NEW ZEALAND  
OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE SINCE 2000

BY

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## Abstract

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Gender mainstreaming is one of the most widespread methods employed by donor countries and their partners to address gender equality and women's empowerment in development. New Zealand has had a varied history of engagement on gender issues within its aid programme. As reportedly one of the first countries within the OECD to have a specific gender policy, New Zealand's commitment to women has waxed and waned. Case and point, in 2011, when asked where women came into New Zealand's growing Pacific focus for aid, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade stated that he was not interested in prescribing a gender within the aid programme. This research evaluated how gender mainstreaming has been implemented into the policies of New Zealand's Official Development Assistance (NZODA) since 2000.

Research methods used included reviewing past and present NZODA policies, carried out alongside interviews with development specialists who had worked in the New Zealand aid and gender environment. Using a feminist lens, the research revealed that New Zealand's ODA has had limited investment in gender equality and women's empowerment, despite gender being mainstreamed or mandated as a cross-cutting issue since 2002. The previous structure which administered NZODA, NZAID, released an in-depth gender policy late in its existence and struggled to retain staff in the gender advisor role. The refocus of NZODA, with the subsequent reintegration of aid into foreign affairs in 2009 meant the expiration of this policy. Two years later, the new body established to administer NZODA, the NZ Aid Programme, released its only policy, where gender equality and women's empowerment featured little and appeared tokenistic. As well as this lack of investment in women, this research revealed that gender mainstreaming appears to be misunderstood, which can only contribute to its widely perceived ineffectiveness. Recommendations argue for a committed focus on gender best practice within NZODA, alongside greater investment in programmes and activities that specifically focus on women and gender issues.

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## Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CID	Council for International Development
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
GAD	Gender and development
IDG	International Development Group
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NZ	New Zealand
NZADDs	New Zealand Aid and Development Dialogues
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
UN	United Nations
WID	Women in development
WAD	Women and development

## List of Documents, Images and Tables

### List of policy documents analysed

CAB Min (09) 13/3B – Cabinet Minute 1: Pacific Island Forum Countries: New Zealand Policy on Aid, Trade, and Economic Development (Paper One)

Cabinet Paper One: Pacific Island Forum Countries: New Zealand Policy on Aid, Trade, and Economic Development: Overview Paper. Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Office of the Minister of Trade.

CAB Min (09) 13/3A. Cabinet Minute 2: New Zealand Agency for International Development: Institutional Arrangements (Paper Two)

Cabinet Paper 2: New Zealand Agency for International Development: Institutional Arrangements. Office of the Minister of State Services and Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

CAB Min (09) 13/3C. Cabinet Minute 3: New Zealand Agency for International Development: Mandate and Policy Settings (Paper Three)

Cabinet Paper 3: New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID): Mandate and Policy Settings. Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Cabinet Minute 3 Annex 1. NZAID's Mandate and Policy Settings. NZAID and MFAT.

NZAID 2007. *Achieving Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*. Wellington: NZAID.

NZ Aid Programme 2011. *International Development Policy Statement: Supporting sustainable development*. Wellington: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

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## Introduction

Gender inequality has become widely recognised as a key cause of poverty (Schech and Vas Dev 2007, UNICEF 2003). More than one hundred years after women were given the right to vote in New Zealand, there are still women in other parts of the world who are not able to exercise control over property, money or their own bodies. Women remain the worst affected by poverty, less likely to attend primary education, and more likely to suffer violence, despite multiple international commitments made by their governments and others to protect and ensure these rights.

Arguably, the current situation is a result of women's absence from aid and development programmes and projects. From the 1970s, feminists began to criticise development models which had assumed there would be trickle down benefits for women (Leahy 1986).

Development theorists have acknowledged two broad periods which tried to address gender inequalities; women in/and development (WID & WAD) and gender and development (GAD) (Rathgeber 1990; Mikkelsen 2005). Each period had particular critiques, with gender eventually becoming more important with growing recognition of men's role in development, principally recognising that women would not be able to change their circumstances without men's input. Later, gender mainstreaming emerged from the third UN Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 as a women-led strategy to address women's rights and role in development. It offered a cohesive plan of activities for states to address gender inequality and women's empowerment. Critically, it talked of *transformation*, a transfer of power where women would be included in decision making, institutions and policies (UN 1995).

Gender mainstreaming has grown significantly in its spread internationally across the development sector (True and Mintrom 2001). It is being used as a way to frame the way that gender relations, inequalities and women's rights are addressed in the development sector, and is particularly important across donors' aid programmes. New Zealand's overseas development assistance instituted its first gender policy in 1998, and gender was first mainstreamed in 2002



following a Ministerial review of official development assistance (ODA) and the establishment of the semi-autonomous aid agency NZAID. In 2009, after the National Party was elected to government ODA underwent another overhaul. The semi-autonomous agency was drawn back into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with big policy changes also undertaken. The 2002 changes were well regarded in New Zealand and overseas while the most recent changes have faced significant criticism domestically.

Gender equality and women's empowerment policy in NZODA is a largely untouched area academically. In fact, there has been little academic literature on the overall programming at all, particularly of the period before the most recent changes in 2009. As far as I know, this is the only analysis of gender in New Zealand's aid. With New Zealand's growing interest and focus on the Pacific region as recipients of its aid, where gender issues are some of the worst in the world, it is particularly important to investigate the history and contents of women, gender and development policy in New Zealand's aid. Gender mainstreaming has formed the framework for addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in New Zealand and worldwide in recent years so this research will use ideas of gender mainstreaming as its central analytical lens.

This research sets out to evaluate gender mainstreaming policy within NZODA since 2000. In particular, I am looking at how gender mainstreaming has been implemented in the policies of the former institution NZAID and those of the current ODA delivery body, the NZ Aid Programme. I examine policies against literature which outlines best practice for optimum outcomes for women in developing countries through gender mainstreaming. Encompassing gender equality and women's empowerment, I examine what NZODA has been doing to improve the lives of women and girls, boys and men in developing countries through an exploration of its policies since 2002.

I first present the history of gender and women in development, before discussing the concept of gender mainstreaming and how it can be implemented in development programmes. Next I

discuss the history of aid in New Zealand over the past decade, detailing the two dramatic changes that occurred within this period. Finally, I present an analysis of gender and women within the policies of the former aid body NZAID and the current NZ Aid Programme. As a young feminist, I carry out the research through a feminist lens. This puts women and their rights at the centre of the research. Next I discuss my methodology, before providing an outline of this research.

## **Methodology**

The objective of this research was to conduct a policy analysis of gender mainstreaming within NZODA since 2000. From a feminist standpoint, I examined the contents of relevant ODA policy in New Zealand, its quality as well as changes in policy and why they happened. I undertook interviews with key actors within the women and development sector in New Zealand and used an extensive literature review to set the scene on international perspectives to substitute for the lack of literature available for the New Zealand context. This chapter will further detail each of these methods to establish how I conducted my research.

### **Research question**

How has gender mainstreaming been implemented in New Zealand official development assistance policies since 2000?

### **Methodology**

This research uses a feminist lens. Feminist research does not specify quantitative or qualitative methods (Letherby 2003). This research has been conducted predominantly through qualitative methods. My analysis was based on a literature review, an analysis of government documents and speeches as well as interviews. An extensive literature review across gender, women, aid and development was required to provide a detailed context analysis which could not be done

specifically for New Zealand due to the lack of academic literature. Data such as that charting the yearly spend on women's programmes in the Pacific Islands has provided a necessary supplement to the finds from the literature. It plays an important role in providing more specific contextual details relevant to NZ's approach to women in development, where there is little literature.

Academic research on gender mainstreaming in a New Zealand aid context is almost non-existent, with the availability of literature on the wider context of gender equality and women's empowerment in NZODA being in a similar state. This made it difficult to find information on the current or past state of NZODA and its investment in women, as well as how it related to other bilateral donors and the international aid and development context. This has meant that the research has largely relied on primary research. I believe that I have established a basis for further research to be undertaken, particularly that which focuses on the programmatic investment of NZODA in gender equality and women's empowerment. Next steps could include field research to establish how partners view NZODA and its impacts on women's lives in those countries.

### **Feminist research**

The epistemological foundation of this research is based within feminist theory. Using a feminist lens ensures a critical analysis of the topic, with an understanding of how gender constructs influence the perceptions of social structures. Feminine and masculine qualities are assigned to dichotomies throughout Western thought, frequently placing higher value on the perceived 'masculine' quality (Wilcox no date, in Sjoberg 2009). Skeggs (1994 in Letherby 2003) argues that feminist research acknowledges, and indeed works from, the hierarchy and inequality of Western society. Following from this, Enloe (2007) believes that being rooted in a feminist perspective enables researchers to work more realistically and have more reliable results.

Thus, my positionality is important in this research. As a feminist woman who has studied development studies at university and been exposed to some experiences in developing countries, my opinions and interpretations of the material have contributed to the construction of the research. Furthermore, I am currently working within the New Zealand development sector. I acknowledge these here in the research, so that it is clear what may have influenced my understanding, perception and knowledge. As Letherby (2003) discusses, there is a strong connection between the process and the product of research, and acknowledging the place of oneself within the research allows for transparency in the analysis and conclusion.

It is particularly important for this research to come from a feminist perspective as I aim to challenge what may be considered 'universal' knowledge about aid programmes. Tickner (2005; 4) claims that feminist research aims to change frameworks and knowledge claims, and this is what I aim to do here – provide a critical analysis of NZODA and its investment in gender equality and women's empowerment.

The close interconnectedness between foreign affairs and aid highlights the political nature of aid delivery. Using a feminist lens openly acknowledges the political, exposing influences and positions which can affect choices and policies. Given that aid is political, it seems logical to apply a feminist perspective in this research to help expose these influences. Tickner notes that

'Much of feminist scholarship is both transdisciplinary and avowedly political; with the goal of bringing about change, it has explored and sought to understand the unequal gender hierarchies, as well as other hierarchies of power, which exist in all societies, to varying degrees, and their effects on the subordination of women and other disempowered people.' (2005: 4)

Feminist theorists assert that feminist research aims to improve women's lives (Tickner 2005), and this research is no different. International research shows that women's lives can be greatly improved through engaging them in decisions that affect them; by empowering them through

their rights. I believe it is important that New Zealand's ODA is used in such a way that it does this.

Applying a feminist analysis aims to put women at the centre of this research. Typically noted as a male-dominated field, foreign affairs can struggle to recognise the vastly different living conditions that women can experience and the importance of having women at the decision making table. As noted by Hawkesworth (1994; 98)

“The goal of feminist scholarship is to transform traditional disciplines, purging them of androcentric bias, reshaping dominant paradigms so that women's needs, interests, activities, and concerns can be analyzed and understood systematically, and generating research methodologies that are neither gender-biased nor gender-blind.”

Similar to the goals of gender mainstreaming, it is appropriate to use feminist theory to analyse NZODA.

“Given that feminist knowledge has emerged from a deep scepticism about ‘universal’ knowledge claims, which, in reality, are based primarily on men's lives, feminist knowledge is constructed simultaneously out of disciplinary frameworks and feminist criticisms of these frameworks. Its goal is nothing less than to transform them and the knowledge to which they contribute.” (Tickner 2005; 4)

Feminist research does not specify quantitative or qualitative methods (Letherby 2003). A critical component of feminist research is for researchers to express their biases. Feminist theorists acknowledge that knowledge is inherently socially constructed, as it is produced from a particular person who has had particular experiences as a result of their own position, power and place. According to Tickner (2005), significant differences exist between the methodologies of feminist international relations (IR) and traditional IR. Particularly, these lie within the creation and use of knowledge. “While recognizing that knowledge is socially constructed since

the questions we ask and the methods we use reflect our preoccupations as members of particular societies at particular times” (Tickner 2005; 2).

In this research, it is critical that feminist epistemology is used as the foundation of this work. This is because of the gender component to the study, and feminist theory enables gender inequalities, power, access and other issues to be examined. “Development research that ignores the complex aspects of gender relations results in incomplete and/or biased research, which in turn leads to the formulation of incomplete development policies and programme” (Beetham and Demetriades 2007; 199).

## **Literature review**

A literature review was completed on two thematic areas. Firstly, the international stage of gender mainstreaming, including gender equality and women’s empowerment in aid and development was canvassed. I sought to establish what best practice is in other countries, as there was a significant dearth of academic information for the New Zealand context.

Secondly, I researched literature concerning New Zealand’s ODA and international relations. This was less difficult, particularly with growing interest in New Zealand’s interests in Asia and the Pacific. Furthermore, the establishment of New Zealand Aid and Development Dialogues (NZADDs) following the 2009 termination of NZAID has contributed greatly to the literature, as it has undertaken significant pieces of research specifically focussed on the history and content of NZODA. Their working papers, discussion papers, commentaries and presentations have provided much needed data on the context and details of NZODA. I have not drawn heavily from their sources as they have not focussed on gender, except to provide the context of NZODA.

International sources on gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly those focussed on gender mainstreaming were chosen to identify common themes and ideas which may be relevant to the New Zealand context.

### **Policies, speeches and other documents**

My policy investigation required a broader analysis of gender equality and women's empowerment within policy, as well as looking at the specific ways in which gender and women were integrated into policy and practice. Policies reviewed included the gender policy released by NZAID in 2007 and the International Development Policy Statement released by the NZ Aid Programme in 2011. The Ministerial reviews in 2001 and 2005, along with OECD-DAC Peer Reviews in 2001, 2005 and 2010 also provide important insights into the functioning, policies and programming of NZODA over the past decade.

Analysis consisted of looking at the contents and key words used in policies. Using the same key themes found through the literature review (and again subsequently in the interviews), these two policies were explored for what was said, in what context. Each policy was developed in a context which was not excluded from previous policies or the domestic or international contexts. As said by Julia Kristeva (Moi 1986 in Tischer, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter 2000: 146), "every text is viewed as part of a series of texts to which it reacts and refers, and which it modifies." While women, gender and development does not have a linear history, the past certainly affected the present.

Furthermore, my place as an 'insider' in the development sector enhanced my ability to read between the lines, put documents in their context, and consider the influence of the author on their work. As Smyth highlights,

“If words are important, silences are important too and a reflection of what is excluded from daily exchanges - verbal or written - among development practitioners and policy makers. What is also important is the frequency and clarity with which certain terms are used, the first as a sign of what gets given priority and air space, the latter because on the clarity of key terms depends whether and how policies are developed and then implemented.” (2007: 583)

Being exposed to the inner-workings of the sector as well as being privy to private conversations about what happens within the sector, and more importantly, the government, has enabled me to access and understand information in a different way than perhaps an outsider.

## **Interviews**

Interviews were undertaken with six key players in gender equality and women’s empowerment in development in New Zealand. Interviewees were Dr Gill Greer, Joanna Spratt, Dr Marilyn Waring, Mike Sansom, Patti O’Neill, and Rae Julian. The six interviewees have an extensive wealth of knowledge between them, including on women’s rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, economic empowerment of women, and capacity building in developing countries.

Each interviewee was selected as a result of their knowledge of NZODA and women and gender. The women were identified through personal networks and referrals. Rae Julian is the current President of UN Women New Zealand. She has been a Commissioner at the NZ Human Rights Commission and has a wealth of development experience in the Pacific. Patti O’Neill was the gender advisor during the first year or so of NZAID. She has been open about her opinions on gender mainstreaming and is the current Coordinator of the OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality. Gill Greer has returned to New Zealand to take up a role as the Executive Director of Volunteer Services Abroad (VSA), but has immense experience in women and development as



the previous Director-General of International Planned Parenthood Federation, and Family Planning before that. Marilyn Waring undertook the Ministerial review of NZAID in 2005, and has extensive experience across New Zealand politics, women and economic development, as well as development work. Joanna Spratt was the previous Director of Family Planning International and is the current Coordinator and researcher of the relatively new body NZADDs, a group promoting critical thought and dialogue about aid in New Zealand. Each interviewee is a specialist in the women, gender and development sphere, both internationally and in New Zealand. Not only do they hold specific insider knowledge but they also were a part of the history and shaping of gender equality and women's empowerment within NZODA. As perhaps should be expected, at the end of my interviews I found that all of the women knew each other and were in regular contact on this issue. Mike Sansom is the current Development Manager: Cross-cutting issues and Gender. Including him in the interviews was essential to have a current view on what NZODA is currently doing.

Interviews were semi-structured and participants were usually able to prepare for the interview. This was important as questions related to policies, processes and politics over the past ten years which required preparation and time to ensure quality information during the interviews. Questions focussed on gender mainstreaming, economic development and women in development, gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as how gender mainstreaming is implemented.

### **Analysis of the interviews**

The base set of questions used across each interview was the same, adjusting slightly for the experiences of each participant. Common themes were clear from reading the transcripts of all interviews, as well as being identified through the literature review. Each interview was informally coded according to themes such as gender mainstreaming, NZODA, working with partners, and programming and organisational structure.

The information shared by the interviewees was essential to this research. The dearth of academic material available leaves NZODA as an area only known to insiders who have worked within the sector, and even more specifically those that have worked in the area of gender and women directly within the NZODA delivery body. Given the different experiences of the interviewees, they each provided a unique and trustworthy perspective of different aspects of NZODA over the past decade. Overall, my sources link together to support each other. My interviewees have worked both in New Zealand and internationally, so they are aware not only of gender in NZODA, but also international frameworks, commitments and programmes by other donors.

### **Outline of this research**

In the next chapter, I present the history of gender equality and women's empowerment to set the scene for how gender mainstreaming was developed. I explain gender mainstreaming, focussing on how it is implemented and the significant critiques of the concept from the literature. I argue that while gender mainstreaming is complex and difficult to implement, it presents a well-rounded approach to address persistent inequities between men and women in development.

In chapter three, I discuss the changes in NZODA over the past decade. I consider the changes in institutions and policies and what may have influenced these changes. I offer an overview of how NZ is doing according to international best practice in aid and development. These help to set the scene for what affects the implementation of gender mainstreaming in ODA and how successfully gender equality and women's empowerment has been addressed in New Zealand's aid.

Chapter four closely examines how gender mainstreaming, gender equality and women's empowerment has been addressed within NZODA since 2000. The chapter is split into two sections. The first section focuses specifically on policy – the gender policy released by NZAID in

2007, and following that, the only policy by the NZ Aid Programme which was released in 2011. I examine these according to the standards of best practice in gender equality, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming established in chapter two. The second part of the chapter looks beyond policies to the rest of the aid programmes. Interviews with key gender specialists help to identify four key areas which affect how effective a policy can be, as well as how much can be achieved through gender mainstreaming. I argue that even a great policy cannot be relied upon to deliver results for women. Political commitment, institutional framework and programming, effective work with partners, and transparency and learning through monitoring and evaluation all play an important part in the effectiveness of an aid programme overall, but especially for the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment.

My final chapter presents the final important points raised through this research. I provide a number of recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness and transparency of NZODA, focussed on how to get better results for women in partner countries and strongly encourage New Zealand to stick to its internationally agreed responsibilities to women's rights around the world.

In my conclusions, I discuss how my research reveals a lack of political commitment to gender mainstreaming over the whole period from 2000 until today.

The next chapter presents the history of gender equality and women's empowerment in development, before discussing gender mainstreaming theory and implementation.

## **Women in/and Development and Gender Mainstreaming**

Gender inequality is a pervasive issue that affects women all over the world. No region exists that has total gender equality (Dodhia and Johnson 2005: 39). Former Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Kofi Annan said that “Eliminating gender discrimination and empowering women are among the paramount challenges facing the world today” (UNICEF 2006: vi). A moral and economic issue, gender inequality has many social and economic costs for communities and states. However, it has only been relatively recently that women and gender have become a more visible component of development. Women were marginalised in the development process or tacked on as a subsidiary focus. The fight for rights has been a long one, with the second movement for women’s rights emerging in the 1960s and 1970s. About this same time, there was growing recognition that assumed trickle down benefits to women from development projects was a fallacy (Leahy 1986; Koczberski 1998; UNICEF 2004). Donors and partner countries began to put greater emphasis on the specific inclusion of women, including women-specific projects and activities in their programmes. After a decade or so, the focus shifted to men and women; looking at the role of power and gender relations between men and women as the key to unlocking women’s rights. However, progress has been unequal across the globe, and even within nations. Some of the ‘wins’ of the movement have been limited primarily to the Western world; improved sexual and reproductive rights, access to education, and near-equality in the workforce. Gender mainstreaming emerged in the mid-1990s as a response from the women’s movement to this lack of progress in developing countries. It aimed to revolutionise gender relations by addressing power structures in institutions and policy. Subsequently, gender mainstreaming has grown rapidly throughout donors and development programmes around the world, becoming the dominant mechanism for improving gender equality and women’s empowerment. However there has been significant lash back with claims of lack of success. Although gender mainstreaming has not led to the fulfilment of women’s rights this is not solely the fault of the concept. Changing power and gender relations is difficult as those in power resist changes; however there have also been failures in the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

This chapter will outline the history of women in development, before going on to discuss the current practices which are used to improve women's situations in development programmes and projects, with a specific focus on gender mainstreaming. The first part of the chapter provides an overview of the evolution of thinking within the UN so we can understand where gender mainstreaming came from and how it relates to those previous ideas. Part 2 looks at gender mainstreaming specifically, within the context of bilateral aid policies and programmes, presenting why there has been an overall lack of success in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Next, I will clarify the terms equality, sex and gender, and look at what inequality means for women.

### **What is gender equity and why does it matter?**

Sometimes there are misunderstandings about the meaning of 'equality'. This can lead to some confusion around the purpose of working on women's rights, and even disgruntled responses that women will end up with a better life than men. It in fact does not mean 'the same'. In the context of gender equality, it is sometimes also referred to as equity – where women and men have equal access to opportunities, with all of their rights being fulfilled. Another common misuse of terminology is the interchangeability between the terms 'gender' and 'sex'. Here I will explain the terminology that I use throughout this research and why a focus on women in development is important, especially in a region like the Pacific which has high rates of violence against women and low rates of representation of women in parliament.

This research specifically focuses on gender, defined as the

“... roles and responsibilities of women and men that are created by social and cultural expectations about appropriate behaviours and activities (femininity and masculinity). These gender roles are learned, highly variable and set by convention and other social,

economic, political and cultural forces. They can change over time and vary within and between cultures.” (Dodhia and Johnson 2005: 33)

Recognising the differences in the experiences, knowledge and even values of each gender is essential in development planning and programmes. Integrating gender into the development process means understanding how gender affects a person’s ability to access resources or make decisions (UNDP 2012). These differences are critical in understanding gender inequality and how to solve it.

Women make up the larger proportion of those living in poverty around the world (Dodhia and Johnson 2005). Research shows that when families are experiencing poverty, girls are often the ones to miss out on schooling rather than boys (UNICEF 2004, 2007). Women who are uneducated are at higher risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth, have higher birth rates, are more likely to contract HIV and AIDS, and their children are less likely to be healthy and educated (CIDA 2011). Girls and women also face issues like child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, gender violence, trafficking and forced prostitution, and maternal mortality, all of which are gender driven.

In our Pacific neighbourhood, gender inequality is one of the most difficult issues that the region faces. Papua New Guinea has a national average that 70 per cent of women experience domestic violence at some time in their life, while in Kiribati, 68 per cent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual abuse, and in Fiji, 26 per cent of women have been beaten while pregnant (Amnesty International Aotearoa no date). The Pacific region has the lowest proportion of women in parliament in the world, and Tonga has yet to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). New Zealand has repeatedly chosen the Pacific as its main ODA focus, and some of these issues are highlighted within the latest ODA policy statement. A further, more in-depth discussion on New Zealand’s ODA and gender policies will take place in the following chapters.

Poverty is linked to a lack of access to political, economic, social, natural and cultural resources (Dodhia and Johnson 2005: 35), and often for cultural and social reasons, women are simply less likely to have access to these resources. As outlined above, gender inequalities have long lasting negative effects on families, communities and states. The consequences are long lasting, such as the effects of a girl's inability to access education, or a woman's inability to access credit. Not only does a moral argument exist for women to be given equal opportunities to men, but also a strong social and economic argument. Women and girls are the daughters, sisters, mothers and grandmothers of men and boys. If an uneducated woman is less likely to have healthy and educated children, this affects the children, and then their children. A woman's ability to earn and support her family provides economic benefits to the family and to the government in the form of increased tax revenue. However, I would like to bypass the economic argument for women's rights. Simply put, internationally, a significant proportion of states have agreed that women have rights, and women around the world want to claim these rights, as they want to improve their lives and that of their children, families, and communities. The next section charts the changes in women's involvement in development international institutions, programmes and policies.

### **Women in/and development**

Development theory and practice has changed greatly over the last half century. Changes in the focus and desired outcome of development have meant that multiple strategies have been promoted as the key to success, and women have had varying levels of integration within this process. The role of women in development was relatively insignificant until the mid-1970s, their inclusion coinciding with the women's movement. Once included within development, the way in which women were targeted varied according to the perceptions of the donor or programme coordinator, although two general phases have been identified within the literature – women in/and development (WID and WAD) during the 1970s, and gender and development (GAD) during the 1980s (Rathgeber 1990; Mikkelsen 2005). The two phases addressed women differently in development, with WID and WAD seen as women-only, while

GAD viewed a wider context of power relations between men and women. However, despite various programmes and projects which tried to improve women's lives, the situation of women in developing countries had improved little (Koczberski 1998). As a result of the frustration at the lack of success, gender mainstreaming then emerged in 1995 from the UN Conference on Women in Beijing. Here I explain the history of women in development and the international movement for women's rights more broadly, which sets the context for why gender mainstreaming was developed and how it became important as a tool for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Development paradigms of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century overwhelmingly did not feature women. The initial growth models during the 1950s and 1960s did not include women as separate beneficiaries of development. The development paradigm at the time promoted economic growth and democracy and believed that trickle down effects would benefit the rest of society (Leahy 1986; Zwart 1992). Development up until this point had assumed that women would be affected by development the same as any other section of society, as well as believing that a women's status was derived from that of her father or husband (Leahy 1986: 3).

Women in Development (WID) emerged during the 1960s and 1970s, advocating for the inclusion of women in development projects. Focussed on the productive role of women, economic skills were promoted as a way for women to increase their income and reduce their poverty. This type of project was rarely successful as it did not consider women's multiple roles, in particular, their reproductive and caring roles. Women found that they were already overburdened and adding formal employment often did not improve their quality of life (Rathgeber 1990). According to Leahy (1986), throughout the UN Food Conference and the UN Population Conference, both of 1974, it became clear that while many countries stated their belief in the equality of women, very few had measured the quality of women's lives in their country.



Women in Development (WAD) followed, derived from Marxist ideas of class divisions, and recognised that men, as well as women, were disempowered during the development process (Rathgeber 1990; Momsen 2010). Many have not recognised the difference between WID and WAD, although Zwart (1992) notes that WAD was simply a more critical version of WID. Understandably then, critics of this paradigm argued that it still did not go far enough; it failed to consider what drove inequity and power inequality between men and women (Rathgeber 1990).

In 1975, the UN declared it to be the International Women's Year, with a conference held in Mexico. Following this, 1975 – 1985 was declared the UN Decade of Women. The effect of this was to support the widening of research into the lives of women around the world and to support improvement in women's status and lives (Leahy 1986). The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) was established in 1976 to promote gender equality and empowerment with governments and within the UN system, as well as providing financial and technical assistance for programmes and initiatives for grassroots activities (Sweetman 2005).

There are several international agreements which establish women's rights internationally, such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995 and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women 1979. Each of these recognises the rights of women as equitable to those of men, and outline the changes required to ensure women can best contribute to their community while thriving themselves. In particular, freedoms and rights are essential to women's success. As Sweetman points out,

“Solving material poverty is not possible for women who lack the power to challenge the discriminatory policies of social institutions, ranging from the family to the state.”  
(2005: 3)

Advocacy for women's rights both within and outside of the UN system resulted in various frameworks and institutions for women's rights; however, the separation of women's issues from other societal issues was seen by some as ineffective and actually detrimental to women's rights (UNFPA and UNICEF 2010). The separation of women from men made it possible to isolate women from development as a whole, frequently leaving them out of projects that affected them but were not addressing 'women's issues'. Subsequently, Gender and Development (GAD) emerged during the 1980s as a new method of including women and gender in development policies and programmes. GAD considered women's triple role – as carers, producers and reproducers – as well as men's role in development (Rathgeber 1990; Momsen 2010). Power relations between men and women, as well as the multifaceted nature of women's identities and the rejection of women as a homogenous group, all formed essential aspects of GAD theory.

In September 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing. This was a culmination of work around the world for the recognition of women's rights, particularly in the 20 years since the first World Conference on Women was held in Mexico. The purpose was explicit, to discuss how to improve women's equality, development outcomes and promote peace. An important outcome of the conference was the Beijing Platform for Action. This document aimed to provide a blueprint for countries to ensure and protect the rights of women, in part by accelerating the implementation of other international agreements, such as the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. It placed responsibility on every state to reform their national policies, frameworks and programmes to promote the full empowerment of women (UN 1995). Another key outcome of the conference was the conception of 'gender mainstreaming'. This was seen as a revolutionary way of improving gender relations through the transformation of institutional structures and societal relations by ensuring that both men and women participated and inequality was not perpetuated. Rather than separating women and men, it looked at ways to integrate girls and women into organisations, programmes and communities that reduced inequality and its effects. While the purpose of the Beijing Platform

for Action was to outline steps and responsibilities for the recognition and achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, it has faced difficulties in realising these goals. Eyben (2006) argues that there have been several key factors which influenced the success of the Beijing agenda. Predominantly, she identifies the World Summit for Social Development, with a focus on development, which was held in Copenhagen in March 1995, and the effect of the subsequent global shift towards poverty alleviation in international aid as a major factor which has reduced the effectiveness and implementation of the Beijing messages.

Nevertheless, the popularity of gender mainstreaming grew until it has become one of the most widespread methods of integrating women and gender into development projects and community initiatives in poor countries (Lyons et al 2004). The second half of this chapter will further discuss the methodology of gender mainstreaming and its level of success in improving the lives of women and girls.

In 2000, the UN Millennium Declaration led to the global agreement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These eight goals covered social, environmental, economic and political aspects for states to work towards a global reduction in poverty as well as increase the effectiveness and work of the global community. The MDGs also included significant focus on activities and goals to improve the lives of women. Goals 2 and 5 aim to increase primary education and reduce maternal mortality, respectively, while Goal 3 is most significant as it aims to promote the equality and empowerment of women. The targets of this goal aim to increase girls' and women's access to all levels of education, increase women's access to non-agriculture employment and increase women's representation in parliaments.

There has been critical feminist feedback on the MDGs. While the Millennium Declaration stated the right of all people to live with dignity and without fear of violence, oppression or injustice (UN 2000 in Heyzer 2005: 9), none of the goals address violence against women. Further, the targets within MDG 3 consider only a narrow perspective of issues which affect women's lives, measuring improvements in enrolments in primary education, the increase of women in parliament, and the percentage of women in non-agricultural employment. Indeed,

the inclusion of two specifically gender related goals (Goals 3 & 5) can be seen as a sign of the success of the women's movement in spreading the significance of women's empowerment in the success of communities. The monitoring and evaluation benefits offered by the MDGs will be further discussed further on.

Growing frustration with the large and disjointed work of the UN led to a move towards 'one UN'. For women and gender work, this meant that the various gender institutions within the UN, including UNIFEM and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), were united together under one name, UN Women, in 2010. The agency aims to provide research, policies, support and assistance for all aspects of gender and women's empowerment within the UN system, recognising that fragmentation of effort was less effective. There is great significance in having a UN body dedicated to women's rights. In his remarks at the launch of UN Women, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stated,

“The United Nations is investing in women because it is the right thing to do and because it is a smart thing to do – possibly one of the smartest things we can ever do.”  
(UN 2011)

While the inclusion of women in development has been sporadic, the benefits to women can be substantial. Research has found that when women are educated and protected, they die later, have fewer yet healthier children, and it can even raise national income as they increase measured productivity (UNICEF 2006). Including women in development programmes also improves the lives of their children and family, as well as the wider community. As such, gender equality and women's empowerment are clearly factors that must be considered within development policies and programmes.

The presence of women in development programmes has been shown to be an essential part to creating sustainable and long-term development success. Growing support for human rights frameworks and international law has also supported the movement for the rights of women.

Gender mainstreaming has grown in importance in the movement to include women and gender issues not only in international development projects, but also in the processes behind them as well as those within the aid agencies themselves.

Women have fought, increasingly successfully, to ensure that gender is on the international development agenda. Sustained efforts have led to an exponential growth in the number of organisations being run by and for women, as well as increased public awareness about gender equality (Jahan 1995). There has been a growing awareness that gender is as much of a political issue about rights and empowerment as it is a 'policy' issue about making sure policy interventions promote gender equity. The Beijing view emphasised this political outcome and provided the starting point for the gender mainstreaming approach. The MDGs have had less of an effect, with indicators that arguably do not accurately capture how to improve women's lives, although they have been useful in promoting the idea that development cannot succeed without women's empowerment. Overall, however, outcomes for women have still been disappointing, with women having the poorest outcomes in most areas, such as education, health, poverty, politics and resource allocation.

Gender mainstreaming came from a struggle in development to recognise the rights of women and the importance of women's inclusion in development for development success. It provided a critical voice which challenged power structures and provided value for looking at development in a different way. The next section will discuss in greater detail the purposes of gender mainstreaming and how it has grown in popularity but has largely remained underutilised within international development programmes. I now turn to examine the gender mainstreaming approach itself, to look at the successes of the approach and the challenges of implementing it that have been identified after 15 years of international experience since its inception. This will help to identify key questions that should be asked about gender mainstreaming in the NZ context, and provide a point of comparison against which to assess and understand the level of success NZ has achieved.

## Gender mainstreaming

The term 'gender mainstreaming' is increasingly common in international development lexicon and policies, becoming one of the most widely subscribed components of good practice in gender and development. As a method, mainstreaming is made up of both theory and practice. Some theorists have noted its revolutionary focus on transforming gender relations in a holistic way (for example, Mehra and Gupta 2006), while others have labelled it a watered-down version of its feminist predecessors (Lyons et al 2004). Gender mainstreaming has been the main avenue for New Zealand, along with other donor countries, to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment within development programmes and policies over the past decade or more. Before we start looking at New Zealand's aid policies, we need to get an idea of what gender mainstreaming is and the challenges it raises for an institution like New Zealand's aid programme. The rest of this chapter begins with an introduction to gender mainstreaming – what it is and how it is done. The subsequent sections will consider how gender mainstreaming might affect or influence an aid programme, and whether it is actually effective in improving gender relations and empowering women and girls.

In 1985, the outcome document from the UN Third World Conference on Women, held in Nairobi, employed very strong, political, language, to identify the longstanding issues that were impeding women's equality. In terms of development, paragraph 103 of the outcome document highlighted that there had been "... insufficient awareness and understanding of the complex and multifaceted relationship between development and the advancement of women..." (UN 1985: 28-9). This paragraph also noted the failure of the reliance on economic growth to improve the lives of women, and the perception that the benefits would trickle down. Overall, the conference outcome document was a clear rejection of the status quo; where women had been left to manage what Moser (Mikkelsen 2005) identified as a triple role – productive, reproductive and community – while still suffering the effects of gender discrimination.

There was an emerging awareness that women needed to be included in the formulation of policies, programmes and projects, in order for women to better ensure that their issues are addressed according to their priorities. Rising from frustrations in the lack of success from WID, WAD and GAD in addressing women's rights and gender inequality, the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing developed and released the concept of gender mainstreaming. It was touted as providing a mechanism and pathway for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment (Clisby 2005), by examining and addressing power inequalities between men and women. Mainstreaming was *transformational* – aiming to bring women into institutions and policies. Mainstreaming provided the ability to consider gender concerns across all levels of policy, programmes and institutions, integrating gender into wider policy and programmes to reduce gender inequality (UNFPA and UNICEF 2010). It is now one of the most widely used strategies to improve gender equality in international development (Lyons et al 2004).

Gender mainstreaming encompasses a number of strategies which aim to balance gender inequalities. A widely recognised definition of gender mainstreaming is from the United Nations' Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as

*"... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (ECOSOC 1997: 28).*

Gender mainstreaming can incorporate several different strategies and activities. When used together as a coherent bundle of activities, it works as a comprehensive action against gender inequality. Examples of the types of activities that are common within gender mainstreaming

include the establishment of a gender focal point or specialist within an organisation, gender training, targeted projects specifically for women's equality, sex-disaggregated data collection, capacity building for women, and supporting women's participation in decision making. These activities operate on two levels (Daly 2003: 442-3). Firstly, bringing women into programmes and ensuring that they consider women's needs and work to specifically improve women's lives. Within programmes, it prescribes a gender component where the impact of the programme, its objectives and activities are considered for all men and women, boys and girls. Each employee is responsible for working towards gender equality and women's empowerment, but the inclusion of a gender specialist within each institution also provides specialist knowledge and assistance for specific gender aspects. Secondly, mainstreaming gender requires an institution to incorporate these ideas into their own internal practices and processes. Making jobs available equally for men and women, encouraging women into leadership roles, and including women in strategy and policy decision-making better integrates women fully into the institution in its work and the way it works. Daly (2003: 10) identifies two key components of gender mainstreaming that make it different to previous gender equality strategies. Firstly, that the aim is to "tackle structures of inequality" rather than women's disadvantage, and secondly, that the programme incorporates a specifically 'gender' perspective.

While mainstreaming is made up of several types of activities, theorists are quick to separate it from old strategies of equal treatment and positive action from previous decades. Although Squires (2005) does identify that components of previous strategies have been integrated within gender mainstreaming, such as positive action and the policies used to get women into the workforce. However, gender mainstreaming needs to be seen and implemented as a long term strategy that is supported by national legislation and policies that promote positive action and support for equity between men and women (Rees 1999, in Squires 2005).

Mainstreaming is a coherent package of strategies that can be employed to address gender equality and women's empowerment in development. They not only seek to improve women's



immediate situation but also to address a systemic power imbalance which limits women's rights and engagement in decision making and power. Gender mainstreaming aims to do this through capacity building and support of women's projects, but also through support to donor staff to ensure they understand power and gender and can effectively and appropriately implement projects that carefully consider differing effects on men and women, boys and girls. Mainstreaming considers both men and women in development and can offer benefits not only to improve women's rights, but also those of disadvantaged men. Furthermore, improvements to women's lives have subsequent flow-on benefits to their families and communities, in the form of better health, education, and even greater national income.

### **How effective is gender mainstreaming?**

Gender mainstreaming has become prolific in policies across institutions globally. As previously noted, it has become more or less a strategy of choice to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. True and Mintrom (2001: 28) assert that actors within transnational networks have had a large impact on national policies and programmes, in particular, working to 'bring home' the international practice promoted by the UN and other global fora. They count more than 100 national organisations around the world using gender mainstreaming domestically. International aid organisations have a key role in promoting the use of gender mainstreaming, as funders of programmes in partner countries and assumed 'leaders' in gender equality. However, theorists, particularly from feminist traditions, have been overwhelmingly negative about the level of success of gender mainstreaming. As discussed above, there are three key aspects to the application of gender mainstreaming; a set of techniques or tools, integration of a gender perspective, and a political process of ownership (Booth and Bennett 2002, in Squire 2005: 372). Different states utilise and apply gender mainstreaming in different ways, and their decisions to do so are affected by a number of different factors. This first part of this section will look at how gender mainstreaming is being implemented by bilateral donors, and what affects the way that it is implemented, while the second will examine the main

critiques of gender mainstreaming and its lack of success through ODA policies and programmes.

The current form of gender mainstreaming has probably evolved from older gender equality strategies. Writers such as Jahan (1995) and Himmelstrand (1997) investigated the history of women in development and gender mainstreaming in donor countries such as Canada, Norway and Sweden. They describe a long history of implementation, with gender policies being integrated as early as the 1960s and 1970s. Instead of being called mainstreaming, these authors refer to the process as integration. Components are remarkably similar, with greater investment in programmes that focus on women, the employment of gender specialists and the adoption of policies which promoted gender equality. In the case of SIDA (the Swedish International Development Authority), they also introduced a Plan of Action and regional Women In Development offices and in-country specialists. Both writers note a loss in momentum and commitment by donors, although at different times, as results prove difficult to obtain in a short period of time.

In the late 1980s, renewed political commitment to women saw many donors significantly increase their investment in women and gender and development. This meant more staff and budget, with a focus on operational issues, including the introduction of operational guidelines and tools, as well as policy that focussed specifically on gender issues (Jahan 1995).

There are various aspects to mainstreaming which can be implemented in different ways. However, these different components mean that the success of gender mainstreaming in an aid programme can differ according to the way in which it is applied. The OECD has been collecting data from member states for over a decade concerning their spending and policies on international aid and development. This is especially useful to examine how donors are applying gender equality policies and to compare differences and similarities across donors. However, although states have their own responsibility for their aid programmes, the impact of international compacts and conventions, as well as political pressure, result in overwhelming

similarities between groups of donors. Lister (2006) states that gender mainstreaming in development policy had such an effect within the EU that it began to be implemented across local policies. Lister identifies the UK, Austria, Sweden, the Netherlands and France as supportive towards gender issues, while viewing Italy, Greece, Ireland, and in some cases, Portugal, as less sympathetic towards gender.

In 1999, an OECD-DAC study of their members recommended that aid organisations increase their efforts in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (OECD 1999). A later study in 2006 by OECD-DAC, again of its own members, found that it was bridging the gap between policy and practice that was proving to be the most difficult part of the implementation; stating that "no agency fully matches its own political rhetoric and objectives on gender equality with the required human and financial resources or accountability measures to ensure progress" (OECD 2007: 7). The study also found that less than 20% of sector-allocable bilateral funds were spent on gender equality, and two-thirds of that was spent on social areas such as health and education, traditionally considered 'women's sectors' (OECD 2007: 11).

An unnamed donor noted that, in their experience, programme based approaches have lacked comprehensive gender analysis, PRSPs had a poor record of including women's groups and lacked gender analysis, and it was difficult to work on gender issues while working with a partner country who did not prioritise gender issues (OECD 2007: 16). Different points of view, priorities and standards exist within communities, let alone between countries, so these issues clearly affect the ability of donors and recipients to agree on a shared programme of work.

Lister (2006) implies that the presence of women at policy and decision making level makes a difference to policy outcomes. Indeed, foreign policy is a well-known male dominated field, with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade often being referred to as an 'old boys' club'. It is not surprising, then, that the gender (and thus their knowledge, experiences and perceptions) of the decision makers impacts upon the type of policies being promoted or implemented within aid programmes.

Literature concerning gender mainstreaming has been overwhelmingly critical. Tiessen (2007: 11) identifies three types of review for gender mainstreaming. A critical view, a hopeful view, and a middle-of-the-road view, which identifies the lack of progress but real possibilities of effecting change. I believe that Tiessen is simplifying the positions of writers. Instead, I suggest that most views actually sit in the middle – commonly with a highly critical view of the way that mainstreaming has been implemented so far and the lack of commitment from donors and decision makers. However, gender mainstreaming still appears to retain support as a politically driven, transformational agenda. Next, I outline critical perspectives of how gender mainstreaming has been implemented so far and what has limited its success.

Moser and Moser (2005) argue that gender mainstreaming is “the most important mechanism” for the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment. However, disappointment with the gender mainstreaming agenda exists, particularly from feminist theorists, who believe that policies have not been taken far enough or implemented appropriately. Daly (2003: 449) believes that the “introduction of gender mainstreaming practices in most countries spells not a change of approach to gender but a more effective way of delivering an established equality policy that is oriented toward women.” In order for there to be success in policy change, Verloo (2001) argues that gender mainstreaming must appeal to policy makers; being clear on the shortfalls of current practice, while not estranging them from the practice of mainstreaming. In order for policy makers with no interest in gender to see how to implement policy and the clear benefits of doing so it has to be understandable and relatable. Squires (2005) claims that gender mainstreaming has remained a vague framework in practice, due to a lack of ownership, its fast subscription from nation-states and institutions, and the numerous definitions. This vagueness makes it difficult for policy advisors and implementers to appropriately write and apply gender policy. I pose that in fact, it is this quick implementation from institutions that has rendered it stuck in the policy world. Mainstreaming has offered a way for women to be included not only in policy content, but also in the process of making the policy. Rather than classify the definitions as different, I submit that they are all considering policy and its

implications for women. It is, however, the lack of integration of women and women's groups into the policy making that makes it impossible to successfully apply gender mainstreaming. Instead, gender mainstreaming has become something that 'has to be done', rather than central to aid policies and programmes (Parpart 2009: 54), and a proper process which is invested in.

Rather than framing gender inequality as a deep societal issue that is replicated through gender roles, stereotypes and institutions, gender mainstreaming as it is currently being applied in many Western countries (for example in the UK, Spain, Greece, see Daly 2003 for discussion) places the responsibility of gender inequality on operations and policies. The operational focus assumes that if policy makers and political actors are educated about gender mainstreaming, then gender inequality will cease to exist. However, this perspective does not affect societal attitudes or behaviours that exist outside of policy, for example, domestic violence against women. This lack of analysis on power relations reduces gender mainstreaming to an operational concern, rather than a feminist social structure analysis. This approach is also relevant when considering aid and development. The implementation of activities such as sex-disaggregated data collection and gender-sensitive budgeting will improve some aspects of women's lives, but it does not address or change the fundamental societal structures which support gender inequality. These are questions that must be addressed in order to have gender mainstreaming reach its full potential as transformational for gender equality and women's empowerment.

One effect is clear – gender mainstreaming makes aid and development programmes more expensive. They require sustained investment, in policy, personnel and programmes, and as the OECD-DAC (2007) found, many donors are not adequately investing in a way that guarantees success. According to the survey, less than two-thirds of donor respondents reported that the emphasis on gender equality has become more important since 1999. 58 per cent of respondents who had a gender policy prior to 1995 stated that new aid modalities and models of aid effectiveness made it more difficult than before to implement gender equality. No

respondents that had a gender policy prior to 1995 believed that aid modalities made it easier to implement gender policies. While the report draws the conclusion that this is negative to the view of implementing gender equality in practice, I do not follow this assumption. In an environment that perceives gender inequality as a low priority or one in which there is a substantial amount of work or change needed, it is not surprising that the ease of addressing gender issues does not improve. I believe this assumption in fact supports the statement made in the outcome document from the 1985 UN Third World Conference on Women – simply not enough is understood about the relationship between gender inequality, women's empowerment and development.

Kelkar (2005: 4690) points out that gender improvements are less likely to come from demand-driven action, given that men are largely in power, so policy implementation from projects and decision makers are critical. Indeed, more than ten years after the initial implementation of gender mainstreaming policies and programmes, much literature exists which is critical of the success and the actual results of mainstreaming. Rao and Kelleher (2005: 59) argue that in the case of many organisations, gender mainstreaming activities have been reduced to a selection of disjointed and disconnected activities. Daly (2003: 8) posits that there are two reactions to this variability in the practice of mainstreaming; firstly, that it is a result of the contextual application of mainstreaming, or secondly, that it is in effect made up of several kinds of strategies which work to reduce gender inequality, and that any of these can be applied as desired. While not arguing for absolute uniformity, Daly herself believes that this second option is troublesome, allowing for political decisions and for claims of gender mainstreaming to be made, when in fact, little work or effort is being done. She also argues that gender mainstreaming can rarely focus on gender at all, with activities and programmes frequently targeting women only (2003: 10).

While dissatisfaction exists with gender mainstreaming as a whole, development research has shown that gender specific activities, and specifically those that address women's inequality, show positive outcomes for women and their families. The much cited example of the rewards

of investment in girls' education is one example. In another, Kelkar (Murphy 1997, in Kelkar 2005: 4690) reports that a 1997 desk review of World Bank projects showed that those which took gender relations into account were more likely to achieve their objectives. Thus, gender mainstreaming has the potential to be a powerful tool for change. However, much rests on the particular aspects of a mainstreaming programme and its activities.

The success of gender mainstreaming may depend on the way that it is implemented within an institution. Squires (2005) believes that mainstreaming could be transformative if it includes a strong democratic focus and integrates the needs of growing diversity. Furthermore, the context of policy development is important when looking at what policy has been developed. Policies and programmes that integrate the priorities of local women along with the support of donors and partner countries are more likely to find success. Local ownership of aid and development, as outlined in the Paris Declaration, is a critical step on the pathway to a better life for women.

Although gender mainstreaming is politically driven, in part due to it being situated within feminist theory, there is a strong operational emphasis within its components (Daly 2003). Rather than changing society and the way gender is constructed, gender mainstreaming in its operational form only impacts upon policies. Furthermore, the emphasis on its use to gain better policy outcomes detracts from its original purpose of being transformational. Daly (2003) is quick to point out that context plays an important part in not only which activities are most relevant, but also in the way that mainstreaming is actually implemented. Historical, social and economic influences change what options seem available or exactly what change seems appropriate or wanted in a particular context.

### **So why do we have gender mainstreaming at all?**

With such criticism, one could be forgiven for wondering why gender mainstreaming still exists at all. It seems like gender mainstreaming was released after the Beijing conference as an

aspirational concept, but failed in its implementation. However the flaws are exactly that – in the implementation. As outlined above, it has been due to a lack of understanding, lack of political commitment and lack of resourcing that has left gender mainstreaming an overused term with little results to show for it. Gender mainstreaming as it is practiced now could be described as ‘add women and stir’ rather than meaningful engagements with women and their communities to make lasting improvements in their lives.

Himmelstrand (1997) asks how a donor could influence the quality of women’s lives in a developing nation. The late addition of gender aspects into development programmes, as well as the lack of connection between recipient and donor priorities means that the programmes supported by donors may not best support women or address the issues that they believe are most important. Similarly, a lack of commitment restricts the success and capabilities, while misunderstanding of mainstreaming could perhaps have had the most detrimental effects on the concept. Gender mainstreaming has been reduced to a simple box to check at the end of a project proposal or evaluation. Lack of awareness of the interconnections between gender inequalities, women’s empowerment and poverty have meant that women – half the population, but more than half of the world’s poor – have been neglected. Furthermore, a lack of power analysis between men and women fails to recognise the inequities that exist between men and women and why. This is what gender mainstreaming can offer development practitioners and how it can improve the lives of women around the world.

While these issues and others are still being worked on in these countries, such as in New Zealand, less progress has been realised in poorer nations. With less than five years remaining before the completion of the 2015 deadline for the Millennium Development Goals, it has been widely recognised that women’s equality and empowerment hold the key to the success of the eight goals (UN 2010). Aside from the MDGs, there are numerous other international frameworks, policies, conventions and institutions that strive to ensure equality for women, no matter what country they live in. However, these alone are not securing women’s futures. According to Ann Veneman, former Executive Director of the United Nations Children’s Fund



(UNICEF), we need to ensure that these agreements and policies have concrete pathways to action changes in women's lives (UNICEF 2006: vii). Development agencies, governments and NGOs have been utilising development theories on how to best include women in development practices to improve outcomes for women.

Gender mainstreaming comes out of the GAD period as an attempt to address women's inequality through the recognition of the importance of a broader social context, including the role of men. Overall, gender mainstreaming seems difficult to implement. Particularly difficult is its aim of transformation, where it attempts to address power inequalities. In countries where men hold significant power, such as in the Pacific region where there are few women in parliament, it is difficult to imagine why these men would seek to change the status quo in which they benefit. How to introduce gender mainstreaming in these environments, that may be highly discriminatory or have discriminative aspects towards women, are perhaps a weak point in the model of mainstreaming. However, it offers a coherent package of tools to address gender inequality and has the ability to improve women's lives. A significant issue raised since the growing importance of the aid effectiveness agenda is whether gender mainstreaming can be implemented in a way that respects the boundaries established in the Paris Declaration and local ownership of development. Similarly, how can gender mainstreaming be implemented in whole, when in the programmes, policies and priorities of donors are being developed in multiple foreign countries, largely by men? It is beyond the scope of this research to answer these questions, but related issues of how to strategically work with partners will be explored in chapter four. I argue that it seems inappropriate to claim failure on the gender mainstreaming 'project' when there have been significant misunderstandings and failures in implementation. Furthermore, improving gender equality and women's empowerment requires a social and cultural shift that may take generations – this is not a process that can be carried out over a short three or five year project cycle.

This chapter has established what is happening internationally in gender equality and women's empowerment, and how gender mainstreaming is and should be implemented. As we'll see in

chapter four, gender has been mainstreamed or applied as a cross-cutting issue in New Zealand since 2002. However, it seems under threat under current circumstances. The implementation of gender mainstreaming is shaped by the overall context of development aid, so next I discuss the overall context in New Zealand before going on to look specifically at gender and aid in the New Zealand context. The next chapter sets the scene for official development assistance over the past decade or so.

# New Zealand's Overseas Development Assistance

## Introduction

Although a small country, New Zealand places significant importance on its role in international affairs. With colonial responsibilities in the Pacific since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, New Zealand's international role has changed somewhat from colonial administrator to supportive neighbour. The way in which aid has been delivered has changed over time. New Zealand's overseas development assistance has undergone a series of significant changes over the past fifty or so years. Moving from basic needs and industrial growth models, to structural adjustment, to rights-based participatory development and then again towards sustainable economic development (Overton 2009), changes in New Zealand's ODA have tended to reflect international changes in development practice and aid distribution. Not only has the focus of aid changed, but so has the model of delivery. Delivered through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, except for the period of 2002 – 2009 when the semi-autonomous agency NZAID existed, aid has often been seen as an extension of foreign policy. Since a significant review in 2001, New Zealand's ODA has strengthened an already strong focus on the Pacific region and integrated gender, human rights, and the environment throughout the programme.

However, each aid donor is unique, given its particular context of domestic politics and regional roles and responsibilities, which interacts within the international environment (Banks et al. 2011). This chapter aims to set the scene of the New Zealand government's delivery of aid, with a particular focus on the evolution of policy and structure. First, I examine the period 2000 – 2008, during which NZAID was existed. Four significant reviews of NZODA were undertaken over this period which are summarised here, providing a view on policy development and the institutional structure. In 2008, a change of government brought about significant new changes to ODA, moving away from international best practice. This new direction is critiqued through an analysis of its sole policy document. This chapter charts the history and changes in policy and structure of the overall aid programme to provide context in the following chapter which

examines how these various factors influence how gender mainstreaming is shaped and included in NZODA.

I will demonstrate the fragility of ODA at the hands of politics, where its purpose and direction can be changed at each change of government, whether or not it is demonstrating progress and capability in its work. Furthermore, while bilateral aid is guided by international agreements and best practice, donors' programmes are unique according to each context and the intent set for ODA.

### **A recent history of New Zealand's aid**

Historically, New Zealand's aid focus has been predominantly on the Pacific. Colonial ties and close proximity have often meant that New Zealand saw its small aid contribution as most effective in the Pacific region (Luteru and Teasdale 1993, NZ Aid Programme 2011). Until the 1980s, aid to the Pacific region totalled approximately 30 per cent of the total aid budget (Banks et al 2011: 5), growing to currently over half of New Zealand's ODA (NZ Aid Programme 2012a). International aid delivery has undergone a series of reviews and changes since 2000. Until 2002, New Zealand's aid programme was coordinated through the foreign affairs office. In 2000, a Ministerial review of NZODA was commissioned. Stating that globalisation was having growing implications on the nature of development and the increasing specialisation of its delivery, it argued that high levels of expertise were essential when designing effective ODA delivery (Grossman and Lees 2001). This review was given three central questions to investigate;

1. How can NZODA best contribute to poverty alleviation and capacity building?
2. How to best assist in the development of best practice policies for just and equitable economic, environmental and social policies for present and future generations?
3. How to best address the root causes of problems in the Pacific, since they are our closest neighbours in more ways than one.

The review was highly critical of New Zealand's aid efforts. At the time of the review, New Zealand had 63 bilateral partners and gave aid to a total of 93 countries. In fact, more than half of aid at the time went to the Pacific, but there was no planning or programme of action in place, and the review team found that there was also no overarching aim for NZODA. Not only this, but there was no analysis of need, or evaluation of how funding to bilateral or multilateral partners matched the aims of NZODA (Grossman and Lees 2001: 5). Heavily project based, the review found that NZODA did not operate using best practice. With no set process for monitoring and evaluation – problematic as it would be without aims in the first place – it is difficult to see that the projects would have had any measurable or positive effects on the targeted communities.

Although there had been reviews undertaken previously, by the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee and by OECD-DAC, the review team believed this to be the most significant and thorough review that had ever been undertaken in the history of NZODA (Grossman and Lees 2001: 89). The review team felt that the existing aid programme was one which did not “reflect the key qualities of good development assistance” (Grossman and Lees 2001: 89) and made a total of 15 recommendations. Most significantly, the authors stressed that NZODA required one main focus with a strong policy framework to help ensure efficient and effective direction of the programme. They felt that, following international best practice, this could only be instituted by having an autonomous agency to administer ODA. Importantly, the review highlights that this same conclusion was reached by the review from the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee in 1990.

As a result of perceived international expectations that New Zealand should contribute to addressing the significant poverty issues which existed in the Pacific, other recommendations included that New Zealand should instead focus on just ten partner countries. With the acknowledgement that two-thirds of those in poverty are women, Recommendation 13 stated that gender, along with human rights and the environment, should be mainstreamed across the

delivery of New Zealand's ODA. Overall, the review identified key aspects of best practice and methods to increase effectiveness of the programme and offered suggestions to introduce these significant changes to improve overall aid delivery.

Also in 2001, OECD-DAC undertook a peer review of New Zealand's ODA. It was also highly critical of NZ's aid programme; stating that the close ties between foreign politics, trade and aid could mean that aid was less effective and efficient, it was also deemed less likely to achieve international development goals as it instead aimed to benefit New Zealand (OECD-DAC 2001).

As a result of these critical reviews, in 2002, NZAID (New Zealand Agency for International Development) was created, a semi-autonomous agency attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to manage New Zealand's official development assistance. As recommended in the 2001 Ministerial review, the agency was given its own budget, chief executive and mission. Its core purpose was poverty alleviation. Over the next six years, the agency developed extensive policies to assist with this mission. Policy statements, cross-cutting guides and toolkits on human rights, gender, the environment and other thematic issues provided a clear message of the values of the organisation, the outcomes expected and the methodologies to be used to fulfil its mission. Overton (2009: 6) argued that the new focus on poverty alleviation spelled an end to enforced economic reforms and was indicative of more partner-led development.

In 2005, New Zealand's ODA underwent another two reviews; again by a Cabinet-initiated review and by OECD-DAC. The review conducted by OECD-DAC praised the new organisation, calling the dramatic restructuring of ODA delivery into NZAID "impressive" (OECD-DAC 2005: 10). The report praised the highly competent team of staff, the over-arching mission of poverty alleviation and its policies, and the "capacity to deliver state of the art programmes" (ibid.). The reviewers also praised NZAID's participation in broader discussions on trade and its support and work internationally for more effective aid. Concerns were raised around public knowledge and perceptions of what NZAID does. The review supported the continuation of the development of programming after a period of intense policy development.

The Ministerial review of NZAID was conducted by Dr. Marilyn Waring in 2004/5, to evaluate progress on the enactment of the 2001 Ministerial review recommendations. The timing also allowed the reviewer to provide comments on the contents of the OECD-DAC review while presenting her own findings. Waring's review took place over five months, resulting in 17 areas of recommendations. One of the most significant, and perhaps least expected, recommendations was that the Cabinet Minute (01) 28/8, which determined poverty alleviation as the central focus of NZAID, be extended to all governmental agencies delivering ODA from the NZAID budget.

This review was less critical of NZODA, rather detailing the work and progress of NZAID. Recommendations highlight areas where improvements could be made, focusing on improving the clarity of direction and best practice. Waring details the huge amount of work that had been done by NZAID as well as the key issues they faced. One particularly valuable aspect of the review was the inclusion of comments and thoughts from a wide range of stakeholders. Waring highlights conflicts between NZAID and MFAT; for example, the cross-purposes of MFAT foreign policy and NZAID, particularly concerning areas of international trade (Waring 2005: 8-10). Quotes shared in the review show that while some felt that NZAID was spread too thin between Africa, Asia and Latin America and some policies were too broad, there was a genuine feeling that NZAID had good relationships and was working to further develop and establish the exact directions of the organisation.

While difficulties were noted in the co-existence of development and political objectives, the second set of review reports highlighted that communication between the MFAT and NZAID was regular and constructive. Difficulties in budget sizes were found by both reviews to constrain the ability of staff to complete their tasks without having to work over-time or have the increased workload affect the turn-around on administration, such as contracts and agreements. Both reviews identified an issue with the number of donors still being too large and the focus too broad. The OECD-DAC review identified around 100 partners, and Waring's

review showed that not only was Treasury unhappy with the stretch of resources, but NGOs and others believed that political considerations were complicating NZAID's work, negatively influencing and confusing New Zealand's aid and foreign policy presence, particularly in Latin America and some of Asia (Waring 2005: 27). Having such a large number of partners not only stretches aid dollars thinly, it also stretches aid personnel thinly (Waring 2005: 29). Waring identifies three 'areas of excellence' that NZAID had developed since being directed within the Cabinet papers in 2001. These included 'change management' (in the process and development of the new semi-autonomous body), 'new modalities' (ways of delivering aid with reduced transactional costs and better partner alignment) and good consultation practices. Waring also provided further comment on gender and mainstreaming within NZAID, which will be returned to later.

Overall, the 2005 reviews from both the OECD-DAC and the Ministerial review gave a positive analysis on the progress of NZAID in building a strong strategic focus, comprehensive policies, and good practice. The reviews highlighted several areas that needed addressing, such as a reduction in the number of partners, but also noted that improvements were in process. Both reviews characterised NZAID as a highly iterative and consultative organisation, and although concerns were highlighted, some of these were acknowledged as having been improved already or having pending changes to correct them.

As a new agency, NZAID had been found to be making good progress. Having been reviewed numerous times from different stakeholders, both local and international, the institution received positive feedback on its work so far and the direction it was heading. However, there had also been heavy expectations placed on the agency to provide quick results and improvements to the lives of the communities that it was funding. Prior to the election in November 2008, the National Party signalled its intent to change the priorities and functions of the aid agency if it was voted into power. The party did in fact win the election, and subsequently quickly initiated changes to NZAID. The next section discusses these changes in more detail.



## **More changes to NZODA**

After the existence of NZAID as a NZODA delivery mechanism for six years, the change of government in 2008 brought further dramatic change to the delivery and format of New Zealand's ODA. In April 2009, Cabinet agreed to reshape NZAID. The semi-autonomous nature of NZAID was removed and the agency was subsumed back into the MFAT, becoming directly accountable again to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, rather than to its own Chief Executive. The new form, the New Zealand Aid Programme, coordinated by the International Development Group (IDG) within MFAT, was given a new mission, focussing on sustainable development with a particular attention on sustainable economic development. This could be considered the most significant change, where the overall mission of NZODA was changed from poverty alleviation to "support sustainable development in developing countries, in order to reduce poverty and to contribute to a more secure, equitable and prosperous world" (NZ Aid Programme 2011: 2), with a specific focus on sustainable economic development. In terms of the wider programme, gender, human rights and the environment were maintained as cross-cutting themes throughout the work of the aid programme.

## **The move towards sustainable development**

The 2008 elected National-led government initiated rapid and significant changes to New Zealand's aid programme. While the structural changes occurred early, it took longer for policy and programming to be redefined and shared publicly. In March 2011, a new International Development Policy Statement was released. Covering the direction and work of the programme, it provided a more in-depth discussion of the new focus on sustainable development, and in particular the specific contents of the new emphasis on sustainable economic development. Several "priority themes" are outlined within the policy; economic development, social development, good governance and peace and security, and disaster preparedness. The next section examines the contents of this new policy.

## **Economic development key focus**

The current overall mission of the New Zealand Aid Programme is given as “to support sustainable development in developing countries, in order to reduce poverty and contribute to a more secure, equitable, and peaceful world” (NZ Aid Programme 2011: 2). The policy statement clearly establishes that economic development is seen as a clear pathway towards achieving this goal. As well as being repeatedly referred to as the “core” or “primary” focus, the economic aspects of the main priorities are also common. In addition to economic development, there are strong themes throughout the policy on the complementary nature of foreign policy and trade with the Aid Programme. The policy explicitly states that the Aid Programme results “should be consistent with, and support, New Zealand’s foreign policy and external relations outcomes.” (NZ Aid Programme 2011: 11). There is no scope here to discuss the political nature of aid, however, it is interesting to note that this goes against comments made in both the 2001 and 2005 Ministerial reviews about the importance of impartiality and separation of ODA from foreign policy. Agriculture, fisheries and tourism are strong features in the new focus and are tied with New Zealand’s competitive advantage in these three areas. This section will discuss the contents of the new programme direction and the consequences of this latest changes.

## **Setting priorities**

The policy clearly introduces four key foci in the aid programme; economic development, social development, disaster preparedness, and good governance, peace and security. In particular, the policy states that the Aid Programme will work with New Zealand’s competitive advantage. As a result, emphasis is placed on agriculture, tourism, fisheries, policing, and renewable energy. Combined with the core focus on economic development, it appears that the Programme would be likely to focus on infrastructure and business opportunities.

While the introduction establishes these areas of work to be priority within the aid programme, it becomes unclear how priority will be negotiated between these, sometimes competing, areas of focus. Compounding this, there are many other smaller areas which are also promised priority, such as “prioritise relevant investments in education and health...” (NZ Aid Programme 2011: 7), and “The New Zealand Aid Programme can target interventions which address the greatest burden of disease...” (ibid.). Putting aside these smaller work areas, it is difficult to see how four very different, competing, areas can all be prioritised at once.

From the outline on the role of economic development within the Programme, it appears that, in fact, priority will be given to those activities which are seen to complement economic development. This is most clearly seen in statements such as, “The New Zealand Aid Programme will prioritise relevant investments in education and health in order to promote human development and *support sustainable economic development*” (NZ Aid Programme 2011: 7) and, “... educating girls *boosts prosperity and economic productivity* and results in healthier, better educated children. *Each year of education can raise the level of individual earnings on average by 7-10 percent*” (ibid.) (emphasis added). This focus on the economic outcomes has come under criticism. A focus on infrastructure and business rather than filling basic needs or addressing fundamental human rights has attracted condemnation from academics and NGOs as a failure to address the root causes of poverty and build the capabilities of people in a long-term way. Furthermore, authors such as Overton (2009) and Wood (2011) have questioned whether economic development can be used to achieve improvements in social development, such as the MDG targets.

Three issues were retained as cross-cutting issues; environment, human rights and gender. Maintained as “a means to ensure good outcomes and to manage risks” (CAB Min (09) 13/3C: 2), the issues appear to not have been given priority. This perhaps comes from the Cabinet papers that directed their inclusion; which seem to highlight their importance as a means to an end rather than being important issues that need addressing in themselves. In the Annex to the Cabinet papers, written by MFAT and NZAID staff, it recommended that “Cross-cutting issues be

pursued not as an end in themselves but as a means to ensure good outcomes and to manage risks” (Cabinet Minute 3 Appendix 1: 10). The language indicates one of two possible situations. Firstly, that the staff have already become aware of Minister McCully’s (in)famous dislike<sup>1</sup> for issues such as gender, and have chosen to portray the cross-cutting issues in a light that may be more palatable to accept. Alternatively, it could be a symptom of the lack of knowledge of the importance of or ‘how-to’ of implementation of cross-cutting/mainstreaming and the three thematic issues. With known long vacancies in the gender specialist role since 2001, this would not be surprising – although I cannot say whether this was representative for all cross-cutting issues. In a difficult working environment, unpopular issues perceived as being hard work need supporters to champion their cause. Although some may argue that it does not matter, because the issues were retained to be cross-cutting, I contend that this shows the lack of knowledge somewhere in the system – whether it is at Ministerial or departmental level – on the importance of key issues to reducing poverty and improving people’s lives.

### **Why were the changes made?**

Two major changes were made the NZODA in 2009; in policy and in institutional framework. To try to understand why the changes were made, it is necessary to look at the Cabinet Minutes from 2009 which made the formal changes, along with the accompanying papers which explained them. There are three Cabinet Minutes, combined with three Cabinet papers and one appendix. Minute and Paper One broadly discuss New Zealand policy on aid, trade and economic development in Pacific, written by the Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Minister of Trade. Paper and Minute Two cover institutional structure and the reintegration of NZAID into MFAT; this paper is written by the offices of the Minister of State Services and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Minute and Paper Three, along with Annex One, discuss the policy directions of NZODA in Pacific Island Forum countries; the Paper

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<sup>1</sup> Within the international development-NGO sector in Wellington there has been significant informal communication sharing reports of Minister McCully refusing to sign off policy that mentions gender, as well as the Minister’s comments made during question time following a speech, in February 2011 – this is discussed later on.

was written by the Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, while the Annex is written by MFAT and NZAID.

The Cabinet papers downplay the structural changes to NZAID, stating that changes were to alter MFAT's management and accountability over NZAID (CAB Min (09) 13/3A: 1). The new form is assumed to address transaction costs and accountability risks, although Overton (2009) claims that the changes were more about enabling close alignment between foreign policy and aid. It certainly does this, as the loss of NZAID meant the loss of separate lines of management and responsibility – the chief executive of MFAT can now control ODA, rather than direction coming from its own executive director, the Minister, or indeed, Cabinet. Point 7.3 of Cabinet Minute (09) 13/3A (p2) supports this conclusion, stating it was desirable to “normalise the way that MFAT is set up in terms of being a department that administers multiple programmes, in particular by operating under delegations from the Secretary, acting as chief executive, instead of arrangements imposed by Cabinet”. Best practice discussed in the 2001 Ministerial review identified that the separation of aid from foreign policy was essential to ensure that aid could be long term and distinct in its purpose of poverty alleviation, which has been done by other large bilateral donors, such as the UK, Canada and Australia (Grossman and Lees 2001).

This drive for alignment between foreign affairs and aid was not seen as mutually exclusive to aid aligning with foreign partners. One particular example of this is in Cabinet Minute 3 ((09) 13/3C) which confirms that ODA should pursue concrete outcomes that are well coordinated with other donors and closely aligned with partners, to “maintain the benefits achieved in recent years for aid delivery that aims to be in line with international best practice, as set out in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness” (CAB Min (09) 13/3A: 3). It appears that the Minister originally wanted to completely change the focus of NZODA to sustainable economic development, removing poverty alleviation as a focus. The latter is labelled as a ‘deficit model’ within the Cabinet Papers, while economic development is contrasted as an ‘opportunity model’. However, the total removal of poverty alleviation is noted as being out of step with international best practice and the Annex to Cabinet Paper Three implies that doing so would

reflect negatively on NZ. To counter this, the Cabinet Papers offered instead that both aims can be included in the mission, so as to work towards economic prosperity by addressing broader economic issues as well as the multi-dimensional nature of poverty. Worryingly, the annex paper, written by NZAID, then states, “This focus will help deliver an improvement in trade statistics and other relevant economic performance indicators over time.” (Cabinet Paper 3 Annex 1: 7). This clearly is out of step with the objectives and purpose of ODA.

It is not the place of this research to provide a detailed discussion on the purpose of an aid programme or on the broader changes to NZODA. These have been well researched and commented on in papers such as Spratt (2012), Banks et al. (2011), and Overton (2009), and even the effects on NGOs, by Challies, McGregor and Sentes (2011). I believe, however, that the reaction from both civil society and from academics has been overwhelmingly critical. As Spratt (2012) points out, no one was calling for change. Instead here I focus on providing an overview which sets the scene of the politics and changes in NZODA which influence how gender mainstreaming, as well as gender equality and women’s empowerment, are included in the work of NZODA; as importantly, none of these papers had a focus on gender equality or women’s empowerment within NZODA or its effectiveness up until that time.

### ***How does the new aid delivery form shape up so far?***

A review of the newly restructured NZ Aid Programme was completed by OECD-DAC in 2010. At the time of writing, no ministerial review had been completed since 2005, to comment on the success (or lack thereof) of NZAID changes or the 2009 changes. Overall, the review was moderately positive of NZODA, especially given the turmoil being felt in the sector at the time. The review received some criticism from the NGO community, particularly as some felt that it did not reflect the high tension atmosphere of the NZAID/MFAT-NGO relationship, as relatively large-scale changes were introduced to the way NGOs were funded to carry out aid and development work internationally (see for example, McKinnon 2011). The 2010 review openly acknowledged the Government’s motivations for reintegrating the aid programme – to better

align aid with foreign policy and trade objectives. However, it also suggests that there are benefits to the aid programme from these changes, in particular, by augmenting “the development dimension of foreign policy” (OECD-DAC 2010: 11). Given the comments of previous OECD-DAC reviews, which acknowledged the tension between the trade philosophy of NZAID and MFAT, this turn-around from recognised best practice seems strange. These comments are highly unusual, given the past decade of theory and practice supporting a clear distinction between development and foreign policy objectives which was noted as far back as the 2001 Ministerial review, as well as the 2001 OECD-DAC review of NZODA. It seems that these changes are in fact more likely to benefit NZ’s foreign policy interests, by strengthening New Zealand’s priorities with the ability to offer monetary benefits in the form of aid to countries that support New Zealand’s interests.

At the time of the 2010 OECD-DAC review, policy direction was still being confirmed, which the reviewers noted was causing some unease within IDG (in MFAT) and partners in both New Zealand and internationally. The review notes in several places that the policy content should not only consider economic aspects of sustainable development, but should also “... make sure that attention is kept on areas whose direct contribution to sustainable economic growth may be less tangible.” (OECD-DAC 2010: 11). The reviewers suggest that both disaster risk management and climate change are also mainstreamed within NZODA, taking into account the Pacific context of its work. The authors believe that a strong economic development focus should not preclude a strong focus on social and environmental outcomes, including improving indicators for the MDGs.

The 2010 review also echoes the 2005 review, with concern about the lack of public awareness and knowledge of aid and development, despite investment in global education. The reviewers note that scepticism about development seemed high amongst parliamentarians. However, the report does not mention the occurrence of significant cuts to global education following the aid programme changes. MFAT cut funding to both the Global Focus Aotearoa (previously known as Global Education Centre) and the Council for International Development (CID), both

organisations which educated both the public and NGO staff on global and development issues. This is a significant omission, as creating an enabling environment for civil society has become recognised as increasingly important in the international development sector.

Other points highlighted in the review include: that New Zealand is ranked 17 out of 23 within the OECD in terms of ODA/gross national income (GNI) ratio; that New Zealand should consider further reducing the number of bilateral partners in Asia by focussing on New Zealand's comparative advantage; that budgeting increases will be required to ensure New Zealand retains high quality work while aid is increased; and that IDG should recognise the comparative advantage of working with New Zealand-based NGOs as partners, as well as trying to widen their work with other stakeholders such as the New Zealand private sector. New Zealand was also encouraged to continue to ensure the local ownership of aid projects, with the alignment of aid to partner countries even though New Zealand's focus had narrowed to sustainable economic development.

Good work does still exist in the NZ Aid Programme. In early 2012, they announced that there would be enhanced transparency and reporting on New Zealand's ODA through the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). The NZ Aid Programme website now has available the most recent data outlining what work is being supported and basic information as to why (the benefits or expected outcomes). However, critics have deemed these most recent changes as undoing the progress of the early 2000s. As evidenced by the growing research body on New Zealand's aid, and even the media around the 2009 changes, it would be fair to say that critics far outnumber supporters of the changes. There has been widespread suspicion of the motivations behind this change in policy. While aid programmes are generally seen as being altruistic avenues to rebalance inequalities created through colonialism and other environment and context, the specific motivations for these changes have been suggested as being driven by a desire to increase trade and economic benefits for New Zealand, with the structural change supporting foreign policy interference into aid and development decisions. This realignment goes against international best practice.



“Foreign Affairs and ODA have distinctly different missions. ODA asks partner governments: what are your needs and how can we help them? Foreign Affairs asks: what are our needs and how can we advance them? These two missions are not only fundamentally different, they can sometimes be in conflict. The mixed missions muddy transparency of outcomes resulting in an organisation that cannot find out what really works for the achievement of any one goal... Poverty reduction is not core business of MFAT and given the differences in missions it could never be made so. As a fundamental issue of transparency, ODA needs its own stream of contestable policy development and advice going directly to a minister.” (Ministerial review of NZODA, Grossman and Lees 2001: 6)

The politics of ODA are obvious in the New Zealand context, with the vastly different forms of the New Zealand government’s aid programme under the centre-left Labour Party, and centre-right National Party. Both NZAID and the NZ Aid Programme have been heavily influenced by party politics. This presents a difficulty when the changes being worked towards in development for poverty alleviation are generational. In reality the current shape of the programme is very new. Even NZAID was still developing its direction and content after six years, so it is very possible that it will be 2020 or beyond before New Zealanders and partner countries see whether these latest changes have contributed long term benefits to the lives of people in partner countries.

The past decade has been turbulent for NZODA. This chapter has shown that politics plays a large role in determining the direction of aid in New Zealand. With two major alterations over the last ten years, both in the direction and policies as well as in the institutional form of delivery, it appears that party politics has had a significant influence on New Zealand’s aid. NZODA is politically fragile; a portfolio relatively easily changed. As a public-facing entity, particularly overseas, it appears that political parties believe that ‘branding’ ODA according to their political ideology is important to present their desired image.

Nevertheless, international best practice has some influence on the practices of aid and development here in New Zealand. In all of the changes made since 2001, international best practice has played a role in defining the shape and purpose of New Zealand's ODA. However, contextual differences meant that differences in focus and delivery format also exist. Ministers' influence here is also apparent, along with foreign affairs and New Zealand's interests, as certain issues are prioritised by New Zealand as a donor, no matter what the priorities of partner countries.

Civil society has a very important role to play in monitoring the purpose and success of ODA. However, the OECD-DAC has repeatedly reported a lack of knowledge on aid amongst the New Zealand public. Since the cut of funds to Global Focus, which played a central role in providing information for students, teachers and professionals about development and development issues, there has been no one able to fill this gap. This can only have further negative effects, contributing not only to a declining understanding, but also leaving tax payers ill-informed to monitor and judge the government's reporting of its work, as well as its effectiveness in development. Furthermore, cuts to CID have limited the ability of NGOs to fill this gap – to monitor the government and to report to the public. The cessation in training offered by CID also leaves New Zealand-based NGOs potentially less connected to best practice, making it more difficult for NGOs to both monitor international best practice in development as well as deliver funding and services in developing countries.

This chapter has shown that the issues identified within Ministerial reviews and peer reviews undertaken by OECD-DAC were not fully addressed, either at the time of the review or over the past decade. Issues still exist in public knowledge and understanding of ODA and development issues. Aid is now highly aligned with foreign policy, but it will be some time before the effects of the latest changes can be seen. These issues show the complexities in ODA and highlight issues which will be explored further in the next chapter, which examines gender mainstreaming and the broader context of gender equality and women's empowerment within

NZODA. Additionally, I further identify themes which affect the integration and success of gender policies within NZODA, set within the international context and best practice established in the previous chapter.

## Gender equality, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in NZODA

### Introduction

International development has changed over the past six decades, with women now occupying more space than ever before. Women went from being an add-on or possibly receiving trickle-down benefits to being promoted to somewhere near the decision-making table. While improvements have been made, they have not been enough to significantly improve the lives and livelihoods of women around the world. As earlier discussed, this is critical, as women face some of the greatest rights abuses. Gender mainstreaming was developed from the 1995 World Conference for Women held in Beijing. It was celebrated as a framework to improve gender equality and women's empowerment, offering a potentially transformational programme of activities for states to implement to improve women's lives in all areas. It called for inclusion of women in the formation and implementation of policies and programmes, and having clear responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation which aimed to ensure issues were addressed for women according to their priorities.

In the chapter which outlined gender mainstreaming, I found that while the relevant literature was overwhelmingly critical, this was primarily as a result of the lack of political commitment and follow through, which subsequently led to the failure of gender mainstreaming.

Governments often signed up to international agreements and instruments but rarely was there follow through with financial investment, comprehensive policy or programming which specifically addressed women's needs or inequalities in gender. However, research has shown that programmes and projects that invest in women were more likely to be successful. It seems against common sense then, that governments would not make significant investments in women and better include them in development processes. These issues are not limited to theory or to individual countries' experience of gender mainstreaming.

The previous chapter outlined the history of NZODA over the past decade. The institutional structure and policies of the agency which delivers aid has undergone massive overhauls in this period. From poverty alleviation to sustainable economic development, and from delivery through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to NZAID, and back again, there have been significant changes to aid delivery and content. However, the changes to NZODA have not occurred in a vacuum. The international setting has also undergone changes and in some cases these have influenced the New Zealand context.

This chapter presents New Zealand's experience of gender mainstreaming, within the wider context of gender equality and women's empowerment. With the changes already described within NZODA, along with the inherent difficulties identified with gender mainstreaming, it is clear that the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda has been ignored or struggled to be implemented. There are two aspects to aid programmes; the policies which dictate the content and chart the course of the programme; and the practice, the methods used and the outcomes. This chapter is split into two sections to cover these two separate areas of NZODA. Policy documents authored by NZAID and the NZ Aid Programme over the past ten years are explored to see the intent of gender mainstreaming and working towards gender equality and women's empowerment. Policies will be examined within the context of international engagement of women in development and gender mainstreaming. The second half of this chapter will examine the practices of implementing gender equality and women's empowerment into New Zealand's aid. Through interviews with gender specialists four key areas were identified which were found to influence the success of policies and the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda within aid and development broadly, and in the New Zealand context specifically. These will be discussed before moving onto the conclusion chapter which summarises the learnings of this research and makes several suggestions for improvements.

## PART ONE – The policies

Policy plays an essential role within organisations. Guiding activities within an organisation, they offer insights into an organisation as well as providing starting points for civil society to hold them to account. Indeed, policies show institutions at their most self-reflective.

When NZAID was established in 2002, new policies needed to be created to establish the parameters, priorities and methods of work. While Cabinet had directed that the overall focus be directed to poverty alleviation and that gender, human rights and the environment be mainstreamed, this still left a lot to be decided on how exactly the organisation would implement these areas of work. It was five years before an official policy on gender equality and women's empowerment was released. The policy set NZAID's work largely within international best practice – with a focus on issues affecting women as well as power and gender relations, along with a gender specialist role to facilitate and implement the policy.

Since the most recent changes which established the NZ Aid Programme (2009), there has been a lack of clarity around which policies from NZAID were still in effect, as well as general lack of information about the new modus operandi of sustainable economic development and how that was to be achieved. In the three years since these latest changes, only one overarching policy has been developed and released, with very little focus on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Overall, we have seen that NZODA has gone through a decade essentially full of changes. This section of the chapter will examine the policies over the two distinct periods in NZODA in the past decade. First, the policy that NZAID released in 2007 which specifically dealt with gender equality and women's empowerment. Second, the overarching policy released in 2011 by the NZ Aid Programme, as no other policy exists in this current period. Because it is a general policy, I examine it looking specifically for where and how gender and women is discussed. I will initially present the contents of the policies, in chronological order, before then providing my

analysis of these documents. However, before doing this, I will set the scene of gender equality and women's empowerment in NZODA by looking back before the 2001 Ministerial review.

### **The history of gender in NZODA pre-2002**

New Zealand's commitment to gender equality in its development programme has varied over the past decade. Since the Beijing Conference in 1995, gender mainstreaming has become a common phrase in development policies throughout the world, and New Zealand has been no exception.

By 2000, New Zealand was party to many international agreements, declarations and conventions that established a minimum standard of rights for women around the world, and established responsibilities for states to protect them. The history of gender in New Zealand's ODA is largely unwritten and details are particularly difficult to uncover prior to the creation of NZAID in 2002. NZADDs has recently begun to document the history of NZODA but they have yet to produce any papers focussing on gender. There have been gender specialist positions, on and off, over the past decade or more, and those people, along with some other 'insiders' have the knowledge about what has been done. I was able to find out some information through interviews with several people who are or were insiders. What we do know is that a gender and development policy was established for NZODA in 1998, before NZAID was created, but this policy has not been published. Referred to as a good benchmark for future policy frameworks, it was reportedly one of the first policies within the OECD developed by a bilateral donor that considered gender and development specifically (Grossman and Lees 2001: 43). Although other evidence shows that European countries beat New Zealand to the punch in terms of adopting gender equality policies in ODA, it is significant that projects were required to pass gender requirements at this time.

However, the existence of a pre-NZAID gender policy should be considered against the background of the broader state of NZODA policy at the time. The skills and knowledge

required to enforce a gender policy may not have existed. Skills and knowledge are crucial in any specialisation, helping to strive for and achieve best practice. The Ministerial review in 2001 revealed that staff managing NZODA within MFAT were commonly rotated and did not necessarily have any skills or experience to match their portfolio, suggesting that an interest in gender policy was likely to have been the fortunate result of individual advocacy. A lack of training in development, let alone gender equality and women's empowerment, had the potential to undermine the success of project outcomes for women. Marilyn Waring (personal interview 2012) asserted that contractors were heavily relied upon to deliver aid programmes – and that these practitioners were unlikely to know about working with women and gender issues in developing countries – all projects had to comply with the gender policy and were checked by one staff member who was committed to the policy. However, it is unclear what happened prior to 1998 before the policy was implemented.

### **Gender equality and women's empowerment in policy 2002 - 2008**

In 2002, when NZAID was established with its mission to alleviate poverty, gender, along with human rights and the environment, was mandated by Cabinet to be mainstreamed across the agency. Despite this, by the time of the 2005 Ministerial review by Dr Marilyn Waring, no official gender policy had been developed, although a draft was apparently in use. I was not able to access a copy so I need to rely on Waring's analysis within her review, which asserted that progress in the use of mainstreaming was slow and often did not go far enough. She pointed out that the intended use of mainstreaming was in fact to make sure that

... the issue plays a dominant part in analysis, strategies and resource allocation. It is not just an addition to the agenda, nor a numerical output description. Mainstreaming cannot be taken for granted as a central feature of a focus on poverty, because human rights, gender and the environment are structural issues about injustice, exploitation and inequalities at a very deep level in any poverty analysis. (Waring 2005: 30)



Although there was no *official* gender policy, Waring still commended the gender work that had been done by NZAID, even while suggesting it did not go far enough. With several women focussed projects in the Pacific, it can be assumed that the draft policy, or some document, was guiding the priorities and choices of the Agency. So, it appears that at this stage of operation, NZAID was regarded as having reasonable gender policies, and that gender was an explicit component of programme work. However, as Waring (2005: 34) pointed out, the mere existence of specific gender projects was not what is meant by 'gender mainstreaming'. Recommendations from the review included the development of new policies and accompanying implementation plans, as well as including gender aspects to funding contracts and contestable funds.

A lack of investment in human resources gives a negative perception of how gender was valued by the organisation. The newly established NZAID human rights desk was empty since the establishment of the organisation and the gender advisor had been not long seconded from the Canadian ODA counterpart, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Waring (2005: 30) noted that the OECD-DAC review conducted at the same time did not make any mention of these issues. This may point to a lack of investment or importance placed on gender and women within the agency. As a new mainstreamed issue, one might have expected it to be a priority (and a necessity) to have a specialist to establish how exactly to mainstream gender across the agency.

As noted earlier, the redevelopment of new gender policies and frameworks was underway at the time of the 2005 Ministerial review. The finished document - *Achieving Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* - was released in 2007. Long and comprehensive, the document covered not only policy, but also touched on practice. The first section of the document provides NZAID's analysis of gender and development, including the international context and international architecture. Beginning the document with the Maori proverb, "Te mana wahine hei ara whakatupu" and its translation, "Recognition of women's mana is the pathway to development", sets the scene for the document, signifying the importance of women to the

development process. This relatively long document provided both an overview of how the institution saw gender and women's empowerment, as well as a comprehensive outline of their policy on the same, which supplemented the core policy statement on poverty alleviation. The policy covers several separate areas, including policy and programme aims and outcomes, the MDGs, monitoring and evaluation, and partnerships. The first section of the document considers gender equality in four different contexts; poverty, international development goals, human rights, and the Pacific. Canvassing theory and best practice on gender equality and weaving in NZAID's stance in each area, this section highlights key international agreements and targets which aim for the achievement of gender equality. The second half thoroughly details the contents of the new policy. While establishing gender equality as a core component in its work towards the eradication of poverty, several questions arise throughout the document, including the focus and measurement of success, reflecting the international demand for measurable results. Gender equality and women's empowerment are frequently identified as fundamental to the achievement of these aims and goals.

The first section of the document focuses largely on the right of women to development. Outlining relevant international conventions such as the International Bill of Rights and CEDAW, which guarantee the rights of women as equal to men, there is a focus on both the moral right of women to development as well as the economic benefits of ensuring equality. The structure of the policy document clearly situates gender and development within international perspectives. The use of quotes from significant institutions and people throughout the document highlight the importance of women and gender in development. These focus on not only the moral or ethical debate of encouraging women's empowerment, but also the economic benefits of doing so.

Gender equality issues in the Pacific context are discussed. The Pacific region is identified as a key focus area for gender activities, and it is noted that activities may not be sufficient to address growing inequality between men and women. Although perhaps aiming to flag the possibility of a perception of failure due to the extent of gender inequality in the Pacific, it is a

strange statement. It is not clear the purpose of this statement, or indeed, who it was written for.

The second half of the document outlines NZAID's goals, outcomes, focus areas and approach for gender equality and women's empowerment. NZAID sees development as "a process" (2007: 13), where capabilities of individuals and their communities are enhanced. It explicitly states that gender equality and women's empowerment are central to the achievement of its development aims. Overall, there is a strong economic focus, with poverty alleviation being inherently linked to gender inequality, and both issues are identified as breaches of human rights.

The goal for gender equality and women's empowerment is "Women and men, girls and boys equally empowered to realise their rights and improve their lives and the wellbeing of their families, communities and societies." (NZAID 2007: 14). This goal diverges into three broad focus areas; capabilities (health and education), resources, opportunities, and services (leadership and livelihoods), and human security (gender based violence and conflict and post conflict). It would be easy to assume that the existence of a gender policy implies a social focus within development. However, these focus areas seem largely related to achieving sustainable economic development, by equipping both women and men with the capabilities to work.

Significant focus within the document is given to the approach that NZAID would use to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender mainstreaming is identified as the methodology to integrate gender aspects into NZAID's work. In 2001, the New Zealand Cabinet established gender equality as a mainstream, cross-cutting issue to be integrated across all aspects of NZAID's work. This may explain the use of 'women' and 'girls' before 'men' and 'boys' throughout the policy – the policy is about gender as the roles and power of both men and women. Intending to adopt a dual focus, gender was to be mainstreamed throughout the organisation, whilst also pursuing activities that specifically focussed on women's empowerment. According to the document, NZAID believes that mainstreaming allows the

invisible to become visible, “in such a way that it challenges power relations” (NZAID 2007: 17), even acknowledging that it is intended to be transformational. This establishes mainstreaming as a ‘game-changer’, where relations between men and women are challenged and debated. What is outlined in terms of concrete policy goes some way to addressing women’s rights and improving their livelihood. However, despite its rhetoric, it does not fully consider or provide details on how it will address power inequalities between men and women. I would argue that the focus areas on health, education, and livelihoods can improve women’s lives without changing them. While educating girls has been shown to have huge benefits (such as reduced maternal mortality and healthier children), opportunities for women must also widen outside of school. Structural change can be achieved by addressing fundamental societal structures, and issues of governance and violence against women can perhaps better address these as they must also include men for change.

The policy sends mixed messages about its standpoint on international aid structures for gender equality. Interestingly, the document is initially critical, stating, “The broad aid effectiveness agenda poses particular challenges for advancing gender equality...” (NZAID 2007: 9). It claims that women’s voices are easily ignored in decision making and that aid modalities fail to incorporate gender dimensions. Presumably this is a reference to potential consequences of the Paris Declaration agenda of partner-driven development, where women, particularly from civil society are often excluded. The policy argues that this lack of ability of the new aid paradigm to include women means that there is a strong need to specifically ensure that they are considered. However, within the next page this is contradicted by a statement that the international framework is already provided through the Paris Declaration, MDG 3, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and the 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action. Furthermore, the policy claims that these platforms, combined with the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), provides “the global foundation blueprint for the promotion of women’s rights” (NZAID 2007: 10). Nevertheless, I would agree with both statements; that partner-driven development can be as disastrous for women as donor-driven development if women are not

specifically included, and that existing international agreements and structures do provide a framework for working with girls and women and gender inequality.

The policy provides an outline of NZAID's monitoring and evaluation criteria. Identifying key indicators, such as relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, little is provided to explain how these would be measured. Further, it is unclear how progress would be measured in gender equality and women's empowerment, except for the statement that "Gender sensitive evaluation requires analysis of the differential impact of development on women and men, girls and boys and on gender relations" (NZAID 2007: 18). The identification of both the impact on men and women as well as on gender relations is positive, although, this is particularly hard to measure and therefore, to demonstrate success. With a focus on the Pacific region - which is notorious for having poor data collection - even more so with gender disaggregated data, ideally the policy would have provided some acknowledgement of the difficulties of measuring social indicators and well as the lack of data.

The mission of NZAID is mentioned throughout the policy. However, it is phrased in different ways. The language of the policy is sufficiently vague that in fact, it would be easy to interpret that *economic* 'empowerment' is what the policy is talking about. "The mission of the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) is eliminating poverty in developing countries through development partnerships", and directly following, "NZAID aims to ensure that women and men, girls and boys, are able to contribute fully to their own social and economic development and that development benefits are fairly shared" (NZAID 2007: 4), and finally, "NZAID aims to ensure that those in poverty are empowered to improve their lives; governance addresses poverty; and vulnerability to poverty is reduced." (NZAID 2007: 13). As previously mentioned, the strong focus on the links between gender inequality and poverty implies the aim of reducing gender inequality is to increase economic development.

## **Analysis of the gender policy**

As established in the gender mainstreaming chapter, there are several key elements to a policy which can successfully address gender inequality and women's empowerment. This includes having programmes and projects that specifically focus on women, a gender specialist, and perhaps most importantly, engaging with women directly and including them in decision making and institutions.

Overall, this policy was a very good start, even though it took a long time to be released. We are already aware of the existence of the gender specialist role, and the policy notes the specific focus on projects with women, so the policy engages with best and common international practice. However, there are a few negative points which restrict the transformational potential of the policy. These are less common features within bilateral aid programmes, but come from gender mainstreaming literature.

Providing new opportunities and engaging women in the development process could be as important as having programmes addressed to women alone. While the policy was aspirational, it failed to acknowledge how to change the inherent power relations between men and women which affect women's opportunities and development. As noted above, limiting women's involvement in development to only the education and health sectors is unlikely to provide a springboard to addressing deep and inherent inequalities, such as rights to land ownership, reproductive and sexual rights, or political participation.

Finally, monitoring and evaluation form a crucial part of development programmes in general. This policy lacked detail about how success (or failure) would be measured and how programmes would be monitored. While values were identified, these do not provide any detail to the actual substance of monitoring and evaluation. It would have been ideal to involve women and communities in the evaluation of projects and activities, to be able to assert their

real value and impact, as well as empower partner communities by valuing their opinions and allowing for local ownership.

This policy existed for approximately two years before the disestablishment of NZAID and it was a further two years before another policy was established. The next section examines this policy from the post-2009 changes.

### **Post 2009: The policy of the NZ Aid Programme**

The reform and reintegration of NZODA in 2009 muddled the waters in terms of policy. The new agency significantly reframed its mission towards economic development, meaning that all of the policies created by NZAID were put into question. At this time, it was unclear which policies were still in place or being referred to.

Almost two years later, in March 2011, the NZ Aid Programme launched its International Development Policy Statement. It is a short document (16 pages including the colourful front and back cover and many photos), although it provided more detail than had been previously released on the priorities and direction of the Aid Programme. However, in reality, the policy contains little information about the content of the work of the Aid Programme or how it intends to implement its work. While the primary focus of the policy is economic development, there are also three other thematic areas identified; human development, disaster resilience, and safe and secure communities. Some of these areas, as well as the brief approaches outlined in the policy, focus on economic benefits and value for money. Gender equality and women's empowerment do not feature greatly in the policy. This is not surprising, as the complete policy document is so short. Indeed, in terms of best practice in development, it would be difficult to fit all aspects with much detail into this small space.

It is not clear why this document is the only policy for NZODA, or why it is so limited in its coverage of development issues, practices or solutions. Private criticism has held that this

reflects the National Party's aversion to policy. In fact, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Murray McCully, has publicly been scathing of policy and policy makers, both in speeches and in the media. Nonetheless, this is currently the only policy document for NZODA. Below I present how women and gender are integrated into the policy and provide an analysis of this.



Image 1. Focusing on NZ's strengths. Taken from NZ Aid Programme 2012b.

### **Where are women in sustainable economic development?**

While the policy does not explicitly mention women as a key focus or concern, women appear in the policy document in various areas. It is worth identifying these specific areas, as they may reflect the value or portrayal of women in the policy.

Women are specifically mentioned in only two of the main priority themes. Firstly, in economic development, where women have “particularly restricted access to economic opportunities and resources” (NZ Aid Programme 2011: 5), and “New Zealand will provide support for both the drivers and the enablers of economic development in order to create more opportunities for men and women in both the formal and informal sectors.” (ibid.). These statements identify an area of need which women have, but unlike the other themes, there is no evidence presented



to support the claims, and furthermore, no opportunities or tangible methods are identified that support women in economic development.

Secondly, gender-based violence is identified as a key issue affecting women within the realm of good governance, peace and security. “Civil society organisations... can also help address violence against women and mitigate the triggers of violence, including issues such as youth unemployment, and insecure land rights.” (p9). As noted before, gender and sexual based violence is a major issue affecting women, particularly in the Pacific region, where in countries such as Kiribati, 68 per cent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence (Amnesty International Aotearoa no date). For such a serious matter, it could be argued that the policy has not done justice to the issue. A feminist argument could also be made here that no gender analysis has been done or included here about what drives violence against women or how to reduce rates of violence. Within the same section of the policy, governance and leadership is also recognised as an area where women are rarely present,

“Support for developing effective and accountable leadership (particularly for women) in the private, public and parliamentary sectors can be identified. The Pacific has the lowest rate of women’s representation in Parliament in the world.” (NZ Aid Programme 2011: 9).

Again, the policy offers no solutions or opportunities which are available to improve women’s participation in civil society and democracy.

Women are also referred to in other aspects of the policy. Widening this analysis to include ‘gender’ brings extra allusions to women. There are three references in the document which identify gender as a cross-cutting thematic issue. No discussion is provided on why gender or women are important, or the social benefits of investing in women. Likewise, no reference is made to international obligations to the equality of women, such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) or the Beijing Platform of Action. The

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are mentioned as an area of significant failure for the Pacific region, but none of the eight goals are suggested as most important or specifically and strategically linked to areas of focus within the Aid Programme.

Finally, women are also strongly alluded to in the policy where aspects of health and education are being outlined. As mentioned earlier, the education of girls is noted as a successful area to gain returns on investment, with increases in productivity and prosperity the expected results. Furthermore, investment in primary healthcare, such as reproductive health, is noted to have returns of 1:10. The economic benefits of investments are frequently made clear, seemingly implying that successful development is economic wealth, rather than improved livelihood and standards of living.

Photographs are typically used throughout documents to add colour and interest. New Zealand's Aid Programme policy statement is no different; however, there is value in examining what images are being used. The selection of images is indicative of the way the authors see women and want women to be seen. There are six photographs within the document which clearly show women or young girls. One of the first images shows school girls looking through a window. Two show women working in agricultural fields. One shows a woman selling her food goods at a market. Another shows women sitting in a group in traditional dress laughing. Lastly, one photograph shows a group of women and girls sitting and writing, perhaps in some classroom. Conversely, there are seven photos which clearly show men. All of these are active images, most commonly showing men fishing (including the large image on the cover of the policy), but also include images of a man working on piping infrastructure, teams rebuilding after a disaster, and a group of police student graduates (which may also include women but gender is not visible). The effect of these pictures is to show women in traditional roles, carrying out agricultural work, wearing traditional dress. I suggest that their passivity is obvious, when compared to the active photographs of men fishing on boats and building infrastructure. These photos clearly reinforce common gender stereotypes of men and women, and the text of the document does little to counteract this, presenting women and gender in a tokenistic

fashion. The focus of the policy on tourism, infrastructure and fisheries – typically male dominated work – neglects women, gender relations, gendered divisions of labour, or the empowerment of women. I argue that the drive by the New Zealand government to support economic development is short-sighted, in that without specific women-focussed projects, it excludes many women. Rae Julian believes that the combined focus on these work areas as well as larger projects will inevitably leave women out of the work of the NZ Aid Programme,

“the types of things they would be encouraging wouldn’t be working on women’s projects, because there’s quite a differentiation in the Pacific between the sort of agriculture projects that are promoted by women which tend to be smaller scale, they tend to be well mainly for local consumption, market stuff, local markets; whereas the sort of thing the blokes are doing are either for export or for the larger markets”. (Julian 2012, personal communication)

As mentioned earlier, the UN Conference for Women held in Nairobi was scathing of the global development focus on economic development. While it had been assumed there would be trickle down benefits for women it was clear that investments in infrastructure and economics without a focus on gender relations or women did little to improve the lives of women, as they were not involved or were ‘tacked-on’. In New Zealand’s most recent policy, it is not clear how women fit into the male dominated projects and activities, and whether women are expected to receive such trickle down benefits. However, several of the specialists I interviewed believed that a focus on the economic benefits of investing in women was not inherently negative, particularly if it led to greater investment in women and girls. The current gender advisor within the NZ Aid Programme went further, arguing that a focus on economic development allowed for a practice that looked from a gender perspective at a traditionally male-dominated area. However, I suggest that if this is to be thoroughly implemented, it needs to be identified as an important practice, and clear policies and guidelines established to support it being done in the programme and its activities.

## Final thoughts on policy

While the NZ development sector tends to be scathing of recent leanings towards economic development, the NZAID gender policy of 2007 was really not that far different. While the ethical and moral focus on women's equality is present, the argument for economic benefits of equitable inclusion of women in development is frequently presented. In this case, it appears that in fact there are many similarities between the old NZAID gender focus and the focus of the current sole policy of the NZ Aid Programme. Themes remain the same, with a focus on education, health, governance and violence against women. However, while gender has been formally made a cross-cutting issue in New Zealand's ODA through Cabinet minutes in April 2009, gender has a much less significant focus within the current policy statement. The themes remain the same, but the critical analysis component of how to address structural change is completely removed in the new policy. Perhaps the strongest difference between the two is the link between policy and practice. Arguably, in 2007, practice was less aligned with policy, with a strong praxis focussed on social aspects of development and projects that solely focussed on women. Currently, the NZ Aid Programme has a strict economic focus, both in policy and in its programming, with a reduced investment in women's projects. Statements from the Aid Programme such as "Reducing poverty is inherently linked to economic growth and trade" (NZ Aid Programme 2010: 1) are crucial in the analysis of its priorities, and are especially revealing in what is *not* being mentioned. As identified in the 2010 OECD-DAC peer review, New Zealand should now provide further details as to the environmental and social aspects of this policy, which up until that point have been overwhelmingly economically focussed (OECD-DAC 2010).

Policies are important as they demonstrate how an institution both perceives an issue and wants to be perceived on an issue. Policy forms a necessary base for any agency's work. As Grossman and Lees stated in the 2001 Ministerial review, "A successful aid programme has a strong policy framework that sets the rationale and direction of the aid work, making it clear what the desired outcomes of the programme are." (p89). So far we have seen the different ways in which gender equality and women's empowerment has been captured within policies

over the past decade. NZAID took a substantial period of time to establish a policy on gender equality and women's empowerment, although the Ministerial Review in 2005 identified that a draft gender policy was in use. The way that gender equality and women's empowerment has been addressed since the 2009 changes has been even further reduced. So far it is not apparent whether this has been due to apathy, general dislike of gender focussed work, or because of other constraints like resourcing. In the second part of this chapter, I will delve deeper into this issue by looking at the practices of NZAID and the NZ Aid Programme. Indeed, as they say, it is not what you say that matters, it is what you do. Several key themes are identified that influence the success of gender equality and women's empowerment in NZODA, and development more broadly.

## **PART TWO – Gender and women's empowerment in practice – beyond the policies**

Literature demonstrates that even in good times – in aid programmes with large budgets and sympathetic politicians – perfecting gender mainstreaming and achieving tangible results in gender equality and women's empowerment is difficult. Even if a policy exists which conforms to international standards of best practice, it does not guarantee good practice or effective results. This second section of the chapter investigates the practice of implementing gender and women's empowerment within the NZODA since 2002 and what has helped shape the success (or failure) of efforts to improve gender equality and women's empowerment.

Interviews were undertaken with six key specialists who have extensive experience in gender and women's development within New Zealand and internationally, which provided key insights into the implementation of policies. These are important as they are insiders, who have specific knowledge of this period. They are particularly valuable as information about what has been happening on the ground is limited, for various reasons, and it was beyond the scope of this research to undertake the necessary fieldwork for a full assessment.

In what is widely considered the 'golden age' in the sector - during the NZAID period - there are examples of good practice. However as noted in the 2007 gender policy, new international

movement towards partner-driven development imposed some difficulties that were particularly felt working on strategic issues like gender equality and women's empowerment. Following the 2009 changes, gender remains a cross-cutting issue but there is evidence of a significant withdrawal of support for gender equality and women's empowerment. However, there is still someone responsible for gender in the organisation, and he appears to be doing good work under significant time and resourcing pressures, as well as working within the current political climate.

From both the interviews and from literature on gender mainstreaming, I have identified four fundamental areas that affect aid effectiveness and results for women and gender relations, as well as effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. *Political commitment*, especially from Ministers and high level decision makers, played an important role in how far gender equality and women's empowerment was integrated into NZODA. Given the growth in importance of partner-owned development, the capability of donors to influence priorities and *work with partners* on selected areas has become more complex. *Institutional framework and programming* influences the shape of gender mainstreaming and activities, including the structure of the agency. *Monitoring and evaluation* is essential to gauge the success of programming. The rest of this chapter will investigate each of these four areas in more depth.

### **Political commitment**

As noted earlier, the importance of women within development has gained international traction and political commitment internationally over the past four decades. Particularly since the MDGs, women's right to participate in development and the setting of the development agenda has become increasingly visible. However, improvements for women require political commitment. In New Zealand, commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment within foreign policy and aid has been variable over the past decade.

The most obvious difference between NZAID and the NZ Aid Programme is the source of political support. The Labour Party was in power for nine years, in which time it established NZAID and commissioned two Ministerial reviews of NZODA. When the Labour Party lost the 2008 election to the National Party, it led to substantial changes in NZODA operations and policy.

Following the establishment of NZAID in 2002, NZODA was being delivered by a range of development specialists. While it cannot be assumed that all staff were fully aware of women's issues or that all had a passion for gender equality, staff were knowledgeable in the development field. This meant having field and programme experience, being aware of different ways of delivering services and working with partner countries to improve the lives of their citizens. Waring (2012) strongly asserted the high level of expertise of staff that she found during her 2005 Ministerial review as well as in her general knowledge and dealings with the agency.

However, it is unclear what power staff have from within the agency to affect policy and mission direction. This is especially questionable since the 2009 changes. Cabinet was able to revise NZODA, under the influence and direction of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, altering content and direction without Cabinet necessarily being aware of or taking into account best practice. The Cabinet Papers which I discussed in Chapter Three showed that while some aspects of best practice were retained and viewed positively, such as the aid effectiveness agenda, others, such as poverty eradication or gender as a cross-cutting issue were perceived less positively, despite them being best practice and acknowledged as such within said Papers. While these same powers allowed for the establishment of the semi-autonomous agency in 2002, the reintegration is considered a step backwards. Political commitment of ministers to improve the lives of those in partner countries is essential. An ideological battle exists on how to address poverty; however, research supports an argument for investing in women – through their rights, health and education – as it reaps significant rewards both for women and their communities. Against these internationally set practices,

New Zealand has lately become one of the few, if not the only, bilateral donor to disregard gender and power and its effect on the success of development policies and programmes. While international leaders like Kofi Annan, Ban Ki-Moon, and the former President of the World Bank Paul Wolfowitz have publicly promoted the inclusion of women in development (note that they are all male), the current New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade has shown his disregard for gender equality and women's empowerment, reportedly both internally as well as in public.

In February 2011, at the end of a speech at Victoria University in Wellington, the Minister was questioned about how gender equality is incorporated into the new development focus of the NZ Aid Programme, and in particular, how development is ensured to be equitable for both men and women. In his response, the Minister stated that he did not prescribe a gender element to the Aid Programme, and was instead looking for the best possible investment for the New Zealand tax payers (Spratt 2011a; personal experience). This bold statement, where the internationally supported importance of a gender focus in development has seemingly been disregarded, brings questions as to whether New Zealand's ODA values support internationally agreed goals for women's equity and empowerment.

This reduced investment in women and girls comes in part from a political disengagement with development. According to Waring (2012), there has never been a development specialist as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade. As reported in the OECD-DAC reviews, the New Zealand public has little understanding of aid and development, and it would appear that this is no different for Members of Parliament. McKinnon notes that "[s]cepticism about the impact of the aid programme seems high among some parliamentarians" (2011: 2). This lack of knowledge could explain why Minister McCully displays a dislike for prescribing a gender element to NZODA and instigated changes in the aid programme that went directly against best practice. However, regardless of political party, focus for gender equality and women's empowerment has never been prioritised politically. Spratt (2012b) believes that regardless of party, all ministers could have done a better job fighting for women's rights in ODA.



As previously noted, New Zealand focuses the majority of its aid in the Pacific. With some of the lowest political representation of women in the world, political commitment to women's empowerment at the highest levels in NZ is important. Showing political will here for the importance of women's participation and rights does not undermine partner-led development but reminds them of their commitments made to international instruments such as CEDAW (Julian 2012; O'Neill 2012; Waring 2012).

Political commitment on gender equality and women's empowerment has varied over the past ten years, probably peaking at ambivalence during the NZAID days and dipping to new lows since 2009. Its importance is critical to not only ensure a focus within NZODA but also to keep gender equality and women's rights on the agenda with political leaders and key players in partner countries. Buy-in from political leaders can make a difficult work area that much easier when it is supported rather than resisted. I note renewed domestic interest since the 2012 Pacific Islands Forum with the release of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration and Australia's announcement of a substantial investment in gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific. This occurred too recently to provide an analysis here. However, I expect this to potentially impact New Zealand's work and it is an area that requires further investigation. Next, I discuss the importance of the structure and direction of an aid programme to the implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment.

### **Institutional framework and programming**

Over the past decade, NZODA has been delivered through both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and through the semi-autonomous body NZAID. As previously discussed, this alignment of ODA with foreign policy is not considered best practice. Combining the two means that aid can benefit a donor country, primarily by providing extra incentives to encourage partners to take on particular policies. However this hinders aid, leaving it less likely to fulfil the needs of communities within the partner country according to their own priorities.

NZAID existed for seven years. During this short period, the agency established policies and programmes; processes, relationships with partners and developing areas of excellence. In terms of gender equality and women's empowerment, the agency integrated gender into its work in two ways, through applying a gender lens to all programmes, while also specifically funding projects which aimed to enhance women's empowerment and livelihood. The reintegration of NZAID into MFAT in 2009 resulted in three significant negative changes. First is the realignment of ODA with foreign affairs. Second was the restructuring of MFAT; the loss of staff and a dramatic increase in workload. Lastly was the reduction of prominence and integration of gender and women within the programme. The reintegration also had negative effect on the presence of gender and women as a priority within activities. While gender remained a Cabinet-mandated cross-cutting issue, its visibility declined within policy and accessible information. Spratt (2011b) notes funding cuts announced to the Vanuatu Women's Centre which was subsequently reinstated following intervention of the NZ Prime Minister after a public out-cry. Spratt (2011b) argues that the focus of the NZ Aid Programme on sustainable development does not oblige it to ignore non-economic projects. Furthermore, I argue that according to the focus of the International Development Policy Statement, issues like violence against women are a priority – particularly when considering the dramatic statistics – so funding for these projects should be prioritised. A response in April 2012 to an information request regarding funding to NGOs women's programmes and activities in seven Pacific Island countries shows a complex picture of what projects are being funded (see Table 1 & 2). As this is a policy analysis, it is not within the scope of this research to provide a full analysis of the data or to request further data on the funding of projects and programmes that support gender equality and women's empowerment. However, these figures do show the complexity of funding women's projects. They show that assumptions of a funding decline for gender and women's projects may not be correct, although the types and sizes of projects appear to have changed. An area for further research may be examining the priority focus on specific countries which may not have as high needs as others, yet currently receive the largest amount of funding, such as Samoa. Most clearly the data shows that any funding is not necessarily *good* or *effective* funding.

Table 1. Funding for women's projects in the Pacific, according to thematic area, by financial year, 2007 - 2012<sup>2</sup>

<b>Theme/Year</b>	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12*
Women and business	85082	47452	308648	406694	12795
Violence against women	579136	649138	699309	537080	406915

\*Note that data from 2011/12 is up to March 2012 and is incomplete

Table 2. Funding for women's projects in seven Pacific Island countries by financial year, 2007 - 12<sup>3</sup>

<b>Country/Year</b>	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12*
Cook Islands	267702	190000	195000	219906	140000
Fiji	248784	192965	377868	339249	339545
Marshall Is.	-	-	15000	-	-
Niue	1900	-	5108	608	1715
Samoa	124948	85063	345159	428078	-
Solomon Is.	66200	50726	54846	26531	5171
Tonga	130465	295255	120123	5757	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>839999</b>	<b>814009</b>	<b>1113104</b>	<b>1020129</b>	<b>486431</b>

\*Note that data from 2011/12 is up to March 2012 and is incomplete

The NZAID gender equality and women's empowerment policy was relatively recently written, in 2007, before the agency was disestablished in 2009. When this occurred, along with other policy and tool documents, the policy was left out of date. Although, strangely, at the time of writing most of these documents are still available on the NZ Aid Programme website. This lack of clarity on focus and content is likely to be a combination of staff having limited resources to produce new policies, as well as an environment which thinks poorly of policy. Policy is essential. It allows people to know what is being focussed on, and it provides guidance and

<sup>2</sup> Data from an Official Information Act request, dated 27 April 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Data from an Official Information Act request, dated 27 April 2012.

parameters for policy and programme staff, as well as providing a tool for partners and civil society to hold the government to account (Spratt 2012).

Mainstreaming gender across ODA is considered best practice. This is noted in the Cabinet Papers in 2009, which confirmed gender to be maintained as a cross-cutting issue in NZODA. However, the Papers suggest that mainstreaming is not done as an end in itself, but rather to promote the success of the *actual* development aims – perhaps women’s improved livelihoods and control over their body and future is not considered a valid outcome of aid? Although one could be forgiven for allowing that possibility to float into existence, it seems unlikely that if questioned, any member of Cabinet would respond that this was the case. Nevertheless, imposing gender as a mainstreamed or cross-cutting issue for *better results* does not capture the true purpose or depth to the concept. Indeed, this truly ignores its intention of being *transformative*.

Within the NZ Aid Programme, the place of gender predominantly stands as a cross-cutting issue. This is different to gender mainstreaming, although it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what the differences are. I believe that the clearest difference is the distance of each term from feminism and feminist thought. I would argue also, the difference is their distance from *transformation*. Gender mainstreaming came as a result of the women’s movement; and in particular from the United Nations conferences for women in Nairobi and Beijing. On the other hand, ‘cross-cutting’ emerged during the 2000s (O’Neill (2012) credits this to the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action) as a replacement for the somewhat jaded ‘mainstreaming’. However, no matter what term is being used, interviews showed that even those who worked in the sphere of gender equality and women’s empowerment in development were not necessarily fully aware of the full range of tools that sit within gender mainstreaming. Yet these same specialists may express their cynical view of mainstreaming. The assumption that mainstreaming is implemented solely by considering women and gender across all aspects of the business does not fully capture the range of activities that encompass mainstreaming. Having a gender advisor

and ticking a box at the bottom of a form as to whether impacts on gender relations and women have been considered are perhaps the least effective of these activities.

While ODA was delivered through NZAID, the strong gender policy focus translated into both gender mainstreaming and women-focussed projects. Gender specialists Gill Greer (2012) and Rae Julian (2012) assert that best practice requires this dual-focus delivery to provide the best outcomes for girls and women. They highlighted that in contexts where women struggle to access services and are discriminated against in law and society, simply considering impacts on women across all programmes could not be relied upon alone to improve women's lives. In the Pacific, this is particularly relevant, where, for example, women struggle to achieve political representation, or have a high risk of death during pregnancy and childbirth.

During NZAID's existence, this dual focus existed. As detailed in the gender policy, investment in women's rights and livelihoods was carried out through specific women-focussed projects, while a gender angle was included in all programmes and activities. Unfortunately, the NZ Aid Programme currently relies heavily on the actions of individual staff to deliver lasting positive improvements to the lives of women. The current gender advisor, Mike Sansom, sees his role as ensuring staff understand gender and can apply it appropriately and effectively in their work. This has included creating a guide which simplifies how to do a gender analysis in projects and activities. Sansom has prioritised the building of capacity within staff of the NZ Aid Programme, rather than following international gender and aid architecture or engaging with partner countries;

“... a key part of my job now, is actually trying to find ways of really building New Zealand's Aid Programme's capability to address gender issues, but do it in a really pragmatic way. Given that reality of that increased workload, stretched resources, difficult operating environment, how can we actually provide really pragmatic advice that basically makes a difference to women and girls, men and boys in our activities.”  
(Sansom 2012)

New Zealand also funded the inclusion of six countries from the Pacific in the Women's Economic Opportunity Report 2012, which examined labour policies and practice, access to finance, education and training, the general business environment and women's legal and social status. Two Pacific countries were ranked in the bottom five, out of 128 countries (The Economist 2012). Considering the abhorrent statistics of violence and health that women have in the Pacific, it is clear that these efforts alone will not improve women's lives, and certainly not those most vulnerable and most in need (for example girls, slum dwellers, and HIV positive females). Furthermore, it appears that under the pressure of disregard from the Minister and the stretched capacity of the gender specialist within the Programme, gender equality and women's empowerment is battling for existence at all.

The current focus on sustainable economic development has significant impacts upon women and gender relations. All of the six gender specialists whom I interviewed were certain that a focus on sustainable economic development need not negatively impact outcomes for women in partner countries. In fact, several believed that changing the language to encompass economic benefits of investing in women – compared to using a solely rights-based argument – opened up the subject to make it easier for men and business to relate to. Any strategy to promote gender and women, as well as to make it easier for those not usually considering women in development to understand the importance of women in development and secure their support is positive. However, in the policies so far accessible it appears that women have not been integrated into the economic aspects. Ensuring that gender relations and the impact of programmes on women are integrated into activities is essential. The purpose of development is to improve the lives of people, in one way or another. Arguably, an essential part of a strongly economic focus means that equity is increasingly important. Delivering results for the most in need, or those most likely to be excluded from development benefits, is one important aspect of gender mainstreaming. For gender to be a truly mainstreamed component of New Zealand's work, both women and men need to be included in the design and implementation of development programmes.

Within the current policy, there is a significant focus on tourism, infrastructure, fisheries and renewable energy but women are markedly absent. Women seem added only as a token gesture. Furthermore, a redesign of funding grants to promote businesses engaging in development and business-NGO partnerships in development projects place added importance on considering women in NZODA. Women are known to be largely underrepresented in company boards in New Zealand. Furthermore, the focus on areas such as infrastructure and fisheries – typically male-dominated industries – reduces both the likelihood of women being involved in the projects as well as the effects of the activities on women being considered. The current gender specialist within the NZ Aid Programme highlights the importance of not only focussing on gender, but also on women’s empowerment (Samson 2012). I suggest that failing to recognise the drivers of these issues, the importance and effects of gender roles and power relationships between men and women will render New Zealand’s ODA ineffective.

New Zealand has committed to gender equality and women’s empowerment multiple times, in various forms, across many years. However, it still fails to implement these commitments within its ODA. As UNICEF (2006: 6) remarks, “While giving lip service to equality, governments often fail to invest often limited public resources in women and children or to challenge discriminatory customs, attitudes and beliefs”. It is important that the NZ Aid Programme follow in the footsteps of the campaign of the World Bank – ‘Investing in women is smart economics’. Women and gender equality cannot be limited only to health and education. As half of the global population, women must be included in all aspects of society.

I will now consider how partners have been included in the design and delivery of NZODA, with a specific focus on whether the theme of gender equality and women’s empowerment, along with women and civil society has been integrated.

## **Working with Partners**

The aid effectiveness agenda has been growing in importance over the same period that is being reviewed in this research. Beginning only with donors, in 2003, the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation established an agreement between bilateral and multilateral donors to strive to align their aid with partner priorities. This was followed in 2005 by the Paris Declaration, which aimed to further redistribute power from donors to their partners. In 2008, the Accra Agenda for Action aimed to deepen commitments made in Paris and accelerate progress, with concrete actions and monitoring to follow. Gender equality, along with human rights and environmental sustainability, were recognised as cornerstones essential to development. The most recent step on the pathway to improving aid and development was the Fourth High Level Meeting held in Busan in 2011. Aid effectiveness, and increasingly, development effectiveness, is working towards partner-led development, which addresses development issues according to the priorities of partner countries and reduces ties and expectations of donors for benefits to be reciprocated (such as freer trade). The Paris Declaration is often cited as it set out a series of five principles to guide best practice and effective outcomes in aid. The Accra Agenda for Action sought to deepen these commitments, while also highlighting more work that needs to be done in areas such as involving other actors in development planning and decision making – such as civil society. Accra also began to increase the importance of results; aid providing real development outcomes (OECD-DAC no date). Paris and Accra both involved donor and partner countries committing to improve aid delivery by following best practice that had been shown to produce good results. Busan was a critical moment that acknowledged that states and multilateral organisations are not the only important stakeholders that influenced development outcomes. Throughout this decade-long process, there has been a widening of the agenda from aid to development. As aid is officially being de-politicised, and effectiveness of aid is becoming more important, donors and partners broaden their approach to include development effectiveness, as development is the intended outcome from the aid.



New Zealand has committed to each of these international agreements and has almost all of its aid untied. However, the movement towards private partnerships and the realignment of ODA with foreign policy increases the likelihood of aid primarily meeting the needs of New Zealand, rather than those of partners. So where did New Zealand policy come from? This is not clear exactly. Before the 2008 election, the National Party did announce that changes would be made to NZAID. Being a centre-right political party, it is no surprise that National would choose to focus on economic aspects of development. Spratt (2012a, 2012b) argues that the recent realignment of NZODA was less about aid or foreign policy and more about growing and protecting New Zealand's business interests. However, using aid as a tool to influence relationships with other countries means that the use of funds is less likely to align with the priorities and needs of partners. This takes NZODA further away from best practice, and further away from New Zealand's commitments to aid and development effectiveness through partner-led development.

From a development perspective, there are still positive aspects to the NZ Aid Programme. For example, the Programme is assisting Pacific governments to take better control of the revenue generated from their fishing zones, as well as supporting training for tourism and fisheries. No doubt these things are important, to help increase the revenue of governments, sustainably manage resources and to provide jobs for young people. However, what about the many issues that face women in the Pacific? How do their needs get conveyed by partner countries to New Zealand? What happens if even the partner country does not prioritise gender equality and women's empowerment?

It appears that as the investment in gender and women within NZODA has waxed and waned, so has the pressure placed on partner countries to identify gender and women as a priority development issue. Patti O'Neill (2012), who worked as the gender advisor at NZAID when it was first established, remembers being a part of a programming team that went to Samoa, believing that this sent a strong message to the partner country on the importance of gender issues.

With Pacific women experiencing some of the lowest political representation in the world, women struggle to be heard in the Pacific. Considering bilateral negotiations consist of state to state negotiations, how do women get heard at the decision making table? A problem is clear when considering the programme's impact on women in partner countries. Sansom (2012) highlights current issues working with partner countries that have male-dominated governments in a partner-driven aid effectiveness agenda. He questions where the space exists to work with partners on gender issues if countries have not identified gender equality or women's empowerment in their country plans.

Since 2002, New Zealand has strived to develop areas of expertise in ODA. As a small donor, New Zealand aims to provide value according to its strengths. During NZAID's operations, thematic expertise was often found in education as well as other rights-based areas. Waring (2005) identified stakeholder consultation as one of three areas of excellence. New Zealand was known to be a leader in gender and development, particularly in the Pacific (O'Neill 2012). Comments from partners and NGOs shared in the 2005 Ministerial review portray NZAID as a donor which collaborated with partners and stakeholders and undertook thorough and meaningful consultation (Waring 2005). As a donor country, New Zealand needs to improve its role and behaviour as a leader in gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly in the Pacific region.

Joanna Spratt (2012b) identifies women's rights as an area of New Zealand expertise. With a Ministry of Women's Affairs which actively participates in women's rights and reproductive health fora internationally, New Zealand is known to promote the rights of women. However, this has not been prioritised as an area of expertise currently needed by development partners. In a world of partner-owned aid effectiveness, how can New Zealand ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment issues are being addressed even if partner countries do not prioritise them? Gender specialists Greer (2012), O'Neill (2012), and Waring (2012) believe that holding governments account to their international obligations is a first step. Most

countries have agreed to CEDAW and complete the required reporting on progress of implementation. Using these reports, and those done by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, provide a starting point to address gender equality and issues that affect women on a contextual basis that otherwise New Zealand might not have capacity to research (Greer 2012; O'Neill 2012; Waring 2012).

Local NGOs are also partners in development and critical to the success of aid programmes. The most recent changes have negatively impacted upon the ability of civil society to engage with NZODA. The cut in funding to support services such as the Global Education Fund and the Council for International Development meant that NGOs and the development community were less likely to be informed or have opportunities to network or keep up with best practice. Changes to the funding available to civil society also meant that it was harder for New Zealand based NGOs to work with their partners in developing countries. The restriction on mandate meant that projects that struggled to prove impact on economic growth were less likely to be funded; making it more difficult to target the greatest needs of the most vulnerable. Providing infrastructure such as roads may mean little to the poor who cannot afford to eat, let alone buy a vehicle.

Finally, the importance of relationships can never be overstated. While the most difficult to control, it cannot be ignored that the relationship between country programme managers in New Zealand and their counterparts based in partner countries have a huge impact on the issues prioritised and development outcomes. Having professional development staff that not only know best practice, but understand local context and can be strategic in their work are essential. Patti O'Neill (2012) believes that "relationships and individuals matter enormously". Rae Julian (2012) notes the incredible outcomes for women that were possible with the strategic lobbying of Pacific leaders by Helen Clark, in particular, highlighting the success of having gender components in the Pacific Plan. In a context where there are few women in government, and likely still few as policy makers, being able to influence the male-dominated

Pacific (as well as other partner countries) requires expert negotiation and lobbying skills, as well as having thorough knowledge about the aspects that need to change.

### **Monitoring and evaluation – keeping stock of success and failures**

Monitoring and evaluation of projects and development efforts was identified by feminist theorists as a crucial component of achieving effective change in women's lives. NZODA has undergone four significant overall programme reviews over the past ten years, as well as monitoring for individual projects and annual reviews.

Ministerial reviews have provided key check-ins to assess progress within NZODA towards identified areas. OECD-DAC regular peer reviews provide a regular opportunity for independent review. The 2001 review highlighted key issues that were echoed in the Ministerial review also of 2001. Largely, these issues concerned the close link between foreign policy and aid and were addressed in the establishment of NZAID. The review that the agency received in 2005 was overwhelmingly positive, noting the significant work that was being undertaken within NZAID to establish best practice. The first and only review to be undertaken since the 2009 changes took place in 2010 by OECD-DAC. Although it was clear that significant changes had been made, in particular to the institutional structure and overall mission of NZODA, the report was also notably positive. I have already noted the surprise and backlash from the sector against what was seen as a poor reflection of the impact of the changes.

Annual reviews are one of the few monitoring and evaluation outputs that have remained relatively constant over the past decade. According to the current gender specialist, the NZ Aid Programme will begin to include a specific focus on cross-cutting issues in the annual review.

Policy provides a key method of holding government accountable. Without it, it is difficult to know what government are working towards or what guides their work. Furthermore, policy

provides a framework for the government's work as well as civil society's relationship with the government. The slow release of the gender policy from NZAID, and of the overall policy by the NZ Aid Programme, has meant that it was difficult to know what the government was doing or assess their work. Lack of information impairs the ability of external agents to monitor the activities of the Programme.

Overall, political commitment is essential. There are many components to this: the interest and commitment of the Minister in charge; commitment of staff; resourcing; freedom of staff and external bodies to monitor the work of NZODA. The 2009 reforms did not only affect the aid programme; cuts were made to global education – an area consistently highlighted in OECD-DAC reviews as an area already under resourced – as well as to the Council for International Development, which supported NGOs working in international development to share best practice and work closely with the government to deliver effective projects in partner countries.

Monitoring and evaluation is not just an internal activity undertaken for projects. Monitoring is essential in all aspects of organisational operations; policies, processes, finances, and activities. While NZAID has been criticised for its intense policy focus, the general availability and transparency of its work and open consultation meant that it was possible to monitor and evaluate its work; its focus, projects, and even their tools. The National government's focus on transparency of projects and activities has perhaps meant that the accountability of the overall Programme has been overlooked. The restructure of the organisation has strained staff and resources, with a lack of policy or detail leading to further uncertainty from partners and civil society. With improved monitoring and evaluation, it would not only be easier to assert the effectiveness of NZODA for gender equality and women's empowerment, but it would likely have flow on effects with better engagement with partners and stakeholders as well as improved policies (as a result of improved consultation and transparency).

## Final thoughts

This chapter has investigated both policies and practices of NZODA over the past ten years related to gender equality and women's empowerment. These two distinct processes are interconnected and heavily influence each other and the level of their success. Policy sets the boundaries and objectives of work. As such, it is essential as it provides a basis to judge success as well as giving external stakeholders something to hold government to account. Practice comes as a result of policy, whether it is written or unofficial. However, the success of the development practice is influenced by several different factors. The commitment of government, particularly of the Minister in charge, to gender equality and women's empowerment plays a fundamental role in the amount of time and space that the issues receive in the aid agency. The relationship between donor and partner countries, as well as their staff, can also dictate what issues are progressed and what success is made. Strategic influencers with good personal skills are more likely to push forward issues for women's rights in a male environment than someone who is afraid to approach the topic. Overall, New Zealand's ODA has not fought particularly hard for gender equality and women's empowerment. Policy has been developed late, if developed at all. Overall, the importance has been shown of having someone fighting in the corner for these issues and promoting the agenda for women. In New Zealand, while there have been skilled gender specialists and committed staff, it has not been enough to build a comprehensive programme which does not treat gender as a box to tick at the bottom of the form, but instead views mainstreaming as a complex toolbox of activities needed to achieve positive change in the lives of girls and women.

It is obvious that while there have been attempts to include girls, women, boys and men and the power relations between them in the policies and practices of NZODA, these have often not gone far enough. Perhaps this comes from a lack of understanding and knowledge of the potential components of mainstreaming; or – and possibly combined with – as a result of a complex combination of these four defined issues which affects practice, political commitment, the institution, partners, and poor monitoring and evaluation.

The next chapter draws together the gender mainstreaming agenda and learnings, with the experiences of NZODA to present a set of recommendations for how to improve and provide better safeguards for the rights of women, gender equality and women's empowerment in New Zealand aid policies and programmes.

## Analysis and implications

Gender mainstreaming was not supposed to be easy. It was a concept that was developed by women, for women, to fight the pervasive inequalities that existed between men and women. Today, almost two decades later, the same issues still exist despite the introduction of gender mainstreaming. In developing countries, girls and women are still less likely to be educated and more likely to be in poverty than their male counterparts. Initially gender mainstreaming became the poster child of development for women, expected to solve the world's problems. This research looked at how NZODA integrated gender equality and women's empowerment, with a particular interest in the implementation of gender mainstreaming over the past decade. It aimed to provide some perspective on why there has not been the imagined success in empowering women and establishing gender equality, focussing on the importance of the role and the content of policy.

Gender mainstreaming was conceived as a method to improve gender inequality and empower women. However, its implementation came with a range of problems. These ranged from a simple lack of political commitment, to misunderstanding of the transformational aspects that required significant changes in operations and power relations within institutions, to the failure to implement the full range of tools for it to be effective. Essentially gender mainstreaming became a box to tick at the bottom of the project form.

Many donors subscribed to the new fad of gender mainstreaming by unveiling ODA policies which said women would be considered across the board, in all aspects of their work. Yet they failed to comprehend and implement the full package of components that could improve the lives of girls and women. One of the most common means for donors to mainstream women involved having a box to tick at the end of a project form to indicate whether gender or women and girls need to be considered and if they had been. Neglect of the power analysis between women, girls, boys and men and the context analysis of the community led to less effective programmes, projects and activities. Overall, in the nearly twenty years since the Beijing



Platform for Action kick-started the gender mainstreaming movement women still face significant discrimination. Indeed, women are still the face of poverty, with less access to education, resources, property, and political representation than men.

Gender mainstreaming requires a multitude of commitments, with unprecedented investment in girls and women. Commitment at international and national levels by donors and partners, specific policies addressing gender equality and women's empowerment, programmes delivering services to girls and women, as well as gender specialists monitoring progress and fostering support and knowledge within government and organisations are all important aspects that work together in gender mainstreaming to improve gender equality and women's empowerment. Furthermore, this is not an issue that money alone can solve. The key part of mainstreaming is having women at the decision making table, deciding their priorities and being in control of their bodies and their lives. Indeed, gender mainstreaming was intended to be transformational – radically changing power structures and the ways institutions are run – injecting women into the mix.

However, significant issues have emerged from gender mainstreaming. While commitments are still being made at the highest levels, there has been little dedicated follow through. The male-dominated environment of government, international institutions and international relations influences the implementation of mainstreaming and in what form it is adopted. A lack of financial commitment has been made by donors. There is growing dissatisfaction and disillusionment with gender mainstreaming. The language being used is even changing from 'mainstreaming', including by feminists and gender specialists; making it less clear what exactly is being talked about.

The issues identified by feminists in theory do not exist solely in literature, and they are also not limited to intellectual criticism. Also faced by bilateral donors, the same issues emerge in literature, policy and practice. This was certainly found to be the case in New Zealand. In the past ten years, there have been significant and constant changes to the content and delivery of

NZODA. In the period 2002 – 2008, NZAID was developing agreements with partner countries, policies and practices with a goal of poverty alleviation, based on a separation from NZ's foreign policy interests. Since 2009, the new structure NZ Aid Programme has begun this process all over again, this time with a focus on sustainable economic development. This change has not only disrupted New Zealand's ODA relationships with partner countries and NGOs, including New Zealand-based NGOs, it has also put significant pressure on the staff within the NZ Aid Programme, particularly when combined with other restructures and cutbacks within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade as a whole.

During the NZAID years, there was variable investment in gender and women. There were periods where there was no gender specialist, however there were gender policies guiding the agency and funding was being specifically directed towards women's projects. Staff within the agency were supported and informed about how to improve outcomes for women and gender equality in their work. Although evidence from interviews shows that investment in gender equality and women's empowerment was variable across the six years of operation, the work more closely resembled that of the full package of gender mainstreaming.

After the disestablishment of NZAID in 2009 and the reconfiguration of NZODA into the NZ Aid Programme with a central focus on sustainable economic development, gender equality and women's empowerment dropped off the radar. The current Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade has made it clear that he is not interested in gender or women's rights as a component of NZODA, and that instead that his focus was on value for money for NZ taxpayers. With the release of the International Development Policy Statement, gender equality and women's empowerment was largely absent, except for violence against women. From an outsider's point of view, there seems to be even less going on for gender equality and women's empowerment. However, in an interview with the current gender advisor within the NZ Aid Programme it was clear that new initiatives are being worked on. A new guide to gender as a cross-cutting issue has been developed, with further thematic issue guides to come. New Zealand funded six Pacific countries' inclusion into the Women's Economic Opportunity Index, which provides a

clearer view of women's position in the countries across a range of economic and non-economic indicators. The advisor also noted that the cross-cutting issues will soon be expected to be reported against in the MFAT Annual Report. Currently, the gender work within the NZ Aid Programme focuses on the capabilities of the staff within IDG, but has less emphasis on working with partners and their priorities or connecting to international networks of best practice and the international framework for gender equality. These are crucial, particularly as partner-driven development is becoming 'the' way to do development and as engaging women in institutions and programmes is the key to achieving transformation, through gender mainstreaming. However, there are still transparency issues, as the NZ Aid Programme website still has all of the old documents from NZAID and none of the current ones reflecting current work for gender equality and women's empowerment. Furthermore, it is almost impossible to know what the NZ Aid Programme is currently doing on gender equality and women's empowerment without specific interviews or requests for information under the Official Information Act. How can one monitor their work without access to it?

Politics has had an immense impact on the content and success of gender mainstreaming in NZODA. Since the National Party came to power in 2008, there has been an overall reduction in policy analysis in general as well as a loss of focus on poverty eradication. Gender equality and women's empowerment has also suffered. The reduced investment in global education and the capacity of NGOs working in international development meant a loss or reduction in the ability of external monitoring of the government's actions. A lack of transparency in the policies and activities of the Aid Programme, in part due to their non-existence, has compromised the ability of NZODA to meet the needs of girls and women in developing countries.

The focus on economic development within NZODA has suffered backlash from the NGO and academic communities. Whether economic development can actually result in poverty alleviation and an improved standard of living for all people in a country is under debate. However, economics does not need to necessarily affect women negatively. As several of the specialists interviewed for this research said, there are economic benefits in investing in women

and their rights, so why not promote these? Furthermore, I agree with the sentiments of the current gender advisor at NZ Aid Programme that a focus on economic development does not need to exclude or negatively impact upon women. However, two issues emerge here – first, that policy and practice must specifically include women, which will require harder work as this is an area that women are not usually associated with, even in New Zealand. Secondly, women and girls face a multitude of issues, particularly in the Pacific region, and work must be prioritised – is it more important that girls can attend school or to train women to be road workers?

Throughout this whole period of a decade, there has been only one factor which has interrupted the success and delivery of NZODA. That has been the political party in power in New Zealand – most notably from the current Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, who is also responsible for ODA.

The lack of information available, both in academic literature as well as policies, processes and statistics, makes it difficult to have a clear view on what is happening and what results are being found in NZODA.

So what could be done in NZODA to improve outcomes for gender equality and women's empowerment?

While success can be difficult to measure and has rarely been monitored, it has been clear what does not work:

- Having a sole reliance on bureaucratic policies, especially if these do not fully acknowledge power relations between men and women.
- Ignoring women and girls
- Neglecting to do thorough context analysis
- Ignoring power relations between different genders
- Attempting to mainstream gender where no or minimal rights for women exist

No matter what other donors are doing in the region, New Zealand has a responsibility to include gender in its work. New Zealand should be innovative and can be seen as a world leader in this area. Best practice includes women-focused programming along with a gender advisor, but there may be innovative ways to deliver better results more effectively.

Gender mainstreaming has immense potential. It has high expectations which states struggle to fulfil. It is important to acknowledge this, but also realise that it provides good goals to stretch for. Although difficult to implement, done right it can improve not only the immediate livelihoods of women and girls (and their families) but also the long-term rights of all girls and women. It provides the framework and steps towards equality for women and girls.

International agreements and the women's movements have already placed pressure on governments to make change for women. I argue that there are no alternatives as well thought-out and as holistic as gender mainstreaming. It is important to carry on with what has already been started, although clearly improvements need to be made. However, it is simply not good enough to say that it is too hard.

So, drawing from these lessons and from the original theory of what gender mainstreaming was aiming to be, I make five suggestions which aim to better safeguard the rights of women and girls as well as to make some improvements within NZODA:

- Develop a specific gender equality and women's empowerment policy to set the framework for the work of the NZ Aid Programme;
- Develop strategic approaches to working on gender equality and women's empowerment with partner countries. Partner-driven development is not going to go away any time soon, so New Zealand must embrace it while still acknowledging to partner countries that women's rights are crucial and all states have responsibilities to protect and enhance women's rights and livelihoods, and that it is in their interest to do so;

- Adopt an official dual focus where specific women's projects are funded at the same time as gender is mainstreamed across all activities. Thorough context and gender analysis is essential here to ensure that gender and power relations are taken into account and 'gender' isn't restricted to 'women's issues' like health and education – especially important in New Zealand's current focus on infrastructure, tourism and fisheries;
- Encourage NGOs and others to monitor ODA policies and programming publicly and privately. This requires better information sharing by MFAT and the NZ Aid Programme;
- Increase investment in global education. Tax payers need to understand aid better, including why we give aid. This should also include a focus on issues in the Pacific, which has complex poverty issues and is not simply a tropical beach paradise.

People and politics matter. Not only in the sense of national politics, but perhaps more importantly, are the personalities and relationships. When working and liaising with partner countries, personalities matter. This can determine what issues are given priority. Similarly, personalities matter within the politics and ministries in a donor country. In New Zealand, different ministers have had different impacts. Over the period reviewed in this research, most notable are the effects of the current Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Murray McCully. Media articles and general knowledge speak of his intense approach as a Minister, interfering in policies directly. Conversely, the previous minister, Winston Peters, was known to be very hands-off. As two of my interviewees noted, all previous Ministers could have done a better job for women and gender (Spratt 2012), and none of them have been specialists in development (Waring 2012). But it is not just people at the top that matter. The workers within NZODA, working behind the scenes to develop policies, liaise with partners, and construct programmes. Their personalities, behaviour and tactics can be the key to success in having a programme accepted by a partner government. Because of the importance of people and personalities, it is equally important to counteract any negative qualities with checks and balances in policy and procedure.

There is scope for NGOs to better monitor NZODA on gender equality and women's empowerment. Currently, it appears as if no one has taken on this role, whether it is due to lack of capacity in the form of funds or knowledge. There are a number of people, particularly strong feminist women with a wealth of experience in this area who are reportedly 'keeping an eye on things', but this is not enough. Personalities, as was shown from a leadership perspective of ODA, affect the success and outcomes of ODA. These people will come and go, but it is important that there are constant checks established internally and externally, on gender equality and women's empowerment in NZODA for its long term success.

As noted repeatedly in the OECD-DAC reviews, the New Zealand public is not engaged on the issues and even those within the sector appear to have limited knowledge on development issues like gender mainstreaming.

The above recommendations are also intended to play as safeguards to reduce the likelihood of political swings and policy changes each government change. There appears to be an assumption that once a Labour Party-led government is in power it will reverse the most recent changes. But it can only be presumed that the next National Party-led government would again make changes. I urge parliamentarians to work towards a consensus on good aid and development delivery; however this may require robust public debate on ODA and more public buy-in on what we give aid for. Currently, it appears that NZODA is more about advancing New Zealand's business interests, rather than improving the lives of people in the Pacific and other partner countries.

## Conclusion

My research has shown overall inconsistencies in NZODA to implement gender mainstreaming, and a lack of commitment to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. The research showing that aid programmes are more successful when they use gender mainstreaming is probably because those programmes take into account gender and women in the programme *as well as* in policy processes. Semantics and word use in policy has a limited effect on the ground. Women who are experiencing domestic violence in their home, or spending long hours working as a result of their triple role will not have their lives improved or changed for the better by New Zealand *just because we say we have gender mainstreaming*. Donors actually need to do it. Donors actually need to use the components of gender mainstreaming in a programme of work or action, in a methodology to improve women's lives, for women to reap the rewards of greater empowerment, the right to control their bodies, their finances, their property and their future, as well as the benefits of healthier children and families and more productive communities. In my opinion, gender mainstreaming offers a solid programme to address gender inequality and women's empowerment, and it is a lack of strong implementation that has led to its failure.

Gender mainstreaming is a cohesive framework designed to be transformative and integrate women into the development process. My research has shown that New Zealand's aid programme simply has not and is not doing this. Particularly, limited political commitment and unclear strategic work with partners on gender issues has affected the effectiveness of NZODA on gender equality and women's empowerment. A lack of transparency and reporting, combined with weak external monitoring by external bodies such as NGOs, has also led to a failure in the ability to hold the New Zealand government and its aid programme accountable to its commitments to improve women's lives.

The operational nature of the current implementation of gender mainstreaming leaves tackling gender inequality within the policy sphere. It also relies on policy changing societal structures



and behaviours. Instead, those looking to have gender mainstreaming provide transformational change in gender relations should focus on *how* change can be achieved, and focus on implementing activities and programmes which support this action. Creative and innovative activities and policies can be developed to add to the collection available under gender mainstreaming concept.

I believe that the five actions I propose are a first step to working towards more effective programmes for gender equality and women's empowerment. Most importantly, they ensure that there is a roadmap to where we want to get to, plans of how to get there, and the ability to monitor how we are tracking along the way – by both the government as well as civil society.

Gender mainstreaming is difficult but it is a complete theory to address a challenging issue. It requires total commitment to gender equality *and* women's empowerment, and comes with an obligation to address and change power structures between men and women. I look forward to seeing New Zealand working more closely with partners in the near future to achieve better lives and freedom for women and their communities.

## Appendix



### Participant Information Sheet

Research on gender mainstreaming in New Zealand's Official Development Assistance

Researcher: Philippa Bennett

School of History, Philosophy, Politics and International Relations, Victoria University of Wellington

I am a Masters student in International Relations at Victoria University of Wellington. As part of this degree I am undertaking a research project leading to a thesis. My research is focussed on examining New Zealand's engagement with gender mainstreaming within its Official Development Assistance. The University requires that ethics approval be given before undertaking a research project leading to a thesis.

I am inviting people who have worked within New Zealand's aid programme on gender equality and women's empowerment in the past twenty years to participate in this study. Participants will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview, to discuss the history of gender mainstreaming and other gender equality initiatives within New Zealand's aid programme and discuss whether there have been changes New Zealand's engagement on this issue and potential reasons why, over the past ten years.

Should any participants feel the need to withdraw from the project, they may do so without question at any time before the data is analysed. Please let me know as soon as possible.

Responses collected will form the basis of my research project and will be put into a written report. Responses will **not** be anonymous. However, in our interview you have the option of identifying portions of our discussion that are to be off the record, and not to be included in the research. You will also be sent the transcript of the interview and be given the opportunity to make any corrections to this. All material collected will be kept confidential. No other person besides me and my supervisor, Dr Ben Thirkell-White, will see the interview notes or hear the recordings.

The thesis will be submitted for marking to the School of History, Philosophy, Politics and International Relations and be deposited in the University Library. It is intended that one or more articles will be submitted for publication in scholarly journals. Interview notes and transcripts will be protected by keeping in a locked cabinet, or password protected file if electronic. They will be destroyed one year after the end of the project.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the project, please contact me at [pippy67@hotmail.com](mailto:pippy67@hotmail.com) or 022 169 8098, or you can contact my supervisor, Dr Ben Thirkell-White, at the School of History, Philosophy, Politics and International Relations at Victoria University of Wellington at [ben.thirkell-white@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:ben.thirkell-white@vuw.ac.nz).

Thank you

Pip Bennett



### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Title of project: Changes in gender mainstreaming and gender engagement in NZODA since 2000

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I may withdraw myself (or any information that I have provided) from this project (before **30 June 2012**) without having to give reasons.

- I consent to information or opinion which I have given being attributed to me in any reports on this research
- I understand that I will have an opportunity to check the transcripts of the interview before publication
- I understand that the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose or released to others without my written consent.
- I would like to receive a summary of the results of this research when it is completed  
YES/NO (circle one)
- I agree to take part in this research YES/NO (circle one)

Signed:

Name of participant:  
(Please print clearly)

Date:

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