Gender and sexuality in Norwegian development policy and practice

The introduction of sexual orientation and gender identity in Norwegian development cooperation

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Master thesis in International Community Health
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II

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IV

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Abstract

Since 2005 Norwegian policy makers have sought to include perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation. The main objectives of this study has been

- To explore how the government and people who work with development cooperation perceive the roles sexual orientation and gender identity may or may not have in development cooperation.
- To critically analyse Norway's development cooperation - its aims, strategies and justification - and explore how sexual orientation and gender identity issues relate to the overall development policy.

To do this the study has situated the current policy in an historical and political context by looking at the history of development cooperation and how gender and sexuality have been thematised throughout this period. It has further analysed current policy documents and explored the themes in conversations with 22 employees from development institutions and organisations in Norway.

A reading of the empirical material inspired by queer and postcolonial feminist theory highlights a central dilemma: Even with the new willingness to include sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation the Norwegian development discourse is still largely heteronormative. On the other hand the focus on sexual orientation and gender identity can be seen to further a tradition where Norway is seen as having reached a successful modernity that should be exported to less developed societies.

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations and acronyms

AI	Amnesty International
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
FBO	Faith based organisation
FGC	Female Genital Cutting
FGC/M	Female genital cutting/mutilation
GFATM	The Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HDI	Human Development Index
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IGLHRC	International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission
ILGA	International Lesbian and Gay Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Ipas	International Pregnancy Advisory Services
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LGBT(IQ)	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans persons (Intersex and Queer persons)
LDC	Least developed countries
LLH	The Norwegian LGBT Organisation (*Landforeningen for lesbiske, homofile, bifile og transpersoner*)
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFA	(The Norwegian) Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSM	Men who have sex with men
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (*Direktoratet for utviklingssamarbeid*)
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PRS(P)	Poverty Reduction Strategy (Papers)
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SGBV	Sexual and gender based violence
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (*Styrelesen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete*)
SOGI	Sexual orientation and gender identity
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
ToR	Terms of Reference
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCHR	United Nations Commission on Human Rights (until 2006)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council (from 2006)
WTO	World Trade Organization

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1 Introduction

The time has come to think about sex. To some, sexuality may seem to be an unimportant topic, a frivolous diversion from the more critical problems of poverty, war, disease, racism, famine, or nuclear annihilation. (Rubins, 1984, p. 3)

1.1 Short introduction and problem statements

After the general elections in 2005, a new government was formed (*Stoltenberg II regjeringen* 'the Stoltenberg II Government'). (Regjeringen, 2012) based on a platform dubbed *Soria Moria erklæringen* ('The Soria Moria Declaration'). (Stoltenberg et al., 2005) The 'mission statement' of the declaration states:

> The Government will combat all forms of discrimination, oppression, intolerance and racism. We will pursue policies that promote equality between women and men. […] No one should be treated differently because of gender, social background, religion, ethnicity, race, ability status, or sexual orientation. (Ibid, p.3, my translation)

Development cooperation policy lies within the mandate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In its budget proposal of 2006, the introduction says:

> The Government will be bold in its development policy. Norway shall be a country that speaks up where others are silent. Norway shall dare to take up gender equality, taboos surrounding HIV and AIDS and the rights of lesbians and gays. Norway will be a consistent defender of human rights. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2006, p. 12, my translation)

In 2008, when the government published the Action plan 'Improving quality of life among lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons,' (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008) one had formulated the policy aim even more clearly:

> The Government has committed itself to pursuing a development policy conducive to combating all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation of persons on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. (Ibid, p.44)

This is the first time I have been able to establish that rights issues have been linked with sexual orientation in foreign policy documents in Norway. In other words, completely new policy was introduced in 2005/6 from the Stoltenberg II Government. This paper will take a closer look at this policy; what does it entail and how is it understood and practiced by Norwegian state- and non-state actors working with development cooperation? The policy has been described in government documents such as Action plans, White papers and budget proposals. It is carried out by the MFA (from Minister level all the way down to case workers

in Norad). Civil society organisations form an important part of Norwegian development cooperation; Norwegian NGOs receive budget support from the MFA and Norad to carry out development programmes in poor countries. It is therefore also an aim of this paper to look at how non-state actors view the policy and if/how they engage with these issues.

The problem statement can thus be summarised to be:

> *To explore how the government and people who work with development cooperation perceive the roles sexual orientation and gender identity may or may not have in development cooperation.*

To do this it has been important to look at the entire development policy field. Questions of sexual orientation and gender identity do not exist in a vacuum but are embedded in the wider policy areas of development cooperation, and in sub contexts such as health and gender policies. A further objective (problem statement) is thus:

> *To critically analyse Norway's development cooperation - its aims, strategies and justification - and explore how sexual orientation and gender identity issues relate to the overall development policy.*

The study will do this exploration and analysis through presenting relevant literature in a historical presentation, analyse policy documents on gender and sexuality in Norwegian development cooperation as well as conversational interviews with people working in the field.

1.2 Why study sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation?

1.2.1 New policy, no previous research in Norway

The policy on sexual orientation and gender identity in development is, as we have seen, relatively new, and no research has been conducted on Norwegian development policy with regards to these issues. A new policy area which the government furthermore is prioritising (see Ch. 4.7) would in itself merit academic interest. I will also argue that issues pertaining to gender and sexuality in development policy should elicit *special* interest; both gender and sexuality are, I would argue, concepts that have been and are understood differently across time and geographic/cultural location. Development cooperation is by its very nature a cross

border activity. The study of how these concepts are understood in development context is thus highly interesting. Studies about gender and Norwegian development policy do of course exist. In 2007 Karin Ask and Siri Lange published a report based on a study commission by MFA/Norad to map Norwegian knowledge about gender and gender equality in development context. (Ask & Lange, 2008) 'The central motivation for this mapping was to get an updated overview of the environments and persons with gender expertise on this priority area of the MFA.' (Ibid, p. iv, my translation) The report concludes that '"Women and Development" (1986 - 1991) has been the first and so far only long-term research program on this area.' (Ibid, p iv, my translation) They further state:

> Lack of effort and securing of institutional spaces for the development of expertise on gender and gender equality issues are resulting in vulnerable research capacity in the field. Most development researchers rely on combining research efforts with consulting services for different user groups. To enhance the development of skills and capacity for innovative research in the field, it is important to support methodology development and specialisation within subjects that do not seem immediately 'useful' for the various user groups of the research. (Ibid, p. 3, my translation)

Since this study was commissioned by the MFA/Norad, it looked into a set of thematic areas defined by the ToR. The thematic areas are all concrete 'objects of development,' e.g. health, education, good governance etc. This can be defined as 'applied research.' The authors comment on the lack of cooperation between the existing centres of gender studies and centres of development studies. The various centres of gender studies develop research on fundamental questions of gender (and sexuality). It is my clear impression that there is a 'missing link' between basic gender research and research on gender and development.

Postcolonial feminist theory has developed new understanding of gender and sexuality across borders of time and place. I have searched in library databases available at the University of Oslo, University of Bergen and Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences (three Norwegian academic institution that offer 'development studies' and produce research on development issues) using the terms 'development aid' + 'post-colonial' + 'gender' in different combinations, and found only a handful of papers/theses matching. (Post-colonial studies as such do not appear to have a strong position in Norwegian academia.) Internationally this is however a large and growing field and references will be made to relevant literature in the following chapters. The lack of analysis of gender and sexuality concepts in Norwegian development cooperation is another justification for this project.

1.2.2 Health implications

This master thesis is submitted at the Institute of Health and Society, and I feel it necessary to make some comments on its relevance for health. According to the Department of Community Medicine at the University of Oslo's website:

> Community medicine research tries to produce knowledge about relations in a society that influence the populations' likelihood to stay healthy or become sick, and tries to find causes for sicknesses both on individuals and in groups. Knowledge of social and cultural frames in a society is necessary for professional understanding in community medicine. (Institute of Health and Society; Faculty of Medicine, 2012)

Both gender and sexuality are relational concepts – and, as we shall see, related to each other. A person's gender (whether seen as self-identified, a social category that changes with time and culture or seen as a biological fact) will influence the health status both because of biological facts (does the person have an uterus that may be prone to cancer for example), and even more important in this context, because it will influence the level of freedom a person has to realise the person's capabilities,[1] among them the capability of staying healthy. Sexuality may in turn be seen either as an inherent trait or as a description of a set of actions. Having sex is often relational, and can lead to changes in health status (becoming pregnant, or not, being subjected to violence, transmission of infections such as by human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, and so on). When different expressions of sexuality is under social control (which they are in most societies because of e.g. the close relation with reproduction), health status may further be influenced; again because of the degree of freedom to realise one's capability of staying healthy. Since both gender and sexuality are relational, (as human beings are) the same arguments will apply on a group level, if instead of talking about health status on a personal level, we want to look at a group of people. Gender and sexuality will then also be important elements to consider for those who work in health management; gender and sexuality are both at work in society and to understand how will have implications for how to organise health services. In short, sexuality, gender and health interact with each other and other social issues in a complex relationship where all components influence each other.

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[1] 'Capabilities' here used according to Amartya Sen's 'capability approach.' The capability approach provides a framework to analyse a variety of social issues, such as well-being and poverty, freedom, development, gender bias and other inequalities, justice and social ethics. See Ch.3.2.6 for a fuller introduction to Sen's thoughts.

Sexuality and gender are thus clearly related to health, in every society. If we look specifically at sexual orientation and gender identity, and the groups which most commonly experience discrimination on these grounds, the Norwegian government in 2008 introduced an action plan to improve the 'quality of life among lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons.' (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008) The plan includes a chapter on health: 'Equivalent health and care services' (ibid, pp. 34-39) which talks about the situation in Norway, and a chapter on foreign- and development policy: 'Norway in the international community – combating discrimination of sexual minorities' (ibid, pp. 44-45). In policy papers on development cooperation we see that gender and sexuality are related to health in all the important documents. (See e.g. Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007, 2012d)

To conclude, this thesis will look at how gender and sexuality are seen and treated within the area of development cooperation. It will thus look at two important determinates of health on a societal and individual level, even if it will not make this connection explicit at every turn of the road that lies ahead.

In her essay quoted above, Gayle Rubins goes on to say something about how sexuality, despite being seen as frivolous by some, is always political:

> As with other aspects of human behaviour, the concrete institutional forms of sexuality at any given time and place are products of human activity. They are imbued with conflicts of interest and political manoeuvre, both deliberate and incidental. In that sense, sex is always political. (Rubins, 1984, p. 4)

Rubins argued for increased attention towards gender and sexuality already in the 1970s because she saw the issues as determining factors in the organisation of society (see Ch. 2.1.3-4). At the Cairo conference (International Conference on Population and Development, 1994) feminists advocated for the inclusion of sexual rights to complement the focus on reproductive health and rights. In the new millennium a renewed attention towards these issues can be discerned. The Ford Foundation for example published a report in 2005 that in its preface states:

> After widespread neglect over many years, the value of studying human sexuality has recently been recognized for its bearing on many important debates and problems in contemporary society. This is the result, in part, of contributions from feminist theory, the emergence of gay and lesbian movements, new efforts to prevent sexual abuse, and the international AIDS epidemic, which have generated a significant amount of new research on human sexuality. Along with increased research we see academics, advocates and community activists in the field coming together to exchange

information and ideas. Having combined forces, **they are focusing new attention on the ways in which gender and sexuality are shaped in different social and cultural settings, and on the complex interactions between sexuality, health and issues of social justice.** This new wave of activity has led to the creation of more effective program interventions and services. (Costa & Wood, 2005, p. 5, emphasis mine)

Sex, and by implication gender, is always political. Gender and sexuality both form and are formed by human societies; they are inherently part of power-struggles and assign individuals and groups of people to positions that have wide influence on their health and wellbeing.

1.3 Thesis structure

The thesis is organised in 4 chapters, including this introduction. **Chapter 2** will introduce the theoretical and methodological foundations for the study. It will present a synopsis of theories and some of the central theorists and their work. It will present and discuss the choice of methods and make some conclusions about their relevance. Study design and an overview of the data will be detailed, and ethical considerations will be discussed**. Chapter 3** attempts to situate the subject matter (Norwegian development policy on SOGI). It will give a historical presentation of development and posit gender, sexuality and development in postcolonialism. **Chapter 4** will introduce Norwegian development policy in general and its priorities on gender and sexuality issues in particular through a presentation of central government documents. It will go on to analyse the documents together with material from conversations with people working in Norwegian development organisations and institutions.

2 Methodological and theoretical foundations and study design

2.1 Methodology

The objective of this study is to critically analyse the Norwegian development cooperation discourse on sexual orientation and gender identity among involved actors (governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions). Discourse in this context would include:

- government policy expressed in policy papers;
- economic aspects (development cooperation budgets, budgetary priorities etc.);
- development research, historical accounts;
- views, impressions, reflections, understandings and thoughts of actors in development cooperation;
- public opinions, media debate.

Adele Clarke gives in her book 'Situational Analysis. Grounded Theory After the Postmodern Turn' (Clarke, 2005) both an argument for including an understanding of discourse in social research using qualitative methods, and a description of how it can be done. Her term 'situational analysis' takes account of all the various elements that, often in conflict with each other, form an understanding. Clarke is a former student of Anselm Strauss, and her methodology is based on classic grounded theory. The methodology of this study has evolved as the project has proceeded. In the clear light of hindsight I can say that I have followed Clarke's methodological example, at least to some degree.

In Figure 1 we see how Adele Clarke represents her methodological approach as a map of the various elements that influence a situation. In her book she outlines a step by step method for doing it. I have not followed her 'recipe' for analysis, but I have used her understanding of elements that influence the themes under study (if not as systematically that Clarke recommends). Figure 2 is my attempt of drawing a map of the elements I have identified.
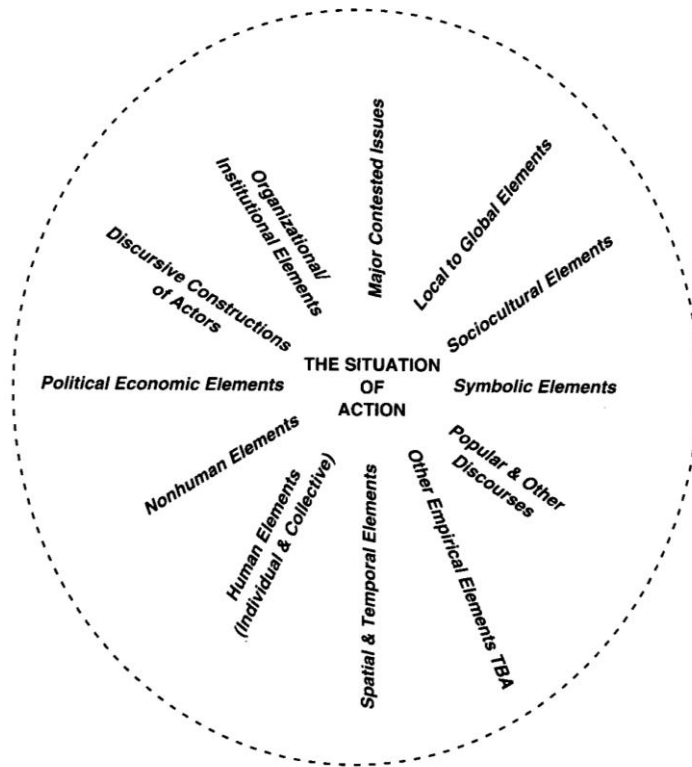
Figure 1: Clarke's Situational Matrix (Clarke, 2005, p. 73)
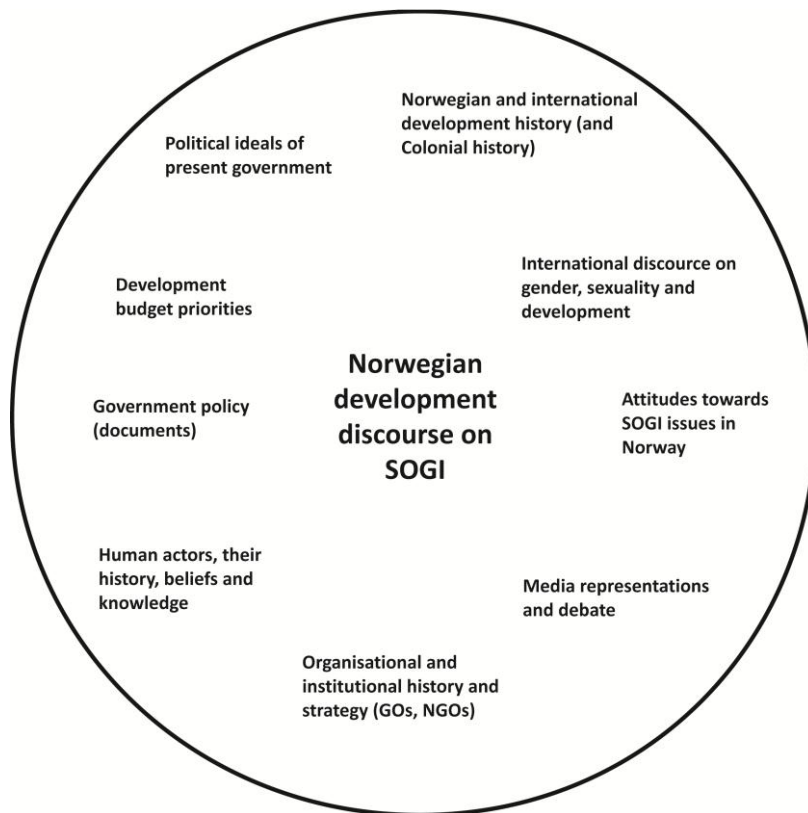
Figure 2: Rodriguez' Situational Matrix

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My 'situation' is the Norwegian development environment and I am looking for its dominating discourses. I have to stress that I will not attempt at doing a discourse analysis in the classic sense (as described by e.g. Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002) I will treat both written material (e.g. policy papers) and transcribed conversations as text to some extent (see the next section for a detailed description). The aim is to try to 'deconstruct' what is written/said to look for the underlying discourse. This will be done based on the theoretical starting point described in Ch. 2.3, i.e. I will put on postcolonial, queer feminist glasses to analyse the discourse on gender and sexuality in the Norwegian development 'environment.'

2.2 Methods and design

This study includes two kinds of empirical material:

1. Policy documents on gender and sexuality in Norwegian development cooperation.
2. Conversational interviews with people working in the field (government officials and employees, employees from selected NGOs, consultants, researchers and lecturers/students).

Through my work[2] as an international advisor in the Norwegian LGBT organisation (LLH) I have followed policy development and debate on sexual orientation and gender identity throughout the period the current government has been in position. I have taken part in, and arranged, seminars and meetings both in Norway and internationally, and I have read policy documents even before starting this study. It was thus my position as an actor in the field that gave me the entry to doing research; I had started asking myself questions about government policy, questions such as 'why did they decide to include SOGI in development policy?' or 'how come SOGI issues are only mentioned in connection with sexual health and rights?' Questions raised in this study have in other words come from a longer process of thought.

To answer questions for the study about what Norwegian policy on sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation is I have gathered policy documents on development cooperation issued since 2006 (when the Stoltenberg II government took office). I have analysed the documents both to understand what the policy entails, how it is justified, and what underlying understanding of core concepts such as gender, sexuality and

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[2] In Ch. 2.2.3 I give a more in-depht presentation of myself.

development are reflected in the writings. Many of the official documents exist in both Norwegian and English versions. When only a Norwegian version exists I have translated the quotes used, and indicated that in the reference.

Policy statements made by the government do not alone represent how the Norwegian development cooperation policy is perceived, and certainly not its practice. I have wished to explore both how the policy is understood, what opinions people have on it, and if/how it is used in practical development cooperation. To get a picture of this, I have talked with people working in the field. I have recruited people from both governmental and non-governmental development organisations as well as people working with development issues in academia (as researchers, students and lecturers). This material forms the backbone of the study.

In addition I have read literature of relevance (books, research papers, journal articles, media articles, web sites, conference proceedings, course material from the master course etc.) I will not present a traditional 'literature review,' but use background literature to situate the topics of interest in a historical and political context (Ch. 3). In the introduction I stated that gender and sexuality are related to everything. My search for literature reflects this, and my strategy can best be described as 'one paper/article/book leading to another.' I have, quite uncritically, followed up footnotes and references I have found to expand my understanding. In addition I have gotten suggestions from international networks of activists and researchers in the field of gender and sexuality studies and activism as well as feminist and queer theory (the two often overlap).

The background literature has also been used to create a 'dialogue' with the empirical material; I have thought and discussed themes that have come up in reading with the participants in the study, with my supervisor and with friends and colleagues, both in Norway and abroad. The process of gathering material and analysing was thus integrated throughout the whole study period. I took notes, made memos and invited (more or less enthusiastic) friends and colleagues to join my thought process.

Conversational interviews

It has been an aim to get beyond policy statements and politically correct attitudes. The intent was to invite participants to freely discuss relevant themes. The hope was that we in the conversations could create a room for reflection (Middelthon, 2005) where thoughts could be investigated and developed. Furthermore it was a wish to talk to employees at different levels

and different positions of the organisations in question (not only the gender advisors and both programme officers and people in head positions). The participants were promised anonymity to ensure a free discussion. It was stressed that their own reflections that was sought rather than official organisational policy.

The participants were selected from both governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as from educational and research institutions. Relevant participants were identified as the project evolved using a purposeful sampling method, with an aim to achieve a broad representation of backgrounds, fields of work and views. I used information available at organisation/institution web sites to identify candidates. I also drew on my network and knowledge about the Norwegian development environment to find people. I wrote e mails[3], sent out invitations and called organisations, and I soon discovered that people were a bit reluctant towards participating. Organisations referred me to their gender/health sections, despite my wish to include people with different work experiences. A common first answer was that 'I do not know/have not worked with the areas you are interested in.' Possible explanations for their hesitance are explored in Ch. 4.10 After explaining that I was interested in hearing their thoughts and views and reassuring them that most people feel they lack knowledge, some agreed to participate (mostly either gender or health advisors/programme officers). 22 conversations were held with participants from the three categories (GOs, NGOs and academia), each lasting 1 ½ - 2 hours. In addition one official interview was held with the State Secretary to Minister of the Environment and International Development Ingrid Fiskaa.

Working with the interview material

The interview guide was developed based on thoughts made during reading of policy documents and background literature. It covers seven themes and some[4] key questions/issues for developing each:

1. Participant background
   (education, work experience, why development work)
2. What is development?
   (how can it be achieved; who should decide; why development; Norway's role)

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[3] A sample can be found in Appendix 1

[4] The list gives examples only, there were more

3. Gender and development cooperation

   (is there a relation between the two)

4. Norwegian policy on gender and development cooperation

   (thoughts on expressed policy aims and strategies)

5. Sexuality and development cooperation

   (is there a relation between the two; is there a relation to gender)

6. Norwegian policy on SOGI in development cooperation

   (thoughts on expressed policy aims and strategies; personal experience with working
   on SOGI issues; thoughts on improvements)

7. Health, development cooperation and SOGI

   (thoughts on health and development in general; SOGI in relation to health)

All interviews were held in Norwegian and all the participants wanted to meet me in their office at work. Each meeting started off with me summarising the information they had been sent (Appendix 2) about the study and answering any questions they might have, before they were asked to formally consent to participating and that the conversation be recorded by signing the consent form (Appendix 3).

To get to know each participant, break the ice and get the conversation going, I started by asking them about their backgrounds (education, interests, volunteer work, work experience, why had they chosen this line of work, etc.) The conversations progressed to introduce my themes in a more or less ordered fashion, depending on my conversation partner; some conversations were erratic, following sudden thoughts or associations and getting to my themes through circuitous routes; other participants depended on me for cues, and we would then more systematically go through my interview guide theme by theme. Despite many having to be convinced by me to participate, very many ended the conversation by making statements about having felt it was useful; they summarised it as 'an exercise of reflection' and said they felt they often had too little time to reflect on 'the big issues' in their daily work life.

The recordings were transcribed (by me) in full and then immediately edited to erase all personal references that might identify the participants. Personal references include circumstantial facts that may make it possible to guess who the person is. Pseudonyms were ascribed (common Norwegian first names) randomly. After editing out all personal information, the data has been stored on an external hard disk, kept in a locked cabinet in the

Table 1 List of participants

Age[5]	Sex (F/M/T)[6]	Educational background[7]	NGO/ IGO/ INGO[8]	GO[9]	Academic institution[10]	Work experience abroad
58	F	Arts/humanities	X			X
49	M	Arts/humanities	X			X
39	F	Social/political science	X			X
37	F	Education	X			X
64	F	Health and/or social welfare	X			X
46	F	Social/political science	X			X
31	M	Social/political science	X			X
50	F	Social/political science	X			X
64	F	Health and/or social welfare	X			X
62	F	Arts/humanities	X			X
38	F	Social/political science	X			X
50	M	Health and/or social welfare	X			X
35	F	Social/political science		X		X
47	F	Social/political science		X		X
63	M	Law		X		X
60	F	Social/political science		X		
37	F	Social/political science		X		X
64	M	Law		X		X
43	M	Health and/or social welfare		X		X
43	F	Health and/or social welfare			X	X
49	M	Social/political science			X	X
65	M	Education			X	X

Name	AKA	Age	Sex	Position
Ingrid Fiskaa	IF	35	F	State secretary to Minister of the Environment and International Development Erik Solheim 2009-12

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[5] I have used a randomizing tool to add 0/3/-3 years to each person's age at the time of writing, July 2012

[6] Female/Male/Trans

[7] I have not differentiated between college and university degrees. As an example: A medical doctor and a social worker are both defined as having the educational background 'Health and/or social welfare'

[8] Non-Governmental Organisation, International Governmental Organisation, International Non-Governmental Organisation

[9] Governmental Organisation

[10] University or College

researcher's home, in accordance with the protocol submitted to NSD (Norwegian Social Science Data Services[11]). Only the researcher has had access to the edited transcripts. When conversation snippets appear in the text, they are either ascribed to the corresponding pseudonym, or when necessary to uphold confidentiality, only indicted with a letter (A, B, C, etc.) In the Table 1 some facts about the participants are listed. I have not included the corresponding pseudonyms, again to safeguard anonymity.

To summarise: Twelve participants worked in non-governmental organisations, seven in governmental organisations and three belonged to academic institution. There were fourteen women and eight men[12], ages varying from around thirty to close to retirement age (67 in Norway). All but onehad experience from working with development cooperation abroad. The most common educational background was social and political sciences with (ten participants), five came from health and welfare sciences, three from arts and humanities and two from law and education respectively.

Ingrid Fiskaa gave an official interview in her office on July 14th 2011. She had received a list of questions in advance. The transcript of the entire interview was sent to her office for approval, and quotes from the interview will be presented with her name.

I have transcribed all the interviews myself, a time consuming but useful exercise as it has given me a close relationship with the material. I decided to use a software package NVivo 9 (QSR International, 2010) to assist with organising the research material, and I coded all the interviews towards the end of the data collection period.

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[11] The project has been approved by NSD and has been assigned project number 23791. See NSD letter Appendix 4

[12] As commented above, many of the participants work with gender issues. This field is, in general, dominated by women, and this may be the one of the reasons for the slight gender bias among my participants.

Table 2 Node tree overview

Thematic nodes	Nodes sublevel 1	Nodes sublevel 2	Nodes sublevel 3
Development			
	Why development aid?		
		Personal motivation	
		Norway's role	
	Definitions		
	Conditionality		Conditionality on specific examples
		Human rights and Western influence	
	Critique		
		Neo-liberalism	
	Strategies for development		
		Premises	
		Health	HIV/AIDS
Gender and development (G&D)			
	Gender vs. Women (concepts)		
		Historical and cultural differences	
	Relationship between G & D		
	Strategies for G & D		
SOGI and development (SOGI&D)			
	Understanding of concepts		
		Historical and cultural differences	
	Relationship between SOGI & D		
			SRHR
			Health
			Human rights
			Gender
	Why SOGI & D?		
		Why now?	
	Reactions to gov't policy		
	Strategies for SOGI & D		
		Health	HIV/AIDS
			Mental health
		Emergency aid	
		Human rights	
		Faith Based Organisations	
		What is needed?	
			Awareness/information
			Leaders' responsibility
			Funding
	Lack of strategies		Demands
		Sensitive questions	
	Personal experiences		
Postcolonial critique			
	Linear view of history		
	The idea of us and them		
	Our expertise		
		We know what is best	

After having coded all the interviews I looked at the material again, now according to the node-tree depicted in the table above. In the analytic process I have used both the interviews as separate entities, and the coded excerpts and moved between the different levels. When I have decided to use a specific quote taken from the coded material I have checked it against context in the respective interview to make sure I am not 'misusing' it.

Sublevel 3 (shaded area) was added as I started writing. As I was organising the printout of coded material, to select what to use, I reorganised several times. The column is thus just some examples of how I would cross-reference codes in the analysis.

Since the conversations were held in Norwegian I have translated all the quotes used myself. I have tried to stay as close as possible to the original, and not edited out colloquialisms (e.g. 'that is,' 'sort of,' 'right?') except when it has been necessary for clarity of meaning.

In the analysis I have also, as it will be seen in the following, looked at the themes using both the interview material and the policy documents. This is not entirely unproblematic. Government policy documents and informal conversations belong to completely different genres; one is written, deliberately worded guidelines while the other is oral, 'top of the head' statements. I do consider the conversational reflections as valuable; the participants are persons with a well of knowledge and experience about Norwegian development cooperation. When I have specifically asked the participants to comment on the policy, it may not be seen as problematic to quote them in relation with the actual documents. I have however also used this approach more generally[13], and this may be considered 'unfair' towards the participants. My argument is that policy on paper can never be evaluated without taken account of how it is understood and used; it is how those it is meant for understands its concepts and implications that will have practical consequences for hands on development cooperation.

2.2.1 Ethical considerations

The Norwegian development community is not very large (Norway has a small population) and I have had to think very carefully about how to avoid identification of the participants by way of their quotes. I have already described the measures that have been taken to secure the anonymity of the participants.

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[13] One example: In ch. 4.6 I cite from a government document giving justifications for Norwegian development policy and counterpoise it with participants' own motivations for working with development cooperation.

The participants were invited to state their opinions about issues that are political[14] in their nature. The participants were also willing to share critical views about their organisation's (employer's) policies and decisions because of the promise of anonymity.

As will be seen in the chapter that contains the main part of the analysis of material from the interviews, I do comment on what is being said. The thesis will be made available for the participants who are interested in reading it (and it will be public through publication at DUO), (University of Oslo, 2012) and one may assume that some may find it uncomfortable to be confronted with their own thoughts in this context. If the themes had been of a more personally sensitive nature, I would have considered this more problematic. As it is, I hope that the readers will see it as food for thought more than provocations. In the interview situations a majority of the participants commented that they found it useful to be asked 'difficult' questions and to be challenged on policy issues. It is my hope that they will find this thesis equally useful in the on-going reflection about their work.

The formal measures pertaining to research ethics relevant in this study were the application for research permit, information about the study given to the participants and informed consent. The project has, as mentioned, been submitted to NSD for approval of protection of privacy (see Appendix 4). When contacting potential participants they were given an information letter about the project and what participation would mean for them if they decided to take part, as well as a copy of a letter of consent (to participate). The information letter included contact details to both myself and my supervisor in case anyone wanted to ask questions. See Appendix 1 and 2 for the information letter and example of an e-mail accompanying it. When I met with a participant, I repeated the central information given in the letters and asked if they had any questions before they were asked to sign the letters of consent. They were reminded that they could decline from answering a question, and that they at any point during the conversation and before publication, withdraw their participation. The letters with signatures are kept under lock and key according to the agreement with NSD, and will be destroyed together with the transcripts upon conclusion of the project.

As will be seen in Ch. 4.10 many participants were initially reluctant towards participating, and were persuaded by my insistence. This could be considered ethically questionable. I do however find it defendable when I look at the reasons of their initial response; the first

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[14] I use 'political' in a wide sense; meaning matters of concern for the organisation of a given society/group and distribution of goods/services and power within it.

reaction was that these were issues they had not worked with, or knew much about. For me that is in itself a finding, and when I explained that I was interested to talk to them anyway, several agreed. This will be further discussed in Ch. 4.10.

2.2.2 Credibility and reliability

The methods used in this study all fit the category of 'qualitative methods.' This is in line with the aim of the study; I have wanted to describe and understand the dominating discourse (common understandings, underlying assumptions, that which is taken as given) rather than finding out for example how many employees in Norwegian NGOs support the government policy on sexual orientation and gender identity. I do draw tentative conclusions about what I perceive as tendencies, and I try to identify a dominating discourse on gender and sexuality in the development cooperation environment. I do this based on a small sample (22 interviews); Norad alone has more than 240 employees. (Norad, 2012e) As in most qualitative research, my sample is not representative; it has an overweight of persons working with gender and health. Still I think I can draw some conclusions based on the tendencies I see in this material. One example: There seems to be some confusion over how concepts are understood and used in this area. When I have found this to be so based on a sample of people of whom many work with gender, I think it is safe to assume the same tendency may be found in the larger development community.

Using my theoretical starting point I attempt to explain some of the findings. If I had used different theories, other explanations may have appeared credible. This should not be understood as if I see every theory as equally relevant (or 'true'); I have chosen my theoretical starting point because I believe it is useful and highly relevant in the context.

In his book about eugenic politics in the Northern countries, Maciej Zaremba gives the following disclaimer:

> Anyone looking to understand the eugenics' (*rashygienens*) exceptional impact in Sweden runs the same risk as everyone else who enters uncharted areas: grabbing hold of all that appears to support what you want to understand. Then it is easy to find a little too many explanations [...] But the discovery that a certain relation fits like a glove with another, is unfortunately not the same as establishing that the relationship also appeared in history, or that it worked just the way you think it should have. [...] It would however have demanded a life's work to produce solid evidence of all the theses contained in this book. Therefore they may be regarded as strong circumstantial evidence, rather than pretentious causal explanations. (Zaremba, 1999, p. 265, my translation)

I can only concur with Zaremba, it would have demanded a lifetime of work to fully substantiate all the attempts at explanations given and conclusions I draw in this thesis. The research area is new in a Norwegian context; I have made an attempt of mapping a hitherto untrodden field. I am clearly at risk of choosing to focus on the details that support my theories and my understanding. What I present is therefore 'circumstantial evidence;' the hope is that it may make do as landmarks or lampposts to guide (or warn) further research.

2.2.3 Who am I? Situating the writer

> For it is true that no production of knowledge in the human sciences can ever ignore or disclaim its author's involvement as a human subject in his own circumstances. (Said, 1985 [1978], p. 11)

I came to study International Community Health from a motley background both personally and academically; I have studied medicine, but did not become a doctor; I have worked in hospitals as a nurses aid and in NGOs with health information campaigns; I have studied design and worked as a textile artist for a number of years; I have been a political activist all my life and worked with international solidarity in many settings and organisations. My experiences and knowledge is spread over a wide area, as are my intellectual interests. In community health I would say this is an advantage. During the theoretical modules of the master course, I found my (international) political interests and knowledge as particularly useful. Since the mid-2000s I have worked (part time) as an international advisor at LLH (The Norwegian LGBT organisation) where I am responsible for (among other things) LLH's partner projects with organisations in East Africa. I am thus part of an environment of Norwegian development actors, and many people know me as a spokesperson for increased inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity issues in a wide variety of policy areas. As a representative of LLH I am also automatically assumed to be lesbian in most settings. I acknowledge that this has most probably influenced the relation to the participants and may have coloured what they say. This is however nothing extraordinary, neither for this study nor for the particular student: I believe, in accordance with theorists like Haraway, that all research is influenced by all people who take part; their backgrounds, status, preconceived ideas and attitudes (their life worlds) will play together with the topic under discussion as new knowledge is created in a joint, collaborative process. It cannot and should not be avoided, but it can be acknowledged, analysed and reflected upon explicitly. I have tried my best to do so, and can only hope the reader will continue to diffract both data and reflections to continue the process of knowledge production.

2.2.4 Dissemination

I foresee two levels of dissemination for this study; first the entire thesis will be publicly available through the University of Oslo's digital publication web site DUO. (University of Oslo, 2012) The participants will be made aware of it on publication, and thus the thesis will be distributed to a wide spectre of actors in Norwegian development cooperation. Secondly, and maybe more importantly, I will use the study in my future work. I have already presented one paper based on preliminary findings at an international conference. (IASSCS, 2011) (International Review Committee IASSCS, 2011) I will continue to work with international cooperation on issues of sexuality and gender. I will attend meetings, seminars and conferences with colleagues in Norway and abroad. I will discuss the themes and develop new strategies together with partner organisations both in the global north and south.

2.3 Theoretical perspectives

In the book 'Empire of humanity: a history of humanitarianism' (Barnett, 2011) the author refuses to make a theoretical standpoint when he states 'This book attempts to explain selected patterns and trends in the history of humanitarianism, and while it is theoretically informed it wears its theory lightly. (Barnett, 2011, p. 15) It is tempting to do something similar, and say that I do not have a theory of gender, sexuality and development that can encompass all. I will however resist the temptation and try to situate the thesis in a landscape of theory and epistemology. I do agree with Barnett that it is difficult to fit everything in a theoretical package, and maybe that is my starting point: I belong to a postmodern world and have given up on the grand stories of modernism. I pick and choose from theories and theorists and build a postmodern construction with parts and elements from several traditions. Central are genealogical reading of history and an understanding of discourse(Foucault), postcolonial, feminist and queer theory, and they will all be introduced in the following.

2.3.1 Genealogical reading of history, discourse and governmentality

> Most of the writings on humanitarianism focus on events after 1990, but to comprehend the history of humanitarianism requires that we go back to the beginning. […] – reading humanitarianism from its origins gives a very different perspective on its present, and reading its present gives a very different perspective of the past. (Barnett, 2011, p. 7)

One could say something similar about the history of development cooperation; most of the writings on development cooperation focus on events after 1950, but to comprehend the history of development cooperation requires that one goes back to the beginning, to the Colonial era's civilising project. Reading development with this perspective gives a different understanding of the present. This is one of the things I will attempt to do; I will be using several levels of analysis and look for different kinds of explanations. At the general level I will attempt to situate present day Norwegian development policy within the historical framework and look for structural explanations. At the specific level I want to analyse gender and sexuality within the context of development cooperation, again by looking both at historical trajections and their present day representations.

Foucault used a historical mode of inquiry to diagnose the present, the genealogical method, and he characterised his projects as writing 'the history of the present.' (Foucault, 1979, cited in Sharp, 2011a) The aim of the method is thus to understand the present, to produce knowledge about characteristics of contemporary society. Genealogy has, according to Foucault however a second goal: To transform the present reality by opening up new possibilities for thought and action; 'Genealogical inquiry aims to transform the present by grasping (more fully) what it is.' (Sharp, 2011a) Foucault asks the question: 'In what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory, what place is occupied by whatever is singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints?' (cited in Gutting, 2005, p. 266) and holds that the question can only be answered on the basis of historical investigations.

A central term in Foucault's genealogical investigations is 'discourse.' In his inquiries he looked for continuities and discontinuities between dominating systems of knowledge and power. The discourse is an arrangement of ideas and concepts which we make use of to 'know' the world, but it is also the institutions in which these arrangements are produced and reproduced and the practices with which they are connected (Arnfred, 2004). Together all these (ideas, concepts, language of knowledge, institutions and practices) constitute 'the Truth.' It will dominate how we define and organise both ourselves and our social world. At the same time, alternative discourses exist even if they are marginalised and subjugated. The alternative discourses offer sites where hegemonic practices can be contested, challenged and resisted. Foucault did not see power as absolute and one-directional; Alternative discourses can be seen as 'power nodes,' or centres for opposition to the, at any time dominating, power/knowledge system. There is furthermore no place outside of power – 'it is always, already, everywhere.' (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 14)

> Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing or exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are like vehicles of power, not its points of application. (Foucault & Gordon, 1980, p. 98)

Of particular interest in the context of this study, is Foucault's view on the social construction of identities and practices, in particular sexuality. The formation of identities and practices are according to Foucault a function of historically specific discourses.

I shall later argue that (e.g.) the dominant Norwegian development discourse maintain a view of the 'Other' as in need of guidance on questions of gender and sexuality. According to Foucault it should be useful to understand how this discursive construction is formed, because this may open the way for contesting it and bring about change.

Foucault held that there was a shift in the techniques of power in Europe (and its colonies) around the late eighteenth century. From the sovereign's 'right of the sword' and 'power over death' the new formations of state took charge of 'life itself.' (Foucault, 1990 [1976], pp. 133-159, Part V) Rosalind P. Petchesky writes:

> The primary focus of what Foucault called "governmentality" became not only enhancing life but managing it, regulating it, calculating and quantifying it, normalizing it, and organizing it into a whole network of sciences and knowledge regimes, or "disciplines," claiming their own truth and wielding their own methods. Biopower took two forms as it developed in the nineteenth century: first *disciplinary* techniques that act directly on individual bodies, to render them docile, or obedient, or "normal"; and later *regulatory* processes directed at populations—their movements, size, hygiene, sanitation, housing, birth rates, longevity, disease and epidemics—in short, the whole sphere of "apparatuses," and the discourses and knowledges they produce, that would become the domain of public health and order and render them distinctly modern (Foucault 1997/2003, 239-249; 1978, 139-141). (R. P. Petchesky, 2012, p. 3)

I will come back to the concept of biopower or biopolitics in Ch. 3.3.4 on Population Control and show how this concept can be used to understand particular development practices.

2.3.2 Postcolonial theory

Postcolonial theory is not a unified set of ideas, and is perhaps best described as postcolonial *theories*. Leela Gandhi calls 'postcolonialism' a 'diffuse and nebulous' term in the preface of her book 'Postcolonial Theory.' (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. viii) She goes on to position postcolonialism theoretically:

> In the main, the intellectual history of postcolonial theory is marked by a dialectic between Marxism, on the one hand, and poststructuralism/postmodernism, on the other. So, too, this theoretical contestation informs the academic content of postcolonial analysis, manifesting itself in an ongoing debate between the competing claims of nationalism and internationalism, strategic essentialism and hybridity, solidarity and dispersal, the politics of structure/totality and the politics of the fragment. (Ibid, p. viii-ix)

Edward Said's 'Orientalism' is regarded as one of the reference points of postcolonial theory. He is however preceded by earlier writers such as Franz Fanon and Albert Memmi, both writing from North Africa during the struggle against the colonising powers, (See e.g. Fanon, 1952; Fanon & Sartre, 1963; Memmi, 1965, 1968) and of course the Indian anti-colonialist Mahatma Gandhi. (Gandhi, 1958-1994) Memmi, a Tunisian intellectual and revolutionary, warned against believing that the yoke of colonisation would be lifted when colonised states reached independence:

> And the day oppression ceases, the new man is supposed to emerge before our eyes immediately. Now, I do not like to say so, but I must, since decolonisation has demonstrated it: this is not the way it happens. The colonised lives for a long time before we see that really new man. (Memmi, 1968, p. 88)

Postcoloniality is thus 'condition marked by the visible apparatus of freedom and the concealed persistence of unfreedom' and this unfreedom 'has its source in the residual traces and memories of subordination.' (L. Gandhi, 1998, pp. 6-7) Memmi also observed that the coloniser and the colonised were bound together; The colonial condition 'chained the coloniser and the colonised into an implacable dependence, moulded their respective characters and dictated their conduct.' (Memmi, 1968, p. 45) This aspect has been investigated by the psychiatrist Frans Fanon, in particular in his book 'Black Skin White Masks' (Fanon, 1952) where he elaborates Hegel's notion of Master/Slave to explain both the psychological consequences of colonisation and points towards colonialism inherent destructive forces; that the resistance begins at the onset of colonialism[15]. Ashis Nandy summarises the effects of colonialism:

> This colonialism colonises minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within colonised societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. In the process, it helps to generalise the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category.

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[15] In 1992, at the fifth centennial of Columbus arrival in the Americas, large networks of popular movements throughout the Americas insisted on commemorating 500 years of *resistance* for example through the 'Campaña Continental 500 Años de Resistencia Indígena, Negra y Popular' (The Continental Campaign 500 years if Indigenous, Black and Popular Resistance) (Girardi, 1999)

> The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside, in structures and in minds. (Cited in L. Gandhi, 1998, pp. 14-15)

What both Gandhi and Fanon did was also to rewrite the history of Western modernity 'to include the repressed and marginalised figures of its victims' (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 21)

> If Gandhi Hind Swaraj everywhere discerns the structural violence of Western 'modernity', Fanon is equally unsparing in his denunciation of the European myths of progress and humanism: 'When I search for Man in the technique and the style of Europe, I see only a succession of negations of man, and an avalanche of murders' (Fanon 1990, p. 252). Read together, the Gandhian and Fanonian critiques of Western civilisation sketch the ethical inadequacy and undesirability of the colonial 'master' whose cognition, as Nandy writes, 'has to exclude the slave except as a "thing"' (Nandy 1983, p. xvi). There is no space for desire, as Fanon and Gandhi struggle to convey, in the existential limitations of a condition whose 'humanity' is founded on the inhumane pathology of racism and violence. (Ibid, p. 21)

If we for a moment let our gaze move forward to the era of development, it is interesting to ponder how the whole project of development can be seen as an attempt to hasten the evolution of less developed societies to reach the 'successful modernity' of Western civilisation, a modernity Fanon and Gandhi has diagnosed as pathological, mired by violence and exclusion.

From the classics, let me move on to postcolonial theory as it has developed since the 1970s. Two names (of many) need mentioning, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Edward Said. Both wrote in a poststructuralist climate and were influenced by e.g. Foucault and Derrida. Gandhi writes that poststructuralist thought has 'provided a somewhat more substantial impetus to the postcolonial project through its clear and confidently theorised proposal for a Western critique of Western civilisation,' and through the shift from Marxist economic critique it has been able 'to diagnose the material effects and implication of colonialism as an epistemological malaise at the heart of Western rationality.' (L. Gandhi, 1998, pp. 25-26)

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak confronted (white) Western academia with her question 'Can the subaltern speak?' in 1985. (1988) She borrowed the word 'subaltern' from Gramsci's work on cultural hegemony. Gramsci identified social groups that are excluded from a society's established structures and subjected to the hegemony of the dominating ruling classes and called them the 'subaltern classes.' (Gramsci & Hoare, 1978) Spivak belonged in the early 1980s to a collective of intellectuals known as the Subaltern Studies Group. The group's objective was to 'promote a systematic and informed discussion of subaltern themes in the field of South Asian studies' and to study both the visible 'history, politics, economics

and sociology of subalternity' and the less obvious 'attitudes, ideologies and belief systems – in short the culture forming the condition.' (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 1) With her question Spivak hits right at home of the problem of representation in research; 'How can the historian/investigator avoid the inevitable risk of presenting herself as an authoritative representation of subaltern consciousness?' (Ibid, p. 2) Her aim has (perhaps) been to 'allow the "people" finally to speak within the jealous pages of elitist historiography,' (Ibid) although she ends her essay by categorically insisting that 'the subaltern cannot speak.'[16] (Spivak, 1988, p. 308). Spivak has also in later writings warned against the co-option of the margins by (postcolonial) intellectuals situated in the centres; against the centres' parasitic relationship to the margins:

> Neocolonialism, [...] Spivak reminds us, 'is fabricating its allies by proposing a share of the centre in a seemingly new way (not a rupture but a displacement): disciplinary support for the conviction of authentic marginality by the (aspiring) elite.' (Cited in L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 59)

In development studies this is a pertinent reminder indeed, and I do feel targeted.

Edward W. Said's 'Orientalism' (Said, 1985 [1978]) is seen as a catalyst for the 'new' postcolonialism in that it lets the colonial aftermath be and concentrates its attention on

> the discursive and textual production of colonial meanings and, concomitantly, to the consolidation of colonial hegemony. While 'colonial discourse analysis' is now only one aspect of postcolonialism, few postcolonial critics dispute its enabling effect upon subsequent theoretical improvisations. (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 65)

Said writes that it is his hope to

> illustrate the formidable structure of cultural domination and, specifically for formerly colonized peoples, the dangers and temptations of employing this structure upon themselves or upon others.' (Said, 1985 [1978], p. 25)

Orientalism is according to Said 'a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern the Orient,' (ibid, p 95) and *one* example of colonisation and imperialism:

> Neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations which include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with that domination. (Said, 1993, p. 8)

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[16] In a comment on Said's work she does however concede that 'the study of colonial discourse [...] has blossomed into a garden where the marginal can speak and be spoken, even spoken for. It is an important part of the discipline now.' Cited in (L. Gandhi, 1998) p 65

What he does in 'Orientalism' is to painstakingly and in great details demonstrate how colonial knowledge and colonial power exist in a reciprocal relationship with each other. Both the Orient and the Occident are ideas rather than geographical locations; they are the result of an 'imagined geography.' In the chapter titled 'Imaginative Geography and Its Representations: *Orientalizing the Oriental'* (Said, 1985 [1978], p. 49) Said writes that Orientalism is a 'field of study based on geographical, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic unit called the Orient,' (ibid, p. 50) and comments that we would never imagine a symmetrical field called 'Occidentialism.' The book further argues that to fully understand the emergence of the 'West' we need to understand how the colonised 'Orient' 'helped to define Europe as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. [...] The Orient is an integral part of European *material* civilization and culture.' (Ibid, p. 1-2) Said's books are deeply political, something he concedes in the introduction to 'Orientalism.' He refuses the distinction between 'pure' and 'political' knowledge and holds that no scholar can detach from the circumstances of life: 'For it is true that no production of knowledge in the human sciences can ever ignore or disclaim its author's involvement as a human subject in his own circumstances.' (Ibid, p. 11), and to keep one's self-respect all humans need to be involved in the actualities of life.

2.3.3 Feminist theory

The broad term 'feminism' is commonly understood as the collection of political movements aimed at defining, establishing, and defending equal political, economic, and social rights between the sexes. (see for example (Encyclopædia Britannica Online Academic, 2012; Merriam Webster, 2012). A 'feminist' is then a person whose beliefs are based on feminism, and who *may* be involved in activities to achieve change in line with her/is beliefs (ibid). In 1949, when the French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir published her book 'Le deuxième sexe' (Beauvoir & Moi, 2000)[17], feminist theory may be said to have been established in theoretical and philosophical discourse as an extension of feminism.

Like feminism, feminist theory is not a single school of thought or direction. I will here only mention a few of the thinkers and contributions – they have been chosen because they are either especially influential or because they have influenced my own thinking and thus the making of this thesis.

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[17] The book was first translated to English in 1953 as "The second sex"(Beauvoir, 1953), the copy I am using is a translation to Norwegian (title: "Det annet kjønn") from 2000.

Simone de Beauvoir was, as already mentioned, seminal for the development of feminist philosophy. Her ground breaking ideas about gender being *constructed* (Beauvoir, 1953), not something solely linked to biology or nature, are still being used to create new understandings. Moreover, she systematically pointed out how the female human being has been constructed as the Other (or Second) sex. Toril Moi, who has used large part of her academic career to study Beauvoir, writes:

> In The Second Sex Beauvoir formulates three principles and applies them to women's situation in the world. First is her foundational insight that man 'is the Subject, he is the Absolute: she is the Other.' Man incarnates humanity; woman, by virtue of being female, deviates from the human norm. The consequence is that women constantly experience a painful conflict between their humanity and their femininity. (Moi, 2010)

'Man' is thus, according to Beauvoir, the definition of a human being, what characterise a woman is what distinguishes her from the norm.

Finally Beauvoir may be seen to anticipate Foucault's method of genealogical readings of history. According to Foucault, using genealogy is to examine 'the constitution of the subject across history which has led us up to the modern concept of the self.' (cited in Sharp, 2011b) In 'The second sex' Beauvoir uses history to explain how the category of women has been constituted and evolved:

> Finally, there is the insight that women are not born but made, that every society has constructed a vast material, cultural and ideological apparatus dedicated to the fabrication of femininity.(Moi, 2010)[18]

Gayle Rubin has been credited (Gothlin, 1999, p. 3) with coining the conceptual pair 'sex-gender' in an essay from 1975 (Rubins, 1975). According to Rubin gender is a socially constructed division of humans in two separate categories based on their sexual and reproductive relations. Her definition is:

> [A] 'sex/gender system' is the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity. (Ibid, p. 159)

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[18] The first part of the quote from Moi starts by saying that Beauvoir 'formulates three principles', here I have only cited two of them. For completeness sake, the second principle is what constitutes Beauvoir as an existentialist philosopher:
'The next principle is that freedom, not happiness, must be used as the measuring stick to assess the situation of women. Beauvoir assumes that woman, like man, is a free consciousness. In so far as the status of Other is imposed on her, her situation is unjust and oppressive. But with freedom comes responsibility: when women consent to their own oppression and help to oppress other women, they are to be blamed.'(Moi, 2010)

In her essay she draws on Marx and Levi-Strauss to further explain how human societies are organised to function economically and for reproducing itself:

> Hunger is hunger, but what counts as food is culturally determined and obtained. Every society has some form of organized economic activity. Sex is sex, but what counts as sex is equally culturally determined and obtained. Every society also has a sex/gender system – a set of arrangements by which the biological raw material of human sex and procreation is shaped by human, social intervention and satisfied in a conventional manner, no matter how bizarre some of the conventions may be. (Ibid, p.165)
> [W]e cannot limit the sex system to 'reproduction' in either the social or biological sense of the term. A Sex/gender system is not simply the reproductive moment of a 'mode of production.' (Ibid, p. 167)

Rubin holds, in agreement with Lévi-Strauss, that all societies will have some 'systematic way' to deal with sex, gender and offspring. She writes that such a system 'may be sexually egalitarian, at least in theory, or it may be 'gender stratified.' (Ibid, p. 168) Many feminists have called the system 'patriarchy', but Rubin prefers the more neutral 'sex/gender system', and adds that not all male-dominated systems are patriarchies. Kinship systems (as described by Lévi-Strauss) are then 'observable and empirical forms of sex/gender systems.' (Ibid, p. 169)

The beauty of Rubin's interpretation of classical anthropological texts is her stringent logic:

> At the most general level, the social organization of sex rests upon gender, obligatory heterosexuality, and the constraint on female sexuality. Gender is a socially imposed division of the sexes. It is a product of the social relations of sexuality. Kinship systems rest upon marriage. They therefore transform males and females into 'men' and 'women' [...] The division of the sexes has the effect of repressing some of the personality characteristics of virtually everyone, men and women. The same social system which oppresses women [...] oppresses everyone in its insistence upon a rigid division of personality. (Ibid, pp. 179-180)

In her other famous essay 'Thinking Sex' (Rubins, 1984), Rubin refines her argument somewhat. Citing Foucault, she stresses that although gender and desire have been 'systematically intertwined' (Ibid, pp.32-33) in kinship systems, contemporary Western society has its own 'system of sexuality' that is linked with gender, but exists separately:

> Gender affects the operation of the sexual system, and the sexual system has had gender-specific manifestations. But although sex and gender are related, they are not the same thing, and the form the basis of two distinct arenas of social practice. (Ibid, p. 33)

Rubin's understanding was not fully appreciated until Judith Butler reread her writings and developed Rubin's thinking in the 1990s. (Gothlin, 1999)

The Swedish historian **Yvonne Hirdman** uses the concept 'gender system' ('genussystem' or 'genusordningen' in Swedish) (Hirdman, 2003, p. 6) slightly differently in that she relates it more directly to power-hierarchies. Gender, for Hirdman is directly related to power in that it is a '"constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and [...] a primary way of signifying relationships of power."'(Gothlin, 1999, pp. 5-6)[19] Hirdman defines gender ('Genus') as a social practice that categorises human beings and a way to interpret the biological differences that can be observed. In her own words:

> Gender can be understood as changeable thought figures (*föränderliga tankefigurer*) 'men' and 'women' (where the biological difference is always exploited); [thought figures] that produce/create beliefs and social practices, which in turn results in that biology too can be influenced and changed - in other words, it is a more symbiotic category than 'gender role' and 'social gender' (*roll och socialt kön*). (Hirdman, 1988, pp. 6-7, my translation)[20]

Moreover the gender system is about 'the creation of practices, ideas, even [ideas] about biology' (Ibid, p. 5, my translation). The two constituting principles of this system are [1)] separation and [2)] hierarchy;

> The female and male shall not be mixed but kept separate, and the female is subordinated the male. In this way a gendered power relationship (*könsmaktordning*) is established. (Lindstad, 2012, p. 29)

Hirdman and the notion of one (global) gendered power relationship have been criticised by postcolonial feminists (see Ch. 2.3.5) for not taking into account historical and cultural differences in power relations between genders. In this regards Rubins' ideas about an asymmetrical if not hierarchical sex/gender system may be more appropriate when one is trying to understand societal phenomena across cultures.

Feminist epistemology

When feminist researchers started to look critically at science, they quickly discovered that knowledge was gendered, and that binary oppositions such as mind vs. body, culture vs. nature and woman vs. man are intrinsic to Western science and 'traditional knowledge'. 'Feminist theorists have sharply denounced this exercise of the dualistic ordering of reality as the attempt of male scientists to control nature and women.' (Wieringa, 1998, p. 362). This

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[19] Gothlin her cites Joan Scott which she claims is in exact agreement with Hirdman. The Scott citation is taken from (Scott, 1988)

[20] The quote was hard to translate so here is the entire citation in Swedish for readers of Scandinavian languages: 'Föränderliga tankefigurer män och kvinnor (där den biologiska skillnaden alltid utnyttjas) vilka/ger upphov till/ skapar föreställningar och sociala praktiker, vilka får till följd att också biologien kan påverkas och ändras – med andra ord, det är en mer symbiotisk kategori än roll och socialt kön.'

further led to questioning of objectivity as an ideal, or even a possibility. In the chapter about theory of science in 'Kjønnsteori,' Egeland and Holst writes:

> A common starting point for feminist science theorists is that both research and the researcher are socially situated. (C. Egeland & Holst, 2008, p. 107)

In the classic understanding of science in Western thought, the purpose of science is to discover how things 'really' are, that is, 'the truth.' The ideal scientist is completely impartial; a 'modest witness'(Haraway, 1996) that does not in any way interfere with his results. But long before feminist theorists entered the stage, thinkers had started to question science relation with reality. Einstein wrote for example in 1922 that 'As far as the laws of mathematics refer to reality, they are not certain; and as far as they are certain, they do not refer to reality.' (Einstein, 1922, p. 15) When it comes to feminist epistemology, one can describe it on a continuum from 'empirical feminist epistemology' (represented by for example Helen E. Longino) to 'postmodern feminist epistemology' (represented by for example Donna Haraway and Sandra Harding[21]) (C. Egeland & Holst, 2008, p. 109). I will use the limited space here to present the views of the two thinkers who are most relevant in my context, namely Donna Haraway and Joan W Scott.

Donna Haraway introduced the term 'situated knowledge' in an article in the journal 'Feminist Studies' from 1988. (Haraway, 1988) In this article, Haraway starts by discussing the problem of knowledge:

> Recent social studies of science and technology [...] have made available a very strong social constructionist argument for all forms of knowledge claims, most certainly and especially scientific ones. (p. 576)
> But the further I get in describing the radical social constructionist program and a particular version of postmodernism, coupled with the acid tools of critical discourse in the human sciences, the more nervous I get. (p. 577)
> So, I think my problem, and 'our' problem, is how to have simultaneously an account of radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for recognizing our own 'semiotic technologies' for making meanings, and a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a 'real' world, one that can be partially shared and that is friendly to earthwide projects of finite freedom, adequate material abundance, modest meaning in suffering, and limited happiness. (Ibid, p. 579)

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[21] Harding introduced the term 'standpoint epistemology', see under 'Feminist postcolonial theory'

She goes on to outline an epistemological program, the main features being [1] to acknowledge situated and partial knowledge, [2] being rigorous and coherent, [3] taking a responsible and political position[22] (Biglia, 2011). In her own words:

> I would like to insist on the embodied nature of all vision and so reclaim the sensory system that has been used to signify a leap out of the marked body and into a conquering gaze from nowhere. This is the gaze that mythically inscribes all the marked bodies, that makes the unmarked category claim the power to see and not be seen, to represent while escaping representation. This gaze signifies the unmarked positions of Man and White, one of the many nasty tones of the word 'objectivity' to feminist ears in scientific and technological, late-industrial, militarized, racist, and male-dominant societies, that is, here, in the belly of the monster, in the United States in the late 1980s. I would like a doctrine of embodied objectivity that accommodates paradoxical and critical feminist science projects: Feminist objectivity means quite simply situated knowledge. (Haraway, 1988, p. 581)

In her arguments against the previous ideals (the 'gaze from nowhere') Haraway implicitly outlines her alternative: The observer is embodied, the one who *represents* something (knowledge) needs to *present* herself and her position. She later goes on to develop this to include how knowledge is produced in a dialogue between the subject and object of research:

> Situated knowledges require that the object of knowledge be pictured as an actor or agent, not as a screen or a ground or a resource, never finally as slave to the master that closes off the dialectic in his unique agency and his authorship of 'objective' knowledge. (Ibid, p. 592)

In other writings Haraway has used the word 'diffraction' to describe what happens in the process of knowledge creating. (C. Egeland & Holst, 2008; Haraway, 1992). She suggests the term as an alternative to 'reflection'; the researcher is not a mirror that can reflect truths, rather a lens that splits light and creates new patterns:

> Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection, or reproduction. A diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear, but rather maps where the effects of difference appear. (Haraway, 1992)

This alternative to reflexivity also implies Haraway's critique that there has traditionally been too much focus on the researcher as an individual subject. A focus on the individual researcher can easily turn into an auto celebratory process, and lose sight of knowledges being collectively produced.

Joan W. Scott is a historian and has argued that gender should be incorporated as a central category of historical analysis. She holds that this may lay the foundations for genuinely rewriting history. Her starting point is to deconstruct, and she writes: 'Those who would

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[22] Her last point maybe what makes many disagree with Egeland and Holst when they define Haraway thoughts as 'postmodern feminist epistemology.'

codify the meanings of words fight a losing battle, for words like ideas and things they are meant to signify, have a history.' (Scott, 1986, p. 1053) She describes two approaches used by historians, the descriptive and the causal. Early feminist history writing was descriptive, she claims, as it sought to inform about the history of women. When she speaks about using gender as an analytic tool her aim is to find explanations for what has been described. Scott's vision is to use the gender category to deconstruct historical gender differences. She writes that we 'need a refusal of the fixed and permanent quality of the binary opposition, a genuine historicization and deconstruction of the terms of sexual difference.' (Ibid, p. 1065) I will in Ch. 4.8.5 come back to her critique of how the gender concept is being used.

2.3.4 Queer theory

Gayle Rubin's thinking was instrumental to the development of what is now known as Queer theory. Queer theory grew out of studies on homosexuality, and was first coined by Teresa de Lauretis in 1994 (Mortensen & Jegerstedt, 2008). Queer theory is however not one unified theory, but rather a way to analyse sexuality, culture, society and exclusion. The word 'queer' itself was originally used about that which differs from the norm in a negative way, and was used about homosexuals. In 1990 in New York, a group calling itself 'Queer Nation' introduced the now famous slogan: 'We're Here, We're Queer, Get Used To It!' (Ambjörnsson, 2006, p. 13). A new era of gay and trans activism was born, an era where activists claimed derogatory terms as their own with an 'in your face' attitude that refused to ask for permission to be different or politely beg for tolerance, and at the same time questioned traditional understanding of identity. (Ibid, pp.13-27)

Judith Butler is perhaps the most known thinker connected with Queer theory, a reputation she has got for her work with renewing feminist theory (Jegerstedt, 2008b). In her book 'Gender Trouble' (Butler, 1990) she draws on Foucault to think about gender and sexuality as discursive practices inscribed in power relations. In 'The history of Sexuality, Vol I' (Foucault, 1990 [1976]) Foucault writes:

> Particularly from the eighteenth century onward, Western societies created and deployed a new apparatus which was superimposed on the previous one, and which, without completely supplanting the latter, helped to reduce its importance. I am speaking of the deployment of sexuality. (Ibid, p. 106)

Butler is anti-essentialist, one of her most famous postulates is that gender is performative, that is, our understanding of gender is created in a social setting where humans through acts

and practices (including speech) perform gendered roles (Butler, 1990), (Jegerstedt, 2008b, p. 76). In popular understanding, Queer theory is strongly linked to this aversion against essentialist identities; to think "queer" is to not identify as either hetero- or homosexual, for example. This is also an area where debates have been heated. In their article "Sorry, we don't speak queer" (Moseng & Prieur, 2000) Moseng and Prieur argue that queer theorists are in danger of losing sight of the material conditions of life and the body's substantial inertia; they risk being left with analytical tools that are inadequate to describe people's lives. Similar critique has also been voiced by Toril Moi in her book 'Hva er en kvinne?: kjønn og kropp i feministisk teori' (*What is a woman?: gender and body in feminist theory*) (Moi, 2002). Butler herself did respond to this line of criticism with her next book 'Bodies that matter' (Butler, 1993).

Earlier research on homosexuality (in some countries known as 'Gay and Lesbian studies') had focused on mapping lives, habits and experiences among homosexuals. Queer studies turned the coin, and started studying the *norm* instead of the *abnormal*; by questioning the naturalness of heterosexuality, one was able to ask fundamental questions about sexuality itself. (Ambjörnsson, 2006, pp. 35-39). Michael Warner, one of the early contributors to Queer theory writes:

> The preference for 'queer' represents, among other things, an aggressive impulse of generalization; it rejects a minoritizing logic of toleration or simple political interest-representation in favor of a more thorough resistance to regimes of the normal. The universalizing utopianism of queer theory does not entirely replace more minority-based versions of lesbian and gay theory - nor could it, since normal sexuality and the machinery of enforcing it do not bear down equally on everyone, as we are constantly reminded by pervasive forms of terror, coercion, violence, and devastation. The insistence on 'queer'-a term defined against 'normal' and generated precisely in the context of terror - has the effect of pointing out a wide field of normalization, rather than simple intolerance, as the site of violence. Its brilliance as a naming strategy lies in combining resistance on the broad social terrain of the normal with more specific resistance on the terrains of phobia and queer-bashing, on one hand, or of pleasure on the other. 'Queer' therefore also suggests the difficulty in defining the population whose interests are at stake in queer politics. And as a partial replacement for 'lesbian and gay' it attempts partially to separate questions of sexuality from those of gender. (Warner, 1991, p. 16).

Another essential argument in Butler's thinking is that one of the norms that govern our understanding of gender is society's compulsive heterosexuality. Butler introduces the term 'the heterosexual matrix' (Butler, 1990, pp. 47-106); The matrix is the power framework that links gender and sexuality, it is the mould that organises bodies, gender and desire into a certain order where masculinity and femininity becomes mutually exclusive categories that are bond together through the heterosexual desire. In the heterosexual matrix the only

positions on offer are as male or female. Furthermore these positions are each other's opposite (to be female is *not to be* male and vice versa), and the two positions are expected to attract each other. (Dahl, 2005, p. 50) (The link to Rubin is clear). Related to this is the term 'heteronormativity', made known by Michael Warner in the article cited above (Warner, 1991). Fanny Ambjörnsson defines the concept:

> With [heteronormativity] one means the institutions, laws, structures, relations and acts that maintains heterosexuality as something uniform, natural, universal - that is all that which contribute **to a certain kind of heterosexual life** being seen as the most desirable and natural way of life. [...] When one talks about heteronormativity rather than heterosexuality, one signals that it is the system of norms itself one wants to examine. (Ambjörnsson, 2006, p. 52)

Gayle Rubin does not use the term (she wrote this before the term was coined), but describes its effect precisely:

> Like gender, sexuality is political. It is organized into systems of power, which reward and encourage some individuals and activities, while punishing and suppressing others. (Rubins, 1984, p. 34)

One result of some activities and individuals being suppressed is that they become invisible; everyone is presumed to be heterosexual until proven otherwise, and everyone is defined as either male or female. In a heteronormative society or culture a person that have a same-gendered partner will have to explicitly say so, if not everyone will assume that his/her partner is a wo/man, a child's parents are assumed to be a man and a woman, if a person is not easily classified as either male or female it will cause difficulties and embarrassment, and so on.

Rubin further describes a hierarchy *within* heteronormativity; different expressions of gender and sexuality are categorised on a continuum from good normal and natural to bad, abnormal and unnatural. Not all expressions of woman/manhood or heterosexuality are applauded within Western culture.

> Modern Western societies appraise sex acts according to a hierarchical system of sexual value. Marital, reproductive heterosexuals are alone at the top erotic pyramid. Clamouring below are unmarried monogamous heterosexuals in couples, followed by most other heterosexuals. Solitary sex floats ambiguously. The powerful nineteenth-century stigma on masturbation lingers in less potent, modified forms, such as the idea that masturbation is an inferior substitute for partnered encounters. Stable, long-term lesbian and gay male couples are verging on respectability, but bar dykes and promiscuous gay men are hovering just above the groups at the very bottom of the pyramid. The most despised sexual castes currently include transsexuals, transvestites, fetishists, sadomasochists, sex workers such as prostitutes and porn models, and the lowliest of all, those whose eroticism transgresses generational boundaries. (Rubins, 1984, p. 11)

Rubin draws a circle to illustrate what form of sexuality is privileged: that is a sexuality that takes place within a committed relationship, is monogamous, for reproduction, and non-commercial. It should be between two persons, one of each sex, they should belong to the same age group, and only have sex in private. I addition Rubin places the forms of sexuality that lie outside this 'charmed circle' on a declining scale from stable lesbian or gay relationships to fetishism and S/M.

The charmed circle:
Good, Normal, Natural, Blessed Sexuality

Heterosexual
Married
Monogamous
Procreative
Non-commercial
In pairs
In a relationship
Same generation
In private
No pornography
Bodies only
Vanilla

The outer limits:
Bad, Abnormal, Unnatural, Damned Sexuality

Homosexual
Unmarried
Promiscuous
Non-procreative
Commercial
Alone or in groups
Casual
Cross-generational
In public
Pornography
With manufactured objects
Sadomasochistic

Figure 3: Rubins' charmed circle (Rubins, 1984) p 13

2.3.5 Feminist postcolonial theory

The link between feminist epistemology and postcolonial theory is for me first the willingness to take the marginalised position as a starting point for knowledge production. In an essay about 'Standpoint epistemology' Sandra Harding writes

> Standpoint theories argue for 'starting off thought' from the lives of marginalized peoples; beginning in those determinate, objective locations in any social order will generate illuminating critical questions that do not arise in thought that begins from dominant group lives. Starting off research from women's lives will generate less partial and distorted accounts not only of women's lives but also of men's lives and of the whole social order. (Harding, 1993, p. 56)

According to Foucault this is also a recipe for change as reclaiming subjugated knowledges may help to expose the hidden borders between knowledge and power. (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 43)

The second link is postcolonial critique of Western humanism. Gandhi writes that although humanism asserts that all human beings are the measure of all things, 'they simultaneously smuggle a disclaimer into their celebratory outlook.' (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 30) That which is written in small letters is of course that some humans are more human than others and thus 'they are more substantially the measure of all things.'(Ibid) Paraphrasing Beauvoir we might say that the colonised is the 'second' or 'other' human. Just as women are seen as all that which men are not, colonised people are seen as the negation of the colonising Europeans.

What postcolonial feminist thinkers furthermore have done, is to challenge the notion that 'women' can be understood as *one* marginalised position; they have pointed to hierarchies within the category of women; 'feminist women of color in the U.S. [have used colonisation] to describe the appropriation of their experiences and struggles by hegemonic white women's movements' (Mohanty, 1984, p. 333) and they have taken women in non-Western locations and/or non-white women's position as their situation for knowledge production.

Inspired by writings from black and third world feminists, the concept of 'intersectionality' came into the public domain in the late 1990s and 2000s. As the word suggests, one seeks to examine how various categories such as gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, and so on interact (/-sect) on multiple and simultaneous levels, contributing to systematic social inequality. Intersectional theory understands the categories (such as gender, class, race) as constituted in a mutual and interlinked process (Gressgård, 2008, p. 224). Black American feminists such as **Audre Lorde** and **bell hooks** had long emphasised that feminists need to

analyse how different axes of power work together to produce and reproduce hierarchies of oppression (Jegerstedt, 2008a, p. 205). bell hooks describes a constellation she calls the 'imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy' (hooks, 1996, p. 107) and points out how also men suffers the consequences of the multiple layered oppression. In Scandinavia the concept of intersectionality was made known through two books by Paulina de los Reyes and Diana Mulinari (De los Reyes, Molina, Mulinari, & Knocke, 2002; De los Reyes & Mulinari, 2005).

I have already mentioned **Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's** contribution on the 'Subaltern' position. Within feminist theory Spivak is also known for her theories of political activism, and the term 'strategic essentialism':

> The concept of strategic essentialism is a 'strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest' (Fuss 1994:99). It utilizes the idea of essence with a recognition of and critique of the essentialist nature of the essence itself. It is a means of using group identity as a basis of struggle while also debating issues related to group identity within the group. Strategic essentialism emerged out of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's critique of the Marxist, [in a] historical collective called the Subaltern Studies Group. The collective's main project was to operate as a counter-movement, working to expose elitist representations of South Asian culture, particularly within Indian history. (Wolf, 2007)

Chandra Talpade Mohanty has in her writings analysed 'the production of the 'Third World Woman' as a singular monolithic subject in some recent (Western) feminist texts' (Mohanty, 1984, p. 333), and criticises 'the implicit assumption of 'the West' (in all its complexities and contradictions) as the primary referent in theory and praxis.' (Ibid, p. 334) Through critical readings of selected research, she draws 'attention to the similar effects of various textual strategies [...] that codify Others as non-Western and hence themselves as (implicitly) Western.' (Ibid, p. 334) Mohanty's concern is 'the urgent political necessity [...] of forming strategic coalitions across class, race, and national boundaries'; her scholarship is thus linked with her feminist and anti-colonial activism.

These are just two examples of feminist theorists that write from a postcolonial perspective, some more will be mentioned and used as I introduce historic perspectives on gender and sexuality in a later chapter.

2.3.6 Theoretical conclusions

To conclude this brief introduction of Foucaultian history, feminist, queer and postcolonial theory and epistemology, my starting point is that

- gender is socially constructed and exists in a complex interaction with a given society's organisation of sex and reproduction
- many sex/gender systems are stratified and hierarchical, but this cannot be assumed a priori, it is an empirical question that needs to be asked in each concrete time/place/context
- knowledge is situated and is produced in a relationship between all that take part in the production, both researchers and that/those which are being studied
- knowledge and power exist in a reciprocal relationship to each other

3 Gender, sexuality and development, historical background

In this chapter I will argue that gender and sexuality were central themes in racialising the people inhabiting Africa and Asia when the continents were colonised. I will argue that as the creation of the racialised Other defined the role of coloniser and colonised, these roles have been maintained in the era of development. I will then look at how development itself has developed, to contextualise my area of interest. Finally I will use Gayle Rubin's concept of the 'charmed cycle' of sexuality (Rubins, 1984) and show how the sexuality and gender manifestations that have been privileged by Western society have changed, and that the sexuality and gender manifestations defined as outside the charmed circle have been allocated to the Other.

3.1 The making of the Other, Colonial images

The Enlightenment with its strong belief in rationality and science and the beginning of Europe's expansion through colonisation coincides. Scientific endeavours and imperialist expansions were seen as quests for mapping and mastering the unknown. A strong dualism lay at the bottom of understanding:

> [M]uch Western thinking from Enlightenment onwards has been constructed in terms of dichotomies and hierarchized binaries, where one is not only separate/different but also above/better than the other. Such figures of thought are part and parcel of the 'dark continent discourse'. (Arnfred, 2004, p. 37)

In her book 'Imperial Leather: Race, gender, and sexuality in the colonial conquest' (1995) Anne McClintock looks at the use of imagery in colonial scientific, fictional and commercial texts. She analyses how ideas about race, class and gender are interwoven in the construction of the inferior Other. (McClintock, 1995) McClintock identifies what she calls a 'porno-tropics'; a lurid imagination[23] of what went on in distant places, and shows how this spans from as early as Roman geographers through the age of Columbus to the Victorians. She writes:

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[23] The psychoanalytical inclined may want to call it a transference of repressed fantasies and dreams.

> For centuries, the uncertain continents – Africa, the Americas, Asia – were figured in European lore a libidinously eroticized. Travellers' tales abounded with visions of the monstrous sexuality of far-off lands, where, as legend had it, men sported gigantic penises and women consorted with apes,[...] Renaissance travellers found an eager and lascivious audience for their spicy tales, so that, long before the era of high Victorian imperialism, Africa and the Americas had become what can be called a porno-tropics for the European imagination – a fantastic magic lantern of the mind onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears. (McClintock, 1995, p. 22)

Edward Said expresses the same views when he in 'Orientalism' argues that the 'otherness' projected is but a mirror of Western illicit sexuality. His argument also includes how this projection has two effects: Apart from creating the picture of the Other, a picture of self, of the West is created. (Said, 1985 [1978]) In Arnfred's words:

> The other is constructed to be not only different from European/Western sexualities and self, but also functions to co-construct that which is European/Western as modern, rational and civilized. (Arnfred, 2004, p. 7)

This idea of excessive sexuality is further linked to a gendered hierarchy. The white male explorer conquered the virgin lands for the Empire. The dangers he encountered are described with gendered metaphors: The opposite of the chaste virgin is the unrestricted female sexuality hidden in the dark interior; the 'vagina dentata'[24] that threatens to engulf the hero. McClintock describes how the scene of discovery becomes a scene of ambivalence:

> [S]uspended between an imperial megalomania, with its fantasy of unstoppable rapine – and a contradictory fear of engulfment, with its fantasy of dismemberment and emasculation. (McClintock, 1995, pp. 26-27)

The 'virgin lands' were of course already populated. The people of the dark continents were being marked by European with the same double understanding as the land: Both innocent and dangerous, both virgin and whore. An example of the innocent purity of the natives of Africa is the alleged absence of homosexuality. Homosexuality was viewed as refinement gone awry, men becoming effeminate; the primitive Africans were thought to be spared of this vice of 'degenerate civilisation'. In 1885 Sir Richard Francis Burton, the explorer, traducer and orientalist, wrote that Africa south of Sahara belongs to a 'non-Sotadic'[25] zone: 'the negro races are mostly untainted by sodomy and tribadism' (Burton, 1885). The Sotadic zones included according to Burton the Arabs and the Mediterraneans. The Arabs and

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[24] The archetypal image of a 'vagina dentata' was made known by Sigmund Freud. In his work on children's sexual evolution he equates the vagina with a mouth, and the teethed vagina represents the male fear of castration. (Freud, 1953)

[25] The word 'Sotadic' is Burton's invention and derives from the Greek poet Sotades who wrote homoerotic verse approximately 200 years BCE. (Burton, 1885)

Mediterraneans were of course also the competitors of England in the struggle for domination of trade and commerce in Africa.

While homosexuality was thus viewed as something foreign to Africa, sexuality per se was an important element in typecasting Africans as savages. Signe Arnfred writes:

> '[T]he black man' like 'the black woman' is defined as quintessentially sexual, albeit in different ways. While black (colonized) women are tantalizing objects for white men's sexual dreams and fantasies, sexualized, large-penis bestowed black men are differently positioned in the white imaginations – as threats and rivals, objects of fear and loathing. (Arnfred, 2004, p. 19)

Frantz Fanon mockingly describes the white men's misconceptions in 'Black Skin White Masks':

> As for the Negroes, they have tremendous sexual powers. What do you expect, with all the freedom they have in their jungles! They copulate at all times and in all places. They are really genital. They have so many children that they cannot even count them. (Fanon, 1952, p. 121)

Heike Becker understands the double image (innocent and dangerous) as a result of two different trends of influence:

> For some, particularly the missions, African sexuality was, and had always been, 'primitive', uncontrolled and excessive, and as such it represented the darkness and dangers of the continent. For others, including colonial officials, pre-colonial African sexuality had been 'innocent', and the danger lay rather in the degeneration of this sexuality which was seen as having come about through social and economic changes caused by external forces. In spite of their different angles, both perspectives concurred that African sexuality was essentially 'other', namely, that it belonged to the realm of nature. In both views Africans and their sexuality were savage; at issue was merely whether African sexuality was of the noble or the ignoble savage variety. (Becker, 2004, p. 37)

The Africans were clearly in need of instruction and *that* was the 'white man's burden;' to bring civilisation to the uncivilised world, or, in Leela Gandhi's words 'imperialism was really the messianic harbinger of civilisation.' (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 15) Civilisation, and Christian salvation, laid in controlling sexuality, the mind should rule the body; chastity and self-control were the virtues preached. The opposite of the Africans' jungle-sexuality was how the white man subordinated passion to reason, how sexuality was restricted by moral and intellect. A gendered and racial dichotomy and hierarchy was established; white men represented mind, while women and Africans represented body. Evolutionary theory had given white men a prime position but also a savage inheritance by linking civilised whites to apes and to uncivilised blacks in the stages of development. This link created fear of a return to barbarism, the body and those who are embodied (women and non-whites, those who are defined as the Other by virtue of their gender or race) had to be repressed. (McClintock, 1995)

> The Victorian white bourgeois patriarchal family is posited as the evolutionary pinnacle, and other social arrangements are ranked by European anthropologists in a fairly explicit evolutionary hierarchy. These scientific theories argue that the evolution of humanity is a long march from primitive promiscuity to the institution of the incest taboo to group marriage, to polygamy, to Victorian norm, with certain groups of people stuck at way stations along the road.[...] The general lasciviousness of savages is a trope that cuts across genres and disciplines throughout the nineteenth century. (Hoad, 2007, p. 56)

V.Y. Mudimbe expresses some of the same thoughts in his book 'The Invention of Africa.' (Mudimbe, 1988) Mudimbe examines discourses about Africa and Africans. He looks at how a primitive African was invented as the perennial Other and how changes in perceptions of the Other relate to changes in European sciences. Following Foucault he constructs an 'archaeology' of thought about Africa with special focus on the discipline of anthropology:

> [W]e are painfully aware of the mystifications according to which all cultures pass through a succession of evolutionary phases: from magic through religion to science; from savagery to barbarism to civilization; from sexual promiscuity through matrilineality and finally to patrilineality. (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 68)

Both time and space come together in the evolutionary tale. Modernity and the civilised Man are the result of European history, physically located in Europe. Anne McClintock calls the colonies an 'anachronistic space:'

> According to this trope, colonized people – like women and the working class in the metropolis – do not inhabit history proper but exist in a permanently anterior time within the geographic space of the modern empire as anachronistic humans, atavistic, irrational, bereft of human agency - the living embodiment of the archaic 'primitive.' (McClintock, 1995, p. 30)

Postcolonial thinkers has pointed out that this trope has survived; the archaic is still placed outside and modernity within. But time is not frozen, not even in anachronistic space: What during the age of discovery was 'virgin lands' populated by 'primitive natives' are now 'underdeveloped countries'.

> The hegemonic Euroamerican notion of modernity – as spelled out in modernization theory and theories of development – locates the non-west at the far end of an escalator rising toward the west, which is at the pinnacle of modernity in terms of capitalist development, secularization of culture, and democratic state formation. (Ong, 1999, p. 31)

'The white man's burden to civilise the natives' of the colonial age has become 'the moral obligation to assist the underdeveloped' of today. In no other area are 'they' as underdeveloped as in their views of gender and sexuality. In fact, it is these views that keep them linked in backwardness and underdevelopment, in oppression and poverty. I will try to document these statements in the following. But first, we need to take a detour: Development

cooperation has its own history and to get a full picture of how gender and sexuality are treated, we need to take a look at the development discourse as such, and how it has evolved since World War II.

3.2 History of development

In this chapter I want to look at what is meant by 'development.' Development is an unclear and contested concept; it is hard to pin down a definition that may be universally agreed upon. Benedicte Bull starts an essay 'Development Theory Revisited' by asking: 'What does development really mean and how can it be achieved?' (Bull, 2006, p. 28) She goes on to describe how 'development' was established as a field within academic disciplines after World War II, and describes the various academic answers to the question across time. To get a fuller understanding, it can thus be useful to explore how the concept has been used in modern time. To do that I will start off by looking at how development policy has changed over the decades since 1950.

In his book 'Empire of humanity: a history of humanitarianism' (Barnett, 2011) Michael Barnett defines 'humanitarianism' to also include what we would call development cooperation[26]. He divides the history in three epochs:

> I observe three ages of humanitarianism, distinguished by a global context defined by the relationship between the forces of destruction (violence), production (economy), and protection (compassion). For Imperial Humanitarianism it was colonialism, commerce and civilizing missions; for Neo-Humanitarianism the Cold War and nationalism, development and sovereignty; and for Liberal Humanitarianism the liberal peace, globalization, and human rights. (Barnett, 2011, p. 9)

Many see the American Marshal Plan after the Second World War as being the first step towards development as a form of international relation. The Marshal Plan, officially named

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[26] In the introduction to the book Barnett writes: 'Although we cannot carbon-date the origins of humanitarianism, the actual term began coming into everyday use in the early nineteenth century. We can certainly understand it as a form of compassion, but in practice it had three marks of distinctions: assistance beyond borders, a belief that such transnational action was related in some way to the transcendent, and the growing organization and governance of activities designed to protect and improve humanity.' (Barnett, 2011, p. 10) That his definition also includes something beyond aid to victims of conflict and natural disasters can be eluded from the list of organisations he has included in his analysis, it includes for example ICRC, Care International, Oxfam, Médecins Sans Frontières, UNHCR and World Vision International, thus both 'traditional' humanitarian organisations like the Red Cross, development organisations like Oxfam and human rights institutions as UNHCR. (Barnett, 2011, p. 17)

the 'European Recovery Program' was created by the United States in 1947 and offered economic and technical aid to rebuild (Western) Europe after the war. The aid was coordinated by the newly established Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), later re-established as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2012)

The period after WWII was marked by increased focus on how poor countries could improve the material conditions of their people. Much attention was given to changes in economic systems; industrialisation was seen as the magic key to improvement. (Lindstrand, 2006, pp. 34-35) At least two tendencies can explain this new attention: First of all, this was the time when former colonies in Africa and Asia were liberating themselves from colonial rule. The new independent leaders wanted to become economically equal with their former colonial masters, and felt that the European colonialists owed them after years of exploiting their natural resources. Second, the American initiative to give aid to its allies in Europe must be seen in light of the political situation. This was the beginning of the Cold War, and it had become clear that Europe was divided between East and West, between communism and market economy, between the two 'super-powers' Soviet Union and USA. (Bull, 2006, pp. 30-31) To offer economic and technical assistance, was one of the ways to secure allies, first in Europe and later across the globe and the super-powers competed to influence non-aligned countries. Seen in this light, it may even be claimed that the first development cooperation happened between the former Russian colonies that became part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1917. (Abbas & Niyiragira, 2009) There can be no doubt that the whole development era was influenced by the Cold War, and that strategies, alliances, beneficiaries and donors were decided by strategic considerations by the two blocs, the USSR-led and the US led (communist/socialist versus capitalist/liberalist states).

To describe the changes in theory and practice, it is useful to divide the time since WWII in time and 'thematic' periods. I will here shortly present one such periodization, adopted from a lecture on development history by Professor Bård A. Andreassen at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights. (Andreassen, 2009) Benedicte Bull (quoted above), a researcher at the Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM), University in Oslo, uses a similar set up (Bull, 2006) and I will use her arguments as well in the following. I will also draw on several textbooks and articles in development theory. (See e.g. Abbas & Niyiragira, 2009; Andreassen & Marks, 2006; Banik, 2006; Lindstrand, 2006; Rist, 1997; Shivji, 2005)

3.2.1 Modernisation, WW II -1965

The main characteristic of the modernisation theory is its linear view of history; there are stages of growth that all societies pass through. (Lindstrand, 2006) The division between poor and rich countries is explained by the poor being traditional (at an earlier step of development) and the rich modern (more advanced). Gilbert Rist writes:

> The world is conceived not as a structure in which each element depends upon the others, but as a collection of formally equal 'individual' nations. (Rist, 1997, p. 73)

To think about changes in economic systems and societies as 'development' was of course not something that started after WW II. Both Adam Smith and Karl Marx talk about stages of development. What is new is to think of development as something that is *done*; an action, rather than something that happens as the great wheel of history turns. 'Development' has taken on a transitive meaning and for the first time poor countries are labelled 'underdeveloped.' (Rist, 1997, pp. 72-73) One believed in large scale programs, 'the big push' and 'take-off'[27] (Rosenstein-Rodan, 1943, 1961) were used as metaphors to indicates what one claimed was needed. In fact the state was seen as an agent of change – in line with Keynesian thoughts, the state should modernise the economy and plan labour education and industrialising programmes.

Rist gives President Truman the honour of articulating the thoughts of the period in his inauguration speech in 1949. (Rist, 1997, p. 70) Truman words give a good impression of how 'development' was understood in the modernisation period, and therefore I find it worthwhile quoting him at some length:

- Fourth[28], we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.
- More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.
- For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of these people. [...]
- I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And, in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.

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[27] 'Launching a country into self-sustaining growth is a little like getting an airplane off the ground. There is a critical ground speed which must be passed before the craft can become airborne.' (Rosenstein-Rodan, 1961)

[28] The part of the address about development has become known as 'President Truman's point four'

- Our aim should be to help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens.[...]
- With the cooperation of business, private capital, agriculture, and labor in this country, this program can greatly increase the industrial activity in other nations and can raise substantially their standards of living. [...]
- The old imperialism - exploitation for foreign profit - has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing.
- All countries, including our own, will greatly benefit from a constructive program for the better use of the world's human and natural resources. Experience shows that our commerce with other countries expands as they progress industrially and economically.
- Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge. (Truman, 1949)

To summarise: Development was seen as a process towards increased prosperity (material wealth), the process would happen through greater production, and technical and scientific knowledge was the keys to productivity increase. Truman's speech points out that to assist the underdeveloped is in your own self-interest: Markets will be expanded, and peace upheld. Without making direct reference to ideological differences or the power struggle with USSR, he underlines that countries that can hope to benefit from their aid, are the 'free peoples of this world', that is those not under the yoke of communism[29].

3.2.2 Dependency, 1965-75

Critics of modernisation theory hold that poor countries are not merely at an earlier stage of development, but have their own histories, structures and aims. The modernisation theory fails by not recognising the relational reasons for under/development. This critique has become known as 'the dependency theory.'[30] (Rist, 1997, pp. 109-139) It claims that national economies cannot be seen as isolated units, not when industrialisation and wealth accumulation happened in Europe and not now. Poor countries are at present weak members of an international market economy where the 'developed' countries dominate. The centre of the market, the market place so to speak, is the industrialised countries in the West and the periphery is the previous colonies. Furthermore the current state is a result of a conscious policy (not just the law of progress) – the conquest of South America, the colonisation of

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[29] In part one of the address he says: 'the actions resulting from the Communist philosophy are a threat to the efforts of free nations to bring about world recovery and lasting peace.' (Truman, 1949)

[30] Important theorists are the North Americans Paul A. Baran and André Gunder Frank, and several Latin American structuralist economists like Raúl Prebisch, Celso Furtado and Fernando Cardoso. Others that can be ascribed to this tendency are Johan Galtung (Europe) and Samir Amin (Africa).

Africa and Asia with plundering of its natural resources, the slave trade, the breaking up of social and economic structures and so on; all this led to some countries being 'more developed' than others. Bull writes:

> The background for this relationship was the strategies pursued by the colonial governments which produced a biased social and economic structure in the colonies. This included a narrow economic base of commodity production for export to industrialised countries, as well as a class alliance between the elites in the colonies and the elites in the industrialised countries. [...] Paul Baran (1950), for example, showed how economic surplus that was created in the peripheral countries was extracted by Western monopoly capitalists through locally allied elites. (Bull, 2006, pp. 34-35)

The dependency theory sees this as a continuing process. The poorer nations provide natural resources, cheap labour and markets that uphold the high standards of living in the rich nations. The process continues because the rich uphold it actively through an array of economic and political means (financing institutions, trade regulations, media control etc.) and resist attempts to change the system by the use of economic sanctions and military force.

The solution suggested by this school was to severe the relations with the world market and rely on self-aid and self-reliance. Tanzania under President Julius Nyerere is an example. In February 1967 he wrote the famous 'Arusha Declaration' (Julius K. Nyerere, 1967) that was later adopted as official policy of the nation and is a program for self-reliance. During the 1960ies the first talks also started about establishing a Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). The organisation website describes the history:

> The mood then was one of pan-African solidarity and collective self-reliance born of a shared destiny. It was under these circumstances that, in 1965, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) convened a ministerial meeting of the then newly independent states of Eastern and Southern Africa to consider proposals for the establishment of a mechanism for the promotion of sub-regional economic integration.(COMESA, 2012)

These theories did not only have support in poor nations; Tanzania under President Nyerere for example received support through Norwegian development budgets.

3.2.3 Popular Participation 1975-85

It should come as no surprise that the focus on popular participation and empowerment started in the 1970ies. A generation of students and young people in the West had been politicised after Paris 1968 and the protests against the US war in Vietnam (See e.g. Krincluding & Scott Sørensen, 2006; Rist, 1997, pp. 140-141). They had come to sympathise with uprisings in Asia and Africa and criticise what they saw as Western exploitation of poor countries. 'Change from below' was a popular truth of the decennium and it influenced thinking on development.

Another trend was critique of materialism and consumerism in Western societies.

> What was suggested in its place was not necessarily a detachment from the world market, but an 'alternative development' which focused directly on the needs of local communities and the oppressed people, and which could only be secured through local participation. In this way, development could be understood as fulfilment of local potential, not reaching towards externally defined goals.(Bull, 2006, p. 36)

Both the modernisation and dependency school had economic growth as an ultimate goal of development, this was now questioned. Concerns for the environment became a theme; in 1972 the Club of Rome published a report called 'Limits to Growth' (Meadows & et al., 1972) that linked development and environment issues. Norwegians will also remember the Brundtland Commission and its (somewhat later) report 'Our Common Future' (World Commission on, Development, & Brundtland, 1987) and the coinage of the term 'sustainable development.'

During this time, one also started to question the use of Western know-how and technical solutions as programme failures became known. A need for better understanding of local circumstances (culture, tradition, modes of production, power structures etc.) made room for a new type of experts: Social anthropologists (albeit mainly from the West) increasingly became important to understand why programmes failed and Western solutions did not necessarily fit local circumstances. (Lewis, 2005)

Another critique of economic growth models was that increased wealth did not necessarily 'trickle down' evenly (or at all). Some groups were marginalised, and even excluded from the benefits of 'modernisation', the largest of them being women. (Bull, 2006, p. 37)

The United Nations General Assembly, after intense lobbying from the Committee on Status of Women (CSW), designated 1975 'the International Women's Year' and arranged the first

'World Conference on Women' in Mexico City. The conference recommended a 'U.N. Decade for Women' (1976–85). (United Nations, 2012a) The decade sought to address the particular needs of women on equality, peace, and development. Aid programmes should be directed towards women's needs, and the term 'Women in Development' started to appear (see more in Ch. 3.3.3).

3.2.4 Neo-liberalism, 1985-95

In 1982 Mexico suffered a debt crisis, and in August the country declared to its American debtors and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that Mexico would be unable to meet its obligation to service an $80 billion debt. The situation continued to worsen, and by October 1983, 27 countries had rescheduled their debts to banks or were in the process of doing so. Others would soon follow. (Camdessus, 1995; International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2012) The causes for the crisis were many, and debated. Following the 1973 oil crisis increases in oil prices forced many poorer nations' governments to borrow heavily to purchase politically essential supplies. At the same time, OPEC funds deposited in Western banks provided a ready source of funds for loans. Failed development projects of previous years, and corrupt central governments in many poor countries had led to wide mismanagement of loans. (Bull, 2006, pp. 37-38; Lindstrand, 2006, pp. 35-36)

At the same time, a political shift occurred in two dominating countries: Both in the USA and the United Kingdom conservative parties won elections; President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher came to direct international economy in what has been known as a 'neo-liberal' direction[31].

> In line with some of Smith's and Ricardo's[32] arguments, neo-liberalists believed that large state bureaucracies and their dominating roles in the domestic economy were the primary reasons for the lack, or slow nature, of economic growth in the developing countries. Accordingly, when the state interferes in the economy, it disturbs the natural price-setting mechanisms with the result that production becomes inefficient and investments are not made in the most productive sectors. (Bull, 2006)

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[31] The politics of the two have been nicknamed 'Reaganomics' and 'Thatcherism'.

[32] Adam Smith (1723-1790) and David Ricardo (1772-1823) were both classical economists, and have influenced the thoughts on market economy since their time. Their main theses are (put *very* briefly) that the market is a self-regulating mechanism that will distribute goods to the benefit of all (Smith) and that countries should specialise their production according to their 'natural' advantages (Ricardo).

The role of the state should (only) be to facilitate export oriented growth through reducing barriers to trade such as toll barriers and removing restrictions on finance (credit controls) and ensuring that the exchange rates of national currency reflected real value. 'Trade not aid' was the slogan of the day, and the so called 'Washington Consensus'[33] steered international economy. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank changed their policy during these years from giving direct project support to the now (in)famous Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). Money was to be given to countries as *direct budgetary support* on condition that they followed the 'advice' provided in the form of SAPs. The essence of the conditionality was privatisation of state-owned enterprises, deregulation of the market and reduction in public expenses. (Lindstrand, 2006)

The critiques have been many – also from within the IMF and the World Bank, especially about the social consequences of the neo-liberal politics in general and the SAPs in particular. The poor suffer when public expenditure is cut and formerly public sectors privatised; poor people depend on food subsidies, free or low cost schooling and health services, regulation on water and electricity prices and so on. (Bull, 2006, p. 40)

Another set of critiques has come from economists that claim that the policy was a 'one size fits all' – without priorities or concern for side effects. The study 'Economic Growth in the 1990s; Learning from a Decade of Reform' concludes:

> The central message of this volume is then that there is no unique universal set of rules. [...] Thus we need to get away from formulae and the search for elusive "best practices," and rely on deeper economic analysis to identify the binding constraints on growth. [...] This much more targeted approach requires recognizing country specificities, and calls for more economic, institutional, and social analysis and rigor rather than a formulaic approach to policy making.[...] The new perspectives also have implications for behavior - in particular the need for more humility. And, last but not least, they highlight the need for a better understanding of noneconomic factors - history, culture, and politics—in economic growth processes. (p. xiii) (The World Bank, 2005)

It is the former vice-president for Africa at the World Bank, Gobind Nankani who writes this in the preface to the study report, a fact that makes the concession even more significant; The World Bank itself admits 'a need for more humility' and that 'a formulaic approach' has not worked.

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[33] In spite of its name, there has been no real agreement as to what the 'Washington Consensus' is. The term was coined in 1989 by the economist John Williamson to describe a set of ten economic policy prescriptions. The ten 'commandments' was Williamson's summary of a standard reform package for the debt crisis and should be promoted by the IMF, the World Bank and the US Treasury Department. (Williamson, 1990)

3.2.5 Enabling environment, Poverty reduction,1995-05

After the 'laissez fair' economic ideology had dominated economic thinking in the 1980s and early 1990s, the role of government was now being more appreciated. (Bull, 2006, p. 41) Although a lot of the neo-liberal principles still governed development policy in the decade that followed (and still do), one saw the need for states that were able to provide an 'enabling environment' for growth, this could not (completely) be left to private enterprise. Important elements were laws and judiciary system, regulatory frameworks for the business community and transparency of government and private sector, physical infrastructure (roads, electricity etc.), fostering human resources (access to education, health services etc.), and so on. Another incoming buzz word was 'good governance' – to provide an enabling environment one needed good governance. One example is the Declaration 'Partnership for Sustainable Growth' (International Monetary Fund (IMF), 1996) that was adopted by IMF in 1996.

[P]romoting good governance in all its aspects, including ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption [... is] an essential element of a framework within which economies can prosper. (International Monetary Fund (IMF), 1997)

Studies that measure development by indexes like per capita income, life expectancy, child mortality, etc. have shown that the period of strong market orientation was a failure for development of the poorest countries. Conditionality, as imposed in form of IMF's SAPs had by the same token definitely gotten a bad name. A study by the Center for Economic and Policy Research concludes:

This study has used standard measures of progress in the categories of economic growth, health outcomes, and education to evaluate the record of the last twenty years. The results are overwhelmingly in one direction: in every category, the comparisons show diminished progress overall in the period of globalization [34] as compared with the prior two decades. The few comparisons that show increased rates of progress in the second period nearly all involve groups of countries that were already performing relatively well at the start of the periods being examined. (Weisbrot, Baker, Kraev, & Chen, 2001, p. 14)

Bull is a bit more cautious in her conclusion:

Although no consensus was reached on the direct linkage between neo-liberalism, inequality and sustained poverty, there was little doubt that neither the modernisation school nor dependency theory nor the neo-liberal ideas had fulfilled their initial promise. By any standards, levels of

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[34] The study defines 'globalisation' to mean 'the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, and capital account liberalization (the removal of restrictions on international investment flows),' and specifically mention the demands made by the World Bank and IMF, i.e. the SAPs. (Ibid, p.3)

poverty and inequality were still alarmingly high, and a majority of the world's poor had experience little progress. (Bull, 2006, pp. 42-43)

How to end poverty is perhaps one of the core issues of all development efforts, and when analysing what had gone wrong, one had to ask the basic questions: How can we reduce poverty; what strategies are effective? In 2000 the World Bank published the results of what they called 'Consultations with the poor' in the book 'Voices of the Poor: Can anyone hear us?' (D. Narayan, Patel, Schafft, Rademacher, & Koch-Schulte, 2000) At the same time they launched a new 'Comprehensive Development Framework' (CDF) and together with the International Monetary Fund introduced the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the accompanying Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Central to these 'new' strategies are holistic approaches (a realisation that a lot of things have to be changed concurrently to end poverty) and the importance of national 'ownership' of programmes[35]:

The five underlying principles [of the PRS] were drawn from the CDF and are set out in general terms for countries to follow. They indicate the PRS process should be: • Country-driven, involving broad-based participation • Comprehensive in recognizing the multi-dimensional nature of poverty • Results-oriented and focused on outcomes that benefit the poor • Partnership-oriented, involving coordinated participation of development partners • Based on a long-term perspective for poverty reduction. (The World Bank, 2004)

In Monterrey in Mexico the International Conference on Finance and Development agreed in the 'Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development' that:

> Effective partnerships among donors and recipients are based on the recognition of national leadership and ownership of development plans and, within that framework, sound policies and good governance at all levels are necessary to ensure ODA[36] effectiveness. A major priority is to build those development partnerships, particularly in support of the neediest, and to maximize the poverty reduction impact of ODA.(United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2003)

Another trend that needs mentioning here, and that should be seen in relation with the focus on local ownership, is the role of civil society. Particularly in Latin America and India, one had seen large movements among the poor and disenfranchised, movements that were different than for example leftist guerrillas of the 1970s. Examples are 'Movimiento sin Tierra' in Brazil, the 'Zapatistas' in Chiapas, Mexico, and the environmental movements in

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[35] A review from the World Bank's own Operations Evaluation Department from 2003 states: 'There is inherent tension in a Bank/IMF–driven initiative involving conditionality that is also meant to foster a country-driven process.' (The World Bank, 2004) The PRSPs have to be approved by the international institutions and signed as a contract by the country applying for funding: To admit there is a 'tension' between these clear conditions and national ownership is in my view an understatement.

[36] Official Development Assistance

India (with front figures such as Vandana Shiva). (See e.g. Biekart, 2005; Shigetomi & Makino, 2009) These large social movements made themselves heard, and civil society was increasingly valued as an active participant and contributor to development. Civil society's increasing importance may also be seen as an expression of frustration with and lack of faith in governments in poor countries. Øyvind Eggen has in his doctoral thesis (Eggen, 2011) looked at state formation in Malawi and how it is influenced by development aid. Problems that are seen to be common, especially for African states, are 'elite accumulation, clientelism, centralisation, corruption, lack of democracy and accountability.' (Ibid, p. 13) Eggen goes on to say that while 'it is easy to agree that such problems are "real," they tend to involve a bias towards what African states "lack" rather than how they function.' (Ibid, p. 13) To circumvent what is seen as corrupt and non-democratic state structures, development aid is channelled to non-governmental organisations. This is not unproblematic. Eggen has looked at the role of chiefs in Malawi and writes:

> [Their] status [can] partly [be attributed] to a 'community fetishism' in aid and development that insists on direct interaction with villages. This can be done by bypassing formal government structures or by insisting that aid-financed government interventions are 'community-based' even if this is not the preferred way of organising local government services. (Ibid, p. 35)

One of his conclusions is that aid can 'increase the dissonance inherent in all states between reality as it is seen in a state logic, and reality as it is experienced locally.' (Ibid, p. ii) The presence of internationally funded NGOs in service delivery (tasks usually performed by the state) may weaken the government's power to govern and thus ultimately the democratic structure.

3.2.6 Human Rights Based Approach to Development, 2005 - ?

> Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized. (United Nations General Assembly, 1948, p. Art. 28)

The texts of two UN Covenants (ICCPR and ICESCR) were finalised in 1966 (United Nations General Assembly, 1966, 1976) to make the hopeful promises of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) legally binding. Justice Keba M'Baye of Senegal[37] argued in the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1972 that development was a right, and that the duty bearer

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[37] Keba M'Baye was President of the International Commission of Jurists from 1977 to 1985 and Commissioner in the UN Commission on Human rights from 1972 to 1987. (Sneyd, 2005)

needed to be identified and made accountable. (Sneyd, 2005) In 1977 the Commission recognised that there is indeed a Right to Development, and in the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights from 1981 it was included in article 22:

> States shall have the duty, individually or collectively, to ensure the exercise of the right to development. (Organization of African Unity (OAU), 1981)

Finally, in 1986 the 'Declaration on the Right to Development' (United Nations General Assembly, 1986) was adopted by the UN General Assembly. It did not make much of a stir, however, but slowly the thoughts about rights in connection with development started to penetrate both academia and international fora. After the end of the Cold war, the old schism between political and civil rights and economic, social and cultural rights had narrowed. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (UN General Assembly, 1993) adopted in 1993 confirms a new way of viewing rights: In this document a link is made between democracy, human rights, sustainability and development, and the interdependency of civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights is firmly established. In Vienna the international community also confirmed its commitment to the Declaration of the Right to Development[38] and in 2000 the Millennium Declaration states:

> We recognize that, in addition to our separate responsibilities to our individual societies, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level.(United Nations General Assembly, 2000)

The concepts of *rights holder* and *duty bearer* now became part of the development lingo: The aim of development cooperation should be to strengthen the capacities of duty bearers to meet their obligations and of rights holders to claim their rights. In his call for reforms of the UN system in 1997 (Annan, 1997) the UN Secretary-General noted that human rights should be integrated in all UN activities. This call led to development of a common understanding among the UN Agencies on 'The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation' (HRBAD or RBA) [39] (United Nations Development Group, 2003), and the various agencies have since produced their own guidelines on how to operationalize HRBAD.

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[38] The Vienna Declaration states: 'The World Conference on Human Rights reaffirms the right to development, as established in the Declaration on the Right to Development, as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights.' (UN General Assembly, 1993)

[39] The concept is known both as 'Human Rights Based Approach to Development' - HRBAD or 'Rights Based Approach (to development)' – RBA(D)

Many governmental and non-governmental development agencies and organisations have also reformulated their policy to fit a HRBAD[40]. (Appleyard & OHCHR Asia-Pacific, 2002).

The HRBAD can be summarised in five defining principles:

1) Explicit linkage to rights: human rights implementation is a goal of development.

2) Accountability: the state is accountable towards its people for upholding rights and securing capabilities and freedoms of the people.

3) Empowerment: a process of expanding the fundamental choices and freedoms of people by focusing on their role as right owners.

4) Participation: people should make decisions on issues affecting their lives. This requires access to information, decision making through consultation and freedom to organise.

5) Non-discrimination: the principle of non-discrimination must be upheld in all arenas and access to decision making by minorities or vulnerable groups should be assured. (Hansen & Sano, 2006)

Around the same time Amartya Sen and Arjun Sengupta from India, Mahbub ul Haq from Pakistan, Henry Shue and Martha Nussbaum from the US (just to mention some) thought and wrote about development and rights. Through this process development was redefined as a concept (content; 'what is development?'), and as a right (legal category; 'who is responsible for development?'). Bull gives a short, succinct, summary of Amartya Sen's redefinition of development:

> Sen views development not simply in terms of economic growth, but rather as the extension of substantial freedoms of the individual to pursue the life he or she has reason to value. Hence, poverty cannot be defined only as a lack of income; it is rather the lack of opportunity to pursue a valuable life[41]. (Bull, 2006, p. 47)

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[40] An example being Oxfam's Strategic plan for 2001-2004: 'Towards Global Equity' (Oxfam International, 2001)

[41] Critique that the capability approach is too individualistic has been voiced against Sen and Nussbaum. (Robeyns, 2000, p. 16). Since this critique has come up in discussions around this paper, I will use some space for an answer to it. According to Robeyns (ibid), the critique is wrongly premised:

'I think this critique suffers from the mistake of collapsing different kinds of individualism into one. We should distinguish between ethical individualism on the one hand and methodological and ontological individualism on the other hand. Ethical individualism makes a claim about who or what should count in our evaluative exercises and decisions. It postulates that individuals, and only individuals are the units of moral concern. In other words, when evaluating different states of social affairs, we are only interested in the effect of those states on individuals. [...] The crucial issue here is that a commitment to ethical individualism is not incompatible with a personal ontology that recognises the connections between people, their social relations, and their social embedment. Similarly, a social policy focusing and targeting certain groups or communities can be perfectly

A central term in both Sen and Nussbaum's philosophy is 'capability/ies':

> The capability of a person reflects the various combinations of functionings (doings and beings) that he or she can achieve. According to Sen, it reflects a person's freedom to choose among different ways of living. (Andreassen & Marks, 2006, p. xii)

Sen's use of concepts like 'functionings' and 'capabilities' may be a bit difficult to grasp without a more thorough presentation than there is room for here. An example much used by Sen himself, may however illustrate the gist: Two people are poorly nourished, one because s/he is a victim of famine, the other because s/he in on hunger strike. Only the famine struck person lacks the capability of being well-nourished, while both lack the functioning of being well-nourished.

Martha Nussbaum has made a list of what she considers the ten fundamental capabilities that should be supported as rights by everyone. Examples from the list are 'Life' (being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length), 'Emotions' (being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves), or 'Bodily Health' (being able to have good health, to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter). (Nussbaum, 2000)

In 1990 the UNDP launched its first Human Development Report (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1990) as well as the Human Development Index (HDI), and with them, the concept of 'human development'. This time the concept is defined; the first chapter is called 'Defining and Measuring Human Development and starts with the famous quote:

> People are the real wealth of a nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to live long, healthy and creative lives. This may appear to be a simple truth. But it is often forgotten in the immediate concern with the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth. (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1990, p. 9)

It goes on to say

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compatible with ethical individualism. The capability approach embraces ethical individualism, but does not rely on ontological individualism. On the theoretical level, the capability approach does account for social relations and the constraints and opportunities of societal structures and institutions on individuals in two ways. First, by recognising the social and environmental factors which influence the conversions of commodities into functionings. [...] The second way in which the capability approach accounts for the societal structures and constraints is by theoretically distinguishing functionings from capabilities. More precisely, the crossing from capabilities to achieved functionings requires an act of choice. Now, it is perfectly possible, and [...] even necessary to take the societal structures and constraints on those choices into account.' (Ibid:16-17)

> The term human development here denotes both the process of widening people's choices and the level of their achieved well-being. It also helps to distinguish clearly between two sides of human development. One is the formation of human capabilities, such as improved health or knowledge. The other is the use that people make of their acquired capabilities, for work or leisure. (Ibid, p.10)

> Human development [...]brings together the production and distribution of commodities and the expansion and use of human capabilities. It also focuses on choices – on what people should have, be and do to be able to ensure their own livelihood. Human development is, moreover, concerned not only with basic needs satisfaction but also with human development as a participatory and dynamic process. It applies equally to less developed and highly developed countries. (Ibid, p. 11)

There should be no doubt that the authors at UNDP are influenced by Sen's thinking. Sabine Alkire asks if there is indeed any difference between the capabilities approach and human development, and concludes that 'there is no consensus as to a conceptually clear distinction' (Alkire, 2010, p. 22) between the two. (One difference may be that while the first is a philosophical concept, the second focus on real world applications.)

The Human Development Reports also show the influence from the Rights thinking. The yearly reports give attention to important rights issues like process, participation, equal distribution, non-discrimination and so on.(Alkire, 2010)

3.2.7 Critical perspectives

Postcolonial theory has influenced thoughts on the relationship between so called developed and developing countries as well as the concept of development itself. Important for the discussion of development is how they point to the continuation of hegemonic world views from the time of colonialism to today: It is still the Western (former colonial powers') view of the world that has power of definition of what development is, and thus sets the agenda for everyone. The West is defined as the norm, and the rest represent the Others; that which deviates.

Post-development theory is another recent and academic critique of the concept and practice of development policy. As the name indicates, this is a theoretic stand point influenced by poststructuralism. Joseph Ahorro writes:

> Within the last twenty years, there was a sprouting of literature that rejects the very meaning of development. This body of scholarship, inspired by Michel Foucault and the poststructuralist school of thought, problematizes the political and power aspects of what can be seen at face value as a neutral and practical problem – how to deliver the technological and institutional advances of the First World to 'poor' people in the subaltern.(Ahorro, 2008, p. 2)

Three important books within this trend are Wolfgang Sachs' 'The Development Dictionary, The guide to knowledge as power' (Sachs, 1992), Arturo Escobar's 'Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World' (Escobar, 1995), and Gilbert Rist's 'The History of Development, From Western origins to global faith' (Rist, 1997).

It is important to stress that although I have presented the various theories on a time-scale, one has to bear in mind that the ideas from the various periods still linger, and mix with what is currently 'in vogue'. New ideas also develop over time, and the timeline given here is just an indication of what ideas dominated during different decades.

> The development scene has [...] become increasingly complex. Old orthodoxies live on at the same time as old theories have been revived and mixed with new ideas. (Bull, 2006, p. 48)

I do for example see ample evidence of thoughts about modernisation in the interviews with Norwegian development professionals done for this study, particularly when we come to attitudes on gender and sexuality. The dependency theory is also clearly still present in for example newly established local common markets (e.g. the East African Community Common Market which treaty was signed in 2009). Popular participation has done a come back with the HRBAD and neo-liberalism has never completely gone out of style (the TRIPS agreement[42] that was signed towards the end of the 'neo-liberal decennium' is still largely unchanged for example, and to become a member of the WTO you have to ratify TRIPS).

3.2.8 Defining the concept

Finally, after this brief introduction of the history of development, let us try to close in on how the concept is understood. When I asked the participants in this study to define the concept of development, most started by making exclamations about how difficult it is to pinpoint:

> **Anne:** That is a huge question! What is development? Development towards what, you might say, what is the goal? Is the goal that people shall become, or that [everywhere] shall become like Norway or other European countries?

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[42] The Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. The agreement was negotiated at the end of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1994 and is now administrated by the World Trade Organization. (World Trade Organization (WTO), 1994)

The UN Charter states that the organisation is mandated to 'promote higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development.' (United Nations General Assembly, 1945, Ch IX, Art 55) There is however no definition of what is meant by 'economic and social progress and development' anywhere in official UN documents.

The word 'development' stems from the verb 'to develop' and is, according to a dictionary 'the process of developing or being developed.' (Oxford Dictionaries, 2012) The same source defines 'to develop' as 'to grow or cause to grow and become more mature, advanced or elaborate.' (Ibid) From this verb we also have the words developed, underdeveloped and developing:

> Developed: (of a country or region) advanced economically or socially; underdeveloped: (of a country or region) not advanced economically; developing: (of a poor agricultural country) become more economically and socially advanced. (Ibid)

To use the concepts to thus classify countries is understandably a contested practice. How does one set a standard for being 'advanced economically or socially', and who sets the standard? Is an economic system that leads to cyclical crisis and collapse (like we currently see in dominating economies) the most economically 'advanced'? Is it an improvement of the quality of human life that more people live to be octogenerians but die alone? Is it better that most people are confronted with ill health because of stress rather than because of infectious diseases? And are countries that puts humanity at risk of the effects of climate change by insisting on continued unrestricted consumption 'economically and socially advanced' nations? These, and similar paradoxes are being raised by post-development thinkers and in movements known collectively as anti-globalisation movements. (See e.g. the website of WSF: World Social Forum Office, 2012) The UN Statistic Division itself has felt it necessary to state:

> The designations 'developed' and 'developing' are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process. (United Nations Statstics Division, 2010)

The same agency also states 'There is no established convention for the designation of "developed" and "developing" countries or areas in the United Nations system.'[43] (Ibid)

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[43] The quoted section goes on: 'In common practice, Japan in Asia, Canada and the United States in northern America, Australia and New Zealand in Oceania, and Europe are considered "developed" regions or areas. In

The UN system does however have a program called the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) that was established in 1965 by the General Assembly. Currently this division uses the term 'human development'[44] to define its scope of work (see more above in Ch. 3.2.6).

Lindstrand et al.'s text book 'Global Health' (Lindstrand, 2006) states:

> The present consensus is that 'development' may be defined as follows:
> "Development is the desired change from a life with many sufferings and few choices to a life with satisfied basic needs and many choices, made available through the sustainable use of natural resources." (Ibid, p. 13)

Albeit the influence from Sen is apparent, I would argue that this is a simplification of his thoughts. Sen's own definition of 'development as freedom' is that it should be seen as 'the expansion of the "capabilities" of people to lead the kind of lives they value - and have reason to value.' (Sen, 1999, p. 18). The crux of the definition and that which differentiates it from Lindstrand et al.'s (and many other) is the 'lead the kind of lives they value - and have reason to value.' To have 'many choices' may not be part of what one values or has reasons to value. There is no room here to explore the philosophical content of this part of Sen's argument. What I want to point out is that it may be problematic to translate Sen's philosophy, a philosophy that attempts to say something about development that is relevant for all humans, wherever and under whatever circumstances they live, into an understanding of development as a relationship between poor and rich nations, where life in the rich part of the world is the standard. It is my claim that the last understanding is what has dominated the history of development since WWII.

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international trade statistics, the Southern African Customs Union is also treated as a developed region and Israel as a developed country; countries emerging from the former Yugoslavia are treated as developing countries; and countries of eastern Europe and of the Commonwealth of Independent States (code 172) in Europe are not included under either developed or developing regions.' (United Nations Statstics Division, 2010)

[44] This is a reflection of the historic development of the concept itself, and the discussions around it (see Ch. 3.2.6)

3.3 Gender, sexuality and development cooperation

3.3.1 Homotolerance

Sweden was the first country to make sexual orientation and gender identity a specific focus of their foreign policy. A policy document from the Swedish government in 2003 on global development (Utrikesdepartementet, 2003) mentions it, and in 2005 Sida[45] issued the document 'Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights – A Cornerstone of Development' (Sida, 2005) where sexual orientation is a recurring theme. The same year Samelius and Wågberg published a study commissioned by The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida titled 'Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues in Development. A Study of Swedish policy and administration of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender issues in international development cooperation' (Samelius & Wågberg, 2005).

Sida followed up with an Action Plan in 2006 on how to operationalize these issues in development cooperation ('*Handlingsplan för konkretisering av Homo-, Bi- och Transfrågor i utvecklingssamarbetet 2007–2009*')[46] (Sida, 2006). Other countries (e.g. the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, the EU and USA) (Council of the European Union, 2010; Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), 2011; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2007; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a; Office of the Spokesperson, 2011; The British Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2008) have since 2005 developed their own policies and guidelines on sexual orientation and gender identity and foreign policy/development cooperation. In 2006 a group of international human rights experts met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, to outline a set of international human rights principles relating to sexual orientation and gender identity. The result was a guide (the 'Yogyakarta principles') to how duty bearers such as governments can use the existing international legal framework to protest and stop human rights violations against persons because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity(Corrêa, Muntarbhorn, & et al.). Furthermore both national and international NGOs have increasingly put the issues on their agenda. Among the first were human rights organisations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, followed by HIV/AIDS organisations like the

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[45] Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (*Styrelesen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete*)
[46] 'Action Plan for the concretisation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Issues in Development Cooperation 2007-2009'

HIV/AIDS Alliance and finally huge international organisations like the Red Cross, Save the Children and several organisations in the UN system (UNAIDS, UNFPA, HRC etc.) have started discussions and programmes that target sexual and/or gender minorities. Research in relation to the themes is also proliferating, and the reference list to this paper serves as a case in point.

International media attention has paralleled this development. Increased attention has also led to personal involvement from several state leaders in the West. I will use Uganda as an example to illustrate. Since 2009 the debate about a bill that will further criminalise homosexuality in the country (Bahati, 2009) has created a lot of attention worldwide. (See e.g. Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law, 2009) The international protests against the Bill have been massive. (Human Rights Watch, 2009b) Hillary Clinton has personally intervened by calling President Museveni to try to convince him to stop the Bill. (Olupot & Musoke, 2010) The Swedish Minister of development, Gunilla Carlsson threatened to cut aid if the law was passed in an interview on Swedish radio. The interview was conducted by the journalist Tomas Ramberg and contains an interesting dialogue:

> **Tomas Ramberg:** What are your views about the new law currently being prepared in Uganda, a law that will include severe punishments of homosexuals?
> **Gunilla Carlsson:** I find it dreadful! [...] I am also doubly disappointed: Partly because Uganda is a country with which we have had long-term relations and where I thought and hoped we had started to share common values and understanding. The law itself is wretched, but it is also offensive to see how the Ugandans choose to look at how we see things, and the kind of reception we get when we bring up these issues.
> **TR:** What are your views on continuing to give support to Uganda if the law is passed?
> **GC:** It will be more difficult. [...] A lot of the world's poverty problems stems from the existence of oppression, that there is too little freedom in the world. And this is a form of oppression directed against a minority, against vulnerable people, and this makes it more difficult for a country to develop and nurture its existing potential. [...] And that makes the wish to continue in general to lessen, and furthermore, in my view, it will not lead to poverty reduction in the long term because one does not appreciate the value of democracy and human rights. (Sveriges Radio, 2009, my translation)

When a Ugandan sexual rights activist, David Kato, was murdered in his home in January 2011, the news had reached all major media houses in the West within days. (BBC, 2011; Economist, 2011; Gettleman, 2011; Hessevik, 2011; Rice, 2011) Barrack Obama and Hilary Clinton wrote condolence messages. (Clinton, 2011; Obama, 2011) International media has followed up with stories about wide spread homophobia in Uganda and Africa. In Norway a

senior journalist of the state media (NRK) wrote an opinion piece titled 'Does Africans fear homosexuals?'[47] (Kristiansen, 2011) He ends his article with:

> Witch way does the wind blow? In all directions. Africa is a continent with both frivolous and strict traditions, with machismo and patriarchy, love and hatred.
>
> There is more attention to the phenomenon now than ever before, something that has polarised the debate. There are more supporters. And more opponents.
>
> But if you ask people in the villages about homosexuality, they will laugh and shake their heads. Never heard of it.
>
> But they are well aware of goat fucking and child sex. (Ibid, my translation)

On March 19th 2012 The Guardian published an interview with Liberia's President and last year's winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Ford & Allen, 2012). Answering a question as to whether she would do something to decriminalise sexual acts between people of the same gender, the President answered: 'We like ourselves just the way we are,' and: 'We've got certain traditional values in our society that we would like to preserve.' (Ibid) On March 21st Dagsavisen, a Norwegian daily, publishes a story based on the interview. (Iversen, 2012) In addition to reporting what was said to the Guardian, they asked Norwegian stakeholder about their reactions. Among those asked to comment was Erik Solheim, Minister for the Environment and International Development[48]:

> - I am provoked by the fact that such attitudes still exist. These are old-fashioned attitudes that we cannot accept.[49] (Ibid, my translation)

Minister Solheim thus firmly places Johnson Sirleaf in the 'anachronistic space' where the clear light of modernity is yet to reach. Further, he feels in the right to act, and to act on behalf of all enlightened, morally sound persons (all Norwegians? – who are the '*we*' that cannot accept such backward attitudes?) He promises the journalist that the government will raise this issue with president Sirleaf[50]. In his book 'Global Sex' (Altman, 2001) Denis Altman writes: 'Sexuality becomes an important arena for the production of modernity, with 'gay' and 'lesbian' identities acting as markers for modernity.' (Ibid, p. 91) Røthing and Svendsen writes that 'In recent years, equality between homosexual and heterosexual relationships has

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[47] Norwegian title: *Har afrikanere homoangst?*

[48] He held this position until 23.03.2012 when he was replaced by Heikki Holmås (Statsministerens kontor, 2012)

[49] The whole quote in Norwegian, as it appears in the article:' - *Jeg blir provosert av at slike holdninger fortsatt finnes. Dette er gammeldagse holdninger vi ikke kan godta,* sier utviklingsminister Erik Solheim (SV).
Han sier regjeringen vil ta opp uttalelsene med presidenten.'

[50] Exact quote in Norwegian: 'Han sier regjeringen vil ta opp uttalelsene med presidenten.'

increasingly been presented as a marker for Norwegian values.' (Røthing & Svendsen, 2010, p. 147) while Wendy Brown says that 'intolerance has become a codeword not merely for bigotry or investments in whiteness but for a fundamentalism identified with the non west.' (Brown, 2006, p. 16) It may seem like dominating cultural forces in the West in the 21st century have picked another facet of sexuality and gender to continue the Othering of former colonised people. From denying the existence of homosexuals in Africa throughout the Colonial era, completely overlooking them during the first decades of the HIV epidemic (see Ch. 3.3.6), it is now 'common knowledge' that Africans have a big problem with accepting sexual and gender minorities, they do not even want to admit they exist (although they are familiar with sodomising animals and fucking children according to NRK's senior reporter). To become properly developed they need to both embrace our understanding of sexual identity and learn from us how to be tolerant towards a vulnerable minority.

> Carl Stychin makes an important connection between the increasing assimilation of lesbians and gay men as sexual citizens within states in the west, and the construction of non-western states as unsophisticated and uncivilised in their treatment of sexual dissidence. In this sense he argues that: 'the colonial discourse of the civilizing west comes to be replicated as the recognition of formal legal rights signifies progress, modernity and western 'civilization'. (Binnie, 2004, p. 76)

The past 5-10 years have seen interesting development within the fields of postcolonial and critical race studies on these and similar issues. Jasbir Puar's 'Terrorist Assemblages' (J. K. Puar, 2007), Sara Ahmed's essays in 'Vithetens Hegemoni' (Ahmed, 2011), Rahul Rao's 'Third World Protest' (Rao, 2010) and the edited collection 'Out of place: interrogating silences in queerness/raciality' with contributions from e.g. Jin Haritaworn and Adi Kunstman. (Kuntsman & Miyake, 2008) all question the dominating discourse on 'homotolerance' as a Western value. Puar writes:

> Forms of U.S. sexual exceptionalism from purportedly progressive spaces have historically surfaced through feminist constructions of 'third world' women; what we have now, however, is the production of sexual exceptionalism through normative as well as nonnormative (queer) bodies. That is, queerness is proffered as a sexual exceptional form of American national sexuality through a rhetoric of sexual modernization that is simultaneously able to castigate the other as homophobic *and* perverse, and construct the imperialist center as 'tolerant' but sexually, racially, and gendered normal. (J. K. Puar, 2005, p. 122)

Puar writes from the U.S. but her words could, as it has been demonstrated above, just as easy be ascribed to a Norwegian context (or the West per se). She draws the parallel to how 'third world women' has been portrayed historically. To understand the recent development in

views on sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation, we need to, again, take a step back and look at history.

3.3.2 From Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD)

In the 1970s research and field reports about the effects of development projects on women started to appear. Ester Boserup's book 'Women's role in Economic Development' (Boserup, 1970) had wide reaching effect on both discourse and practices. What Boserup and others had documented was that economic advances in society did not affect men and women equally. During the same time, second wave feminism vitalised struggles for women's rights in many parts of the globe, and a new consciousness about gendered inequalities spread to policy makers both nationally and internationally. The UN Decade for Women was for example declared in 1975 (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2012). In the development field one started to talk about 'Women in Development' as a special field for research, programming and policy around this time. (Rathgeber, 1990) Plans for specific projects for women started to appear, in the beginning mainly very low scale and with limited aim. As pressure grew and analysis of reasons for subordinations evolved, WAD ('Women and Development') became the preferred concept, and one main focus became the lack of participation for women on all levels of society (economically and politically). Developments within academia and feminist theories in the 1970- and 80s critiqued some of the basic assumptions that lie behind the WID/WAD approach. Black and third world feminists pointed out the differences between women, and criticised white, westerners for making too general assumptions. Socialist feminists criticised WID for overlooking class differences between women and for not taking account of international structures of inequality (in line with dependency theories, see Ch. 3.2.2). (Bull, 2006; Butler, 1990; Andrea Cornwall, 2007; Rathgeber, 1990; Zwart, 1992) The concept 'Gender and Development' (GAD) emerged out of these discussions, and the original understanding of it included transforming development per se; to confront the power relations that produce and reproduce inequality. Instead of using 'women' as focal point, 'gender relations' became the preferred analytical tool to understand structures of inequality. (Andrea Cornwall, 2007, p. 70)

> [T]he GAD approach starts from a holistic perspective, looking at 'the totality of social organization, economic and political life in order to understand the shaping of particular aspects of society. '(Young 1987) GAD is not concerned with women per se but with the social construction of gender

and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations to women and to men.
(Rathgeber, 1990, p. 494)

By the 1990s 'gender' had become a 'catch-all term for a plethora of competing meanings and agendas' (Andrea Cornwall, 2007, p. 70), and lost much of its initial analytical power. We now see a return to the use of 'women' as category and 'heading' for development initiatives, for example in policy documents produced by the current Norwegian government. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2007, 2008a) How both 'women' and 'gender' are understood and used in these will be dealt with in a later chapter. Both 'women' and 'gender', when used in feminist theory, are politicised categories. What we have seen since in development discourse is the return of essentialism in the form of biological categorisation. Andrea Cornwell comments:

> [T]he interpretation of feminist demands and their incorporation into development policy [as exemplified in MDG3] is disquieting. Closer inspection reveals that development agencies' concern with women has precious little to do with the politicised category 'woman' that served to animate and organise feminist demands. Rather, representations of women in the discourses of influential development organisations frequently combine gross essentialism with patronising paternalism. (Andrea Cornwall, 2007, p. 70)

Underlying the different approaches has been an assumption of gender being a *universal category*, in other words that all societies use gender to differentiate and assign roles and to define power structures. Butler has criticised this in 'Bodies that matter' (Butler, 1993) where she points out (in line with postcolonial feminists) that the primacy given to sexual difference is what marks (psychoanalytic) feminism as white, and claims that the assumption made by white feminists is 'not only that sexual difference is more fundamental [than other differences], but that there is a relationship called "sexual difference" that is itself unmarked by race.' (Ibid, p.183) In addition to the assumption about a universal category of gender, there is an assumption about a universal favouring of one gender, that there is a universal patriarchy. These underlying presumptions, some have challenged, is based on Western experience and history (see also Ch. 2.3.2). In her book 'The Invention of Women', (Oyewùmí, 1997) Oyèrónkẹ Oyěwùmí challenges the inherit link between biology and social category that lies behind the now universal use of the gender concept:

> The universality attributed to gender asymmetry suggests a biological basis rather than a cultural one, given that human anatomy is universal whereas cultures speak in myriad voices. [...]If gender is a social construction, then we must examine the various cultural/architectural sites where it was constructed, and we must acknowledge that variously located actors (aggregates, groups, interested parties) were part of that construction. We must further acknowledge that if gender is a social

construction, then there was a specific time (in different cultural/architectural sites) when it was 'constructed' and therefore a time before which it was not. (Ibid, p. 10)

Oyěwùmí holds that in traditional Yoruba society, gender is not connected to biology (exemplified by the existence of 'female husbands'), and biological sex does not position you in the social hierarchy. She has been contested by others (e.g. Bakare-Yusuf, 2002), but her main message, that gender is not the only, or the most important, social category everywhere, definitely seem valid. Anthropologist Prudence Woodford-Berger makes some of the same observations from her field work in Dormaa in Ghana in the matrilineal kinship system of the Brong Akan. She observes that

> Despite clear distinctions between conceptions of female-ness (in Twi béré) and male-ness (nyin or nini), these are for the most part not firmly attached to physiological sex, or to particular duties, ways of being or behaving. Neither do 'female' and 'male' categories or persons necessarily embody notions of dichotomous relations or dually constructed social persons considered to be the exact opposites of one another. 'Gender identity' can shift over the life course as well as with respect to specific existential situations, conditions and requirements. In terms of power relations, women should defer to men. (Woodford-Berger, 2004, p. 69)

Woodford-Berger[51] now works at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a senior policy advisor on gender and development, and describes Sweden's gender mainstream policy as being based on the works of (among others) Yvonne Hirdman[52] (ibid, p. 68). Hirdman has researched Swedish national history and developed the theory of an 'intractable, hierarchical sex-based power order (könsmaktordning)' (ibid, p. 68) as an analytic tool. This analytic framework is, according to Woodford-Berger, used 'as a foundation for the construction of gender analytical frameworks' (ibid, p. 68) both nationally and in Sweden's international work. Combining her two spheres of specialised knowledge, Woodford-Berger concludes:

> The assumed oppositional positions of women and men in the social, economic, political and ritual order, the very basis of gender frameworks and of the kind of gender thinking that is so much part of Swedish gender equality work, simply does not match the Dormaa reality. What they work to obscure is the way in which women mobilise resources, their affective as well as economic bonds with the men in their lives and the cross-sex alliances of various kinds, especially amongst kin, that can be so critical a part of women's livelihoods. [...] Researchers in Sweden from various non-Swedish ethnic origins have, equally, drawn attention to some of the shortcomings of Hirdman's assumptions and the binaries on which they are based (see de los Reyes et al. 2002). Yet Hirdman's

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[51] Prudence Woodford-Berger has worked as a consultant and policy adviser in Swedish international development cooperation work since 1978 on issues concerning women and gender in development. Prudence is presently a senior special adviser on social and gender equality issues at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Development Policy in Stockholm. (Pathways of Women's Empowerment, 2012)

[52] Hirdman's theoretical contributions are presented in Ch. 2.3.3, while Mohanty is referred to in Ch. 2.3.5

work remains the mainstay of Swedish government policy for the promotion of gender equality and for gender mainstreaming. (Ibid:69)

Already in 1984 Chandra T Mohanty[52] voiced similar critique in her now classic essay 'Under Western Eyes'(Mohanty, 1984):

> An analysis of 'sexual difference' in the form of a cross-culturally singular, monolithic notion of patriarchy or male dominance leads to the construction of a similarly reductive and homogeneous notion of what I call the 'Third World Difference' that stable, ahistorical something that apparently oppresses most if not all the women in these countries. And it is in the production of this 'Third World Difference' that Western feminisms appropriate and 'colonize' the fundamental complexities and conflicts which characterize the lives of women of different classes, religions, cultures, races and castes in these countries. (Ibid, p. 335)

Another critique has been the stereotyping of women from poor countries as inherently oppressed and victimised by their men. Everjoice J. Win writes:

> For decades now, the development industry has thrived on the stereotypical image of an African woman who is its 'target' or 'beneficiary'. Always poor, powerless and invariably pregnant, burdened with lots of children, or carrying one load or another on her back or her head, this is a favourite image, one which we have come to associate with development. (Win, 2004, p. 61)

In her essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (Spivak, 1988) Gaytri C Spivak introduces her famous proclamation: 'White men are saving brown women from brown men' (ibid). Her primary reference is how the British colonialists in India prohibited the Hindu *Sati*[53] practice. The statement has been used as a description of both colonial and postcolonial attitudes and practices towards women and men in the global south when it comes to gender issues; the tendency of Westerners to focus on and magnify wrongdoings in other cultures (Sati was not a general practice among Hindus), to portray black (/brown/racialised) men as much worse than white men when it comes to oppressing women (or children or homosexuals[54]), to believe the West has a right (and a duty) to intervene, and to believe (black) women cannot act on their own behalf.

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[53] 'The Hindu widow ascends the pyre of the dead husband and immolates herself upon it. This is widow sacrifice. [...]The abolition of this rite by the British has been generally understood as a case of "White men saving brown women from brown men".' (Ibid)

[54] Or being worse war criminals: As I am writing this (in March 2012) the film Kony2012 made by the NGO Invisible Children is spreading virally on the internet. As of 17 March 2012, the film had over 80 million views on video-sharing website YouTube (Wikipedia, 2012c). The aim of IC is to create a strong international demand for hunting down Kony and bring him to justice (he has been indicted by ICC in Hague). The film and campaign is now being criticised for 'asking white men to save black children from a black men,' to rephrase Spivak.

Linked to the stereotyped victimhood of poor women is the essentialisation of women with feminine and men with masculine values and behaviours – and that this essentialisation is tied to the traditional, old fashioned, in need of change. Women are mothers, wives, caretakers, altruistic and responsible, men are fathers and husbands (if often absent), bread-winners (or frustrated because they cannot fulfil that role), egoistic and irresponsible. Lina Tordsson has in her Master thesis analysed the discourse on men's role in reproductive health in development literature (Tordsson, 2010). Her finding is that the literature distinguishes between two male models, the 'old man' and the 'new man,' and that the goal of development is tied to modernisation.

> Explicitly or implicitly the literature distinguishes between two male models: the old man, and the new man. These men are separated by both an ocean and by time. The old man lives in the South, and is saturated with colonial stereotypes. He is the hyper sexualised black man, 'the black danger', an unreflecting cultural product, and his form of masculinity leads to his own and his partner's destruction. The new man is liberal, equality-oriented, he is able to reflect on his own masculinity. And he is living in the Western world. (Tordsson, 2011, my translation)

Since the 1970s gender (/the status of women) has undoubtedly been an important element in development cooperation. To move toward greater gender equality has been seen as a step away from tradition, towards modernisation. Gender equality is moreover defined by us: societies in the Global South ought to look to Scandinavia[55].Gender equality (or equity) has become a central feature of development, both an aim and a means. Here is but two recent examples, Ingrid Fiskaa, Norwegian State Secretary of the Ministry Foreign Affairs, delivered a statement to the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in February 2012:

> Gender equality and the empowerment of women are **preconditions for sustainable development** and should be at the heart of policy making. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012b, my emphasis)

The World Bank states in its World Development Report 2012, Gender Equality and Development (The World Bank, 2012):

> Gender equality is at the heart of development. It's the right development objective, and it's smart economic policy. The World Development Report 2012 can help both countries and international partners think through and integrate a focus on gender equality into development policy making and programming.(Ibid; XIV)

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[55] Both Sweden and Norway have been seen, and see themselves, as being in the forefront internationally when it comes to gender equality. See for example (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a, p. 6) More on this as I analyse the policy documents in Ch.4

To move forward from the anachronistic space of underdevelopment to modernity, gender equality as understood in the West must be in place.

3.3.3 Population control

At the turn of the 19th century Thomas Malthus wrote 'An essay on the Principle of Population,' and started what was to become a constant worry over the size of the human population:

> Assuming, then, my postulata as granted, I say that the power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man. Population, when unchecked, increases in a geometrical ratio. Subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio. (Malthus, 1993 [1798-1826], p. 13)

Francis Galton, a Victorian scientist of many disciplines (from anthropology to meteorology) read his cousin's Charles Darwin's book 'On the Origin of Species' (Darwin, 1859) when it was published, and started exploring how Darwin's theories about 'survival of the fittest' and genetic development applied to humans. (Encyclopædia & Wikipedia, 2012) In 1883 Galton coined the term eugenics[56] in a book called 'Inquiries into human faculty and its development'. (Galton, 1883)

Combining the Malthusian worry of population growth with eugenicists concern for the quality of the genetic composition of a population led to both national and international attempts of controlling populations throughout the 20th century[57]. Other influences also directed attention towards the issues: New means of communication, increased literacy and a growing circulation of printed news, made the masses of starving people in China and India around the turn of the century public knowledge. In the name of humanitarianism one wanted to alleviate the suffering, and concluded that there were simply too many Asians. (Connelly,

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[56]'We greatly want a brief word to express the science of improving stock, which is by no means confined to questions of judicious mating, but which, especially in the case of man, takes cognisance of all influences that tend in however remote a degree to give to the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had. The word eugenics would sufficiently express the idea; it is at least a neater word and a more generalised one than viriculture which I once ventured to use.' (Galton, 1883, p. 17)

[57] People using Malthusian theories in the 20th century are often referred to as 'neo-Malthusians.' Eugenic theories came after Malthus lifetime, and neo-Malthusians are influenced by this. In addition most see war and famine as inadequate of controlling population size, and advocate for the states' active use other methods such as family planning and birth control. According to Zaremba the fear of degeneration of humans (or some human 'races'), was also one of the ideas that were proposed by neo-Malthusians, the theory being that when 'unfit' humans survived in greater numbers (because of increased standards of living), they would pass on their inferior genetic material which again would lead to degeneration of the human genome. (Zaremba, 1999)

2008) Last, but not least, the subject of women's emancipation had emerged through campaigns for general suffrage and pioneers like Elise Ottesen-Jensen (Sweden), Marie Stopes (UK) and Margaret Sanger (USA) started to advocate for women's right to control their own fertility (Connelly, 2008). Neither Ottesen-Jensen nor Stopes or Sanger were however free from racist influences and eugenicist ideas (Connelly, 2008; Zaremba, 1999). All three tried to win support for their cause by arguing for a *differentiated* birth control – it was the 'unfit' who needed to control their fertility the most. 'More children from the fit, less from the unfit – that is the chief issue of birth control' wrote for example Stopes in 1919 (quoted in Zaremba, 1999, p. 64) while Ottesen-Jensen argued for sterilisation of 'less worthy racial elements' and those 'from a racial hygienic[58] view point less endowed' ought not to be cared for by the society. (Quoted in Zaremba, 1999, p. 34)[59]

In the book 'Fatal Misconception,' historian Matthew Connelly points to how colonial powers eagerly caught onto the idea of overpopulation as the 'native' populations became increasingly hard to rule:

> It appeared to provide global solution to a crisis in colonial rule occurring from Nairobi to New Dehli, from Algiers to Hanoi. Rather than addressing political and economic inequality, imperial administrators blamed divergent population trends, even if they preferred to leave it to international and nongovernmental organizations to pick up the pieces. (Connelly, 2008, p. 9)

During the beginning of the 20th century, a recurring feature in discussion about population trends was the so called 'yellow peril.' One of the fears was that hordes of Asians (and later also Africans) would arrive at the shores of Europe and America and supplant the (white Christian) inhabitants. In the 1890s the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) president Francis Walker called immigrants 'beaten men from beaten races; representing the worst failures in the struggle for existence.' (Connelly, 2008, p. 57) The claim was that the populations in Asia and Africa had grown relatively to that of Europeans:

> In fact, the situation was just the opposite. By 1930 their [the peoples of Africa and Asia combined] share of the world population had declined to barely 60 percent, its lowest level in history. Many people seemed to want to believe that the populations of Asia and Africa were growing rapidly. (Connelly, 2008, p. 57)

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[58] In the Nordic countries one did not use "eugenic" as a concept, but the more loaded term racial hygiene ("rasehygiene" in Norwegian, "Rassenhygiene" in German)

[59] Zaremba is in turn quoting Ottesen-Jensen from an article in the Swedish daily "Arbetaren" (the Worker) in 1923.

One of the books influencing public understanding in the West during the first quarter of the 20th century was Katherine Mayo's 'Mother India'. (Mayo, 1927) Connelly writes:

> Katherine Mayo was worried about Asian immigration and wanted Americans to understand the good work of the Raj[60]. But British officials gently dissuaded her from inquiring into public health programs. Instead, an agent of Indian Political Intelligence suggested she write a book about the oversexed and unsanitary native, and the threat independent India might pose to the public health of the world. Mayo agreed that a report on prepubescent marriage, venereal disease, and bride-burning would be explosive. Her book, Mother India[61] (Mayo 1925), ignited international debate about whether Indians were too backward to merit self-rule, especially because of their treatment of women. (Connelly, 2008, p. 58)

Population control and biopolitics

Foucault introduced the concept of biopower or biopolitics in his lectures at Collège de France and in the book 'The History of Sexuality, Vol. I'. (Foucault, 1990 [1976]) Biopower is the regulation of a state's subjects through 'numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations' (Ibid, p. 140)[62] As we have seen in chapter on theories, Foucault claimed the techniques of power had changed from the sovereign's 'right of the sword' and 'power over death' to forms of governance that ruled over 'life itself.' (Ibid, pp. 136-137) To veil biopower is to reign through disciplinary techniques directed at individuals (to make them follow orders as well as incitements) and processes that regulated populations – processes such as population control (through governing birth rates, movements), disease prevention (vaccinations, nutrition), sanitation and hygiene and so on; in other words the whole field of public health.

Sexuality is at the very core of bio-politics: 'Sexuality represents the precise point where the disciplinary and the regulatory, the body and the population meet'. (Foucault, 1997, cited in R. Petchesky, 2012, p. 8) Foucault also described how biopolitics intersected with politics of the market. The global market place needs populations under control to function. Biopolitics

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[60] The British rule of India

[61] 'Written against the demands for self-rule and Indian independence from the British Raj, Mayo alluded to the treatment of India's women, the Dalits, the animals, the dirt and the character of its nationalistic politicians. Mayo singled out the "rampant" and fatally weakening sexuality of its males to be at the core of all problems, leading to masturbation, rape, homosexuality, prostitution and venereal diseases and, most importantly, to too early sexual intercourse and premature maternity.' (Wikipedia, 2012b)

[62] In his first Collège de France lecture in 1978 he defined bio-power: 'I mean a number of phenomena that seem to me to be quite significant, namely, the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power, or, in other words, how, starting from the 18th century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species. This is what I have called biopower.' (Foucault, 2007, p. 1)

thus serve capitalism in its modern form. One recent example is how while border regulations for goods and finance are deregulated, borders are made ever more impenetrable for (certain) human beings.

Above (in Ch. 3.1) the Colonial era's notions of the Other, and how sexuality featured centrally in this, are described. Biopolitics in the form of population control came into use first and foremost towards the racialised other in the 20th century: The (former) colonised people, minorities within Europe, North America and Oceania, as well as the urban poor[63] (the lumpenprolitariat).

Jumping now to the last half of the 20th century, let us look at how these historic trajectories came into play in the era of development. Programs of population control were central in Scandinavian countries' new policies of international aid programs from the start in the 1950ies. Sunniva Engh writes:

> Sweden and Norway were particularly active in the 1950s and 1960s, when Third World population growth gradually became a concern for development aid. Family planning was promoted with 'missionary seal,' and the countries argued the salience of the population issue in international forums, creating a favourable opinion of the matter. An increasing number of Western donor countries reluctantly included population assistance in their aid programmes, and together with the USA Sweden and Norway became the most generous donors to Third World family planning. (Engh, 2005, p. 18)

The demographic transition model, developed by the American demographer Warren Thompson in 1929 (Wikipedia, 2012a), had shown that a reduction of death and birth rates historically had paralleled the transition from agrarian to industrialised societies in Europe. This theory was now used to argue that in order to enhance modernisation (understood as industrialisation and increased wealth), you had to reduce fertility. High fertility was seen as a symbol of backwardness, and a hinder of development. Paige Whaley Eager writes about this assumption:

> [R]apid population growth is a primary cause of the Third World or developing world's development problems or, in other words, the developing world was not modernising and developing as it should since population growth was outstripping economic growth. (Eager, 2004, p. 145)

The problem with giving aid without taking population growth into consideration was also that improved health could lead to *more* people:

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[63] Ann McClintock describes how during colonialism the urban poor (as well as Irish peasants and English mine workers) are racialised: They are depicted with features, and skin colour, that resemble Africans, in contemporary literature. (McClintock, 1995)

> Improved public health, the Point IV[64] planners acknowledged, 'will at the same time intensify one of the great problems in the success of the program – increases in the population of areas already overpopulated under present economic conditions.' (Connelly, 2008, p. 120)

That this dilemma was taken very seriously indeed, can be seen in how programs for family planning, birth control, or mother and child health programs, as they were called when euphemisms were needed, were generally not part of a general attempt to improve health:

> McNamara[65] said he was reluctant to finance health care 'unless it was very strictly related to population control, because usually health facilities contributed to the decline of the death rate, and thereby to the population explosion.' Even when administrators acknowledged the correlation between women's access to education and lower fertility rates, they asked whether less costly measures might achieve the same goal. (p. 266)
>
> India asked several donors for more money for maternal and child health, for instance, arguing that if children lived longer their parents would not have so many of them. But even Norway turned them down, even though it was a leading proponent of the 'integrated' approach. Norad's population budget, like USAID's, was built on warnings of 'a catastrophe of unknown dimensions', of a 'hunger crisis or war,' as two MPs put it during parliamentary debate. 'When one went to India to find a family planning programme,' Stoltenberg explains, 'one could not come back with a vaccination programme.' (Connelly, 2008, p. 292)

An influential book of the time was Paul and Ann Ehrlich's 'The Population Bomb.' (Ehrlich, 1968) The Ehrlich's warned of mass starvation due to overpopulation, the danger towards the environment and major societal upheavals, and advocated immediate action to limit population growth. Fears of a 'population explosion' were already widespread by the time of publish, but Paul Ehrlich brought the idea to an even wider audience through his writing and speeches.

Behind this fear of 'exploding' population growth, there were other fears. Sunniva Engh writes:

> [P]ut very simply, mass poverty was understood to be the main reason for political and social unrest, extremism and war. [...]As the Norwegian Labour Party representative Finn Moe argued in Parliament in 1967: 'differences in standards of living will not exactly provide a basis for a quiet and peaceful development. It can, on the contrary, become a dangerous reason for bitter racial conflicts. This shows... that it is not just a philanthropic task, an act of mercy we are facing. It is rather a substantial part of international politics, a substantial part of our own foreign policy, to contribute development aid... so that we can avoid those frightening perspectives that will be the result if we fail.' (Engh, 2002, p. 40)
>
> [From the same debate in Parliament, MP Thorstein Treholt]: 'In the long run there are no

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[64] See Ch. 3.2.1

[65] 'McNamara served as head of the World Bank from April 1968 to June 1981, when he turned 65. [..] As World Bank President, McNamara declared at the 1968 Annual Meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group that countries permitting birth control practices would get preferential access to resources.' (Wikipedia, 2012e)

alternatives to family planning but hunger crisis or war.' Thus, the connection poverty - social unrest - war that in the early post-war period was used as an argument in favour of development aid was connected to the issue of population growth. A reduction of the population growth was understood as necessary due to both limited natural resources and security considerations. (Engh, 2002, p. 43)

Security considerations became even more poignantly important as the Cold War chilled international climate. Dr Barbara Crane, Executive Vice President of Ipas[66] summarises the attitudes of the time:

> The Cold War mentality supported the foreign aid program generally. We [the United States] needed to support these countries so they did not go communist. [...]That was the underlying cognitive framework of U. S. elites who made links between security, development, and population control. (Eager, 2004, p. 155)

The thinking was reflected in for example what parts of the US Administration concerned itself with population growth. In 1974, months before the 'World Population Conference' in Bucharest, (United Nations, 2012b) President Nixon directed the US National Security Council to examine the effect of the world population growth on US national security interests. (Eager, 2004, pp. 153-154) The resulting policy document (National Security Study Memorandum 200, NSSM 200) states:

> Populations with a high proportion of growth. The young people, who are in much higher proportion in many LDCs[67] are likely to be more volatile, unstable, prone to extremes, alienation and violence than an older population. These young people can more readily be persuaded to attack the legal institution of the government or real property of the 'establishment', 'imperialists', multinational corporations, or other – often foreign – influences blamed for their troubles. (U. S. National Security Council, 1974)

Norway was an early state actor in this field. Sunniva Engh has written about Norwegian and Swedish involvement in India's population programmes. (Engh, 2002, 2005) Norway first became formally involved in the Indian Family Planning Programme (FPP) in 1971 when it entered an agreement with the Government of India to support the so-called Post Partum Programme. India's FPP had by that time evolved from focusing on the 'rhythm method' in the 1950s, to male sterilisation, the IUD (by the mid-1960s) to legal abortion and female sterilisation in the 1970s. Indira Gandhi declared a national emergency in 1975 that lasted until 1977, and during that time, a new National Population Policy was announced that included a range of wide ranging measures such as giving permission to state legislatures to

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[66] Ipas: 'International Pregnancy Advisory Services' see www.ipas.org
[67] LDC: Least Developed Country

pass laws for compulsory sterilisation. (Engh, 2005) Under the leadership of Gandhi's son Sanjay Gandhi, mass sterilisation was to solve the population problem.

> Parts of the country embarked on a policy of maximum sterilisation by a various means, ranging from the requirement of a vasectomy or tubectomy certificate before government permits for various purposes could be granted, to mass rounding up of people for sterilisation. Men of all ages were bribed or forced into vasectomy camps, regardless of medical or marital status or the number of children they had. The measures were not only directed towards the general public; central government employees with more than three children were not given government housing unless they were sterilised. (Engh, 2002, p. 49)

While a debate about continued support raged in Sweden, and led to Sida withdrawing from the FPP, Norway continued to give aid, and in 1978 Norad tripled its assistance to the Post Partum Programme.

To summarise, the focus on population control had many causes. From Malthus to eugenics, from demographic transition theory to Cold War politics and finally ecologic worries about the earth's sustainability, all theories led to the conclusion that the size of *poor* populations needed to be restricted. That the problem of overpopulation was always located with the racialised women of the 'third world' and their hyper-fertility, and never in the densely populated countries in central Europe, links the expressed racism of the 1920s and -30s with birth control programs of the -70s.

> Colonial officials had experienced the demise of empire as at least partly a function of population growth and their inability to stop it. Many now feared a further redistribution of wealth and power between rich and poor, in which metropoles would lose access to oil and other resources, or even suffer 'colonization' by migrants from former possessions now grown overpopulated. Was it so far-fetched to imagine that a 'World Population Plan of Action' to reduce the number of poor people was really a form of imperialism by other means? After all, what was empire but the pursuit of unaccountable power, even if it now operated in the guise of international and nongovernmental organizations? (Connelly, 2008, p. 312)

One of the participants used to work as a medical doctor in Norway during the late 1960s and early 1970s when the first 'new' groups of immigrants from (mainly) South Asia and the MENA region started to arrive to work in Norway and gives a vivid description of experiences from the time:

> **A:** And it was at that time ... I was always interested in development aid (*U-hjelp*), so I followed it parallel [to my work], and it was at that time one was terribly afraid of the 'population explosion' and especially that coloured women had very many children and this infected partly how immigrant women were treated in Norway. And it was a fear of large families of children (*store barnekull*) and this... It was not the Islamophobia that we have now, but it was sort of [fear of] 'the stranger' and especially this fertility, which I think was a fear of sexuality. I have really become interested in the

sexuality of the Other, that is the Other meaning the stranger and the frightening, the monstrous, uncontrollable sexuality of the Other, which I think lies underneath this fear of [many] children. And especially [the fear of] female sexuality which *is* very scary. [... I] discovered that there was a strong insistence in relation to birth control. I had patients who had received... I remember one patient, who came and complained that she was not getting pregnant, and so I examined her and she had a coil and then I found the doctor who had inserted the IUD and who then said 'But I could not talk to her and I thought she looked tired and she had so many children.' How one completely took over the ... I were very concerned ... [...] I think that the greatest atrocities were in the area of sexual health, that at this time was all about contraceptives, it came in the form of this contraception. And it was all this 'kind' reasoning by the doctors... We are oh, so good at giving the right reasons, we do know so well! (**Me:** Perhaps it is the social democratic tradition...) Yes, the patriarchal, I would say: 'I know what is best for you, poor thing.' And there were also some cases of sterilisations, and that is... We are talking about signatures, you are supposed to sign for it and know what you are signing as well! And then I wrote about it […] I remember, and at one time I sat in the office and a doctor called from a hospital here in town, and I am not going to say which one. And then he said that 'I have a woman who is under general anaesthesia and she is about to be sterilised, but I am not sure if it was she wanted, what do you say?' So I said: 'It is your responsibility.' [He answered] 'Yes, but I couldn't very well bring her out of the anaesthesia,' [and I said] 'of course you can bring her out of anaesthesia.' It was this very insistence in relation to contraception.[…] So it was ... I'm not saying this is something easy, I have really fallen into the trap myself (laughs). And it was an awakening [for me] and then this was brought up at the global level also ... Where one wanted to confront this fear of the 'population explosion.' (**Me:** As early as that?) Yes, it started well, that is [with] 'The myth of population control,'[68] I think it was published in 1972, [...] (**Me:** I remember from my school days that it was still very much talk about the population explosion and...) I think it was in 1972 or something like that … where a somewhat controversial scientist, he is, well, strictly speaking, originally from Uganda, I think, but he ... Mahmood Mamdani is his name, who interviewed Indian families about how many children they had and then ... how many children they *wanted* to have […] and it was a complete match. They had exactly as many children as they wanted. Now the research has been questioned, if it was really that [simple]. That is, one does believe that birth control matters for decline of fertility, while he almost claimed that it did not. But it was very good thing, those who began to question the so-called truths. It is so lovely that [there are] those who dare to stir it up, even though they are not exactly right, they have some important points. So it [questioning] started to appear, later on in the 1980s one began to discuss it.

Attitudes towards the Other is not reserved for inhabitants of faraway countries; the attitudes and beliefs about 'them' are part of the challenge immigrants and refugees are met with when they arrive in a new country. Given how strong Norway's engagement in family planning in south Asia was at the time, this should not come as a surprise, perhaps, but it is part of a picture of Norwegian attitudes toward the female Other.

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[68] (Mamdani, 1972)

3.3.4 Female genital cutting (FGC[69])

Various forms of altering female genitalia among people in the Middle East and Africa have been known to Westerners for several centuries. Missionaries and Colonial authorities tried to ban the practice in for example Kenya and Sudan during the early 20th century, and met fierce resistance (Talle, 2003, pp. 15, 16; Thomas, 2000). The motives for banning the practice were both medical and moral. The rituals accompanying the cutting (which in the case of the Kikuyu in Kenya involved clitoridectomy) were seen as too explicitly sexual. (Ibid) The colonial prohibition led to defiance and resistance. It became part of the opposition towards the British, and increased support for the Mau Mau uprising towards the liberation from colonial rule (Mufaka, 2003).

Knowledge about FGC did not reach the general public in the West until the 1970s. In 1979 the WHO sponsored the first 'Seminar on Harmful Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children', in Khartoum, Sudan (Rahman & Touiba, 2000). The American radical feminist and social activist, Fran P. Hosken was invited to present her findings from her fact finding travelling across Africa. The same year Hosken published 'The Hosken report: Genital and sexual mutilation of females,' (Hosken, 1993) which became widely influential, and later widely criticised. The report functioned as an eye-opener to a practice few outside regions where it is practiced knew about at all. It led to extensive involvement from international organisations like WHO, and a worldwide engagement among activists in women's organisations. The issue of FGC and how to fight it is however not without its dilemmas and controversies. Critique first came from African feminists who recognised a paternalistic and scandalising tone in much of the writing and campaigning coming from the West. Hosken wanted to shock and engage, and her language can best be described as inflammatory:

> Though violence against women in all kinds of vicious ways goes on all over the world there is one difference: For African men to subject their own small daughters to FGM in order to sell them for a good bride-price shows such total lack of human compassion and such vicious greed that it is hard to comprehend. [...] The question must be asked: What is the relationship between the constant civil wars in Africa carried on with unmatched brutality and the mutilation of female children as a

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[69] There has been a lot of dispute over what to call the practice of physical altering of female genitalia. In common use have been 'female circumcision,' 'female genital mutilation,' and 'female genital cutting.' WHO mainly uses FGM, sometimes FGM/C, and the following definition: 'FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.' I have chosen to use the culturally less stigmatising Female Genital Cutting, precisely because it is less stigmatising.

celebrated traditional practice in each family, quiet aside from family violence? (Hosken, 1993, p. 16)

Hosken seems close to labelling African men brutal savages, and women as hapless victims, (Talle, 2003) both clearly in need of rescue. Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf, an anthropologist from Sudan engages with this view:

> Its important contribution to the literature on female 'circumcision' notwithstanding, The Hosken Report is filled with negative statements about African societies that adhere to the practice. [...] [Hosken] argues that western intervention is imperative 'because the myth about the importance of cultural tradition must be laid to rest, considering that development - the introduction of Western technology and living patterns - is the goal of every country where the operations are practiced today.' (1981:10) (Abusharaf, 2000, pp. 160, 161)

In addition to the stereotyping of Africans, the literature and campaign material on FGC fit with McClintock's description of the 'porno-tropics', the West's lurid imagination of the Other, an imagination that is both tantalising and makes us shudder. In the Renaissance McClintock describes how travellers 'found an eager and lascivious audience for their spicy tales' stories (McClintock, 1995, p. 22) and shows examples of contemporary art that visualised their tall stories (McClintock, 1995, pp. 2, 25). Today detailed descriptions of operations on the private parts of black girls, often accompanied by close up pictures of the same, are presented for the Western gaze. (Talle, 2003, p. 19)

> FGCs amplify the conflict in the conversation between feminism and postcolonialism because, unlike issues that are historical (footbinding), disturbing but rare (widow immolation), chosen by adults (cosmetic surgery), or impermanent (veiling), FGCs are ongoing, frequent, performed on children, and can involve extensive and irreversible bodily modification. (L. Wade, 2012, p. 27)

Isabelle R. Gunning writes about how she struggled to come to terms with the issue:

> Yet my own desires to fit the practice neatly into a somewhat feminist version of the category 'human rights violations' led me toward an arrogant attitude that ultimately rendered those African feminists already engaged in a struggle within their cultures over the practice as either invisible or as stereotyped victims with a great need for yet another Western (if racially correct[70]) savior. [...] We are not discussing one example of a panoply of cross cultural practices that impose disproportional health risks on women or that serve to exercise dominion and control over women. We are now describing the bizarre and incomprehensible, i.e., defective, behavior of the other. [...] Ellen Gruenbaum describes Hosken as 'notorious', because for all her hard work and probable good intentions, her 'us helping them' approach has created an enormous bitterness in non-Western feminists for whom the attitude is chillingly reminiscent of colonialism. (Gunning, 1992, pp. 198-200)

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[70] Isabelle R. Gunning is African-American

Since the mid 1990s, after the postcolonial turn, the writings about FGC have changed. (L. Wade, 2012, pp. 32, 37) Most scholars will acknowledge the critique, and also use it in their analysis. In Norwegian debate about FGC among immigrants (mainly focusing on Somalis), the arguments have however not changed much in recent years, and anthropologists and feminists trying to raise different perspectives get harsh responses from an outraged public in the media (Khazaleh, 2010; Talle, 2003). We can also see that a lot of 'women oriented' projects by Norwegian NGOs in Africa are directed at fighting FGC[71] – a sign that it is considered one of the main problems for women in Africa.

3.3.5 HIV/AIDS and behaviour change

In her book 'AIDS and the Ecology of Poverty'(Stillwaggon, 2006), Eileen Stillwaggon confronts what she terms the 'racial metaphors' that underlie most writing about and programming on HIV/AIDS in Africa:

> Persistent notions of racial difference suffused the social science literature on AIDS in Africa, especially in the first 15 years of the epidemic. No one used the word race, but it entered into the discourse as culture. HIV prevalence is attributed to cultural characteristics that are assumed to be common to 700 million people from hundreds of language and ethnic groups. That supposedly homogenous cultural zone is coincident in its boundaries with a region identified with blackness in the Western view. (Ibid, p. 135)

Her argument, much elaborated in the book, and in articles (see e.g. Stillwaggon, 2008), is that the colonial heritage of Othering Africans has influenced present day attempts to understand the rapid spread of HIV in Africa. Instead of including analysis of the ecology of infectious diseases in poor populations, the predominance of research and policy has focused on individual sexual behaviour. (Ibid). Neville Hoad writes

> The general lasciviousness of savages is a trope that cuts across genres and disciplines throughout the nineteenth century. Though marked by multiple ruptures and significant shifts and reversals, there is arguably an important strand of thinking beginning in Victorian anthropology and moving through psychoanalysis to current configurations. This approach views AIDS as a predominantly homosexual and African (and in the U.S. context, Haitian) disease linking homosexual and the savage, who are both required to represent promiscuous unbridled lust and are held to embody states of arrested development or degeneration. (Hoad, 2007, p. 56)

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[71] FOKUS (Forum for Women and Development.) FOKUS has 71 member organisations. FOKUS projects are supported through Norad. A quick count of projects in Africa administrated through FOKUS shows that out of a total of 25 projects, 9 focus on FGC, (of which 5 are simply titled: 'Fighting FGM' (*Bekjempelse av FGM*). (FOKUS, 2012)

The fact that the virus is transmitted through sexual encounter (and through direct contact with blood that carries the virus, as through contaminated syringes) of course merits a focus on sexuality, and sexual behaviour. In countries like the U.S. programmes to modify behaviour among sub populations at high risk (like gay men) early showed a good rate of success. The problem, according to writers like Stillwaggon, is when behaviour becomes the main focus; to explain the huge difference in prevalence between countries in Africa and the West, you have to conclude that there is a difference in behaviour – that Africans are different when it comes to sexual behaviour ('They copulate at all times and in all places' (Fanon, 1952), see Ch. 2.3.2). Since this is a notion that is deeply imbedded in Western thought, it is also an explanation that lies ready at hand. Stillwaggon notes:

> An explanation of the huge difference in HIV prevalence between North America or Europe and Africa that centers on the difference in sexual behavior, however, depends on **epic rates of sexual partner change** in Africa for which empirical support is lacking. (Stillwaggon, 2006, p. 134, my emphasis)

One of the most cited articles on sexual behaviour in Africa was written in 1989 by the couple John and Pat Caldwell together with Pat Quiggen. The Caldwells have a history of doing population research in Africa, much of it funded by the Population Council and published in their journal Population and Development Review (Population Council, 2012; Stillwaggon, 2006; United Nations, 2004). They describe the entire sub-Saharan Africa as 'an alternative civilization - very different in its workings, including its patterns of sexual behavior' (Caldwell, Caldwell, & Quiggin, 1989, p. 185). So different are Africans according to the Caldwell's that they find it opportune to 'employ the term "homo ancestralis"' (Caldwell & Caldwell, 1987, p. 410; Caldwell et al., 1989, p. 185) to understand African fertility and HIV infection patterns. The Caldwell's writings are widely cited, and although they have also been criticised for their universal conclusions, their theories have influenced much research and programming. One example is a title from UNFPA's global update on HIV/AIDS in 1999: 'Promiscuity, and the Primacy of Cultural Factors: A Lethal Mixture In Africa.'

> Physiologically four times more susceptible to HIV infection, women in the Southern African region are contracting the virus at a faster rate than men, and at a younger age. Most of the women who tested positive for HIV in Namibia, government figures show, were in their early 20s, while most men were in their mid-30s. In Africa, AIDS is transmitted primarily by heterosexual sex. The problem is promiscuity, and underscores the primacy of cultural factors. (United Nations Population Fund, 1999, p. 13)

Sexual traditions and cultural factors are understood to be part of the structural causes of the HIV epidemic also in recent Norwegian policy documents. The Norwegian Ministry on Foreign Affairs writes in 2006:

> Norway believes it is vital to examine the underlying structural causes of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, such as poverty, the suppression of women, sexual traditions, the abuse of alcohol and narcotic substances, as well as other harmful traditional and cultural factors.[72] (Utenriksdepartementet, 2006, p. 7)

The same year (2006) The Lancet published the results of a large international study of sexual behaviour. (Wellings et al., 2006) Kate Wellings et al. reviewed medical, public health, and social science research between 1996 and 2006 from 59 countries across the world to be able to say something about trends in sexual behaviour on a global scale. Although they state several reservations (scarcity of data from some regions for example), some interesting conclusions are drawn. They found that more surveys, and more standard measures, were available for African countries than for any other region while data from developed and middle-income countries were the most difficult to obtain. (Ibid p. 1708) Their study thus seems to attest that the sexual behaviour of Africans merit most attention among researchers. Three of their 'key messages' also contrast with some widely held believes about multiple partnerships and early onset of sexual activities being causes of the endemic spread of HIV in Africa compared to other continents:

- Trends towards earlier sexual experience are less pronounced and less widespread than sometimes supposed (in many developing countries the trend is towards later onset of sexual activity for women), but the trend towards later marriage has led to an increase in the prevalence of premarital sex.
- Most people are married and married people have the most sex. Sexual activity in young single people tends to be sporadic, but is greater in industrialised countries than in developing countries.
- Monogamy is the dominant pattern in most regions; but reporting of multiple partnerships is more common in men than in women, and generally more common in developed countries than in developing countries. (Ibid, p. 1706)

The process of Othering is partly based on misconceptions about the other. Such beliefs are most often unacknowledged. They are part of what we take as given, the unspoken truths.

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[72] The position paper exists in both Norwegian and English, the Norwegian version reads: 'Norge ser det som helt nødvendig å gå inn i de underliggende strukturelle faktorene som bidrar til å gi aidsepidemien næring. Norge vil bidra aktivt til å analysere slike sammenhenger nærmere. Eksempler på slike faktorer er fattigdom, kvinneundertrykking, seksuelle tradisjoner, misbruk av alkohol og andre rusmidler i tillegg til andre tradisjonelle og kulturelle faktorer.'

3.4 The wheel keeps turning
(or changing hierarchies of attitudes towards gender and sexuality)

In Ch. 2.3.4 we saw how Rubins draws a 'charmed circle' to describe the heteronormative hierarchy. I have used her idea to illustrate how attitudes towards gender and sexuality have changed from the Colonial times to the era of development. As in Rubins charmed circle, the inner wheel represents what is considered good and normal. The periphery represents our views of the Other; in the first circle the Other in need of civilisation, in the second circle the Other in need of development.
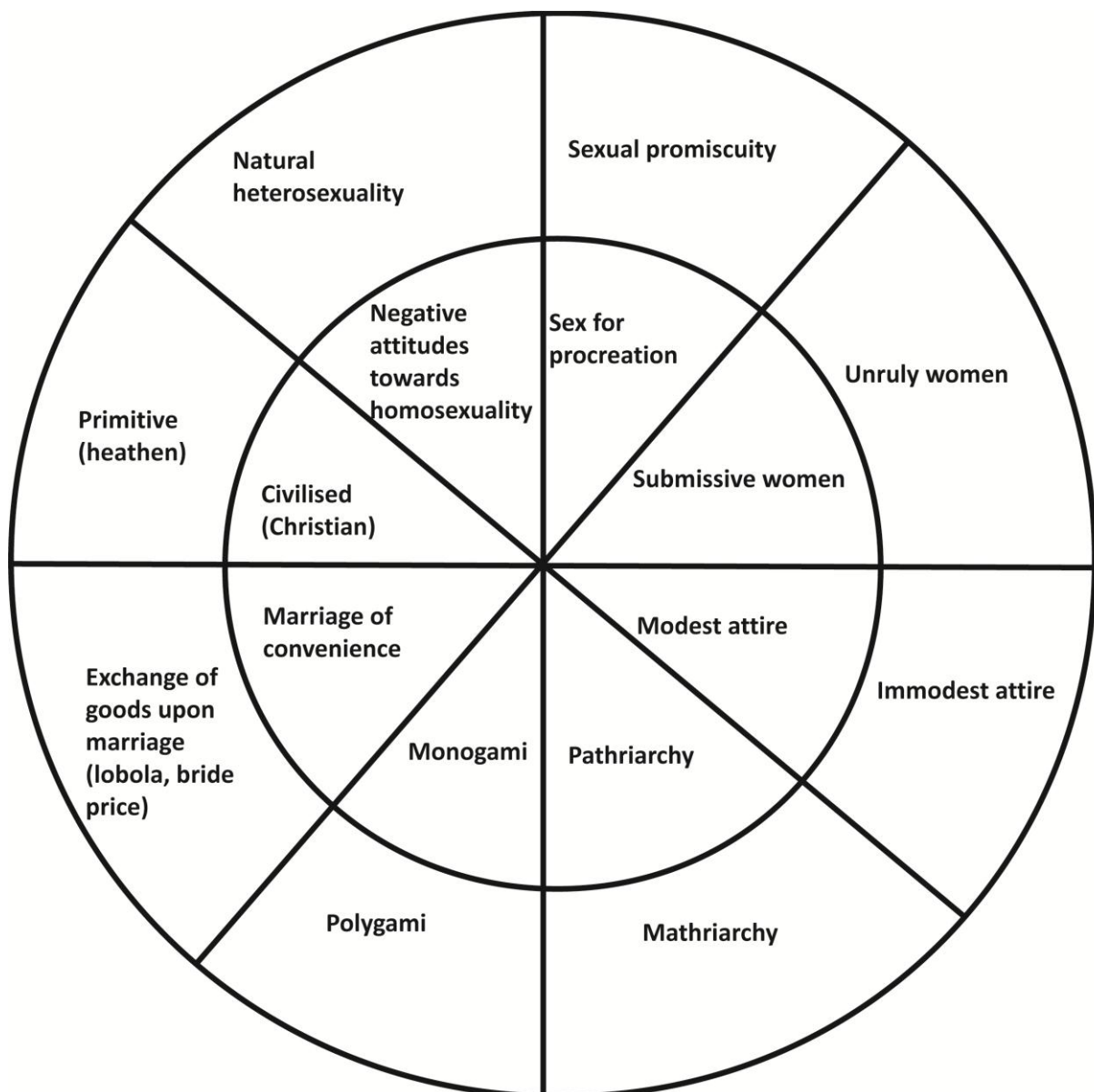
Figure 4 Attitudes towards gender and sexuality, Colonial era
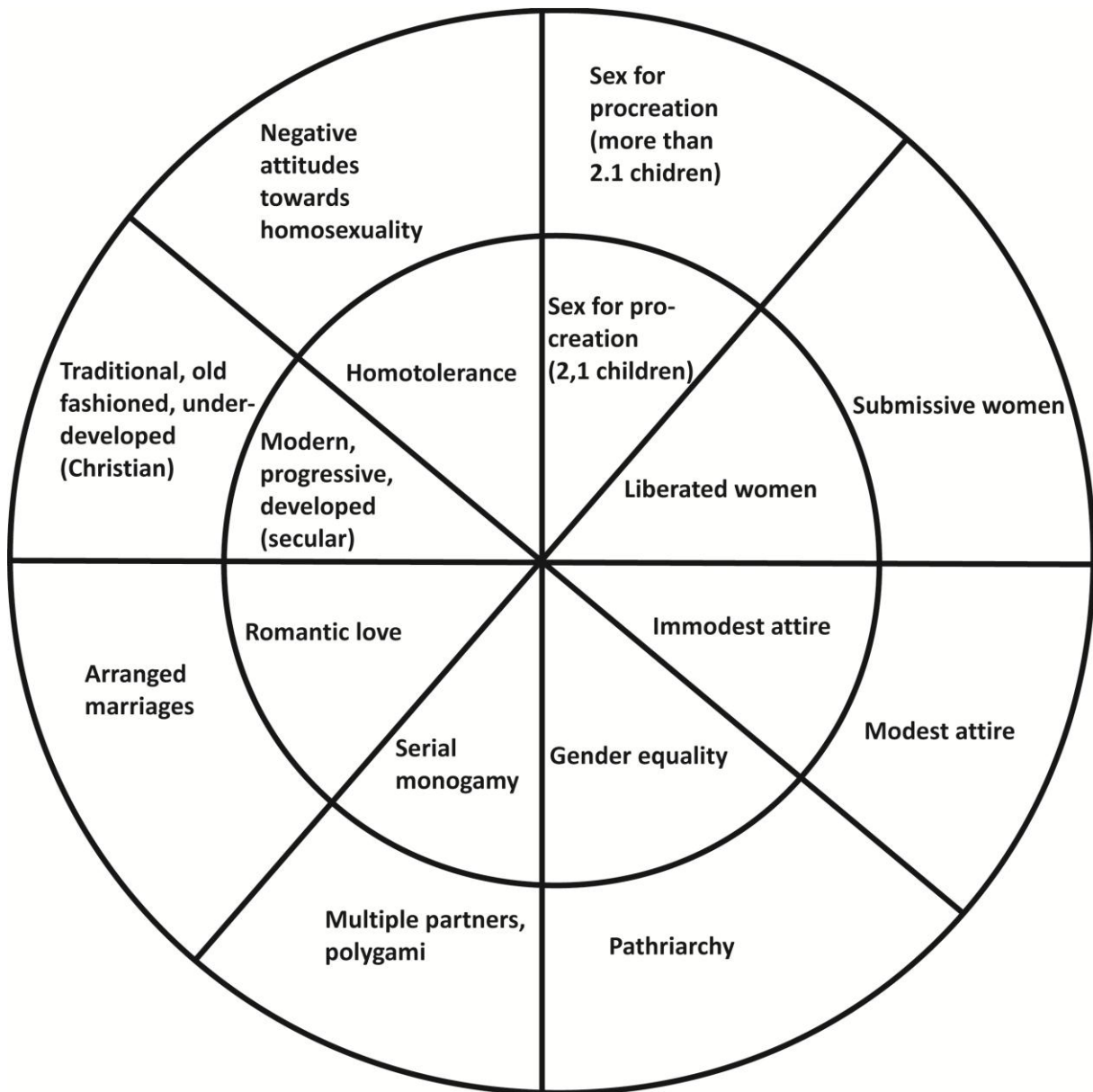
Figure 5 Attitudes towards gender and sexuality, era of development

4 Gender and sexuality in Norwegian development policy and practice

4.1 Introduction and overview

In this chapter I will analyse how gender and sexuality, and particularly gender identity and sexual orientation are thematised in policy documents. The interview material will similarly be analysed to explore how actors in the development field view the policy, if and how they have incorporated the issues in their own work. The goal is to reach a better understanding of *how* and *why* the questions of sexual orientation and gender identity have come into focus, what roles they are perceived to play, and how they are thought to fit the general development policy and philosophy. The critical stances developed in the previous chapter will now be used to look at these special themes from a feminist, queer and postcolonial standpoint.

4.2 What is sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI)

Sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI for those in the know; in Norwegian: *seksuell orientering og kjønnsidentit*et) are terms now widely used. Matthew Waites writes:

> The categories 'sexual orientation' and 'gender identity' have emerged as pivotal in the contestation of human rights discourses and global governance by prevailing international lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and activist networks. (Waites, 2009, p. 1)

The Yogyakarta principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (Corrêa et al., 2007) defines the concepts:

> Sexual orientation is understood to refer to each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender.

> Gender identity is understood to refer to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms. (Ibid, p.6)

Despite the now global use of these terms, they are hotly debated in international fora. One example from 2012 is the 19th Session of the UN Human Rights Council (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2012) where a debate and a panel discussion were held about the report 'Discriminatory Laws and Practices and Acts of Violence against Individuals based on their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.' (Pillay, 2011) Among those questioning the title of the report was His Excellency Silvano M. Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations:

> Moreover, the Holy See Delegation wishes to raise serious concern with the insertion of terms such as "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" which do not enjoy mention in binding documents of the United Nations and which are ambiguous in nature since they lack specific definition in international Human Rights instruments. In fact, my Delegation believes that the use of the term "gender identity" was settled, in 1998, during the discussion leading up to the promulgation of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, which states, "For purposes of this Statute, it is understood that the term 'gender' refers to the two sexes, male and female, within the context of society. The term 'gender' does not indicate any meaning different from the above." Thus the Holy See notes that the categories 'sexual orientation' and 'gender identity' "find no recognition or clear and agreed definition in international law." Any requirement for States to take such terms into account in their efforts to promote and implement fundamental human rights could result in serious uncertainty in the application of law and undermine the ability of States to enter into and enforce new and existing human rights conventions and standards. (Tomasi, 2012)

Similar concerns have been raised by representatives from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (Akram, 2012). The terms are not only disputed from those who may be seen as religious traditionalists (like the Holy See and OIC). Queer scholars, like Matthew Waites quoted above, also have second thoughts about the concepts:

> I argue that rather than viewing this emergence [of widespread use of the SOGI terminology] as signalling the eradication of the normative privileging of particular genders and sexualities, it can usefully be interpreted as a reconfiguration of what Judith Butler calls the 'heterosexual matrix': 'that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders and desires are naturalized' (Butler 1990, p. 151). I argue that the emergent grid of intelligibility continues to be subject to dominant interpretations which privilege a binary model of gender, and sexual behaviours, identities and desires that are defined exclusively in relation to a single gender within this binary. Hence, this new matrix needs to be contested. [...]Even the most impressive recent global scholarship on sexuality, gender and human rights, despite consistently deploying a critical social analysis, lacks a focus on 'sexual orientation' and 'gender identity' as crucial elements in the emerging conceptual architecture of global human rights discourses. (Waites, 2009, p. 138)

Even though I do not claim that this paper belongs among the 'most impressive recent global scholarship,' I do stand guilty as accused: I will continue to use sexual orientation and gender identity somewhat uncritically. The terminology is widely used in the material I have analysed, and I will despite my use of it, return to the essence of Waites' critique when I look

at what I deem to be a consistence heteronormacy within the development discourse. To fully develop Waites' line of thought, however, (sadly) lies outside the scope of this paper.

4.3 Why now?

During Oslo Pride week (Skeive dager) in June 2011 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a publication to describe what is being done at the Norwegian embassies around the world on issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity (Utenriksdepartementet, 2011a). State Secretary Gry Larsen held a speech:

> It was in 2005 that the Norwegian government decided to make the fight for LGBT rights an important part of its international human rights policy. (Larsen, 2011) [73]

I will now look at what has happened both internationally and nationally that can explain how the newly elected government came to make this decision in 2005.

4.3.1 International trend

International organisations and NGOs have raised the issues of sexual orientation and gender identity both nationally and in internationally for many years. Human rights organisations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch officially broadened their scope to include sexual orientation in the early 1990s. Over the last decade the issues have reached a new level, as they are being discussed with increased frequency in international forums like the UN, and they are put on the foreign affairs and development agendas by governments, for example in the so called 'Brazilian resolution on human rights and sexual orientation' that was presented by Brazil to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in April 2003 (Girard, 2007, p. 341) or when the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office developed a toolkit for embassies to use when advocating these rights in their host country in 2008 (The British Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2008) and launched a programme for promoting the human rights of LGBT people (The British Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2010), or when France initiated and held the 'World congress on Human rights, sexual

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[73] I recorded the meeting and transcribed it, the verbatime quote in Norwegian is: 'Det var i 2005 at den norske regjeringen bestemte seg for å gjøre kampen for LHBT rettigheter til en viktig del av sin internasjonale menneskerettighetspolitikk.'

orientation and gender identity' in Paris in May 2009 (Ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2009)[74].

International and national organisations working on development issues have also focused on these issues. In 2005 the Ford Foundation published a report called 'Sexuality and Social Change: Making the Connection' (Costa & Wood, 2005). The report makes the connections between discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and/or gender identity and general marginalisation and impoverishment. The same connections are made by the Institute of Development Studies in Issue 5, Volume 37 of the IDS Bulletin (A. Cornwall & Jolly, 2006). Others again have looked at these issues from a human rights perspective, one example is the book 'Sexuality, Health and Human Rights.' (Corrêa, Petchesky, & Parker, 2006) Sweden was the first country to make sexual orientation and gender identity a specific focus of their foreign policy. A policy document from the Swedish government in 2003 on global development (Utrikesdepartementet, 2003) mentions it, and in 2005 SIDA issued the document 'Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights – A Cornerstone of Development' (Sida, 2005) where sexual orientation is a recurring theme. The Norwegian policy thus fits well into these international trends.

A review of the documents seems to indicate that two main explanations for this heightened awareness on the international arena can be identified: One has to do with a developing understanding and use of human rights thinking in development discourse; the other has to do with global responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the two can be seen to intersect.

Historic perspectives of Human Rights and Development

In Ch. 3.2.6 I looked at how human rights came to be incorporated in development thinking, and how development agencies started to apply the so called HRBAD. Norway was relatively early in this regard: In late 1999 the Norwegian Government presented a white paper on Human Rights called 'Report No. 21 to the Storting (1999-2000) Focus on Human Dignity; A Plan of Action for Human Rights' (Utenriksdepartementet, 1999) which in a chapter on development states:

> Realisation of the right to development depends first and foremost on systematic commitment, nationally and internationally, to the promotion of already existing human rights. Adopting a rights-based approach to development cooperation will be one of several contributing measures in this regard. (Utenriksdepartementet, 1999, p. 158, my translation)

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[74] For more examples; see Ch. 3.3.1

The HRBAD changes the way development is viewed. The principles of participation, empowerment, non-discrimination and accountability shift the focus from the aim to the process. This shift has had positive consequences for marginalised groups. Development agencies have started to look for population groups that because of social exclusion and discrimination are in need of added resources and assistance. Examples are targeted programs for ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, the aged, indigenous people, refugees, *and* sexual and gender diverse people.

At the same time, in academia and activist circles concerned with feminism, queer theory and critical race studies, a new awareness of the *intersectionality* of various forms of social and identity categories has developed, (see e.g. Yuval-Davis, 2006). Simply put the theory examines how various identity categories such as gender, race, class, disability and sexuality interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels, contributing to systematic social inequality. (Ibid, p. 193-4) This way of thinking draws on and feeds into the new understanding of rights interdependency described above.

The time from 1990s till today is the period when neoliberal economic policies have gained worldwide dominance, a process associated with the term globalisation. Globalisation is understood as a process where international trade and investment lead to increased interaction and integration between people and governments, a process aided by communication technologies. Because Western(/American) powers have dominated the global market (at least until recently), the cultural consequences of the process are by many critiques seen as a Westernisation(/Americanisation). Some social theorists do however criticise this understanding of economy as the 'prime mover,' and claim the interdependency of economic, political and cultural factors. Their focus is on time and place, and globalisation refers to fundamental changes in the spatial and temporal contours of social existence, according to which the significance of space or territory undergoes shifts in the face of a no less dramatic acceleration in the temporal structure of crucial forms of human activity. (Scheuerman, 2010)

Sexuality research is also concerned with globalisation, both to look for effects of globalisation on human sexualities and to ask what role sexuality plays in globalisation. (See e.g. Altman, 2001; Binnie, 2004) Binnie points to the convergence between globalisation and the emergence of transnational lesbian and gay politics. (Ibid, p. 32-36) Communication

technology has been the birth assistant for an international LGBT movement[75], like for many other social movements that organise across borders. This movement has been influenced by the new human rights agenda and it is using a rights based discourse to lobby states, organisations and international bodies.

Let me end this part by briefly mentioning that tying development to human rights is a debated issue. Criticism from those on the 'receiving end' of development projects range from disputes about the universality of human rights, the double standards of donor countries, the random enforcement of some rights, to charges of cultural colonialism. Jacqueline Bhabha writes:

> [T]his is also the era when the West is championing one of its prize exports, respect for universal human rights, as part of its new assault on 'the rest' and in tandem with its foreign policy strategy of 'good governance'. (Bhabha, 1996, p. 5)

I will return to this and similar debates later.

International HIV/AIDS policy

When HIV/AIDS first became known in the 1980ies it was through a localised epidemic among gay men in the US. In many parts of the world the epidemic has stayed localised in subpopulations such as drug users, people who sell sex and men who have sex with men (MSM). The great exception is Sub-Saharan Africa where the epidemic is generalised. Until quite recently both research and programming on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment in Africa have focused almost solely on transmission through penile-vaginal sex. The first studies on HIV prevalence and men who have sex with men in Africa started to appear around 2005. (Caceres, Konda, Pecheny, Chatterjee, & Lyerla, 2006; Onyango-Ouma, Birungi, & Geibel, 2005; A. S. Wade et al., 2005) In 2007 the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) published a report 'Off the Map' that criticises '[h]ow HIV/AIDS programming is failing same-sex practicing people in Africa' (Johnson, 2007). The last 3-4 years we have seen this changing: More interest and awareness have been created through advocacy work on the ground and by international partners. The biannual World Aids Conferences organised by the International AIDS Society[76] have been an important meeting

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[75] I use 'movement' to refer to a loose network of organizations and individuals. Britannica defines 'Social movement' as a 'loosely organized but sustained campaign in support of a social goal, typically either the implementation or the prevention of a change in society's structure or values.' (Killian, Smelser, & Turner, 2012)

[76] http://www.iasociety.org/ and http://www.aids2012.org

ground for activists and scholars, and have contributed to the advocacy for inclusion of 'most at risk populations' like MSM. Since 2009 institutions like UNAIDS, The World Bank and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria have made reports and strategies for MSM and HIV (Beyrer et al., 2011; The Global Fund to Fight Aids & Malaria, 2009; UNAIDS, 2009).

The Political Declaration from the 2006 United Nations High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS states that the UN General Assembly

> Reaffirm that the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is an essential element in the global response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including in the areas of prevention, treatment, care and support, and recognize that addressing stigma and discrimination is also a critical element in combating the global HIV/AIDS pandemic; (United Nations General Assembly, 2006)

A human rights based approach has thus also been reflected in the international public health discourse. The late Jonathan Mann was a pioneer in this regard, and one of the first to articulate how human rights can be used to identify, analyse and respond to societal conditions that influence health status (J. Mann, 2006 [1997]).

> Public health has traditionally sought, through application of standard epidemiological techniques, to identify risk factors associated with disease, disability and premature death; […] In contrast, to take a health and human rights analysis— which is to say a societal based analysis—seriously, requires uncovering the rights violations, failures of rights realization, and burdens on dignity which constitute the societal roots of health problems. (Ibid, p. 1940[77])

In 2000 the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted its General Comment No. 14 (Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, 2000) on Article 12 ('the right to health') of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (United Nations General Assembly, 1976). Throughout this Comment emphasis is put on the basic principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, and *sexual orientation* is specifically mentioned as one of the prohibited grounds for discrimination. I believe this heightened attention to human rights and the principle of non-discrimination in public health discourse has led to awareness of groups that face health challenges because they are marginalised on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

In the interviews I asked why these questions have been raised now. Several say 'the time was ripe' for it to reach the international agenda, and they see it as the result of years of advocacy

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[77] I have used a reprint of the article from 2006 since I have not been able to find the original

that has led to a gradual development. One draws the lines back to the Cairo conference[78], and points out that in 1994 it was not yet possible to talk about sexual identity:

> **A:** So, we managed to include a reference to sexuality. I don't remember the exact wording, I don't have the Cairo document here, but it says something about 'human sexuality' something-something, and then 'enhancing the quality of life' so it does say something positive about sexuality. What one tried to, and Norway was one of those promoting it, but not the most fierce promoter, was to include a reference to sexual identities, and that was not included in Cairo. It completely lacks that. [...] Politics is a power game... a power game about what you can achieve. Yes, that is how far one got in Cairo, and one thought 'ok, it is at least in, this about sexuality, and we have to continue to work.' And then it was not until the present government [...] that you have gotten any real focus on it.

As seen from the history (Ch. 3.2) approaches to how development should be achieved has changed and with them what themes have been in focus. Development discourse has centred on main themes like technological development, poverty reduction, gender, rights based approaches and so on. One can also discern specific topics that have appeared for after a time to fade into the background. Examples can be birth control ('the population crisis'), deforestation/desertification, indigenous rights, IDPs, HIV/AIDS or SRHR. Such topical focuses lead to new practices; programs are developed, funds are allocated, conferences are organised and research produced.

> **Me:** One may wonder ... I've thought about why it is a theme in Norwegian politics now. There are some international currents... It is, kind of, very 'hot' right now. But it may also be important to be conscious about this; to not only to throw oneself on the last wave and follow what is most important right now...
> **Claus:** It is yes, and this is part of the aid practices that I find problematic. I have experienced this very concretely in relation to working with children and children's rights, because that was also 'hot' for a while, now it is not so 'hot' anymore (laughs). But what it leads to is that organisations working with people have to suddenly change direction, so you get other types of priorities, and then you start things and build something and then suddenly there is money for something else again. And it becomes very difficult to create continuity and it can become very fragmented. Part of aid fragmentation is also about how these themes show up on political agendas and disappear, and new things come up, and that again is related to [how] pressure groups work for their issues.

This brings in discussions about who should make decisions in development cooperation (see more in Ch. 4.5.3). As the trend to focus on sexual orientation and gender identity, or more specifically on issues concerning lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans persons, spread across national development organisations as well as NGOs and INGOs, it may be pertinent to ask why this is happening and who are making it happen.

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[78] The United Nation International Conference on Population and Development (ICDP), Cairo 1994

In October 2011, the English Prime Minister David Cameron threatened to reduce development aid to countries that criminalise homosexuality (Anguita, 2012). The Obama administration has also made similar statements about using rights of LGBT persons as aid conditionality (ibid). Both moves have been criticised both by heads of state that see this as undue interference in national affairs, and from activists working in the LGBT movement in some of the countries in question (Abbas, Muguongo, Mtetwa, Nana, & Ndashe, 2011).

One (cynical) way to analyse this is to see a struggle among Western powers to be in the forefront of what is viewed as the 'newest trend.' Moves to introduce conditionality on rights implementation for LGBT persons would then be more about pleasing the home constituency than about a genuine wish to assist those who experience persecution and marginalisation. Without consultation with activists in the forefront of the struggles in countries like Uganda, resorting to means such as aid conditionality can be counterproductive.

4.3.2 Gender equality, SRHR and human rights

In Ch. 4.6.3 I will discuss how the Norwegian government has put gender equality and human rights on their priority list for its development efforts. I will also look at the arguments for why Norway should do this (moral obligation, alleged expertise on gender, non-discrimination, SRHR and human rights in general). That both gender and sexuality are put on the global health agenda from a starting point of rights[79] signal that the government sees a human rights based approach as relevant also when it comes to health. With a heightened awareness around the situation for LGBT persons internationally, the Norwegian rights based policy should thus be wide open for inclusion of gender identity and sexual orientation.

One of the participants gives a succinct resume about how this person thinks SOGI issues have come on the Norwegian agenda:

A:[80] Non-governmental organisations both in Norway and internationally are listened to a lot, their expectations and demands… I have understood that LLH apparently has had meetings [at the MFA] for 10 years without there being any concrete cooperation, but I find that really strange because usually, one is very responsive to the non-governmental organisations and their recommendation and wishes to cooperate if one can find a common objective or ways of working. Then there is also the UN, both the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly, various organisations. When it comes to the health bit for example, then Norway has to follow the recommendations from UNAIDS and all

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[79] Report No. 11 on Global Health focus on 'Universal and equal access to health services' and on securing access for vulnerable groups (women, minorities, disabled etc) (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012d, p. 10)
[80] 'A' works at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

that, and [Norway]wants to be a good donor on this. What else is there that influences [the policy]? Media could have a major influence by inquiring about what we do or not do, critical scrutiny, and it is actually important for us to appear that we have a comprehensive policy; that we do what we promise. Research institutions can to some extent be ... they are not political actors, but reports that show sort of trends or gaps in the way of working with development aid could help to influence how we do things.

4.3.3 Change of government

As we have seen, Norway started using HRBAD in policy documents in the late 1990s. Why did it take until 2005 before non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity were articulated in policy documents?

In 2005 Norway held general election and after 9 years of Centre-Right coalition governments led by the Christian Democrat Kjell Magne Bondevik, the Labour party (*Arbeiderpartiet*) formed a coalition with the Socialist Left Party (*Sosialistisk Venstreparti*) and the Centre Party (*Senterpartiet*). The coalition has been nick named the Red-Green government, and is still in power in 2012. When it comes to foreign policy the differences between the major political parties in Norway are not very striking. Still, the position of Minister for Development went from the Christian Democratic Party (Hilde Frafjord Johnsen) to the Socialist Left Party (Erik Solheim[81]), and questions of homosexuality have historically been problematic for political parties that have a Christian platform. Many of the people I have spoken with saw the focus on sexual orientation and gender identity issues as a symbolic case to demonstrate this change in leadership:

> **Nils:** Clearly, the explanation may be simple – the previous government had parties that had a more traditional view of development, the previous Minister of development was...she had other..., had a different set of values; she talked a lot about values! I don't know if the explanation is that simple, or if there are larger trends behind it.

> **Eva:** It was not so easy when we had a government from the Conservative Party (*Høyre*) and the Christian Democratic Party (*Kristelig Folkeparti*), because during that time we could hardly speak about sexual rights and health at all, from the starting point, they did not want us to front these issues. But with a new government in place, this has become much easier.

> **Hanna:** It is because... I think there's a genuine wish to make a difference and have an opinion, and this is a topic where you can be visible, it gives an effect. It is a bit cheeky at the same time as it is a very principled and heavily symbolic stand, and it shows that you are daring, even when it is not

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[81] Erik Solheim stepped down in March 2012 and his successor is Heikki Holmås, also from the Socialist Left party. (Statsministerens kontor, 2012)

easy. It is nice that [being daring] is something one wishes.

At a press conference January 18th 2008 on the publishing of a White paper to the Storting on women's right and gender equality in development policy (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a), Minister Erik Solheim stated:

> In matters concerning women's right to control their own bodies and sexuality, the Government should be a fearless champion of women's right to safe abortion on demand. The Government is also seeking to implement concrete measures and will take a clear and bold stance on sensitive issues such as sexual orientation and the rights of homosexuals and transsexuals. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2008)

The white paper itself says:

> Sexuality is a loaded subject in many countries of cooperation and in international forums [...] Norway shall speak where others are silent. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a, p. 30, my translation)

Norway shall be bold and fearless, and speak where others are silent – I have wondered what people feel about such statements. My own thoughts have been that these issues (women's sexual rights, safe abortion, and homosexuality) have been singled out because Norway will be noticed by taking a stand on them. I have discussed this in the interviews:

> **Me:** And in this Norway shall be fearless and brave...
> **Anne:** Yes... Violence against women, abortion, circumcision... There is nothing wrong with their self-confidence (laughs), they do not lack in that regard! It is like... bring it all on! (Laughs)
> **Me:** And this is one of the things I wonder about when I am reading all this. It is exactly what you are now saying: What does it sort of say about Norway's self-image?
> **Anne:** And we are a very small country with few people and ok, a lot of money, but still... It is kind of a desire to be a form of role model, then, for that which in a way is moral and worthy and right and also that one wishes to be in the forefront globally on all these things. And it must have something to do with Norway's foreign policy; maybe they have to promote themselves.

Anne here points to an important theme: Gender equality and sexual rights as Norwegian 'Trade Marks' or 'selling points.' Other participants do not agree with this line of thought, but believe it is a good thing to speak out on controversial issues:

> **Me:** Do you think this can be seen in connection with how Norway wants to be viewed? That is, Norway's 'image' in the world?
> **Kjersti:** Yes... it may be, but I am not so sure LGBT issues are a motivating factor in that regard. [...] I think you have a very limited audience that will respond to you promoting yourselves on these issues. I think it is a wish to.... I don't think it is motivated by a desire to score politically, I think on the contrary that this is something Norway scores rather poorly on in quite a few settings.
> **Me:** That it in fact do cost them something to speak out...

Me: Am I hearing that you also see an element of 'image building' in this?

Hanna: Yes, it is that too! For the politicians it is… the home public is very important. Gry Larsen tells that her contacts on the political scene who work in the gay movement have given her a lot of credit and praise for… and you can tell she enjoys that. It is enjoyable also because it is good politics! It is enjoyable because it gains voters for her, and it is noticed that one makes a difference, and the two are hopefully tied together. Of course at times one may get a foul taste because… Yes, this about freedom of speech and respect for human rights then… then immigrants and the religiously intolerant have to accept that half naked gays are marching in the streets during Gay parade, kind of. Sometimes it seems like [the policy] is used to hit others over the head. I find that a bit unpleasant, but in general I don't think it is a problem. But I do try to follow the debate, to see if it is used like that. (**Me:** I think there are some…) [Interrupts]: Yes, you did write a very nice article[82], together with… (**Me:** Stine Helena Svendsen), yes, I enjoyed that a lot! (Me: Thank you; these are issues that concern me.)

Me: Is there also an element of promoting oneself, in a way?

IF: You know, (laughs) it is a good thing if we can get positive promotion from this, and .... It is clear we look for... That is, when we choose what we will focus on, it is clear that areas where there are not many others vying[83] for the same thing, will stand out. That is, those areas where we have something to offer and there is a role for us to fill, that there are not many others who take. This is a good example that we have, that we make a difference, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs likes to say (chuckles).

My own sense is that this is not an either/or question, but rather that the motivation behind the policy is *both* image building and a genuine wish to make changes one believes necessary. When one looks at the arguments used by the MFA in the White Papers on foreign policy that will be explored below (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a, 2010a), it is however quite clear that being a prominent representative for human rights and gender equality globally is important for Norway. It is on these arenas the country can make itself visible, is the argument spelled out in policy papers.

Lastly the participants point to two other influencing factors: That the national LGBT organisation (LLH, Landsforeningen for lesbiske, homofile, bifile og transpersoner [84]) has lobbied the government to include perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity since the early 2000s and that the political leadership after 2005 included openly gay persons who influenced it. Torbjørn Urfjell, an openly gay man was for example Erik Solheim's Political Advisor during the first years in government (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007). Claus comments on the role of NGOs, as do the State Secretary, Ingrid Fiskaa:

Claus: And it is also interesting that this kind of issues are placed on the agenda by social movements around the world. I know that in Nicaragua, for example, they have a very strong gay

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[82] (Svendsen & Rodriguez, 2010)

[83] Her expression is: *'der det ikke er mange andre om beinet'*

[84] www.llh.no

and lesbian movement, which in one way or another has taken over for other social movements, and [this movement] is a strong advocate for changing the law.

IF: I think there are multiple motivations, or, how should one put it? - reasons for it. It is an area where Norway can make a difference internationally. We are one of the countries where the homosexual struggle has come furthest, and we have a strong homosexual movement in Norway that is internationally oriented, and it gives us an opportunity to put the issues on the agenda in a different way than many other countries. And then we have a rights-based approach, ie, a human rights approach to development and that means that we believe that everyone should have their basic human rights fulfilled. Gay... or the struggle for equal rights for sexual minorities is first and foremost about ensuring that; that everyone has equal rights, because we know that there is widespread discrimination and oppression based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and it is also an obstacle to development, in the sense that... It is both the rights' approach and it is because we see that it is an obstacle to development. When people are denied access to health care, for example, then it means that for example, infectious diseases can spread rapidly, it becomes difficult to stop it, just as one example.

4.4 Exploring current Norwegian development policy

To look at sexual orientation and gender identity within the field of development cooperation, I have found it necessary and useful to look for the rationale behind the entire development policy. I have asked the participants, and looked in policy documents to find answers to questions like:

- What is understood by 'development' among Norwegian practitioners?
- How can development be achieved? (What are important preconditions, ingredients etc.?)
- Who is making/should make decisions in development cooperation? (Conditionality?)
- Why should Norway and Norwegian organisations work with development cooperation?

Jarle Simensen asks: 'Can we talk about a 'regimen of development aid?'(*bistandsregime*) in the introduction to his history of Norwegian development aid. (Simensen, 2003, p. 14) A 'regimen of development,' in the Foucaultian sense, is what I am looking for, and it is the development discourse that I want to explore. I will analyse policy documents and interview material on Norwegian development policy and work in general as it pertains to my areas of interest.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states on its website that 'The objective of Norway's development policy is to fight poverty and bring about social justice,' (Norwegian Ministry of

Foreign Affairs, 2012c) and goes on to list the following priority areas, where according to the MFA, 'Norway can make the greatest contribution:'

- o the environment and sustainable development;
- o peace building;
- o human rights and humanitarian assistance;
- o oil and clean energy;
- o women and gender equality;
- o good governance and the fight against corruption;
- o efforts to reach the health-related Millennium Development Goals. (Ibid)

When I interviewed Ingrid Fiskaa she answered this to my question about what the main aim of Norwegian development policy is:

> **IF:** It is to prevent skewed power relations that lead to poverty, prevent uneven distribution between countries and between people within countries, both between rich and poor countries and between rich and poor people within countries, of course first and foremost in developing countries. And it is an important goal to help developing countries to gain more control over their own development, and that *people* should have more control over their lives.

The policy is spelled out in some central documents, and I will draw on the following in the analysis:

- Report No. 13[85] (2008–2009) to the Storting 'Climate, Conflict and Capital Norwegian development policy adapting to change' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009b)
- Report No. 15[86] (2008–2009) to the Storting 'Interests, Responsibilities and Opportunities The main features of Norwegian foreign policy' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b)
- Meld. St. 14 (2010–2011) Report to the Storting (white paper) 'Towards greener development: A coherent environmental and development policy' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011)
- Meld. St. 11 (2011–2012) Report to the Storting (white paper) 'Global health in foreign and development policy' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012d)
- "Proposition to the Storting No 1" (Prop 1) for the consecutive years 2006-2012 (Utenriksdepartementet, 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009, 2010, 2011c)

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[85] Naming standards of official documents in Norway changed between 2009 and 2010. All the four documents are so called White Papers – a document on government policy presented to the Parliament (the Storting) for debate and approval.

[86] Report no 13 and 15 were developed at the same time and the work coordinated: 'Work on the two white papers has been closely coordinated so that they complement each other while at the same time functioning as independent documents. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009b, p. 10)

4.5 How is 'development' understood?

Jarle Simensen writes:

> The most overarching perspective for development assistance is of course 'development' the process of economic efficiency and social change that has happened in the West in modern times, and that leading groups in societies of non-European countries have wanted to promote. (Simensen, 2003, p. 14)

I have already shown (in the theory chapter about development) how the understandings, aims and practices of the development process have changed throughout the last 50-60 years. What Simensen writes may be thought to belong strictly to what is referred to as 'the modernisation period,' but as also mentioned before, these thoughts have been carried on into the different periods of theoretical and practical development work. This will be shown both here, and when I come back to the theme in the chapter on sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation.

I will now look specifically at how Norwegian actors understand the concepts of development and aid (*utvikling* and *bistand* in Norwegian). In Report No. 13 I found the following definition:

> This white paper uses the term **aid**[87] to refer to the funding of the various measures that donor and recipient have agreed to give priority to. Aid can be given in many ways and through many different channels. In contrast to other factors that govern how a country develops, aid is a tool over which both donor and recipient have a considerable degree of control. **Development policy** encompasses the full range of political approaches and tools that Norway uses actively to influence the various factors that determine the framework for development in poor countries. The initiatives we take and

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[87] Here 'aid' is restricted to mean financial assistance. In other documents, the terms development cooperation and aid (utviklingssamarbeid and bistand) are used interchangeably. At the web site of Norad, for example, a drop down menu called 'About aid' (*Om bistand*) has the following headings: How Norwegian **aid** is organised; Norwegian **development** policy; Partners; Norwegian **aid** in numbers; Countries; The Millennium Goals; **Aid** efficacy; AidWiki; The numbers speak. (*Om bistand: Slik er norsk bistand organisert; Norsk utviklingspolitikk; Samarbeidspartnere; Norsk bistand i tall; Landsider; Tusenårsmålene; Bistandseffektivitet; Bistandswiki; Tallenes tale*)

I looked for 'development' in 'Aidwiki' and only found 'development cooperation' as an entry. The entry referred to another entry: 'Aid'... The article under aid says (first two paragraphs):

'Aid or development cooperation is the term for public and private financial and other material transfers from donor to recipient countries in order to assist regions and states, organizations and groups in their social and economic development to promote economic growth and combat poverty. [...] (p. 10)

The overall purpose and spirit of international aid has traditionally been to fight poverty and promote sustainable social and economic development in recipient countries. Several countries, including Norway, also emphasizes that the assistance should contribute to equalisation of social and economic disparities within countries and between developing countries and industrialized countries.' (Bistandsaktuelt, 2012)

the messages we communicate in various international contexts are important development policy
tools. So is an awareness of the consequences of our foreign policy for conditions for development
in poor countries. Aid is, of course, a key development policy tool, but it is only one of several.
(Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009b, p. 11)

What 'development in poor countries' means is thus not defined. A recurring sentence is that
development is about 'fighting poverty and bring about social justice.' This seems to be how
development itself is understood in official documents.

Where does health fit into this understanding? We have already seen that 'efforts to reach the
health-related Millennium Development Goals' is one of seven priority areas of Norwegian
development policy according to the MFA. Report No. 11 Global health in foreign and
development policy (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012d) analysis why health is
important, and give an outline of how Norway shall work to improve 'global health.' What is
meant by this concept is rather vague; something the report admits when it on page 8 states
that it 'does not yet have a universally accepted definition.' What is important, according to
the report, is that 'health is a global public good' and that the concept is meant to emphasise
the 'importance of ensuring health for all, reducing inequalities in health and addressing
health problems that cut across borders and sectors.' (Ibid, p. 8)

4.5.1 But what does it really mean?

Working with this study, I have been frustrated over vague language in policy papers and lack
of definition of central terms. One seems to take central terms for granted. My theoretical and
methodological starting point emphasises the search for 'hidden meanings;' to understand
what lies behind that which is taken for granted; to question common beliefs and truths. I try
to explore the discourse on development. The conversations with the participants are
important in this regard; I have asked them to elaborate on how they understand the concept
of development directly and through questions about how and who makes it happen. First
some examples of how participants understand 'development:'

Frida: (Chuckles) For me development means that a society is moving in a direction where larger
segments of the population are in a situation where they can, where they are able to make choices
and where they can develop their potential, and that there is a society around that is able to facilitate.
To me, that is really what development means in this context. [...] This thing about people being
allowed to realize their potential, I think perhaps that is the most important in development: that all
people have choices [and] that no human beings should have to use their life to just survive.

Ivar: Do you want a short answer (laughs)? I'll try to be a little short then, it means just that ....
(hesitates) that all people get to realise their potential.

Kjersti: Yes that is a good question! Development are so many things, that's for sure, and all development does not serve neither the poorest nor women in particular, so it is a very good question that I have not problematised a lot, but what I think is that development must take ordinary people as the starting point. That is, it is about people's daily lives and that people should have a better life. More control over their own lives, and especially [for] women and girls, and better health and a better quality of life.

Mari: Development? .... Development as a word means a process, it is not a static concept, it's something about moving from something *to* something else. And of course we are all in development, (laughs) and development happens everywhere, but to work with development policy, development cooperation in my sense, I understand it, in a way ... ultimately it is that the individual human being should have a safer and better life. That children should not have to die before their fifth year, that people should, in a way, not have to starve, and they should be able to lie down to rest in safety ... So it is like... the basic human needs when it comes right down to it. We can readily work with larger structures and processes in relation to [development], but when it comes right down to it, this is what we are working with.

Stein: I think that development is inextricably linked to two aspects, one is this about democracy, and I mean democracy broadly defined, and the other is about eradicating poverty, and the two things may also be inextricably linked to each other, so development, I think, is in particular the two variables, the two conceptual content of these two things, I think that is in a way absolutely fundamental.

Unni: Oh, yes, yes it is [a] big question, yes. It is a bit like that, ok, going back to school and all the theories... Development, yes, from what and towards what? How do I understand development? I think it is about people increasingly being allowed to participate and be involved in decisions, make decisions, whether it is in their own lives, or whether it is on the local political or national political level. That means it's inherently a kind of democracy understanding. And then it is also about getting a better life, if it may be put that way. Whatever that is, and how you measure that... Is it to have more than five dollars a day? –[Although] that may not necessarily mean you do not need development anymore... And what is ... It is something about the basics which are people's needs and rights and opportunities really, maybe that is kind of a key concept within the field of development.

Yngve: To me the most important, I guess, is the opportunity of human beings to gain control over their own lives, and make their own decisions based on their own terms.

It is fairly obvious that employees in Norwegian development agencies and organisations are influenced by Amartya Sen, the capabilities approach and a HRBAD to development (see Ch. 3.2.6); that people are able to realise their potential; that people have freedom to choose how they want to live; and that they can live good lives. An improvement of living standards – economic development – is important for many. Some add increased fulfilment of specific social, economic and political rights as the goal of development, and thus specifically link the concept to a right based approach. Few, however, seems to have qualms about the concept

itself. Two researchers and one student of development studies were among the participants. They did, maybe not surprisingly, have more fundamental doubts about the concepts[88]:

> **A:** Yes, that is hard to say... it's a huge question (Me: That it is...). It *is* a huge question... What is development; progress towards what, in a sense? What is the goal? Is the goal that people should be, or that [other societies] should become like Norway and other European countries?

> **B:** I think that is a very problematic concept. For it has, in a way, normative implications, and really something Western too, in that development, the transformation of these societies should happen the same way as what happened with us. And this, in a way, puts our civilisation in a better light than their civilisation by [implying that] our... our development is a desirable development. So I do not like the word development. I like the word *change* better, because it is clear that some of these societies need to be changed when they cannot satisfy their population when it comes to food, and they need education as well, right? And when they do not have the money for it either, they need a change. All societies need to be changed and also these societies need to be changed, and many of them are relatively static. I'm not saying completely static, but relatively static, so that it is... it is difficult to satisfy the more basic needs which are universal. I need not say much more about it, I believe that change is necessary but not necessarily a development, because a development has a tendency to get a... Yes, I look at our development not necessarily as just a good thing either, huh, I look at the ecological crisis we have, we look at the exploitation of the earth and all that, and that in this regard we have much to learn from the 'indigenous people' [uses the English term], right? But... so the concept should be questioned, obviously. But that does not mean that not also these societies should get some encouragement to changes that can improve people's living standard, that is, in certain basic ways.

> **C:** That is what I now teach and I do find it challenging. There are many competing perspectives, you have the strong criticism of development, that believe that development is part of a power practice and discourse, and you have those who believe that it is possible to engage in development but we must find new ways to do it, - from below, local knowledge has been very much in focus lately, and then one has begun to criticize this too... Where do I stand? I probably think that I, as an academic, am inclined to think that it is possible to be activist-oriented. It is possible to support processes that are not initiated by me or other development actors but that are arising in places, among people, and that one can, in constructive ways be included in such processes and strengthen or assist in different ways. I probably lean more towards this kind of activist-position than the more traditional development solution. But I have no answer; I think it's a matter of having an ongoing reflection about it.

4.5.2 Reflections on how development be achieved

During the 1970s ideas about changing the international economic order were debated internationally, the basic idea being that the rules of international economy needed to be reset. (Rist, 1997, Ch. 9, pp. 143-154) The Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) was for example adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974 and referred to a wide range of trade, financial, commodity, and debt-related issues.

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[88] To ensure their anonymity they will only be presented as A, B, and C

(United Nations General Assembly, 1974) The Norwegian policy documents of today all make comments about the necessity of structural changes. 'Climate, Conflict and Capital' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009b) states in the introduction:

> World poverty is no coincidence. It is a result of international power structures. Of poor policies and poor leadership. Of historical trends and conflicts. Of oppression and discrimination. Although the world's rich and poor are becoming increasingly intertwined in a complex global economy, the goods remain unevenly distributed. The disparity between those who have most and those who have least has never been greater. International human rights form the normative basis for Norway's development policy. This policy aims to assist states in fulfilling their obligations and enable individuals to claim their rights. (Ibid, p 9) [...]
> The Government considers it important to ensure that developing countries are given greater access to global capital and better opportunities for value creation. We believe it is important to pursue an active policy that steers financial flows in a more development-friendly direction and stops illegal capital flight out of poor countries. (Ibid, p. 10-11)

One of the big dilemmas within rights-thinking is to define responsibility: Who is the duty bearer? Most international agreements are based on states as the primary duty bearers. Report No. 13 for example states 'This policy aims to assist states in fulfilling their obligations and enable individuals to claim their rights.' (Ibid, p. 9) This is different than the thoughts that lay behind establishing NIEO, or even the UDHR. The Declaration of the Right to Development (United Nations General Assembly, 1986) reads:

> [U]nder the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in that Declaration can be fully realized. (Ibid, Preamble) [...]
> As a complement to the efforts of developing countries, effective international co-operation is essential in providing these countries with appropriate means and facilities to foster their comprehensive development. (Ibid, Art 4,2)

The people I have spoken to talk about the existence of basic injustice in the world, but say little about what should be done about that, or who is responsible. Few seem to really believe that 'another world is possible.'[89]

> **Me:** The fundamental economic injustices in the world are also often brought into this discussion?
> **Vidar:** Yes, I have eventually become a bit fed up by theories of imperialism, which somehow has certainly characterized this institution for a long time (laughs) (A: and the whole field...), and the whole field, and of course there are some truth to them, but they must also be seen in relation with internal factors. And [one must realise] that internal factors may be just as important as external. But it is of course an interaction here, and there is no doubt that [...] the North exploits the South, but the question is whether or not the South could have done more to prevent this, there is such a link ... I do

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[89] 'Another world is possible' is the slogan adopted by the international social movement that has gathered every year since 2001 in what is known as the World Social Forum. (World Social Forum Office, 2012)

believe in this dependency theory in a way, where there is centre and periphery, but in the periphery, there is also a centre and this centre will benefit from a connection with the North and they are also pretty good at exploiting those who are living in the periphery of the periphery, right? Therefore of course.... Fifty years after independence you cannot just blame the colonial practices.

During the last decade corruption in particular and aid management in general have become themes in development policy and discourse (as for example expressed in the OECD led process that led to 'The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness' and 'The Accra Agenda for Action' (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2012). This may be in line with the thoughts Vidar shares – even though exploitation of poor countries does exist, the main challenge is within the countries themselves. The conclusion seems thus to be that the duty bearer *is* the individual state, not the international society.

As described above, the participants have a strong belief in what is known as the Rights Based Approach. This may be seen as a break with ideas of charity that dominated in the past. People have a right, and should not be viewed as recipients of alms.

Figure 6 Fund raising event in 1953 (Simensen, 2003, p. 47)
'Folkeaksjonen for India' (The people's action for India). During the early years of development aid, charity was in focus. The Indian woman depicted in the campaign poster is sorry-looking and her big eyes and begging hands reach out to the better-off Norwegians in a plea for help.

Gina: I guess I think that I would emphasise the rights aspect, that all people have equal rights and therefore it is our duty as those who have such a lot [...] with people in the rest of the world to actually share a little of what we have. I believe in this way of thinking rather than just the charity mindset that you should give just to be kind, because that, I think, is a mistake.

Hanna: It is clear there is this rights-based approach, and in a way it is a bit in contrast to the MDGs. Because the MDGs measure the quantity and not quality, and thus you can say that so and so many people have gained access to health care, or so and so many more, right? A percentage. But it does not reveal structures where groups such as homosexuals or minorities are left out, and this is what we think is the weakness in having such an approach as the MDGs. It should be rights based, because then you encompass all, and you express something in addition about the quality, about everyone's right and opportunity to for example health care.

Ivar: I guess [the RBA] is on the level of slogans. However, there are large discrepancies in how this is practiced and what people mean by it. And it is a human ... And what we are trying to work for is not a rights based approach, but a *human* rights based approach. And that is the normative starting point, and that is quite precise in terms of that it is the human rights conventions ratified by [for example] Tanzania, Uganda ... isn't it? So you can approach this formally and look at what they have actually signed on to and apply that to practical aid work. That would be, I believe, a rights-based development. But this is not what, but this is not the prevailing opinion, or is not internalised and communicated and understood and followed. (**Me:** It is perhaps one of the areas you work with?) Yes, those of us who have the approach that we have. Then there are the others who are economists, and they will look at the MDGs or from a rather different, from a different perspective. And there are different perceptions of this within the bureaucracy of development and many believe ... And some believe that the rights-based development is just nonsense and that everything depends on economic growth, and [maybe they add] distribution mechanisms... And that can certainly be all right, but when one misses something, you lose something on the way in relation to the protection of certain groups and have a harmonious society. I think probably there is an understanding [of the rights based approach], but there are different ways of seeing it and varying emphasis placed on it.

4.5.3 Views on who should make decisions in development cooperation

Imbedded in the rights based approach to development is a strong focus on participation – that people themselves should decide what changes are to be made, and how they should be made. The participants were asked questions about decision making, both in general and in particular about aid conditionality when it comes to fulfilment of human rights obligations. Most express strong support of decisions being made locally:

Berit: But to do that [strengthen peoples' possibilities of living good lives], we cannot do it very directly from here; we must act through the local people. And that is then why we have a very strong focus on building up our sister organisation. Given that they act as aid associations in their countries [and] that [they] in a way shall look at the needs that exist in those countries and become good, become good 'supporting actors' - that is the kind of words that we use.

Frida: This thing about people being allowed to realise their potential, I think perhaps that is the most important in development: that all people have choices [and] that no human beings should have to use their life to just survive. And then - how to do this - I believe it should really be left to each society and each culture to define that.

Kjersti: I think that development must take ordinary people as the starting point. That is, it is about people's daily lives and that people should have a better life. I see that it does not always coincide with how we promote development or at least it is problematic, to put it that way. I think for us it is very important that [there should be] access to electricity and tap water, while we can see that it may have negative effect on the local, the local populations when [these things] are developed, because they may be displaced from their homes and their land, isn't it? So that in the short term and for some groups it can be very negative if you do not consult them and do not offer them ... explain to them why, possibly, and somehow motivate them to understand why it happens, [...] So one of the things I am concerned about is to point out that we must consult local people, we must consult with user groups, and both women and men. And also because I do not think that development is sustainable if we don't have the ordinary people on board, because it generates a lot of resistance, and the end result may be an opposite effect of what you wanted, it is just to look at the population policy, for example, (**Me:** Yes that is a good example.) Yes, [that is what happens] if you are not in a dialogue with the people you want to help or to control ... and you also [need to] have a clear idea of what you really are looking for.

Despite the attestations that 'people themselves' should make decisions and that it should be 'left to each society and each culture to define' how it shall develop (Frida, above), it is possible to discern what I would call 'paternalistic' attitudes in their answers. Let me use Kjersti's answer above as an example. She points out that development may sometimes have negative effects, and uses the example of how wanting to secure electricity may lead to people being displaced from their land (presumably because of building dams for the production of hydro-electricity). She points out that local communities should be consulted, and her choice of words could be read as a wish to listen to the involved communities requests, but when she adds that the goal of the consultation is to 'motivate them to understand why it happens' it seems clear that 'they' do not understand their own good. 'We' need to get 'ordinary people on board,' 'we' know the way forward and 'they' need to be convinced. Her last example, population policy, illustrate the point; the goal is set by 'us' – 'we' need to have 'a clear idea' of what 'we are looking for,' and the goal is 'to help or to control.'

To consult the local people may be seen as an attempt to reach consensus about the objectives of development. Poststructuralist thinkers have criticised the notion of consensus:

> The very process of reaching consensus is vitiated by a 'conversational imperialism.' According to Lyotard, the participants in an ethico-political dialogue are rarely equal, and almost never equally represented in the final consensus. Insofar as this dialogue is already projected towards some predetermined end - such as justice or rationality - it is always conducted, as Dipesh Chakrabarty argues, 'within a field of possibilities that is already structured from the very beginning in favour of

certain outcomes' (Chakrabarty 1995, p. 757). One of the participants invariably 'knows better' than the other, whose world view, in turn, must be modified or 'improved' in the reaching of consensus. The heterogeneity of thought, Lyotard would argue, can only ever be preserved through the refusal of unanimity and the search for a radical 'discensus'. (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 28)

This is one of the reasons why development as such may be seen as a continuation of colonisation; the objective is predetermined by one part, and the dialogue (consulting the local people) will never be equal.

Even one of the researchers (B) who repudiated the idea of development may be accused of certain paternalism. B also seems to think that 'we know best' (we predetermine the goal) and therefore 'we' should act like benevolent parents when he says: 'the concept should be questioned, obviously. But that does not mean that not also these societies should get some encouragement to changes that can improve people's living standard.' And when I ask about thoughts on what is needed to bring about the changes, the answer is:

> **B:** It is complicated. I have worked a lot with what is known as 'indigenous knowledge' and also a bit with the concept of culture, and it is clear that part of the difference between 'indigenous view of life' and 'our view of life' is that their idea of the world is often very circular, whereas ours is more linear, and they may sometimes need a push to become a bit more future-oriented; they may have to break out of the circle somewhat, and [realise that] not everything in the past is the ideal. But if aid is the right way to do this, that is up for discussion, that is certainly a matter for discussion.

B here introduces an important theme: The idea of a linear understanding of the world, history and development. The idea of development itself belongs in a linear understanding of history. But it is not enough to see the linearity, even more important is the view that 'we'/Europe/the West, (or the Occident, as Edward Said would have said)/ the rich North have reached a more advanced stage in this linear evolution. Yngve expresses the same thought when he muses about conditionality:

> **Yngve:** This will be a bit like, it is my personal thinking on some things, but from where I stand I do think it is right that one can and must impose some conditions, at the same time I think that you should have respect for the context and culture that [you] work in, and [you] cannot expect that the thinking always is equal to, or at the same stage as what we have here in Norway based on the development and the processes that we have been through, and some things might be on their way, but [it] takes time, and [they]will not be changed from one day to another.

I believe that it is precisely this idea about stages of development that gives 'us' the right to set standards, to impose conditions, to take the roles of shepherds or guides.

Several of the participants are employed by NGOs that work with likeminded organisations in the South. They say the ideal is to cooperate as partners, but admit that power is unequally distributed. The Norwegian partner has access to funding, and this gives them the upper hand:

> **Me:** What about the relationship between donor and recipient? Who sets the agenda? Who provides the premises for
> **Nils:** (Interrupts) I think, firstly, I think that it will always be that way, we will never get away from the fact that the money we bring means a lot; money, and thereby we, represent power. That is one thing. We try being aware of this and we have documents about partnership strategy and stuff like that, so that when we go out into the world and identify some actors who we believe have a good agenda, [...] then we have put into writing that we are very aware of this dilemma. [We know that] our agenda always will 'win' if we want it to as long as we are the ones bringing money. Then it is sometimes cool to see that there are organisations out there [...] that say 'No, we do not want to have your money, if you say that it should ... if you insist to affect our project or our agenda.' What is really good, the way I feel, is that at least some people among us can come back and say 'How cool is this: I met an organisation that did not want our money!' But having said that, I do not think you can get away from the fact that we too contribute to the [power] dynamics and we have been [doing this] in many countries for a long time.

Several concur with the fact that 'money talks:'

> **Anne:** I think that most of [for example] Malawi 's goals come from [international] organisations or the UN or the like. Malawi has no goals, or I cannot say that they do not, I cannot say that, but I think most [objectives] come from abroad, [...] and it is because it is [decided elsewhere] where the funding goes. So that, if they say 'No, we will focus on something else,' they [the funders] will say, 'But you have no money to do so...' So in many ways they have been denied the possibility of developing their own... (**Me:** agendas?) Yes, I think... I think so. Or, I suspect it is like this.

> **Me:** But is it because we provide assistance in the form of financing that we have a right to be in the dialogue [about conditions]?
> **Eva:** What at least is certain is that 'money talks', so even if we wish that we could enter into dialogue processes in other countries, those who come with money will probably be given the most space, at least in major health sector dialogue.

Jorun is deeply critical to the way some international funding influences local decision-making. 'I worry about these... It sounds very nice when Gates give a lot of money to development aid but...' she says and explains that her worry is about the introduction of even more 'vertical programmes' that do not take account of the totality of the health care situation in a country. She adds: 'You also deprive democratically elected representatives of setting an agenda.'

4.5.4 Opinions on aid conditionality

I asked very specifically about aid conditionality, - a difficult question according to many:

> **Me:** And what do you think about it [conditionality], how (**Unni:** (Interrupts) Oh no (we laugh)), oh yes – I will force an answer from you! Just kidding, you just have to say stop if you do not want to

answer! What priorities would you set?

Unni: Oh, I think it is a difficult area! (**Me:** Yes, it is really difficult!) One can agree and disagree about a lot, but it's hard to know what actually is best, what is the best way. On the one hand you may think 'Why can't we just give the money and let them use it the way they see fit?' [...] At the same time... one would like to have a hand in it too, and one is supposed to ensure that the money will benefit the people, lest they end up in someone's pocket, [...] And then I think, generally, civil society is a very important player in this, [...] they are best placed to hold their own governments accountable as to how they spend money. At the same time, you can see that what brings the quickest results, that is when the international actors say 'No, stop, now we won't give you any more money unless you do ABC,' right?, and civil society could spend years on something similar. However, it is not... it is not viable... (**Me:** There is no real change). No, exactly.

Many question the effectiveness of aid conditionality and express hesitance of giving general answers:

Me: You sometimes hear criticism from for example African countries about 'conditionality,' about setting conditions for aid?

Eva: You know, we have in a sense been 'the good guys' there, if you talk about Norway, we have not put as many conditionalities, and [if we] return to the case in Malawi, there was a few who said that we should just withdraw all funding when this happens.[90] But that has not been Norway's way of solving things, we have to a greater degree used an active dialogue [...] what you see when looking at Norway as a bilateral actor, is that one often has jumped in and helped where such things have happened. So, being actively involved at national level has actually helped. So we have not supported that there should be conditionality on our support. And the starting point for that [view] is that we want national ownership. And I do not believe in entering a country and say that 'this is the way you will do it'. But one can actively express our view, like we did when Solheim was in Malawi, and say that this is not acceptable, that is a role I think Norway can have. But then to again tie this with the money, I think that is a little dangerous.

Me: But what about roles? To what extent do you think countries like Norway, or the one who is the donating part, have a right to set conditions?

Frida: Norway is a country which to a much less extent than many other donor countries set conditions. And as a receiver, it is very convenient to relate to this because you can use the money in a way that you think is reasonable. [...] However, some conditions have to be set. For example, being able to show that you have used the money properly, that money hasn't disappeared, it has not been lost in a lot of corruption and such things, I think that is very important. It is of course one of the values that you try to export. Norway is also a country that is getting stricter on this about being able to demonstrate that one promotes gender equality.

Me: Do you have an example of something you would think 'yes, at least we should make demands about this'?

Gina: Yes, again I would think about life and health, that is health care; the social ... One often sees that maybe if a country should make its own priorities, then they may downgrade this. But health services and education and the soft values - they are so fundamental to ... it is such a fundamental right and it is so important to lay the foundation for new generations, that is for the development of a

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[90] She is referring to a case in 2011 when two men were arrested and sentenced to 14 years in jail for 'homosexuality.' The case brought a lot of international media attention, and discussions about aid conditionality. See also Ch. 4.11.5

country and if you do not have this, unless you ensure that people survive, and that they are in good health, unless you ensure that they have education then you will... then you will remain at a standstill. And there I think that it may be appropriate to set conditions, that this should reach everyone, for example, that equity, that is, equal gender distribution, I think it is ok to make demands about things like that. It is the opposite of the structural adjustment requirements.

Ivar: They have stopped this now, the idea about conditionality. I think that it is ... Conditions in relation to that one should try to follow the human rights situation, I believe, is totally legitimate. And I mean that one should provide economic incitement to those who demonstrate a willingness to follow up for example children's rights, those who do so should receive more aid than those who do not. If they show a political will. That is, it is hopeless to provide support, at least through the state if they do not also show a willingness to do something about [rights]. So I think they should get less, and this is what happens, in for example Zimbabwe, where one has dropped support. So it is a form of conditionality, and vice versa, that is, if they show a positive attitude, they will get more, and that is kind of like the carrot.

Me: Let me play the devil's advocate: one often hears criticism from both Asia and Africa saying the human rights instruments are 'Western' per se and that it is something that is forced upon them.

Ivar: What I think about it? (**Me:** Yes) I think that is an untenable view. Simple as that. (**Me:** Because?) No, because firstly, I would like to hear the reasons why they believe this, I really think the burden of proof lies on those who claim this, that it is a Western view. But no matter where you are on earth you cannot be... believe that what we perceive to be human rights, at least in the formal sense: that humans are born free and independent, to use that which is the highest norm - the UN declaration of human rights as the starting point, [... Then] I see no justification for what they say. Therefore, I cannot even argue against it.

Me: You often hear accusations from the South about being bulldozed [into accepting human rights standards], and that human rights come from the West...

Nils: Well, no, I have no difficulty neither to understand nor to see [their point], and not least when it is so easy for them to point out our double standards in a way. To take one example, again from Palestine: [...] to work with local organisations there and preach democracy to them for example, that is to me a challenge after the whole world community has pissed on Palestinian democracy[91]...

Ragnhild: I have for example worked with very conservative churches, and if I would come with the principle that 'if you do not practice gender equality among yourselves, we will not work with you', then we might as well build a wall around us, and enjoy a nice time at home. I think one important task is to show how important gender equality is through practical examples, and be initiators and challengers, but to set it as a requirement and a starting point in every context, I think that will lead you in the wrong direction. That would put us at a standstill; that would be to build trenches. It can be quite painful to see all these things that you believe are violations of both human rights and gender equality, but that is where we need to be. Otherwise, we would fail those who are fighting to change the situation.

Me: One is the often met with claims that it is 'Western ideas' that we bring and force upon local cultures...

Ragnhild: It may well be that a lot of it is Western, but we believe that it is also universal, and that the human rights are universal, and our starting point with the Bible as a basis... [the Bible] is

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[91] He is referring to what happened after Hamas gained a decisive majority in the (democratic) parliamentary elections: Following the elections, economic sanctions against the Palestinian National Authority were imposed by Israel and the so called 'Quartet on the Middle East' (USA, EU, UN and Russia) against the Palestinian National Authority. (See e.g. Wikipedia, 2012d)

universal, all humans are equal and then we cannot start calling it Eastern or Western, we believe that it should be for everyone. But it is clear that there are possibilities for interpretations [...] when it comes to human rights, many countries sign and practice them in a way that we do not find consistent with our understanding.

When I ask participants to comment on concrete examples,[92] stricter use of aid conditionality seems to be acceptable to some of the participants:

> **Me:** One example is this bill in Uganda, which led to the Swedish Minister of development actually threatening to withdraw aid. (**Ivar:** Yes). What do you think about this way of using the aid? **Ivar:** I think that is legitimate. If I have understood the situation correctly, I have not followed the case very closely, but [...] They threatened to cut aid if the bill was passed? (**Me:** Mmm) Yes, and the bill was discriminatory in its nature? [I confirm] Yes, I think it is right.

> **Me:** For example, there are... [the debate] now about Ethiopia, should we for example support regimes where there are so many human rights violations? What do you think about this? **Pernille:** I am certainly very critical to this [giving support]. But I have to admit that I have, I do not have a strong enough foundation to... to say that I would with certainty conclude that 'you should pull out immediately,' because I have not listened well enough to arguments for and against on this level. But if I were to choose today, I would say: Get out - and be sure to channel the resources elsewhere! [...] I see that you have to make some compromises in relation to, in the hope that one can influence, but I often see that the belief in democratic influence is too great.

I think the discussion on tying conditions to development aid shows that despite professions about self-determination, many believe that 'we,' as donors and defenders of good values, should have a strong say. I will come back to this belief in 'us' as experts on other people's lives and societies in the following sections. I also have to stress that I do not think these are easy questions. I do not want to pass moral judgments on the participants. The people I have talked with have strong convictions about justice, for example, they believe that changes have to be made in the distribution of wealth and power, they react strongly against any form of discrimination, and most of them express great faith in the capacity of 'ordinary people.' When thinking about these questions I have also realised and had to admit I am looking for 'the speck in my brother's eye;' I am myself part of the power apparatus of development through working with Norad-funded projects in Africa. Still I believe these are questions that need asking. We need to become more concerned about these fundamental inequalities of power that are inherent in the concept of development itself and that colours everything we try to do.

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[92] I used several examples, but the two I mostly referred to were [1] Ethiopia's human rights situation (there has been a media debate about Norway's bilateral aid to Ethiopia, and the Conservative Party (*Høyre*) has expressed the view that aid should be stopped until Ethiopia's human rights' record improves) and [2] the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, which made the Swedish Minister of Development threaten to cut aid. (See Ch. 3.3.1)

4.6 Views on why Norway should engage in development cooperation

4.6.1 Altruism, moral obligation and self-interest

Norwegian development cooperation is administratively and politically seen as part of the country's foreign policy – it is governed and administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs[93], (the corresponding Parliamentarian unit is 'The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence'[94]).

> The essential task of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to work for Norway's interests internationally: to safeguard the country's freedom, security and prosperity. [...] As a specialist ministry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is both a preparatory and an executive body in connection with foreign policy questions, economic foreign policy issues and development-related matters. It is also the only ministry with two ministers: the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of International Development, both with their own areas of constitutional responsibility. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012a)

To safeguard Norway's freedom, security and prosperity is thus the overall task also for development policy. The division of responsibility between two ministers may however be seen as a measures to single out development cooperation as something not (only) governed by self-interest. This view is strengthened by how the MFA introduces their aims in Report No. 15:

> The extended scope of Norway's interest-based policy can [also] be illustrated by looking at another key area of Norwegian foreign policy: the exercise of and rationale behind Norway's policy of engagement (development aid, humanitarian policy, peace and reconciliation, promotion of human rights and democracy). From the start, the main rationale behind our policy of engagement has been the altruistic desire to improve the lives of people in other parts of the world. However, globalisation and other geopolitical changes are providing a renewed, stronger rationale for our policy of engagement, as it is helping us in various ways to achieve goals that are in Norway's interests. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 95)

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[93] Norad, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, is however a so called 'directorate;' a specialised and somewhat independent agency under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Norad's functions are laid down in the agency's terms of reference and annual letters of allocation issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Norad, 2012a)

[94] The committee's responsibilities are matters relating to foreign affairs, military defence, development cooperation, Norwegian interests on Svalbard or in other Polar Regions and matters in general relating to agreements between Norway and other states or organisations. (The Storting's Information Service, 2012)

An altruistic desire to improve peoples' lives, thus, but now also another, stronger rationale: To safeguard Norwegian interests. In this quote the concept 'policy of engagement'[95] is used. Chapter 13 of Report No. 15 is devoted to this under the heading: 'Exercising global responsibility through our policy of engagement.' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009b, p. 112) It is here one can find the most thorough review of the raison d'être of Norwegian development policy:

> i) Norway's global moral responsibility: Norway has a fundamental conviction that all people are entitled to a life of dignity, as is set out in international conventions on human rights. As one of the richest and most peaceful countries in the world, we have a moral duty to help to reduce poverty and armed conflict. We have a responsibility to pursue a policy that safeguards the rights of all individuals, by alleviating suffering and ensuring that basic needs are met, regardless of geographical distance and other political and strategic considerations. This is the main reason for the policy of engagement. (Ibid, p. 113)

An altruistic desire and a moral duty are the foundation of the policy. Where does this altruism and sense of duty stem from? In the conversations with people working in the development field, I have raised questions about *why* Norway should engage in development work. Many of the people I talked with agree with the policy papers quoted above, and see it as a moral obligation.

Before I present some of their thoughts, let me also say something about who they are, in relation to this. Several of the participants have a background with activism in NGOs in their youth, often working with international solidarity campaigns. The women often add an early awareness of gender injustice, and a wish to do something about gender inequalities. In addition many say they were motivated into development work by a sense of adventure, wanting to travel and learn about different parts of the world, different cultures and languages. They find the work interesting and inspiring, and appreciate their colleagues and the 'development community' (many have been in this line of work most of their working life). Here are some examples of motivations, both personal and on behalf of Norway:

> **Me:** But what was your personal motivation for choosing to do development studies and being internationally involved?

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[95] In Norwegian: *Engasjementspolitikk*. In a report written by the MFA's Refleks project ('National interest, Foreign Policy for a globalised world. The case of Norway' (Lunde & Holm, 2008)) the same term is translated to 'politics of commitment' (ibid, p. 194). The first use I have found is in a historical work by Rolf Tamnes (Tamnes, 1997b) where he in part IV describes Norwegian foreign policy as a 'policy of engagement.' (Tamnes, 1997a) Another commonly used descriptive term is *humanitær stormakt* ('humanitarian superpower,') used by Jan Egeland in the PRIO report 'Impotent superpower - potent small state: potentials and limitations of human rights objectives in the foreign policies of the United States and Norway.' (J. Egeland, 1985)

Hanna: That comes from the background I have in [political activism in my youth[96]], and I can particularly remember South Africa, the Apartheid era was very engaging and motivating, both the fact that the injustice was so extreme and a wish to do something about it, and that things were changing, I found that very exciting, but basically everything to do with injustice and inequitable distribution, that have been something I have always been concerned about.

Me: Can you say something about your personal motivation for working in this area of development policy?

Kjersti: I think it is a kind of solidarity thinking, that is, I think we live in a profoundly unjust world, and I am very concerned about women's rights and gender equality - and perhaps solidarity with all kinds of marginalised groups, and preferably the intersection between gender [and other reasons for marginalisation].

Me: What are your thoughts on why Norway as a state shall at all engage in development policy?

Nils: No, that brings out the great clichés... It is of course in a way two things, it is both a form of enlightened altruism and enlightened self-interest. Also, some may say that it is very naive, that stuff about self-interest, because that is not how the world is put together, but I believe that at least these things about defending the principles of international law are essential for a small state, and particularly if one takes a tiny look into the crystal ball like... that the world, the big geopolitical picture is going to change quite dramatically, certainly during my lifetime.

Me: But what are your thoughts on Norway's role in questions of development?

Ragnhild: Yes, we belong to the privileged part of the world, and we got to that position incredibly fast. We have high levels of education and lots of knowledge about the state of the world. We have much knowledge about what may contribute to change, and that gives us a great moral obligation to do something about it. So, Norway has every reason to be at the forefront. Both because of its riches, its knowledge and the position we have today.

Me: What do you think then, in relation to the two main topics: the role Norway can play and why Norway should play a role?

Stein: Yes, [...] it is kind of like a global ethical imperative that in a way is just there and that is also expressed in the... our..., that we are a member of the UN for example, and there are some things we are committed to, in a kind of moral perspective and based on a cost-benefit perspective as well, [...] That is, it is useful for the community. So I think we as a rich country, we are obligated to it.

When pressed on *what* obligates Norway, and their personal motivation for working in this field, a common answer was an awareness of 'an unjust world,' and that Norway is very rich.

Gina: I think that one can be a bit pragmatic and give slightly different message depending on who you are talking to. In a global perspective, you have both the rights perspective, which is an argument based on rights; that all people have equal rights and right to life and health. But you may also use the global security, for example, that is, to ensure that all countries have a certain level of development is helping to promote stability in the world. A number of theories exist on this. But I guess I think I would prioritise the rights aspect, that all people have equal rights and therefore it is our duty as those who have such a lot, somewhat undeserved... That is, it has been given to us on a plate in a way, and it is a part of our duty with the international... with people in the rest of the world to actually share a little of what we have.

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[96] Specifics changed to ensure anonymity

Liv: Personally I think... In my view the elements of solidarity and justice and duty are fundamental to work with development aid.

Me: And what does that mean? Why do we have that duty?

Liv: No that... it stems from injustice; that the world is unjust, and we have won the lottery. It's not necessarily something we can thank ourselves for to a large degree. That means that you have a duty to share. It sounds very naive in a way...

Me: Does Norway have a responsibility, in your opinion? Do we have an obligation [to give aid and do development work]?

Yngve: Yes, I do absolutely think so!

Me: And why?

Yngve: There are many reasons. First of all, we are so comfortable, we have so much, and we are all part of the same world. Based on a Christian perspective on humanity too, we are born with the same value and ought to have the same opportunities. So, it is unfair that just because you happen to be born in Norway, then you should have very different opportunities and access to the world's resources than we had if we had been... been born in a poor country, somewhere, and that there is a duty to try to cancel out that imbalance, I think.

Ivar: Do they have a formal responsibility beyond following the agreements they have adopted? That is the formal side of it. And then there are expectations towards Norway as a rich nation. There are expectations, but I don't think it is natural to call it a responsibility. Then there is the responsibility the Norwegian people should feel as a rich, privileged community towards those who have had less luck in the lottery, in the historical lottery.

Despite expressions of a sense of injustice, both in the policy papers and from the informants, there seem to be no reflections on *why* Norway is among the lucky few. The injustice is understood to be coincidental, we are privileged by chance. The same kind of arguments forms part of the public dialogue in Norway, expressed in for example newspaper articles on national economy:

Figure 7 Facsimile: Economic section of Aftenposten, Oct, 7th 2011
The Minister of Finance Sigbjørn Johnson has just presented the budget, and the caption reads: 'A fortunate man in a fortunate country'

A few of the participants do however express a different view, here is one example:

> **Me:** If one then thinks of Norway, a country like Norway, what role can we play [...]? Do we have a role to play in relation development of poor countries?
> **David:** You are thinking of development in the broadest sense (**Me:** Mmm) Absolutely! [...] We neither have permission nor the right to divide humanity into groups. There is something about a shared responsibility, where you can say that the nation states threaten that we in fact constitute one humanity. On a very basic level one has a responsibility for the people ...[...]that is *all* peoples' life situation. We are challenged through immigration, we are greatly challenged. Europe and Norway's economic ... one has been given a position and we are not able to see this position in terms of how we got there, through the exploitation and such. And then we become more and more hard, I think that is a dangerous ... [...]And today we have these resources and that gives us even more of a moral obligation to do whatever one can, and I think that we even have to reduce our own standard of living compared to the conditions in the world.

Another participant expressively links our 'luck' to oil, and he finds that Norway now takes advantage of countries in the South that have found oil:

> **Nils:** [continued from his answer above about why Norway should have a development policy] But it should also be a form of moral obligation. Oil was incidentally left right here, right? And all those kind of things, so when Norway takes the profits of the oil that was incidentally left in Angola, based on completely different preconditions than Norway provided when the international companies came here thirty years ago and would take up our oil. So there are a lot of things like these that makes, yes, that are grounds for why Norway both should have a development policy and should spend resources on it, and should change the policy in some areas where there is discrepancy between different objectives.

The rich oilfields outside the coast of Norway are one of the foundations of the country's current wealth, a fact the Ministry itself points at:

> Without jurisdiction over the economic zone in our own waters, we would not have had our petroleum and fisheries resources. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 124)

What is left out here, is that this 'economic zone in our own waters' has been hotly debated. Norway claimed a 200 nautical miles economic zone in 1977, five years before the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was finalised in 1982.

In Report No 13. the term 'Global public goods' is introduced:

> A stable climate, the conservation of genetic diversity, clean air, peace and security, the absence of infectious, epidemic diseases, the development of new knowledge and technology, international trade, and financial stability are examples of important global public goods – goods that are important to all countries and that must be secured through joint global efforts. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009b, p. 36)

Oil, or, to put it more broadly, fuel to produce energy and raw material and a whole host of industry, is thus *not* considered a global public good. If states agreed to include for example

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oil, forests and water as global public goods, this would be a large step towards solving global poverty and climate/environment problems. Seen from this angle, Norway has grabbed a scarce natural resource as its own, and built its wealth on it, and the pledged altruism becomes crumbs from the rich man's table.

Figure 8 Drawing by Finn Graff (Tamnes, 1997b, p. 389)
The artist is even more scathingly critical towards the rich than Jesus; according to Luke Jesus told the story about the beggar Lazarus who was 'desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.' (Luke, 16:21)

4.6.2 No colonial past and few strong economic and strategic interests

I want to dwell a bit more on the list of main considerations for the policy of engagement. From the argument of moral obligation in bullet-point i), I will skip to point iii):

> iii) Norway's unique position and expertise: Unlike the world's major powers, Norway has few strong economic and strategic interests at the global level. Moreover Norway does not have a colonial past. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 113)

Both these claims can be questioned. Sunniva Eng makes this comment:

> Norwegian and Swedish development aid has been based on the assumption that development aid is a policy area in which these countries could play a 'special' role, and the sense that the countries are in some way 'different' from other donors. Sweden and Norway's lack of a colonial past is said to make these countries particularly suited for providing aid, lacking 'selfish' motivation[14].
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> [14:] This argument is reflected both in the contemporary political documents such as parliamentary papers and government bills, as well as in subsequent historical and political science literature on development aid. (Engh, 2005, p. 21)
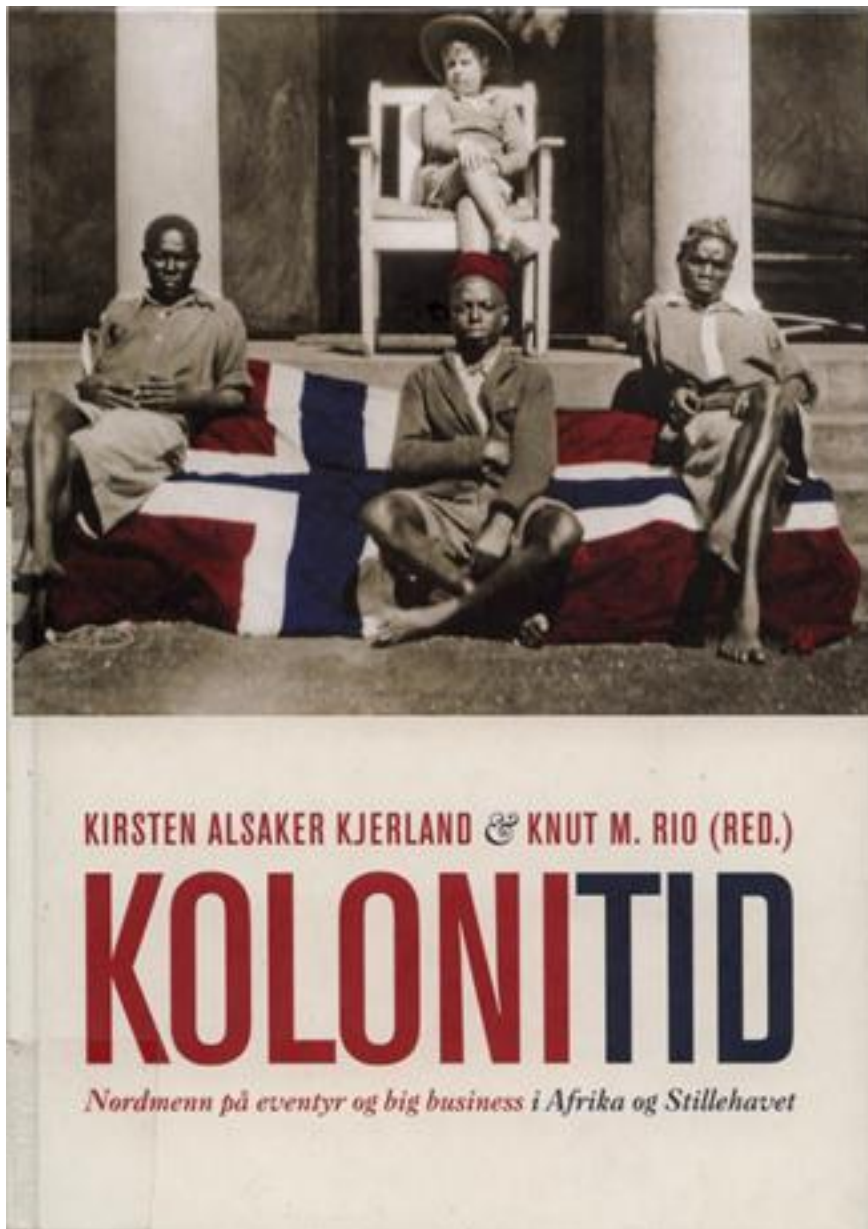
Figure 9 Front cover of 'Kolonitid: Nordmenn på eventyr og big business i Afrika og Stillehavet.' (*Colonial Times; Norwegian adventures and big business in Africa and the Pacific***) (Kjerland & Rio, 2009)**
The publication was one result of a research project titled 'In the Wake of Colonialism. Norwegian commercial interests in colonial Africa and Oceania.' (Forskningsrådet, 2012)
The picture is taken in 1930 at Kizembe Estate in Kenya and shows the son (Bjørn, 6 years old) of Eivind Eriksen, and three unnamed 'house boys.' Eriksen was manager of one of four farms belonging to the Norwegian company Krag Estate. The company's main office was in Oslo (Kristiania), a director sat in Nairobi and the farms were run by (mainly) Norwegian farm managers. (Kjerland & Rio, 2009, pp. 275-279)

The picture shows us a well-dressed white child sitting on a chair on a porch in front of what looks like a grand house entrance. The child is positioned above three black males who sit directly on the steps of the porch were a Norwegian flag is draped. There can be no doubt of the child's superiority towards the African men. The Norwegian flag may be seen as a symbol that even if Kenya at this point of time was a British colony, this farm (this piece of Africa)

belongs to Norway. In a letter to his family quoted in the book, Mr. Eriksen consequently calls the workers his 'niggers' or 'boys.' (Kjerland & Rio, 2009, pp. 275-277). That racist attitudes were present among the Norwegian settlers should come as no surprise – they equal their British counterparts in Kenya. I still think it relevant to mention, since the hard held belief that Norway lack a colonial past, seems to indicate a similar lack of a racist legacy. The book (and research project) gives several examples of Norwegian economic interests and involvement in the colonial exploitations, even if there were no direct territorial occupations.[97]

Furthermore the colonial project was about more than land-grabbing. Cultural dominance was, and is, part and parcel of imperialism. Christian missionaries were seen as, and to a large degree saw themselves as representatives of the colonial powers, or Western civilisation as such. Gustav Sjoblom writes:

> In spite of the absence of formal Swedish colonialism after 1878, I will argue that Sweden was involved in cultural and religious networks that decidedly made Sweden part of Europe and the imperial world. The importance of the colonial world to Sweden was, of course, not at all of the same degree as on Britain, but also the Swedish framework was one of European expansion. (Sjoblom, 2003, p. 1)

The same could be said for Norway. Simensen writes that 'In relation to number of inhabitants, Norway had more missionaries than any other country,' (Simensen, 2003, p. 13). Even if Norwegian missionaries did not represent a directly colonising power, they did contribute to a cultural colonisation, and they did contribute to establish a picture of the Other as an uncivilised heathen in Norway. Edward Said has developed our understanding of the relation between culture and colonisation projects. In his book 'Culture and Imperialism' (Said, 1993) he describes 'how culture participates in imperialism yet is somehow excused for its role.' (Ibid, p. 107) His argument is that cultural links have been of much greater importance than direct domination and physical force both in establishing territorial colonies and in perpetuating forms of neo-colonialism. Said describes how the distinction between the

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[97] Norwegian territorial expansion did take place in Polar Regions though and is often called Norway's 'polar imperialism.' Norway for example annexed the Atlantic coast of Antarctica in 1939, naming it Queen Maud's land, a territory 7 times the size of Norway. When Norway and Denmark was one state (until 1814) the Danish-Norwegian kingdom did have colonies in India, Africa and the Caribbean, in addition to Greenland and the Faeroe Islands.

Westerner and the natives becomes a 'unified discourse' that is close to impossible to break. Andrew Porter maintains that

> [I]t is not difficult to categorize the ways in which missionaries might have made important contributions to his conception of the 'unified discourse' which binds communities together in a settled imperial hierarchy. As influential commentators on non-European societies and vital sources of information about the world overseas, missions could not escape being involved in the development of those perceptions and modes of discussion which for Said have played such an important part in the imposition of Western power and imperial controls on colonial peoples.[...] Missions, he[98] wrote, 'strengthen our hold over the country, they spread the use of the English language, they induct the natives into the best kind of civilization, and in fact each mission station is an essay in colonization'. (Porter, 1997, pp. 368, 369)

Turning back to the discussion among the participants cited above where Vidar is quoted saying 'Fifty years after independence you cannot just blame the colonial practices,' I find it worth noticing that neither he nor any of the other participants talk about the cultural side of colonialism. What historical luggage do Norwegian aid workers carry when they arrive in countries in the South? That is a question I think is worth keeping in mind. The description of the research project 'Colonial times' mentioned above nicely summarises:

> Our knowledge about Norwegian commercial interests in colonial Africa and Oceania in the period ca. 1880-1950, has many lacunas. Very little is known about the extent of Norwegian trade, investments and activities in these regions, and the result has been a distorted perception of the Norwegian contribution to the building of colonial empires. This is true both in terms of academic knowledge and in terms of public awareness.(Kjerland, 2011)

Some of the participants in this project also mention not being a colonial power as part of the Norwegian self-image, and a 'truth':

> **David[99]:** (Laughs) Yeah, where we have a terrible tradition of wanting to be like, not the 'nicest guy in class' but 'best in class': that it can be simplistic sometimes, sure. It has a lot to do with our self-image, which can be a bit goopy (laughs), not very good... And I think that has a background in an attitude of…, that missionary thinking, part of this is a continuation of that. And we can pretty much say we have not been a colonial power and there is something about this that is not always good. So this need to […] assert one self, one should be a little self-critical about this.

One can only speculate that it is this lack of knowledge and awareness that leads to the wide spread attitude among Norwegians that Norway did not take part in the colonial project, that Norway/Norwegians are not seen as representatives of colonialism, (and thus not in today's neo-colonialism) and that even if we are part of the rich world, people in Africa see us as the

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[98] 'He' is Harry Johnston, and the quote inside the quote is from 'Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa,' by Roland Oliver (Oliver, 1957)

[99] He is answering a question about Norway's self-image

'good guys,' one participant also tells about the experience of actually being identified as representing the colonial powers in Africa:

> **A:** Western extremism as expressed by Bush, in a sense, is the cause of much of the confrontational line that has arisen. And then there will be... That is, [we should ask ourselves] what elements we have not seen? One thing is that [the reactions] were so aggressive, that is clear. And then we are many more that are taken by that tide, but does it also have something to do with our way of doing things? [For example in the example from] Malawi[100]: Do we see a backlash in terms of where we want to go? […] But this is of course just the end of a long history with aggression against the West that I think that we do not adequately see, and how can we get a greater understanding of the trenches we tend to end up in? I think we have been prone to deny our own story, saying that 'it was not me who ran the slave trade, it was not me that...' But there are other people who live much stronger with a much longer history, for example in South Africa with my name [A's name is a common Boer name] I cannot help but be placed [as a Boer] and it is not... Because I think that these are some issues that we need to look at and get a clear understanding of in order to be able to proceed wisely, so that we could actually, in fact, create better living conditions and quality of life for individuals and not cause an adverse reaction , that is, an opposite development.

The example is indeed very relevant: Norwegians look like Boers, have Boer-sounding names and our language is related to Afrikaans. When we arrive in southern Africa we need an awareness of who we are seen to represent. During the 1980s I went to Nicaragua with a 'solidarity brigade' organised by *Latinamerikagruppene i Norge* (The Norwegian Solidarity Comitee for Latin America) to support the Sandinistas in building schools in remote areas. A group of 8 Norwegians worked together with village inhabitants to build a school in a mountainous district targeted by the Contras, the US supported guerrilla fighting the Sandinistas. The village we stayed in was 2 hours on foot from the main road, and we were at first shocked to discover that the people we passed on our way seemed to hate us: They would throw rocks at us and shout *Fuera, gringos!* ('Gringos, get out!') I was 20 years old and deeply upset to be misread as a *gringa*; I was there to support the revolution, and a friend of these stone-throwing Nicas…It taught me a very valuable lesson of how the world looks like from the other side. Norwegian or Boer or American, we are all seen to represent the same.

Turning now to the claim that Norway has 'few strong economic and strategic interests at the global level': In chapter 3 of the Report No. 15 states:

> Norway also has important commercial interests in connection with development in African countries, and in 2007 the Norwegian business sector had investments worth more than NOK 40 billion in Africa. [...] Africa is an important market for the Norwegian oil and supplier industries, a

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[100] He is referring to a debate in Malawi about donor interference, where a Norwegian minister publicly critiqued a Malawian court decision. Details of the case are described in Ch. 4.11.5

market that is becoming even more interesting as new discoveries are made in countries such as Ghana, Uganda, Tanzania and Madagascar. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 38)

A report commissioned by the MFA's Refleks project, 'National Interest, Foreign Policy for a globalised world, The case of Norway' (Lunde & Holm, 2008) states:

> [T]he Norwegian petroleum sector is being globalised in a way and at a pace hitherto unknown. More than half the earnings of the Norwegian supply industry come from international markets, and the role of global markets is rapidly increasing in importance for StatoilHydro. (p. 143)
> The Norwegian oil and supply industry is already making substantial profits in politically unstable areas in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. The importance of these regions is steadily increasing, both in general and in step with the levelling off and reduction of production on the Norwegian continental shelf. [...] Promoting Norwegian business interests in this area is an important task for the foreign service, which receives important assistance from the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy and Norwegian Oil and Gas Partners (INTSOK). (Ibid, p. 153)

The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate writes about the Norwegian supplier industry:

> Today, the supplier industry delivers advanced technology, products and services for the Norwegian shelf and international markets. [...] Over the last decade, several Norwegian suppliers have gained a strong international position. From 1995 to 2009, the Norwegian supplier industry has increased its international sales more than fivefold. (Olje og energidepartementet, 2012, p. 22)

This is but one example of how Norway does have both strategic and economic interests globally.[101] Related to this is also the fact that Norway is the world's third largest oil and gas exporter. (INTSOK Norwegian Oil and Gas Partners, 2012) The vast surplus from oil industry is invested in the international stock market through the Government's Pension Fund (Statens Pensjonsfond):

> The petroleum sector is now our largest industry. It has made a substantial contribution to Norway's growing prosperity. The sector accounts for roughly a quarter of Norway's gross domestic product

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[101] Other examples:
'It is not just in the petroleum sector that Norway is making its mark internationally. Norway is the world's sixth largest hydropower power producer and the largest in Europe, and has already developed most of its own hydropower power potential. Norwegian power companies and consultancy firms have therefore increasingly focused on contracts abroad. There is also growing interest in investing in hydropower plants abroad. Statkraft has grown strongly in recent years, outside Norway as well, and is now Europe's leading producer of renewable energy. SN Power, which is owned by Statkraft and Norfund, is engaged in extensive operations in Latin America and Asia, and it is involved in a rapidly increasing number of hydropower projects.' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 71)
'Norwegian companies have increasingly found it profitable to set up operations abroad. Previously, most of the operations of companies such as Telenor, Norske Skog, Elkem and Aker Kværner were located here in Norway. Today, these and many other companies are mainly expanding outside Norway's borders, and for many of them Norway has become a marginal market. These companies have become global actors. Today, these and many other companies are mainly expanding outside Norway's borders, and for many of them Norway has become a marginal market. These companies have become global actors. When new Norwegian enterprises are established in sectors such as oil and gas, ICT, maritime services, seafood and alternative energy, they think in global terms.' (Ibid, p. 126)

(GDP). Revenues from the petroleum sector amount to almost a third of the state's total revenues. These revenues have been used to build up a fund, the Government Pension Fund – Global, which is now equivalent to total annual value creation in Norway (GDP). (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 67)

There are frequent debates about the nature of the investments (are they and should they be invested in companies that destroy rain forest, that support Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine etc.?) As long as oil is both a scarce resource and a determining driving force in the world economy, one of its leading producers must be said to have a *strong* global economic interest. In Report to the Storting No 15, it is also admitted:

> Good governance, transparency and participation are key factors for rights-based development. Today, around 3.5 billion people live in countries that are rich in petroleum resources, timber or minerals. With good governance, these resources can provide a basis for poverty reduction and development. However, Norwegian investments in petroleum operations and other areas in countries with authoritarian regimes can entail challenges for Norway in its efforts to promote democracy, human rights and development. In particular, the activities of companies where the state is part-owner can give rise to dilemmas. In such cases we may be faced with conflicting interests, both of which are important for Norway. This is a situation that will probably increase over the next ten years or so as the Norwegian petroleum industry increases its international activities, and thus has to deal with a number of difficult regimes. (Ibid, p. 118)

Norway is a member of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which main objective as expressed in the founding Treaty is to 'safeguard the freedom and security of its members through political and military means.' (NATO, 2012c) Since NATO conducted its first military interventions in Bosnia in 1991, NATO's military involvement has proliferated with missions such as those in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Gulf of Aden and the latest in Libya. (NATO, 2012b)

> Norway has played an active role in NATO operations in the West Balkans region and in Afghanistan and, in terms of population size and military resources, has long been one of the main contributors of personnel to NATO-led operations. (p. 103) [...]
> Politically and strategically, NATO has developed from being a purely North Atlantic defence organisation into a political and military security organisation. Since 1999, it has also engaged in operations outside the territory of its members, such as that currently underway in Afghanistan. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 104)

Norway's commercial maritime fleet has a strong interest in the counter-piracy activities of NATO outside the coast of Somalia and Norway does participate as a partner in the Standing NATO Maritime Group. (NATO, 2012a) Again it is hard to see these interests as anything but strong (for example Norway is willing to, and does send young men and women to risk their

lives in the ISAF[102] forces in Afghanistan. Until 2010 almost 840 had been injured and 9 killed. (Forsvarsdepartementet & Forsvarets sanitet, 2011)

4.6.3 Norway's unique expertise

Continuing the scrutiny of the policy of engagement, let us look at the rest of the quote (repeated here for ease of reference):

> iii) Norway's unique position and expertise: Unlike the world's major powers, Norway has few strong economic and strategic interests at the global level. Moreover Norway does not have a colonial past. On the other hand, Norway does have internationally recognised experience as a steward of extensive natural resources, not least in the energy field. In addition, Norwegian society is characterised by the rule of law, a mixed economy, an active distribution policy, equal rights, a strong civil society and the use of consultation and negotiation to resolve important issues. For example, we have by means of an active family policy, succeeded in combining a positive demographic trend and a relatively high birth rate with a high level of employment among women. Therefore, Norway is the subject of considerable interest, and **Norwegian experience and expertise in these fields are in demand. Another area where Norway is attracting international interest is our work to safeguard the rights of vulnerable groups and the fight against racism and discrimination.**
> Thus, in line with our policy of engagement, Norway should focus its efforts on the fields and geographical areas where it has clear moral responsibility, where there is great need, and **where Norway's expertise is in demand, i.e. where Norway is particularly well placed to make a difference**. (p. 113, emphasis added)

> Norway plays an active role in many international contributions to conflict resolution and peace-building in African countries such as Sudan and Burundi, on the Horn of Africa and in the Congo Basin. Norway's contribution is based on expertise and long experience of these conflict areas, gained for example through development cooperation. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 38)

To summarise, the government here claims that Norway has special expertise and should concentrate its efforts on the following fields:

- Management of natural resources, especially in the energy field;
- Implementation of liberal democracy;
- Family policy, demographic control, women's participation;
- Rights of vulnerable groups, antiracism and antidiscrimination;
- Conflict resolution and peace-building.

Before going further into details, I have to comment on two issues that I find immediately problematic with this list: The reference to demography and to Norway's work to counter

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[102] ISAF - International Security Assistance Force

racism. First of all it is not very clear to me what a 'positive demographic trend' is supposed to mean. I am assuming reference is made to the fact that the Norwegian population is growing[103]. If this is positive in a global sense can be questioned. There is however no doubt that Norway, together with Sweden, historically has taken a leading role in population policy on the international arena (see Ch.3.3.3), and still place issues related to demography high on the agenda. Sunniva Engh writes:

> Scandinavian family planning aid to the Third World is similar to the domestic Scandinavian population policies in that both are based on an idea that reproduction is an area in which the government should be allowed to influence the population's behaviour, despite this being related to their most personal, private, and intimate spheres. Furthermore in both Sweden and Norway this development can be linked to an influence by medical personnel and experts, a belief in scientifically based social planning and a comprehensive social reform programme, which reached its peak in the period 1930-60. Thus the Scandinavian population aid, especially its early period, may be viewed within a framework of a belief in the possibilities of social engineering. This belief again tied in with the general optimism regarding the Scandinavian systems of government, the social democratic order, and a belief in the potential of politics. Portrayed as 'self-satisfaction', it has been claimed that these images 'mentally structured both policy-makers at home and administrators in the field.' (Anell:1986). Indeed, other authors have argued that Sweden has been marked by an idea that the country has been particularly 'modern, enlightened and developed,' (Zaremba:2003) a part of the new world, possessing moral superiority. (119)(Engh, 2005, p. 119)

Reading the policy documents written after the turn of the Millennium leads me to conclude that the belief in social engineering is still present. To use policy measures to ensure high birth rates and high level of employment among women, can be described as social engineering. The general optimism regarding the Scandinavian systems of government that Engh describes, is also reflected in the preceding sentence: 'Norwegian society is characterised by the rule of law, a mixed economy, an active distribution policy, equal rights, a strong civil society and the use of consultation and negotiation to resolve important issues.' Norway is, one may conclude, a model society, and should be a guiding star in the world. Finally Engh refers to what is a recurring theme in this project: the belief that 'we' are modern and enlightened, a belief I am trying to demonstrate is still part of the development discourse in Norway.

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[103] Statistics Norway (*Statistisk sentralbyrå*) writes:
'In 1665, Norway's population was 440 000. It had grown to one million by 1822, two million by 1890, three million by 1942 and four million by 1975. Today, Norway's population is 4.9 million.
There were born 61 500 children in Norway in 2010, which is somewhat fewer than in 2009. The number of births describes the average number of babies born per woman during her reproductive period. In the mid-1980s, the number ranged between 1.66 and 1.75, but it has increased over the past seven years. For the years 2001-2005 the average was 1.80. Norwegian women's fertility is among the highest in Europe.' (Statistics Norway, 2012)

Secondly, when it comes to the purported successful antidiscrimination work, not everyone agrees. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance in its last published report on Norway states that the legal and institutional framework against racism and discrimination has been strengthened (in response to previous critique) but ads:

> However, the situation of persons of immigrant background remains worrying in sectors such as employment and school education, as well as the situation of Roma and Romani/Taters. Political discourse sometimes takes on racist and xenophobic overtones, and the police still have important challenges to take up, including in the field of addressing racial profiling. (The European Commission against & Intolerance, 2009)

Since the focus of this project is gender and sexuality, especially as it pertains to people who experience discrimination because of their gendered and/or sexual expressions and practices, I have looked more closely for references to gender and human rights policies. Both are, as seen, areas where Norway claims it is 'particularly well placed to make a difference.' In Report No. 15, a point is made about Norway's place in the UN's Human Rights Council:

> Norway is a candidate for member ship of the Human Rights Council in 2009[104]. Norway is at the forefront of efforts to promote the rights of women, children and minorities, and in efforts to combat discrimination in general. Many look to us, and as a member of the Council, we would have greater opportunity to exert an influence. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, pp. 116-117)

The report also makes reference to the white paper 'On equal terms: Women's rights and gender equality in development policy Report No. 11 (2007–2008) to the Storting' (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a) where it is stated:

> The gender equality work that is done in Norway has great credibility internationally. It is an area where we have a good reputation and high skills. Our model and the Norwegian experience have translational value. Gender equality is an area where Norway is listened to. We need to exploit this fact. [...]Even though we think we have found a good model for gender equality, this can not just be exported. Norwegian society is a small, highly developed, consistent and consensus-seeking society - and is in this regard a stark contrast to the situation in many other countries, especially among developing countries. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a, p. 6, my translation)

In the report on Global Health it is further stated that:

> The principle of universal and equal access to health services is the guiding principle for Norway's health engagement in all forums. The principle of access to health services for women and children,

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[104] Press statement from General Assembly: 'The General Assembly today elected 18 States to serve on the Human Rights Council for three-year terms starting next month, five of which will be sitting on the Geneva-based panel for the first time: Belgium, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, **Norway** and the United States.' (United Nations, 2009, emphasis added) Norway was also elected for the next period, now serving until the end of 2012. (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2011)

as well as for vulnerable groups like the disabled, the poor, refugees and minorities, is central to the Government's work. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012d, p. 10)

In the next chapter I will come back to the issues of gender and sexuality in Norwegian development policy in great detail. Here it is just given as an example (and one of the most important examples) of what is seen as Norway's area of expertise and specialised knowledge.

The participants I talked with echo the official justification about special expertise both on gender equality and antidiscrimination work. What is also noteworthy in the following quotes from conversations with the participants is the recurring reference to an understanding of the Norwegian society today as a clear goal of development:

> **Gina:** ...I do buy the argument that Norway is one of the countries in the world that is best placed to raise these problems because in the Norwegian society it [homosexuality] is very well accepted. And this is something Norway... Here Norway can raise a voice where many others have to be silent, that is an argument I find reasonable.
>
> **Frida:** Norway has come quite far on many issues, and I think that has been positive for Norway. Norway is, at least on the paper, at least on a political level, a very inclusive society; it has a very inclusive perspective. There is something about the social democratic Norway that wants everyone to have a place. I do believe that if you look underneath the surface of good, old Norway, you will find a lot of murky attitudes that might also be interesting to study! But I think that the modern concept of equality is important for Norway, the idea about equality that says that people... well, that no groups shall be left behind, people shall be included, people shall be able to make choices about religion, about sexual orientation, about who you want to be, or not want to be, but just is....
>
> **Eva:** Together with Sweden and the Netherlands and some others, I would argue that we have a particular role because we have such a liberal policy in this area [gender equality and sexual rights] and we have actually come pretty far within our own borders in relation to issues of rights. I think this means that one can speak with a little more authority abroad.
>
> **Kjersti:** Norway has the understanding of... that is, we have these qualitative elements in the development policy. This about being able to focus on consultation with local populations, a democratic approach, an emphasis on civil society, the ownership that extends beyond government and includes civil society. This is very important in gender equality policy and it is also central to [our] development policy [...] But in addition we have the additional value, politically, in that we have one of the most, you may say, radical governments, who are most keen to promote a policy that not everyone would agree to, especially when it comes to sexual and reproductive health and rights: The abortion issue, sexual minorities, women's rights and gender equality as a redistribution of power and resources.

I have to add that many of the participants modify their statements by saying that there is still some prejudice among Norwegians. However, the conclusion seems to be that the role Norway has in the world is to lead by example. My contention with this line of thinking goes

back to the whole idea about development, and the division between more and less developed societies and people. When writing the history of Norwegian development aid, Jarle Simensen comments:

> Development aid contributed in shaping the Norwegian world views. It had been a key instrument in Norwegian foreign policy and an important part of the national self-image.(Simensen, 2003, p. 13)

Some of the participants are critical to the way the development concepts are used. Still, when we get down to talking about concrete issues like gender and sexuality, it seems like most hold 'our views' and 'our way' of organising society to be on a higher, more advanced level and a goal of development. Uma Narayan calls this the 'missionary position;' a position stemming from the history of colonialism (U. Narayan, 1997).

> [A]n important 'difference' between 'Western culture' and various colonized cultures was the alleged singular openness of 'Western culture' to historical change – cast, not surprisingly, as 'progress'. Colonized cultures were conversely often represented as victims of static past of unchanging custom and tradition, virtually immune to history. (Ibid:16)

According to Narayan the legacy of colonialism, and its Othering of non-Western cultures as stagnant and resisting change, lives on in present-day attitudes towards (particularly) the position of women in Third World countries, and leads to the will to act as 'missionaries.' She calls this a 'colonialist stance.' The lack of reflection on this position among Norwegian development actors may stem from a lack of awareness about Norway's position in the (on-going) history of colonisation.

In Report No 15, the MFA discusses possible difficulties that may arise when Norway takes a seat in the Human Rights Council:

> At the same time we are aware that membership of the Human Rights Council would entail a number of challenges. The Council is the first UN entity whose composition reflects the world as it is today. This means, for example, that African and Asian countries are in the majority. When these groups take concerted action, the Council can sometimes be an arena for questioning principles that are key elements in our own value base and that of other liberal states founded on the rule of law. We must work to prevent this. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b, p. 117)

Here human rights are seen as part of our 'value base,' in opposition to those of countries in Africa and Asia. The Norwegian mission in the Human Rights Council is, according to the quote above, to uphold the moral ground of 'our values.'

There is one more theme that I will not have time to explore thoroughly here, but that merits mentioning. At some point I was struck by the use of words one usually associates with marketing and the world of business in both policy documents and by some of the participants:

> Although much remains to be done, women's place and role in the Norwegian society is one of Norway's leading Trade Marks[105]. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a, p. 6, my translation)

> **Stein:** And we should gang up with a number of other countries that are in the same position as us and try to sell our ideas, our values, so that we can have more of a holistic approach.

In 2003 a study on power and democracy commissioned by the Norwegian government was published (*Makt og demokratiutredningen*), and the researchers comment on this trend:

> Since the early 1990s, 'Norway' has been developed as an international brand, as a special peace-loving and friendly donor country, with particular responsibilities in world affairs. Brand building takes place through 'engagement policy' - the work with conflict resolution, peace, democracy and human rights - around the world. The image of Norway as a moral and humanitarian superpower has become a new national symbol, in line with other symbols that form the Norwegians' national identity.(Østerud & et al., 2003)

New Public Management (NPM) is a concept coined about government policies used particularly in Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand since the 1980s. The basic hypothesis of NPM is that market oriented management of the public sector will lead to greater cost-efficiency for governments. (Dalby, 2005) In parallel to what happened inside countries like Great Britain, international financial institutions like IMF and the World Bank imposed similar structural conditions on its beneficiates, conditions that for example led to state owned services being forced to compete with the private sector (see Ch.3.2.4). These structural changes that have come to affect most of the world have also changed the way we talk about society. We use 'business terms' – patients at hospitals become customers, propaganda is 'image building,' we try to 'sell' ideas. Jorun, a woman with extensive work experience from IGOs complains:

> **Jorun:** That all should, that states should be managed as one manages large enterprises, apropos this about how to sell a Honda[106] I think it is completely irrelevant how to sell Hondas when organising services and communities for better sexuality and ... (A: You've had that discussion here at home in relation to health enterprises ...) Yes, the DRGs [diagnosis-related groups], and the moment people start to use the market mechanism and change the codes and stuff like that to get more money in the cashier there is always a terrible racket, but you have in fact asked for it when you have laid down these principles. I think that is an important thing [to understand], so I am pretty depressed when it

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[105] In the Norwegian original: *merkevarer*

[106] She is referring to a previously made answer: 'Honda is supposed to sell cars – we do not sell cars!'

comes to the major ... Me, I have given up on the big structures.

It would be interesting to follow up on these lines of thought and do research on how neo-liberalistic thinking influences development policy and practice, and how it changes both the goals and the methods of the actors. The focus on micro credit, and that income generating projects for marginalised groups always seem to be about starting one's own business are examples that come to mind.

4.7 What do policy documents say about sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation?

The policy documents from the government that details Norway's development policy and include mentioning of sexual orientation and gender identity are:

1. Position paper: Norway's HIV and AIDS Policy, 2006 (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006)
2. The Action Plan and White Paper: Women Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation from 2007 and 08 (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007; 2008a)
3. The Guidelines on how the Norwegian Embassies shall include LGBT issues in their Human Rights work from 2009 (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a)
4. The Action Plan: Improved quality of life for LGBT persons 2009-12 on improving the rights of LGBT people from 2008 (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008)
5. St.prop. nr 1 from consecutive years from 2006 – 2012 the budget for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

I will make a brief summary of what they say on sexual orientation and gender identity here.

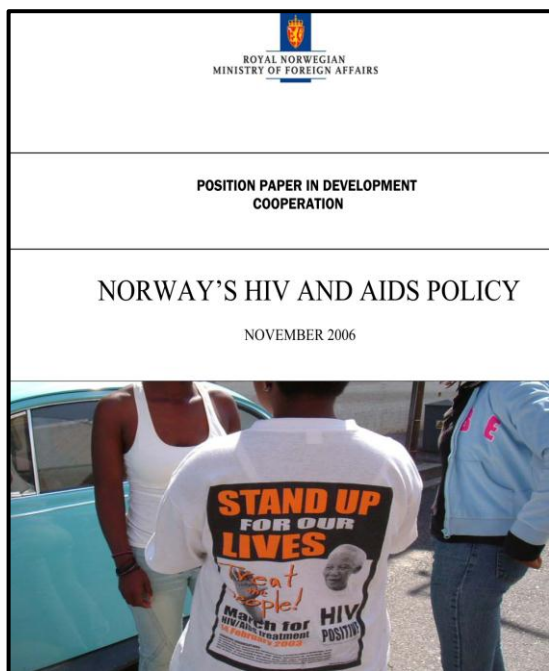## 4.7.1 Position paper: Norway's HIV and AIDS Policy, 2006

Figure 10 Norway's HIV and AIDS Policy (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006)

'Norway wishes to pursue a clear and fearless policy in the fight against HIV and AIDS and will particularly strengthen its strategic efforts relating to stigma and discrimination, gender and sexuality, legislation and rights.

In these efforts, Norway will cooperate with groups that are marginalised, suppressed and discriminated against, to ensure that they gain access to prevention and treatment. Men who have sex with men, injecting drug users and people who sell sex are vulnerable and are subject to taboos; they experience double discrimination due to the combination of their illness and their group identity.'
(Ch. 2, p. 5)

The quote above comes from the first of the three main chapters in the paper, Chapter 2: 'Policy Directions.' Here Norwegian policy is aligned with international commitments like the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations General Assembly, 2000) and the Political Declaration from UNGASS[107] in 2006 (United Nations General Assembly, 2006). The need to examine the underlying structural causes of the HIV and AIDS epidemic is highlighted, and it is stressed that policy should be designed to address these. Among such structural causes are reasons for marginalization and vulnerability (poverty, oppression of women, substance abuse, stigma etc.). Chapter 3: 'Norway's profile and thematic priorities' details Norway's 7 priority areas: 1) Women, gender and power; 2) Vulnerable groups; 3) Youth; 4) Legislation and rights; 5) Local communities and local democracy in an AIDS perspective; 6) Health personnel and health services; 7) Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT). The areas are picked because they 'are part of a comprehensive HIV and AIDS response and areas where Norway can play a leading role.' (Ibid, p. 7)

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[107] The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS

Topics pertaining to same sex sexuality are mentioned under the headlines 'Women, gender and power', where one promises to work for the recognition of sexual rights, under 'Vulnerable groups' where MSM are particularly mentioned, and under 'Legislation and rights' where the promise is the rather vague:

> Norway will [...] clarify the legal obstacles to effective HIV and AIDS policies in areas such as: [...] purchase and sale of sexual services [...] the right to sexual relations with persons of the same sex [and] examine questions relating to the right/duty to be tested and the right/duty to declare HIV status. (Ibid, p. 9-10)

The reason for the weaker language in this area may the realisation that some of these legal obstacles do also exist in Norway: Short time after the Position paper was published the Minister of Justice started a process that ended by a new law being voted through in the Storting in 2008 (Justisdepartementet, 2007; Stortinget, 2008), a law that penalises the purchase of sexual services. Norway also has a law that criminalises transmission of HIV . There seems to be a difference between what is considered to be good policy at home and abroad.

It is further noteworthy that same sex sexuality is *not* mentioned in relation with youth (for example with regards to prevention knowledge) or in relation to health services (for example questions of access for stigmatized groups). I will come back to omissions and use of language in the later analysis.

Chapter 4: 'Norway's approach' outlines how

> [t]he Norwegian profile[108] should be recognisable in all Norway's HIV and AIDS efforts and in relevant efforts within health, education, good governance and rights. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, p. 13)

The chapter lists 'principles for effective AIDS efforts' that should be mainstreamed into all programs. Among them are to fight discrimination and stigma[109] at all levels, to develop greater understanding of cultural and systematic causes of vulnerability, to focus on women, gender equality, sexuality and sexual and reproductive health and to actively use a rights

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[108] The 'profile' is not defined, and we have to suppose they are referring to the 'Policy directions' described in Chapter 2

[109] It is not always clear if the paper only refers to HIV-related stigma and discrimination, or if it is referring to stigma and discrimination that leads to vulnerability. When quoting it here, I am supposing the most including understanding.

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based approach. The chapter also states that Norway shall promote 'special, effective preventive measures for vulnerable groups.' (Ibid, p. 14)

Finally Chapter 4 promise that Norway will, as a political actor, 'identify relevant opportunities and channels for raising issues relation to stigma and discrimination, and ways of combating them.' (Ibid, p. 15)

4.7.2 Action Plan and White Paper to the Storting on 'Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation'
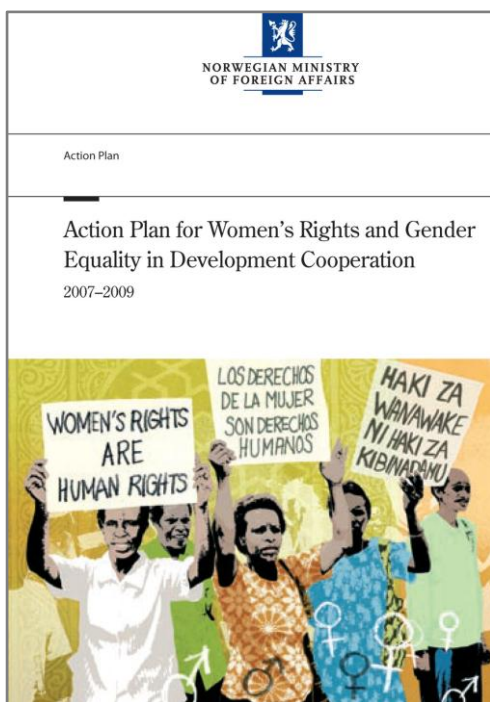
'Norway will be a fearless champion of women's sexual and reproductive rights. [...] We will also fight all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation on the grounds of sexual orientation.' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007, p. 7)

Figure 11 Action Plan for Women's Rights (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007)

Former Minister of Development and the Environment Erik Solheim has written the foreword to the Action Plan that is quoted above. The Action plan main focus, like the title indicates, is on women and gender equality. In the introduction to the White Paper it is explained:

> The main focus will be on women, but our policy shall also mobilize boys and men. The effort shall also be directed towards discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation that affects homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals[110]. That means a broad and clear effort in sensitise areas. Norway shall speak where others find it easiest to keep silent; we shall act where other find it easiest to sit quietly. (2008a, p. 6, my translation)

The Action Plan is divided into 6 chapters, and the three that are interesting here are Chapter 2: 'Thematic priority areas', Chapter 3: 'Mainstreaming the gender perspective in all development cooperation', and Chapter 4: 'The main channels for Norway's development assistance.' The four main priority areas for Norway's development work on gender are 1) Women's political empowerment, 2) Women's economic empowerment, 3) Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and 4) Violence against women. Interestingly the only references to sexual orientation to be found in this chapter are under the SRHR heading: Here it is stated that Norway will advocate for

> decriminalisation of homosexuality and the fight to prevent all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation due to sexual orientation [and] international acceptance for the concept of «sexual rights», including the right to safe abortion on demand, and equal treatment regardless of sexual orientation. [...]
> Measures and processes that should be supported and promoted include: [...] support for organisations and efforts seeking to abolish legal and other discrimination and stigmatisation due to sexual orientation[111]; (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007, p. 21)

The analysis of the understandings of gender will be the main topic in a later part of this chapter. In Chapter 3 of the Action Plan about mainstreaming, we see that the *gender* concept is used instead of *women* in the chapter's title ('Mainstreaming the gender perspective in all development cooperation.'(Ibid, p. 26)) The whole document alternates between using gender and women such that one must conclude that gender reads women. This is again a topic for later analysis. Chapter 3 does not mention issues of sexual orientation anywhere, not even under subheadings like 'Human Rights', 'Health' or 'Education'. It is hard to understand how

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[110] The various documents described in this chapter do use different terminologies to describe sexual orientation and gender identity. I will come back to a discussion about terminology later.

[111] Sexual orientation is defined to include 'lesbians, homosexuals and transsexuals, i.e. people who feel psychological and social identification with the opposite sex, i.e. opposite to their somatic sex.' (Ibid)

these perspectives will be integrated at all. Chapter 4 on channels for development cooperation mentions that when tailoring policy to a country context

> [a]ccount must be taken of groups that can be vulnerable to double or multiple discrimination due to the combination of gender and other axes of discrimination. These include factors such as ethnicity/race, including belonging to an indigenous population, sexual orientation, and disability. [...]
>
> With regard to sensitive issues, such as abortion and homosexuality, which are prohibited in many countries, Norway can provide moral and economic support to organisations and projects that promote rights in these areas. Norway can also use its policy dialogues with national authorities to express concern about a country's reactions to prohibited activities, for example by questioning the use of the death penalty and other severe penalties for homosexuality, abortion or adultery, where relevant. (Ibid, p. 40)

The white paper uses more space in arguing for the policy (naturally, since it is presented to Parliament (the Storting) for deliberation and voting). In Chapter 2 'Background and Analysis,' the strict binary understanding (women vs. men) is broken when it is confirmed that

> It would be too simple to look at girls and women as a uniform group. There is great variety. Different groups have different needs and interests. This variety should be noted by Norwegian policy. It also means that contributions to fight discrimination of sexual minorities, demands special solutions. (p. 13)
> Women experience discrimination in all countries – albeit to a various degree. Many women are doubly discriminated. Poverty is in itself a factor that leads to discrimination. Ethnic minority background, belonging to a indigenous population, religion, sexual orientation, disability or serious diseases like AIDS, are other conditions that may influence or reinforce discrimination. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a, p. 14, my translation)

In the white paper's Chapter 3, 'New impetus, new priorities' (ibid, p.25), we see the same issues being prioritised as in the Action plan (political and economic empowerment, SRHR and violence against women). Again we see that sexual orientation is only mentioned under the SRHR heading.

4.7.3 The Guidelines on how the Norwegian Embassies shall include LGBT issues in their Human Rights work from 2009

Norway is a staunch defender of Human Rights. Our policy with regards to LGBT people is that Norway is willing to speak up when others are silent, and to raise the issue of equality and rights for LGTB people. There is a need for an increased focus on equal rights, including the issue of discrimination based on sexual orientation. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a, p. 2)

Figure 12 Guidelines for embassy efforts (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a)

The Guidelines is a small folder of 4 pages. It starts by giving an update on what Norway has done in international fora to promote human rights for LGBT people that ends with a statement on Norway's intentions:

> Our main message has been that homosexuality must be decriminalised and that states must take steps to combat violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. (Ibid, p. 2)

The guidelines go on to give a short background for Norwegian engagement, establishing that this is part of Norwegian human rights policy:

> [H]uman rights apply to everyone, regardless of their sex, social and ethnic background, religion or sexual orientation. [...] LGBT activists who are working for their rights and fighting discrimination are considered to be human rights defenders, in the same way as other human rights activists. (Ibid, p. 2)

They continue by describing Norway's own experiences during the past 35 years and use it as an example, and stress that making changes has to be seen as long term approach. Finally the guidelines list 7 concrete steps the embassies should take to advance the policy: They should

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have good knowledge of the policy, report back on the situation, connect with like-minded foreign missions, investigate local legislative and social situation, connect with local LGBT organisations, raise issues of human rights for LGBT people with authorities and human rights organizations, make sure that LGBT people have access to HIV/AIDS treatment and if possible intervene directly when the security of activists is threatened.

4.7.4 The Action Plan: Improved quality of life for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons 2009-12
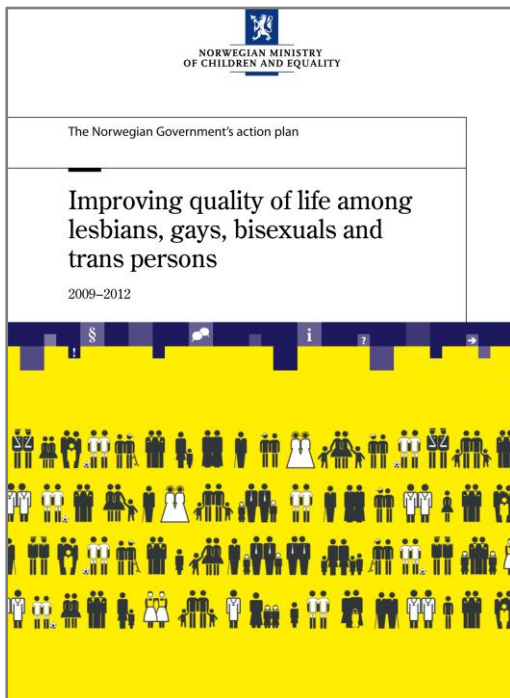
The Government has committed itself to pursuing a development policy conducive to combating all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation of persons on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.(Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 44)

Figure 13 Action Plan on LGBT (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008)

This plan consists of 13 chapters that cover the different areas the plan shall apply to (like education, health, immigration and so on). The last chapter, 'Norway in the international community – combating discrimination of sexual minorities' (ibid, p. 44), deals specifically with foreign policy and development cooperation. The chapter highlights two courses of action: 1) Political dialogue in international forums and with development partner states to 'raise the awareness of the authorities of partner countries concerning their responsibility with regard to citizens' rights in all areas,' and 2) To give 'financial and moral support [...] for organisations and initiatives that promote the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons.' (Ibid, p. 44) The chapter also includes a reference to the health situation :

> Stigmatisation and deprivation of rights on the basis of sexual orientation and sexual expression may have dramatic consequences for the health of the individual and for society as a whole. The prevalence of HIV and AIDS among sexual minorities throughout the world underlines the importance of having a clear policy that recognises and adapts to the specific health problems faced by sexual minorities. It is important to ensure that national health plans pay regard to the situation and needs of sexual minorities. (Ibid, p. 44)

What can be noted here is that despite the general use of human rights language in the chapter, one does not use the right to health as a starting point. Vulnerability and specific health problems lead one to focus on what is different and special; a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS may just as easily lead to the introduction of restrictive measures by states, for example, while a right based focus would have taken non-discrimination and state obligations towards *all* citizens as starting point.

Another interesting finding is that no reference is made in this chapter to either the Position Paper on HIV/AIDS or the Action Plan and White Paper on Women Rights and Gender Equality. In the introduction to the plan, the Minister writes:

> By means of this action plan the Government wishes to place the LGBT perspective in all policy areas and in the ministries involved. We wish to integrate knowledge concerning the needs and challenges of the LGBT group in the various public services. (Ibid, p. 3)

Integration of knowledge about how the issues intersect with other foreign policy themes has not been addressed in this plan. One may ask if there is lack of communication and knowledge between the different sections of the MFA. My guess is that the chapter on foreign policy and development cooperation in this Action Plan is written by the Section for Human Rights and Democracy while the Gender papers have been written by the Section for Global Initiatives and Gender Equality (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012e). I will come back to what I see as a lack of mainstreaming later.

In closing the chapter, four specific measures are listed:

> Measure 61: Continue a close dialogue with Norwegian development agencies
> A close dialogue will be maintained with Norwegian development agencies that work to improve living conditions and secure the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons in other countries.

> Measure 62: Provide support to organisations and measures that promote the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons
> Each year, financial and moral support will be considered for organisations and initiatives that promote the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons.

Measure 63: Work for international acceptance of the concept 'sexual rights'
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will work to secure international acceptance of the concept 'sexual rights' in consistency with the working definition prepared by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Measure 64: Work internationally to combat discrimination of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will work in the relevant international fora against criminalisation, discrimination and stigmatisation of persons on the basis of sexual orientation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will also raise this in bilateral meetings. (Ibid, p. 45)

In measures 61 and 62 I notice a rather vague language. 'To maintain a close dialogue' is not very ambitious in my book, neither is the promise that 'financial and moral support will be considered' each year. The problem the MFA has is that there are at present few 'development agencies' in Norway that do work with these issues. A more proactive stance would be to initiate dialogue with Norwegian NGOs that work in the development field about how questions of gender and sexuality can be mainstreamed.

In measure 64 the headline says it will 'combat discrimination of LGBT persons,' while the text only mentions 'discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.' I see this as a result of poor understanding of the concepts used. Again, I will come back to this in Ch.4.11 when I discuss how terms are interpreted/understood.

4.7.5 Proposition No.1 to the Storting (Prop.1 S) from consecutive years from 2006 to 2012

The Proposition to the Storting about the Ministry of Foreign Affair's plans for each year is a huge document (usually around 300 pages) that also includes brief reports on the previous period. I have searched all seven using terms like 'sexual', 'gender', 'identity' and 'homosexual', and also read relevant chapters in full. When looking at them together it becomes clear that the policy on sexual orientation and gender identity is an evolving policy and that it has been given high priority; Already the 2007 proposition states in the introduction:

> The Government will be daring in its development policy. Norway shall be a country that speaks when others are silent. Norway shall dare to raise gender equality, taboos surrounding HIV and AIDS and the rights of lesbian and gays. Norway will be consistent defender of human rights. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2006, p. 12, my translation)

The consecutive Propositions go on to mention the issues regarding sexual orientation and gender identity with increasing frequency, reflecting the on-going development of the policy. In 2007 it is only mentioned (aside from the introduction quoted above) under the Human Rights heading where one vows to strengthen the efforts to gain equality for lesbians and gays (Ibid). In 2008 it is also included under sections about 'Women and gender equality' and 'HIV and AIDS' (Utenriksdepartementet, 2007), while the propositions from 2009 and onward in addition mention the themes during reports on regional and national engagements in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008b, 2009, 2010, 2011c)

On the subject of human rights, one focus of Norwegian international engagement has been human rights defenders. A separate Guideline on how the foreign missions shall work to support human rights defenders locally and on a multilateral level was developed in 2010 (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010a). In Prop. 1 S from 2010 and onwards it is stated

> In line with Norwegian efforts for human rights defenders, we recognize LGBT-activists who work against discrimination and for their rights as human rights defenders. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2009, 2010; 2011c, pp. 174, 201, 171, respectively, my translation)

From 2009 to 2012 Norway has been one of Europe's members of the United Nation's Human Rights Council[112]. The work in the Council has had high priority for the Ministry, and is reflected in the documents:

> Priority groups for the Norwegian human rights policy are human rights defenders, children, women, sexual minorities, indigenous peoples and other minorities. Norway is a driving force for human rights in the UN's many agencies, including the Human Rights Council and ILO. (Ibid, p 304, my translation)

In the same document (Prop 1 S for the year 2012) a summary is given in the chapter about 'Special themes' under the heading 'Gender equality':

> Norway works for acceptance of the concept of sexual rights, including women's right to control their own bodies and sexuality, [...] And the right of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. (p. 309)
> Norway has been at the forefront of sexual minority rights in multilateral forums and bilaterally. An important result of the work was when 85 countries on March 22nd 2011 supported a cross-regional joint presentation on sexual minorities in the Human Rights Council in Geneva. Norway participated actively in the efforts to develop and mobilize support for the presentation, which calls for an end to

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[112] Members are elected by the General Assembly for three years. Western Europe has a quota of 7 members. (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2012)

violence and human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Norway has also contributed so that the subject has been given higher priority in the global fund GFATM[113] and in the UN organization against HIV and AIDS UNAIDS. The foreign missions continuously follow up cases of abuse and discrimination, and are encouraged to keep in touch with rights organisations that work with sexual minorities. Guidelines for the embassies work on this area have been developed, LGBT questions have been profiled as part of the larger work on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and Norway supports LGBT-activists and organisations in partner countries, among others in Nepal. (Ibid, p. 309)

In Ch. 4.12.2 I will take a closer look at what Norway has done since the policy was declared to be a priority.

4.8 How are the concepts used and understood (in documents and among participants)?

The field of gender and sexuality is fraught with debates about language; which words to use to denote sex-differences, gender expressions or sexual practices have been subject of numerous conflicts and attempts of redefining meaning to change policy and understanding (see e.g. Murray & Roscoe, 1998; Oyewùmí, 1997; Sexuality Policy Watch, 2008; Waites, 2009; Young & Meyer, 2005). In the policy documents which this project looks at, this is not something that is explicitly acknowledged. 'The Norwegian Government's action plan "Improving quality of life among lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons" 2009 – 2012' (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008) is by far the most thorough when it comes to terminology and concepts. As the title signals, it does however seem to be based on an essentialist view; it is taken for granted that one can identify a group called 'lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons', and that this group of people have some special needs. A sympathetic reading may see this as case of 'strategic essentialism'(Wolf, 2007). To verify if this is the case, one needs to ask if the plan utilises the idea of essence to combat the effects of discrimination, while at the same time recognizing the need to criticise the essentialist nature of the essence (the LGBT identity) itself. The main aim of the plan is stated in the introduction:

> The Government's anti-discrimination policy is designed to safeguard the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons (LGBT). This group will be given support to enable them to live openly in accordance with their sexual orientation, gender perception and sexual expression, and actively oppose discrimination in all social sectors. (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 9)

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[113] GFATM: The Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Much could be said about language here (who will 'actively oppose discrimination', for example), but let me instead focus on a central term: Sexual orientation. In Norwegian there has been a change in choice of words from the older term *seksuell legning*[114] ('sexual predisposition') to the more contemporary *seksuell orientering* ('sexual orientation') and this shift may be seen as a shift towards a more dynamic understanding of sexuality. In this document, 'sexual orientation' is however neither defined nor discussed, and there is no argument for why one now chooses 'orientation' instead of 'predisposition' (*legning*). It leaves me wondering if the shift is a result of a shift in understanding, or just a result of influence from international discourse (where the English term 'sexual orientation' is, as demonstrated above, very influential) [115]. Three of the other policy papers include an explanation of terminology:

> The concept sexual orientation includes lesbians, homosexuals and transsexuals, i.e. people who identify psychologically and socially with the opposite sex, i.e. opposite to their somatic sex. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007, p. 13)

> The term sexual orientation includes in this context lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals[116]. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a, p. 30)

> Terminology: In ordinary speech we often talk of lesbian and gay rights. The UN uses the term sexual orientation and gender identity. Common generic terms are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people (LGBT). The term 'transgender'' or 'third gender' applies to all that do not fall into the definition man/woman. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a, p. 3)

What these quotes illustrate is that sexual orientation is something non-heterosexuals[117] have. The Government's objective stated (see above) accords with such a reading: It is lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans persons who have a sexual orientation that is discriminated against.

Chapter 2 of the action plan on LGBT is titled 'Terms and concepts' (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 11):

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[114] *Legning* means 'predisposition, tendency, propensity, leaning, (by inclination, by nature, by temperament) (Kunnskapsforlaget, 2012)

[115] In chapter 12 on ' Legal position, police and prosecuting authority' the Norwegian document does use the old-fashioned *seksuell legning* instead of orientation. The English version uses sexual orientation in this chapter as in all others.

[116] Original text: 'Begrepet seksuell orientering inkluderer i denne sammenheng lesbiske, homofile, bifile og transseksuelle'

[117] The first two quotes do not distinguish between sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. To be/express a trans gender is thus seen as a sexual orientation. Furthermore the very first does not include bisexuality as a sexual orientation.

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> Language [...] provides us with both opportunities and limitations and thus is affecting the way we communicate and the way we think about other people and about ourselves. In many ways, discrimination is associated with the possibilities and obstacles inherent in language. For example, the Norwegian language does not provide a particularly broad range of expressions for or interpretations of what lies between or peripheral to the categories "man"/"woman" and "heterosexual"/"gay".
>
> The Government attaches importance to opening up culture and language on the basis of the diverse society Norway has become. [...] It is our wish that a more refined conceptual apparatus may contribute to better awareness and greater openness concerning the different sexual minorities and variations of sexual expression, and may thereby over time help to put an end to the discrimination of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons (LGBT). (Ibid, p. 11)

In the first paragraph we do find an acknowledgement that language may be part of the problem. The next paragraph does however contribute to entrench an understanding that it is (only) LGBT persons that experience this as a problem. The second paragraph also introduces another term, 'sexual minorities' (*seksuelle minoriteter* in Norwegian). I have looked through the set of documents and see that the white papers on Women's rights and Global Health and the Guidelines for embassies (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a) (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a, 2012d) also use 'sexual minorities' as a collective term. The term is however not defined anywhere. From the context one may assume that it is meant to include LGBT as a group. In conversations with the participants I asked some how they understood the term:

> **Me:** In [...] these documents I have read, [...] one sometimes talks about sexual minorities...
> **A:** Yes, because I wondered [about that]. I read about it the other day and you know what I thought at first? [I thought of] immigrants, that kind of minorities, it was a bit confusing for me. 'Sexual minorities', what is that? Is it... is it those who have different fetishes, or is it sadoma...[sadomasochists] is that what it is? I did not completely understand it.

> **Jorun:** What I think is problematic [...] is that when you talk about sexual minorities, then it very quickly turns into conversations about sexual techniques, and I find it simply offensive and I find it 'Peeping-Tom-ish', I find it pornographic and I get upset about it!

Two different responses that touch on some of the same themes: A simply does not know the term (other participants were also unfamiliar with the concept), but associates it with people who practice 'kinky' sex. Jorun knows, but strongly dislikes the term because of the strong association with sexual practice – it leads people to only think of what these 'minorities' might do with each other in bed. In Norwegian 'sexual minorities' (*seksuelle minoriteter*) is not a commonly used term, and does not have an entry in 'Norsk ordbok'[118] (Guttu, 2012).

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[118] The online version defines the two terms separately:

seksuell: som angår kjønnslivet: seksuelle spørsmål; kjønnslig ('sexual: affecting sex life: sex issues')

minoritet: mindretall; etnisk, nasjonal, religiøs el. språklig gruppe som er i mindretall ('minority: less in

When new policies are implemented, there may be need for new vocabulary to be introduced. The problem here is that the new concepts fail to be explained.

In international, English discourse 'sexual minorities' is used[119], but also contested. Trans persons have for example expressed a strong dislike for thus being associated only with sexuality, and not gender[120]. In a position paper from 2008, Sexuality Policy Watch (SPW) (2012) writes:

> In any vital and highly contested political domain, language can be a potent force for change or an obstacle to understanding and coalition building across difference. [...W]e want to challenge the uncritical use of the term 'sexual minorities' based on a number of historical and conceptual problems with which that term - like the larger thicket of identities and identity politics it signifies - is encumbered.(Sexuality Policy Watch, 2008, p. 1)

4.8.1 The problem with tolerance

Among the problems SPW goes on to list is the identification with a historical discourse of tolerance towards minorities found in Western liberal thinking:

> [T]he objects of 'toleration' - commonly referred to in the West as 'minorities' - have always, even when extended certain 'privileges,' been treated with condescension and exceptionalism at best and continued exclusion and persecution in practice. (Sexuality Policy Watch, 2008, p. 2)

I also tried to discuss the problematic aspects of 'tolerance for minorities' in some of the conversations, using a quote from one of the policy papers as an entry point: 'An important element in Norwegian policy in this field is the work to help create tolerance for different sexual orientation.' (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008a, p. 31, my translation)

> **Me:** But what does it mean when one speaks of tolerance, who is it that ought to be tolerant?
> **Anne:** Yes, society should be tolerant; individuals. The goal is that... You will never, there will always be intolerant individuals in all societies, quite a few and in fact there are also many bigots in Norway, but society, that society moves in the direction of tolerance...
> **Me:** But what is it you are tolerant of then, (**Anne:** Yes?) what is it we should tolerate when it comes to for example sexual orientation?
> **Anne:** Differentness... People that somehow want to organise their lives, their families in a different

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numbers, ethnic, national, religious or similar. linguistic group who are numerously in minority')
Note that 'minority' is mainly understood in relation to ethnicity, nationality, religion or language. (Guttu, 2012)

[119] One example: A working paper issued by the World Bank in 2005 says in a list of definitions: 'Sexual minorities: An umbrella term including all MSM, WSW and LGBT persons'. (Anyamele, Nguyen, Binswanger, & Lwabaayi, 2005)

[120] The same critique towards using 'sexual orientation' as an all-encompassing term has led to the addition of 'and gender identity/expression' = SOGI.

way. […]

Me: So it is… How to put it? That which requires tolerance is that which does not follow the norm?

Anne: Yes, tolerance is to endure seeing what you are not used to see.

Me: I have wondered about what it means to 'create tolerance'. How do you understand this?

Berit: It means an open mindedness. I have experienced that in Africa there is not much open mindedness and there is kind of a traditional macho culture that is absolutely all-encompassing, that is, in many African countries. It is quite frightening, really...

Me: And you see a connection here?

Berit: Yes, because it makes it much more difficult to say that it is okay that there are differences, in a way. Because they have to fulfil the role of being both women and men so completely in many ways, fulfil this traditional way of being. [...] It [to create tolerance] is in a way about getting away from [different sexualities] being unusual, I think, that is so difficult. We have been through the same process here.

Me: Definitely, and [we are] still in the process (laughter). But one thing I have thought of is that if [the ideal is to show] tolerance towards someone, then you could say [that you implicitly] confirm that there is something abnormal with the other. Do you understand where I want to go?

Berit: No, I did not understand completely...

My lack of conversation skills thus amply demonstrated, I still find these two exchanges interesting. Anne defines tolerance to be 'to endure seeing what you are not used to', and Berit that it is about being 'open minded' and that creating tolerance is to stop thinking about something as unusual. Tolerance is thus a benevolent gift bestowed by those who represent 'normality.' I do think it is safe to conclude that the idea that tolerance can be problematic, was completely novel to the people I spoke with.

4.8.2 Heteronormativity

The chapter about concepts in the action plan on LGBT goes on to talk about 'heteronormativity' and defines the concept:

> Heteronormativity refers to the tendency for heterosexual orientation[121] almost always to be an implicit assumption when people meet. Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons (LGBT) therefore feel that they constantly stand outside the "heterosexual community." Homosexuality is "the other sexuality", i.e. the opposite of heterosexuality. [...] Heteronormativity concerns both sexual identity and gender identity. (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 12)

The text develops the consequences of invisibility, but does not mention the other aspects of heteronormativity (such as the privileging of some forms of sexual and gendered expressions and practices, or the underlying understanding of a binary gender system). I find it lacking in that it does not use the concept to question the norm, only to look at how 'the other sexuality'

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[121] This use of words ('heterosexual orientation') does indicate that 'sexual orientation' includes more than diverging orientations.

is discriminated against. The above definition is however important, and a quote from one of the participants gives a demonstration of this aspect:

> **Vidar:** I have not worked on this about homosexuality at all.
> **Me:** And you have never encountered it in any connection?
> **Vidar:** No I have not encountered it either. It is not something you encounter if you are not really looking for it, because it is very, in Africa it is very hidden, the way I see it, also because it is so stigmatised, it is much more stigmatised than here, right? Not that we face it so very often here either, you must in a sense, you might have to start looking for it, to see it.

That homosexuality is something you do not see unless you specifically look for it, is a good description of heteronormativity. To not find the invisibility in any way problematic, is another aspect. I will say more about the invisibility aspect later when I look at heteronormativity in other policy documents.

4.8.3 LGBT, sexual orientation and gender identity

LGBT is the next concept to be defined:

> Public policy should reflect the diversity of sexualities, gender perception and sexual expression. The Government shall make efforts to ensure greater use of terms that allow the expression of more shades of meaning and give room for the experience of diversity and reduction of unnecessary language barriers. As a consequence of this, the designation 'lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons,' abbreviated to LGBT is used throughout in the action plan as opposed to 'lesbians and gays,' which was used in the White Paper on the living conditions and quality of life of lesbians and gays in Norway[122]. This is in consistency with terms used internationally, both by the authorities and by research institutions as well as by most organisations by and for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons. (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 12)

Here we get an answer to the question posed earlier: The categories are to be understood as essential, they have just added more of them. From my own work at LLH, I know that mainstream organisations often find terminology concerning sexuality and gender difficult: People express uncertainty as to which terms to use and the meaning of them. Despite my critique and disagreement over some of the definitions, I find it commendable that the Ministry tries to introduce a common understanding and give guidelines as to which words to use. We have however seen that some central terms are not defined, and that (some) people do not know their meaning. Here are more inputs on concepts from the participants:

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[122] (Barne og familiedepartementet, 2001)

Me: What about sexual orientation, what does it mean?

A[123]: You mean in general? (**Me**: Mmm.) Then I think that it means if you are attracted to girls or boys, or both, that is sexual orientation, and then I do not know if gender identity belongs to this, that I do not know. [...]

Me: What about LGBT? Have you ever come across that [term]?

A: (Laughs out loud) What is that? (counts on her fingers) LGBT... No, I've never heard about that. [...]

Me: One of the things they say, and now I'm quoting again, is that 'an important element in Norwegian policy in this field is the work to help create tolerance for different sexual orientation.' What does this mean, what do you think?

A: Tolerance for different sexual...? (**Me**: orientation) Orientation? What did that mean (laughs), I get confused every time... What is the sexual and what is the orientation... Oh, yes it was this about gay and straight? Yeah, that was the orientation.

Me: What I want to look at [in this project] is this new field within development cooperation and development policy which is to include sexual orientation and gender identity in the work, which of course was introduced as a specific policy by the Stoltenberg government.

B[124]: (Interrupts) Sexual orientation? Are we talking about homosexuality and that kind of things, is that what it is?

Me: Let's start with the title,' sexual orientation', what are we talking about when we say that we should include perspectives on sexual orientation?

Berit: It is that people have different sexual orientation and that one must take that into account.

Me: You said that people have different sexual orientations, in what ways is that relevant?

Berit: I think – it is mostly in the HIV/AIDS efforts that this comes up, and it can be a set of issues... There may be men who have sex with men, for example, that this is one set of issues, that it is important not to forget, even if people do not want to talk about it, it is still a factor.

Me: You mention men who have sex with men, are there other groups that are included in the term?

Berit: Yes, there are also transsexuals. In Asia, perhaps more [than other places], in India it is a much bigger concept, in a way, than what you see in for example Africa. It is the same-gender sex, in a way, that is at least what I think.

What these quotes show is that not all people are familiar with the concepts used in the policy papers. The people I spoke with also make the connection that 'sexual orientation' is something people who are not heterosexual have – orientation is strongly linked with homosexuality (and trans gender expressions). One of the participants, who in her professional capacity has held workshop on the Norwegian policy on sexual orientation and gender identity, says:

> **C:** I very often meet very many people who find it difficult to put into words. They lack concepts and that... Therefore I often try to initially put into words exactly what we will be working with, and do not say 'this', but I say 'it is lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people, LGBT'; [I say] that there are many words and abbreviations, and that it does not matter if they make mistakes. And then

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[123] A is a midwife with extensive practice in clinical work from NGOs working in Africa and Asia

[124] B is a researcher on development issues with work experiences from development projects in Africa.

in conversations, I repeat it many times so that there is no way that you can sit and talk about 'this topic'.

The use of abbreviations like GLBT or LGBT(IQ…) causes many frustrations, and countless debates in international fora. It has been dubbed the 'alphabet soup' (Sexuality Policy Watch, 2008, p. 4) and debates range from the order of letters to which identities to include. It makes people that are not familiar with the debates feel alienated and unsure of themselves:

> **Jorun:** So ... When it comes ... So one has got a lot of nice words LFBGT (mumble, mumble), I think one mystifies it a bit too much. You are kind of supposed to know all the rhetoric… That is why I, in defiance, have not learned this there rigmarole... Because I think that we need to actually speak so people understand what we are talking about before we introduce abbreviations and mystify it, because I am afraid that it might mystify it further. And if we talk about 'sexual orientation', then people know what we are ... So I know that these words are very sensitive, but it also means that we must be careful that everyone knows ... that you are talking about the same thing.
> **Me:** But do you find that people understand that? It is one of the things I've wondered ... Do people understand when you talk about 'sexual orientation'?
> **Jorun:** (Laughs) Of course it is different in different contexts, but I think at least it is better than coming with such LDBT.., all this, the whole alphabet. Sexual identity or sexual orientation.

4.8.4 MSM

The Position paper on HIV/AIDS (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006) focuses on vulnerability and behaviour, and talks about 'homosexuals and other men who have sex with men.' (Ibid, p. 4) Men who have sex with men (MSM) is however used without any explanation or argument as to why the group is considered vulnerable or why a behavioural term is added to the identity-based 'homosexuals.' Men who have sex with men (*menn som har sex med menn* in Norwegian), is not a commonly used term in Norwegian; only those already working with HIV/AIDS can be expected to know the reasoning behind using the term.

MSM may be a useful category in that it 'focus on acts or behaviour rather than identities or disease and contains no moralizing implications.' (Sexuality Policy Watch, 2008, p. 5) Its use, and the contexts in which it is used, does however pose some problems:

> First, through its use as a broad description of men leading very different lives in very different contexts, MSM has mimicked Orientalist strategies of collapsing cultural differences between non-Western (and non-white) people, and marked them as 'others'. Kothis in Bangladesh, ibbi in Senegal, 'yan daudu in Nigeria, African–American and Latino men 'on the down low' in the USA, and hijra in India are collectively tagged 'MSM' despite speaking different languages, holding different religious beliefs, occupying different social positions in various environmental spaces, and being engaged in different kinds of sexual practices and emotional relationships. Interestingly, this

universalising narration of sexualities across the South is also happening at a time when more challenges are being posed to dominant models in the West. (Gosine, 2006, pp. 28-29)

Furthermore the ubiquitous use of MSM in HIV programming has led to women and trans persons being rendered completely invisible, or in the case of trans women, having to be defined as men to be seen.

4.8.5 Women, gender and equality

The Action plan on Women's rights (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007) includes an explanation of concepts used (ibid, pp. 13-14). Here one explains the use of 'women', 'gender equality', 'gender perspective' and 'gender mainstreaming', but not 'gender' itself:

> The term '**women**' is inclusive, encompassing girls and women of all ages.
> **Gender equality** implies equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender. It involves changing how the sexes relate to each other and bringing about a redistribution of power, resources and caregiver responsibilities between men and women. (p. 13)
> Applying the **gender perspective** involves taking socially and culturally determined gender roles into account. The gender perspective helps us to understand how social institutions, structures and systems, programmes, reforms and measures can affect men and women, and boys and girls differently. **Gender mainstreaming** means taking into account men and women's different power and resource situations, needs and priorities in the design and implementation of general development projects and programmes. [...] Targeted measures towards men and boys must include efforts to change attitudes and behaviour and to mobilise them as allies in the fight for women's rights and gender equality. (Ibid, p. 14)

Without any explicit statements about how 'gender' is understood, it seems safe to assume that a binary view of gender is implied. Gender is linked to (biological) sex (only age differences are envisioned). The rest of the text uses a mix of the words 'women' and 'gender', for example in the chapter titled 'Violence against women' which starts:

> Gender-based violence and the use of force, including harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, are to a large extent a question of control and failure to respect and safeguard women's human rights. (Ibid, p.23)

The term 'gender based violence' can be read as violence caused by society's gender-norms, and would then include for example violence against men who are perceived to be too 'feminine.' The text of the action plan does not support such an understanding. Men are further assumed to be in a position of power, and in need of changes in their attitudes and behaviour (in the quote on 'gender mainstreaming' above).

Despite what appears to be a lack of non-binary gender understanding, the plan does include a brief statement about the possibility of multiple power-axes in a paragraph headed 'Tailoring to the country context.' (Ibid, p.40). In this paragraph the plan concedes that not all women are equal:

> Account must be taken of groups that can be vulnerable to double or multiple discrimination due to the combination of gender and other axes of discrimination. These include factors such as ethnicity/race, including belonging to an indigenous population, sexual orientation, and disability. (Ibid, p. 40)

The analysis cannot be classified as truly intersectional though, as it only sees negative multiples. Intersectional analysis of power sees the possibility of an uneven distribution of privileges and discrimination; a person can e.g. be privileged as white and discriminated as woman, or privileged as a rich woman, and discriminated because her partner is a woman.

After having read the action plan, I was curious to see how people in the 'development community' thought about gender, sex and women's rights. In the conversations we used quite a lot of time on discussing the understandings of sex and gender in general, and the use of concepts in the action plan in particular. As we will see the level of reflection and knowledge vary considerably.

> **Me:** What is the difference between having a clear focus on women and talking about gender in general?
> **David:** In HIV[-work], and perhaps even beyond HIV, it has now been a great problem for us that 'gender' means the same as 'women' and that we not have managed to get men to take an active part. And therefore ... if we should make a parody, we should now work with 'gender and men'... (We laugh.) [...] But then there is history behind it; it was on the women's side that one had the greatest need, [women] have been the most oppressed, and then this [to focus on women] is [the strategy] that has worked for us.
>
> **Oda:** Well, when the talk is about 'gender' all the time you may be afraid… yes, and also [about] including men; [men] shall claim space and be involved. And […] the funds that are actually women oriented are so scarce, so again it becomes a bit like this type of organisations [which organise men] will be eating of already very limited funds too, and claim space, isn't it, in delegations, in the discussions, which is good in a way, but that is a little like that... yes again... then there will be many male actors who maybe will speak on behalf of gender and women too for that matter somehow, but then [they] become the ones that get funds and get attention again, also in the gender field. [... A]fter the Beijing conference 'Gender mainstreaming' was brought up very strongly. Torhild Skard[125] has said it a bit ironically that it at times has become 'gender *malestreaiming*'. […A]nyway, you can say that one turned away from the women's grants to mainstreaming everything, and then you had an

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[125] Torild Skard (born 29 November 1936) is a Norwegian psychologist and researcher, feminist, politician for the Socialist Left Party, civil servant and former high-ranking United Nations official (UNESCO, UNICEF).(Wikipedia, 2012f)

evaluation of this and one realised that it [focus on women] had disappeared[126]. And to reintroduce [the focus on women], I think probably… *We* [her organisation] are very much spokeswomen for this being the right political tool in an international context.

Many thus agree that because of (an implied worldwide) oppression of women, there is a need to focus specifically on women. Some (especially those who like Oda that have a background from or work in 'women's organisations,') are also afraid that the talk of gender will lead to a shift of focus and resources towards men's challenges and positions and that men's voices will dominate the gender arena. Others again see this fear as part of the problem: Men have too long been kept outside, they maintain, and they blame 'feminists' for this exclusion. Eva, for example refers to debates in UNAIDS about bringing sexual orientation and gender identity into the equality-strategy and that women who had worked with gender equality since the Cairo conference went against this: 'the main argument from the women's side was that felt threatened by bringing it in' and that women would suffer from bringing in more groups or perspectives. Mari feels that 'parts of the typical women's movement in Norway have stagnated [...] they are quick to see [men organising] as competition.' Jorun has slightly different arguments against using the gender concept in policy papers and projects:

> **Jorun:** I think that starting directly to talk about gender in places where there are very high degrees of power imbalance; that will be completely incomprehensible. Me, I think you should talk about women for twenty years before ... the twenty years is just a guess, but for quite a long time, before we can talk about gender. Because it is misunderstood and it is twisted in the wrong direction and ... [Name of country] is probably the most male-dominated society that I have had a working relation with, and I was only there a short while, I did some UN stuff, and then you are invited into these kind of 'amusing' circles very fast, and then... There they were saying that 'now we start talking about gender and that is so nice, because women have been given so much, they have received care during pregnancy and there is no end to what women have received! Finally, now it is the men's turn, because now one should talk about gender and not about women, ha-ha-ha!' And I thought, my God, well, you should be careful with how you ... 'Gender' is a theoretical concept, women are physical human beings (laughs) […] So, I am a bit afraid of this here gender rhetoric, it is not understood, purely and simply.

Nils thinks along the same lines when he says that 'in some of the places we do practical work with this, it is a sign of progress [to be able to] work with these categories [men and women] even if they are static.' To use essential categories like men and women are thus seen as a step on the way to more open understandings of gender. I believe this is reflected in many areas; when queer activism and theory started to appear in Norway, many representative from the traditional movement for gay and lesbian rights, and some researchers, felt this would

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[126] She is referring to a Norad report: 'Evaluation of the "Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (1997–2005)"' (Aasen & Hellevik, 2005)

undermine the political struggle. The argument was that if you dissolve categories it is impossible to make political demands. (See e.g. Bolsø, 2007; Moseng & Prieur, 2000) The debate is still on-going, both in Norway and internationally.

In the conversations I asked if the participants felt the concepts were understood, and how they understood them:

> **A[127]:** I do not feel that this is a big problem really, what you are suggesting, I do not. People are very well educated and I am really very impressed with the quality of many in this institution. […] I must say that mainly I think people are reflective and have ... and want to make a qualitatively good job including in this area and when it has been signalled as strongly and clearly from the political leadership that it has been now for a number of years, many consider it appropriate to include this in their work. If they know how to do it.

> **B:** Well, yes, when you talk about gender equality (*likestilling*)... then it gets a little complicated for me because I ... Yeah, I can agree with it, but I ... gender perspective and gender equality, then we are looking at areas where I am not trained, but I see that the role of women in political life should be strengthened, and economic and political influence should be strengthened. So I buy the main idea in these action plans, I do, without any problems.
> **Me:** On the one hand, one talks about women's rights and gender equality but then you come to a heading entitled 'Gender-based violence.' What is the difference between talking about gender in general, and talk specifically about women, do you think?
> **B:** I do not know. (Reluctant) I have read it as violence against women, mostly.
> **Me:** Yes and that is what ...
> **B:** (Interrupts,) yes, and I think that they are looking for a way to vary the language. But I do not see it ... Gender-based violence? Gender-based violence including the use of mass rape and rape as a means of oppression and what is happening in DR Congo and stuff, but I do not know if there is a difference, no.

I realise it is a bit unfair towards A to counter pose the faith the person has in the knowledge of colleagues with the quote from B, but it does illustrate a point I want to make: I think many (of us) who have worked with gender or sexuality issues, take it for granted that the concepts are common knowledge. As have been demonstrated in this chapter, many of the concepts used in policy documents without an explanation, are indeed unknown for people working in the field, for those the documents are supposed to guide.

The participants also interpret the gender concept in different ways. Most of those who praise or, like Oda above, fear it, think of gender as a way of 'adding men' (like David said in jest):

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[127] I have decided to not disclose any information about the next three participants. A and B work on different levels in the same (large) organisation, both are senior advisors in sections that have 'gender' as part of their area of work.

C[128]**:** What we saw in [Asian country] was that we didn't have any facilities for men. We are after all working with obstetric care and stuff, […] we had to open up a clinic for men so that they should be given their fair share. […] At the same time, what would this facility offer? There was a bit of uncertainty around this. And elsewhere, they have women [wards], and then they have a children's section and it is sort of boys and girls then, right? […] Elsewhere in healthcare [the organisation] treats mostly women, so it is possibly the men who are discriminated against. There are aspects of *their* health problems that are not focused on by [the organisation] absolutely. But I think that it has something to do with these Millennium Development Goals and that you have hooked on to them. It does not mean that there isn't a lot of other important things people have, but these [the MDGs] are guidelines for what to focus on, and that means a focus on women[129].

Me: 'Women in Development' has been an umbrella term, then there was a change to talking about gender instead of women, and Gender and Development has sort of become the new headline. What is the difference?

C: Between women and gender?

Me: Mmmm. Or what do you think, is there a point in making such a distinction, from women to gender?

C: Yes, that is a good thing. I think it is positive. With the issues you have talked about now[130], this will of course include both men and people who do not necessarily identify themselves as women, it contains a larger category. That is a good thing!

This participant, and the organisation C has worked for, find it problematic to focus on women because men may be left out and feel overlooked[131]. Stein has thought along the same lines when he says that 'gender is a way of making it democratically more acceptable, we give equal rights to everyone.' C however also sees the gender concept as a way to open up the understanding and include other groups that are in need of some special attention. This is, as we will see in the chapter about heteronormativity, reflected by several participants. Stein goes on to muse about how 'gender' is read as 'women' by most, and new concepts might be needed:

> **Stein:** I think that there is something more, somehow, this field is about something more than just women's rights, and I think one would have been better off if one had, had been clear about what you mean, because then... Because if you were very specific in written material, made up a different terminology, or whatever one should do, I do not know but I think you, I think it would be timely, I think so, it could have released some discussion and it could have been liberating and brought a number of issues on the table that might otherwise be camouflaged. But when I read, especially when I read English, and it says gender, then I would probably by and large also think women without giving it a second thought.

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[128] This participant has worked with health projects in Asia and Africa

[129] A bit later the person adds that women do carry a very large burden of morbidity and mortality and there is need for a focus on women.

[130] Refers to the themes of this project

[131] I do find it conspicuous that you feel a need to prove that men are not being overlooked when your main activity is to give obstetric care... I think this is the kind of argument the women's groups have (good reason to) fear.

When you group the entire population into two groups (men and women), there is of course a risk of missing out on differences within the groups. Several participants make the point that 'gender' is a wider concept that makes it easier to see differences within the categories:

> **Frida:** Women are in many cases further down the hierarchy of power, to put it that way, giving the less access to resources, less access to, or fewer opportunities, and I think ... and that is why when talking about *gender* or *kjønn* we very often talk about women, while a gender perspective is yes, is actually more complex than that, the gender perspective is in a way to analyse the different needs and resources of different groups and make sure you take this into account when developing projects and programs. (**Me:** Different groups, what do you mean?). Different, well, now I thought, like especially about boys, girls, men and women, that is, gender and age, but if you take on an anthropological, perhaps even economic perspective, one can look at religious groups and ethnic minority groups too... [...] Thus, in an ideal world you would have time and resources to do such an analysis of the whole spectrum; I do not think necessarily it is a contradiction between this and to look at the gender perspective. I think in terms of seeing the gender perspective, men, women, boys, girls, you will see the large groups, and then you have smaller groups within and between them, so I do not think that there is a contradiction between them, but I think maybe if you get better at looking at the gender perspective then you get better at including other perspectives in the way you are working, rather than applying the same yardstick to the whole population.

Yngve tells about experiences working with faith based organizations, and a resistance towards the gender concept:

> **Yngve:** The gender perspective is understood very differently. Especially in many parts of Latin America it is difficult to talk about 'gender' because it is perceived as acceptance of gay marriage or relationships, especially in the churches. Therefore it is easier to talk about women's rights, than to speak about gender, because there is such an understanding; a negative understanding that causes some to put their foot down and say 'we will not deal with or talk about this because we disagree with this' [the concept], without understanding fully what *we* mean by the term, what we think about the concept.

Yngve may of course be right when he thinks the opposition towards gender stems from a misunderstanding. Another way of seeing it that is supported by recent debate in international fora like the UN (Akram, 2012; Tomasi, 2012), is that many religious institutions hold the view that men and women are two categories of humans, created by the supreme being to be complementary. A gender perspective may indeed shake this basic belief.

Queer theory has questioned the idea of 'gender equality' because it confirms the heterosexual couple as natural even as it problematizes the level of equality between men and women:

> Ultimately, it is sexuality that is in focus: it is the foundation for pleasure, reproduction and family, at the same time as it is the root of the problem, a chronic source of danger to women and conflict between the sexes. On one side the starting point is always that men and women desire, relate to and select each other. On the other hand it appears to be difficult for women and men to live and work

together. Gender equality politics is, you might say, to reconstruct men and women and their relationship, without questioning or undermine the heterosexual desire game.[132] (Dahl, 2005, p. 49, my translation)

The Norwegian word *likestilling* simply means equality, but is usually associated with gender equality[133]. I see the consistent use of the term *likestilling* in policy papers as problematic exactly because it undermines the wider gender perspective, upholds a strictly binary understanding of gender and reinforces heterosexuality as the natural way to be. Ingrid Fiskaa says it has been important for the government to relate sexual orientation and gender identity issues with the struggle for gender equality, because 'there are some similarities even though it is about more than gender equality.'

> **IF:** The gender concept thcontains larger possibilities for viewing gender as a social construct, and [that] our understanding of what it is to be a woman, our understanding of what it is to be a man, is very much formed by society. And here I think that the gay struggle, or the struggle for sexual diversity has added a lot to the struggle for gender equality, or equality between women and men, in relation to not only see this as a mathematical equality thing between two clearly defined categories, but to also to see the categories as social products. […]
>
> **Me:** But do you feel that it is successful? That this kind of understanding is reflected in the present policy and plans of action?
>
> **IF:** No, that is a good question. Now I am of course describing my view on this, and it is my experience that there is not very high awareness around, how shall I put it?, the theoretical starting points, in every corner of the government apparatus and the administration and the ministry. We still have something left when it comes to gender equality, including in the MFA, so yes, (laughs) we have work left to do, but it is at least fairly accepted, I would say, as a priority, as something we should spend time and effort on. We have many competent people both here in the MFA in Oslo and abroad at the embassies who work tirelessly on these issues, but… what can I say? We will never be very much better than society at large.

Kjersti on her side thinks there is an inherent understanding of greater gender flexibility in the Norwegian concept of *likestilling*:

> **Kjersti:** It is about our understanding of gender roles. Flexibility is central to the understanding of gender equality (*likestilling*) in Norway; flexibility in the creation of gender roles, independently of biological characteristics.

I may be underestimating the Norwegian gender discourse, (if Fiskaa is representative of it, I am) but I still see a need for both advocacy (for the introduction of new concepts) and reflections on the ways one thinks about gender.

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[132] In Swedish: *det heterosexuella begärsspelet*

[133] The Norwegian title of the action plan on gender in development cooperation confirms this: *Kvinners rettigheter og likestilling i utviklingssamarbeidet 2007-2009*

Tore: Then I need to talk about competence, right? We tried it [to school ourselves] here in this section two years ago, and we are a 'soft section', and the reaction among many here was in fact that... And we worked with [the gender section] to carry it out, […] and there were two emotions: […] One, that it is a bit messy now with all the concepts and so on, and two, that we are unable to render it concrete, it is perhaps too general, and it is possible that the two are connected. […] We have got, you know, a lot of 'gender, the speak' into all places and so on. I do not feel that we are the best anymore, with exception of some few individuals, that we are not quite at the head in relation to actually translate it into practice. […] I think we are a little trapped in that [although] we talk a bit in general and 'indoctrinated' about 'gender', I do not think we say very much. I think when we think about gender [that means] we shall talk about men, right? […] It takes many years, right, to bring in new knowledge, and bring in new trends, today day we really work with knowledge about policy that were developed ten, fifteen, twenty years ago, and then there are the new [knowledge] that we use much time on, but it is still the old set that is used in...

Other participants relate similar stories of seminars on gender and sexuality being held in their organisation, that only 'the already converted' show up, and that planned seminars on gender and/or sexuality has had to be called off because too few sign up. When LLH has held seminars on sexuality and gender issues aimed at development organisations, we have found that a disproportioned number of the attendees are gays and lesbians who work in these organisations.

Feminist theorists have also accused the 'development industry' of lack of political will; of being too soft when it comes to criticise the gendered power hierarchies. As far back as 1998 Saskia E. Wieringa criticised the GAD approach, her criticism being that it lacks feminist perspectives (Wieringa, 1998). She refers to the work of Joan W Scott (see Ch. 2.3.3). Scott suggests gender as a useful term to analyse how historical knowledge has been developed and organised. One could rephrase Scott and ask: 'How does gender give meaning to the organisation and perception of [development and development cooperation[134]]? The answers depend on gender as an analytic category.' (Scott, 1986, p. 1055)

Wieringa criticism is about how gender is used as an analytic category, and she agrees with Scott that it ought to 'pay attention to four elements - symbols, normative concepts, political and social institutions and the formation of subjective identity' (Wieringa, 1998, p. 364). This is necessary because 'gender relations are involved in the whole range of social relations between the sexual, symbolic, economic and political'. (Ibid, p. 364)

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[134] The original Scott quote is: 'How does gender give meaning to the organization and perception of historical knowledge? The answers depend on gender as an analytic category.'

According to Wieringa, contemporary GAD policy is unwilling to look at anything but the economic and political aspects. One reason being the fear of being marked as 'feminists.' She gives an example of a study among World Bank employees that in interviews declared being uncomfortable with 'a specific emphasis on women, [but] willingly embraced gender,' (ibid, p. 365), or as Stein noted above: Gender makes it more democratically acceptable. If we go along with Wieringa, one would think that the Norwegian documents that do focus specifically on women would satisfy the 'feminist' stance. Wieringa does however have a much more complex answer. She asks that one should both acknowledge existing power hierarchies and the embodied experiences of real women in given locations, *and* use the gender concept to its full potential, that is according to Scott's four fields of analysis (the economic, political, symbolic and sexual). (Ibid, p. 368) Her article was written in 1998 and she uses examples from books on GAD from the early 1990s, but reading the Norwegian action plan today shows that her contributions are still worth listening too. Jorun, one of the participants, is also critical to how politics has disappeared in much GAD discourse:

> **Jorun:** Something that I am working on in the big pile I put away [points at a stack of documents] is... [I think] the political questions are downplayed. Now everything is supposed to be partnership, now all work is supposed to be in harmony, non-governmental organisations shall work together with the United Nations, shall work together with governments, shall work together with the academics, everyone should be in harmony... It is not like that one has won major victories. It is more through disagreement and it is noisy and it is a riot (**Me:** Some have made demands and challenged.) Yes, and it concerns me now, this thought about harmony, where all do the same. All think the same thing, everyone agrees on the goal, we should just organise ourselves and have real partnerships, better coordination. I think that we should *not* have anything in the way of... (laughs) we should not have so much partnership and coordination, we really shouldn't. We should have noise and commotion and controversy and power struggle and that is what brings us forward. So in relation to gender too, where I also think that there should be some commotion, I think more and more about commotion and not about harmony, and about 'acting in concert' – this kindness, this wishy-washy, paralysing kindness. (**Me:** And what voices are not heard when one strives for consensus?) There are different opinions! There are different opinions about where we are going, there are different... and those who agree on the objective disagree on how to get there, and this is how it should be.

I think Jorun and Wieringa agrees that the GAD discourse has become depoliticised; Wieringa specifically calls for bringing feminism back into gender, while Jorun is just sick of the pretence of agreement in a field where we know there are so many different opinions.

4.8.6 Sexual rights

In the White paper 'Global health in foreign and development policy' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012d) the concept sexual rights are defined:

> Sexual rights include human rights that are already recognised in national legislation, international human rights instruments and unanimous declarations. For instance, they include the universal right of access to the best possible sexual and reproductive health services, sex education, respect for bodily integrity, freedom to choose whether or not to be sexually active, and the free choice of partners. (Ibid, p.16)

This is of course an (unacknowledged) quote from WHO's definition[135] of sexual rights (World Health Organization (WHO), 2012). This definition is good in that it includes all; choice of partner is for example not gender-specified, human beings should be able to choose partner regardless of gender, age, race, level of ability etc. Sexual rights are thus for everyone, not some special rights applicable only to minority groups. When I have discussed the concept of sexual rights with the participants, most however, links it directly (and only) with discrimination against LGBT:

> **Me:** A key area in a number of projects related to women has been sexual and reproductive health and here we also talk about 'sexual rights'. How do you understand this concept?
> **Stein:** It is a little ... Sexual rights are in a way to… it is supposed to be to be able to function in society with one's sexual identity, and a right then is to *not* be punished for it, a right is that there does not exist, that there not are limitations in the form of *Berufsverbot* and other kinds… other sanctions from society; that society can actually help to protect, that is, protect against common social sanctions from people around you.

Mari, on the other hand, found sexual rights to be inseparable from reproductive health and rights, and thus not very relevant in connection with including sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives:

> **Mari:** I have not really thought about it much. It is closely linked to... The two [sexual and reproductive] are in a way a 'package' and it is very easy to think of the right to family planning and safe pregnancy and birth and stuff like that, … and AIDS and stuff like that, […] but I feel that maybe (pauses), sexual rights, it is obvious that it [SOGI issues]belongs there, yes, but I think probably that [sexuality] is often looked at 'technically', that it is reproductive techniques, because they belong together.
> **Me:** So, sexuality is mostly linked to (in unison) 'reproduction,' that is the part of it that is the least 'touchy' (we laugh).
> **Mari:** Yes I think so, people working with it think like that.

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[135] Albeit still a *working* definition, encumbered with the following disclaimer: 'These definitions do not represent an official WHO position, and should not be used or quoted as WHO definitions' (Ibid)

Me: What if one sees it in the context of gender? It seems like when one mentions SRHR, it is always associated with women.
Mari: It is perhaps a reflection of what I am saying: That it is linked very closely to pregnancy and childbirth, I think so.
Me: Is it possible to do something about this? Would it been feasible to try to do something about it?
Mari: In relation to sexual rights, and expand [the understanding] to encompass all and not associate it so closely to reproduction? (**Me:** Yes). I think it is difficult, I think it may be difficult to achieve. I think maybe there could be other ways of working that might be more suitable.

One of the participants works for an organisation that works particularly with women in development. Her answer to my question about sexual rights is interesting:

Me: [The organisaton] works with sexual rights?
A: Yes, it does you know, but you can say if we are going to be quite… it does not constitute a large part today of [the organisation's] portfolio (**Me:** Ok?) Even if I guess some people are working on it on the side. [She tells about the organisation's work with a new strategy document] Perhaps this about sexual rights and reproductive health, may be it becomes more of a clear thematic area [in the new strategy] […] maybe it is actually a pretty important thematic area that should be lifted slightly more clearly.
Me: I know that some think it is easier in a way to work with reproductive health, has this been a part of...
A: Yes, you can say that if we are actually... [The organisation] is a sort of like driving force and […] we have followed the Cairo process and […] also in relation to HIV / AIDS, right? (**Me:** Yes, it is relevant in that regard), yes, sexuality and stuff like that and contraception and awareness and things like that, then you can say that somehow all that... […]
Me: It has sort of been the women's organisations that put these questions on the agenda...
A: Yes, but actually there are not many of [the Norwegian women's organisations] that… and certainly when compared to... but it is clear that... FGM, right[136]? But in relation to a broader understanding of sexuality then there are probably not that many that are very clear, and I think, maybe, that there exist rather homophobic tendencies in some partner organisations as well.
Me: Yes there may be... But is it not… Sexual rights include so much; like sex education for young people, it is such a wide [concept] I think (**A:** Yes, absolutely), and I think there is a bit of a danger in thinking that sexual rights have mostly to do with minority groups…
A: Absolutely, and it also in a sense includes access to birth control and freedom from violence and rape and that whole issue and abortion, even to control one's sexuality and reproduction, so... […] my personal hope, then, would be that we had perhaps taken a bit like clearer stand on this, I realise that as the one here in the [office] that has worked a little with this theme.

Looking at the excerpt now, it makes me realise she probably felt 'put on the spot' by my questions and reaction. I was indeed very surprised that the organisation did not have more focus on SRHR. One of my presumptions has been that women's organisations are a natural ally in attempts to widen perspectives on sexual rights because of their experience working with the SRHR agenda.

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[136] I think she refers to the organisation's programs on FGM as an example of working with SRHR

I also asked a more general question: Does sexuality has anything to do with development? Again, most connected sexuality directly with non-heterosexuality:

B[137]: (Sighs) Now you are asking a difficult question. Well, it is a factor that is... almost forgotten, or it depends on what you define as sexuality, but it is clear that this theme, if one talks about sexual minorities, has been very little in focus... in general and even less in our context.

Nils: It is a bit the same [as with gender], that yes, there is one, there is this dimension where it is associated with inequality and oppression and to fight this is a necessity in a development perspective in itself. Simply because inequality and oppression in itself is a problem for a group or an individual and then it is the same thing: Because I think it also has greater consequences related to participation, both economically and politically and all that. That was a very general answer yet […] it is more like my personal answer that [sexuality] is probably a dimension where inequality and oppression is played out, and [where there are] strong, strong norms of course, but if the next question is how this is situated in development policy, then [the answer would be] perhaps to a lesser extent, [this is] a dimension that have been less captured.

Stein: Yes, because it is a set of rights, that is, it has to do with […] this is about democracy, it is a democratic right to be, that is to expose one's identity in society, of course.

Sexuality is thus relevant for development if some are discriminated against because of their sexuality. This is clearly an important aspect, but maybe not the only (or best) strategy of including sexuality as a dimension of development work. Using discrimination against sexual and gender minorities as an entry point to talk about sexuality will in many locations turn the whole sexuality issue into a no-go area. If one instead focuses on sexuality as part of human life in general, something that concerns everyone, it is my belief that it would be easier to also include sexual variety.

4.8.7 Problematic concepts, revisited

I have already mentioned Matthew Waites critique of 'sexual orientation' as a dominating concept in international discourse. There is however another way of reading this concept: Sara Ahmed focuses in her book 'Queer phenomenology' (Ahmed, 2006) on the verb stem of 'orientation,' and talks about subjects who actively and deliberately *orientate* themselves sexually. With Ahmed's understanding as a starting point, it is possible to use the concept to question essentialism, and re-orient the language of sexuality in a dynamic way. Finally it is important for me to say that I despite the above criticism, do recognise the need for strategic essentialism; I do see how talking about and treating LGBT(IQ) persons as a group is both

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[137] Works in a faith based development organisation

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useful and necessary to raise awareness and fight discrimination. My objections with the material analysed, is that the essentialism never seems to be strategic; the use of language discloses, in my opinion, an underlying understanding and belief in sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions as fixed personality traits. With the knowledge we have about differences in understandings, experiences and expressions of gender and sexuality cross culturally and –historically, I see this as a non-viable starting point for international work. bell hooks advices us to criticise essentialism at the same time as we emphasise the importance of the authority of experience; it is possible to at the same time reject the idea of a black essence, and recognise how black identity has been formed through experiences of exile and struggle. (hooks, 1990, p. 29)

When the LGBT term is explained in the action plan (see quote in Ch. 4.8.3) the explanation ends by stating that this use of the term is consistent with terms used by 'most organisations by and for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons'. (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 12) The Norwegian authorities are thus taking their cue from those that are mostly concerned, and should be credited for listening to the 'grassroots.' This particular 'grassroot' is however not unified or reconciled when it comes to language. Much criticism has come from non-Western, non-English speaking activists and organisations about what has been dubbed 'gay imperialism', that is the dominance of Western (English) concepts, organisations, and political strategies (see e.g. Massad, 2002; Phillips, 2000; Rao, 2010; Robinson, 2012) Much of the scepticism towards the use of essentialism expressed above, can equally be addressed towards the (Western) LGBT movement, that is organisations that pertain to represent persons worldwide with alternative sexual orientations and/or gendered expressions. One of the participants[138] says that she has experienced the 'gay movement' as rather closed, and that it has a too narrow view of politics: When sexual identity becomes the main focus of advocacy, you lose possible allies among for example feminists and others with an interest in a wider understanding of sexual rights, is the gist of her argument.

Looking at the policy documents together, I see that issues that concern sexual orientations and/or gender identity/expressions are viewed as special topics with relevance only for those who identify as LGBT(IQ). They are not integrated, or mainstreamed, they are added as an afterthought ('for diverse and spicy development: add homosexuals and stir.')

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[138] This participant defines herself as a heterosexual woman and has close to 40 years of experience with working in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

4.9 A binary understanding of gender and its consequences – heteronormativity in development cooperation

Judith Butler asks rhetorically if we can 'refer to a "given" sex or a "given" gender without first inquiring into how sex and/or gender is given, through what means?' (Butler, 1990, p. 9) In development discourse in general, and in the policy papers discussed here, gender is taken as something given, no questions are asked about what gender is, or how gender is constituted. The result is, as we saw above, that sex and/or gender is primarily understood to mean men and women, male and female gender roles and attributes, and that *likestillling* (gender equality) means equality between these two groups. Wieringa, quoted above, was one of the early voices that pointed to why this is problematic, and that showed how this for example led to women identifying as lesbian being left out. (Wieringa, 1998; Wieringa & Blackwood, 1999) The Institute of Development Stuides (IDS)[139] held a series of seminar between 2000 and 2001 called 'Queering Development' where they asked questions such as:

> Why is development so straight? Sexuality is often ignored in development studies or practice, or if included, conceived of as a narrow form of heterosexuality. […] Could consideration of sexualities in all their diversity allow development to gain a more holistic and appropriate understanding of stakeholders? Could development theory learn from the advances in queer theory? (The Institute of Development Studies, 2012)

Several research papers and journal articles have since then been published, many of them with links to IDS. (Bedford, 2005; Andrea Cornwall, Corrêa, & Jolly, 2008; A. Cornwall & Jolly, 2006; Corrêa et al., 2006; Griffin, 2007; Jolly & Ilkkaracan, 2007; Lind, 2009; Parker, 2004; Williams, 2009). What this new research does, one may say, is to question heteronormativity in development discourse and practices. Bedorf has, e.g. looked at the World Bank's Ecuadorian lending and concludes:

> Gender staff in the World Bank – the world's largest and most influential development institution – have a policy problem. Having prioritised efforts to get women into paid employment as the ''cure-all'' for gender inequality they must deal with the work that women already do – the unpaid labour of caring, socialisation, and human needs fulfilment. This article explores the most prominent policy solution enacted by the Bank to this tension between paid and unpaid work: the restructuring of normative heterosexuality to encourage a two-partner model of love and labour wherein women work more and men care better. (Bedford, 2005, p. 295)

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[139] The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) is a global charity for international development research, teaching and communications with accreditation links to the University of Sussex, UK.

We recognise here the thoughts of Dahl quoted above (Dahl, 2005); there is something about gender equality that easily leads to heteronormative policies. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, like Butler, questions the whole concept of gender:

> It may be [...] that a damaging bias toward heterosocial or heterosexist assumptions inheres unavoidably in the very concept of gender. This bias would be built into any gender-based analytic perspective to the extent that gender definition and gender identity are necessarily relational between genders – to the extent, that is, that in any gender system, female identity or definition is constructed by analogy, supplementarity, or contrast to male, or vice versa. Although many gender-based forms of analysis do involve accounts, sometimes fairly rich ones, of intragender behaviors and relations, the ultimate definitional appeal in any gender-based analysis must necessarily be to the diacritical frontier between different genders. This gives heterosocial and heterosexual relations a conceptual privilege of incalculable consequence. (Sedgwick, 1991, p. 31)

Can we detect this bias in Norwegian development policy, and among Norwegian development actors? I think the pervious chapter has shown that the answer is yes. Some of the participants are also critical towards this:

> **Eva:** When I say women I jump on the tradition that when one is talking about gender, one talks about women, right? And what have been too little in focus is, for example, lesbian women. And one can see that in some countries lesbian women are treated much worse than heterosexual women […] And then there is a group that might have been even less in focus and that is trans persons.

> **Me:** But what do you think about that if one focuses on women as a group, like one do [in these documents], are there any elements of risks in this, or do you see anything negative about it?[140]
> **Gina:** That one focuses on women... Yeah, you will not be able to include other sexual minorities, that is, it will not include sexual minorities who are not women. If you focus on women's rights you will not include men who have sex with men or transgender […] and you will not associate [women's rights] with lesbians. You will perceive that to be more of a cultural struggle, social rights, rights in society.
> **Me:** But this is very interesting what you are saying, is it... Why will it not include lesbians, why are not lesbians included when you think about women's rights?
> **Gina:** No, I do not think this is what we traditionally think. Because then one thinks of women's oppressed position in society, that their position and ability to participate in decision making and the right to control over the body and health and childbirth and the whole area you sort of associate with women's equality. I do not think that one traditionally in the development context thinks of lesbians women's rights.
> **Me:** What steps should be taken to ensure that 'women' include different types of women, then?
> **Gina:** (Pauses.) Then I do in fact think that you had to focus much more on gender perspectives and not on gender equality (*likestilling*), because I do not think this is what we associate with gender equality. Gender *and* equality (likeverd) maybe, [… if one] called it something like that, then it would be, then one could have included both.

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140 Very leading question, I know!

A[141]**:** No, it's a pity, as when for example I have to say to an embassy that they can get money from the 'women and gender equality fund', then I must explain that in this basket there are measures for non-discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons, because that is clearly not self-evident.

The Action plan on women's rights and gender equality (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007) only treats the subject of sexual orientation and gender identity under the heading SRHR. Other headlines where it could be natural to include LGBT are 'Violence against women' (where the term 'gender based violence also is used) (ibid, p. 23) and 'Human rights' (ibid, p. 27). Let me give an example from the chapter on human rights:

> Norway will protect and promote women's rights as political actors, members of society, private individuals and family members. It is important to take into account the fact that women and men are to some extent subject to different types of violations of human rights. While men are more likely to be persecuted directly by the state, women tend to suffer violations of human rights in the private sphere due to the authorities' inability or lack of will to protect them. (Ibid, p. 27)

What is said here about women could have been said about persons that have their rights violated because of their sexual orientation or gender expression; they too suffer violations from non-state actors, in the private sphere and the authorities lack will to protect them (see e.g. Human Rights Watch, 2009a; Kenya Human Rights Commission, 2011). On the list of actions and priority areas we read:

> Such issues include freedom of movement, education and occupational opportunities, parenthood and custody, marriage and divorce, control of sexuality and reproduction, individual and equal rights to inheritance and to own land, housing and other property regardless of marital status; (ibid, p. 28).

All of the issues listed here have equal relevance when it comes to discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender expression. (Human Rights Watch, 2009a; Kenya Human Rights Commission, 2011)

When heteronormativity was explained in the action plan on LGBT, we saw that it was explained as the tendency to render LGBT persons invisible. The quotes above could have been used as illustrations of how LGBT are invisible. Some of the participants express views that question heteronormativity:

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[141] A works at the MFA

Claus: Yes, sexuality cannot be limited to only [be relevant for] women; that is a very strange limitation[142]. And neither should reproduction, nor care [only be relevant for women]. I think on these fields here one... And recent research now shows clearly that if you dismiss men from the care field, you lose a very, very important dimension, including in *machista* societies. There are some very interesting studies done on men and care in Mexico, for example, among the lower social classes where you had presumed that men were just real louts that disappear [from their families]. So what I mean, yes, absolutely, […] if you shall work on it within this field you must have a gender... the concept of gender must be inclusive.

I think Claus here give a very good example of why a binary gender view is too narrow: If femininity, or 'female' qualities such as ability to give care, are exclusively linked to women, you lose sight of the range of qualities that all humans are capable of; male femininity becomes invisible. Among the participants was one openly gay man. I think his thoughts on gender gives credit to the 'truth' that lived experience may change the way we see the world:

Me: But I also think that to think 'gender' instead of just men and women may do something with the way one looks at the two sexes. It is so easy to put all women in one box, for example. **A**[143]: Yes definitely, and then there is also something about all the nuances. That is, little by little to open up for the various nuances, and.... (Thinks) In a professional setting there is perhaps not so much confusion but it is something .... I do not know if we confuse…, now I might be on thin ice but you have the ... male/female pair with the intermediates, and you have the pair masculinity and femininity that is not a parallel to it, but is often perceived as such, where you also have smooth interim transitions, and then you have same or different-sex attraction and different varieties [of these]. And to understand that for example the experience of the balance between masculinity and femininity can be extremely variable within the dichotomy of man and a woman... There is something about... and perhaps gender is a word even if gender can easily be read as biology, that is so, […] but the ideal would be to find [a word] that could accommodate all these nuances. Because that is it, what people are disappearing in this language that we use? (**Me:** Yes, at least with the large categories.) And then we sometimes may need the large categories but [with] the awareness and the labour that the most vulnerable groups can easily fall through. And in working with men, it is a terrible tragedy that a traditional understanding of masculinity is the same as man, for example, and a traditional understanding of femininity is the same as woman. One could wish for other words to describe some of the things that we sometimes see […] For the man, this about aggressiveness, the understanding of being more sexual, for example. […]How will you shake [this understanding], by talking about femininity?

A has clearly dwelled on the dilemmas of dichotomous understandings of gender. He also touches on the essence of strategic essentialism when he sees the need for using 'the large categories' at the same time as he sees the nuances within them, and the danger of losing sight of them. Unni uses the metaphor of putting on more than one set of glasses when she talks

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[142] We have talked about the fact that sexual orientation and gender identity issues are mentioned in the action plan titled 'Women's rights and gender equality'

[143] I have chosen to make him anonymous here; not to protect him against his sexuality being known (he is open at work), but to make other linkages invisible.

about widening the gender concept, and she tells that her dialogue with partner organisations in the South has taught her valuable lessons about a more intersectional understanding:

> **Unni:** But I guess this is what was attempted through […] mainstreaming women and gender equality, […] the thinking behind was to keep it in mind, or to have those glasses on all the time, but then you have to be put on even more glasses, […] some might say that now it becomes too complex, but I think it very quickly becomes a habit, when one has only been made aware of this and have been hooked on to it: 'oh yes, I have to think about this too,' […] I think that one sees the world as more complex, but it is not necessarily more difficult. [The organisation], or I myself, has... I have learned much about this through some of our partners in [African country], some of the women's organisations, and parts of the […] feminist movement. How they are very dedicated to looking at both class and gender and identity, both heterosexual and lesbian and trans and bi. And where they see class in terms of economy and in social structures, and that is actually a way to try and see how these different [categories] come into play with each other and actually keep this complexity in mind and have it as a reference model. […] I think probably this has formed or contributed to me getting a more complex vision, a more complex standard, or what I shall call it, and that .... But this is an exercise that one needs to do, and it does not necessarily come naturally, at the same time as it ought to be a natural part.

To conclude, I think the current government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad, that is, those that develop new policies and guidelines, have a job to do: To counter heteronormacy in all its aspects, you need to raise the level of awareness and encourage people to reflect on new ways of seeing.

4.10 How has the new policy been met? Participants' reactions

The 'Power and democracy study' (*Makt og demokratiutredningen*) (Østerud & et al., 2003) looked at Norwegian foreign policy, among many themes, and commented on the 'policy of engagement' (described in detail in Ch. 4.6). They describe very close ties between the government institutions and the NGO world, and find little real opposition towards the expressed goals:

> The design and implementation of the policy of engagement takes place in a corporate partnership structure, where the government, NGOs and research institutions are working together on a national project. (Østerud & et al., 2003, p. 52, my translation)

Norwegian self-understanding when it comes to the country's ('our') role in the world seems to be very homogenous. There is a large degree of consensus on issues of what 'our' role in the world is and should be. Norwegians also seem to have great faith in their leaders and the state apparatus. According to Østerud et al's study, consensus and trust are built by what they

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have dubbed a 'national corporatism;' cooperation on consensus building between the state apparatus, organisations in civil society and academia. Does this hold true when it comes to the perceived role of sexuality and gender issues in development cooperation? That is one of the questions this chapter will try to answer.

When I started sending out the first invitations to potential participants in May 2010, I was surprised to find that it was a tad difficult to get people from academia and the NGO world to agree to talk to me[144]. I thought a lot about why, and came up with several theories. Before I say more about why I think people working in development institutions were a bit hesitant about participating, let me give some example of part of mail exchanges with potential participants[145]:

> **A[146]:** It is always nice to receive such requests! This time, I must sadly admit that I simply do not feel competent to answer within the field you are interested in. I have no specific experience or understanding of sexual orientation and/or gender identity within the Norwegian development cooperation. I have lectured a bit about gender and development vs. gender in development - but not with any specific reference to Norwegian aid..where I'm pretty blank. Sorry about this.
> **Me:** I understand that you feel you do not have expertise in the field. I would still like to discuss with you, if you are willing to reconsider. [Here I give a rather long argument for why] So, sorry for putting pressure on you, and I promise that I shall take no for an answer next time!
> **A:** Ok, if you think it is relevant I may as well try to answer questions.

> **B[147]:** Your thesis sounds interesting, and I do not know if I can contribute with much, but you may interview me.

> **C[148]:** Thank you for your enquiry. We are unfortunately not able to participate in this project. Good luck!

> **D[149]:** Thanks for the inquiry. This theme is a bit outside my core competencies. I do not think I would have much to say on this. I have therefore sent the request on to others in the organisation who work more directly with gender[150] and development issues. For my own part, I say no thank you. Good luck with your research!

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[144] For the governmental organisations, (the Ministry of foreign affairs including Norad), I had less difficulties in getting positive response. I wrote directly to the heads of various sections, and got assigned persons that I could talk to.

[145] All had received variants of a standard letter of invitation with the project description and form of consent attached (see Appendix 1). In some cases I also called after having sent the first e mail.

[146] A works as a researcher and lecturer in development studies at an academic institution.

[147] B is a senior advisor in a NGO, and has mainly worked with HIV/AIDS in Africa

[148] C is a programme director of a NGO working for women's rights.

[149] D is an advisor on development policy issues in a NGO, E is a colleague of D, and in the first answer this person is advisor on HIV/AIDS, in the second answer the job description has changed to include health and HIV/AIDS.

[150] I had specifically asked to talk with someone else than their gender advisor, in the hope of getting a feeling about the awareness of gender perspectives in the larger organisations.

E: It is an interesting study that you are planning. I have discussed a bit with others here in [the organisation] to see if there is anyone who could contribute. We are in a very hectic phase [...] and unfortunately find it difficult to prioritise this now. Currently, we lack someone who has health as a responsibility, but we expect to get someone. Good luck with your thesis!
[After some months I sent a new mail to E]
E: Thanks for the new enquiry! As you can see I will now formally be the organisation's special advisor on health issues. I would like to try to set up an interview and ask you to make a few suggestions about dates and time. [...] Unfortunately I do not think that we have very much to contribute, so maybe it is enough to set aside [suggests a time limit].

F[151]: I am not sure that I have much to say in this context. I've written about HIV/AIDS in [African country], but more from [country specific] perspectives with gender and ethnicity as key concepts, but nothing about development aid in this connection. I do not know what you think.
Me: Thanks for your response! I would like to talk with you even if you have not worked specifically with these issues. The fact that you teach and do research at an institution dealing with development issues and [omitted for anonymity's sake], makes you a valuable participant in my opinion [...] Gender and ethnicity are definitely important concepts in this context, so again: If you could take the time, I would be grateful.
F: I can just as well speak with you, but I do not think I have much to add.

As can be seen from the exchanges, some decided to participate, if somewhat reluctantly. Like C, some also declined on behalf of their organisation without giving any reason as to why. One reason for their hesitance to participate is clear from the examples above: People felt they did not know enough (or anything at all) about the issues I wanted to discuss. Sexual orientation and gender identity were not themes they had worked with or discussed as relevant for their area of work. Through the conversations I also realised that many had little knowledge of the government's policy on these issues. It is only 'human' to not want to expose one's ignorance or lack of awareness; maybe my enquiries triggered some latent bad conscience? Some people also know me in my capacity as an international adviser at LLH. They have met me at seminars and meetings, and heard me advocating for a less heteronormative policy. It is thus not surprising that they feel 'on thin ice' when asked to reflect on these issues together with someone they may think of as a 'lesbian activist; they may feel the lack of knowledge even more acute and be afraid of not to appear 'politically correct,' or even appear insulting or insensitive towards me as a person. It can be compared to white people being asked to discuss racism with a black person; they will in most cases feel they have to weigh their words to not offend or insult the other.

A less sympathetic reading is that there among Norwegian development actors are unacknowledged heterosexism – that people think homosexuality is in fact unnatural and

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[151] F is a senior researcher and lecturer in development studies at an academic institution.

should stay in 'the closet', or at least an issue that makes them uncomfortable to talk about. In the policy documents, sexual orientation is often labelled a 'sensitive' issue. That may mean that it is *politically* sensitive, but one of the government employees has an additional interpretation:

> **G:** Another thing that makes it sensitive is that we who are working with this all the time, we do not always keep in mind that we have a lot of prejudice in our own ranks. It is one of the things we wanted to raise in the seminars[152]. It is not for everyone to just ... if you leave this office, you might find someone who is hostile towards homosexuals. And then it will be difficult for them to raise it in a setting in another country if they are required to do so. So we have to work a lot with the attitudes and prejudices in our own systems. And the way it has been until now, we only get the already converted [to attend the seminars]. So we really struggle to get others on board who might have needed it more. That is, […] we have not made any study of attitudes among our own on this. When I say our own, I refer to Norad, MFA employees, but it would be interesting to find out, because I think this can actually hold us back a little. And then it becomes very easy to hide behind this that 'it is too sensitive; it is too difficult to talk about.'

Despite initial difficulties I did get someone from most of the central development organisations to agree to participate. When asked directly about their thoughts on the government's policy they were almost unanimously positive:

> **Me:** What do you think about the government's decision to prioritise these issues?
> **Berit:** I think that is very good!

> **Frida:** It is the least they could do!

> **Ivar:** Yes, I agree. I do not know what dimensions it has, […] but I agree in principle.

> **Pernille:** That they actually begin to have ambitions on sexual orientation and trans-sexuality and so on, I think that is quite, it is excellent as a starting point, [...] because I think it is really good that someone starts to raise these questions.

To try to 'unearth' a possible opposition, I specifically wanted to include some of the organisations that work from a Christian perspective. I suspected the government policy on sexual orientation and gender identity may be experienced as difficult by some religious organisations, and three representatives from faith based organisations agreed to participate. One of them does voice some of the feelings I had anticipated:

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[152] Refers to the seminars arranged by the Norwegian Foreign Service Institute (*Utenrikstjenestens Kompetansesenter*)

A: There are several things that have been involved and led to this[153], these […] guidelines that came in relation with gender and women[154], where this [SOGI] was specifically mentioned attracted some ... protests, aggression in our, among some of our [members]. Because, to mix this in, it was felt that one could not, as an organisation, vouch for it. Equality between men and women, yes, but this other was threatening, so can you say that it would be like a kind of legitimating [if one] agreed that it was okay, so that is why it aroused a bit more of a resistance than necessary. But in this sense, we had a very good dialogue with the desire to continue working on this theme also based on a theological perspective, and part of the reason why, or [why this was] put on the agenda, is what has happened in Uganda recently, and [some of us] work in Uganda, and somehow, can we as organisations sit and watch that sort of thing happens without saying anything? Are we allowed to do that, when the basic human rights are violated?

[…]

Me: Finally, we talked previously about the Stoltenberg government thematising sexual orientation and gender identity, saying that this should be a priority in development policy. What do you think, why do they do this?

A: No, well ... I think that it is a result of pressure on one side, which can be positive or negative, but somehow that one puts special topics on the agenda based on different types of groups' possibility to influence the power, pressure groups, whether it is women's organisations or if it is gay, lesbian organisations or if it is the disabled or if it is such and such, but that there are pressure groups, lobbying to get the topic in. And that is important, but as I said when this came, it led to great disagreement among our organisations; like what would this…, what would this entail and [it probably was seen as] unwanted interference from the authorities on internal activities and thinking.

Me: Now there is no obligation to report on this or anything ...

A: No there is not. However, I think it was also positive in the sense that even though it evokes anger, or aroused anger in some, even so it was talked about, and I think each time it is spoken of, or all the things that one can talk about one can do something about, but all the things that simply stay unspoken, that does something to us, which is often much more negative. And we can bring it up and talk about it here in Norway, and we should be able to do so today without it being very difficult.[…] We have some example, in this organisation that works in [Asian country], where the sexual rights is a theme in the same manner as many other themes and [where there is] training of local personnel in what it means, and questioning around it and so on but it is perhaps also because the cooperating organisation that we have there, our local partner, is led by a man who is openly gay. But that this is also part of the reality in missionary organisations is exciting. At the same time it is a taboo, it is a bit difficult, it is something you can talk about in certain circles, but it is not the type of information you tell the traditional mission donors here in Norway, for fear that it will then be misunderstood or you will create greater problems or that this is a theme that still is a little like that in the grey zone.

It is clear that A does not want to be seen as representing those that have strong feelings against the government policy; A says these are issues that need to be discussed, and that human rights should encompass all, regardless of a person's life choices[155]. Secondly the

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[153] A refers to a seminar on HIV, rights and sexual minorities organised by Digni, the umbrella for churches and mission societies working in development and receiving support from Norad. (Digni, 2012) Among Digni's member organisations are some that are known for their literal reading of the Bible.

[154] The action plan and white paper on women's rights and gender equality

[155] In another part of the conversation A talks more about the seminar and says: 'The starting point for trying to get it on the agenda was that one did *not* want a theological debate for or against homosexuality, if these

discussions within the religious development community had started with the publication of the action plan on gender which includes references to non-discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. The fear was that to include this would implicitly be read as an acceptance of homosexuality as such, and that organisations would be forced to accept this within their programming. Thirdly A, (and the religious community he is part of?), sees the new policy as a result of lobbying from pressure groups. A thinks that pressure groups may be both positive and negative in their influence on policy, but do not specify which it is in this specific example. Elsewhere he says that his organisation is sceptical towards what he calls the government's attempts to 'politicise development aid' and asks rhetorically: 'How important is it that Norway shall brand its policy based on the political winds blowing in Norway?' If one looks at arguments on sexual orientation and gender identity issues from so called 'Bible-believers' and traditionalists internationally, one finds references to the 'international gay lobby,' (Jamaica, 2008; Kincaid, 2010; Morse, 2012) and clear examples of conspiracy theories about its possible influence in for example the UN. (Krempach, 2012; Ruse, 2012) It is not possible to say that similar thinking exists among the more fundamentalist faith based development organisations in Norway based on this material, but it would certainly be interesting to look into. Finally he tells the story of how an openly gay man leads a partner organisation, and that they work with sexual rights, but that this is something they cannot speak openly about. Again, a very interesting point, it makes you wonder how many other examples like this exist, not only in faith based organisations.

Based on my experience working with perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity for a number of years, and my knowledge that few Norwegian organisations had included this in their programs, I expected to hear a number of reservations about the government policy. Scott Long writes on his blog 'A paper bird' about the reluctance of mainstream human rights organisations to work on issues of sexuality. (Long, 2012) His three 'barriers in attitude' nicely sum up my own experience:

> Sexuality is not respectable. You may have a right to exercise it, but don't expect me to bring it up in decent conversation. One sees this in the diehard reluctance of human rights to raise the matter in their colloquies with 'mainstream' partner organizations

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things are a sin or not a sin based on a theological understanding [...], but based on a human rights perspective, that all are created in God's image and the basic human rights apply equally to these groups as to everyone else and how do we deal with it as a church when... or with people who choose something other than what one might think is right and proper. '

Sexuality isn't that important. Here what I've often called the 'humanitarianization of human rights' kicks in: in an era of massive humanitarian catastrophes, cases seemingly on the scale of individuals shrivel in significance next to the gargantuan, aggregate anonymity of a Rwanda, a Darfur, a Sri Lanka. Without a queue of zeroes trailing the numbered victims, a situation can't merit the diligence of crisis. [...]

Sexuality is private. It's something you only do (legally) behind closed doors, and it can't possibly be implicated in grand public events like revolutions [or development]. This is a delusion sustained by never talking to revolutionaries about why they were really there… (Ibid)

If we replace 'human rights' with development, I have heard them all: Sexuality is too 'sensitive' to talk about with partners in development setting. There are more important issues to work with; let us first solve the issues of maternal mortality before we can talk about frivolous issues like sexual identities. Ordinary people in far away countries are not concerned with sexuality, and it is not on their list of priorities for change. Despite the proclamations of support from most participants, I did find remnants of the attitudes described by Long when I delved deeper. I asked the participants if they saw sexuality to be important in a development context and if they thought of sexual orientation as relevant? Anne brought up Maslow's pyramid, but was unsure if sex would be at the bottom or top of the hierarchy; here she thinks aloud about what would be right place for it:

> **Anne:** [In some situations] one is at a level where one does not have any sexual energy, this is a bit difficult... It must be included in many arenas but I still think that, that sexuality as urges, ok that might belong pretty far down on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, but sexuality as self-realisation is much higher up […], it is part of self-realisation so that it requires... People who are in dire need... I do not know if I would have focused on this [sexuality as self-realisation], I would think of it as positive but you would have to balance [against other priorities].

Later Anne also says that 'to be lesbian or homosexual or bisexual is a dimension that is about exploring one's sexuality,' and goes on to describe her experiences as a health worker in Africa and Asia; the people she has met, and especially the women, are so destitute that they do not have energy for exploring sex, and they lack the knowledge[156] they would need to do so. Sexuality as self-realisation is, I believe, a common way of seeing non-reproductive sexuality: Sexual urges are 'natural' (biological) and about reproducing the human race, but sex for pleasure (as all same gendered sex would be defined as), is something humans only can indulge in when more basic needs are met:

> **Kjersti:** The White paper says 'Women have, or shall be entitled to, health care and control over their own bodies and sexuality.' We want to get this far, control over one's own fertility is a start,

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[156] She specifically mentions that women do not know what an orgasm is.

which is far from realised. It is important to focus on the joys of sexuality; we are too little concerned about this some say, but when you look at the reality for very many, this is such a far step ahead. If you are not looking at people like us, that is, that in a sense are in an economic and educational situation in which one can worry about this kind of thing.

Again we see that sexual pleasure is considered to be a luxury that only the well-off and educated have time to worry about. Many do agree however that outright discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation is a concern in development situation, but feel that it may push aside more important issues:

> **Vidar:** I do think this [SOGI issues] is a big challenge; there was for example a Ugandan gay activist who was killed a few days ago. So there are significant challenges associated with this in Africa, so I think it was good that one raises this. The problem is that one should raise so many different things, and I am a bit critical of the government Solheim's regime of development aid because he is a bit of a populist, in my view, and is throwing himself onto new trends while fundamental needs such as education, health and so on, they have in a way become a pulverised by new catch words like 'women's rights' and the like. Which are good by them self, but I believe that, yes, both this about 'women's rights', and homosexuality and such, these things would to a much greater extent be understood if people have a better education level. […] It is very like 'catchy' in a Norwegian political context, but for example in [African country] where they have worked a lot, but where education is now being marginalised in Norwegian development aid [projects], because there are other things today, you know, women's rights and the like that are prioritised, which is good, but when only two percent of the women can read and write in [African country], then it becomes simply one of those phantom tigers [*fantomtiger*[157]] that is not... So that is what I think about this, it is good, but it must be put in a much larger frame of reference and [one can] not just focus on homosexuality and gender rights when people actually can not read and write!

I later asked if he meant you had to do one thing at a time, that to talk about non-discrimination of for example homosexuals is somewhat 'premature.' He insisted that one should be able to do several things simultaneously, but that 'it is wrong if it […] is isolated from these fundamental needs, and Norway has gone from [having a focus on] these basic needs to these more populist things.' I think he is giving voice to a concern shared by many; that 'marginal' issues have become too dominating at the expense of fundamental social, economic and cultural rights. I have argued above that it is problematic if/when sexual orientation and gender identity issues are single out and not seen in context. I am, like Vidar, critical to policies that treat sexuality and gender as 'special topics' of concern only in relation to people who define themselves/are defined as LGBT. I however do not think that gender perspectives or antidiscrimination awareness are just 'catch words' or in any way marginal perspectives; it is possible, from a rights based stand point, to both think inclusion, be aware

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[157] I think he meant to say *papirtiger* ('paper tiger') which in Norwegian is used to mean something unrealistic, like an air castle.

of gender and work to enhance 'substantive freedoms' (Sen, 1999). The kind of argument presented by Vidar may be seen as unwillingness to take gender and sexuality seriously, or see them as important enough to merit concern. One of the participants who is a gender advisor in a NGO shares thoughts on how gender has been seen as unimportant in humanitarian catastrophes, and along the way of argument she gets a new insight (with some contributions from me):

> **Me:** If we look in particular on the issue of sexual orientation and now in emergency situations, is this a perspective that is at all relevant?
> **A:** In emergency situations (hesitates) (**Me:** The flooding in Pakistan[158], for example). I was even there... I spoke primarily with women, then, I went there to talk with the women because they were so incredibly invisible in the media. It may well be, I ..... It is like nothing that anyone is talking about. Not at all. If I try to think about the kind of setting I was in, the chaos, it is possible that it is... I think it is a very difficult question. (**Me:** That it is.) In relief work, pure emergency relief work... People are all the time saying that we have no time to engage in gender analysis in emergency relief, and I always get very angry, now I might be about to commit the same error. It should probably be part of a 'vulnerability criteria', probably, that it has more to do with like a 'protection perspective.' One looks at minority groups, looks at particular stigmatised groups, and ensures that they also have access to what they need to have access to. I just try to think about, if one is gay, what kind of needs does one have because one is gay in an emergency situation? Will the person have less access to food, because he or she is gay? Probably not.
> **Me:** It would be if you are being discriminated against because of who you are, like you said. (**A:** Yes...) If you cannot make the queue, if you are the village's outcast and not part of… (**A:** Of course.) Like a disabled person...
> **NN:** Yes, like a widow, like a... Yes, this whole issue I looked at in Pakistan was in relation to women who were widows and so on...

Several participants expressed the same kind of frustration over difficulties in getting heard when it came to gender issues. They also linked a possible lack of will among development actors to take on these 'new' issues to this:

> **Liv:** I have not experienced any difficulties discussing these issues here [at the home office]. I do experience more difficulties when one visits the embassies, that they feel like 'Ok, we work with women's rights, but if we have to start working with LGBT, - then it is going to be… be very difficult'.
> **Me:** What do you think lies behind this [reluctance]?
> **Liv:** That it is actually forbidden by law in many countries. […] One has to find other ways of working and I think the guidelines[159] have been a good initiative [to help them do that].
> **Me:** My impression is that they get the human rights approach but that they find it more difficult to see this from a gender perspective. Have you had similar experiences?
> **Liv:** I have no specific experience, but I think I see it, that it may... I wonder if it might originate...

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[158] I used this example because I had read an article about trans women who were discriminated in the relief work during the flooding. (Saleem, 2011)

[159] (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a)

That is, for those working with women's rights, women's organisations and so on, I think probably they may find that this is hard enough, and that if they also should include other, that is even more tabooed grounds of discrimination, then...

Me: Do you think, when there has been talk about [SOGI issues] in your organisation and you say it is mentioned in some policy documents, do you find that there is opposition towards it, or is it embraced?

Pernille: No. I think that there is a lot of resistance. Not because... [Pretends to say it like it would be said by someone against]: 'oh no, we are not against the rights, but is it [the organisation's] responsibility to take on board these issues as well?'

Stein: A bit subjective because I have no evidence for this, but I can imagine that one has to be pushed a bit because I can imagine that organisations working with human rights themes on first hand basis, […] I can imagine that some feel that they are, they have many battles to fight, and the less they take on the more it is possible to get through, perhaps, that they may be a bit like 'evasive' [because of this kind of thinking].

Me: What would it take for Norwegian NGOs to start including... That is, we have seen very little of this so far, what will take for them to start thinking [about including SOGI perspectives] and actually do something about it?

Kjersti: I think we just have to look at it as a challenge. Currently, we have probably focused on maternal health for there is so outrageously much to do there, right? Because [maternal] mortality is somehow perhaps more conspicuous. It has probably something to do with that. […] There are not many settings that I have been involved in where this has been thematised specifically, but in some contexts, we have talked about, for example, access to contraception for unmarried, not just for couples,[…] When we talk about gender equality in the more traditional sense, then there are plenty of the more qualitative aspects that are barely on the agenda. Especially now that we are so concerned with results, and with counting results and displaying results, I see that it almost becomes a kind of... I will not say 'backlash', but the focus remains very much the quantitative targets, and to be able to show quantitative results. (**Me:** How many condoms you have distributed...) Yeah, right; how many children are enrolled in school, at best, they can read and write when they get out of school,[…] So there is some way to go! But it is also… the challenges are also so colossal, the injustices so enormous, right?

It is worth noticing that most of these arguments are voiced on behalf of (sometimes imaginary) other people, they are never presented as the participant's own view. I think this may have something to do with my person – it is probably difficult for people to say to someone they presume is a lesbian that they do not think issues related to sexual orientation are important enough to prioritise. Kjersti however admits that 'we' have decided to focus on maternal mortality and let other issues be. She argues that it is because this problem is so 'conspicuous'; the situation is so grave. One may think that she feels this is more important. Related to this, is that another recurrent theme among the participants was their opinions about need for data in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity issues (I had asked a question about their thoughts on what would be needed to get more organisations to relate to these issues):

Ivar: You have to be aware of the problem first, someone has to report and you must have a record of when it takes place, i.e. the nature and extent of this kind of discrimination.

Gina: I think it is about not having enough good arguments that it is a vulnerable and exposed group. If you manage to get past the prejudice and stigma, and say that this is actually [people] who are very exposed to a lot, a very vulnerable group, I think that one can argue [for doing something]. But it may be something about numbers, right? How many there are? We are a huge organisation internationally and when I think, that is, when you discuss who the resources should go to, I think it is easier to say that it should go to the very poorest [...], those who are very difficult to reach, because then we can reach more, it is much higher numbers, so it may be...
Me: Yes it is an argument that one meets frequently, this about that one kind of has to take the most important first…
Gina: So if you get data that this is a larger group, for example, than you might think, or a more vulnerable group than you might think, I think it could be useful to bring it onto the table and raise awareness around it. [...] This is something we want to achieve now; we want to investigate a bit more about who they are and what their challenges are and what type of programme work that would be appropriate in relation to this group.

Tore: What is […] the impact of discrimination; what is the situation at the country level? Statistics, because one of the most important thing we can use is actually facts, as a foundation. One is much stronger, if one can present that in fact, *this* is how it is. (**Me:** [One should] support research then?) Support research, compile research results, enter it at the right time, and it is clear that the other side, to put it that way, are world champions at […] doing so for opposite reasons, they are much more tactical in relation to information.

It is difficult to discern between the participant's own thoughts, and their thoughts about what is needed to get others on board[160]. I still feel it is safe to interpret the expressed need for more data to mean that people are unsure too what extent sexual orientation and gender identity issues are relevant. As an international advisor at LLH I am often been asked direct questions of the type 'how many homosexuals are there in XX country?'[161] This is an impossible question to answer. Kjersti Malterud has written about the inherent difficulties and dangers of doing epidemiological research on marginalised groups (Malterud et al., 2008), because we simply cannot know the population size. Maybe it is not even relevant? If we look at sexual orientation and gender expressions not as fixed categories, but as thematic areas, the need for exact numbers immediately evaporates. Most would agree that the capabilities for sexual and gendered expressions of human beings are the same across the globe, and that

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[160] I did consciously phrase the questions like this (asking them to respond 'on behalf of' others). I feared that direct questions about their own feelings would only give me 'politically correct' answers.

[161] When Kenya's National AIDS & STI Control Programme – NASCOP decided to start including men who have sex with men in their HIV and STI programming they first wanted to do a base line study where one of the research objectives was to estimate numbers of MSM in Kenya. The study was done in collaboration with both national and international research institutions as well as national organisations for MSM/gay men. The resulting report was published in March 2012 and does indeed give numerical estimates (10,000 to 22,222 in Nairobi). (National AIDS & STI Control Programme - NASCOP, 2012, p. 3)

these capabilities are not linked to ethnicity or 'race'. Most would also acknowledge that there are social rules in most societies that govern which of these expressions are seen as acceptable. To document how certain expressions are restricted or discriminated against in specific geographical, cultural and historical locations is needed to understand for example vulnerability towards ill-health and to be able to plan for improving the public health situation. To try to estimate numbers about how many in a given location does, at times, cross the social norms, is not in my view productive or necessary.

Finally, an argument that was only voiced by one person, but that may indeed be an important consideration when it comes to whether or not to bring up sexual orientation and gender issues in political dialogue:

> **Kjersti:** But there may be a reluctance [towards bringing up SOGI], and say that this undermines other important objectives of Norwegian foreign policy, right? We do meet this, that is quite clear. Therefore, one must always balance and look for ways to promote it that do not incur more costs than benefits.

I have no way of knowing if this is how government officials think; is the Minister of development afraid of alienating an important development partner when he consider whether to discuss homosexuality with for example Meles Zenawi of Ethiophia?

4.11 How are sexual orientation and gender identity issues relevant for development cooperation?

In the action plan on LGBT it is stated that the objective of the government is to pursue a development policy that is 'conducive to combating all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation of persons on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.' (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 46) while in the action plan on women's rights it says that

> Norway will utilise international arenas, dialogue processes and programme support to raise controversial issues, and will advocate: [...]
>
> - the decriminalisation of homosexuality and the fight to prevent all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation due to sexual orientation;
> - international acceptance for the concept of «sexual rights», including the right to safe abortion on demand, and equal treatment regardless of sexual orientation. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007, p. 21)

Both of these stated objectives thus focus on rights and non-discrimination. Above I discussed some aspects of what I find problematic with the understanding and use of the 'sexual orientation.' I would now like to draw attention to another aspect: When anti-discrimination is used as an overriding principle, it is difficult not to end up essentialising those that should be protected from discrimination. The fundamental question in human rights based thinking of 'who is the rights holder?' will, when linked with the European tradition of minority thinking (Sexuality Policy Watch, 2008, p. 2), almost unvaryingly lead to a need for identifying essentialised characteristics like sexual identity. Let me give an example: The UNHCR has issued guidelines on how to handle 'refugee claims related to sexual orientation and gender identity.' (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Protection Policy and Legal Advice Section, & Division of International Protection Services, 2008, p. 4):

> An applicant's sexual orientation can be relevant to a refugee claim where he or she fears persecutory harm on account of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation, which does not, or is seen not to, conform to prevailing political, cultural or social norms. (Ibid, p. 6)

Here we see that the UNHCR has felt the need to add 'or perceived' – people may be harassed or persecuted for 'being lesbian' even if the person herself do not identify as one. Norway recognises persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation as a legitimate protection ground. To determine the right to asylum, it then becomes important to verify if the claimant *is* homosexual. A typical decision made by the Immigration Appeals Board (*Utlendingsnemnda*) states 'The Board has come to the conclusion that the claimant is not homosexual, (Utlendingsnemda (UNE), 2010) or it 'bases its decision on the belief that the claimant is homosexual,'(Utlendingsnemda (UNE), 2011) It is also interesting to note that UNE uses the Norwegian term *seksuell legning* (Utlendingsnemda (UNE), 2012), not *seksuell orientering*, and given that this is a conscious choice of words, sees homo/heterosexuality as a stable identity category. (see discussion in Ch. 4.8)

Let me then turn to practice: How can the objectives be operationalized in 'on the ground' development cooperation carried out by governmental and non-governmental actors? In what kind of programs would it be relevant to include perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity? The following section will give examples of what the participants think about such questions, and include their advice to MFA on how to improve the policy.

4.11.1   Non-discrimination and human rights

Given the focus on anti-discrimination in the policy papers, it is no surprise that also the participants focus on human rights as an entry point:

> **Hanna:** I have not been very engaged in human rights, I must admit that for me it has been a little like luxury, I thought it was one of those luxuries before, because I have worked so much with hunger and poverty; how important is it that you can vote, the right to vote, if you can not survive until the next day? But the more I have worked with it, the more alluring I find a way of thinking [that says] that human rights are indivisible and interrelated, that it is not enough for people to just have food, you have to live in a free world, you must be allowed to express yourself and not be discriminated against. The non-discrimination principle I find amazing, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - it just gets better and better (laughs) and that it applies to everyone, and this about gay rights is so incredibly clear in the work because you can not believe that human rights apply to all and then brutally discriminate against a group, as it is done in society today.

> **Berit:** My immediate thought is that it belongs under 'human rights and humanitarian aid', and 'women and gender equality', those are maybe the two [areas], but then there is, there is something that is general about it.
> **Me:** Human rights, then, can you specify what you are thinking about?
> **Berit:** It is about discrimination and things like that. And these are things that are incredibly important to us, in terms of, […[162]] we say that we should help the most vulnerable of the vulnerable. […] So we should be attentive and try to see who it is our partners are helping. And who are they not helping? (**Me:** A right based approach...) Yes, and then one gets to this sort of thing, are there any groups here that sort off are left out, that are vulnerable? And that is always very difficult.

Both Hanna and Berit sees human rights as a valuable angle for including sexual orientation and gender identity issues, and in particular Berit is concerned with using a rights based approach to make sure no one is overlooked. Towards the very end of the conversation Berit however also says that 'I thought in advance that it is going to become very clear that we work very little on this, and we do.' I think this sums up the experience of many; the participants were, as we have seen, positive towards the policy, they see the relevance when it comes to applying the non-discrimination principle, but they have not found it important enough, or do not know how to apply it in their programs.

Berit says something else that is interesting though; she thinks 'there is something general' about these issues[163]. I think she is right; if we see sexuality and gender as issues of concern to everyone, if we see that everyone express their sexuality and gender in more or less accepted ways, these are issues that are relevant in very many settings.

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[162] I have taken out details about how the organisation works to ensure anonymity

[163] Unfortunately I did not follow this up when talking with her.

Frida also talks about non-discrimination when she says that development of a society has to include everyone, and when she sees that one needs to have a 'protection perspective:'

> **Frida:** Yes, it is clear it has something to do with development. Because we are dealing with […] a group of people who in many contexts and in many countries is completely stigmatised. And if you are working with the development of an entire population then everyone should in a way be included (Me: '*Alle skal med!*'[164]) whether they have a different sexual orientation, or whether they have a different religion or whatever. But the problem is that it is a taboo area; that it is almost impossible to talk about in many places. Very often one does not find them, because they will not be marked as having a different sexual orientation, they do not want people to know about it, they probably in very many cases live with their wives and husbands and children in such normal family settings. Many for sure risk their lives by being out in public, or by... So I think it is a very important perspective in a development perspective, but I think one has to think very carefully about how to approach it. […] And from a protection perspective, absolutely. I come from [name of organisation] and have always worked a lot with women, with gender, but often with capacity building, with institution building; all the gender analysis part, and less on the protection part. I have never looked very much at either disabled or elderly or widowed, or...but it is clear that the importance of such a protection perspective... if people are discriminated against because of their sexual orientation, transgender or whatever. It is clear that it must be considered. And then there is something about how to do it, how are the criteria, how do you find it, how does one obtain this information. In societies where these things 'do not exist,' right? Then there is something about how to go about actually reaching out to them. But that it is important, there is no doubt about that.

It is clear that she thinks about sexual orientation and gender identity as issues related to a specific group of people. I must add, though, that I may have contributed to this way of thinking by using quotes from the policy papers[165] as introduction when I asked the participants about how this would relate to their work. Frida mentions another important issue here, one that many others also draw attention to: 'They' are hard to find. In health related writing and programming one often talks about marginalised groups as being 'hard to reach,' and Frida explains that it is because they do not want to be seen, they hide their sexuality to not experience the dangers of being out. Kåre Moen et al. has recently published an article titled 'Not at all so hard-to-reach: same-sex attracted men in Dar es Salaam'(Moen, Aggleton, Leshabari, & Middelthon) that questions this assumption:

> Despite expectations to the contrary, it was neither time consuming nor difficult to identify and get to know same-sex attracted men in Dar es Salaam. On the contrary, a large and diverse group of such men could readily be encountered, befriended and involved in HIV-related research. The fieldwork was characterised by communicative openness and the researcher was treated with

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[164] This was the slogan of the Social democratic party for the general elections in 2009. In English it would be something like: 'Everyone aboard!' or 'All shall be included.'

[165] I used phrases like 'fighting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender expressions.' As we have seen above, this language does lay the road open for thinking of specific groups of people that differ from the majority.

immense kindliness, hospitality and inclusivity. While we may not be in a position to say that the situation is identical everywhere else, we find reason to caution against accepting and propagating unexplained, unexamined and unverified claims to the effect that same-sex attracted men in Africa cannot be reached.

We have seen earlier how one participant comes to think sexual orientation and gender identity issues may be relevant in an emergency situation[166]. Frida is however quite weary about how this could be done:

> **Frida:** If one should place it [in our organisation] it would be in our protection area. Again, I think you have to be very careful about how it is handled. I am not saying one should not do it; it should be done in the same way that one should include people with disabilities, people who are in a situation where they are being discriminated against because of the situation they are in. Certainly, I think it can be done, it should be done, yes, but how to do it, you can not just whizz in and be very vocal about it. I think you have to do it in a very careful manner, so that you do not undermine all your own presence there. It has something to do with realising that it takes time to change attitudes. However, the protection part is probably the one that is most obvious place to do something in relation to pure emergency situations.

Being afraid of undermining your own position is, I think, a concern shared by many, if not often verbalised. Organisations do not want to antagonise local partners by bringing up contended issues. Those that, like Frida, do mention it, hold that the problem lies with the 'other;' it is 'they' who have difficulties accepting that 'these things exist.' This brings back the discussion about why sexual orientation and gender identity are seen as sensitive issues. There is no doubt they are hotly debated internationally, but I also believe Norwegian development workers themselves feel it is difficult to talk about. And I do understand them. If your option is to ask a local official during an emergency how he treats the homosexuals in the refugee camp, it may seem like a no-go-area. This is one of the dangers of treating issues related to gender and sexuality as special topics of relevance only for a distinct group.

4.11.2   More on identity politics

Organisations that work with LGBTI issues and advocate for the inclusion of perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity may contribute to the focus on identity. The majority have identity terms as part of their name (e.g. the Norwegian LGBT organisation) (LLH, 2012a) and advocate for 'gay rights' as if this was a special kind of rights. Furthermore many of these organisations are only concerned with issues with specific relevance to the lives of people who identify as LGBTI, and do not see themselves as part of larger movements for

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[166] The one thinking about the floods in Pakistan

social justice. All this strengthens the understanding that there is such a thing as a 'global gay' identity and that sexual orientation and gender identity issues are only relevant for specific minorities. This is of course an example of the more fundamental problem with identity-based politics, an issue that has been, and is, endlessly debated within social movements of many kinds. (See e.g. (Cressida Heyes, 2012; Linda Martín Alcoff, 2000; Stone-Mediatore, 2011) Within the Western 'gay movement' one of the results of these discussions is of course queer activism and politics, a political trend that has attempted to look beyond and transgress the boundaries of identities (see Ch. 2.3.4).

Linda Martín Alcoff warns that 'epistemic scepticism can weaken political determination and gives comfort to political cynicism,' in her essay 'Who's afraid of identity politics?' (Linda Martín Alcoff, 2000) She agrees with the poststructuralist critique of essentialism, but challenges the notion that identity has lost all meaning or use:

> Although Foucault, Butler, and Brown are right about some aspects of some identities or subjectification processes, they are not surely right about all such aspects of all such processes. In contrast to their analysis, for example, the social theorist Manuel Castells' explains identity as a generative source of meaning, necessarily collective rather than wholly individual, and useful not only as a source of agency but also as a meaningful narrative. Similarly, Satya Mohanty argues that identity constructions provide narratives that explain the links between group historical memory and individual contemporary experience, that they create unifying frames for rendering experience intelligible, and thus they help to map the social world. (p. 323-324)

> To say that we have an identity is just to say that we have a location in social space, a hermeneutic horizon that is both grounded in a location and an opening or site from which we attempt to know the world, and thus it is incoherent to view identities as something we would be better off without. (p. 335)

> Hegel was right to argue that without some social recognition for our status as thinking subjects, our very capacity for subjectivity is stunted. Without a social space, such as a civil society or neighborhood or perhaps a family, in which the individual can operate as a free, moral, decision-making agent, the individual cannot become a moral agent, indeed, is not a moral agent. (p. 336-337)

> A realistic identity politics, then, is one that recognizes the dynamic, variable, and negotiated character of identity. It is one that acknowledges the variability in an identity's felt significance and cultural meaning. Yet it is also one that recognizes that social categories of identity often helpfully name specific social locations from which individuals engage in, among other things, political judgement. What is there to fear in acknowledging that? (Linda Martín Alcoff, 2000, p. 341)

Her warnings against the individualist tendencies in some postmodern and queer thinking are certainly valid; it is a criticism that has been brought to the table by activists since postmodernism started to become known in public domain. The queer answer, I think, would be that one needs to be aware of the social locations one is placed in, use it to engage, and fight its boundaries, all at the same time.

Queer activism started, as we have seen, in the US, and is largely a Western phenomenon. Jasbir Puar and others (see 3.3.1) have warned against the co-option of queer agendas in nationalist and racist debate. Puar has also coined the term 'homonationalism' to describe the idea that lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans persons all over the world experience, practice, and are motivated by the same desires, and that they join forces politically because of an understanding that sees identity as something stable, something to use as basis for organising and making political claims.

> In my recently published book, Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times, I sketch the rise of the utility of gay rights discourses to US/Western imperial projects in legislative and consumption realms that coincides with the production of various visible subjects. These are, I contend, the results of the 'successes' of incorporation, of the cultivation of subjects of liberal multiculturalism that have played off each other to cohere a pernicious binary that has emerged — not recently, but during the last 40 years of the post-civil rights era — in U.S. legislative, activist, and scholarly realms: the homosexual other is white, the racial other is straight. Heteronormative ideals pivotal to nation-state formation are now supplemented by homonormativities — what I term homonationalism. I point to western liberal feminist practices that function as both precursors and historical continuities to homonational formations. Islamophobic strands in queer organizing that I detail start appearing in the 1990 's, while welfare reform, neo-liberal privatization, market accommodation, anti-immigrant legislation, and counterterrorism initiatives contribute to the fractioning of race and class alliances and the proliferation of homonationalisms. (J. Puar, Pitcher, & Gunkel, 2008)

Some of the participants were attentive to the problematic aspects of using understandings of identity that originated in 'the West:'

> **Me:** Do you think that there are cultural differences [when it comes to questions of identity]?
> **Eva:** At least in terms of how we talk about it. I think that deep down, biologically, we are put together the same way all of us and then how it manifests itself and how it is described in different societies are different. And that is perhaps where one has also gotten used to using a lot of concepts from 'the North', concepts which are familiar to us. Kåre [Moen] had a very good presentation on exactly this at the UKS seminar[167] (**Me:** Yes it is very interesting) Yes because we talked about what we mean by... a lesbian woman and so on and so on, and many call themselves both lesbian and trans person and something else, and one thinks 'Oh, but can you be all that?' And the term men who have sex with men, for example, there are many who do not see themselves as homosexuals even if they have sex with a man, it can mean something entirely different. And in many cultures, you have initiating rites where it is common that one only has sex with other men until one is fully developed. And there is one thing that I think is very important and that, going back to the seminar and what we learnt from it, that we found out we will have to focus more on our own understanding versus what we are trying to talk about when

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[167] UKS: *Utenrikstjenestens Kompetansesenter* ('The Norwegian Foreign Service Institute') The Institute 'is responsible for developing, administering and carrying out all courses and competence-development programs at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).' (The Norwegian Foreign Service Institute, 2012)

we are abroad [ute[168]]. For it may be that if we change some of the language and recognise what we are actually talking about, we may be able to meet in a different way. And this about it [homosexuality] being a thing that has been introduced by white Europeans to Africa, that is of course completely off the mark. But that is easy for us to say when we come and use all the fine European words [to describe] it too, instead of making them aware of what has actually been there throughout the ages.

Eva feels that she learned something important from the discussion about how one talks about gender and sexuality; that the concepts that are used are *our* way of describing *our* society's organising of sexual and gendered identities. She also comments on the argument that homosexuality was 'introduced by white Europeans to Africa,' an argument she finds ridiculous since 'deep down, biologically, we are put together the same way all of us.' Her last comment, that '[we should make] them aware of what has actually been there throughout the ages,' seems to indicate that she thinks Africans do not have knowledge of their own history, and that it is our task to educate them about it. It may be true that many in Africa have little knowledge of the pre-colonial history; it is equally true that many Norwegians have scant knowledge of how society was organised with regards to sexuality and gender before, for example, the 19th century. It is also an unfortunate fact that much historic and ethnographic knowledge about traditional society in Africa has been and is produced by European (and American) scholars. This is part of what can be seen as continued colonial practice. What would be a strategy for development that could subvert colonial practices?

4.11.3   SRHR and Gender

In the previous section I have discussed how the gender concept is used and understood in policy documents and by the participants. Berit says in the quote above that she would find it natural to include sexual orientation and gender identity issues under 'women and gender equality,' while several others found the focus on women too exclusive for including for example programs for homosexual men. We have also seen that the action plan on women and gender equality mention non-discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity under the headline SRHR:

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[168] When the participants talk about their work and projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America they use the Norwegian term *ute* to indicate that they are talking about a geographical location in 'the South.' I have translated *ute* to the general 'abroad.' *Ute* literary means 'outside,' in the sense 'outside the country.' This use of word has a history: I think it comes from the missionary tradition in Norway. Missionaries have always talked about '*å dra ut*' (literary 'to go out'), an echo of Jesus' command: *Gå derfor ut og gjør alle folkeslag til mine disipler* ('Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,' Matthew 28:19-20). (Bible Gateway, 2012)

Me: In my experience SRHR is almost always put under the gender label – it is the people who work with gender who work with [SRHR] and it is mostly women.

Eva: There is no doubt that women and gender equality is very important still but it is just that one must be able to work with both, and in fact if some women's organisations could become more active in this field, I think actually this could strength the agenda of SOGI, for it is not only the human rights organisations that need to pick this ball, [it is] particularly the women's organisations.

Me: The whole package of SRHR very often falls under gender equality and gender, and is very often women-oriented. What is the link between gender issues and sexual rights?

A[169]: I don't think it is like you say, I think that we should to a larger degree connect gender and the SRHR package; it is not necessarily located in the gender equality package.

Me: Because?

A: Yes, I look at how we work here [in Norad], for example, and how one works in embassies as well; SRHR is very much about health. It should perhaps be *more* gender in it. We had a seminar here last year in November, which was very interesting (**Me:** Yes, the Nordic?) The Nordic [seminar on SRHR] yes, an attempt to connect Beijing and ICPD [International Conference on Population and Development, the Cairo conference] - I think we need more of this! And for me this is also where the rights part comes in, you have to stop talking just about sexual and reproductive health, but also get the rights part, where there are very many similarities with how you work to promote sexual rights and women's rights, (**Me:** Yes definitely) it is in a sense two sides of same coin.

I think both Eva and A would agree that there is a strong link between gender and sexuality issues, and that everyone would benefit from seeing and using such linkages in their work. In my practical experience as an activist working with sexual orientation and gender identity issues in Eastern Africa I have noticed that feminist women's organisations are among the first to raise these issues and to join hands with sex workers' and LGBTI organisations in sexual rights advocacy. (Examples can be found in e.g.Urgent Action Fund, 2006) (Akina Mama wa Afrika, 2009) As we have seen, this not appear to be the case of Norwegian women-oriented development organisations.

4.11.4   Marginalisation and poverty

Eva, who works with health and HIV, also makes notice of another area were she thinks too little is done:

Eva: In my field, [development] means that one should have access to treatment, access to good health and equal rights for all, that would be a good development thinking in the health and AIDS field. And it is clear that within the field that you are currently working on, it has been shown that it is not something we have been able to achieve at all. And we have been so quick to talk about poverty reduction strategies and other things, without reflecting on this group, the LGBT group.

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[169] A works in the Department for Peace, Gender and Democracy (*Avdeling for fred likestilling og demokrati*) in Norad. The department has now changed its name to the Department for Economic Development, Energy, Gender and Governance.

When talking about poverty, one has talked about children, one has talked about women and men, but this will never be raised as a separate group. So many will simply not be admitted, and do not have access to the services that we want to work with.

It is well-known that marginalised groups are poverty stricken in any setting. Despite the decade long focus on poverty alleviation in Norwegian development policy, I have not been able to find any examples of an acknowledged link between poverty and people who are marginalised because they break with society's gender or sexuality norms. Ingrid Fiskaa however now acknowledges the link:

IF: If people are being discriminated against, deprived of rights on the basis of gender or sexual orientation, this will prevent development. UN's Development Organization has said that one of the most important obstacles to achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals is the lack of gender equality. If women, for example female farmers had equal access to inputs and land rights and so on as their husbands have, the actually agricultural production in Africa would have increased significantly. And the example of health I mentioned earlier, if one is deprived of access to health care - that is a direct obstacle to development. If women get their say it will create plenty of positive effects, not only for themselves but for their families and communities. And I believe the same goes for sexual minorities, when people are deprived of rights and access to resources, health, education and so on, the consequence is that a country can not utilize its full potential, that one does not get to use the resources, the human resources one actually has, and all forms of discrimination and oppression will prevent or curb development.

A study commissioned by SIDA focus (among many things) on this aspect:

When making a general analysis of injustices, LGBT people primarily suffer from repression in forms of cultural injustice (being rendered invisible, being maligned, harassed, violated and disparaged in everyday life) and legal injustice (being denied legal rights and equal protection under the law). As a consequence of cultural and legal injustice, LGBT people also suffer economic injustice (being denied employment or summarily dismissed from work, being denied family-based social welfare benefits, etc). Cultural, legal and economic disadvantages reinforce each other and, thus, the discrimination of LGBT people forms an escalating negative circle of injustice and poverty. (Samelius & Wågberg, 2005, pp. 19-20)

Eva, Fiskaa and the researchers at SIDA talk about a defined group, 'LGBT group/people' or 'sexual minorities.' I think it may be useful to think and talk about LGBT as a group to bring attention to the effects of marginalisation. We have seen how the participants ask for data, and categorising people makes it easier to produce 'hard facts.' I am more in doubt if the categories are useful for including perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity in practical work. I will come back with suggestions of alternative approaches when I talk specifically about health programs in development work.

4.11.5   Faith based organisations

When I talked with the participants about their experiences and thoughts about implementation, I was curious to hear the views from people working in faith based organisations. Allow me therefore a rather long conversation extract:

Me: If we now turn to the practical development cooperation, what place do you see for these perspectives?

Ragnhild: They are important, but unfortunately I do not think [name of organisation] with its ownership will be prime movers on this. That is, I do not think we will be in the forefront in the Norwegian context. I register with joy that there are some also in [name of organisation] who dare to bring up this issue abroad (*ute*) too. But I think they are too few. At the same time I see that the organisation has been very careful in the new strategy. This is not a main issue for us, but it is a perspective that I believe those who work with the themes are familiar with, and try to get on the agenda. But I do not see us as a major driving force, I do not.

Me: Are there reasons within the organisation in Norway?

Ragnhild: Yes, I think to a large extent it lies with our [constituency]. It would create resistance if one began to flag it as a high priority. At the same time I do not know... Here there are kind of fluid transitions. Working for maternal health is acceptable, to fight against child mortality is acceptable, not only acceptable, one is of course in favour of that, and the same is true for gender equality, but some elements within the scope of sexual and reproductive rights will be opposed. We have never really reached a closing [on these issues], and have never had a thorough debate about views on abortion, and we have just said that instead of having [a debate] and maybe end up on a stand that we think will be difficult to live with, we let it lie, and then ... I think it is not ... or I think it would be (hesitates) easy to gather support for the view that [there is] need for an abortion law, meaning that one sees [the need for it]. We have, among other things, a project in [country in Latin America], where this has been a problem and where our partners were very clear and said that banning abortion is dangerous, but from there to, for example, add to the platform that we will fight for free and safe abortions, that probably lies a bit ahead, and I do not think we…[…] And another question ... We have had the situation in Malawi, where some were grossly harassed and discriminated against because of sexual orientation, this it is not difficult to disapprove of, without […] feeling any need to have a position on for example […] marriage between persons of the same sex. That is actually outside the area that is important for us to have a position on. Some will say that it is part of the gender equality issue. So it is clear there are some issues that are perceived more important than others.

Me: Malawi is a good example, and there are several African countries where […] churches have been involved in stirring up hostile feelings and where I think [the organisation] could land in some 'dilemmas' (Ragnhild: Yes...) in relation to local partners?

Ragnhild: No. I think that actually is not much of a dilemma, in this case I think it is relatively easy to say that we can not accept this. But it may mean that you do not, that you do not have specific projects or things that affect these issues. But in relation to speak out when something happens, I think there is no problem.

Me: But is it then a fact that you know of specific examples of how it happened, that one has spoken out, that one has entered into this dialogue?
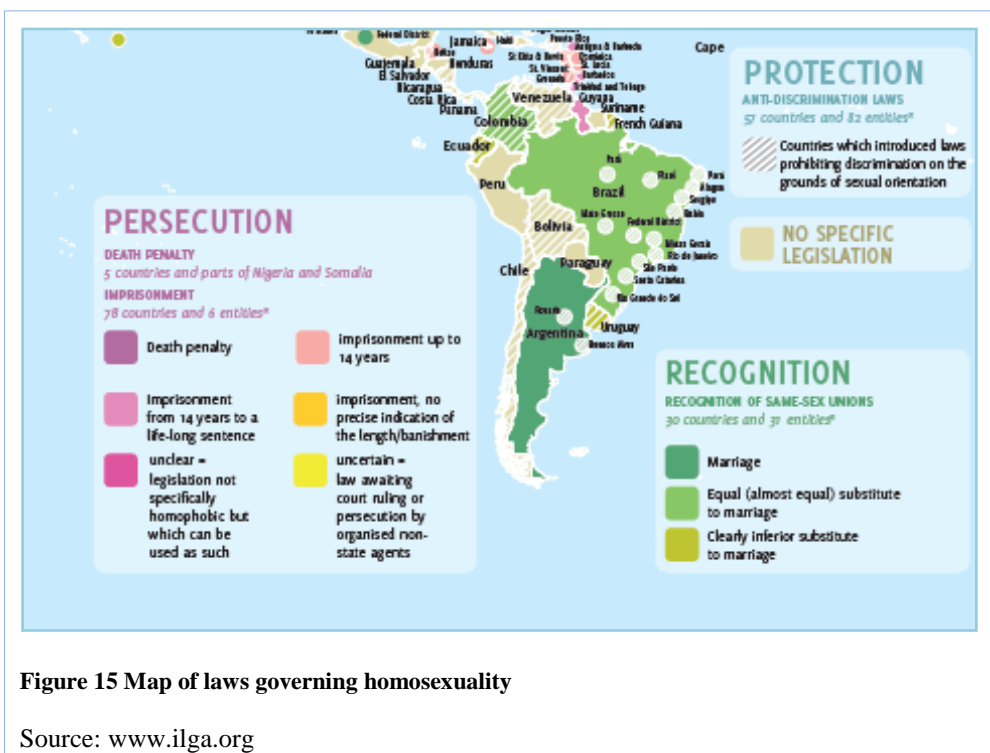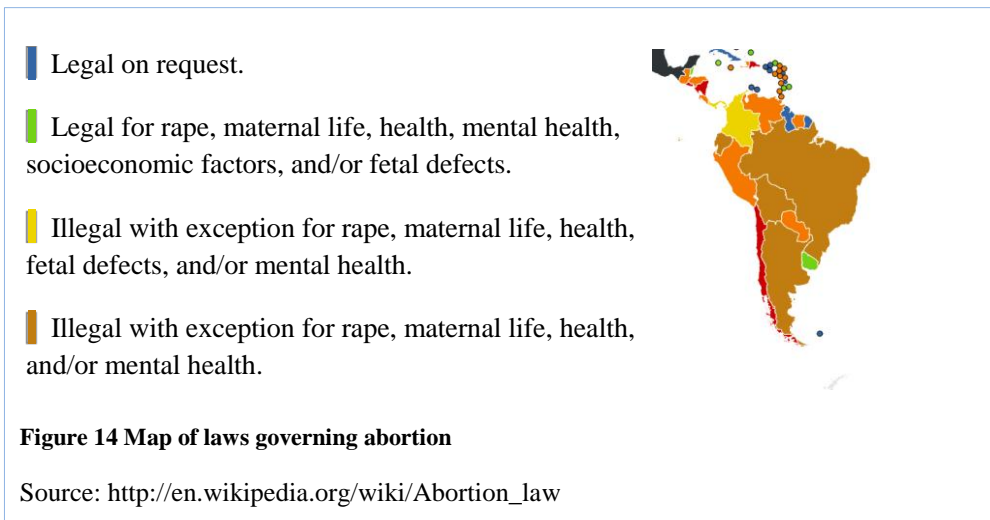
Ragnhild: Yes, [country in Latin America] is an example; [African country] is another. Another example that is about some other things, but we have had a pretty extensive work in relation to female genital mutilation, where we have been very specific in relations with authorities and not the least religious leaders, because we have thought that to succeed in this work we have to have them

on our team. Here we are clear.

Me: You say that concrete cooperation may not be very relevant, but if you think about the thematic areas that you work with and have projects on, are there some themes where you think it would be natural that these questions were included, or where you know [they are included]?

Ragnhild: As I mentioned, we have a project underway in [African country]... I guess this is the only place where there has been an open, organised debate, on these issues; about the relation with people with different sexual orientation included bisexual, transsexual, and see it in a larger perspective. And it has been done from a ... it has been with church partners. Also based on an understanding of human dignity and equality, where ... I don't know it very well and do not know how many were involved in the discussion and how well known it is, but I think that it is hopefully a kind of pilot project for us that will allow us to take it up in other countries. But there has been extensive work done by other actors in [African region], so it is not something we are all alone in.

My own bias towards faith based organisations is fairly easy to spot – I do pressure Ragnhild to answer some very direct questions about presumed negative attitudes and lack of action. Her answers are honest and include several interesting perspectives. First she echoes the thoughts quoted on p. 182; working with SOGI issues is difficult because of the organisation's constituency, and if it is done, it should not be talked too much about. She then draws the parallel to the debate about abortion. In international forums the traditional fault line has gone between those who support the right to abortion *and* anti-discrimination measures on the ground of sexual orientation and gender identity and those who oppose both. In many contexts this is presented as questions of ethics (the respect for sanctity of human life and the divine order of sex and procreation). Another way is to see the two questions as linked by gender; both abortion and same sex sexuality may be seen to threaten the 'natural order' of separation and hierarchy, the principles that constitutes the 'Gender system' according to Hirdman. (Hirdman, 1988, see Ch. 2.3) In this regard it is interesting to note that in international debate the traditional fault line is now moving; it may seem like sexual orientation and gender identity issues are slightly less non-acceptable than abortion. If we look at development in Latin America the past ten years, more and more countries are introducing protection measures against discrimination on the grounds of SOGI, while to decriminalise abortion seems to be a non-issue outside feminist circles:

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Legend
Legal on request.
Legal for rape, maternal life, health, mental health, socioeconomic factors, and/or fetal defects.
Illegal with exception for rape, maternal life, health, fetal defects, and/or mental health.
Illegal with exception for rape, maternal life, health, and/or mental health.

Figure 14 Map of laws governing abortion

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abortion_law

Figure 15 Map of laws governing homosexuality

Source: www.ilga.org

Another interesting feature is that the joint resistance against abortion and sexual orientation and gender identity has brought feminist and LGBT movements together, particularly in Latin America; *Red Latinoamericana de Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir* ('Latin American Network of Catholics for the Right to Decide') is an example of an organisation that started out to advocate for the right to abortion, and that has included sexual orientation and gender identity issues.(Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir (CDD), 2012) The Nicaraguan organisation *La Iniciativa Desde la Diversidad Sexual por los Derechos Humanos (IDSDH)*

('The Initiative from Sexual Diversity to the Human Rights') on the other hand has allied itself with the women's movement in the fight for the right to abortion. (La Iniciativa Desde la Diversidad Sexual por los Derechos Humanos (IDSDH), 2012)

Ragnhild talks about a dialogue project her organisation has been involved in 'with an open, organised debate, on these issues; about the relation with people with different sexual orientation [...] with church partners.' All the three participants that work with FBOs stress the importance of dialogue, a non-confrontational, open-minded dialogue with people and partners you do not necessarily have a common understanding with:

> **Yngve:** [There has been] problems in Ethiopia because the Swedish church has tried to put... no, maybe not influence, or yes, they have done that too, to the extent that [they] talk about the acceptance of homosexual unions or marriages or things like that, […] The church in Ethiopia which has been a partner for many, many years, threatened to break the partnership because they believe that this is completely wrong and they can not work with an organisation that thinks and understand the Bible so totally different from what they do. And somehow, is this what you want, break-up, exclusion, or one might wish, [even] if it takes longer time, to more quietly be influencing... There are various starting points [and] it is difficult to say today what is best and what is worst.

> **Ragnhild:** I have worked with a number of very conservative churches, and if I should come with a principle that says 'if you do not practice gender equality among you, we will not work with you,' then we might as well just build a wall around ourselves, and have a nice time at home. I think that one important task is to show how important gender equality is through practical examples, and be initiators and challengers, but to set it as a requirement in whichever context, I think that would be taking a bad turn. Then we will not get ahead; then we will be left in the trenches. It can be quite painful to see all that one believes are in violation of both human rights and gender equality, but that is where we need to be. Otherwise, we fail those who are fighting to change the situation.

> **David:** When you have organisations that represent a wide range of opinions, you have both extremes and everything in between, but it also provides a high degree of freedom. And I probably think… that is, I really have a commitment to dialogue. And it can easily become compromises but... I remember very early in our work that I thought that in very much of the secular HIV/AIDS work [there is this] unprotected talk about for example condoms and sexuality and there are many groups that are excluded, that close the door before one has started anything. [...] So if one starts working with this type of group you may get results perhaps after a long, long time... That is, I have become quite concerned with the manner in which one can begin to move the stones, because so many people are victims when one does not work with those groups. One must understand that the religious are some powerful systems; you can not expect that a person can easily step out of it, especially not if it is young people. [...] And therefore [may be the solution is to] enter into dialogue, and therefore I feel that I can vouch for that we need to compromise with an awareness that we must also see that it is a gradual change. And what I find... I talked to my closest contact in [African country] earlier this year or late last year and asked him... The situation for gays and lesbians, when will the churches [in his country] be able to raise it, and then his answer is surely influenced by the fact that he talks with me, but he thought that in about three-four years it will be possible. [...] But it is this precarious balance, where one is going to go wrong, sometimes stepping too far into the water, sometimes being too careful, so there is something about the acceptance of both of the two.

I think some FBOs have some very valuable experiences when it comes to working together despite of different opinions about important issues like gender and sexuality. To meet people with respect for everyone's point of view, to listen to each other in a dialogue between equal partners, to realise that dialogue may change both parts over time, are indeed lessons worth listening too.

> According to contemporary social sciences, dialogue takes place when all participants, regardless of their academic or cultural background, are listened to and count. Participatory democracy is grounded in this kind of dialogue. (Flecha, 2005, p. 2)

Is it possible to live up to this ideal? There are still power hierarchies in place, partner organisations (/churches) in poor settings are usually depending on financial support from the donor organisation, and donors usually come from a tradition of saving heathens and civilising savages.

Ragnhild mention 'the situation in Malawi, where some were grossly harassed and discriminated against because of sexual orientation.' She is referring to the case of Steven Monjeza and Tiwonge Chimbalanga; two young Malawians who were arrested in December 2009 after an alleged engagement ceremony and in May 2010 were sentenced to 14 years in prison for 'unnatural offences' and 'indecent practices between males' under sections 153 and 156 of the Penal Code. After massive international pressure Malawi's President Bingu wa Mutharika intervened and gave them pardon. (See e.g. Amnesty International, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2012; International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), 2012) For me it is a bit difficult to understand what Ragnhild and her organisation's position regarding sexual orientation and gender identity issues are. On one hand she is very clear that they would, and have indeed, spoken out towards local partners in situations where grave human rights violations occur. On the other hand she seems rather reluctant when pressured on what she thinks about integrating sexual orientation and gender identity issues in the organisation's work in general. Maybe faith based organisations prefer to not work with sexual orientation and gender identity issues, but do so when and if they feel they have to[170]?

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[170] The Malawi case was very high profile and got a lot of media attention, also in Norway. The Minister of the Environment and Development Erik Solheim brought it up in official talks with his counterparts in Malawi during a visit in March 2010 (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010a) something that led to media debate in Malawi about donor conditionality.

4.11.6   Working with partners

When we talked about strategies for including sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives in development work, some of the participants stressed the importance of working with partners in the recipient country; that one should support local actors who already do this:

> **Hanna:** But it is by working through local organisations that we will have the largest effect in most of the fields we are [working in], they know the reality best, it is they who can best advise us [as well as] local authorities and the embassy about what are the best interventions. It is clear there are many different players, all do not agree but that they also have an internal discussion on what are the best targets. This is something that [should be supported and] LLH has been clear on giving this advice.

> **Kjersti:** For me it is important that we support the change agents, but that we do not take the initiative. Also because it can actually be counterproductive. At the women's conference in Copenhagen in 1980 African feminists stood up and accused Western feminists of undermining their efforts against female genital mutilation. And it was like a very important learning for me who was not part of it; even though I was part of the feminist movement I knew nothing of this, but I was... I studied anthropology and we had a long debate on FGM if [our policy] was sound from a kind of relativist mentality, right? Or if it was violence against women. And for me that was not a question, but ... these things were very educative for my understanding of how we work with development aid, then, that we must always make sure that we work in dialogue and that we support the local actors, and that we do not... do not promote agendas in a way that is counterproductive. These are difficult balances, and one must constantly evaluate how to do it in individual cases. […] I think probably that Norway will, and I will support this approach, that we rather support the [local] actors as best we can...

Kjersti's account of being educated by African feminists in Copenhagen echoes many feminists of the 'second-wave-feminist' generation – white European or American women who through listening to 'Third World' feminists came to change some foundational understandings of the world; that people from so called underdeveloped countries or social strata have their own objectives and strategies for change; that brown women do not want to be saved by white men or women, to paraphrase Spivak[171]. Both Hanna and Kjersti here uphold a non-hierarchical view of how development should take place. When I asked the participants general questions about 'who should decide' about development, all ensure that it should be 'people themselves.' In the last section I will question if this is a principle that truly imbues Norwegian development cooperation.

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[171] Spivak argues that the abolition of the Hindu rite of *sati* in India by the British 'has been generally understood as a case of "White men saving brown women from brown men"' (Spivak, 1988)

4.11.7   Health

Many of the participants mention improving people's health as an important condition for development in general. I also asked about their thoughts on if and how sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives would be of relevance to health programmes. Berit says her immediate thought is in HIV/AIDS work 'because it is that which is fitting' ('*det er jo det som ligger lagelig til*') while Tore sees HIV/AIDS epidemiology among homosexuals as 'low hanging fruits,' and Eva cites UNAIDS when she says 'you must know your own epidemic to actually be able to respond to it.' Most of the participants, like these three, immediately associate sexual orientation and gender identity and health with HIV/AIDS. This may be problematic if this is the only connection one can think of. I see from the interviews that issues like experience of discrimination in health services are mostly brought up by me; few connect non-discrimination with health on their own:

> **Me:** Let us now turn to these perspectives, sexual orientation and gender identity, do they influence the health of a human being, and in what way?
> **Berit:** Yes… I have not thought very much about that. Actually, apart from what we know about men who have sex with men in relation to HIV/AIDS or venereal diseases and things like that, there is also in a way an additional dimension, but no, I do not know...
> **Me:** If you think from a rights perspective, a rights and discrimination perspective, what then?
> **Berit:** In terms of health? (**Me:** Mmm) Yes, it could well be that it is harder to get health, get access to health services, that could be the case. So that is one thing one maybe could work with in terms of having a greater focus on it.
> **Me:** And where should the focus be... who should one work with?
> **Berit:** I do not really know. I know too little about it, I think. I do not know if there are any special things you are thinking about or?
> **Me:** Well, I was thinking... in relation to this about access to health care, it may also be about raising the awareness of health workers.... (**Berit:** Yes it does!) That it is a question about the ways people are met?
> **Berit:** That's right, and we focus on it in relation to HIV and AIDS, but not in general, I would say. We have worked a lot with health care workers in Asia on this about discrimination against HIV positive, which is, that does absolutely exist among health professionals (**Me:** Like here...) Yes, here too, but I have sometimes been a bit shocked when I have realised how bad it was.

It may be problematic if sexual orientation and gender identity issues are always and only brought up in relation with HIV-statistics; Vulnerability could easily be seen as self-inflicted, and a group of people can be marked as carriers of disease (which has often been the case. AIDS was first known under the nick-name 'the gay plague.' (See e.g. Jan Fouchard, 2005)

Eva has thought about the doctor patient relationship, and that it may be unwise not to talk about same-sex sexuality in relation to sexual health:

> **Me:** We spoke earlier of better health as a development policy goal, how do these themes fit in, or do they? Do they influence the health condition; let us first say at the individual level?
> **Eva:** It is clear that if you live in a country where you are being discriminated against by your doctor

if you should come in with a venereal disease or… That is, many *want* to be open, and if you can not be open with your doctor, and do not get an offer [of services], then it will influence your general health situation. And one sees that many do not come forward and get tested, because one operates a lot underground because things are illegal. And then one does not get access to treatment or preventive measures. In generalised epidemics, all is about the youth and children and it is very oriented towards heterosexuality. So even many heterosexuals will think that having anal sex is safe, for no one mentions it as one of the hazards. So in general we see that one, I think it is 40% of youth […] do not have basic knowledge about AIDS, and I would believe that among the 'SOGI' population that has not been reached, neither as a group, nor [as individuals, the knowledge is even less.]

Eva also immediately thinks about sexual health as the relevant theme in this context. At the same time she makes an important point when she indirectly claims that health personnel are prejudiced and that this has consequences for the general health situation for a person who would like to be able to speak to her/his doctor about sexually transmitted infections. Mari Bjørkman has done research about doctor-patient relationships in Norway for patients that identify as lesbians. (Bjorkman & Malterud, 2007, 2009) Among Bjørkman's conclusions are:

To obtain quality care for lesbian women, the healthcare professional needs a persistent awareness that not all patients are heterosexual, an open attitude towards a lesbian orientation, and specific knowledge of lesbian health issues. The dimensions of awareness, attitude, and knowledge are interconnected, and a positive direction on all three dimensions appears to be a necessary prerequisite. (Ibid, p.1)

In Norway research like Bjørkman's has led to the introduction of a state financed programme of training for health and social workers; *Rosa kompetanse* ('Pink competence') is run by LLH and trains personnel to think less heteronormatively in their daily performance as service providers. (LLH, 2012b) Anne comments:

Anne: It is important for health workers to know about this [sexual preferences/identity] but I think about how it is talked about. Does the health worker has a language for it and can talk about it? That must be very important.

This is exactly what LLH's programme is trying to address; What language is used, do health workers manage to behave unbiased towards clients, do they have the necessary skills and levels of reflection to talk about sexual orientation and gender identity issues and feel comfortable when doing so? (Ibid)

Eva also refers to the belief that anal sex is safer than vaginal sex when it comes to HIV transmission[172], and finds it problematic that HIV programmes have targeted what is perceived to be the most common practices (vaginal intercourse). Finally I find her use of terminology interesting in light of the discussion in Ch. 4.8: Eva is apparently used to the international acronyms of the field (she uses the acronym 'SOGI' when speaking Norwegian,) and says 'the SOGI population.' A literal understanding of the SOGI population would mean everyone, if we presume that all humans do have a sexual orientation and gender identity. Again this use of the concept shows that sexual orientation is something that is read as a specific orientation; homosexuality. Claus thinks it is important to look beyond the division of people according to identities:

> **Claus:** As identities they may be clearly separated [between hetero- and homosexual orientation], but people's sexual practices do not necessarily follow this and […] what people do in their own life, it may include many relations and practices. So I would think that to understand more about his, and somehow break down these very clear boundaries between [identities] may be very important input towards health research and health work, development work with HIV and AIDS.

Tore and I discussed the use of HIV as an entry point to talk about health in relation to sexuality:

> **Tore:** Health in the broadest sense is a very important gateway to work with [development.] Look back on our own development history; to be healthy, to have access to services, not to be discriminated against, and this is also related to sexuality. And who else... if not health people can talk about sexuality, who will then be able to do so? But it is a long road to travel! […] I think you have to look at ... use epidemiology, we shall not use HIV as a starting point for working on gay rights, for doing everything, but it is clear this is an area that simply is so important, that was important with us. But then again, it would be gays and not lesbians. (**Me:** Yes, and that is quite apparent), so I think ... I see political work towards 2014 - Cairo, which has been very woman-oriented, will now be widened to in a way be gender-oriented, and this is something that we are going to work with.
> **Me:** When people began to talk about MSM, at least in the discussions I know from East Africa, it was as 'bridge populations,' right? There was constantly this problem focus and not a human rights focus, but fortunately more and more people now dare to talk about equal rights to health, and not only that there is a danger to the national statistics, although this too is of course a relevant argument...
> **Tore:** Yes, I think we have to use the statistics that are the foundation, and then it is a question about the way that things are implemented... I think that the health field ... but the same would apply to

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[172] I have heard much anecdotal evidence about this belief, but not seen any research done on it from Africa. A quick PubMed search only gave two rather old articles; a review of international papers and one from New Zealand. (Chetwynd, Chambers, & Hughes, 1992; Halperin, 1999) Both do however confirm that heterosexuals are less likely to use condom when having anal intercourse, and some state they believe the practice is safer because of less contact with female body fluids.

very many sectors, has some things that are not only symbolic, but actually some specific issues that are 'low hanging fruits, relatively'.

Tore thus sees health as a rights issue (non-discrimination), he sees health personnel as key to bringing in sexuality issues because they should be comfortable talking about it, and he sees HIV as an entry point at the same time as he sees some of the dangers associated with using it (for example that lesbians are left out). An example of successful advocacy work using HIV as entry point is what has happened in Kenya. In 2005 the first quantitative research paper on HIV vulnerability among MSM in Nairobi was published (Onyango-Ouma et al., 2005). Service providers and organisations started to use the statistics when advocating the national AIDS organisations, and discussions about if and how MSM might influence the national statistics ensued. In 2012 the government-appointed Kenya National Commission on Human Rights issued a report on SRHR where they establish that LGBTI Kenyans are discriminated and that their right to health is not fulfilled. (Lichuma, Ngugi, Tororei, Mati, & Olungah, 2012) I think the Kenyan example shows that even if there are pitfalls when using HIV as an entry point, it may lead to a wider, more inclusive view of health as a right. Another problematic aspect, raised by Tore, is that the focus on HIV leaves out lesbians; although maybe not justifiable, lesbians are presumed to be a low risk group when it comes to STIs in general and HIV in particular. Kjersti echoes this when she says 'I see that if you are allowed to live as a lesbian, it probably has positive health rewards[173].' Of the funds allocated specifically to work with persons marginalised because of SOGI, the better part goes towards HIV programmes for MSM[174].

Several participants expressed concern about how difficult they perceived it would be to include sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives in health and HIV programmes in Africa, and that they thought it would be easier to do so in Asia:

> **Me:** Do you see any difference between the different ... is it easier to work with [SOGI issues] in Asia or in Africa or in Latin America, the areas you work in?
> **Ragnhild:** I think that Africa is easier in the sense that there are so many who are affected, they kind of *have* to talk about it, to a greater extent than many other places. It is a major part of their everyday lives. (**Me:** HIV, yes?) Yes, and in this light... Many will say that in Asia... the Asians, or at least in Southeast Asia, find it easier to talk about sexuality than many others; the depth of it may well be

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[173] I am presuming that she is thinking about the lower risk of getting STIs. She may of course also be referring to lesser risks of dying in child birth...

[174] I have not found any scientific publication that confirms this claim, it is based on my own experience of working with these issues internationally.

another matter. But it is probably easier to address questions about sexuality directly in parts of Southeast Asia. They have more tradition on it.

Me: It is interesting that you use AIDS as an example [of how poverty affects health] because it is one of the things I have read about and interested me for in particular. In relation to health and/or HIV and AIDS, to now get into my 'special field,' in what way do you think that this about sexual orientation and gender identity come to influence the state of health?
Gina: Yes, I absolutely think so! Men who have sex with men are much more susceptible to infection in the first place. In many African countries it is either criminalised, that is, homosexuality as such is either criminalised or very, very, very tabooed. It is a little different in Asia. But I think it is definitely part of, or it has an impact on whether you, what kind of access you have to health services. And if it is very, very stigmatised, then it will of course be even harder to ask for help if you need it in relation to a venereal disease, for example.
[We discuss the fact that her organisation has started to work on SOGI issues in Asia but not in Africa:]
Me: But then you think that the reason [for not working with HIV and MSM in Africa] is political opposition in the countries? You can do so in Asia, but not in Africa?
Gina: Yes, I would think that it is a much more difficult political context. That is, there is much less latitude for these groups. That is what I would think, because it is partly a criminal offense and the groups do not have the same opportunity to be an actor then. How problematic or not it would be for us to cooperate with such an organisation, I am not sure. If it was not allowed in the country I would think it would be difficult for us.
Me: Yes, one thing is if one works directly with organisations, something else is to what extent one has emphasised for example men who have sex with men […] in HIV work in general in African countries?
Gina: As I said, I do not think we have had any special focus on it in African countries but if we get to do [mention specific plans] in Asia, then I think that a very exciting next step would be to take it to Africa and to argue with this kind of South to South learning, and in a way see if this is something we can use. And I do not perceive that the discussion is still there in many African countries, and that is fine in a way, because I think that it is a very difficult starting point when they say that homosexuality does not exist in our country, then it is much harder to be able to reach these groups, if it is a criminal offense and if it is so stigmatised. But I think this is more the reason rather than it being a question of whether we as an organisation should be able to do it, if you know what I mean. I do not think we should have a problem with working with the theme, included because we actually do it in some places.

Me: Finally, you earlier mentioned the work with HIV, and you mentioned that in our part of the world gay men as a group has been hit hardest. And yet, in Africa with its general epidemic one has seen that this has been a group that has been totally overlooked. Have you formed any thoughts on why it has been like this, also from Norwegian NGOs' side?
Stein: I think that Norwegian organisations… One should know the context, and [in] the context, this is not very open, and then it will be like that. And then there is this that one... and that the problem is so overwhelming and immense, and there is more than enough to deal with, and then it is perhaps also that one imagines that it is difficult to reach... That is, there are no organisations of homosexual men, you will not find that in Africa (**Me:** Now there are...) But I mean like on the whole it is almost invisible, and to look up… it is very problematic if there are no... if you can not find the organisational opposite party, the natural partner. So I think probably it is a bit like that, I think probably there is a lack of openness in Africa that is reflected in the Norwegian organisations. […] I think so, but this is a bit like my guesses, but I think that if it was... It is not usually hard to find partners, but I think that it is, I think it is the cultural conditions that have created the invisibility

that is part of the explanation.

Me: Do you think it may also have something.... the ideas we have had about... That is, if we have [had beliefs about] them not being there and therefore not worth looking for?

Stein: I think we have… I think the view from the North has been that in most societies in Africa there have been some pretty warped ideas about this; that homosexual men do not exist in Africa. And we have frowned over this and thought these were ridiculous claims. That is what I think.

Me: So one has not been coloured by the idea oneself?

Stein: No, I think not. That I can not believe.

I wish I had asked *why* they thought it is easier to talk about sexuality in (Southeast) Asia and so difficult in Africa; Is it true, is it a 'popular belief' or is it based on experience or systematic investigations? In the chapter about historic views of gender and sexuality I have discussed how myths about the Other were established during colonisation. One of the myths that have persisted is the idea that homosexuality is non-existent or rare in Africa (See e.g.: Epprecht, 2004; Murray & Roscoe, 1998). Both Gina and Stein think that the problem lies with the Africans, and is not caused by prejudice or bias among Norwegian development actors; Norwegian development organisations would have had HIV programmes for MSM in Africa, if only their African counterpart would admit that homosexuality exists among them. I find this to be problematic as it can be seen as an example of lacking humility and self-scrutiny, or at best lack of awareness/knowledge about the theme. Furthermore I think he is wrong:

> **Vidar:** But it is a taboo, no? It is clear that if it had been like in Europe, where it has been a more homosexual epidemic, then that may have been advantageous for the gay cause, if you know what I mean, because you would have had to have put your finger on it, but when it is mainly a heterosexual epidemic then it shows in a way that homosexuality might not be very... I do not know, seen from the outside it may seem as if homosexuality is not as prevalent in Africa. Do you understand what I mean? Whether it is or not, I do not know anything about. It is probably at least more suppressed, that is that it does not surface very much because of the strong phobias.

Let me also give one example from my personal experience to illustrate what I believe are wide held opinions: During the first semester of the Master programme in International Community Health we had a (mandatory) course, 'INTHE4000 - Theoretical Foundation' with a module called 'Reproductive health, HIV and AIDS.' (University of Oslo & Section for International Community Health (Institute of Health and Society Faculty of Medicine), 2012) One of the lectures on HIV in Africa was given by an epidemiologist who during a long discussion insisted that MSM was a marginal group in Africa, so small that it would not influence the general epidemic, and therefor did not merit any special attention. I think this has been the 'truth' among both scientists and development organisations until quite recently,

and I believe the one of the reasons are persisting myths about 'African sexuality;' myths that hold that same sex love and sexuality is less common among Africans.

A couple of the participants mention mental health as an aspect of health they find relevant with regards to questions of sexual orientation and gender identity. Kjersti adds it to the list of what she thinks would be the most important entry points:

> **Kjersti:** I see that if one is allowed to live as a lesbian then there are probably positive health benefits (we laugh) in many ways. At the same time we know that women are victims of rape and violence because they are lesbians and they get married against their will, or they are not allowed to live out, or even think out, their lesbian orientation (*lesbiske legning*) because it is completely unacceptable. That is one side of it. And I think that it is… and an important entry point is this about the stigma attached to homosexuality for both men, well primarily men because men are allowed to live out their sexuality, and are expected to live it out, this does not apply to women to the same degree, not in any way. The result is that men buy sex, use... from either male prostitute or young boys or such... We know that girls also do that, you have this type of gift relationships, you have lots of different relationships in relation to sexual, the sexual, which also involves girls in African countries and in our countries as well but now we are talking about... And all that which is stigmatised results in taking less security... that is that there is less attention paid to safety, condoms, all those things that can protect against sexually transmitted diseases. Mental health, of course! […] These are perhaps the primary things which I can see [relate to health].

She does not elaborate, but I assume she meant that mental health issues are related to stigma. Yngve for his part does explain more fully what he thinks would influence mental health for a stigmatised group of people:

> **Me:** If you were to say something more about how you think... HIV and AIDS are such obvious health issues for these groups, but do you think that this, sexual orientation, may influence health issues in other ways?
> **Yngve:** I do think that it is very important for the quality of life as such, and availability. And health, if you think about both mental health and physical health as part of this, this about self-esteem, everything is related, and of course, if one experiences marginalisation and being ignored because one is seen as something that is 'abnormal', in quotation marks, 'inferior', 'unwanted'. Obviously this will influence how we feel about ourselves as a human being, whether you are here or there, it will have something to say. And this is where I think there should be a theological justification [for acting] because human dignity is inviolable, and the consequence of saying that we are all created in God's image with the same rights, should have consequences also in this setting.

Yngve's logic (seen from a human rights perspective) is what led the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights to issue its report on the right to sexual and reproductive health earlier this year (see above). The Swedish National Institute of Public Health (*Statens folkhälsoinstitute*) initiated in 2005 a large-scale quantitative survey that included an element on health issues related to SOGI[175]. The ensuing report

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[175] The Swedish study, which is one of the largest representative surveys I have seen, sent out questionnaires in 2005 to 64,000 randomly selected individuals between 16 and 84 years in Sweden. Of these, 63% or

(Boström, Roth, & Nykvist, 2008) shows large differences in general health status between the study group (defined in the report title as *HBT-personer*, that is 'Homosexual, Bisexual and Trans persons') and the general population; lesbian women and trans persons have the poorest health, while the entire group shows a marked difference from the general population on all indicators used to measure mental health (including substance use). (Ibid) One of the interesting things about this is that the report had consequences for Swedish health policy and research: One started to look for *why* the large discrepancies exist, and followed up with qualitative studies that looked into relationships between various forms of discrimination and health. (See: Frykman, 2005; Frykman, 2006) Others have done similar studies elsewhere, Nancy Krieger and her research on health effects of ethnic discrimination in the US being one of the most well known. (See e.g. Chae et al., 2010; Krieger, 2012; Krieger et al., 2011) Human rights institutions and organisations have on the other hand looked into the health situation for persons discriminated because of sexual orientation and/or gender identity from a rights rather than public health perspective[176]. The study mentioned above from Kenya is one example, another is the report from The East African Sexual Health and Rights Initiative (UHAI EASHRI) published in 2010 (Kisia & Wahu, 2010). The report has a chapter on the 'challenges of accessing health rights for LGBTI persons in East Africa'[177] (Ibid: pp.44-47) That these studies have been conducted in a country that criminalises sex between persons of the same sex (Kenya Law Reports (The official law reports of the Republic of Kenya), 2009 (revised)), shows that it should be possible to include sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives in health programmes, also in Africa.

4.12 Participants' views on measures needed for increased inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives in development work

We have seen in the previous section that few of the Norwegian NGOs have done work that includes SOGI perspectives, and that also employees in the government organisations seem to have some difficulties operationalizing the intents of the various policy papers. Many also expressed some embarrassment over this, and it was natural to ask them about what they thought could be done to improve the situation:

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approximately 40,000 people answered, and among the respondents around 30.000 answered questions about sexual orientation, which gave a subgroup of around 650 that defined themselves as 'not exclusively heterosexual.' This just to illustrate how difficult it may be to gather large datasets on issues related to marginalised groups. The study also looked at other sub-populations like women, the disabled and ethnic minorities.

[176] The two may of course be combined, as it has been shown by for example the late Jonathan Mann (J. M. Mann, 1996)

[177] Chapter 5: 'A Bleak Reality: The challenges of accessing health rights for LGBTI persons in East Africa,'

Berit: I think it is very good if the MFA and Norad have this high on the agenda and when they talk about development aid organisations[178], that applies to us too, not just gay and lesbian organisations involved in development work. And in this regard, we do of course have a way to go still [...] It is something that they must also help us to get more focus on maybe. But generally speaking, it is important that there is focus. We just need help to do this I think.

What kind of help is Berit asking for? The advice from the participants can be organised into four areas: [1] the MFA/Norad should make demands towards the implementing partners; [2] the MFA/Norad should set aside funds for this area; [3] organisations (both NGOs and GOs) need to acknowledge the need for leadership and the responsibility of senior management to follow up the policy, and finally [4] there is an urgent need for awareness raising and reflections among the actors.

4.12.1 Demanding attention towards sexual orientation and gender identity perspectives

In 2011 the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality and Inclusion published a status report on the action plan on LGBT. (Barne- likestillings- og inkluderingsdepartementet, 2011) The report states on Measure 62

> Norway has provided extensive financial and moral support to a number of organisations and initiatives in many different countries that promote rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons, particularly through Norwegian embassies. Norway has been actively supporting and[179] various forms of grants to voluntary organisations [NGOs] (*frivillige organisasjoner*), campaigns and development of human rights structures in Uganda, Nepal, Nicaragua, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Lebanon, Turkey, Brazil, Argentina. (Ibid, p. p.31, my translation)

Still few Norwegian NGOs have applied for Norad funding to work with this: In 2010 only LLH received Norad funds to work with partner projects reported under Measure 62, a total of 1.55 million NOK divided between two projects with partner organisations in Kenya and Nepal[180]. (Skancke & Sandsnes, 2011) The MFA has appointed a point person in its Department for UN, Peace and Humanitarian Affairs, Section for Human Rights and Democracy, and this has resulted in activities conducted by the Ministry itself (through its

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[178] She is referring to Measure 61 of the Action plan on LGBT: 'Continue a close dialogue with Norwegian development agencies' (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2008, p. 45). In the action plan the text in measure 61 and 62 can easily be understood to refer to LGBT organisations, at least to only refer to organisations that already have put these issues on the agenda.

[179] I think the word 'given' has been left out here

[180] Norad has also granted funding for international organisations (in 2010 International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and The International HIV/AIDS Alliance, UK) that work with including SOGI perspectives in HIV related work. (Ibid)

foreign missions, in international forums like the UN, and at ministry level towards counterparts in developing cooperation partner countries). (Utenriksdepartementet, 2011b) Participants from NGOs, GOs and academic institutions agreed that something ought to be done to bring Norwegian NGOs on board:

> **Gina:** But it could have been interesting if the Norwegian authorities, who in a way are flying this [SOGI] flag, at least here [in Norway], that is, they could... If you are talking about entry points, they could make demands on us and said that 'we want you to show us that you are focused on these [groups] in the things you do, whether it is education, whether it is health.' Because one does this already when it comes to for example women [and] I have not seen that one has done this yet [on this area]. I see that embassies are required to focus on it and stuff, but not much more than that.

> **Me:** And given that the government is flying this flag high, is there something they could have done to stimulate more effort on it?
> **Unni:** Part of the reason [for the lack of action] I think is...'ignorance,' how shall I put it in Norwegian? (**Me:** *Uvitenhet*?) Yes, ignorance (*uvitenhet*), or… (**Me:** A lack of knowledge?) Yes, that one do not *think* about it. (**Me:** (Smiling) That is what we call heteronormativity.) Yeah, that is another word for it (we laugh together.) Quite simply that one is not aware of these parts of the structures of culture and understanding. And that one, one has certainly seen it before, that to get things on the agenda within the aid community; it is very effective that it becomes a requirement. (**Me:** That one has to report on it?) Yes, we saw it in [name of organisation], last year or the year before last, Norad came and said ok, now one has to report on the environmental consequences. It was like, yes, - the environment? Sorting recyclable rubbish according to their source material, using less paper, turn off the lights in the room? What is this thing really? And I must admit that I have not yet grasped how I should actually relate to this with the partner organisations, and what it is really about, but it has certainly led to us initiating a process of thinking, at least, and we have tried to figure it out, and some of us who have been more interested than others have been a little in the forefront on this. I can not say that we are very good at it, we are not, but we at least have it somewhere in the back of our head. So I think that it is an efficient measure from Norad and the Ministry's side, that one must report or include it in one way or another. And that one should come with a clearer plan of action on it of course, and preferably in relation to how it is connected to the different thematic fields you work with. Just like 'gender' has now become[181], it would be quite easy to add it to this gender-mainstreaming that now in a way has become completely natural. In addition to think about gender all the time, whether you are drilling a well or running education projects or what you are doing, you should not just think boys and girls but you should think about variation or you should think diversity on more (areas), and there may well be other elements to consider too.

Unni has some very clear ideas about how this could be done. She is referring to the signals Norad sends to the Norwegian civil society partners through its application and reporting procedures. There are several different kinds of agreements an organisation can have with Norad, a cooperation agreement (*samarbeidsavtale* for large organisations), an individual

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[181] She is referring to what Norad calls 'cross cutting issues' (*tverrgående hensyn*): ' These are prioritized issues in the Norwegian development policy that should be considered in all projects.' (Norad, 2012d, p. 3)

agreement (*prosjektavtale* smaller projects run by smaller NGOs) and core support (*kjernestøtte* large organisations with long term programmes, this is now being phased out). (Norad, 2012g) In the 'Application form for individual agreements' (Norad, 2012b) Norad asks the applicants to 'Give a brief outline of the project with respect to the following cross-cutting sustainability elements[182],' and list 'Human Rights; Gender; Environment and Climate Change; Conflict sensitivity; Anti-corruption work.' (Ibid, p. 4) The application guide for cooperation agreement refers to the policy documents:

No.:	Application requirements:	Guide:
1.2.7	Activities in relation to thematic priorities of Norwegian development cooperation:	Documents of central importance are white papers (Reports to the Storting) on development cooperation, annual budget propositions (Proposition No. 1 to the Storting), current thematic plans of action and strategies.

(Norad, 2012c, p. 3)

It is followed by more specific advice:

2.2.10 Regard for the rights of specific groups.
This may include regard for groups such as women, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, marginalised groups. (Ibid, p. 8)

Finally, in the report form for cooperation agreements it is stated:

The report must state very clearly how gender, climate and environmental issues are addressed in the programmes.
Effort relevant to the Norwegian government's action plan for carrying out of the United Nations Security Council's resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security of 2006 should be included. (Norad, 2012f, p. 2)

As we can see, sexual orientation and gender identity issues are not specifically mentioned anywhere. The organisations are expected to read the policy documents, which of course mention this area. While 'women, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples,' (2.2.10 above) are specifically mentioned, Norad has not seen it fit to make the partners aware of the government's priorities concerning sexual orientation and gender identity issues. The participants agree that this may not be enough; GO ought to be more specific towards their civil society partners. Nils shared some thoughts on political declarations in general:

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[182] The heading is '2.2. Background - description of the project,'

> **Nils:** If that was all your questions I have one more thing I think I want to say and that is that... that such kind of moves, also from within my [organisation], such statements often leave me feeling sceptical, because I often feel very confident that I will not see them in my everyday work.

Jorun seems to agree with him when she says 'I find it a bit problematic that now we have very bold statements from the top-notch political level and then a lot of hesitance in… It is in a way the bureaucracy that is hesitating.' She goes on to advice me that I should write about how it can be done: 'Embed it for God's sake! (laughs) Show that there are some openings [to work with this.]' I am not sure I feel that this should be an objective of this thesis, but I agree that someone ought to develop guidelines on how to operationalize the overarching intentions of the government's policy on sexual orientation and gender identity/expressions.

Finally, several participants felt Norad's guidelines on the cross cutting issues are too vague. We have already seen that Unni does not know how she can operationalize 'environment and climate change' in her programme work, or how she shall explain to the partner organisations what practical consequences this may have for their joint projects. Another issue mentioned by several is 'Effort relevant to the Norwegian government's action plan for carrying out of the United Nations Security Council's resolution 1325.'

> **Pernille:** We have worked a lot together with colleagues in the MFA and Norad on women's rights, how can the requirements from above, […] strengthen the demand from those of us who work inside and feel powerless. And I think a similar model… that this must be taken on board in the same way.
> **Me:** Is this something you feel is happening or has happened, or is it something you are calling for now?
> **Pernille:** In relation to... (**Me:** Sexual orientation and...) It has not happened, no, no, no! Absolutely not, and we are struggling still with women's rights and gender equality, including in the MFA's project reporting where it says generally that we have to show that this is in line with UN Resolution 1325 and we have challenged them in meetings and in writing: What do you really mean? What you are asking needs to be more specific, because this is too unwieldy for us, and the few among us who are working within, and try just to [for example] get gender-specific information, there is still an ocean to cross before we actually get it, and we strive to ensure that all programs have gender equality at some level, and we see that some reports pass through without any [gender] perspective at all, and there is no response from the MFA that [says] 'this we can not approve, because we cannot see how you have been working on this.' So I think we have fallen short in this area too. And I will say that the challenge would be formidable in relation to sexual orientation.

What I hear her saying is not that she is against the MFA/Norad making demands on civil society organisations, but that they need to make their requirements more specific, and that they should educate partners in priority policy areas. I will come back to this when I discuss the responsibility of leaders and the need for more awareness and reflection.

4.12.2 Funding

In addition to funding from Norad, resources for this work can be allocated from both the budget posts 163 and 168; 'Emergency aid, humanitarian assistance and human rights' and '168 Women and Gender Equality,' respectively in the yearly budget of the MFA. (See e.g. Utenriksdepartementet, 2011c, p. 18) The pamphlet produced by the MFA titled *Norges internasjonale arbeid mot diskriminering av seksuelle minoriteter* ('Norway's international work against discrimination of sexual minorities') (Utenriksdepartementet, 2011b) states:

> In 2010, Norway contributed 11 million Norwegian kroner in targeted support for efforts to combat discrimination against sexual minorities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Support is provided through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norad and Norwegian embassies. We are [thus] not talking about major funding, but experience shows that small funds can give good results. The support ranges from NOK 30,000 for conferences to up to 5 million for long-term rights work, research and work against discrimination in various sectors of society like the police, educational institutions and health authorities. (Ibid, p. 4, my translation)

11 millions of a total of more than 5 thousand million (5 billion) kroner (exact figure is 5.021.497.000[183]), or 0,22%. If we look only at what was given to Norwegian NGOs (and take out budget lines 72: *Demokratistøtte/partier* ('Democracy support/political parties'), 75: *Internasjonale organisasjoner og nettverk* ('International organisations and networks') and 77: *Utvekslingsordninger gjennom Fredskorpset*, ('Exchange programmes through FK Norway') the total is 1.4 thousand million (1.4 billion) kroner (exact 1.410.734.000), of which LLH with its two projects got 1.55 million or 0,11 %. (Utenriksdepartementet, 2011c, pp. 17, 18, 151) The numbers confirm what the participants are saying: Few Norwegian organisations are working directly with issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

> **Me:** There are few concrete projects in this field. Why is that? It seems that it is difficult for both ... or let's talk about non-governmental organisations, operating within the field, that this is an area that ... Or I do not know exactly why but there are few that work with it.
> **Claus:** Yes. Me, I think that it is related to this kind of political agendas. Where the money flows, that is where the organisations are, necessarily, for they are totally dependent on it for surviving. If this is put on the political agenda then ... Now there has been a gender-focused for a long time, that is, focus on women, so one will always make sure to include such statements about women's rights in applications, grant applications and stuff, and then work more or less with it in practice. But the fact that NGOs do not work with this type of question I guess would be connected with this, that it has not been prioritised. And it may perhaps be as you say that there are some prejudices here, and that there is some resistance and it is perhaps sensitive and... But I think that there are very many fields that are sensitive in the first place too.

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[183] Prop 1 (2011-2012) includes a financial report for 2010, all numbers are taken from the 2010 accounts. ("Prop. 1 S (2011-2012)," 2011, pp. 17, 18, 151)

Unni: It is incredible how much power is related to money, but then it is [also] a fact that it leads to changes, gradually, then, when one in a way is forced (laughs). But earmark funds is not a bad idea, because then one could imagine that one would get kind of small appendages on the programmes, with a small component that would be about this [SOGI issues], and then develop a greater understanding from [working with it].

A[184]: You talked about the political guidelines and who decides. The problem is that one has said that this is focus area, but one has had less money to follow it. And that is something we have tried to get more money for, but it is not always easy; maybe next year it is climate and forest that is important. So okay, we want to achieve this, but how do we achieve it? We need the support. One achieves more with money too. One can achieve a lot by 'speaking where others are silent' but being able to put some money on the table as well, that is... So I, who have worked extensively with this field, find it has been a bit problematic in a way, that we do not have enough money, I feel, to spend. Now I say this to you, but not in public. (Me: And that is part of the agreement, so that is okay.)

Earlier, while discussing the action plan on gender we saw a government employee complaining that for example the embassies did not see sexual orientation and gender identity as being included in the gender fund basket. This may thus not only be a question of lack of money; the funds may be there if one knew where to ask for it. The basic problem is, in my view, that most actors within this field do not see a connection between gender and sexual orientation and gender identity issues, or to put it in colloquial: One does not see what discrimination against gay men has to do with women's rights. When the connection is not made, there is a risk of seeing it as groups competing for the same pot of money and for public attention (who merits attention the most?)

Claus' point about NGOs following the money in their programming is, if a bit cynical, to a large extent based on facts: Norwegian NGOs are largely government funded. (I have looked at financial reports from three large development aid organisations in Norway and 60-80% of their budget comes from public funding.) We have also seen that there is a large degree of agreement between different actors in Norway about its development policy. Furthermore, to continue their work, civil society organisations are largely dependent on government finances to survive, and policy directions can be assumed to influence their strategic plans.

Cynicism aside, Unni has a valid point when she says that earmarked funding may give more organisations the practical experiences they need to achieve greater understandings for the issues. Finally the public servant who is working with sexual orientation and gender identity issues claims that it is difficult to get funding to work with it. The person implies that the

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[184] A works in a GO.

policy is more words than action, and that resources need to follow the grand promises of ministers and policy documents. She thus echoes Nils who felt policy statements seldom led to practical changes in his day to day work.

4.12.3   Leadership

We have seen that the participants call on the MFA/Norad to follow up the political intentions with feasible instructions and funding for operationalizing the policy.

> **B[185]:** I say this anonymously, but we *have* tried to invite them to our seminars... There is something about... I do not know at what level you are interviewing people, but it is the management that has a responsibility to educate people on it, and it is they who really should be held accountable.
> **Me:** What role do you have in relation to civil society organisations that receive money from public funds?
> **B:** Yes that is... is a challenge. It depends on those who work with grant making and that they are able to get it into their conversations, and their guidelines and the seminars we have had, that we should mobilise people to attend and things like that. But a lot of lobbying from organisations and institutions at home is unfortunately needed for us to get there. [We need] specific examples of things that does not work to use it as an example of what to avoid. That is the road one took with women and gender equality in civil society, which certainly was a long road to travel, still is a long road to travel.

> **Me:** How can one improve it? If it is development of skills among other things, that is needed?
> **Tore:** Yes, it would [be the same for] climate and many other fields. How do you go from, and I think about this a lot, how you go from the general to actually be able to, able to make a difference in situations? (Pauses) I think that one of the most important things is that management at all levels, from policy level and all the way down, that one both creates room for it and put emphasis on it.

What I hear is that these two think leaders can play a vital role by showing that they think this is important. They should take a clear stand and they should expect that their colleagues attend seminars, write about it in reports and plan for it in programs. B also talks about the experiences gained from getting gender on the agenda, and that it is important to get input from those who are 'in the field' to improve plans and guidelines.

4.12.4   Raising awareness

In 4.8.5 we heard Tore express his thoughts that there is lack both of awareness and willingness to try out new ways of thinking and doing. Unni, for her part, asks for more specific plan of action specifically on SOGI issues:

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[185] This participant works in a GO

Unni: I think that it is an efficient measure from Norad and the Ministry's side, that one must report or include it in one way or another. And that one should come with a clearer plan of action on it of course, and preferably in relation to how it is connected to the different thematic fields you work with.

We have also seen that many ask for more data, for research, statistics and population estimates; they ask to be made aware of how people are discriminated against because of sexual orientation and gender identity, for example:

Ivar: If you perceive that there is discriminatory policies in place in relation to sexual minorities, then it should... and then one may characterise them as a vulnerable group because they have not... they are being discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation, then one should increase the efforts towards the group in order for them to reach the same level in some way.

All this may be seen as a challenge of raising awareness, that more knowledge is needed among Norwegian development actors on SOGI issues.

Me: But this is a rather crucial point then, does one know what one is doing? Do we have enough knowledge to start working with this?
Frida: One does not know, to the necessary degree. But there is certainly some general knowledge; that they are stigmatised, that one probably in very many cases should not talk about it explicitly, and then you have to figure out how to... Thus, how can you get the kind of information you need to actually be able to handle it in a way so that people are not discriminated against in such situations because they are gays for example.

Me: You say that there is a common understanding between the top of the political leadership through those who work in ministries all the way down to the NGOs, does this also apply to questions about sexual orientation and gender identity, do you think?
A[186]: There is not enough expertise and understanding. I think that, part of what I find difficult in working administratively, in public administration, is that we have very many demands, we shall ... we are supposed to mainstream everything. And there is a big difference between saying the right things on a 'ball point level' and to actually be able to enter into negotiations or take part in considerations and evaluations of programs in terms of actually being able to do something that works, and I still believe there is much that... a lot of skills development or increase is needed in the administration. So it is still dependent on individuals and it is on, it is a management responsibility, clearly, that one looks at the departments, sections and stuff like that where there may be questions which have openings for [including the issues], then you could achieve a lot. Then there is the advisor level in relation to having knowledge and skills, or case officer level, whether you are sitting in New York and will negotiate or... And this is probably something you sometimes do not see; that it is great to see the change that has happened in the delegation in New York, that with regards to working with sexual minorities, this requires some knowledge and courage and not to mention that if you get it wrong on what is being said, it can suddenly be used against one, and then you get a worse result, the text changes and other things, but it is far better now than it was a few years ago. However, it is very fragile because it... If we think about diplomats, these are people who change every second, third, fourth year from portfolio to portfolio, and either one must be willing to school

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[186] A works at management level in a GO.

oneself, you should definitely do so, [because] it is an advantage to have the right attitude when you sit down [to negotiate], or you attend seminars; seminars that are arranged in the MFA and Norad are very positive, they are very important, but the whole thing is fragile.

A thus think there is need for significant skills development to be able to operationalize the policy, and at the same time sees that much can be done when people are given an opportunity to educate themselves (the example of the current diplomatic delegation in New York). This person also stresses the point raised by Tore and another public servant above; this must be seen as the responsibility of management.

Regarding the need for skills development, Jorun has some interesting thoughts on Norwegian awareness around the importance of questions of sexuality:

> **Me:** When I now go around asking people if I can interview them, especially when... When it comes to the people who work in Norad and the MFA, it is mostly a problem of finding time for it, but out in the civil society and also in educational institutions then... it is indeed not easy to get people to say yes. Of course I have thought a lot about what causes this, why [do they hesitate]? I think that maybe it is both about... that is that people feel... Many say they do not know anything about this...
> **Jorun[187]:** Here I think there are very big differences between Norway and Sweden. [If you look at] what Sweden has done to follow-up the Cairo conference, and I am so impressed with the Swedes knowledge! I think there is so much more knowledge among the Swedes and in-depth understanding of what this involves and how dramatic it is as a basis for the social organisation, it impresses me. [...] Knowledge about the importance of sexuality in society... Thus the whole structure of society, [...] both the Swedes and the Danes and the Finns - they had knowledge of this [already in the Cairo process]. So they say that they do not know... that is interesting indeed. I believe that this knowledge is everywhere in Sweden, or not everywhere, but that it is much more generally present. RFSU[188] right? (**Me:** I was just thinking about that, we have not had a RFSU here). It was of course started by a Norwegian woman (**Me:** I know, and their magazine is called 'Ottar' after her). What was it that made Emilie Ottesen-Jensen able to start in Sweden and not here? She was as strong here, she was the same strong woman, what was it that made Sweden in a way receptive to it? I do not know, but I have the feeling that sexuality here [in Norway] is a bit like a special theme for some, there are some who have some special interests, like, and who are doing our own thing, and so we have our own little club.

Jorun puts her finger on what to me is a crucial issue. Despite the agreement that one should not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, sexuality itself is seen as a marginal issue in Norwegian development discourse (and perhaps in Norwegian society as such). To change this one would need to take the really basic discussions about what place sexuality is seen to play in the organisation of society. Internationally this discussion is taking place, institutions like the Institute of Development

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[187] I have edited out part of the quote to secure anonymity
[188] RFSU is the Swedish organisation *Rådet för sexuell upplysning* ('the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education') (RFSU, 2012)

Studies, through its research and information programme BRIDGE (Gender and Development) has for example for years focused on the link between development, gender and sexuality. (See e.g. Jolly & Ilkkaracan, 2007) Norway is often seen as being in the forefront of SRHR policy, but I would argue that it has been largely focused on reproductive health and in particular 'safe' issues like breast feeding, maternal mortality and family planning. Sexuality as such has mainly been a theme in relation with reproduction or sexually transmitted infections.

On the question of skills development and awareness raising, one also quickly runs into a dilemma of specificity: What is most needed, that development actors start to look for gays and lesbians among their target populations, or that they acquire a more general awareness about gender and sexuality?

> **Tore:** I also think about how precise one should be in a given situation, but I totally agree with you that we still live in a heterosexual world. I think that the focus, but that would go for inequality in general, right? That we have been very general in the way of talking, so therefore it would be very nice to let us say, push some things forward, and be able to work on specific issues. However, this has led to fragmentation, which in turn undermines 'mainstreaming'... (We laugh. **Me:** You get to a point where you bite your own tail…) It is quite possible that the kind of skills development that must come should be through type study circles, conversation circles, that one takes the time to actually reflect.
> **Me:** Yes, but I am almost always left with... People just love to have clear definitions, but my needs are almost always to say 'yes but, it is much more complicated than that!'
> **Tore:** It is perhaps just this about reflection, again to be, what do we call it again? 'Ambiguous,' to be *tvetydig* ('ambiguous') (**Me:** To endure it), it is terrific in many cases, and it can be incredibly destructive in others, and... Having in a way both sufficient insight and experience to live with this and ask, ok, do you really mean it like that? And at other times just like 'we do not want to go there…'

Above I have discussed dilemmas around identity politics. It should be clear that I hold certain scepticism towards linking these questions to a certain group of people. At the same time I see that one might need to try have the attitude of Winnie the Pooh: When asked by Rabbit whether he would like honey or condensed milk with his bread, he answered 'Both please.' (Milne, 1958, p. 37) Maybe that is what Spivak's strategic essentialism is all about? To refuse the choice between identity and queer politics; to see that lived experiences of discrimination may give reasons for ascribing to a group identity, and at the same time refuse to be confined by the same identity.

4.13 Postcolonial critique of the development discourse on sexual orientation and gender identity

In the chapter 3 I looked at historical trajections of gender and sexuality from the era of colonialism to the age of development. Above (Ch. 4.6) I have also looked at Norwegian development policy from a postcolonial point of view. I will know look closer at some excerpts from the conversation with participants from this starting point. There are three themes I think I discern: [1] There is an underlying linear view of history that may be seen as an echo of the idea of modernisation (see Ch. 3.2.1); poor countries and their populations are at an earlier stage of development. [2] Norway has special expertise on questions of gender, gender equality and respect for minorities and should act as a role model towards development partners. [3] The idea of 'us' and 'them' is perpetuated through generalising statements about 'our values' on equality and human rights as well as stereotypical descriptions of the Other. The three are closely linked and will be treated together in what follows.

I have asked the participants (variants) of the question: 'Does Norway have a special role to play in development?' and 'The policy documents talk about "Norway's expertise," do you agree that we have some special knowledge and what would it be?' When I look through the coded extracts that fit this theme I find answers like 'we have this gender equality that has come very far,' 'we have an historic experience […] in relation to achieving rights,' 'we almost have a duty to raise these issues because we have come so far,' 'we have a special role because we have a quite liberal policy on this field and we have in fact come quite far with respect to the rights problems within our own borders,' 'Of course there is a process [of change] everywhere, but one is at different places in the process,' 'Norway is one of the countries where at least the formal rights and the acceptance of different people are greater than in very many countries, ergo do we have some experiences […] that give us an opportunity to raise these issues.'

The ideas of 'modernisation' and linear views of history become clearer when we look at the context such statements are taken from:

> **Anne:** It is a bit like that, without comparison besides, this about Muslims and the thing they have about pigs, right? They do not have irony towards their own religion. We have had, it is like 30 years

since the Monty Python film[189] was banned, you are on a completely different… you can discuss things with words. You have created a larger space for discussion. They are not there. That is, you can not demand of them to have the same understanding. I think that in a way one should respect that. It takes time to reach, to get that kind of relationship to gender. [Gender] is for many, perhaps even more than religion - it is something that certainly is *real*. […] Of course there is a process [of change] everywhere, but one is at different places in the process. So that is what you kind of want to enter into to speed up...

Frida: The things we tend to forget are that Europe has spent hundreds of years to evolve into what we are today; it is not exactly something that has happened over night. And then one insists that Africa, Asia should be doing in five years that which we spent 500 years to accomplish. And that again has something to do with… changes must come from within, and social changes and attitudes often need generations to in fact change.

Tore: I have almost become cautious in relation to what I say when I am abroad (*ute*), even with people I know rather well that comes from, not necessarily only from Africa, but... for there are indeed things that are... even people who I thought would be relatively... shall we say progressive, open minded, were born in and grew up with models and thinking and ideas which are really difficult for us in general, to even imagine. [Gives several examples of when things happened in Norway:] And when was it, wasn't homosexuality still a medical diagnosis in 1972? […] I think we should be able to skip [some steps]; we can do things much faster. I see that communication, that there is so much information available that we can achieve change so much faster now, [at least] potentially, than twenty or thirty years ago, but that we must be very humble because change must come from within.

Yngve: These are my personal musings about some things, but the way I see it, I think it is right to have some conditions, at the same time I see that one should have respect for the context and the culture that this takes place in, and not expect that thinking is the same as, or at the same stage as where we are in Norway based on the development, the processes we have been through, and that some things may be in coming, but will take their time, and [things] will not be changed from one day to another.

Both Frida and Tore insist that 'change must come from within,' and Anne thinks one need to respect that people are at different levels of development, at the same time all three seem to know that development will go in the same direction as we have seen at home. Anne thinks our role is to help speeding up the process, while Tore thinks modern technology may enable societies to skip some steps. This attitude may be summarised as 'we have reached a successful modernity and they are some steps behind on the road of modernisation.' Yngve stresses that 'things take time,' (*ting tar tid* is a much used phrase in Norwegian and many used it in this context.)

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[189] She is referring to ' Monty Pythons' Life of Brian' (Jones, 1979). In Norway, the film was stopped in 1980 by the National Film Control due to blasphemous content. Later the same year it was released with an age limit of 18 years, some dialogue edited out and accompanying warning that Brian was indeed not Jesus… I remember having to pass through a crowd of protesting Christians when I arrived at the local cinema in my home town.

Jorun: Development should move.... have width [be inclusive] and be based on the lives of people, the lives they have and the lives they want to have. It is clear that a Norwegian democratic model, I am of course very pleased with that, but then it is unrivalled (laughs)! There are of course some things that I actually hold to be... I do not mean that you necessarily have to jump there right away, maybe you have to go the way of an enlightened autocracy and god knows what, but that it... It is a place where you can discuss these difficult things [gender and sexuality] and there may be disagreement.

This is naturally a difficult terrain: I think most would agree that one has to defend positions that are seen as valuable, for example that all humans are born free and equal and should be treated with respect for their inherent dignity as humans; most would agree that this is a principle that should be upheld everywhere. Michael Barnett however warns that values are known to change:

> It was fashionable among nineteenth-century Europeans to assume that Europe had scaled a moral mountaintop and that Christianity and modernity were agents of civilization. Many of us now cringe at such beliefs. Will future generations look back at us and wonder why so many in the West were so certain that democracy and human rights are the path to salvation? My point is not to condemn contemporary commitments but rather to note that it is commonplace for a community to assume that its values have a timeless quality. (Barnett, 2011, p. 11)

I have argued that one of the most potent symbols of 'modernity' are attitudes towards gender and sexuality: Women's liberation, to have sex without being married and same sex partnership are seen as proofs of a successful development, by both sides; those who think of these as examples of necessary changes in underlying values tend to see them as goals for the entire humanity, while those who for example believe that God created men and women to fulfil different roles and complement each other sees them as examples of 'Western depravity,' and oppose (this part of) 'modernisation'.

Above we saw Uma Narayan calling the wish to change attitudes of the Other a 'missionary' attitude, and she saw this as a result of the underlying belief that 'Western culture' is (and has always been) more open towards change, while colonised cultures are marked by their virtual immunity to change. (U. Narayan, 1997, p. 16)

Vidar discusses the dilemma between trying to not taking a colonialist stance and ending up as a relativist:

> **Me:** You mentioned this about understanding things within a cultural framework, even connected to location. Do you think ... this goes for gender issues as well; is it possible to use *our* understanding and our language in these contexts?
> **Vidar:** No, that is exactly the challenge, right?

Me: What are your views on how Norwegian organisations and

Vidar: (interrupts): No I think that is probl... not only Norwegian organisations, but scientists too enters a reality without knowledge about it. So one can of course say that both women's oppression, and, what is it called? - homophobia, are... should not be accepted, but one must then perhaps also try to approach it in a more culturally sensitive way. I also think that when secular Norwegian aid workers go to Africa and arrive in a community that is religious through and through, then communication is indeed difficult, that is, if they do not work with it. […] How does what I am saying relate to this about... sexual... minorities and stuff, I do not know, but it is not that simple! It is not that easy. But I think it really has to do with information level (*opplsyningsnivå*). To expect that one should start accepting homosexual practices in a society that is so little enlightened in our sense, that would be a Sisyphus job... Because the same has happened in the Norwegian society, you know, it is only just recently that this kind of thing has been accepted in the Norwegian society (**Me:** And not entirely accepted either), no it is not fully accepted, but at least it is accepted in law and all that. We have more discussions about it, and of course there are deep undercurrents here too that do not accept it. And so we may have in a way to accept that they are there, that is, not respect or accept, but at least acknowledge that this is not something you just snap out of. For this about attitudes is… yes, we talked about development before, this about changing attitudes is one of the hardest things to do in development aid, and should one change all these attitudes? It is of course some of these attitudes... When your friend is killed[190], this is of course totally impossible; when women are poisoned because they want to be more equal, that is completely impossible, and so on. But then there are degrees of how fast you can go, when you acknowledge that it has gone and goes slowly in the Norwegian society too. […]It is much easier to be equal (*likestilt*) in Norway. And if you in a way do not take on the somewhat humble attitude, then it becomes such a very top-down... In this respect I am to some extent in agreement with Signe Arnfred[191]... These feminists who tell us that abortion is necessary to be... to have control over your body and... I strongly react against that, so there I would agree with her in a way, so I both agree and disagree with her, if you know what I mean? And it is probably the same with these sexual minorities, then, if you can call it that, that it must be seen in such a cultural epistemological context, and you do not tell people that homosexuality is as normal as heterosexuality in a society that in a way is deeply heterosexual then. […] I do not know, I have not worked with that question at all, so I have not thought it through, not even from a more theoretical approach, but it is something of the same imperialist, colonialist who ... I see that it is necessary when you have these episodes that we have mentioned, but I see that there are challenges there. It would probably be easier in South Africa than in [for example] Sudan, where you have a relatively large gay movement, especially among the affluent, you know, and it has been particularly focused on because of the HIV/AIDS stuff, and many of these activists are the gays, right? Though HIV/AIDS is not necessarily one of those... it is not a homosexual epidemic in Africa.

Vidar makes an important point when he states that one cannot enter a society and expect to understand what goes on without any previous knowledge. He is also right in acknowledging that homosexuality is frowned upon by segments of the Norwegian society, and we should

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[190] A bit earlier in the conversation Vidar had alluded to the murder of David Kato in Uganda. The interview happened short time after the murder, and it was hard for me to keep my feelings under control. This just to explain how he came to know that David was my friend, a fact I would not have announced if I had not been so upset at the time of interview.

[191] We had been discussing Signe Arnfred's essay in 'African sexualities,' (Arnfred, 2004) which he was reading as I entered his office. He was very, very upset by her writing which he claimed is a striking example of relativism (of anthropologists).

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thus not feel 'superior.' I still think he expresses a view that changing attitudes is a goal of development. 'Their' problem is furthermore the lack of information, they are not enlightened (in what sense?), and one may ask whose job it should be to enlighten them?

In Ch. 2.3.5 and 3.3.2 we saw how postcolonial feminists (e.g. Chandra T Mohanty and Gayatri Spivak) have criticised people in the West (including Western feminists) for stereotyping women from poor countries as inherently oppressed and victimised by their men. Statements made by the participants seem to confirm that this is a commonly held view also among Norwegian development actors. Vidar, for example make a sweeping statement about women being poisoned for wanting more equality, other examples are:

> **Ivar:** I think there is a very strong relation between... that is, women and women's rights and development. I think that, and there is lots of research on it, but I see... If you travel in Africa, it is almost... One should not underestimate the importance of your own observations when you are in this business, and it is the women who work and the men who mess about (laughs), often, and ... I think it is tremendously important that women get political power and economic power and this is what is called gender equality, but I think it is... that is, that women carry a lot of the burdens, in the daily life and get… and try to make the ends meet.

> **Berit:** I experience that there is very little open-mindedness in Africa and there is this traditional Macho-culture of enormous dimensions in many African countries. It is really very frightening.

> **Anne:** In (country in Africa), if you turn on the radio, then it is only gospel music and [church] services all day, right? You can just imagine, - they are indoctrinated in a society like this. You talk with people and I tell them that my parents are divorced, and they say that this is what happens when you do not believe in God or the Bible. Yes, this belief in the simple idea about the nuclear family, and marriage and all that, is really incredible strong.

We have seen examples of the same stereotypical views when it comes to attitudes towards homosexuality: Many claim that Africans are in denial when it comes to the existence of homosexuality. We also saw that at least one participant thought the lack of programmes for MSM in Africa is only caused by negative attitudes in Africa, not by our own ideas about African sexuality. Vidar, however seems to think that poor African countries like Sudan are in fact 'deeply heterosexual' and that reason for the presence of gays in South Africa is that the country has more affluent people. This is, I would hold, a reflection of the view that sexuality (when it is not heterosexual) is a way of self-realising, a luxury that only rich, well-educated and fed persons can indulge in. The danger of stereotypical ideas is that they strengthen the 'us and them' polarity. When *they* are viewed as intolerant, backward and not gender equal, *we* are by the same token portrayed as tolerant, modern and equal.

Let me now look closer at the idea of 'our values' and Norway as a role model.

> **Frida:** Do we have a special capacity? I think we have some values, ideals of equality, which I think very well could be exported (laughs). We are a democratic society, which I think you could export as well, at least to some extent. We have some fundamental values here which I think is worth trying to promote abroad (*ute*). Do we have some special capabilities? (**Me:** You already answered my question). I do not think we should forget that we have this equality thinking, we have an idea of solidarity which is so very thoroughly embedded. It is a little scary now with the Progress Party and so on that has been in success, (**Me:** and who also talk about Norwegian values…) yes, I have noticed that. Now I have been abroad (*ute*) [number of years] and I think there has been a change. But I hope nevertheless that the social democracy, this about everyone having equal opportunities, that it is so deeply anchored, that it is a big part of the national soul, that it holds even through such Progress Party-times, the right-wing [political] waves.

> **Me:** You mentioned to 'speak where others keep silent' - what is it we have; do we have a special capacity in some areas?
> **Liv:** If we are to call it a capacity I do not know, but we have different attitudes to a number of topics... sensitive issues such as homosexuality, such as the abortion question, and we have more support at home in relation to talking about it abroad (*ute*).

> **Unni:** I think maybe there is something in the statement of Gro [Harlem Brundtland], that it is typical Norwegian to be the best[192] (laughs), that this is like a nerve. […] It is not all bad, or of course - to believe that it is typical Norwegian to be the best, that is not good (**Me:** It is not healthy!) No it is not healthy and it is not, I do not think everyone go around believing this all the time, but I think that we... Thus, Norway is in this very privileged economic situation and I think we probably transfer it to other areas as well, that is to democracy and human rights and values and... And we think that we have made great strides in many areas.

'We have some fundamental values,' 'we have different attitudes' and 'it is typical Norwegian to be good,' these statements express national self-esteem that would lend itself easily to take on a (self) righteous missionary attitude towards development partners. We see that at least Unni may see this as problematic, below she develops her argument:

> **Me:** But have we come far?
> **Unni:** Yes that is a question. (**Me:** If you think of this area particularly, do we have something to teach the world?) I do not know really, do we? (Pauses) I think that we are in the middle of a process in this too; it is possible that we have like juridical [equality]. Now I do not know the law very well, but as far as I understand anti-discrimination is not mentioned that many places, hence perhaps… that is the South African Constitution, it says this quite clear, and now they have got it into the Bolivian constitution also very clearly, so in that respect, we may not have something to teach, but rather to learn from, and with regards to attitudes: You know, one is no longer prosecuted, but... (**Me:** It is nice to hear you say these things - I think there is so much complacency out there that I get the creeps some times...) It is probably easier in many ways to grow up to be gay or lesbian in Norway than in South Africa, despite the good constitution they have. But if we reflect, it is all about

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[192] Unni is referring to a famous statement by (former) Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland. In her new year's speech of 1992 she said '*Det er typisk norsk å være god*' ('It is typical Norwegian to be good.')

attitudes in the community and stuff, and whether the Norwegian attitudes are wonderful examples of how to best relate to each other, or in a better way, I do not know exactly. Maybe in some kind of pockets of society, of course, but they have those in South Africa too, there are many such pockets of freedom. […] I think we like to think that we are very tolerant and open and inclusive and protective of vulnerable groups and stuff, and I think that we have probably some mechanisms in place, but to what extent do people get support to take advantage of it…

To think of oneself as having reached a higher level of development is however only one of the problematic aspects of the 'missionary position.' Frida talks about some of the basic ideals of the social democracy, the ideas of equality and solidarity. The Scandinavian social democracies are also characterised by a strong will to act on behalf of its citizens, of knowing what is best for people, especially persons who in some way or another do not fulfil the duties of a member of society, duties (ways of living, conduct) defined by those in power. Nowhere is this will to power, this structure of governance, more evident than in public health policies. Ulf Ohlsson writes about public health discourses in Sweden in the 20th century:

> Another discursive notion is that large segments of the population, first and foremost the lower strata, are unenlightened. The people shall be enlightened by the already enlightened elite, so that they voluntarily take on the necessary responsibility to and reach the insights the commission[193] find necessary. (p. 139)
> The [different] health information discourses have one thing in common; one thinks of humans as unenlightened, as making the wrong considerations and having wrong preferences, and that this results in undesirable behaviour. (Olsson, 1999, p. 152, my translation from Swedish)

In the section on population policies in Ch. 3.3.3 this tendency was described in detail. Ulf Olsson claims that this permeates the entire public health policy. Michael Barnett furthermore sees it as an inherent dilemma of humanitarianism:

> Yet any act of intervention, no matter how well intended, is also an act of control. Humanitarian governance may have its heart in the right place, but it is still a form of governance, and governance always includes power. The simultaneous presence of care and control has become intensified by the growing involvement of states and international organizations in humanitarian affairs over the decades (and in this respect reverses the standard observation that global governance enhances the power of NGOs relative to states). It also results from the very nature of humanitarianism. Humanitarianism is partly paternalism; in fact a world without paternalism might be a world without an ethics of care. That said, there can be too much of a good thing, and too much care can feel oppressive and suffocating. Paternalism is not simply an unsavory legacy of the nineteenth century – it represents both the best and the worst of humanitarianism. (Barnett, 2011, p. 12)

Combining these different aspects gives as a less benevolent view of Norwegian development policy as expressed in current discourse among (some of the) actors in the field. It may be

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[193] The quote is taken from a chapter where Ohlsson describes the Population control commission's measures from the 1930s and onward.

seen as continuing a colonialist stance of 'us and them' which give Norway the role of shepherd or father towards less developed countries and people. Barnett claims that paternalism may be necessary ('a world without paternalism might be a world without an ethics of care'). I think there are other possibilities: To manoeuvre between the Scylla of Paternalism and the Charybdis of Indifference may however not be easy. In my view, we can find the guiding lights we need in postcolonial theory. It advices us, among many other things, to let go of the belief of one truth and one road to development and teaches us to value 'the heterogeneity of thought' and to 'search for a radical "discensus".' (L. Gandhi, 1998, p. 28, quoting Lyotard)

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample e-mail

Hi

I am a student at the University of Oslo and I am working with a Master-project in International Community Health. I will be writing about the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in Norwegian development cooperation and I am looking for people who work with development issues and/or relief work in Norwegian organisations/institutions to interview them.

Below is a brief description of the project and attached you will find a formal invitation to participate along with a sample of a letter of consent. It is my hope that you would want to take part and can find the time to do so. I know many are busy and find it difficult to find time; I want to stress that it is possible to make appointments both during and after office hours, - I am very flexible on time!

I hope to hear from you shortly,

Kind regards

Annika W Rodriguez
Phone: 93 67 98 50
E mail: a.w.rodriguez@studmed.uio.no / annikawr@gmail.com

Research project on sexual orientation and gender identity in Norwegian development cooperation

This project is part of my master's degree in "International Community Health" at the Department of International Health at the Department of General Practice and Community Medicine at the University of Oslo.

In recent years the political leadership in Norway has stated that it is a goal to include perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation:

'The government has committed itself to pursue a development policy that aims to combat all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation of persons based on sexual orientation and gender identity."'(The Government's action plan 'Improving the quality of life for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people 2009-2012')

Little is known about how this relatively new Norwegian policy is perceived and valued among people of different development cooperation practice fields. What kind of thoughts do

people in the community have about what sex and sexuality have to do with development? To what extent do they experience the government guidelines as relevant, useful, feasible, etc.?

To do this I will both go through written materials (such as action plans, project descriptions, research reports, etc.) and talk to people in the field. It is important to emphasise that it is not only those who are specifically concerned with gender and sexuality that are interesting to talk to (not only the organisation's 'gender advisor' in other words), but also people who work with other disciplines and other approaches to development. All who choose to participate will be assured anonymity.

The material will be analysed and presented in the form of a thesis. This will be available through the University of Oslo and distributed to participants and others interested in the development environment. The project could also lead to the publication of research articles on the topic. Research coordinator is my supervisor Kåre Moen (tel: 90 92 37 80, e mail: kare.moen @ medisin.uio.no).

Appendix 2: Invitation letter

Invitation to participate in research project

My name is Annika W Rodriguez. I am a student at the Univeristy of Oslo, Faculty of Medicine, where I am following the M.Phil course "International Community Health" (more information can be found at http://www.uio.no/studier/program/ichealth-master/). This project will be part of my Master degree, and it is conducted under the auspices of the Department of General and Community Medicine, Section for International Health. My supervisor is Kåre Moen (phone: +47 22 85 05 50)

The focus of this project is to investigate thoughts and attitudes among people working with Norwegian development politics and projects about the inclusion of perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation. In recent years Norwegian authorities have expressed a clear will to include perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity in development cooperation.

This politic is relatively new, and there is little knowledge about how it is viewed by people working in different professions connected with development work. To what degree is it considered relevant, useful, feasible and so on? What do people with different experiences from development work thin about the roles such perspectives may or may not play, should, or should not, have in development cooperation?

I want to look at this by reading existing documents (white papers, action plans, parliamentary reports, academic papers, project proposals and so on), and through talking with people who work with development, both in the state apparatus, NGOs and in research and educational institutions. I would like to speak with people who have a variety of experience and different approaches to development work to be able to build my understanding of the questions at hand. I would like to make it clear that this is not meant to be an evaluation of the work of organisations or individuals, and I do not have any "correct answers". I would like to learn from people working with development, listen to their thoughts, attitudes and understandings of these concepts and which role they play in practical development work.

The material will be analyzed and presented as a master thesis. This will be available through the University of Oslo, and distributed among the participants and others who are interested. The project may also lead to publications in academic journals.

What does it mean to participate?

I would like to invite you to participate in this study! If you decide to say yes, I will interview you about these questions. The conversation will last between 1 and 3 hours. You decide when and where we shall meet. It is important that we can speak undisturbed and without interruptions. The interview will be audio-recorded.

You may later be asked to participate in a second interview and/or a group discussion. You decide if you want to accept a new invitation.

The conversation will be about your experiences from development work and what thought you have about development (motivation, objectives, implementation, results etc). We will talk about sexual orientation and gender identity in particular and what place these perspectives have in development cooperation. You may decline to answer any question, and may withdraw from the interview and/or the project at any time before its end on September 30th 2012.

The project will not benefit you directly, but I believe you may experience it to be useful to reflect on these questions. In addition I hope that the project as such may increase the understanding of the roles perspectives in sexual orientation and gender identity play in development today, and what role they may have in the future.

Information about you and the interview material

The interview and any information you share with me will be treated confidentially by me. In future publications it will not be possible to identify who has participated.

When the project ends (September 30th 2012) all material will be rendered anonymous (all names and contact details will be obliterated).

Voluntary participation

I would now like to summarize some standard rules for research that this project is bound by:

- Participation is voluntary
- Participants can at any time decline to continue and withdraw from the project without being asked for a reason and without experiencing negative consequences of any kind.
- Participants may decline to answer any question or part of question during the conversation.

The project is registered at the Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD).

If you would like to participate, or if you have any questions about the project, you can reach me through e mail: a.w.rodriguez@studmed.uio.no or by phone: +47 93 67 98 50. Before an interview I will ask you to sign a consent form.

Kind regards from

Annika W Rodriguez

Appendix 3: Declaration of consent

I have received written and oral information about this research project and I give my written consent to participate in this interview.
I also agree that Annika W Rodriguez my contact me in the future to ask if I am willing to participate in another interview and/or group discussion. I would like to be contacted in the following way (fill in one or both):
E mail:

Telephone:

Date: _____._____.2011

Signature: _____

Printed name:_____

Declaration of consent (additional interviews)
I have received written and oral information about this research project and I give my written consent to participate in this interview.

Date: _____._____.2011

Signature: _____

Appendix 4: NSD letter

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

Kåre Moen
Seksjon for medisinsk antropologi og medisinsk historie
Institutt for allmenn- og samfunnsmedisin
Universitetet i Oslo
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Fax: +47-55 58 96 50
nsd@nsd.uib.no
www.nsd.uib.no
Org.nr. 985 321 884

Vår dato: 29.03.2010   Vår ref: 23791 / 2 / MAB   Deres dato: Deres ref:

TILRÅDING AV BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 14.02.2010. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

23791	*Sexual orientation and gender identity in Norwegian development cooperation*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Universitetet i Oslo, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Kåre Moen*
Student	*Annika Wattne Rodriguez*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, vedlagte prosjektvurdering - kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/-helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.06.2011, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Bjørn Henrichsen

Marte Bertelsen

Kontaktperson: Marte Bertelsen tlf: 55 58 29 53
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Annika Wattne Rodriguez, Danmarksgate 25, 0658 OSLO

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Utvalget består av personer som arbeider i norske bistandsorganisasjoner, tilsammen ca. 40 personer.

Noen av informantene vil bli spurt om å delta på gruppeintervju, mens andre vil bli spurt om å delta på individuelle intervju.

Det gis skriftlig informasjon og innhentes skriftlig samtykke.

Reviderte informasjonsskriv for gruppeintervju og for individuelle intervju, mottatt av personvernombudet 24. mars 2010, finnes tilfredsstillende. Men avsnittet om lagring må fjernes fra begge informasjonsskrivene, i stedet må det tilføres "Ved prosjektslutt 30.06.2011 vil datamaterialet bli anonymisert."

Personvernombudet tar høyde for at det under intervjuene vil kunne bli registrert sensitive opplysninger om politisk, filosofisk eller religiøs oppfatning, jf. pol. § 2. nr. 8 a).

Ingen enkeltpersoner vil kunne bli gjenkjent i den ferdige masteroppgaven.

Prosjektslutt 30. juni 2011. Ved prosjektslutt skal lydopptak slettes og datamaterialet anonymiseres. Med anonymisering menes at direkte personidentifiserende opplysninger som navn slettes og indirekte personidentifiserende opplysninger som navn på organisasjon, stillingstittel, alder og kjønn, endres (grovkategoriseres) eller slettes.