When Two Orthodoxies Clash?
A Study of Gender Mainstreaming and Participatory Development at Sida

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between two orthodoxies in contemporary development; gender mainstreaming and participatory development. Specifically, this study examines whether these two strategies stand in conflict, in theory and in practice, where the donor agency the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) serves as the empirical case. Discourse analysis was conducted to examine whether the conflict can be discerned in Sida’s written suggestions for how to work with gender mainstreaming in development cooperation. To add nuance and depth, interviews have been carried out with Sida staff members to gain broad perspectives on the potential conflict. This study argues that the conflict can be discerned based on the underlying principles of gender mainstreaming and participatory development. While this study also provides a first attempt to illustrate how the conflict manifests itself in practice, future research is needed to establish the conflict’s empirical appearances. However, this study contributes with valuable indications of the conflict’s appearance and manifestation in practical development efforts that Sida is engaged in.

**Keywords:** gender mainstreaming, participatory development, Sida, donor agencies
## Contents

1 Introduction .................................................. 4
   1.1 Purpose and Research Question .............................. 6
   1.2 The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency ................................. 7
      1.2.1 Directives for Swedish Development Cooperation ............................................. 7
   1.3 Disposition .................................................. 9

2 Gender Mainstreaming & Participatory Development .......... 10
   2.1 Previous Research ............................................. 10
   2.2 Basic Principles of Gender Mainstreaming ...................... 12
   2.3 Challenges for the Transformatory Potential .................... 13
   2.4 A Participatory Perspective to Development .................... 14
   2.5 Who Participates? ............................................. 16
   2.6 Are Gender Mainstreaming and Participatory Development Compatible? ................. 17
   2.7 Theoretical Framework .......................................... 19

3 Research Design .................................................. 21
   3.1 A Single Case Study Design ........................................ 21
   3.2 Case Selection ................................................ 21
   3.3 Methodology .................................................. 22
      3.3.1 Discourse Analysis ............................................. 22
      3.3.2 Interviews .................................................. 23
   3.4 Analytical Framework ............................................. 24
   3.5 Material and Triangulation .......................................... 26

4 Analysis & Discussion ............................................. 28
   4.1 The Written Suggestions on Gender Mainstreaming ...................... 28
      4.1.1 Sida’s Understanding of Gender Mainstreaming ............................................. 28
      4.1.2 The Constant Relevance of Gender Mainstreaming ............................................. 29
      4.1.3 Priorities Concerning Gender Mainstreaming ............................................. 29
      4.1.4 Sida’s Viewpoints on Partners’ Role and Impact in Relation to Gender Mainstreaming ............................................. 30
      4.1.5 Sida’s Viewpoints on Stakeholders’ Role and Impact in Relation to Gender Mainstreaming ............................................. 31
   4.2 Perspectives .................................................. 31
      4.2.1 Sida’s Understanding of Gender Mainstreaming ............................................. 31
1 Introduction

During the last decades, a growing interest and commitment to work towards global gender equality and women's rights has emerged. The women's movement has long struggled for the recognition of factors that sustain gender inequality which the international community has responded to. For instance, global agreements have been created and adopted such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Women (CEDAW), the Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women, and the UN World Conferences on Women (Benería et al. 2016). Especially the last world conference in Beijing 1995 has had an impact on the growing focus on gender equality in the international community. Following from this conference, the UN Gender Mainstreaming Approach was developed as a strategy to achieve global gender equality (True 2003, p. 369). In the development sector, gender mainstreaming has become one of the main strategies development organisations and donor agencies use in order to incorporate a gender perspective into development efforts and work towards gender equality (Palmary & Nunez 2009, p. 66). While gender mainstreaming is not the only strategy in working towards gender equality, it differentiates from other gender equality strategies since it is based on the assumption that most institutions and organisations are gendered, which reinforces the construction of gender inequality (Verloo 2001, p. 2-3). A gender perspective is thereby always relevant to use in order to highlight gendered practices and to counteract them regardless of institution, organisation, sector, level or context. Scholars have therefore argued that gender mainstreaming contains transformative aspects that other strategies lack (Rees 2005, Pollack & Hafner-Burton 2000, Verloo 2001).

Because of the constant relevance of including a gender perspective, gender mainstreaming might conflict with other strategies in development efforts. This study will therefore explore if gender mainstreaming conflicts with another strategy which heavily influences contemporary development; participatory development. Participatory development mainly emerged out of the critique of developing states through top-down measures which often fail because of weak state performances together with market imperfections in many developing states (Platteau & Abraham 2002, p. 105). Instead of focusing on national reconstruction, liberalisation and reform, participatory development seeks to engage local communities and participation of the stakeholders in development projects to direct their own development agenda (Mohan 2001, p. 1-2). Currently, participatory development is the orthodoxy on how development organisations and donor agencies are engaged in development interventions (Cornwall 2006, p. 62).

Gender mainstreaming is interesting to examine in relation to participatory development because many scholars have argued that the strategy is an extension of top-down
development (Warren 2012, Wendoh & Wallace 2005, Mannell 2012, Clisby & Enderstein 2017). Further, because gender mainstreaming builds on the assumption that a gender perspective is always relevant, one can discuss whether donor agencies that adopt gender mainstreaming as a strategy impose ideas of what is important for development and what the needs and interests for populations in developing states should be (Cornwall 2003, Escobar 1995). Thus, given that gender mainstreaming is adopted by a donor agency to work towards gender equality, tensions might arise when the strategy is contrasted against the contemporary orthodoxy of participatory development. The tension lies in that participatory development is built on the idea that beneficiaries are to drive their own development agenda with little influence of outside actors and their interests. These standpoints might stand in conflict with the constant relevance of gender mainstreaming given that the donor agency’s gender equality objective is against beneficiaries’ interests in their development agenda. In other words, there is a potential conflict between two important strategies that influences how development organisations and donor agencies conduct contemporary development.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is a Swedish government donor agency that may potentially illustrate this tension or conflict between these two strategies: gender mainstreaming and participatory development. Sida is one of the key actors in the world when it comes to advocating for gender equality in development efforts and has had a long standing commitment to gender equality, which both influences the organisation of the agency as a whole, and partner countries’ development projects. Since 2015, Sida has strengthened its commitment to gender mainstreaming by stating that gender mainstreaming is the main strategy Sida uses when working with gender equality in development cooperation (Sida 2015a). Apart from Sida’s focus on gender mainstreaming, the agency is directed by a number of strategies created by the Swedish government on how it should work with development as a whole. One of the core elements in the framework that directs Swedish development cooperation (SDC), Policyramverk för Svenskt Utvecklingssamarbete och Humanitärt bistånd, is that development should be based on participation of the local communities in partner countries and that local ownership is crucial for sustainable development (GoS 2016, p. 49). This perspective on participation is also reflected as a viewpoint of Sida when the agency states that "development assistance is conducted on terms of those who benefit from it" (Sida 2017a). Participatory development does thereby seem to be an integral part of Sida’s development efforts. In fact, Sweden and Sida have been recognised as one of the first actors in the world to adopt a participatory approach to development (Cornwall 2000, p. 38). In other words, Sida is a case which may exemplify the potential conflict in contemporary development between advocacy for

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1Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (author’s translation).
gender mainstreaming and the insistence on the constant relevance of the strategy, and
the simultaneous orthodoxy of participatory development and that development should be
driven by the agenda of the actual stakeholders and beneficiaries.

1.1 Purpose and Research Question

This study will explore a case when two dominant strategies in the development sector
might stand in conflict: donor agencies’ use of gender mainstreaming and their simultane-
ous use of participatory approaches in development efforts. The study focuses on theorising
this potential conflict, and empirically explore a case that might illustrate this conflict.
Discourse analysis is used as a method to examine how Sida’s principles of participatory
development interact with the principles of gender mainstreaming. To add nuance and
broader perspectives to the exploration of the conflict, interviews with Sida staff members
have been conducted which provide perspectives on the potential conflict. The purpose of
the study is threefold. First, the study aims to identify if there is a conflict between gender
mainstreaming and participatory development by theoretically comparing and contrasting
the two strategies. Second, the study aims to examine if the potential conflict can be
empirically found at the Swedish government agency, Sida. Third, if there is a conflict,
the study aims to illustrate how that conflict is manifested. In other words, the study
is mainly descriptive, although, primarily attempts to explain why such a conflict would
exist or not. The research question that will guide this study is:

*Can a conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development be discerned
in theory and in practice? If so, how does that conflict manifest itself?*

The conflict in practice will be examined at Sida where the agency’s points of departure,
standpoints and objectives concerning gender mainstreaming and participatory develop-
ment are examined as opposed to the implications for these standpoints in development
projects. Following from the theoretical reasoning and the analysis, this study will argue
that the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development can be
discerned based on the underlying principles of the two strategies.

The theoretical relevance of this study lies in that it explores a case and a problem
that has not been studied adequately previously. Consequently, this study can provide
new interesting insights which develops theory on gender mainstreaming and participatory
development. This study will also contribute with two definitions of gender mainstream-
ing and participatory development which may be analytically useful when studying this
research problem in the future. Moreover, if the study can show that there is a conflict be-
tween gender mainstreaming and participatory development at Sida, this conflict arguably
affects Sida’s efforts and the outcomes of the development cooperation Sida is involved in. Highlighting that this type of conflict might exist can make development agencies examine whether it is a cause for particular outcomes which is important when evaluating development cooperations. In sum, there is also empirical relevance for this study.

1.2 The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

This section will go more in-depth about Sida and the directives for Swedish development cooperation which will assist in motivating the case selection later on in the study.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is one of the Swedish government bodies which works with development and in particular, foreign aid. Sida is directed by the Government of Sweden on the ways in which Swedish Development Cooperation (SDC) should be designed and on what grounds. Currently, SDC is directed by the Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid\(^2\) that was adopted by the sitting government in 2016 (GoS 2016). The policy framework provides the basic standpoints and guidelines for SDC and based on this framework, strategies for specific areas and topics are designed which Sida carries out. For instance, there is a strategy that directs the way in which SDC should work with gender equality.\(^3\) The following section will describe the directives for SDC more in detail.

1.2.1 Directives for Swedish Development Cooperation

The directives for SDC are broad and include many different aspects. Therefore, the description of how Sida is directed will be narrowed down to what can be linked to the perspective on gender equality and participatory development or alternatives that would show a distance to participatory approaches.

The stated goal for SDC is to "create opportunities for better living conditions for people living in poverty and oppression" (GoS 2016, p. 3). In order to achieve this goal, SDC is based on two overarching perspectives: the poor people’s perspective on development, and a rights-based perspective. The poor people’s perspective means that poor women’s, girls’, men’s and boys’ situation, needs, opportunities and priorities should be the starting point for poverty elimination and the promotion for a fair and sustainable development. The rights-based perspective means that the human rights and democracy are fundamental parts of development. This perspective has its starting point on globally agreed values based on the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the binding international conventions that have been adopted (GoS 2016, p. 14).

\(^2\)Regeringens Skrivelse 2016 17:60, Policyramverk för svenskt utvecklingssamarbete och humanitärt bistånd

\(^3\)Strategi för Svenskt Utvecklingssamarbete för jämställdhet och kvinnors och flickors rättigheter 2018-2020
Apart from the two overarching perspectives, three thematic perspectives are added as standpoints for SDC: a conflict perspective, a gender equality perspective, and a climate perspective. Due to the focus on gender in this study, only the gender equality perspective will be described further. While a gender perspective has been an established part of SDC for a long time, the feminist foreign policy has raised the ambitions for the efforts on gender equality, especially since the framework regards global gender equality as a condition for sustainable development. In order to achieve gender equality, a gender perspective needs to be incorporated in all efforts and projects made by SDC, that is, gender is to be mainstreamed into development cooperations (GoS 2016, p. 21-22).

In terms of the relationship with the partner countries, the policy framework states that the partner countries are themselves responsible for their own development meaning that local ownership and national responsibility is key for the development cooperation. The point of departure is the country’s own strategies, plans and systems for development and that SDC should strengthen these institutions and processes on the national plans for poverty reduction and development (GoS 2016, p. 49-50). Specifically, dialogue with partners is repeatedly mentioned as crucial for development cooperation. Dialogue is a platform for negotiation of values between Sida and partners that influence development cooperation and is argued to be important for the relationship with the partner country. It is also a means for including Swedish policies and perspectives, achieving results in accordance with Swedish strategies and increase the development efficiency (Peebles & Jubb 2015, p. 13). However, the policy framework states that dialogue needs to occur on mutual terms and should be focused on the recipient’s needs, priorities and systems (GoS 2016, p. 52). Finally, the policy framework states, on the basis of Agenda 2030, that cooperation between different actors on different levels is important to incorporate a broad perspective on development. Once again, local ownership is mentioned as critical for long-term and sustainable development (GoS 2016, p. 50).

Going back to the gender perspective in development efforts, the Swedish government adopted a strategy for how SDC is to work towards global gender equality. The motivation for adopting this strategy is based on Agenda 2030 and other conventions such as CEDAW and UNSCR 1325 and states that gender equality is a prerequisite for sustainable development, apart from there being an intrinsic value to work towards gender equality (GoS 2018, p. 4). In other words, this strategy is in line with the policy framework’s recommendations for how to work towards global gender equality. Further, gender mainstreaming is once again mentioned as the tool to incorporate a gender perspective into all Swedish development efforts and to achieve Agenda 2030 (GoS 2018, p. 5).

One can conclude that SDC point of departure is that gender equality is key for development and that gender mainstreaming is the main tool for working towards gender
equality. With regard to the relationship with partners, the focus is on local ownership and dialogue, the perspective of taking the viewpoint of the poor and their needs, priorities and interests. It can thus be concluded that Sida has a great commitment to gender mainstreaming and simultaneously aims to work by participatory development due to the links to local ownership, the perspective of the poor and national priorities. Sida therefore seems to be a case where the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development should be found.

1.3 Disposition

The thesis proceeds as follows. Previous research on the topic of the study will be outlined before the two fields of literature that the study builds on, gender mainstreaming and participatory development, will be described and discussed. The study will move on to theoretically reason around the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development before this discussion is narrowed down into a theoretical framework. Thereafter, the research design will be described which will touch upon case selection, methodology, the analytical framework and on the material. The analysis will then take place in light of the analytical framework and the theoretical framework. Lastly, the thesis will be concluded and suggestions for future research will be recommended.
2 Gender Mainstreaming & Participatory Development

This chapter contains the theoretical basis of this study. It starts with reviewing the previous research on the study’s topic before moving on to the basic elements of gender mainstreaming and the most common critique against the strategy. As the academic field on gender mainstreaming is extensive, the literature included here, apart from the most prominent scholars in the field and the basic principles of the strategy, is mainly what relates to gender mainstreaming in development. The third part of the chapter will consider the basic standpoints of participatory development and its most common critique. Finally, the two fields of literature will be narrowed down to a theoretical framework.

2.1 Previous Research

This section will describe if and how the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development has been studied previously and if there are any studies that examine this relationship at a development organisation or donor agency. Following from outlining previous research, one might find theory that the study can build on and situate the contribution of this study.

However, there is an apparent lack of literature which examines the relationship between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. While some scholars have investigated how forms of participation can function as a way of mainstreaming gender into policy making (Clisby 2005), to make gender mainstreaming more effective (Howard 2002), or how gender mainstreaming is implemented through participation (Hippert 2011), there is a gap in the literature on the relationship between the underlying elements of the two strategies on a more fundamental level, especially in relation to aid agencies which have adopted the two strategies. This study will contribute to such a discussion. However, there exist a large body of research which concerns gender mainstreaming in organisational environments (Benschop & Verloo 2006, Booth & Bennett 2002, Rees 2005, Lombardo 2005, Hafner-Burton & Pollack 2002) and the successes and challenges in implementation of gender mainstreaming in development operations (Moser & Moser 2005, Warren 2012, Milward et al. 2015, Mannell 2012, Mukhopadhyay 2009, Wendoh & Wallace 2005, Howard 2002). This literature examines different forms of gender mainstreaming adopted by development organisations and donor agencies and how those forms affect the implementation and outcomes of gender mainstreaming. It also explores processes of gender mainstreaming in development efforts and what gender mainstreaming might mean in practice for people in developing contexts. Since this literature will be drawn upon in the theory section, it will not be outlined further here.

Regarding how donor agencies adopt participatory approaches to their development
activities, the literature generally concerns the underlying motives for using participation. One can distinguish between arguments which build on participatory development as a procedure that increase the effectiveness of development activities, or arguments which build on participation as a moral objective, where participation is seen as a fundamental right (Pretty 1995, Mohan 2007, Parfitt 2004, Gaventa 2017, Cornwall 2003). This discussion will be described in detail below. Moreover, scholars have examined the relationship between donor agencies and beneficiaries, asking questions such as "How can and should aid agency staff respond to conflict and contestation within a recipient country? Whose voice and knowledge count in the decisions they make?" (Eyben 2006, p. 2). Here scholars call for greater learning environments and reflective practice by donor organisations to respond to dilemmas that occur between donor agencies’ commitment to a rights-based approach and the interests of the poor, and the simultaneous practice of power and accountability to policies governing where the aid should be directed (Eyben 2006, Arora-Jonsson & Cornwall 2006). This study will also contribute to this line of research as it explores a potential dilemma or conflict between values and procedures on how to do development cooperation.

Finally, Sida has been studied before in relation to gender mainstreaming and participatory development, although as separate topics. Concerning participatory development, one study investigated what participation means for Sida and how Sida wants to work with participation (Arora-Jonsson & Cornwall 2006). The study was formed as a learning process with researchers and Sida staff members where they should think about and develop Sida’s reasoning surrounding participation in development. These learning environments fostered, on the one hand, reflexivity surrounding participation but, on the other hand, new ways of thinking of participation which did not translate well into the familiar routines. This study therefore called for creating more open spaces for reflection and ability to challenge existing routines on how to do participation (Arora-Jonsson & Cornwall 2006, p. 92). Another study goes more in-depth into the processes in which participation became practice at Sida and attempts to unlock the different meanings and ways of thinking about participation at Sida (Cornwall 2009). These studies are informative since they dig deep into how Sida staff members have reflected about participation.

A recent report series has evaluated the implementation of Sida’s Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2015-2018, a plan for strengthening the commitment of working with gender mainstreaming. The conclusion is that despite the institutionalisation of gender equality and the commitment to gender equality among Sida staff, the implementation of the Plan has been irregular and depends on time resources and the individual staff member’s interest and competence (Bjarnegård & Uggl 2018, p. 108-109). This study supports the claim that Sida has a great commitment to gender equality, but simultaneously shows that the practical implications and efforts do not necessarily follow.
The above literature and theories on gender mainstreaming and participatory development are informative as they provide insights on how donor agencies may work with gender equality and participatory approaches in development efforts. However, previous research has tended to examine how these two strategies are used by donor organisations separately, ignoring the relationship and the potential conflict between them. This study will therefore contribute to theory by exploring how gender mainstreaming and participatory development interact as strategies for development cooperation at Sida. Because this study explores a new theoretical problem, the theory section below will outline the basic standpoints of gender mainstreaming and participatory development in order to disentangle the potential conflict between the two strategies. This theoretical discussion will be narrowed down into a theoretical framework, serving as the lens through which the analysis will be conducted.

2.2 Basic Principles of Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming was adopted by the UN in 1996 as a consequence of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995. The aim with enforcing gender mainstreaming was to initiate a global strategy to achieve gender equality and to put special responsibility on nation-states and international organisations to carry out gender mainstreaming. Apart from national governments, many influential institutions such as the EU, the IMF, the World Bank and the UN have since then adopted gender mainstreaming as an official policy (True 2003). Consequently, gender mainstreaming has become one of the most influential and used strategies in order to work towards gender equality. The meaning of gender mainstreaming has unsurprisingly been up for debate, however, the UN’s definition is repeatedly used:

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and man of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (UN 1997, p. 2).

Following from this definition, some underlying assumptions and meanings can be identified which underpin gender mainstreaming. Firstly, a gender perspective is to be included in any planned action in all areas and at all levels, suggesting that gender mainstreaming is of constant relevance, despite action or context. In other words, a gender perspective⁴ is

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⁴Gender mainstreaming and gender perspective should not be confused to be different things as using a gender perspective is what gender mainstreaming is about. Thus, the terms will be used interchangeably throughout the thesis.
always important to include and cannot be negotiated, given that it is adopted as a strategy. Second, gender mainstreaming implies moving the responsibility of gender equality away from gender specialists into the mainstream agenda (Booth & Bennett 2002, p. 442). A third aspect of gender mainstreaming is the transformative aspect which differs from other strategies to achieve gender equality. Rees (2005) differentiates between three ways of addressing gender equality; equal treatment, positive action and gender mainstreaming. Equal treatment is a rights-based approach which aims to highlight women’s rights mostly through legal frameworks. Positive action focuses on specific groups and their disadvantages through special projects and interventions. Gender mainstreaming, however, has more transformatory potential since it focuses on and attempts to illuminate the very systems and structures the causes gendered practices and gender inequality by incorporating a gender perspective into all such systems and structures. In other words, gender mainstreaming addresses ‘institutionalised sexism’ and is a more comprehensive and radical approach than equal treatment and positive action (Rees 2005, p. 557ff.).

The practical implementation of gender mainstreaming can imply a range of different actions to incorporate a gender perspective. Common practices is to conduct gender analyses, usage of gender indicators, creating gender disaggregated data or approach budgeting from a gender perspective. While these are concrete ways of including a gender perspective into organisation, policy-making or projects, scholars have criticised these technical elements as a form of depoliticisation of gender mainstreaming. The next section will describe this further.

2.3 Challenges for the Transformatory Potential

While gender mainstreaming has been adopted by a great number of global institutions, nation-states, NGOs and donor agencies, the main struggle has been to translate the transformative potential of the strategy from policy to practice (Moser & Moser 2005, Sainsbury & Bergqvist 2009, Milward et al. 2015). Hippert (2011) argues that gender mainstreaming in Bolivia mainly concerns increasing the presence of women in various institutions, organisations or other forums which leads to the classic "add women and stir" approach, ignoring how women’s inclusion can be an additional burden for women apart from traditional gendered activities (Hippert 2011, p. 506). Other scholars argue that gender mainstreaming looses its meaning when being implemented because of its technical elements, described above, which makes the transformative strategy into a technical and bureaucratic approach (Mannell 2012, p. 426). In other words, the bureaucratisation and institutionalisation have in many ways made the strategy depoliticised as the transformative potential gets lost in the technical aspects of mainstreaming (Mukhopadhyay 2009). Apart from criticising the technicalisation and bureaucratisation of the strategy, some scholars argue that many donor
agencies and other development actors are so eager to incorporate a gender perspective into projects, that the meaning of 'gender' in the local context is neglected (Warren 2012, Wendoh & Wallace 2005) making gender mainstreaming considered an imposed "bad word" that simply relates to donor agencies’ requirements for aid and not what the locals’ interests or needs might be (Mannell 2012, p. 425). Consequently, it is argued that gender mainstreaming is implemented as an outsider top-down approach with little impact since top-down approaches often ignore local processes, belief systems and meanings. While it has been argued that the strategy can be developed and implemented in a variety of ways dependent on location and context (Walby 2005, p. 464), criticism has progressed to argue that gender mainstreaming is part of an extension of orientalist and neo-colonial projects or as an imperialistic notion used to undermine local culture. Clisby and Enderstein (2017) argue that gender mainstreaming has become vulnerable to repoliticisation based on an orientalist and neo-colonial discourse due to the top-down elements which risk neglect local structures and relations of power (Clisby & Enderstein 2017). Clisby (2005) finds that this is in some instances already the case by giving examples on how gender mainstreaming has been implemented from above and from an outsider in Colombia, without accounting for the local structures and barriers to gender equality that pre-exist (Clisby 2005).

On the other hand, when gender mainstreaming has been considered implemented successfully, greater community ownership over projects surrounding questions of gender has been achieved, a bottom-up approach (Wendoh & Wallace 2005, Zachariassen 2012). Howard (2002) somewhat supports the argument above that the strategy is often implemented as a top-down approach by arguing that stakeholders which are not gender experts are often perceived as passive recipients or as resisters to gender mainstreaming rather than agents with their own knowledge of gender. However, in cases when stakeholders were involved in the gender mainstreaming process through stakeholder participation, new innovative solutions to gender inequality was found and greater outcomes were achieved (Howard 2002). This type of participation in development processes and how participatory approaches have influenced the contemporary development agenda will now be described further.

2.4 A Participatory Perspective to Development

During the 1990’s, traditional development methods were criticised for being based on top-down strategies following ethnocentric and neo-colonial biases (Escobar 1995, Mohanty 1988). As such, the goal was to advance developing countries into modern, Western-like countries, through outsider intervention based on expert knowledge of national reforms where the local people and stakeholders often became sidelined without real influence (Mohan 2001, p.1-2). Out of the failure of developing states through top-down measures,
contextual measures, taken based on the people actually experiencing the problems that needs to be "developed", has progressed to be crucial for development (Krishna & Shariff 2010). Much of participatory development departures from the civil society as a reaction to the inflexible and bureaucratic structures of the state as well as a way of including the marginalised and poor in the development efforts (Mohan 2001, p. 4-5). Participatory development thereby emerged as a more equitable and sustainable form of doing development (Enns et al. 2015, p. 361) and has become the new orthodoxy of contemporary development (Cornwall 2006, p. 62).

There is no single definition used in terms of participatory development and there is great contention of what participation really means and for whom. Some have even gone as far as saying that "participation can be used to evoke – and to signify – almost anything that involves people" (Cornwall 2008, p. 269). However, in broad terms one can understand participation as "the inclusion of the beneficiaries of development in the design, implementation and evaluation of development processes" (Enns et al. 2015, p. 361). It is thought to give voice to the poor and marginalised and empower them to become agents rather than passive receivers in development interventions (Enns et al. 2015, p. 361). However, not only beneficiaries should be included in participatory development but also anyone who has a stake and influence in a project or intervention, for instance, governments, people affected both positively and negatively by the project, those with technical expertise, and as mentioned above, the poor and marginalised (Oakley 1995, Danquah et al. 2018).

While participatory development is the dominant strategy for how to do development today, the motivations for using participation differ. Pretty (1995) distinguishes between participation as a means for efficiency, and participation as a fundamental right (Pretty 1995, p. 1251). Participation as efficiency refers to that if local people are involved in the development project, they are more likely to support the development service provided in the project, that is, an instrumental value of participation to achieve development objectives (Pretty 1995, Mohan 2007). The implication of an approach where participation is regarded as a means for development is that power relations are rarely analysed and project design and management are often left in the hands of those in power (Parfitt 2004, p. 539). On the other hand, participation as a fundamental right refers to how the main aim of participation is local mobilisation and empowerment, that is, an intrinsic value of participation, or participation as an end (Pretty 1995, Parfitt 2004, Cornwall 2003). Others have expressed a similar view of participation as transformatory and empowering, meaning that the marginalised are enabled to voice their interests and concerns which become institutionally integrated to reach social change (Mohan 2007, p. 780), and can be seen as a response to social exclusion (Gaventa 2017, p. 51). This school of thought has been argued to have transformative potential since mobilisation and empowerment can
support those who are normally socially excluded and reduce the gap between those with voice and those without. In other words, there might be a greater scope for negotiating power relations when regarding participation as a fundamental right, which is a factor for transformation (Kyamusugulwa 2013, Mohan 2007, Parfitt 2004, Cornwall 2003). While most scholars tend to differentiate between these two broad forms of dividing participatory approaches, others regard them as complementary and argue that participation in itself can be empowering regardless of underlying motivation or the activity undertaken (Cleaver 1999).

2.5 Who Participates?

Despite being a strategy which mainly aims to include marginalised and powerless groups in development societies, e.g. women, scholars have shown how those groups often remain silenced and voiceless. Thus, the question 'who participates' is a crucial one (Cornwall 2003, 2008, White 1996). Cornwall (2003) argues that interests being raised through participatory approaches are often gendered, which restrict some women’s the ability to voice their interests and concerns (Cornwall 2003). Thus, participation includes having the power to participate and relations of power within local communities and projects, but also between local partners and the outsider development organisation. In turn, it affects how participation turns out in practice and what local interests that are expressed (White 1996, p. 12). Some have even gone so far as to argue that participation has become 'the new tyranny' in development as the ideology of participation, to shift power from the powerful to the powerless, has failed and has rather sustained these power imbalances (see Cooke & Kothari 2001). Enns et. al. (2014) support this claim based on the case of the UN’s new rhetoric on participation in the post-2015 agenda. Despite moving towards participatory approaches to a great extent, the motivations for doing so are based on what Pretty (1995) and Mohan (2007) refer to as the efficiency motivation, i.e. regarding participants as instruments for development rather than actors for transformation, which neglect power imbalances and hinders a shift in power (Enns et al. 2015).

The above scholars target the basic epistemology of participatory development, moving the power from the development practitioner to the participating beneficiary, which calls into question the transformative potential of participatory development (Mohan 2007). Yet, scholars still claim that participatory approaches are better than top-down strategies and despite weaknesses and limitations to the strategy, some argue and show how participatory development can have transformative outcomes. Mohan (2007) argues that when participatory development has rendered transformative outcomes, it has been promoted as a broader political and radical project that has sought to go in-depth into underlying processes of development with an explicit focus on citizenship. Furthermore, in order for
participation to be transformatory, local political institutionalisation of participation is necessary where participants can hold power-holders to account (Mohan 2007). In other words, having the fundamental right to participate through citizenship, and making political institutions accountable when participants raise their voice, is one way through which participation has been argued to be transformatory (Mohan 2007, Parfitt 2004).

2.6 Are Gender Mainstreaming and Participatory Development Compatible?

When comparing and contrasting the literature on gender mainstreaming with the literature on participatory development, some conflicts emerge on how to reason and prioritise these topics. One of the basic elements of gender mainstreaming is that a gender perspective is of relevance in all areas and levels of the context in which the strategy is adopted. In relation to development cooperation, this element has been valued with regard to its transformative potential, but has also been criticised as it may result in donor agencies imposing gender mainstreaming as a top-down strategy which run the risk of neglecting local understandings of gender relations or other interests and priorities to development overall. Assuming that a donor agency has adopted gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality and given that a gender perspective is always relevant to include, in for instance, development project plans, gender mainstreaming does seem to have traits of top-downism in relation to development cooperation between donor agencies and partners. The top-downism of gender mainstreaming lies in the fact that a gender perspective is always relevant to include, despite of what local partners in development cooperation might prioritise or focus on in their development agenda.

Participatory development emerged as a reaction to top-down strategies, as a way of including local voices and stakeholders into development projects and reduce the prescriptiveness of top-down policies. It aims to give voice to those who generally are marginalised but that are stakeholders and affected by the development intervention (Mohan 2001, Oakley 1995). However, whether participatory development actually fulfils this aim and provides an alternative to top-down development strategies is up for debate. The question is if transformatory participation is possible if there are strong interests from other actors than the local partners. Thus, for donor agencies, it is a matter of choosing between imposing a strategy that might include elements of top-downism, or staying true to the fundamental elements of participatory development, resulting in a discussion of what is valued and prioritised most, and who gets to decide those values and priorities. Here, Sida or partners and individual stakeholders?

Furthermore, research has shown that 'who participates' in participatory projects is a crucial issue and that the aim to give voice to the voiceless is rarely accomplished, es-
pecially in regards to women (Cornwall 2003). As has been mentioned repeatedly above, participatory approaches have been criticised for not only neglecting power relations but sometimes even sustaining them in various contexts (Cooke & Kothari 2001). Adding a gender mainstreaming strategy to development projects might be a way to include women’s experiences and highlight how gender inequality sustains poverty or other obstacles to development, and consequently, potentially empower women to not only voice their interests but also to challenge existing unequal power relations in place. Yet again, if donor agencies impose a strategy such as gender mainstreaming to create awareness and combat unequal power relations, it might not be in line with the elements of participatory development, given that gender mainstreaming is not an interest of local partners. Instead, it can be regarded as a prescriptive expert knowledge of what a ‘developing population’ needs (Escobar 1995). Thus, the ways in which donor agencies and development organisations advocate for strategies in development cooperation such as gender mainstreaming, and simultaneously attempt to move power over from themselves to the ones affected by development interventions and let them direct and participate in their own development agenda might not always be compatible.

In other words, the conflict builds on donor agencies’ principles for both advocating and using gender mainstreaming as a strategy to work towards gender equality in development cooperation, and simultaneously advocate and using participatory approaches in the very same development cooperation. The reason for the conflict lies in the constant relevance of a gender perspective inherent in the strategy of gender mainstreaming, which seems to stand in conflict with the commitment to let partners in development cooperation participate and direct their own development agenda, possibly implying that they do not always see gender as relevant.

Furthermore, who participates in directing the development agenda are affected by local power relations which may exclude groups that are relevant participators in the development projects. This could create a need for addressing gendered power relations, that is, including a gender perspective. One could argue that there is a bridge here for where gender mainstreaming is important and valid from a participatory perspective, so that those that are affected by development interventions actually get to participate in that development process, i.e. acknowledging local power relations and including marginalised groups in the participatory practices in development efforts. Nevertheless, the conflict may remain between donor agencies’ usage of gender mainstreaming in development cooperation and simultaneously advocating for participation since the above reasoning is simply an argument for using gender mainstreaming, but the underlying principles of the two strategies might still stand in conflict with each other.
2.7 Theoretical Framework

In this study, the subject for examination is Sida and the ways in which this theoretical conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development may be illustrated at this donor agency. This empirical case is especially interesting since Sida is proud to announce their passion and commitment for both gender equality and participatory development (GoS 2016, Cornwall 2000).

In order to answer the research question, this study needs to identify when and how Sida aims to include gender mainstreaming and simultaneously include participatory development into development cooperation. The theoretical framework will thereby clarify when transformatory gender mainstreaming occurs, as well as when transformatory participatory development occurs. Based on the theoretical reasoning above, this study will argue that there is a conflict when the two strategies are to be implemented simultaneously in development cooperation. The conflict emerges when a donor agency shows great commitment to the transformatory aspects of both gender mainstreaming and participatory development. If there is a lack of commitment to the two strategies, then the conflict will most likely be weak or non-existing. Thus, the theories on the transformative aspects of gender mainstreaming and participatory development will be narrowed down to two definitions used in order to understand if the conflict between gender mainstreaming exists at Sida, and if it exists, how it manifests itself.

This study will understand transformatory gender mainstreaming similar to UN’s definition (UN 1997, p. 2), outlined above, as a way of assessing the implications for both women and men in any planned development cooperation, in all areas such as political, economic and societal, and at any level. Further, gender mainstreaming entails making women’s and men’s concerns and experiences an inherent part of project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in development cooperation. Thus, gender mainstreaming makes no exceptions dependent on project, partner country or case, and is non-negotiable given that is is adopted as a strategy to work towards gender equality. On the other hand, this study will understand transformatory participatory development as a fundamental right which builds on Pretty’s (1995) and Mohan’s (2007) understandings of participation (Pretty 1995, Mohan 2007). Transformatory participatory development means that partners are included in all stages of the projects, such as project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The aim is to support local ownership over projects and that the development agenda is driven by local interests and opinions and where outsiders’ interests or motivations are reduced to a minimum. The goal is that partners in development cooperation are empowered to raise their voices, demand their rights and drive their own development agenda. As such, participants in partner countries are
agents of their own development.

Based on this theoretical framework, this study will argue that if Sida attempts to achieve both transformative gender mainstreaming and transformative participatory development, a conflict between the two strategies will emerge. To summarise, departing from the basic principles of gender mainstreaming and participatory development, the theoretical framework landed in two theoretical definitions of *transformative gender mainstreaming* and *transformative participatory development*. The theoretical framework will be used as the lens through which the empirical material of the study will be understood and will provide the foundation for the analytical framework described in detailed below. Next, the research design of the study will be presented and discussed.
3 Research Design

This chapter will outline and discuss the research design of this study. In particular, it will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of a case study design, selection of case and its implications, the chosen methods, how the theoretical framework will analytically be applied to the empirical material and finally a discussion on the material and triangulation.

3.1 A Single Case Study Design

This study qualifies as an exploratory single case study. It is based on a theoretical research problem that can be explored and possibly illustrated in an empirical case, Sida. Since this study explores a potential conflict between principles underlying gender mainstreaming and participatory development, it looks in-depth into complex arguments and nuances which could illustrate this conflict. As examining such processes and complexities in-depth is the basis for answering the research question, this research design is deemed useful, especially since this study is interested in one case that provide good opportunities to illustrate the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. By examining one case in depth, insights gained can be used to move theory on this conflict forward which can be tested in future studies (Gerring 2004, p. 349f.).

3.2 Case Selection

The case selection in this study is linked to the theoretical reasoning surrounding when global orthodoxies might not be compatible with each other, here, gender mainstreaming and participatory development. Following from the description in the introduction of Sida and the basic principles for Swedish Development Cooperation, Sida is arguably a case where this conflict would be found given that it exists and if so, in what ways it manifests itself. This study aims to explore and deepen the understanding of the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. As such, it is valuable to choose a case which is most likely to illustrate that type of conflict, hence, why Sida is chosen as a case. Sida is most likely to illustrate the conflict due to the agency’s commitment to working towards gender equality through gender mainstreaming while at the same time adopting participatory principles for how to conduct development. Using a most likely case in a single case study has implications for the empirical generalisations that can be made from this study because of the difficulty of establishing the representativeness of the case, thereby determining how one can generalise the results to other cases similar to the one studied (Gerring 2004). While empirical generalisations of this study can be difficult to draw, one might still be able to draw some conclusions that can be abstracted
to other cases. For instance, if there does not exist a conflict at Sida, as a most likely case, it is unlikely that the conflict will exist in other cases either. However, the purpose of the study is to explore and increase the understanding of a somewhat new area of research where typical features or characteristics of the theoretical conflict would be interesting to abstract from this case. In other words, this study will contribute to research through theoretical generalisations and by bringing new nuances and dimensions into theory on gender mainstreaming and participatory development.

3.3 Methodology

This section describes the two methods used in this study to answer the research question; discourse analysis and interviews.

3.3.1 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a suitable method for answering the research question as one can dig into the written principles that Sida works from regarding gender mainstreaming and participatory development. In this study it is used as a way of elucidating whether a conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development can be discerned in Sida’s manuals, strategies and written support concerning gender mainstreaming in development cooperation. Discourse analysis has the benefit that it can reveal what is hidden or taken for granted in the so called ‘discourse structure’ of a text such as underlying ideas and conceptions (Winther Jorgensen & Phillips 2007, p. 32). One can therefore use discourse analysis to identify the underlying principles of gender mainstreaming and participatory development Sida attempts to follow in development cooperation, and thus, identify when the potential conflict might be apparent although not explicitly mentioned in the text. In other words, discourse analysis is a method that can reveal underlying principles, meanings and conceptions in texts, which is a suitable method for this study as it attempts to examine the underlying principles of Sida’s conception of gender mainstreaming and participatory development and analyse whether they are compatible or not.

The precise way of using discourse analysis often varies, but an often used practice is to ask questions to the texts at hand in order to deconstruct the text and reveal the underlying principles, meanings and conceptions (Winther Jorgensen & Phillips 2007, p. 31). In this study, these questions reflect the operationalisation of the theoretical framework and will be discussed in greater detail below in the analytical framework. Further, the discourse analysis is conducted based on the documents that Sida possesses regarding its suggestions on how gender mainstreaming can be incorporated into development cooperation, namely, the Gender Toolbox, Gender in Practice: A Manual for Sida, The Plan for Gender Integration and the portfolio overview Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Women’s
Rights. These documents will be described further below. While texts on participatory development would have been valuable to include in the discourse analysis, Sida does not possess any such documents apart from the Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation, outlined in the introduction. The discourse analysis could thereby be argued to be limited since it only accounts for documents that concern gender mainstreaming. On the other hand, Sida’s point of departure for development cooperation is participatory development and this study will therefore argue that the participatory standpoints should be reflected in the documents on gender mainstreaming. Thus, the discourse analysis will, among other things, examine if and how participation is recognised in relation to gender mainstreaming processes.

3.3.2 Interviews

The second method used in this study is interviews with Sida staff who work in different segments of the organisation or in the field as representatives. The reason for including interviews is to go more in-depth into the processes in which the potential conflict may occur and manifest itself and thereby gain a more nuanced understanding. While the discourse analysis can provide information based on the formal standpoints Sida works with gender mainstreaming and participatory development in development cooperation, interviews can provide information about the informal and practical ways in which this occurs, how those processes may function in reality and how Sida staff interpret gender mainstreaming and participatory development.

The study has conducted nine interviews with people working at Sida, both at the headquarters and in the field. Some of respondents work with issues close to gender mainstreaming, others work in the field and some as program managers. Almost all respondents have experience from working in the field. To get the perspectives on participatory development, people working with civil society in various ways have been interviewed as there are not participatory development positions at Sida as such. Thus, the selection of respondents was strategic in the sense of that the aim was to identify broad and alternative views and perspectives, however, the respondents are not argued to represent a unified view of Sida. Further, anonymity was ensured to some of the respondents which limits the transparency of these interview persons. For instance, lack of transparency regarding their position at Sida and expert knowledge could compromise the understanding if this study has interviewed relevant people. However, anonymity and the value of the respondents insights and information on the study’s research topic have been regarded more important in this case.

Snowballing was used as a sample technique, mainly because of the difficulty of finding

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5 A list of the respondents can be found in Appendix B
relevant respondents without a social network at Sida. This technique builds on previous respondents’ recommendation and could be biased since the sample builds on their network and not specific criteria of the study. However, as mentioned, the aim with conducting interviews was to provide broad perspectives on the potential conflict and the author therefore specifically asked for future respondents that could provide alternative views on the conflict and that had a different position at Sida than the one interviewed. Finally, since this is an exploratory study and given the scope of the study, the sampling technique was deemed satisfying since the idea is to gain alternative information and viewpoints on the potential conflict.

Further, the interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide.\(^6\) This interview model allows for the respondent to steer the conversation and reason freely while still keeping the focus of the study purpose. Since the respondent can answer more freely than in a structured interview, information can be abstracted to a larger extent, about for instance, positions taken in relation to various situations where the conflict might occur, which gives more nuance to the understanding of the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. The interview questions are based on the theoretical framework to be in line with the theoretical understanding of the study, as well as the discourse analysis. However, the questions were somewhat revised during the interview process as some questions did not work properly or as new information was gathered which the author wanted to probe more into. After the interviews were conducted and unclear passages were clarified, the interviews were transcribed. Finally, the interviews were coded, compiled and analysed based on the analytical framework in order to be easily compared and discussed in relation to the discourse analysis. One could question if important nuances in the interview material are missed when following an analytical framework strictly. This was not deemed to have occurred in this study since the analytical framework allows for open-ended reasoning.

3.4 Analytical Framework

The analytical framework of this study departure from the theoretical framework, i.e. the definitions of *transformatory participatory development* and *transformatory gender mainstreaming*. An analytical framework is necessary in order to ensure that the empirical material is analysed through a consistent lens so that the results can be compared and systematically understood. While explicit mentioning of the potential conflict the study explores could be expressed, the analytical framework is formulated as to also identify the implicit ways through which the potential conflict may be articulated. Further, the same questions will be applied to the material extracted from the interviews so that this

\(^6\)The interview guide can be found in the Appendix C.
material can be compared and contrasted against the textual material. An important note here is that while this study examines the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development, the practical analysis will be based on how participatory development intersect with gender mainstreaming processes. This is because participatory development is, apart from a strategy, a procedure for how to do development. In other words, participation is best studied in relation to a development process and Sida points of departure regarding partners’ and stakeholders’ participation in that process, here the gender mainstreaming process. Thus, to make the definitions of transformatory participatory development and transformatory gender mainstreaming measurable, the study poses a set of questions and sub-questions to the empirical material;

1. How is gender mainstreaming to be incorporated in development cooperation?
   - On what levels?
   - In what areas?
   - Through which processes or tools?

2. Are there exceptions to gender mainstreaming or other priorities that go beyond gender mainstreaming?

3. Is gender mainstreaming included in development cooperation based on Sida’s priorities or partners’ priorities?

4. How does Sida reasons regarding partners’ role and participation in relation to gender mainstreaming? Are they restricted to specific areas and levels or apparent throughout the process?

5. How does Sida reasons regarding stakeholders role and participation in relation to gender mainstreaming processes? Are marginalised people and groups to be included?

The first question aims to identify if Sida follows the comprehensive understanding of gender mainstreaming and that a gender perspective should permeate all aspects of the context it is implemented in. The second question relates to the constant relevance of gender mainstreaming and if Sida follows that insistence on a gender perspective. The third question concerns how Sida relates to its participatory principles in relation to that partners are to define their own development agenda based on their priorities and interests, or if Sida deviates from its commitment to participatory development by adhering to the constant relevance of a gender perspective. This is one of the questions that may clearly illustrate if the conflict can be discerned. The fourth question focuses on the aspects of transformatory participatory development where beneficiaries or partners are to be included in every step of the development process. This question may elucidate how Sida balances its commitment to gender mainstreaming with its simultaneous commitment to participatory
development. The fifth question have similar aims as the fourth question, but specifies the aspect of transformatory participatory development that stakeholders and marginalised people should be included in development efforts, and thus examines how Sida relates to that aspect. Moreover, because the interviews provide a suitable opportunity to discuss the theoretical conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development directly with Sida staff members, an additional question will be added to the analysis of the interview results in order to illuminate clearly the perspectives that the respondents may have on the potential conflict;

6. In what ways is the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development recognised and discussed at Sida?

This last question may also provide examples of how the potential conflict could manifest itself and could give initial explanations for the potential conflict’s appearance.

3.5 Material and Triangulation

The material for the discourse analysis will consist of the tools and manuals Sida uses in their efforts to support the inclusion of a gender perspective in development cooperation; *The Gender Toolbox, Gender In Practice: A Manual or Sida, The Plan for Gender Integration*\(^7\) and the portfolio overview *Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Women’s Rights*. These documents, manuals and guidelines are strategically chosen because they provide the ways Sida suggests gender mainstreaming is to be included in development cooperation. Because SDC is to be based on principles on participatory development but there being no other documents on how Sida is to work with participatory development apart from the *Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation*, the documents presented above are deemed to be the most suitable to analyse in order to examine if there exists a conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development at Sida.

The Gender Toolbox consists of tools, briefs and thematic overviews which function as a knowledge and resource bank for both Sida staff and partners on how to operationalise gender mainstreaming into development cooperation.\(^8\) Apart from the Gender Toolbox, the *Gender in Practice: A Manual for Sida* (2009) is analysed. This manual has been developed to assist particularly desk officers with tools on how to carry out gender mainstreaming and is the most comprehensive document. *The Plan for Gender Integration* is chosen because it is a framework Sida recently adopted to strengthen the commitment to gender mainstreaming. Finally, the portfolio overview *Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Women’s Rights* is included in the textual material since it is one of the documents

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\(^7\)Plan för Jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018

\(^8\)A list of the documents can be found in Appendix A.
Sida refers to in their work on gender mainstreaming (Sida 2017b). These documents are rather similar and often build on each other. For instance, the documents from the Gender Toolbox are sometimes brief and tangible descriptions of the more comprehensive *Gender Equality in Practice: A Manual for Sida*. In terms of triangulation, the interviews function to triangulate and give perspectives on the results from the discourse analysis by comparing the results and findings. However, the material from the interviews can be biased since respondents might want to portray Sida in a particular light, lack knowledge on the questions asked, do not understand the questions, or have personal interests that affect the answers. The textual material and the interview material do thereby complement each other and the results will be systematically compared through the analytical framework to reach a nuanced result.
4 Analysis & Discussion

This chapter will contain the analysis of the study. It will be broken down into a description of the results from the discourse analysis, followed by a section in which the perspectives from the interviews will be added. Finally, a discussion of the results in the light of the theoretical framework will take place.

4.1 The Written Suggestions on Gender Mainstreaming

Following the questions asked in the analytical framework, the results section starts with outlining the results from the discourse analysis made on the written material on how Sida aims to support partners in their efforts on gender mainstreaming. Since the textual material builds on each other and contain similar information, the results section will be a combined description of the results from the texts to avoid unnecessary repetition.

4.1.1 Sida’s Understanding of Gender Mainstreaming

Firstly, Sida is rather clear on its commitment of working gender equality through gender mainstreaming and states rather early in several documents that a "a gender perspective shall permeate all Sida’s work" (Sida 2016, p. 1), that "gender mainstreaming is of relevance in all contexts in which Sida engages and in the cooperation with all types of partners" (Sida 2017c, p. 1) and that "[Gender mainstreaming] covers all of Sida’s operations: at global, regional and bilateral level; in all geographical regions and types of countries [...] in all forms of cooperation and with all types of partners" (Sida 2015a, p. 10, author’s translation). Further, it is stated in Sida’s definition of gender mainstreaming that it is "...a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes..." (Sida 2015c, p. 1).

In order to incorporate this gender perspective into all relevant areas, a model for gender mainstreaming is described which is structured around three steps. First, a mandatory gender analysis which describes the current gender equality situation in the given context. Second, an identification on how to move from the gender analysis to areas of collaboration. Third, decision on a strategy on how to include gender mainstreaming into the development intervention. Further, Sida suggests three strategies on how gender mainstreaming can be integrated into projects or interventions; integration, targeting and dialogue (Sida 2009, 2015a, b, c, 2016, 2017c). Integration means that a gender perspective should be applied throughout the intervention in whatever context that is at hand. Gender should be a formulated objective and should be a visible variable that has an impact throughout
the intervention. On the other end, targeting means that specific groups or issues are.

targeted with gender mainstreaming to specifically highlight gendered aspects and how
to cope with them. Finally, dialogue is described as a way of discussing sensitive issues
and aspects with partners, to advance Swedish positions and to strengthen the capacity of
partners (Sida 2009, 2015b, c, 2016). Apart from these more technical aspects described in
the documents on how gender mainstreaming should be included in development coopera-
tion, other aspects are mentioned such as "gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of all
actors involved in Sida funded cooperation" (Sida 2015c, p. 2), that gender mainstream-
ing strategies should be context-specific and that gender mainstreaming ensures that the
perspectives of women and men, girls and boys are all included, as gender mainstreaming
is not simply a ‘women’s issue’ (Sida 2009, 2015c). Thus, one can conclude that Sida has
a very comprehensive framework for its efforts on gender mainstreaming, which will be
furthered discussed below.

4.1.2 The Constant Relevance of Gender Mainstreaming

This section regards whether Sida considers there to be any exceptions to when gender
mainstreaming should be included in development cooperation. Here, there is a clear
message from Sida that, as mentioned above, "a gender perspective shall permeate all
Sida’s work" (Sida 2016, p. 1), and "gender mainstreaming is of relevance in all contexts in
which Sida engages and in the cooperation with all types of partners" (Sida 2017c, p. 1).
These statements seem to point to that Sida adhere to the constant relevance of gender
mainstreaming. However, one can discuss the term relevance here, as relevance does not
necessarily ensures that a gender perspective actually is implemented into development
cooperation. This will be discussed further below, however, in principle it seems that Sida
aims to include a gender perspective into all development cooperations.

4.1.3 Priorities Concerning Gender Mainstreaming

Regarding whether gender mainstreaming is included based on Sida’s priorities or partners’
priorities, the texts are rather vague. While an outright answer to the question has not
been found, it is clear the gender mainstreaming is a priority for Sida. For instance,
one of the tools states that "gender equality is a top priority perspective for Sida" (Sida
2017c, p. 1) and the Plan for Gender Integration states that "increased focus on gender
equality as the main objective and gender mainstreaming within specific areas" (Sida 2015a,
p. 10, author’s translation) is one of the main aims of the plan. While if the inclusion of
gender mainstreaming in development projects and interventions is exclusively dependent
on Sida cannot be determined, one can conclude that Sida seems to strongly advocate for
a gender perspective in development cooperation. However, two of the documents, Tool:
**Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality in Practice: A Manual for Sida** mention that local priorities concerning gender issues need to be accounted for. For instance, a "gender strategy must be strategic to the country’s, sector’s and programme’s long-term objectives" (Sida 2015c, 4) is stated, and specifically in relation to cooperation strategies that "the priorities of the cooperation country form the basis" (Sida 2009, p. 54), and that one needs to "look for gender priorities in the governments priorities" (Sida 2009, p. 54) when producing development cooperation strategies. Another example underscores that:

[N]ational priorities must be considered. Most countries have national action plans and policies on gender equality. These must be viewed as guiding the choice of strategy and priorities when formulating goals and objectives (Sida 2009, p. 39).

Finally, in the checklist for gender analysis, two questions are suggested: "What are the national priorities on gender equality?" and "What processes towards gender equality are ongoing in the country/sector/society?" (Sida 2009, p. 60) which suggests a tendency to recognise partners’ priorities in the gender mainstreaming process in development cooperation. However, these are the only instances when partners’ priorities in relation to gender mainstreaming are mentioned in all documents analysed. A paragraph or sentence which explicitly states that gender mainstreaming should be included based on partners’ priorities have not been identified in any of the documents.

**4.1.4 Sida’s Viewpoints on Partners’ Role and Impact in Relation to Gender Mainstreaming**

Based on the discourse analysis, one can conclude that partners are mainly mentioned in relation to dialogue (Sida 2009, 2015a,c, 2016). However, in relation to the mandatory gender analysis, partners are somewhat mentioned in regards to gender expertise. For instance, the *Gender Equality in Practice: A Manual for Sida* expresses that "civil society partners should also be considered as partners and potential resources that could and should be used" (Sida 2009, p. 33). Further, it seems that Sida also regards partners as resources or consultants in the gender analysis process. Such a tendency can be distinguished when one text states that it is important to "[U]se knowledge and resources from the civil society and your partners [...] These possess local knowledge on gender issues [...] Use them as reference sources" (Sida 2009, p. 38-39). The use of partners as consultants in the gender analysis process is explicitly mentioned: "Include the voices of women, men, girls and boys in the consultation processes [...] most partner country governments have gender units or women’s agencies, which should be invited" (Sida 2009, p. 38). Finally, Sida refers to the Paris Declaration and "underscores the importance of national ownership over development priorities. It is the partner country that should be in the driver’s seat in formulating its
own development agendas” (Sida 2009, p. 70). This last phrase is rather interesting as it deviates from the view of partners as consultants since partners are here rather regarded as independent development actors. This will be discussed further below.

4.1.5 Sida’s Viewpoints on Stakeholders’ Role and Impact in Relation to Gender Mainstreaming

The last question surrounds what specific group of partners that are to be participating in gender mainstreaming processes where the aim is to discern if marginalised people are included in such processes. Sida repeatedly mentions how gender mainstreaming includes the perspective of women and men, girls and boys (Sida 2009, 2015c) and that other social variables need to be included in the gender analysis such as ethnicity, class, functionality and sexuality in order to include all perspectives and dimensions of gender (Sida 2015c, 2017c) which suggests an attempt to incorporate the perspectives that are generally missed. Further, in the strategy suggested for including gender mainstreaming in cooperation strategies both women and men’s, boys and girls and LGBT’s aspects and perspectives should be accounted for (Sida 2009, p. 37). However, the direct participation of these groups is not mentioned, rather that their perspectives need to be included into gender analyses.

4.2 Perspectives

This section presents the perspectives gained from the interviews with Sida staff. Conducting interviews was especially valuable as it provided an opportunity for the respondents to reflect directly on the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. As mentioned above, the results from the interviews should be regarded as broad perspectives on the research question, and serves as a way of broadening the understanding if the potential conflict occurs and in what ways. In other words, these results are not representative of an official view or standpoint from Sida, but are rather experiences and stories from people working at Sida in different positions. The respondents are referred to in text as abbreviations of their occupation at Sida. Anonymous respondents are referred to as ‘Sida Staff Member’ or ‘SSM’. A full list and information of the respondents can be found in Appendix B.

4.2.1 Sida’s Understanding of Gender Mainstreaming

The above claim that Sida has a great commitment to gender mainstreaming in all development cooperation was reflected in all interviews conducted, as each respondent emphasised the importance of including a gender perspective in development cooperation. Many re-
spondents argued that the Swedish Feminist Foreign Policy has strengthened the incentives to prioritise gender equality in development cooperation along with the new analysis tool called *Multidimensional Poverty Analysis* which is used to analyse individual poverty from a range of perspectives (GA 2018, GA 2019, HCB 2019, FPO 2019). These two developments were reported to have clarified how Sida should work for and prioritise the work on gender mainstreaming.

Moreover, all respondents stated that it is a requirement that partners adopt a gender perspective in their development project or intervention if Sida is to support with financial aid. As such, when partners reach out for aid and support from Sida, the project description should already include a gender analysis. In that way, a gender perspective is apparent before Sida gets involved into a development cooperation. However, some respondents admitted that in practice, a gender perspective is not always integrated into development cooperation or throughout Sida’s involvement in development cooperation. For instance, gender analyses are often weak or not conducted at all (GA 2018, SSM I 2019, PSGE 2019, PPM 2019, FPO 2019). Consequently, the integration of a gender perspective in practice is rather unsystematic, especially in regards to whether and how gender analyses are made, the reporting of concrete results and if there is any monitoring and evaluation in relation to gender equality. One can thereby discern a discrepancy between Sida’s commitment to a gender perspective in development cooperation, and how a gender perspective is actually implemented in practice. This discrepancy between policy and practice at Sida has been established before and is a common manifestation of the difficulty of translating policy into action (Bjarnegård & Uggla 2018, Moser & Moser 2005). Nevertheless, there is a great consensus at Sida of the value and importance of including a gender perspective into development cooperation even though this commitment might be unsystematically reflected in practice.

### 4.2.2 The Constant Relevance of a Gender Perspective

As mentioned above, a gender perspective is a requirement for partners to receive financial aid from Sida and formally, there are no exceptions to this requirement. It is therefore interesting to examine further the arguments for this requirement and the basis for the constant relevance of a gender perspective. Many respondents referred to the two overarching perspectives of Swedish development cooperation; the poor people’s perspective on development, and a rights-based perspective (GA 2018, GA 2019, PSGE 2019, FPO 2019, PDCS 2019). The poor people’s perspectives includes the question of "who are the poor?" which requires a gender perspective to identify the poor. Additionally, the rights-based perspective includes women’s rights which is an inherent part of a rights-based approach. Some respondents also made the argument that development concerns people and as long
as you work with people, a gender perspective is always relevant (SSM I 2019, HCB 2019). Thus, based on these arguments, a gender perspective is included because of the overarching perspectives of Sida’s development efforts. On the other hand, two respondents made the argument that gender equality is important for development, making gender mainstreaming an instrument to achieve more effective development (GA 2019, SSM II 2019). Nevertheless, it can be concluded based on a compilation of the interviews that a gender perspective is always relevant to include in development cooperation even though the underlying arguments for doing so can differ.

4.2.3 Priorities Concerning Gender Mainstreaming

Since a gender perspective is a requirement for a development cooperation between Sida and partners to be initiated, one can understand that gender mainstreaming is a priority which comes from Sida rather than partners. On the other hand, many respondents explained that Sida only initiates development cooperation with actors who share the same values and standpoints as Sida. In other words, partners that reach out to Sida most often acknowledge gender equality as a goal or as an important perspective to include in development efforts. Conversely, if an actor reaching out for cooperation with Sida is against gender equality or does not recognise it as an important factor for development, it is not an actor Sida will initiate development cooperation with (SSM I 2019, GA 2019, PSGE 2019, HCB 2019). Thus, according to these respondents, a gender perspective is included in development cooperation on both partners and Sida’s terms and priorities as they share the same basic values.

However, as described above, how far and thoroughly a gender perspective is implemented seems to vary from context and development intervention. While a gender perspective might be a priority from both partners and Sida, one can question how far those priorities extends in practice. From Sida’s point of view, a complete gender analysis and perfect understanding of gender in the specific context is not necessary initially but is rather regarded as a process which is discussed and developed during dialogue between Sida and the partner (SSM I 2019, PSGE 2019, GA 2019, FPO 2019). As such, Sida has no fixed template or formal guidelines for how to integrate a gender perspective in development cooperation but is rather flexible in letting the partners define and form how the gender analysis and gender perspective should be included into the project at hand (GA 2018, HCB 2019). In relation to this, a respondent argued that it is key that partners understand why gender equality is important for development and that the process of including a gender perspective and working towards gender equality starts, rather than forcing a gender perspective into the development project through fixed forms and through specific ways of doing (SSM I 2019). In particular, many respondents expressed that it is a
requirement that a gender perspective is integrated into the development cooperation, but how a gender perspective is to be integrated is for the partner to define and decide (SSM I 2019, GA 2019, HCB 2019, FPO 2019). One respondent stated that: "the requirement from Sida is that gender equality should be included [...] but that they can come up with the solutions themselves are the best. It becomes more sustainable" (SSM I 2019, author’s translation). Another respondent explained that:

It is very context-specific how to work with gender equality in order to get a hearing and also for us to understand. Because it is not that we are the enlightened and they have not understood anything but it is that we may think of gender equality in a certain way [...] I think the best thing is when you have a dialogue where both parts listen and find inputs for working with gender equality and to understand each other (GA 2019, author’s translation).

In other words, Sida requires that a gender perspective is integrated into development cooperation, but is flexible concerning the ways in which a gender perspective is included practically and how partners want to understand and incorporate a gender perspective. Some respondents thought that Sida could push harder for a gender perspective, but on the other hand, also recognised the value of local ownership over projects and that flexibility in relation to partners are important.

4.2.4 Sida’s Viewpoints on Partners’ Role and Impact in Relation to Gender Mainstreaming

A basis for Swedish development cooperation is that partners themselves are the drivers of the development project, intervention or organisation (GoS 2016) and this was repeatedly mentioned by the respondents as the ways Sida works in development cooperation. In particular, one respondent stated that:

Participation is specifically something that Sida follows up, and I believe Sida and Sweden are very good at local participation and local ownership. It’s not just nice words but is something that we live up to in practice [...] we really push partners to bring the initiatives (SSM II 2019, author’s translation).

In relation to partners’ involvement and participation in gender mainstreaming processes, it has been argued that it is the partners that should define how a gender perspective is to be integrated into the project or intervention. Here, Sida supports partners in their way of understanding contextual gender relations and how one can pay attention to how gender plays out in that context. These discussions are often held within the dialogue process and should mainly be seen as a support function from Sida in the gender mainstreaming process, rather than a way of pushing the partner into specific ways of thinking about
gender equality (HCB 2019, FPO 2019). Many respondents actively stated that despite Sida’s requirement of a gender perspective, the agency is careful not to impose gender mainstreaming on partners. If partners are somewhat reluctant, Sida initiates dialogue and attempts to find compromises or solutions to how a gender perspective could be incorporated that are on the partners’ terms (SSM I 2019, SSM II 2019, FPO 2019, PDCS 2019). It was also mentioned that it is important that partners bring the initiatives on how to work with gender mainstreaming and that Sida rather has a supporting role in that process (FPO 2019). As one respondent expressed it: "After all, we want to help people help themselves to get out of poverty and that’s how to do it best" (SSM I 2019, author’s translation).

Despite that partners are to be the drivers of the development effort, some respondents argued that Sida’s involvement in the gender mainstreaming process depends on the local programme managers or Sida staff in that context (GA 2018, PSGE 2019, PPM 2019, FPO 2019). As has been reported previously (Bjarnegård & Uggla 2018), and which was also mentioned repeatedly by the respondents in this study, if and the extent to which a gender perspective is integrated into development cooperations are very much dependent on individual staff and their interest and competence regarding gender equality. In other words, if the Sida representative in a development project is a gender expert, s/he may push far for gender mainstreaming to be an active part of the project and be rather though and active regarding the requirement of a gender perspective, whereas another Sida representative with other types of expert knowledge may be satisfied with a gender analysis.

Here, most respondents agreed that Sida should push further and be involved to make sure that gender mainstreaming is part of the development agenda. Yet, they also stated the importance of how that involvement is formed to avoid making gender mainstreaming a "top-down" interest or an expert knowledge that Sida brings into development cooperation (PSGE 2019, SSM I 2019, GA 2019, FPO 2019). Dialogue was repeatedly argued to be the forum in which Sida should push for gender mainstreaming and listen to partners and their points of departures to avoid top-downism. However, some respondents argued that Sida can be too flexible in relation to partners’ conception of gender mainstreaming and that Sida should push more for gender equality in development cooperation. On the other hand, they also stated that they value local ownership extensively and argued that it is important that Sida is flexible in relation to partners (SSM I 2019, FPO 2019).
4.2.5 Sida’s Viewpoints on Stakeholders’ Role and Impact in Relation to Gender Mainstreaming

In order to include, for instance, women in development projects, Sida supports interventions that targets women specifically so that they are included into the processes (SSM II 2019). Targeting is one of the strategies through which Sida aims to do gender mainstreaming and is a way of improving development efforts so that they benefit women equally to men. The participation of marginalised groups is part of the rights-based perspective which is one of the two overarching perspectives of Swedish development cooperation and in the same way as a gender perspective is a requirement for Sida to initiate development cooperation with a partner, participation of different groups of society is requirement (SSM II 2019).

In line with these principles and requirements from Sida’s point of view, a respondent reflected about gender mainstreaming as one of the ways in which marginalised women are enabled participation in the development efforts. Since Sida works for the poor people, inclusion of these people is necessary which in turn means that women have to be part of the development process since many women are poor. Consequently, gender mainstreaming is a way of including women’s participation and experiences of development, as a gender perspective accounts for both women’s and men’s experiences and concerns which is an important component of the ownership of the development agenda and efforts (GA 2019).

As the respondent argued:

Ownership lies in the fact that we also include women and men in development. So who is the owner? It is not necessarily the one we have on the contract [...] but it is actually the target group [...] which we really work for and then we must include women and children, girls and boys and yes, all people (GA 2019, author’s translation).

Following from this quote, and from another respondents reasoning (PDCS 2019), Sida aims to work for the stakeholders and for their ownership over development interventions that affect them, where in which gender mainstreaming is argued to be a strategy to increase the participation of stakeholders.

4.2.6 Viewpoints on the Potential Conflict between Gender Mainstreaming and Participatory Development

The interviews provided a suitable context for the respondents to reflect directly on the potential conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. Some of the respondents had not reflected upon it at all, while others discussed it and thought about it in their daily work. The most interesting result from the discussion on this question was the lack of consensus regarding if the conflict exists or not. Some respondents
argued that the conflict exists and that the underlying principles of gender mainstreaming and participatory development provide a dilemma for how to follow these principles in practice in everyday development cooperation (PSGE 2019, FPO 2019, PDCS 2019, PPM 2019). On the other hand, some argued that because Sida works with organisations that support and build on the same values as Sida, the conflict may not appear as gender mainstreaming is a priority of most of Sida’s partners. Further, women and women’s organisations exist across the world which are the target group for Sida’s support making gender mainstreaming both relevant and a priority (PSGE 2019, SSM I 2019, GA 2019, HCB 2019). Thus, these respondents made the argument that the efforts of mainstreaming gender into development interventions are rarely a question conflict between interest or priority between Sida and partners, especially since partners themselves are to define how a gender perspective should be integrated into the project. However, the extent to which a gender perspective is implemented in development cooperation was rather argued to depend on the competence and knowledge of the individual staff members working in the development project (GA 2018, PSGE 2019, PPM 2019, FPO 2019), which has been established elsewhere (see Bjarnegård & Uggla 2018).

Another respondent made the argument that the conflict does not exist in theory since both strategies build on the rights-based approach; the right to participate which in turn requires a gender perspective to ensure that women and men participate on the same terms. However, this respondent argued that, in practice, the conflict appears to a large extent and that dependent on partner, a conflict of interest and priorities is common (PDCS 2019). In relation to the conflict’s appearance in practice, another respondent argued that it might appear because Sida is vague on the ways in which include gender mainstreaming in development cooperation. However, Sida’s vagueness might be due to the value put on flexibility and local ownership in relation to partners and the agency might therefore refrain from giving too specific guidelines (FPO 2019). Other respondents made the argument that the conflict does not exist at all simply because women and women’s organisations exist across the world and these are the actors Sida supports, which avoids the risk of imposing gender mainstreaming into the development cooperation (SSM I 2019, SSM II 2019, HCB 2019). On the other hand, many other actors in the same development context are excluded since Sida can be argued to be rather selective in their choice of partners. Thus, one can question if one of the underlying assumption that guides participatory development and Sida’s development efforts: that people in the development context should drive and direct the development agenda, is actually followed. In relation to this question, one respondent argued that:

The dilemma is contradictory in theory but not in practice because one inevitably works in contexts where one has different views on equality and the outside world.
Everyone does not think the same in the world, it is a basic condition (HCB 2019, author’s translation).

According to this respondent, one should not necessarily understand the relationship between gender mainstreaming and participatory development as incompatible since different points of views are a basic condition in development work and will always exist. The important thing is to make sure that the gender mainstreaming process follows the context in which the development project takes place. It was further argued that the notion of gender mainstreaming being imposed from Sida is irrelevant because a gender perspective is always relevant to include due to women’s and women’s organisations existence across the world (HCB 2019). Nevertheless, it was also argued that the conflict’s existence depends on how far the Sida staff member in the field pushes for gender mainstreaming (GA 2018, PSGE 2019, PPM 2019, FPO 2019). This means that while there might be a consensus between partners and Sida that a gender perspective should be mainstreamed in the development project, the conflict may arise in how that is done as there is a variance in the extent to which Sida pushes for gender mainstreaming in practice. Thus, while there might not be a direct resistance to integrating gender mainstreaming into development cooperation from partners, the conflict may appear when other priorities and interests clash with particular Sida staffs’ commitment to mainstreaming a gender perspective.

To conclude, most respondents acknowledged that the conflict between the underlying principles of gender mainstreaming and participatory development could appear in Sida’s development efforts. However, other factors such as the presence of women and women’s organisations across the world make the relevance of including gender mainstreaming mitigate the potential clash with participatory principles, especially since Sida strives to work with actors that support and build on the same values as Sida. Notwithstanding, it was discussed that the conflict might appear regarding the question of how gender mainstreaming should be integrated into development cooperation as Sida representatives may push for gender mainstreaming to different degrees depending on competence and interest.

4.3 Transformatory Gender Mainstreaming & Transformatory Participatory Development?

This section will discuss the results from the discourse analysis and the interviews in light of the theoretical framework and the two definitions: ‘transformatory gender mainstreaming’ and ‘transformatory participatory development’.

Firstly, Sida shows a great commitment to gender equality by stating that gender mainstreaming is of relevance in all contexts and in cooperation with all partners (Sida 2015a) and that a gender perspective shall permeate all Sida’s work is another example of this
(Sida 2016). The statement by all respondents that partners integrate a gender perspective in development cooperation for them to receive aid is also an example of the commitment to work towards gender equality. Further, that the texts state that gender mainstreaming is to be included at all levels and that women’s and men’s concerns should be an integral part of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in development cooperation speaks directly to transformatory gender mainstreaming. In addition, the model for gender mainstreaming with the three strategies; integration, targeting and dialogue, illustrates a thorough approach for incorporating a gender perspective into development cooperation. While some scholars have criticised gender mainstreaming for being too technical (Mannell 2012, Mukhopadhyay 2009), the strategies suggested by Sida nevertheless shows a sound commitment to the elements of transformatory gender mainstreaming.

The interviews gave additional insights on the relevance of including a gender perspective in development cooperation which included the overarching perspectives of Sida’s development efforts; the poor people’s perspective and the rights-based approach, where it was argued that a gender perspective is necessary to adopt if Sida is to work by the two overarching perspectives. One can thereby conclude that Sida follows the model of transformatory gender mainstreaming since the agency considers a gender perspective to be of relevance in all contexts, levels and areas and strive towards integrating gender perspective into all development cooperations. The requirement of including a gender perspective to receive aid is, specifically, a factor which strengthen the link to transformatory gender mainstreaming. Factors that weaken the connection to transformatory gender mainstreaming are the extent to which a gender perspective is actually implemented in practice which seems to be rather unsystematic and depend on individual Sida staff members’ competence and interest. However, the points of departure in Sida’s efforts and support concerning gender mainstreaming speaks to transformatory gender mainstreaming.

The question is how this commitment to transformatory gender mainstreaming interacts with Sida’s commitment to participatory principles in development cooperation. Recalling *transformatory participatory development*, partners are to be included in all stages of the development intervention in order to ensure local ownership and that the development agenda is driven by local interests. The goal is that partners in development cooperation and people involved in the development process are empowered to raise and demand their rights and to drive their own development agenda. The theoretical argument of this study is that if Sida attempts to achieve both transformatory gender mainstreaming and transformatory participatory development, a conflict will emerge since the constant relevance of including gender mainstreaming might stand in conflict with the principles of letting partners participate and direct their own development agenda based on their interests and opinions. Thus, how does partners development agenda and interests interact with Sida’s
commitment to gender mainstreaming?

Because Sida simply initiates development cooperation with partners that support the same or similar values as Sida and those that meet the requirement of incorporating a gender perspective in development cooperation, gender mainstreaming seems initially to be integrated on both partners’ and Sida’s priorities and agenda. The discourse analysis revealed that while gender mainstreaming is a top-priority for Sida, the agency also has directives to account for partners’ priorities, national plans and priorities of the partner country. The acknowledgement of partners’ priorities is a clear link to transformatory participatory development since it builds on partners’ interests and development agenda. It has been reported in other cases that gender mainstreaming has been implemented based on donors’ initiative and priority which often results in that local understandings of gender are ignored (Mannell 2012, Warren 2012), resulting in gender mainstreaming being imposed as a top-down strategy rather than based on local interests and ownership (Wendoh & Wallace 2005, Zachariassen 2012). Although gender mainstreaming is a top-priority for Sida, respondents argued that the agency avoids this trap these scholars point out as Sida attempts to work with those that also consider gender equality as an important factor for development. However, the question remaining is how Sida regards its commitment to transformatory gender mainstreaming if it is not necessarily the greatest priority of the partner or if other priorities competes with gender mainstreaming.

Dialogue was repeatedly mentioned as the way in which Sida advocates and push for a gender perspective, giving one reason to believe that gender mainstreaming might not always be part a common agenda between Sida and partners. Further, it was also reported that gender analyses are often weak or non-existing and that it is rather common that partners have weak capacity with regard to gender equality. In other words, that partners adopt a gender perspective in development cooperation with Sida indicates that Sida pushes for gender mainstreaming very early in the stage of development cooperation. However, this does not necessarily seem to mean that a gender perspective is a priority for partners in the same way as it is for Sida since respondents continually argued that that actual implementation of gender mainstreaming is often weak and that Sida need to push for a gender perspective in dialogue with partners. Here, it is unclear to whether Sida would adhere to transformatory gender mainstreaming or transformatory participatory development, and as respondents argued, it might depend heavily on context. Notwithstanding, this is a situation where the conflict could appear although the inclusion of gender mainstreaming initially seems to be on both Sida’s and partners’ terms.

Nevertheless, if one assumes that gender mainstreaming is incorporated in development cooperation on both Sida’s and partners’ terms and interests, how does Sida regard partners’ role and participation in that gender mainstreaming process? Demonstrated in
the discourse analysis, partners and stakeholders are mostly mentioned as consultants in relation to, for instance, the gender analysis showing that partners seem to be included in that process but as consultants of local gender relations rather than agents driving their own development. This connects to the distinction between participation as efficiency and participation as a fundamental right (Pretty 1995, Mohan 2001, Cornwall 2003, Enns et al. 2015), where Sida seems to drift more towards participation as efficiency in this case. However, the results from the interviews gave another viewpoint on partners’ role in relation to gender mainstreaming. Here, it was repeatedly mentioned that partners should define how a gender perspective is to be integrated into the development cooperation and, as along as they understand the importance of working towards gender equality in development, Sida is flexible in regards to the design of the gender mainstreaming process. It was also mentioned that Sida takes participation seriously and that the agency cherish local ownership over development projects. Again, this reasoning of partners’ role in the gender mainstreaming process provides links to transformatory participatory development.

On the other hand, many respondents reported that the extent to which gender mainstreaming influences the development project depends heavily on the Sida staff member in that context and his or her competence concerning gender equality. If the Sida staff member has gender expertise, s/he might push far for gender mainstreaming which may conflict with partners’ other priorities or interests i.e. manifesting the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. However, respondents stated that it depends heavily on context how gender mainstreaming processes look and the results from the interviews can thereby not be argued to be representative for how the conflict may be expressed empirically. Nevertheless, this type of reasoning gained from the interviews is important as it provides perspectives on the relationship between gender mainstreaming and participatory development.

Moreover, that Sida takes participation seriously was also mentioned in regards to stakeholder’s involvement in development interventions. The discourse analysis revealed that additional social variables based on class, functionality, ethnicity and sexuality (Sida 2015c, 2017c) are to be included in the gender mainstreaming process. Going back to theory, scholars have criticised participatory development for sustaining local power relations by not including those that normally lack the ability to raise their voice, for instance women, which generates the issue that even though participation might occur, a large group that is affected by the development intervention gets left outside of the participation and development process (Cornwall 2003, Cooke & Kothari 2001, Kyamusugulwa 2013). It was unclear from the texts whether this inclusion of social variables are simply added perspectives or active participation of people belonging to specific, often marginalised, groups. The interviews offered insights here as Sida attempts to conduct targeted interventions to
capture people who are often left outside of participation in society. The argument for working actively to include marginalised groups into development cooperations is similar to why a gender perspective should be used and is based on the two overarching perspectives of Swedish development cooperation; the poor people’s perspective and a rights-based perspective. Once again, these active efforts by Sida to include people often left outside of influence and participation in society shows links to transformative participatory development. In particular one respondent argued that participation is a requirement for financial aid and support in the same way as a gender perspective is a requirement (SSM II 2019). Thus, following from the discourse analysis and the information gained from the interviews, Sida arguably follows the definition of transformative participatory development and as showed above, Sida also shows great commitment to gender mainstreaming and the definition of transformative gender mainstreaming. How can one then understand these two simultaneous commitments; does a conflict emerge and if so, how is it manifested?

4.4 A Conflict between Gender Mainstreaming and Participatory Development?

Following from the theoretical framework and the argument that follows from the theoretical reasoning, a conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development emerges when Sida attempts to follow the two orthodoxies in contemporary development simultaneously in its development efforts. The conflict lies in the constant relevance of a gender perspective inherent in the gender mainstreaming strategy, which interferes with the commitments to participatory development and that partners and stakeholders are to drive the development agenda based on their interests and priorities in that context.

The discussion above concludes that Sida, indeed, attempts to do both transformative gender mainstreaming and transformative participatory development, which means that the conflict arguably exists. However, before making conclusions, some insights from above will be discussed. The first insight concerns that Sida simply initiates development cooperation with those that share Sida’s values and principles for development. One could argue that Sida here departures from its participatory principles for its commitment to gender mainstreaming as Sida only initiate development cooperation with those that have the same values, thereby ignoring other local interests and priorities in that context. One respondent argued that it is inevitable that people and organisations have different standpoints in the world and that Sida has to choose which they want to cooperate with. Given Sida’s gender equality objective, they simply cooperate with those that seems to share the same values in development contexts. While this might be a valid argument, the conflict could still occur in principle since Sida states that development cooperation should based on national priorities and the perspective of the poor, but by excluding those that do not
share the gender equality objective, leave many of those priorities and perspectives behind. Thus, the conflict might appear in the early stage when Sida determines which partners to cooperate with.

Moreover, gender mainstreaming might initially be based on both Sida’s and partners’ interests and priorities, but the often weak implementation together with the common need for Sida to push for gender mainstreaming in dialogue makes one question if gender mainstreaming always is a mutual priority in development cooperation. If not, this is a situation where the conflict may appear and manifest itself. However, because Sida is flexible in relation to how a gender perspective is integrated, one could argue that the risk for the conflict’s appearance is mitigated. On the other hand, it was simultaneously reported that the extent to which Sida pushes and is involved in the gender mainstreaming process depends on individual Sida staff members’ interest and competence. As it was reported that how far gender mainstreaming is integrated into development cooperation is highly dependent on Sida staff members’ interests and competence concerning gender equality, there can be situations where the conflict emerges because that individual push hard for gender mainstreaming which extends beyond the participatory principles. Here, some Sida staff members might adhere to transformatory gender mainstreaming extensively, which overrules the principles of transformatory participatory development which manifests the conflict. However, the material for this study is too limited to establish that Sida staff members’ commitment to gender mainstreaming is a cause for the conflict. Nevertheless, this type of reasoning was repeatedly mentioned among the respondents during interviews which provides indications that the conflict exists in practical development efforts and how it could manifest itself.

The third insight concerns Sida’s flexibility in relation to partners’ conception of gender mainstreaming and how they want to incorporate a gender perspective in the development project. Some respondents that currently work in the field or have field experience from previous positions called for clearer directives from Sida regarding how to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated in the development project to avoid the heavy reliance on competence to work with gender equality properly. However, they also reasoned that too strict guidelines could limit the local ownership over the project and therefore argued that flexibility is still important to ensure that Sida does not impose gender mainstreaming on partners. The conflict between ensuring that a gender perspective is incorporated in development cooperation and simultaneously work by participatory principles may be a factor that result in Sida’s vagueness of gender mainstreaming and irregular implementation of a gender perspective in development efforts. In other words, a manifestation of the conflict could be the irregular implementation of gender mainstreaming. This is once again speculations that provide indications of the conflict but which cannot be established
by this study. Future research is clearly needed to establish if this is the case.

Finally, the forth insight concerns how gender mainstreaming is a way of increasing participation and involving, particularly, women in development processes. One could argue that there is a bridge here between gender mainstreaming and participatory development, especially since scholars have pointed out the importance of highlighting "who participates" in development interventions and processes (Cornwall 2003, White 1996). In relation to local ownership over development projects, one respondent argued that Sida works for the target group and for their ownership, even though the target group might not be the ones on the contract. Involving these people through gender mainstreaming and highlighting their perspectives is arguably one way of increasing participation in the development process. However, the crucial point is whether gender mainstreaming is a priority for partners and stakeholders from the start, or if it is an interest Sida imposes on the development intervention. Following that Sida initiates development cooperation with partners that share the same values and interests, this should not be a problem in most instances, mitigating the risk for the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. However, as the reasoning above highlights, how the relationship between gender mainstreaming and participatory development plays out in practice can make room for the conflict to take place even though contextual factors may impact to a large extent, making it difficult to draw any general conclusions about the conflict’s appearance in practical development efforts. Nevertheless, the analysis and discussion have provided indications for when the conflict may appear and manifest itself which create reasons for future investigations in the matter.
5 Conclusion

5.1 Main Conclusions

This study has examined whether a conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development can be discerned in theory and in practice, and if it can be discerned, how it is manifested. The practical investigation has focused on the Swedish donor agency, Sida. The study concludes that the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development can be discerned theoretically based on the underlying principle of the constant relevance of a gender perspective inherent in gender mainstreaming, which is incompatible with the underlying principles of participatory development; that partners and stakeholders are to define the development agenda based on their interests and priorities which in turn should influence the project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. If a development agency adopts both gender mainstreaming and participatory development as strategies for development efforts, these two strategies somewhat clash based on their underlying principles.

Empirically, however, the conflict is not as easily discerned as Sida attempts to initiate development cooperation with actors and partners that share Sida’s values regarding gender mainstreaming and participation. If the points of departure are similar for Sida and partners, then the conflict may be irrelevant or non-existent. While this study cannot establish conclusions on how the conflict appears and manifest itself empirically, it has provided indications for future research to explore. For instance, it has been argued that whether the conflict appears empirically in development cooperation may be dependent on partners’ capacity to implement a gender perspective together with Sida staff members’ competence and interest for gender mainstreaming. Another example is Sida’s flexibility in relation to partners conception of gender mainstreaming as a way of keeping the requirement of a gender perspective while still balancing the requirement against participatory principles. Another appearance and manifestation could be Sida’s vagueness regarding specific guidelines on how gender mainstreaming should be part of development cooperation as Sida does not want to impose a gender perspective on partners. The irregular implementation of gender mainstreaming is another example since different Sida staff members might value gender mainstreaming or participatory development over the other. In other words, these are examples of how the conflict could appear and manifest itself in practical development efforts. Yet again, this study cannot establish that these are manifestations of the conflict but they should rather be regarded as points of departures for future investigations.
5.2 The Study’s Value and Limitations

It is of value to elaborate the conclusions of the study in relation to the study’s limitations in order to finally determine the value of the study. One weakness of this study is the scope of the material which could be argued to be limited. In relation to the interviews, a majority of the respondents work with gender mainstreaming directly rather than participatory development. The respondents’ information could therefore be argued to be biased towards gender mainstreaming. This is a valid objection and the study would benefit from a greater number of interviews with people working closer to participatory development. On the other hand, participatory development is a procedure for how to do development and should arguably be visible through gender mainstreaming processes if Sida accounts for participatory principles as the agency sets out to do. Further, there are not people working specifically with participatory development at Sida, but rather with, for instance, the engagement of civil society in development. The author thereby focused on interviewing people with a civil society perspective and with field experience to meet the focus on gender mainstreaming from the other respondents. Thus, the results from the study do arguably not fall based on the current interview sample. Further, this is an exploratory study which attempts to identify and discuss a research problem which has not been researched adequately before. While a greater variety among the interview sample would expand the understanding of the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development, the current information gained has still offered valuable insights as a first step in researching this relationship in the development sector.

Furthermore, because this is an exploratory study of a single case, this study is mostly valuable in terms of theoretical generalisations. As discussed in the section on research design, Sida is arguably a most likely case for this research problem and if the conflict would not appear at Sida, it might thus not appear in other cases either which can make one question the case selection. A most likely case is suitable, however, when exploring a new research problem as it arguably provides most information about the specific problem. In other words, this study’s relevance mainly lies in the contribution to theory and as an initial step for future research on this topic and problem.

5.3 Future Research

Because this is an exploratory study, research on this topic needs to be conducted further in order to fully establish whether the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development exists and the ways it may manifest itself. This study has contributed to research by initially discussing how two popular, and almost taken for granted, strategies in contemporary development might stand in conflict with each other and has thereby
connected theory on gender mainstreaming and participatory development by comparing and contrasting it. While the case of Sida shows somewhat ambiguous results in regards to the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development, this study arguably gives reasons for studying this conflict further.

In order to examine the empirical appearances and manifestations of the conflict, interesting phenomena to study in the future could be to look more into specific development projects to disentangle how the conflict appears and affect everyday development work. In situations where the conflict appears, research could delve into how that conflict is solved or dealt with. One could also examine programme managers’ decision-making when it comes to determining project support and how they manage to balance the commitment between gender mainstreaming and participatory development. Future research could also examine Sida’s position of power in relation to partners as Sida contains the money. How that power position affects the partnership with partners is interesting to examine further since partners may adapt their priorities and interests in order to receive aid and support from Sida. The perceived priorities and interests of partners could then be a pretence and the question is how Sida relates to such situations in relation to its commitment to gender mainstreaming and simultaneous commitment to that partners priorities and interests should drive the development agenda. In other words, there are many potential complex situations where in which the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development could be studied further.

This study has attempted to take a first step on the research of this relationship and conflict by examining if the conflict between gender mainstreaming and participatory development can be discerned, theoretically and empirically, and how that conflict may manifest itself. As such, it has contributed with new insights into contemporary dilemmas that influence development. Hopefully, it provides a step forward to respond to current challenges in development and strengthening development practices.
6 Bibliography


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Warren, H. (2012), ‘... the donor community, they are not sensitised about these kind of gender things’: incorporating ‘gender’ into the work of a Ghanaian NGO’, Gender & Development 20(3), 505–516.


7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A: List of Documents

Gender in Practice: A Manual for Sida
The Plan for Gender Integration (Plan för Jämställdhetsintegrering på Sida 2015-2018)
Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Women’s Rights
The Gender Toolbox
    Gender Analysis- Principles and Elements
    Gender Mainstreaming
    How Sida Works With Gender Equality

7.2 Appendix B: List of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role at Sida</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Reference in Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sida Staff Member I</td>
<td>January 17 2019</td>
<td>SSM I, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sida Staff Member II</td>
<td>February 11 2019</td>
<td>SSM II, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Advisor</td>
<td>December 11 2018</td>
<td>GA, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Advisor</td>
<td>January 17 2019</td>
<td>GA, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Lead Policy Specialist Gender Equality</td>
<td>January 14 2019</td>
<td>PSGE, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Program Manager</td>
<td>January 15 2019</td>
<td>PPM, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Cooperation, Swedish Embassy in Bolivia, Previous Lead Policy Specialist Gender Equality</td>
<td>January 30 2019</td>
<td>HCB, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Programme Officer on Democracy, Human Rights and Gender Equality</td>
<td>February 25 2019</td>
<td>FPO, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Manager Specialist on Civil Society</td>
<td>February 27 2019</td>
<td>PDCS, 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix C: Interview Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Question</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Vad är din nuvarande roll på Sida?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vilka är dina arbetsuppgifter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hur länge har du arbetat på Sida?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Har du haft tidigare roller/arbetspositioner på Sida?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Mainstreaming</strong></td>
<td>Är det ett krav att ett genusperspektiv ska integreras i utvecklingssamarbeten Sida är involverad i? Varför?</td>
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<td>Om genusperspektivet som partnern anammar inte anses gå tillräckligt långt, hur bemöter Sida det?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participatory Development</strong></td>
<td>På vilket sätt arbetar Sida för att lokala partners ska leda projektet i utvecklingssamarbeten?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hur integrerar Sida specifika intressen i projekt?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participatory Development &amp; Gender Mainstreaming</strong></td>
<td>I hur stor utsträckning brukar Sida sträcka sig i principer såsom lokalt deltagande, lokalt ägarskap, att biståndet ska ske på mottagarens villkor samt att partners ska styra sin egen utveckling när de kommer till arbetet med gender mainstreaming?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hur ska partners intressen, villkor och uppfattningar om deras egen utveckling prioriteras gentemot Sidas prioritering gällande gender mainstreaming?</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Finns det situationer där Sida ger direktiv för hur saker ska prioriteras eller gå till?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Har Sida en maktposition gentemot partners? Hur ser den i sådana fall ut och hur påverkar den utvecklingssamarbetet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kan man förstå gender mainstreaming som en &quot;top-down&quot; strategi som implementeras genom utomstående aktörers intressen och expertkunskap om &quot;vad människor behöver&quot;?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closing Question</strong></td>
<td>Om det finns en slitning eller konflikt mellan att jobba för gender mainstreaming och principer för lokalt deltagande i utvecklingssamarbeten, hur ska man bemöta en sådan slitning eller konflikt? Finns det en lösning?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>