



Royal Tropical Institute



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands

Forum 2012: Gender Rights and Development Report

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This report has been written by Catherine Hodgkin summarising the presentations and key discussion points at the Forum. The PowerPoint presentations have already been circulated to participants.

1) Introduction

Forum 2012 Gender Rights and Development was organised by the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) on behalf of the Gender Equality Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to bring together the gender and development community in the Netherlands to focus on repositioning the knowledge base on gender, rights and development. The Forum brought together Dutch policy makers, academics, practitioners and activists and included selected resource people from European and Southern-based organisations. The discussions focussed primarily on the knowledge themes that are a priority in the Netherlands development programme including key women's development issues as identified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The over-arching objective of the discussion was to promote gender equality and women's rights through Dutch foreign policy and international cooperation. The Forum itself was expected to contribute insights into the knowledge base that informs key themes in the Dutch development agenda from a gender and rights perspective and to identify areas of collaboration between policy leaders, academics and development organisations that would strengthen the knowledge base and inform strategies to integrate a gender, rights and development perspective in the Dutch development agenda.

The Forum was designed to share information about the on-going gender and development work that is currently being undertaken by Dutch development organisations and to discuss and explore current gender and development practices, their relationship with the realisation of women's rights and the knowledge base that underpins them.

The day consisted of plenary presentations and discussions, small group work, and a market place in which to share ideas and activities. The programme addressed a number of specific themes:

- Gender and rights dimensions in resource equality
- Gender, security and the rule of law,
- Actualising rights in the SRHR agenda
- Women's voice political participation and leadership
- Gender and rights dimensions in market relations

This report contains summaries of the plenary presentations and the discussions they stimulated, selected highlights from the group work and gives a flavour of the "ideas" on offer in the market place. It also summarises the concluding discussions and ambitions for further actions and knowledge exchange expressed by the participants.

2) Morning Plenary Session

Opening Address. Irma van Dueren Head of Division for Gender Equality Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The idea of holding a gender forum was very welcome to the Ministry. In these challenging times a strong knowledge network is important to achieve the goals of incorporating gender equality in policy. We, in the Ministry, need experts and colleagues to reflect with us on how we can operationalize this. How do we understand it and how can we give meaning to it? The Ministry supports this dialogue and sees the benefits of being involved in it.

Internationally the Ministry is involved in a number of challenging and complex processes such as the post 2015 discussion. It is very important that The Netherlands positions itself strategically in this dialogue. The discussion around the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2012 was a challenging and not very successful process and The Ministry is keen to ensure that the next conference is more successful and is also looking at options for Beijing +20 and are part of a discussion about how best to follow this up.

Nationally the Netherlands also faces major challenges. There is going to be another significant reduction in AID and it will be important to ensure that gender issues will stay centrally on the agenda and will remain well resourced.. The combination of trade and aid in the Ministry requires us to reflect on the implications and how this will affect our policy. At the same time it is important to note that we do have a minister who understands gender issues and is a strong supporter of gender equity and this presents all of us with opportunities.

The core policy position of the Ministry in relation to gender has not changed substantially. We still have a twin track policy with track one as a stand-alone policy on gender equality.

The MDG3 fund and its successor FLOW are the two biggest women's funds in the world. FLOW is a 80 million euros programme and provides opportunities to use these funds flexibly. We recently had a meeting of grantees and they shared their work and expressed strong appreciation of the innovative and flexible way in which the MDG3 fund has worked. They also stressed the enormous challenges that women doing this work face including threats to their own safety. One area of Dutch aid has been to support women in the Middle East and North Africa to ensure that their rights are achieved in the period of transition and the development of new government structures. We are also working with women in 6 countries on peace and security within the framework of Security Council Resolution 1325.

The second track is the track of integrating gender equality in our own organisations. Much can be said about the possibilities and impossibilities of gender mainstreaming but we are confronted with gender discrimination in the culture and structures of organisations and this is not easily dealt with by technical measures. We do continue to work with our leadership on this but we know that real commitment is needed to address the cultural as well as the technical aspects of discrimination. We do hope that defining indicators and approaching gender through "equality at entry" will make an impact on this. We want to ensure that gender analysis is included in project design and use this as one of the project approval criteria. We are also trying to critically examine the gender practices and

policies of the partners and sub-contractors we work with. Dealing with track 2 is a struggle but we continue with this work.

In the discussion following this presentation one participant stressed the value of the “equality at entry” policy and drew attention to the policy of Belgian Development Cooperation of doing a gender analysis not as part of project design but preceding project design.

Another question involved dealing with resistance to gender and increase political commitment. Van Dueren said that she saw this as a long term struggle but stressed that sometimes what is apparently resistance is, in fact, ignorance and lack of awareness. Making gender inequalities visible through gender analysis is important in raising awareness. Making gender issues visible and explicit in organisations is critical and setting specific and measurable targets and monitoring them is also a practical way of moving forward.

Knowledge in International Cooperation. The case of Gender Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay Head Social development and Gender Equity KIT

Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay picked up on the point made by van Dueren in her introduction and emphasised that the struggle to change major development programmes and ensure that gender knowledge is infused in their programmes is a major and long-term challenge. This is one of the reasons the gender knowledge base is so important.

The Netherlands has always been a very strong and committed donor with regard to gender and the Netherlands has funded important knowledge programmes such as On Track with Gender and the Gender Knowledge Circle in addition to the major funds mentioned by previous speaker. But in spite of this there has been an erosion of the knowledge base both in the Netherlands and more generally. One of the key constraints is financial and not just in terms of the overall money available for gender but also in terms of the way in which aid money is spent. Financial resources for gender have been badly hit by the way in which aid priorities and modalities have changed.

There has tended to be a fixation on the policy orientation. As Wendy Harcourt argues the focus of on policy has resulted in “sound bites” rather than social change. Since the Paris Declaration there has been an increased focus on results-based frameworks as planning and monitoring tools; these frameworks do not always capture the “messiness of real life” and the difficulty of fitting gender into standard results has contributed to the erosion of interest in gender. Domestically declining support for international aid has meant that the post second world war social compact has been broken and we find ourselves in a transitional phase in which the domestic agendas are shifting.

The reason to focus on gender knowledge is to inform policy and to focus on advocacy. Knowledge from the ground needs to be reflected in evidence-based policy. There is also an autonomous function to gender knowledge that is neither policy-driven nor advocacy-driven. We need to improve and build a critical theoretical orientation and one which really allows the South to speak.

Knowledge production is political and the knowledge base on gender is one that contributes to an end-goal of social change and not to maintenance of the status quo. Most main stream knowledge fails to make women’s interests and concerns visible and does not recognise that gender relations provide a key to understanding society.

We have to differentiate between “doing gender” and using the social relations of gender as a category of analysis. It is important to remember that the word gender should be used as an adjective to describe the specific relationships between men and women and not as a noun as it has become in current development practice.

There has been a tendency to use our analyses to create and rely on universalisms which become stereotypes. In fact we are dealing with contingent and shifting realities, we do not move in a linear direction and processes of change are not simple and single. If we make generalisations about patriarchy and religion there is a danger that we stop the conversation instead of moving forward to understand complexity and finding out how to support women working for change. Similarly if we reduce the discussion to one of tradition versus modernity we miss out on the discussion about the way in which people living in traditional communities cope with allocation of resources and entitlements in these communities. How can we use these in a way which is empowering? Another common oversimplification that is made is to talk in terms of the singular identity. If we reduce diverse societies to singular characteristics and fail to recognise their diversity we give power, not to them, but to the researchers who can then make sweeping statements and talk in generalisations. Gender and development theory has always fought against oversimplification and should continue to do so.

One of the constants in the global picture is the measure used. The main measure still used to determine how well a country is doing is GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and this measure persists in spite of efforts to provide a more nuanced or development-sensitive measure. If we explain everything in terms of GDP it means that many of the socially productive tasks that men and women carry out disappear from the accounts. The work that cannot be counted becomes invisible and is left out of the sphere of policy along with the people who do the everyday work of social reproduction, mainly women.

The fact that the new Dutch development minister is responsible for both aid and trade is positive in that it makes the links between aid and economic interests very explicit. We need trade, we all need trade but the interests of multinationals and major corporate interests often do not coincide with those of poor people. We struggle to reconcile these agendas and understand how to recognise the powerful role of major companies and engage with them whilst promoting equity and gender equity. Recent examples from the garment industry in Bangladesh remind us how workers (often women) work in terrible conditions for miserable wages. But the reality is that three million women work in the garment industry and this is an important segment of the economy; too important for the government to ignore and in practice too powerful for them to easily regulate.

When market conditions set the agenda for global change what happens to human rights? The growth of the global economy feeds on class and gender divisions and although we need global growth it is a challenge to make corporates and the global market in any way accountable or even to develop and enforce effective regulations. We need to engage with the markets and we also need knowledge of the markets to understand how market relations are affecting gender and affecting development cooperation. Outsourcing and the development of public private partnerships often create areas of unclarity in regard to regulation and accountability and this has contributed to erosion of the power and the state and of civil society.

Finally we need a breadth of knowledge across development themes but we also need to go into depth and to unpack complex concepts and the assumptions that underlie them, and we need to analyse how these mechanisms really work. The process of building and maintaining the knowledge infrastructure needs to be inclusive of different constituencies and disciplines and needs to include not just the generation of new knowledge but also exchange and dissemination.

What have we learned on women's empowerment? Andrea Cornwall Professor of Anthropology and development, School of Global Studies, University of Sussex

Andrea Cornwall introduced a research project which Pathways to Women's Empowerment which she had led. She described the development of the DFID funded programme, the process of implementation and the findings and explored the ideas of how to develop a strong knowledge base and bridge the gap between knowledge and action.

The DFID programme was one which gave a relatively free hand to develop a research programme involving international actors. One decisive factor in developing the proposal was that in writing it they challenged the assumptions behind the call for proposals and looked at the way in which change is achieved. The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) proposal argued that governments were travelling "motorways to nowhere" in terms of achieving social change but that, in spite of all of this, women were achieving gains. Their approach was one which would explore the means by which economic, political and reproductive rights are enjoyed by women in practice. By making the pathways of change visible the project aimed to contribute to a radical shift in policy and practice-building on these revealed successes. This approach, although challenging for DFID was financed.

The project aimed to understand change mechanisms in a range of ways. One way is to look at deliberate interventions that target women (quotas for women in politics, cash transfer etc.) and see how they work. But this project also aimed to go further and look at the institutional drivers that influence changes in women's rights and to look at the broader changes in society that contributed to an enabling environment. In order to study this the research had to look much more broadly than purely monitoring results. The researchers really tried to include the way in which women experience change rather than depending on stereotypes. They developed a model that would allow for contradictions and plural visions and one that reframed empowerment in ways that return power to the concept.

The DFID funding was supplemented by additional funds from Norway and in total this amounted to about 5 million pounds over the 5 year project period. It was decided not to select specific countries as specified in the original DFID call but rather to set up an equal partnership to work with people in the different regions. For this reason it was decided to base the project around a ring of institutions each of which had a critical mass of feminist researchers and a leader within a selected institution. The institutions became regional hubs and they had a broad remit, an opportunity to jointly set the agenda and to decide which countries in the region to include. The project involved more than sixty researchers and was built around 5 hubs (Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia, West Africa and Global)

The project started with scoping workshops which brought a range of actors together to talk about the national and regional context and identify possible pathway of change. The log-frame developed was very flexible and creative and designed on the basis of the scoping workshops. One important factor was that the people involved were not just researchers but activist researchers with strong

links to policy and policy makers and many were involved in national policy processes. There was also a strong South-South component. Flexible funds were built into every budget line so that it was possible to respond to opportunities as they arose, this was critical in the implementation. The project also had resources for communication and capacity building. The mix of policy, action and research were key characteristics of the approach.

The project worked around four themes:

1 *conceptions of empowerment and change*, encompassing substantive empirical as well as conceptual work on measuring empowerment and change in women's lives and contextualising meanings and practices of empowerment in our different regions

2 *building constituencies for justice and equality*, taking the 'voice' entry point into exploring the politics of changing policies, and development and political institutions, to lend greater support to women's empowerment that can promote greater justice, equality and wellbeing for all

3 *empowering work*, taking the 'work' entry point into investigating the relationships between paid work and empowerment and exploring the implications of changing markets in the wake of globalization for women's rights, security and wellbeing as workers as a pathway of empowerment

4 *changing narratives of sexuality*, taking the 'body' entry point into understanding the factors that can enhance women's ability to exercise control over their own bodies in relation to sexuality, focusing in particular on religion, media and the intersection of global forces with the institutions that mediate women's options and choices.

The project used these as entry points to identify key topics and see where change was happening and which issues were really hot topics for women. Part of the research concentrated on the global institutions that are working with feminists working in these organisations to understand the problems they faced.

Findings from the project were classified under twelve key headings included in the box below. On the Pathways of Empowerment website these are further explained and many references given to specific case studies and examples from the research that illustrate the findings:

<http://www.pathwaysofempowerment.org/index.html>

Key Findings from the Programme Pathways of Womens' Empowerment

1. What is empowering to one woman is not necessarily empowering to another: understanding empowerment needs to begin from women's own experiences, rather than focus on a predictable set of outcomes.
2. Across very different contexts, women's ability to exercise voice and strategic forms of control over their lives is linked to being able to generate regular and independent sources of income.
3. Relationships lie at the heart of women's empowerment – women's families, partners, friends and colleagues, and women's organisations, networks and coalitions can be crucial in supporting and enabling women's pathways of empowerment.
4. Sexuality is a vital but neglected dimension of women's empowerment. Positive approaches to sexuality can be an important driver of change in women's lives.
5. Understanding women's empowerment calls for rigorous and imaginative combinations of research methodologies and methods. Participatory research can make a powerful contribution to both understanding and action.
6. Efforts to promote women's empowerment need to do more than give individual women economic or political opportunities. They need to tackle deeper-rooted structural constraints that perpetuate inequalities.
7. Policies and laws that affirm women's rights and open up pathways for women's empowerment are critically important. But they are not in themselves sufficient to change women's lives.
8. Women's organising is vital for sustainable change.
9. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to women's empowerment. Global institutions would benefit from listening more to local women and doing more to support existing local agendas for women's empowerment.
10. Fostering public engagement and debate is essential to making policies that work for women's empowerment and gender equality. The media and popular culture have a vital role to play in this.
11. Recognising and supporting those within the state who are responsible for the implementation of women's empowerment interventions is crucial; front-line workers can be vital agents of change.
12. Changing attitudes and values is as important to bringing about women's empowerment as changing women's material circumstances and political opportunities.

Cornwall concluded that it was important to remember that empowerment is about shifting people's ideas and sense of the possible. Waking up people's sense of expectation is one very important way in which change happens.

In the discussion following this presentation attention was drawn to the need to think more about change processes in project design so that complexity is incorporated and can be made visible. In response to a question about how to make sure that divergent views and methods create productive tensions rather than just leading to conflicting ideas Cornwall referred to the ideas of the American philosopher Hannah Arendt. In Arendt's model everyone comes into a conversation with different ideas; they leave something in the dialogue and they gain something from it. In her model there is not necessarily a consensus but people do gradually shift and change as a result of the dynamics in the dialogue. Looking for agreement does not necessarily contribute to productive dialogue; sometimes we learn most by exploring differences.

Women accessing land, realising rights in Uganda. Josephine Ahikire, Director, Centre for Basic Research Uganda

Josephine Ahikire explained that the Centre for Basic Research is a leading Ugandan research organisation and that one of its key functions is to produce grounded knowledge that can contribute to improvements in the quality of life of Ugandans, particularly through citizenship. She discussed challenges in developing and sustaining a knowledge base for gender drawing on the case of land rights.

She stressed that it is important to acknowledge remarkable gains that have been made in some areas both in terms of policy and practice. The status of women has been advanced and women are undoubtedly more visible, more involved as political leaders and decision makers. In Uganda at the time of the Forum a major national declaration on gender based violence was ratified and this is of course very important. However Ahikire challenged the participants to consider the “flip-side” of this discourse and to question whether some fundamental issues are really changing. There is a tendency to talk in terms of the buzz words we use in our log frames such as “empowerment”, “participatory” and “democratisation”. These words sound good and look good in reports but have we emptied them of their meaning. When we tick the boxes and claim the results money flows but how much is really changing? Maybe we are talking and thinking too much and doing too little. What are the implications of this?

In Uganda the successes that have been achieved in some areas are real. There are many more women in politics and in terms of access to primary education gender parity has almost been achieved. However in terms of access to land little progress has been made. Land and property rights are entitlements that are anchored in deep-seated structures in the community and when women attempt to assert and claim land rights the whole struggle is determined by societal relationships with men. Property rights are some of the most intransigent vestiges of male power and the lack of progress in this area puts achievements in other areas of gender equality into a different perspective. We need to recognise that land rights are at the heart of the issues and are very hard to achieve.

One question to ask is whether the struggle for land rights is supported and backed up by an adequate knowledge base that helps in addressing these issues. Looking back to the nineties we can see that there was a robust debate on land and property rights that was linked to processes of constitutional reform. At this time there was a real opportunity to rewrite property laws but insufficient progress was made and the debate faltered. In the post – Beijing period it could even be said that the energy around these issues disappeared into a black hole from which little emerged except for a recurrent mantra about women’s lack of lack of land ownership and property rights. Women increasingly were seen as victims who needed to be rescued and protected and, in particular, widows became a target group that needed to be addressed. We can ask ourselves whether we really have to wait for the husbands to die before acting to claim rights. Is it not possible to claim rights as wives, daughters and grandmothers?

We need to end the discourse of protectionism and stop talking about women as a special category or a target group. What we see is an intermittent and inconsistent response to the abuse of land rights and a reaction to a situation in which women are defined as victims whose rights are abused. If

we talk about women as a target group we actually take citizenship away and the dialogue becomes one about imposing rights that do not exist. We need to stop this dialogue and develop one in which women are entitled and can claim substantive rights as citizens. Our arguments should be framed by entitlement and rights and not by abuse.

Ahikire argued that we need to build a base of knowledge that looks at the other aspects of rights articulation rather than exceptionalism. This can take us above the level of buzz words and jargon and into productive dialogues. The imperatives of the log frame have meant that we have come up with policy prescriptions, gender experts and short consultancies to find quick fixes but not a mode that is based on reflection, joined-up thinking and an understanding of change. The actors are being turned into parrots using the language that is expected of them and echoing each other without inventiveness and creativity.

We should not forget the women's organisations who do not approach it like this but who start from the visibility and empowerment of women in their various contexts. An example of a more productive dialogue emerges when we talk to women about what they really want to achieve. We have discovered is that when we ask women what they want in claiming land rights they state that they want to dig the land, to control the products and be included in decision making. This is interesting and important because it helps us to realise that their aim is to be included themselves rather than to exclude men. We find that in discussions that are centred only on control and ownership the dialogue becomes focused on exclusion not on inclusion.

In terms of giving meaning to empowerment we can define it as the opportunity and ability that people have to make decisions on the matters that count most to them. The knowledge base is one which should facilitate this and promote a dialogue on the things that really count to people.

3) The Market Place of Ideas

The Market place created an informal space in which people could wander and choose to discuss on a wide range topics and campaigns relevant to one of the day's central themes. At each "market stall" an Ideas Kicker promoted their idea or campaign in a stall that they had set up. Market shoppers were able to drop in at the stalls and engage in dialogue with the Ideas Kicker and other participants as well as looking at the poster and materials that were on display. The market was organised in two rounds to give people plenty of time to shop around. The Market Place was busy and productive. Each topic was led by an Ideas Kicker who introduced the topic and facilitated discussion. The aim was to encourage cross fertilisation and create a space in which to reflect and make connections. Participants were also asked to reflect on two questions in relation to the issue or campaign that was being discussed. What are the theories of change about achieving gender equality implicit in the ideas, innovations and insights presented? What assumptions, evidence or concepts are these theories of change based on?

Gender and rights dimensions in resource equality This theme focused on the Dutch development food security agenda as well as the gender dimensions of access to land, energy and agricultural services. Specific examples addressed were key resources needed to enhance food security. Another case examined was gender, rights and energy and potential new spaces for women to occupy in advancing their rights in relation to biofuels.

Gender, Security and rule of law This theme discussed a number of aspects including: women's right to live free of violence, establishing the rule of law so that the most vulnerable members of society are able to see justice as an outcome of legal and adjudication processes and the attaining of gender justice in contexts of legal pluralism. Specific attention was paid to UNSCR 1325 which addresses the impact of war on women, and the pivotal role women play in conflict management, conflict resolution, and sustainable peace.

Actualising rights in the SRHR agenda Whereas the commitment to promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights has been part of the international development agenda since the 1994 ICPD; the concept of *rights* has gone missing from the agenda as articulated in development policy and practice. Campaigns and issues included in the market place included strategic support for the advancement of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) rights; an example of activist-led movement strengthening condom use, and abortion rights and the rise of the opposition in Europe.

Women's Voice: political participation and leadership Despite gender perspectives on good governance focusing on enhancing women's participation more generally but particularly in politics since the late 1990s, outcomes have been modest in that there are few women in elected assemblies world-wide. This theme shared perspectives, experiences and knowledge on women's political participation with a view to challenging what has been learned on strategies that enhance women's chances of entry and retention in politics and the depth and breadth of participation. One issue examined was how to strengthen feminist movements and not just women leaders another Ideas Kicker discussed feminist transformative leadership.

Gender and rights dimensions in market relations This theme addressed contemporary development strategies that include the private sector and market operations as key actors with a view to understanding how these are informed by gender and rights knowledge bases. These include, for instance, the corporate social responsibility agenda, public and private partnerships, economic value chain development, trade and other strategies. One of the market stalls introduced a theoretical framework within which to analyse gender and value chains other stalls looked at case studies in cocoa production and in palm oil production.

The Market Place was open for two hours and was well visited and there was a lively dialogue at the stands. A complete overview of the topics on offer in the market place, the organisations involved and the Ideas Kickers is given in Annex 1.

4) Small Group Discussions

When the market place was closed participants met in small groups to reflect on the theories of change underlying the work to achieve gender equality and to consider the assumptions and evidence underlying our understanding of change. From this discussion they went on to consider the implications for the gender knowledge and the way in which we gather evidence. What kind of knowledge infrastructure do we need to further our reflections on the gender and rights knowledge base in the Netherlands?

5) Final Plenary Discussion

The discussions in these small groups were summarised in a plenary discussion by Franz Wong and some preliminary conclusions drawn. This feedback was then the subject of final reflections by the morning's speakers and the participants.

Synthesis of small group discussions. Franz Wong Senior Advisor - Social development and Gender Equity KIT

The discussion on the underlying theories of change was felt by many participants to be timely and the opportunity to jointly reflect on the implicit judgements and assumptions that underlie much of the work was fruitful and encouraged reflection on the things that we tend to overlook or not to see. Critical reflection can reveal our own complicity in reproducing inequity and power.

Unpacking analytical categories and widely used concepts is something that needs to be done more often and more rigorously and we should look for the complexity and the “messiness” rather than thinking in terms of tidy categories and correct jargon. If we take words such as “empowerment” do we have a common understanding of what it means or is it just an easy word to throw in. If we talk about “invited space” do we stop to think about who is inviting who?

When understanding social change we need to examine potential tensions between individual agency and empowerment at a structural level. Sometimes these seem to be in conflict with each other but they can be inter-related and mutually reinforcing. Do we understand and analyse our achievements to understand this?

We need to distinguish between tools and process. For example, if we are working to achieve quotas for women's involvement we have to be sure that we do not just look at the numbers but to see the bigger picture and analyse whether the numbers add up to real changes in women's lives and contexts. If we fail to do this we run real risks of missing opportunities for change.

It is essential that we work for change in ways that are inclusive, take account of diversity, and are multidisciplinary and foster ownership. This is important but do we have the right methods and approaches and do we have a common and inclusive understanding of inclusiveness. If we are really working from the bottom-up we are much more likely to genuinely accommodate and use the power of diversity and if we use different methodologies we can accommodate different paradigms and paths and arrive at a deeper understanding of change processes.

We have become outcome focused but do we know how to define success. As Cornwall's research illustrates success is contextual and what counts as success of one may not count as success for others. We have to recognize that success can be small steps and still significant; without contextual understanding we can miss what really works. This means that we have to validate our concepts in different settings and keep questioning them.

Alliances are key to achieving change. Agitation without alliance will not lead to change and it is important to create strategic alliances as well as movements so that change processes multiply and take root. Working subversively within the system is a key change strategy to transform it.

Issues of citizenship and human rights do not fit tidily into log-frames but are critical and we need to be proactive rather than reactive in claiming rights. Change comes from being strategic and using different entry points.

We need to be aware of the potential to do harm. External actors can disrupt local ideas and local settings in a way that creates a backlash or a negative effect. We should not assume that good intentions always create positive results and we need to be very aware of the fact that action and activism can make vulnerable people even more vulnerable.

We have to look critically at the various assumptions about how change happens. If we are going to engage in the market we need to understand the market as an instrument of change. What are the theories underlying corporate social responsibility initiatives? Can we question them and can we make them work for our goals?

Final Reflections

Ahikire: How to define success is certainly a big challenge. One lesson from Uganda was to count small successes and small steps as part of the process of change and not just to concentrate on the end goal. For instance when campaigning against corruption it is not yet possible to see the results but they can make visible the fact that women are campaigning about it and taking the discussion into the public sphere.

It is good to know how to articulate issues in terms of “the business case” as well as just in terms of rights based approach. But if we need to adopt the language of the private sector to talk to them we should not forget the principles we are working for and the right to be protected and respected.

We need to be aware that we talk continuously about problems and challenges this creates “a discourse of lamentation” and is translated into “developmentalism”. If we follow this we stop listening to women’s voices. We see them as victims and we know all about their problems. We really have to avoid working like this and listen to the lived experiences of women and men.

We should find a way to connect promises with reality through accountability mechanisms. What is the use of an MDG if it does not enable a citizen to make a claim and be heard.

Cornwall: Development agencies need to become more realistic about what they can actually achieve. The discourse around theory of change is built around an oversimplification of change processes and hubris about the role of development agencies. Change is chaotic complex and cumulative and not linear. We have to replace this linear process with a much more complex and democratic process that accommodates diversity, a plurality of paradigms and the unpredictable. This involves producing and sharing knowledge of very different sorts and fostering knowledge producers. We need different frames that speak to complexity and foster different forms of expression and we should think beyond the written word and include images and other forms of communication. There is not one solution but many different solutions depending on the perspective of the person.

It is useful to maintain a clear distinction between liberal and liberating. Liberating tools push boundaries, stretch our imagination and strengthen our collective strength to organise and challenge the status quo. In this way we can get away from the cliché images of women as Poor Powerless and Pregnant

Reflections on Knowledge Infrastructure in the Netherlands

Van Dueren: It has been very important to have this meeting and the opportunity to talk together rather than on a one to one basis. We would like to take up the challenge of democratising the debate but need to think about how to give shape to this. Some people have suggested a closed and more time-bound process; others have argued that we need a free, open and inclusive exchange of views. My view is that we do not want to be exclusive and that the Ministry should be supportive but not the owner of such an initiative. The Ministry intends to take this discussion forward, initially with KIT and we also aim to link this discussion to the development of Knowledge Platforms. We will come with a proposal for the creation of a small working group soon to talk about the creation of thinking spaces. We will follow up with KIT and will keep you informed and involved.

Mukhopadhyay: We have to question our agendas and question assumptions. If we want to reenergise gender knowledge and contribute to change we need to find another tack. It is insufficient to say that mainstreaming does not work but we have to acknowledge that in the major debates gender becomes marginalised. If we want to sustain and re-energise gender knowledge we have to continue to influence these mainstream agendas but we also have to occupy other spaces in the wider agenda and ensure the gender is really taken on board in discussions on issues such as food security and the rule of law. We need an infrastructure that brings plural voices into play and guarantees a place for different stakeholders: academics, NGOs, knowledge institutions, policy makers and women and men in their various contexts.

Participants were asked to contribute their ambitions about what should be considered when strengthening the knowledge infrastructure

The gender knowledge infrastructure should facilitate:

- the integration of knowledge into advocacy and evidence into lobby activities
- sense-making- this requires interdisciplinarity and cross fertilization
- multi-stakeholder exchange and dialogue with government
- an inclusive approach (language, sector, discipline etc.)
- dialogue with the new Knowledge Platforms and a structure that ensures that the gender discussion is sustained and that it is mainstreamed in the other Platforms
- the regeneration of gender studies in the Netherlands
- the development of working groups on specific topics (i.e. women and girls)
- safe spaces in which to think and reflect and in which the discussions can find roots
- dialogue outside the pressures of writing funding proposals and keeping up with demand for publications
- an environment in which people are supported in stepping out of their roles
- a focused approach so that there is clear purpose
- an exchange mechanism so that people can reach out and share work
- learning about change and resistance to change

6 Closing

Irma van Dueren and Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay closed the meeting thanking all who had contributed to a successful and inspiring day and stressing that concrete steps will be taken soon to give shape to some of the ambitions expressed in the final session; The Ministry will follow up with KIT and prepare the next steps.



Figure 1 Overview of final remarks made by participants

Annex 1 the Market Place

IDEA KICKERS

Name	Organisation	Position	Idea
1. Gender and rights dimensions in resource equality			
Katrine Danielsen & Sheila Oparaocha	KIT and ENERGIA	Senior gender advisor & ENERGIA Network Coordinator and Programme	KIT and Energia have collaborated in integrating a gender and rights-based approach to energy access. A G&R approach signifies a new way of thinking and practice on gender and energy recognizing access to energy services as a right and acknowledging the particular barriers women face in realizing energy rights due to unequal gender relations. A G&R approach is about making rights-holders' entitlements to energy visible and about holding duty-bearers accountable to delivering universal and gender-responsive access to energy services.
Netsayi Mudege	KIT	Gender Advisor	A gender rights audit of food security discourses and practices was presented. It identified gaps in emerging discourses on food security and understanding relating to the gendered dimensions. The presentation provided suggestions for developing a comprehensive framework to understanding gender rights in food security discourses and practices
Joy Clancy	Twente University	Associate Professor	Building on the work Energia has done on gender, rights and energy I will take biofuels as my theme and argue that biofuels offers women an opportunity to advance their rights (by providing a space not previously occupied by men) as well as threatening their rights (men appropriate assets to become involved in commercial crop production for biofuel value chains).
Julia Szanton	ActionAid International	Head of Programmes & Partnership Development	The presentation posed the question of how to harness women's power to defend, claim and secure their rights to land (based on programmes implemented in Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Mozambique and Malawi from 2009-2011). Lessons learned include: the need to combat discriminatory attitudes and behavior, increase the decision making and bargaining power of women, broaden access to justice (formal and traditional) as well as the importance of access to productive resources &

services.

2. Gender, Security and rule of law

Sandra Quintero & Roos Apotheker	KIT	Gender advisor & SED advisor	The presentation discussed the the 'chain of justice' analytical framework developed in the context of work with Ugandas NGOs active in working on land rights. Whereas work on land rights has achieved rights on paper for women there remains wide gaps between intention and reality. The chain of justice analytical framework helps uncover the gendered barriers women face in plural legal systems and factors that need to be considered in order to make justice for women the outcome of adjudication.
Georgina Hrabovszki	Tilburg university Europe External Policy Advisors (EEPA)	Communications assistant	Work done by EEPA one promoting the recognition by and implementation of commitments of the EU on child rights in context of armed conflict. Conferences, meetings, reports and training to EU on child rights and armed conflict, and stimulating the translation of policy attention into implementation by engaging with different levels and stages of EU policy making processes.
Karin Verbaken	Women's International For Peace and Freedom	Consultant	The presentation focused on the use of UNSCR 1325 in Columbia. Among the lessons learned include: the need to limit the scope/targets; focus more on results /implementation (while continuously monitoring changes); support grassroot women/ organisations;
Sophie Kessler	Wo=Men	Policy Officer	The presentation discussed lessons learned about WO=MEN participation at the NATO military exercise Peregrine Sword in the context of implementing UNSCR 1325

3. Actualising rights in the SRHR agenda

Fabienne Simenel	HIVOS	Programme Officer LGBT Rights	Strategic support for the advancement of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) rights: an example of activist-led movement strengthening
Serena Cruz	Dep't of Politics and International Relations Florida International University	PhD candidate	The presentation focused on grounded research in different sites in Kampala, to grasp the often very context-specific dynamics that affect access of sex workers to condoms. Identified the disconnections between condom programmes and realities of sex workers, and pointed to the risk of interventions actually undermining strategies of sex workers to protect themselves.
Corine Otte	Women's Network for Reproductive Rights	Program Officer	The presentation focused on abortion rights, the growing opposition in Europe to these rights with the rise of the right wing politics and possible consequences for international debates on sexual and reproductive rights.

4. Women's Voice: political participation and leadership

Lara van Kouterik	MamaCash	Interim Programme Officer Voice	Women's political participation alone is not contributing towards social change and the improvement of women's rights, but the building of strong feminist movements does.
Tine Davids	RU Nijmegen (CIDIN/CAOS)	Faculty of Social Studies	Research on women's political participation in Mexico was presented. Insights include: key shifts in history open up possibilities for women's participation; quotas for women are important but so is political subjectivity/identity; there is a need to politicize identity beyond identity politics and there needs to be awareness that change is fragmented, partial and slow.
Lincie Kusters	OXFAM Novib	Knowledge and Programme Advisor Women's Right to Bodily Integrity/ SRHR & HIV	Transformative feminist leadership
5. Gender and rights dimensions in market relations			
Caroline Wildeman	HIVOS	Coordinator advocacy and public support	Recently launched Women@Work campaign raises attention of policy makers and business to investing in women, with a specific emphasis on promoting and protecting women's labour rights. Making the connection between private sector actors and women's rights.
Noortje Verhart	KIT	Gender advisor	This presentation discussed how making diversity visible helps in addressing gender issues in agriculture, using the case of the cocoa in Ghana. It further showed that by making diversity among farmers visible, different and relevant strategies can be deployed by service delivery systems to assist different kinds of farmers and the sector as a whole.
Anna Laven	KIT	SED advisor	The presentation discussed the emerging framework on gender and value chains which combined the chain empowerment concepts with social science concepts of structure and agency. The framework is designed to analyse women's position within value chains.
Maria Jose Barney		Consultant	Palm oil for biofuels and the impact on women involved in family agriculture case of Para-Brazil

Annex 2 List of Participants



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken



Royal Tropical Institute

Forum 2012: Gender, Rights and Development

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