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Abstract

The topic of Feminist Foreign Policy has in recent years gained global wide attention. Its perspectives on foreign policy are informed through years of scientific research conducted through a feminist and intersectional perspective. In the development sector, feminist foreign policy has found itself indirectly through the development cooperation agendas of countries such as Sweden or Canada. The Swedish model of feminist foreign policy is of particular relevance to this research. Sweden, which in the international arena is known for its normative power, is the primary focus of analysis. This thesis explored Sweden's normative power exercised through its development cooperation strategies, with the goal of determining whether the use of norm diffusion is a more vital alternative to achieving long-term sustainable and gender equal development. In the following pages, this thesis will discover the roots of feminist foreign policy and the use of norm diffusion mechanisms within feminist foreign policy. Through the use of process-tracing, this thesis has conducted two qualitative case studies in two Western Balkan countries, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The results show that Sweden's normative influence exercised through its development cooperation strategies, proved successful in the implementation of gender perspectives in legislation in Kosovo. On the other, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the case study was not able to determine the extent of the normative influence. This is because the government system and political environment made it difficult for Sweden to exercise direct normative influence in BiH.

Abstract German

Das Thema feministische Außenpolitik hat in den letzten Jahren weltweit Beachtung gefunden. Ihre außenpolitischen Perspektiven werden durch jahrelange wissenschaftliche Forschung unter feministischen und intersektionellen Gesichtspunkten geprägt. Im Entwicklungssektor hat sich die feministische Außenpolitik indirekt durch die Agenden der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit von Ländern wie Schweden oder Kanada wiedergefunden. Das schwedische Modell der feministischen Außenpolitik ist für diese Forschung von besonderer Relevanz. Schweden, das auf internationaler Ebene für seine normative Kraft bekannt ist, steht im Mittelpunkt der Analyse. In dieser Arbeit wurde die normative Kraft Schwedens untersucht, die durch seine Strategien der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit ausgeübt wird, mit dem Ziel festzustellen, ob die Nutzung der Normdiffusion eine wichtigere Alternative zur Erreichung einer langfristigen nachhaltigen und gleichberechtigten Entwicklung darstellt. Auf den folgenden Seiten werden in dieser Arbeit die Wurzeln der feministischen Außenpolitik und die Verwendung von Normdiffusionsmechanismen innerhalb der feministischen Außenpolitik entdeckt. Mithilfe von Process-Tracing wurden in dieser Arbeit zwei qualitative Fallstudien in zwei westlichen Balkanländern, dem Kosovo und Bosnien und Herzegowina, durchgeführt. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass sich der normative Einfluss Schwedens, der durch seine Strategien der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit ausgeübt wurde, bei der Umsetzung der Geschlechterperspektiven in der Gesetzgebung im Kosovo als erfolgreich erwiesen hat. Andererseits konnte die Fallstudie in Bosnien und Herzegowina das Ausmaß des normativen Einflusses nicht bestimmen. Dies liegt daran, dass das Regierungssystem und das politische Umfeld es Schweden schwer machte, direkten normativen Einfluss in Bosnien und Herzegowina auszuüben.

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Pledge of Honesty

On my honor as a student of the University of Vienna, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.

Vienna on May 12, 2021

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Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AGE BiH	Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina
AGE Kosovo	Agency for Gender Equality in Kosovo
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FFP	Feminist Foreign Policy
FIGAP	The Financial Mechanism for the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IFI	International Financial Institutions
INGO	International non-governmental organization
KEP	Kosovo Environmental Program
KPGE	Kosovo Program for Gender Equality
KCSF	Kosovar Civil Society Foundation
KWN	Kosovo Women's Network
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAP	National Action Plans
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OSCE	Conference for Security and Co-Operation in Europe
PSVI	Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict
SAP	Stabilization and Association Process
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SOC	Sarajevo Open Centre
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNSCR 1325	UN Security Council Resolution "Women, Peace and Security"
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Introduction

In 2014, the newly elected Swedish Social Democratic-Green Party government declared that they would be perusing a Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP). The government declared that they wanted Sweden to pave the way towards being the strongest advocate for gender equality and human rights for women and girls (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015). Sweden's decision to pursue a feminist foreign policy comes to no surprise as the country has a reputation for implementing feminist perspectives in its foreign and domestic policies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). However, the implementation of a FFP is arguably one of the most progressive declarations the Swedish government has made thus far. In the international arena, Sweden is already known as a humane internationalist, using normative power to achieve its international ambitions. Its advocacy work focuses, among other things, on gender equality and human and women's rights. Its international positioning as change maker and transformer of oppressive social structures, has allowed Sweden to conduct strategic analysis, and implement advocacy and alliance building. This allows Sweden to have a better understanding of the individual circumstances of women and girls in partner countries. A part of this commitment is reflected in Sweden's development cooperation initiatives. Compared to other OECD countries, Sweden repeatedly tops the list of the highest Official Development Assistance (ODA) contributors, committing to around 1.1 percent¹ of their gross national income to the economic development and welfare of developing countries (OECD data). In their recent foreign action plan for feminist foreign policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sweden lists out a set of six objectives to be achieved through their policy for global development. Throughout these six objectives the issue of gender equality is mainstreamed and considered a prerequisite for sustainable equal development. The action plan for feminist foreign policy, moreover is to guide thematic, regional and bilateral strategies of Sweden's Foreign Service. This is meant to ensure that all policy documents align with Sweden's feminist foreign policy (Swedish Foreign Service action plan for feminist foreign policy, 21). Evidence shows that throughout Swedish development strategies the issue of gender equality is seen as a cross-cutting issue, impacting all development objectives. Yet, analysis on feminist foreign policies success in pushing forward the issue of gender equality in development cooperation is very limited. Most of the research are evaluation reports

¹ United Nations target is that developed countries should devote 0.7% of their GNI to ODA

conducted by Swedish foreign service itself. From the academic perspective, studies analyzing the use of FFP in development cooperation are very few.

Considering that Sweden perceives gender equality as a prerequisite for economic development, it is important to analyze how Sweden intends to assist development partners in achieving gender equality. It is important to analyze how impactful Swedish development strategies are in achieving this, and whether the use of normative power and diplomatic tactics is a means of encouraging local partners to adopt Swedish gender equality goals.

So far, the evidence shows that Sweden's normative power in foreign policy is one of the key vehicles through which Sweden's intends to carve itself an area of influence within development cooperation. Sweden's use of normative power allows it to use norm diffusion mechanisms as means of working against social norms which continuously perpetuate gender and social inequalities. These norm diffusion mechanisms are reflected in Sweden's feminist foreign policy where evidence collected shows that Sweden's cooperation with both the institutional level and the local grassroot level are established using norm diffusion mechanisms. Norm diffusion mechanisms allow Sweden to cooperate with local partners and simultaneously exercise its normative influence over them. Moreover, they allow Sweden to build partnerships with institutional actors, thus allowing it to work towards normative change from the institutional level (top-down). Similarly, Sweden's use of norm diffusion mechanisms also allows it to cooperate with the grassroot and civil society level, thus working towards normative change from the bottom-up. However, while Sweden's FFP encourages this top-down and bottom-up approach to norm diffusion in development cooperation, the evidence collected shows that the issue is far too complex. As will be explained in the following pages, the evidence shows that it is essential for actors using normative power to be particularly aware of the institutional frameworks within partners countries. It is these institutional frameworks which permit the extent to which norm diffusion mechanisms can achieve any substantial policy change.

In order to trace the process, from the use of Sweden's norm diffusion mechanism to gender sensitive policy change in partner countries, this thesis has used the method of process-tracing. The selected method allows for a step-by-step analysis of the effects of norm diffusion on development cooperation, and the resulting policy change. It traces norm diffusion and its use and impact on the institutional level and the civil society level, in order to determine whether

Sweden's use of normative power in its FFP has been influential in changing underlying normative convictions. In this study, the analysis is methodologically informed by the perceptions of decision-makers and policy experts involved in this process. I have discussed the impact and the effect of Sweden's normative power in its FFP and development cooperation, with local experts and have collected their experiences and perceptions. These individuals have cooperated with Sweden's foreign service and have implemented some of the gender policy recommendations suggested by them. As this is the first time such a study is being conducted, the findings presented in this study are preliminary results. If such a study were to be conducted on a bigger scale, with a bigger number of experts and throughout an extended period of time, the accuracy of the data would've been even higher. For now, the findings include the perceptions of a limited number of experts who have been cooperating with Sweden in the past five years only.

Research Question

The thesis will therefore be dealing with these issues by asking,

“How does Sweden's feminist foreign policy exercised through its development cooperation agenda influence the adoption of gender sensitive perspectives in legislation in Western Balkan countries?”

I argue, that Sweden's role as norm entrepreneur is an integral part of its feminist foreign policy. As such, I predict that the impact of this norm entrepreneurship can best be observed through its development cooperation agenda. The method selected for measuring the impact of Sweden's FFP in development cooperation will include a listing of the most recent gender-sensitive legislation implemented in the Western Balkans.

I will be looking into specific objectives of Sweden's development cooperation agenda implemented by SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) in the selected countries. The process of the implementation of gender perspectives into legislation, shall be determined through the method of process-tracing in two case studies in the Western Balkans, specifically in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Moreover, I analyze how Sweden's implementation of a top-down and bottom-up approach to norm diffusion, impacts the institutionalization of new norms, thus resulting in the implementation of gender sensitive legislation.

To determine whether Sweden's feminist foreign policy exercised through its development cooperation is effective in eliciting the implementation of gender-sensitive perspectives in legislation in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, I will be looking into strategies, programs and legislations which have received donor support by Sida or the Swedish Embassy in their country.

Literature Review

This thesis intends to answer a very broad research question encompassing two main themes, the impact of feminist foreign policy and international norm transfer. The one uniting feature of these two themes is the implementation of gender sensitive and pro-gender equality norms and policies. The literature review will therefore, intend to explain how the use of norm transfer allows gender and women's issues to gain traction in foreign policy. To do that, I will be drawing upon studies conducted on international norm transfer as well as research conducted on gender and international relations, and the contribution that FFP brings to the process of pro-gender equality policy implementation.

The first section of this review will cover academic research conducted on norm diffusion. It will draw heavily on studies conducted on current models of norm diffusion and will explain how leading political figures in foreign policy (known in this study as norm entrepreneurs) use models of norm diffusion to transfer their normative agendas. This section will introduce the norm diffusion models which comprise the basis of normative mechanisms used by countries, such as Sweden to exercise normative influence. The norm diffusion models explained in Section 1, build the basis for the gender norm diffusion mechanisms explained in Section 2.

The second section covers studies conducted on the role of gender in international relations and its impact on norm diffusion. The section draws upon early feminist international relations research to illustrate how gender analysis and women's issues were introduced into international relations and foreign policy. Building upon Section 1, this section further elaborates on the use of gender norm diffusion in foreign policy as a mechanism for normative and social change.

Lastly, the third section explains how feminist international relations and gender norm diffusion inform feminist foreign policy, and its role in disseminating pro-gender equality norms and policies. The section will include studies conducted by feminist scholars on the perceived effectiveness and impact of FFP in implementing pro-gender equality norms and policies, eliciting normative change, and changing gendered institutions and structures.

1. International Norm Diffusion

Norm diffusion and transfer is a very well researched topic. It covers every spectrum of the policy and decision-making research. From shaping the definitions of war and peace (Dowds 2018; True, 2020), to norms preventing violence and gender-based violence (True, 2016; True and Wiener, 2019; Dowds, 2018) to norms fostering human rights and democracy (Manners, 2002; True 2016; Wigell, 2013), norm transfer and diffusion has been a crucial component of political and legal research. By specifically analyzing norm transfer and diffusion, scholars hope to understand the connections between domestic structures, and their influence on policy making as well as the impact of external actors and structures on the domestic and foreign policy of states (Kravtsov, 2015; Ring, 2014).

Ring defines norm diffusion as a method powerful enough to not only change ideas, but also capable of changing a state's identity and behavior. He argues that international norms begin domestically, and end up becoming institutionalized global cultural traits with the ability to shape the behavior of governments (Ring 43). This means that norms are capable of traveling from one highly specific context to another highly specific context (Winston 8). Similarly, Risse defines norm diffusion as a process of spreading ideas, normative standards and policies to decision-making institutions (Risse 293). Norm diffusion therefore, entails a "transfer" of normative values originating from the domestic context and spread to the international arena.

For scholars of political science and international relations norm diffusion is a process which includes the cooperation of several mechanism and models. Most agree that the process begins with the norm entrepreneur who uses diplomatic tactics, moral authority and legitimacy to push their agenda forward (Davies and True, 2017; Bjorkdahl, 2007; Davies and True, 2017; Elgstrom, 2011). The following section will therefore, introduce some of the most common mechanisms of norm diffusion. It will define and explain their function and goals, as well as

present conflicting opinions over their functionality. The models presented in the following pages, will be used as examples to explain how the development and use of such mechanisms by feminist scholars elicits the rise of pro-gender equality norms.

As previously mentioned, diplomatic tactics are some of the most well-known forms of norm diffusion. Elgstrom for instance argues that norm advocates specifically prefer and rely on these traditional diplomatic initiatives when promoting a new idea or norm. He argues that in order to facilitate effective policy diffusion, it is essential that norm entrepreneur possess the “know how” and the “know who” (Elgstrom 4). This knowledge of diplomatic relations allows the norm entrepreneur to engage in network building, and through that network gain access to superior knowledge. Elgstrom’s model is just one of the many models which tries to explain norm diffusion. Diplomatic tactics are usually understood to complement both agenda-setting and framing (Bjorkdahl, 2007). The model is therefore, most commonly practiced among norm entrepreneurs within international and multilateral organizations who lobby for a place to cultivate their norms and build coalitions (Bjorkdahl, 2007; Jacob et al, 2014; Manners, 2002). Besides these more traditional models, scholars of norm theory and diffusion in international relations have identified additional models. These include four main mechanisms of norm diffusion, namely the models of coercion, competition, emulation and learning (Ring, 2014; Winston, 2017; Kravtsov, 2015). While the models of coercion, competition, emulation and learning provide the primary mechanisms for norm diffusion, scholars have also identified “tangent models”. These tangent models are informed by the four primary models but include different theoretical perspectives, including feminist theories. For this study, the world polity model, the norm cascade model, the boomerang effect and the spiral model developed by True and Krook (2010), as well as the logic of world culture model (True, 2016) have been identified as primary feminist and gender norm diffusion mechanisms. In Section 2, these models will be elaborated in more detail, in order to illustrate how they influence Sweden’s FFP.

The first models which will be presented are the more traditional ones identified by Bjorkdahl. As previously stated, these models include framing, agenda-setting, and diplomatic tactics used predominantly by member states within international and multilateral organizations. (Bjorkdahl 4). Framing according to Bjorkdahl, refers to the process of defining reality (Bjorkdahl 5). It helps to connect a problem to a line of solutions. For framing to be successful in norm diffusion

it needs to be able to push a particular issue to the forefront and provide the right information to the right individuals (Elgstrom 6). Once a specific issue has been framed by the norm advocate, the next step involves gaining influence over the agenda and shaping the agenda (Bjorkdahl 8). Possessing control over the agenda, allows the norm advocate to push specific topics to the forefront. Elgstrom argues that norm entrepreneurs use persuasion to get their norms on the agenda and to convince other actors to pay attention. Their goal, according to Elgstrom, is to convince decision-makers that the proposed norm is legitimate (Elgstrom 5). Agenda-setting therefore, includes a particular problem definition together with a new set of ideas and proposed solutions to the problem. In order to make sure that the new norm remains on the agenda, states use diplomatic tactics to gain more support for their proposed norm. According to Bjorkdahl, diplomatic tactics open the floor to bilateral-consultations and coalition-building. Norm advocates identify like-minded supporters and lobby for the mobilization of support for norm promotion. Bjorkdahl uses the example of Sweden to portray a real-life example of how diplomatic tactics work. In her article, “Norm advocacy: A small state strategy to influence the EU” Bjorkdahl illustrates how Sweden maintained informal contacts with EU member states who shared their own sentiment regarding the norm of conflict prevention, and managed thus, to diffuse the norm among all EU member states (Bjorkdahl 10). However, the method of diplomatic tactics to elicit norm diffusion is very dependent on coalition-building. A state cannot gain influence over the agenda if it does not have the support of other like-minded states. Coalition-building thus becomes another area of focus for norm diffusion researchers.

1.1.1. The coalition building model of norm diffusion

Kratsov sees coalition-building as yet another analytical model for analyzing norm diffusion processes. He states that compared to the other models; the coalition-building model is by far the most “political” mechanism of global diffusion. Movements, activists, parties and state officials are given the opportunity, under this model, to seek policy solutions not covered by current government measures (Kratsov 12). Kratsov calls these solutions, “minority traditions” because the actors pushing for them do not have a direct influence over their governments decision-making bodies. Sometimes these minority traditions enjoy some form of domestic support, but according to Kratsov, in order for these solutions to achieve change they need influential and authoritative external actors to boost the norms they advocate (Kratsov 13). Therefore, they engage in coalition-building with external actors which can exercise some form of normative

influence over their state. “Outsiders empower, sponsor, and simply encourage domestic minorities. As a result, governments choose to adopt external norms and advice if they feel they have to broaden their support, reach out to additional would-be followers, and cement prospective support groups together” (Kravtsov 13). Ring agrees with Kravtsov’s model of coalition building, but places the model in the first stage of norm dissemination. According to Ring, norms spread in a patterned way he calls “life-cycle”. The norm life-cycle consists of three main stages: emergence, acceptance and internalization (Finnemore and Sikkink 9). Kravtsov’s model of coalition-building belongs to the first stage, emergence, because it entails the first steps that need to be taken for a norm to achieve public recognition.

In the field, the example of coalition-building and minority traditions can be illustrated in the example of grassroot movements or civil society advocacy actions. In the tradition of coalitions building and minority traditions, grassroot actors and advocacy groups reach out to multilateral organizations for support of a specific cause or campaign. This is done in order to draw the attention of their own government towards the relevance of the issue. In the norm-life cycle this action fits into the first norm life-cycle, emergence. This is because the action of coalition-building draws attention to a newly emerging norm and is highly dependent upon political connections. In contrast, the model of coercion does not necessarily include the component of grassroot engagement or civil society action. Rather, it involves the interaction between heads of state and the influence powerful states exercises on weaker ones.

1.1.2. Coercion as a form of norm diffusion

According to Ring, coercion is founded on power, specifically on the ability of one actor making another one act in a way it would not do on its own accord (Ring 62). In that sense, coercion depends greatly on the perceived reputation of the actors involved in this exchange. True and Krook for instance argue that states comply to international norms as a means of increasing their own international reputation and identity as a modern state (True and Krook 21). The more people (actors) in a community adopt the norm, the higher the incentive for other actors to adopt the same norm (Ring 48). Ring defines this as direct coercion. Direct coercion is meant to represent an inequality of power between two organizations. The powerful state exercises direct coercion to elicit a desired change in the weaker state. True also recognizes the importance of coercion in norm diffusion. She states that international relations realists pay close attention to

coercion as a tool to elicit policy diffusion. She specifically highlights the influence of powerful donor states and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) who use the availability of loans as a coercive tool to push donor countries towards the development and implementation of certain policies (True 5). On the other hand, Kravtsov calls this form of coercion the norm substitution model. According to the norm substitution model, outsiders intervene directly applying raw power (coercion) and dispensing soft pressures (financial incentives and conditionality). The use of this form of norm diffusion is seen particularly often in development assistance programs. The use of financial incentives is meant to create the groundwork for development assistance programs that aim to change domestic approaches. This means that development aid donors place conditions on financial support, provided to partner countries, in order to coerce them in implementing specific policies. Only when these policies are translated into legislation are partner countries provided with the promised financial backup.

Ring greatly criticizes this form of coercion. He states that coercion translates into a specific behavior favoring the strong over the weak. Moreover, he also questions its efficiency in eliciting long-term norm internalization. According to Ring, there is a high chance that the norm internalization is going to be rather poor in the long-term, if norm diffusion has been achieved through coercion. This is because, weaker states have a lower capacity to change their societies thus, they have a higher chance of falling back to their old patterns (Ring 32).

1.1.3. Competition and the fight towards international recognition

To provide an alternative to coercion, Ring identifies competition as yet another norm diffusion mechanism. He defines competition as the process of “policy adoption driven by the potential and the limited supply of rewards available only to adopters” (Ring 62). Meaning, states will compete against each-other on policy adoption based on the prospect of receiving rewards and international recognition. For Ring, this behavior ultimately elicits a side-effect known as policy convergence (Ring 51). Policy convergence means that states begin to implement the same sort of policies. Driven by the aim of international recognition and reputation as a modern state, policy convergence forces states to invest in reforms before they are able to reap any benefit from it. Similarly, Kravtsov argues that the model of competition includes governments competing against each other for scarce resources, favorable international regulation, regional leadership and global recognition. According to Kravtsov, the “explanatory power of world

economic competition as a diffusion mechanism is apparent when applied to the global spread of economic liberalism” (Kravtsov 17). According to him, competition uproots domestic policies and norms that lead to economic decay and an inability to compete. This is because the liberal economic order supports economic efficiency. Ring on the other hand, specifically criticizes this aspect of competition. He states that this often incites a race-to-the-bottom effect, and that it rarely leads to policy convergence. Ring argues, that while competition may incite two states to become more alike, it can simultaneously forge the ground for them to seek ways to differentiate themselves. This sort of model, according to Ring often implies a “don’t get left behind” mentality especially pronounced among neighboring countries.

While Ring expresses doubt towards the efficiency of competition, he still maintains that it is a more effective mechanism than coercion. Coercion he argues, forces states to perform only the bare minimum in order to pacify the coercive state. Competition, on the other hand, actively motivates states to elicit long-term changes (Ring 35).

1.1.4. Emulation and mimicry: Everybody else is doing it too!

Although in certain points similar to competition, emulation embodies a model of mimicry. Ring states that emulation “occurs when states are uncertain about what they should do, so they mimic prestigious states regardless of the merits of the institution they adopt” (Ring 62). It is usually noticed in situations where a particular state becomes aware of an internal problem, not through its domestic needs assessments, but through the international system. The international system, according to Ring, defines problems and offers its own solutions to states before those states are even aware of the full extent of that problem internally. When that occurs, states are predicted to act in two ways: first, they either align themselves towards esteemed individuals, or second, they align towards those states which are more similar to them politically and economically (Ring 52). This behavior is defined as the information cascade model. According to Ring, actors are indifferent which side they pick or which policy they select. Once the initial actor picks a side (or a policy), the rest will follow their lead and adopt the same behavior. For Ring, this shows that the behavior of most actors in the system depends exclusively on the behavior of the previous actor. “It is conceivable that information cascades will produce convergence toward one policy choice even in situations in which actors know nothing other than who has adopted what policy” (Ring 53). For Elgstrom, a component eliciting the successful emulation of policy convergence is

the presence of a leader driven approach within the diffusion process. Actors or norm entrepreneurs actively seek opportunities in which they can “sell” their policy ideas to other actors. Using persuasion, more reluctant actors are influenced to incorporate the new ideas into their world view (Elgstrom 3). In this sense, emulation is similar to competition because it emphasizes regional dynamics of diffusion. In competition, states are motivated by the rivalries between states of similar status, whereas in emulation, lower status states look up and mimic regional and global leaders (Ring 54). This process however, is not as straightforward. According to Elgstrom, actors which adhere to their old norms sometimes actively oppose the introduction of new ones, and are thus more change-resistant. This is because, norms have to fight their way into institutions and are therefore, not imitated but translated into new institutions. It is this translation process of norms, which requires extensive compromises as well as competing objectives. Moreover, Ring also criticizes the process of emulation on the grounds of it being weak to elicit long-term internalization. He argues that since states are only copying the behavior of more prestigious states they have less desire to invest and spend resources on changing internal structures. “For emulators, it is all about behaving as you think you should in public. In private, there is no need to put on a show” (Ring 55).

To somehow repair the downsides of emulation, Elgstrom suggests focusing on the translation process of norms. He calls this translation process the negotiation process. According to Elgstrom, the negotiation process consists of two forms: text negotiations and implementation negotiations (Elgstrom 4). During the text negotiation, agents try to define and redefine their own interests. Their goal is to legitimize their norms and verbalize them into texts. Once a norm has been verbalized in text, norm entrepreneurs have to engage in norm implementation. This is the process where norm entrepreneurs are expected to continually promote and defend the norm they represent (Elgstrom 6). For Elgstrom one way to ensure that this mechanism lasts the test of time, and does not follow the same patterns as emulation is by using persuasion. Persuasion is seen as effective enough in leading to norm spread through a change in preferences and interests. It allows norm entrepreneurs to get their norms on the agenda and to persuade other actors non-coercively. This combination between emulation and soft persuasion, according to Elgstrom, is the only way which can convince agents of the adequacy of the norm and elicit long-term internalization (Elgstrom 6). Kravtsov also uses a combination of emulation and persuasion as a model of diffusion. He calls it the socialization of norm diffusion. According to Kravtsov,

socialization is defined as the internalization of new values. It is characterized as compliance with outside norms and joining international political communities. Participating in intergovernmental institutions or international regulative regimes is seen as highly desirable. “External persuasion is important, but domestic actors often take the legitimacy of international norms and practices for granted and start emulating them” (Kravtsov 16). The mechanism is believed to have functioned in influencing eastern European countries to adopt European Union norms during their process of democratic transitioning. “These countries had to adjust to fundamentally different principles of governance in order to be able to join the emergent European superstate. It is possible to argue, moreover, that it was the initial sense of belonging to the international society of European states and ontological compatibility with them that in part drove the eastern European inclination to being socialized” (Kravtsov 16). The process of socialization, according to Kravtsov requires scholars to identify the formal common-wealth of countries that are attracting new members in order to demonstrate how prospective members relate joining the common-wealth with undergoing normative adjustments.

1.1.5. The master and the student: The learning and teaching model of norm diffusion

All the previous models presented, ultimately rely on actors possessing the right knowledge and information in order to demonstrate legitimacy and push their agenda forward. The next model of norm diffusion will specifically explain how actors generate knowledge and how they spread it to other actors in the international arena. Most scholars of norm diffusion call this process learning. Ring defines learning as the process which, “occurs when states know they need a policy to deal with a particular problem, but are not sure about which policy would be best” (Ring 62). By the ways in which other states have successfully solved their problems, potential adopters choose the policies which they believe are best suited for their needs. Elgstrom for instance refers to learning as an internal process of an actor, and teaching as an external activity (Elgstrom 5). Learning and teaching are thus seen as complementary models of norm diffusion. The process of learning and teaching is fairly straightforward and simple. Policymakers recognize an internal problem in their institutions, and they develop theories and methods to solve the problem. After they review the various solutions available they attempt to determine the effectiveness of each solution. Once an effective solution has been found, they embark on teaching it to the others. The learning model, according to Kravtsov provides the most

“rationalist” and utilitarian portrayal of norm diffusion. Using the learning model domestic leaders, decision-makers and politicians are expected to consider all the information in order to solve a specific problem at hand. They are expected to follow external advice if the benefits of international policy are tangible and the information about a certain policy has proven to be successful. “They tend to appreciate foreign models if adopting external alternatives has a significant advantage over doing business as usual” (Kravtsov 10). This type of definition implies that actors are rational players.

Ring, however, disagrees with that statement. He states, that oftentimes learning and emulation become mixed up. The only way to know whether learning has occurred rather than emulation, is by determining whether the government is aware of the benefits learning has brought them (Ring 55). A simple exercise to illustrate the difference between learning and emulation is the implementation of quotas for women’s representation in government positions. In the example of quotas, a successful learning experience would translate in decision-makers understanding the importance of women’s participations and representation in government and an expressed interest in maintaining quotas until a 50-50 representation is achieved. On the other hand, an example of emulation without learning would include the implementation of quotas without an understanding of its effectiveness, and a lack of political will to further extend the quotas.

Bjorkdahl uses a different example to illustrate the different components within the mechanism of learning and teaching. She argues that in the arena of norm advocacy two primary channels of norm diffusion are used: unidirectional communication and two-way communication and teaching (Bjorkdahl 9). Unidirectional communication is used in Bjorkdahl’s example to illustrate the practice of learning. She argues that in the case of Sweden, norm entrepreneurs used speeches and rhetorical statements to relay their normative idea of conflict prevention in public meetings in the General Assembly. Once the speeches had garnered a certain audience the practice of two-way communication (teaching) allowed Swedish representatives to identify like-minded countries, and to build coalitions in support of their idea (Bjorkdahl 10). For both Bjorkdahl and Ring, the practice of learning as a norm diffusion mechanism proves successful in eliciting both short and long-term internalization of norms. (Ring 62).

1.2. The use of norm diffusion in foreign policy and development cooperation

The presented models of norm diffusion, inform the actions of both states and decision-making actors in domestic and foreign policy. In the international arena, the use of such tools allows leaders to make room for their normative ideals, engage in agenda-setting and diffuse their policy solutions. Norm diffusion as such, is a long and strenuous process which requires extensive diplomatic exchange, dialogue and negotiations. The tools presented above are meant to facilitate this process. At the same time, they can be implemented in domestic and foreign policy as means of expediting the policy implementation process.

Specifically, in the foreign policy field the use of such models can be of great benefit to foreign policy makers who are trying to gain influence in foreign governments. By drafting normative strategies, development cooperation strategies for instance, states are able to extend their influence to partner countries and “teach” them effective policy solutions. By proposing these solutions, the norm entrepreneur ultimately engages in norm and behavioral change.

From the perspective of Sweden’s feminist foreign policy, the use of such tools comprises the basis of their normative power. Informed by feminist perspectives, norm diffusion mechanisms are used to extend the normative beliefs for gender equality which Sweden’s shares. The section above, illustrates how social scientists view norm diffusion and its role in foreign policy.

Similarly, it can also be argued that feminist scholars view norm diffusion as an effective tool to disseminate ideas about gender and gender equality. Building on this section, Section 2 will explain how the norm diffusion mechanisms presented above, are used by feminist scholars in the development of feminist and gender norm diffusion mechanisms. In order to explain how gender perspectives gained traction in norm diffusion but also in foreign policy, Section 2 will initially provide an overview of gender perspectives in international relations, and explain how these perspectives informed the gender norm diffusion mechanisms used within FFP.

2. Gendered Perspectives in International Relations

Gender is an integral concept in the study of world politics. It’s been analyzed and dissected by political science and international relation scholars for years. Especially feminist international relations scholars have dissected its role and the importance in policy and decision-making. However, this was not always the case. Feminist scholars such as Enloe, Tickner and Peterson

bring us back to a time where analyzing gender and using feminist practices in international relations was not a common approach. In books such as Tickner's *Gender in International Relations and Feminism and International Relations* or Enloe's famous *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, these early feminist IR scholars analyzed the origins of feminist analysis in IR, and the impact gender and gendered structures (patriarchal structures) had on domestic and foreign political decision-making. Their research informs foreign policy sectors such as security and military alliance and development assistance.

The following section will introduce some of this early work on feminist IR in an attempt to trace back to the emergence of gender as a category of analysis in foreign policy. The section will go back to early studies conducted on topics such as masculinity and the state, masculinity versus femininity in IR, and the public versus private dichotomy. These topics will be further used to illustrate how current research perceived the category of gender in international relations. Lastly, the section will introduce early research conducted on alternative solutions to the dissemination of gender inequalities which will then further inform the last section on gender and norm diffusion.

2.1. Where are the women in International Relations?

The question "why are there so few women in IR?" is what drives the early work of both Enloe and Tickner. In their work they seek to identify masculinist underpinnings which influence the field of international relations and simultaneously effect the way foreign policies are drafted and implemented. In her book, "Gender in International Relations" Tickner famously states that her goal is to make the experiences of women visible, and to determine how gender relations have thus far contributed to the development of the field of IR. "Drawing attention to gender hierarchies that privilege men's knowledge and men's experiences permits us to see that it is these experiences that have formed the basis of most of our knowledge about international politics" (Tickner, Preface xi). Similarly, in *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, Enloe begins her analysis of global politics and political relations by placing at the forefront of her analysis women, from the Global North and the Global South, and their roles as consumers and as global political actors. Enloe's goal is to determine how current traditional power relations combined with gendered politics affect the everyday lives of women around the globe. Together with Tickner, Enloe is one of the first feminist voices in IR to draw attention to the negative side-

effects of the processes of femininization and masculinization of global politics. It is these processes, Tickner and Enloe argue, which perpetuate global insecurity and thus shape current foreign policies including security policy and international development policy. As such, the personification of the state as masculine becomes the central theme of analysis of both Enloe and Tickner.

In *Gender in International Relations*, Tickner further analyzes the concepts of masculinity and femininity, especially how these concepts affect political decision making in IR. She states that the inherent masculinist conditioning has influenced the perception of character traits in society, so that these traits have become deeply embedded in social understanding as being masculine traits (Tickner, 6). Tickner lists strength, power, independence and rationality, as traits typically associated with men and masculinity (Tickner, 3). It is these traits that also socially legitimize the positions of men in decision-making positions and foreign policy. In that constellation, traits most commonly associated with femininity become marginalized in foreign policy. Tickner argues this is the result of gender stereotyping which suggests that international politics is a gendered activity and that the perspective of IR is entirely based on the experiences of men (Tickner, 5-6). While the concepts of masculinity and femininity are now very well researched and understood, it is nonetheless important for this study to go back to the origins of the academic analysis of masculinity and femininity in order to properly understand their influence on society and global politics.

In a study conducted in Australia, a team of social researchers among them R. W. Connell, observed a group of Australian high school boys in an attempt to understand the making of masculinities, specifically how young men viewed their bodies, experiences and roles in society. The study is ultimately responsible for drafting the terms hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity (Connell, 4). The study defined hegemonic masculinity as a “pattern of practice” which legitimized men’s dominance over women. Grounded on strong normative perceptions hegemonic masculinity honors the “ways of being a man”, and elicits other man to follow suit (Connell, 5). In social constellations, but also in politics and international relations, this “way of being a man” consequently informs the actions of both society and politics. The state thus becomes gendered. It is this gendered structure which differentiates between male and female, masculine and feminine, rational and emotional, and public and private. These dichotomies

shape and constrain what states are, what they do and how they do things. Tickner for instance argues that rationality, independence, strength and power are characteristics most commonly associated with men, and hence also perceived as most valued characteristics to be found in a leader (Tickner, 3). Ironically, these binary distinctions are also what shape the perceptions and the hierarchical relationships in the anarchic “outside” world. In political discourse, Tickner argues this is translated into stereotypical notions about nonwhite, tropical countries which become assigned traits most commonly attributed as feminine, such as irrational, emotional or unstable (Tickner, 9). Using this example, Tickner attempts to raise awareness that the way we are socialized into understanding gender differences is also the way we are taught to think about international politics (Tickner, 9). It is these notions of femininity and masculinity, according to Tickner which further sustain global inequalities and oppressions.

Peterson further elaborates on this topic by arguing that from a state’s perspective the perceptions of femininity and masculinity can best be observed in a state’s use of coercion as a way to maintain patriarchal order. This becomes especially visible in the public versus private domain. From the private domain, a state becomes “directly” complicit in furthering the domestic violence against women through its selective policies of “nonintervention” in domestic violence. From a public domain, a state is “indirectly” responsible for the continuation of violence against women, through its promotion of masculinist, heterosexist ideologies expressed through mass media, the public education system, the culture of militarization and patriarchal law (Peterson, *Gendered States*, 54). To rethink structures of masculinity and femininity, Peterson suggests challenging the notion that women have no role in the public sphere or in maintaining the internal and international security of the state (Peterson, *Gendered States*, 86). Only by increasingly including gender analysis in international politics, is it possible to understand how much effort it actually takes to keep gender off of the agenda and how much power it takes to maintain the international political system in its present form (Peterson, *Gendered States*, 159-160). With this Peterson intends to suggest that the main premise of including gender analysis in IR and foreign policy is to significantly disrupt patriarchal and inherent power and class relations. Only then, will international politics be able to limit economic and social oppression of those in the lower reaches of class, sex and race hierarchies.

However, the dissemination of gendered masculinized structures, according to IR scholars proves to be more difficult to elicit than anticipated. The personification of the state as masculine in itself limits the extend of which outside factors and actors can intervene. True for instance argues that the gender division of masculine public and feminine private, has not only served as the foundation for modern European states, but has also shaped postcolonial states beyond Europe. As such, True argues that changing gendered social relations is a direct threat to sovereign statehood and political order (True, *Bringing back Gendered States*, 2). She argues that traditional patriarchal relations are a historical feature of gendered state identities and their dissemination may pose significant implications for the state and IR. For once, True argues that the dissemination of patriarchal relations also undoes the cultural foundation of international relations. This may be respondent to by violent reactions, which may in turn threaten the stability of international order and the values upon which it rests (True, *Brining back Gendered States*, 3). These potential extreme reactions to the dissemination of patriarchal state order are rooted back to gender hierarchies which legitimized the position of men in the public sphere, while relegating women in the private family household.

By examining this gender social order, states can form a global approach to the fight against gender inequality and injustice. One way to do this, according to True is by addressing gender domination or patriarchal relations as a “binary system that is reflected in the male/female international indicators of equality” (True, *Bringing back Gendered States*, 8). To achieve this, political leaders would need to understand how gender inequalities intersect with other social hierarchies of race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class. Only by addressing this will states be able to create a less hierarchical order of nations as well as build new global networks with the potential of transforming international society in the present and the future (True, *Bringing back Gendered States*, 10).

In *Gender in International Relations*, Tickner also proposes alternative models to the disruption of the hegemony of authoritative masculinity. Tickner uses the Mediator model to embody a model of human behavior grounded on patience, empathy and sensitivity as characteristics working towards the elimination of gender inequality, (Tickner, *Gender in International Relations*, 139). Tickner argues that the Mediator model is perfectly suited in conflict mediation situations where the need to build trust among negotiating partners is paramount. The Mediator,

characterized as being able to understand the others point of view, is also considered the best practice for breaking down political and social hierarchies (including gender hierarchies). According to Tickner, both national and international disputes tend to get solved more peacefully using this method (Tickner, 140). Similarly, in policy terms, this method is translated to generate more sympathy for the weak at home and more support for foreign aid programs abroad. To illustrate this, Tickner uses the example of Scandinavian countries. Scandinavian countries with less militaristic foreign policies, and a greater commitment to economic security also tend to discard gender models of national identity (Tickner, 141).

Tickner's mediator model and True's binary systems model to gender and social inequalities, are just two models used to identify gendered masculinized structures and power hierarchies in society. By being based on the theoretical understandings of gender and gender inequalities these models moreover, work towards dismantling patriarchal hierarchies in international relations, and assist states in discarding gender models of national identity. However, the two models alone cannot reproduce the needed momentum for these changes to take place. Therefore, taking the norm diffusion literature from Section 1, the following section will intend to explain how decision-makers can make use of feminist IR theories and norm diffusion mechanisms to change normative understandings and work towards the elimination of patriarchal gender hierarchies.

2.2. International Norm Diffusion as a method of Patriarchal Unraveling

With gender becoming more and more prevalent in fields such as conflict and peace research, and development studies, but also domestic and foreign policy (Risse, 2017; True & Wiener, 2019; Jacob et al, 2014; Elgstrom, 2000), feminist scholars have sought the opportunity to analyze its influence on topics such as development assistance and foreign policy (Elgstrom, 2000) and post-conflict economic recovery (True and Hazic, 2020). Implementing different ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives (Caprioli, 2004; Tickner and Krosnell, In Ackerly et al, 2006; Hansen In Shepherd, 2009), IR and feminist scholars have created theories through which they intend to analyze how gender operates in state institutions and how states in turn are influenced by gender relations when drafting domestic and foreign policies. Having previously explained the influence of gender and patriarchal relations on international relations and global politics, the following section will focus more concretely on alternative solutions to the dissemination of gender inequalities. In particular, this section will

reintroduce the concept of norm diffusion as an alternative method to patriarchal unraveling and a means of increasing women's participation in the public decision-making sphere. Contrary to Section 1 however, this time the focus will lie specifically on diffusion mechanisms implemented within global normative frameworks, which work towards the transformation of gender equality norms.

2.2.1. Global Normative Frameworks as Mechanisms for Gender Norm Diffusion

Tickner is one of the first feminist IR scholars to suggest that the use of norm dissemination and norm change can be used as a method to elicit patriarchal unraveling. For Tickner, it is the formation of new cultural norms and practices which have the power to change social consensus on values such as gender equality, but also diplomatic relations and policy formulations. Similarly, True also analyzes the role of norm change in her analysis of gender in international relations. According to her, the focus on norms emphasizes the role of ideational factors, which have become hugely successful and perceived as “good” methods for bringing states together to cooperate with one another (True in Tickner, 73). True argues that among these new norms, the norm of gender equality is perceived to lead the way towards “better” state behavior. A behavior that is concerned beyond national state interests and which fosters cooperation and liberal values throughout the international system. Contrary to other scholars however, True remains skeptical towards the effectiveness of norms in creating new power relations. She argues that by not being fixed rules norms are plural and dynamic and as such, it is difficult to predict the degree of internalization they may possess. Similarly, she argues that norms by being the result of global power relations have the tendency to reproduce similar power relations and reestablish systems of domination and marginalization (True in Tickner, 80). True's criticism towards norm dissemination, however is refuted by Jane Jaquette who states that norm change is an effective weapon, especially for women in international relations who seek to transform existing norms, laws and the behavior and actions of states (Jaquette in Tickner, 90). Norm change according to Jaquette, is a conscious process of rule creation which challenges “normalized” behavior and deploys “moral arguments against existing practices that have become normalized as natural” (Jaquette in Tickner, 91).

In “Rethinking the life cycles of international norms”, True and Krook state that norms diffuse precisely because norms encompass different meanings, are able to fit into a variety of contexts,

and can be subjected to framing by diverse actors (True & Krook 3). Using a constructivist approach, they argue that norms are anchored in language and repeated in speech acts allowing them thus, to maintain the appearance of internalization. To analyze this phenomenon, True and Krook use the world polity model of norm diffusion. The world polity model argues that states are, “socially constructed and embedded in a world society that promotes cultural processes of modernization, learning and imitation, and institutional and organizational isomorphism” (True and Krook 4). This model sees international norms as universalistic and derived externally with no strong adherence to local circumstances. It argues that states comply to international norms as a means to increase their own international reputation and identity as a modern state. True uses the world polity model to also explain the diffusion of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

In 2004, the United Nations Secretary General requested member states to develop Women Peace and Security, National Action Plans (NAPs) which would implement the UNSCR 1325 agenda in the member states peace and security institutions. The NAPs were used as a proxy for WPS normative commitment and implementation, and mark a phase in the policy diffusion process from international to national jurisdiction (True 4). Nevertheless, 15 years after the adoption of the UNSCR 1325 and the development of NAPs, the process of norm adoption and internalization still remained fairly low among member states. To explain this low adoption and internalization rate, in “Explaining the global diffusion of the WPS Agenda” True urges scholars to take a closer look into domestic, transnational and international conditions to understand why some norms diffuse and others do not. Since the world polity model with its premise on modernization, learning and imitation had failed to explain the lack of implementation, True makes use of another norm diffusion mechanism, the logic of world culture.

The logic of world culture with its premise on the analysis of domestic, transnational and international conditions, provided True with the correct information to determine the likelihood for the implementation of NAPs (True 6). True uses the example of former Yugoslav countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia) to illustrate how the use of domestic and transnational analysis can allow policy makers to understand the inherent security dilemma present within and between post-conflict countries. True argues that conflict afflicted countries are more likely to implement WPS NAPs if their direct neighbors (countries they’ve been in

conflict with) do so as well. In her text, True argues that the above-mentioned countries unilaterally decided to implement WPS NAPs within a year suggesting a “band-wagoning” effect, rather than a world polity model. In contrast, non-conflict countries were more likely to adhere to a world polity model of norm diffusion elicited by international normative peer pressure (complying with the pressure to appear modern) (True 3). Going back to Tickner’s statement, especially in the context of post-conflict countries norm change can be an effective tool to elicit a transformation of the social perception of women in leading positions, and peacebuilding negotiations. The implementation of a normative framework such as WPS NAPs has the potential to redirect and “improve” state behavior.

Besides the world polity model and the logic of world culture, True and Krook identify an additional norm diffusion model, the boomerang effect (True and Krook 5). The boomerang effect intends to explain how norm diffusion occurs even in situations where states actively seek to ignore them. The model proposes that in cases where local authorities are not responsive to the demands presented by civil society, these groups are allowed to connect with transnational allies. In that respect, the model resembles very closely to Kravtsov’s coalition building model. Using the normative power of transnational allies, local civil society activists put pressure on their own states from the outside (True and Krook 5). The model gives local activists and networks access, leverage and information that they would normally not possess. In the world stage, the boomerang effect first gained recognition following the Helsinki Accords. The Helsinki pact is a diplomatic agreement signed in 1975 in Helsinki, Finland at the conclusion of the first Conference for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE). The Helsinki Accords were a means of reestablishing the relationship between the then Soviet Union and the Western block. Especially relevant to the discussion of norm diffusion is Chapter 7 “Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” and Chapter 8 “Equal rights and self-determination of peoples” of the accord (Conference on Security and Co-Operation in Europe Final Act, 1975, 9-10). According to Keck and Sikkink, the Helsinki Accords present the best example of the boomerang effect being used by human rights networks as a means of pressuring the Soviet Union and the governments of Eastern Europe to change (Keck and Sikkink 36). Human rights activists referred to chapters 7 and 8 of the Accord, to pressure Moscow to protect activists from repression. With regards to women’s rights, the boomerang effect is well-known within transnational networks working towards the elimination of violence against women. The human

rights networks which made use of the Helsinki Accord to put pressure upon the Soviet Union, also paved the way for women's networks to place the topic of violence against women as an international issue. Women's networks around the world used the boomerang effect to draw the attention of international organizations towards women's rights and specifically towards practices eliciting violence against women locally (Keck and Sikkink 166-167). Therefore, the use of the boomerang effect as a norm diffusion mechanism entails a form of international coercion and pressure put upon local governments to cede to the demands of their civil society, and respect the need for change. From a feminist IR perspective, the boomerang effect fits in the first stage of the norm diffusion process, agenda setting (Keck and Sikkink 37). As such it has the potential to increase awareness on new issues, and help set agendas which provoke the attention of the international audience. Using the boomerang effect, networks and civil society have the power to persuade states and international organizations to support different topics, and change both domestic and foreign policy.

The fourth and last model used frequently in the diffusion of human rights and women's rights norms is the spiral model. The spiral model, is a combination of several norm diffusion mechanisms (Kravtsov 9). It analyses the domestic impact of international norms in relation to transnational influence. "The framework aims to identify under which conditions international norms are internalized and applied domestically" (True and Krook 6). The model however, does not assume an evolutionary progress towards norm implementation. Instead, advocates of the spiral model consider the possibility that at any stage of the norm internalization the content of the norm may be substantially changed by local interpretations which have the power to transpose the norm into a whole new trajectory (True and Krook 21). Being a combination of several norm diffusion mechanisms, the spiral model can be especially beneficial when used in the human rights norm diffusion area (Risse et al 28). Risse, Ropp and Sikkink analyze the use of the spiral model and its reliance on transnational advocacy networks. According to them, the spiral model consists of several "boomerang throws", similar to the boomerang effect previously described. Non-governmental organizations, civil society and human rights networks operating locally in a norm-violating region, reach out to transnational networks to draw their attention towards their national government norm violating practices. These transnational actors in return invoke international human rights norms with which they intend to pressure the local governments to change. However, this does not always function smoothly. Sometimes the

“boomerang throws” have to be thrown several times back and forth, in order for national governments to express even a small willingness to change. That being the case, Risse et al refer to the spiral model as a causal model. This means that the model attempts to explain the variation in the “extent to which national government move along the path toward improvement of human rights conditions” (Risse et al 28). Put simply, the model records each minute step a government takes either towards the implementation of human rights norms, or the extent to which it moves away from implementing such norms. According to Risse et al, for this back-and-forth dance to be successful in evoking norm change a steady bilateral and multilateral network pressure needs to be sustained. Only then, can local networks mobilize and expand into new political spaces where they can assume centerstage in societal discourse revolving around human rights (Risse et al 30). However, similar to other norm diffusion mechanisms presented, the spiral model has its own flaws. Risse et al argue, that repressive governments often adapt briefly to normative pressure from the outside. However, once the pressure decreases the odds are that they will return back to their inherent repressive methods (Risse et al 25).

From a feminist IR perspective, the use of the spiral model illustrates how domestic and transnational social movements and networks get together to compel norm-violating states to change by using pressure “from above” and “from below”. This top-down and bottom-up approach, both strengthens civil society and provides them with the space to critique the norm-violating state. In addition, it also provides local networks with the possibility to take action and propose their own alternative solutions to norm-violation and change. Similarly, the top-down approach allows multinational organizations and international human rights networks to make use of moral consciousness-raising as a means of pressuring and shaming the norm-violating state to change (Risse et al 25). The models presented show how the use of norm diffusion mechanisms implemented within normative frameworks and diplomatic relations can result in norm change. With regards to the research question, the development strategies implemented through Sweden’s feminist foreign policy, can be analyzed in terms of these mechanisms. This is done in order to determine how the use of norm diffusion mechanisms influences the effectiveness of development cooperation strategies in evoking behavioral and norm change, and how it elicits the implementation of pro-gender equality policies in partner countries.

3. What does Feminist Foreign Policy bring to this debate?

So far, the research presented has elaborated on the use of gender analysis in international relations, in order to determine how gender and women's issues gained traction in foreign policy. This was done in order to demonstrate how gender operates in state institutions and how states in turn are influenced by gender relations when drafting domestic and foreign policies. While Section 1, introduced norm diffusion as a theory and practice, Section 2 explained how gender and women's issues initially gained traction in IR and foreign policy, and reintroduced the topic of norm diffusion as an alternative mechanism for the dismantling of gendered power relations. Building upon Section 1 and 2, Section 3 will analyze feminist foreign policy in light of its normative framework and its norm changing potential. In this section, I argue that feminist foreign policy uses the same norm diffusion mechanisms as introduced in Section 1 and 2, as a means of raising moral consciousness, changing state behavior and practice and eliciting the implementation of pro-gender equality policies.

3.1. Feminist Foreign Policy, a new method for social change? Norm change as the new foreign policy goal

Feminist foreign policy as a foreign policy approach is a combination of theories and practices derived predominantly from feminist IR theory (Tickner, 1992; Tickner and Sjöberg, 2011; Enloe, 1989, 2004; Peterson, 1992, Parashar et al, 2018). However, by being a feminist approach to foreign policy FFP also incorporates postcolonial feminist theories and practices (Aggestam et al, 2018; Achilleos-Sarll, 2018) as well as decolonial feminist theories (Tlostanova et al, 2019; Verschuur et al, 2012) and feminist ethics of care (Thomson, 2020; Robinson, 2019). Its theoretical embedding allows FFP to not only cover issues relevant to women's participation in politics, but also ensures that the foreign policies implemented take into account colonial histories and their impact on society and state-building. Its basis on feminist IR theory and postcolonial and decolonial theories, moreover provide FFP with the mechanisms relevant for identifying gendered and patriarchal hierarchies. It also provides it with normative mechanisms with which such a policy intends to change these structures and improve the situation of women and minorities.

When analyzing the literature on FFP, the predominant focus lies mostly on international treaties and frameworks as the basis for FFPs work. In a government communication from Sweden's

Foreign Ministry, the communication states that Sweden's FFP is informed by the framework of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Istanbul Convention, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the EU Action Plans on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (Government Communication 2019/20:17). These frameworks, which we can agree incorporate a gender analysis component, provide feminist foreign policies with the mechanisms for spotting gender inequalities and gendered structures as well as the normative mechanisms for fighting and dismantling these structures. In *Gendering Foreign Policy*, Aggestam and True also state that the increased interest in implementing pro-gender equality policies in foreign politics can be traced back to the implementation and signing of international treaties. They list the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), as well as the implementation of Goal 5 Gender Equality within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as important international milestones for the promotion of women's rights and gender equality (Aggestam and True 2). The treaties reflect the internalization of pro-gender equality norms within their working documents and the transfer or diffusion of norms within implementing partners. Scholars of foreign policy who specifically analyze the theories informing feminist foreign policy also agree that there is a strong "ethical/moral" component, and a postcolonial perspective informing the work of FFP. Thomson for instance argues that the "moral" component found within FFP, derives its existence from ethical understandings of foreign policy (Thomson 2). It is this ethical component Thomson argues, which raises the "ought" question in FFP (Thomson 3-4). Questions such as: "Should states intervene in norm violating governments? What should such an intervention look like? Should such an intervention be led top-down or bottom-up?" are examples of "ought" questions grounded on moral and ethical arguments. Robinson, specifically highlights this ethical component of feminist foreign policy. She states that a critical feminist ethics of care has the potential of transforming binary gender norms and patriarchal political hierarchies. According to her, FFP has the potential to be perceived as an ethical alternative to *realpolitik* (Robinson 2-4). Similarly, the implementation of postcolonial feminist thinking is what allows FFP to address racialized and gendered foreign policies (Thomson 2). For Thomson, it is the combination of these and other feminist theories and practices which has opened the doors for feminists to re-envision and use political opportunity structures in new ways (Thomson 3). The scholarly study

of feminist foreign policy therefore, is meant to expose global ethical dilemmas (subordination of women in peace-making processes; sexual violence in conflict) and give voice to those most harmed by global injustices (Aggestam, Rosamond and Kronsell 6).

Whether its ethos is interpreted to originate from internationally signed treaties or founded on feminist schools of thought, feminist foreign policy can be understood as a method with which feminists seek to renegotiate and challenge power hierarchies and gendered institutions. With a working method directed towards normative reorientation of foreign policy, feminist foreign policy includes cosmopolitan norms of global justice and peace (Aggestam and Rosamond 2). Moreover, its goal of shaping global developments in a gender-sensitive direction, allows FFP to challenge underlying gender norms that fuel violence and conflict (Scheyer and Kumskova 4). In order to further illustrate how feminist foreign policy manages to implement pro-gender equality norms and policies, I have defined a list of indicators most commonly occurring within FFP literature. These indicators are often portrayed as mechanisms and tools in the literature guiding the practice and goals of feminist foreign policy. They include: leadership, gender mainstreaming, women and security, and civil society and social networks. I argue that the use of feminist norm diffusion mechanisms can best be observed within these indicators. Meaning, in order to illustrate the use of norm diffusion within FFP, I will be looking for evidence of normative mechanisms occurring within these indicators. This is done in order to prove that FFP makes extensive use of norm diffusion mechanism in order to push forward normative and policy change.

Moreover, three of the mentioned indicators, namely gender mainstreaming, women and security and civil society will be further analyzed in the empirical analysis in order to determine how impactful FFPs work in these indicators has been in eliciting pro-gender equality policies in the selected case studies.

3.1.1. The Role Leadership can play in the Norm Diffusion Process

The literature on feminist foreign policy makes use of key political figures to illustrate how their leadership style has increased awareness around “women’s issues” and gendered structures in society and politics. Through the portrayal of heads of government and foreign affairs ministers, the literature of FFP intends to explain how these figures influence the implementation of pro-gender equality policies and norm change in society (Aggestam and True 10). As has been

previously explained in Section 1, norm entrepreneurs are the main actors in the norm diffusion process. Similarly, leaders promoting a feminist agenda are also seen to act as norm entrepreneurs in their own states (Aggestam and True 10). Aggestam and True, for instance argue that different leadership styles can further impact the adoption of pro-gender norms and feminist strategies. Observing the leadership styles of some of the key proponents of feminist inspired foreign policy (Hilary Clinton, Margot Wallström, Julie Bishop, Justin Trudeau, William Hague) they have developed a set of three leadership categories: status-quo oriented; gender-sensitive and inclusive; and transformative. As one can understand from the titles of these leadership styles, they include both a gender analysis component (gender-sensitive and inclusive) as well as a norm transformative component. To illustrate how leadership is a model of norm diffusion within FFP, I will be using the example of William Hague as illustrated by Davies and True.

From 2010 until 2014, William Hague served as Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs within the Government of the United Kingdom. His tenure and the policies implemented during his position as Foreign Secretary are of particular relevance for IR scholars. Hague's leadership in contrast to other foreign policy actors was characterized by extensive policy and norm entrepreneurship. Of particular importance, is his positioning in favor of the initiative towards the prevention of sexual violence in conflict (PSVI) (Davies and True 6). Hague articulated his leadership of the PSVI as an imperative issue for the maintenance of international peace and security. As such, his promotion of an international norm prohibiting the use of sexual based violence in conflict (PSVI) illustrates the unique positioning of a foreign policy actor in promoting international political and normative change (Davies and True 5). However, Hague's norm entrepreneurial activities are not the sole focus of Davies and True's study. In "Norm Entrepreneurship in Foreign Policy" Davies and True pay particular attention to how the identity of the norm entrepreneur influences foreign policymaking processes. In the case of William Hague his identity was particularly relevant in the agenda-setting phase of the norm diffusion process. Hague used his gender and bureaucratic position as foreign secretary to talk about a crime rooted in deep-seated structural gender inequalities. This, Davies and True argue, was a deliberate move to generate attention. The gendered identity and structural position of the norm entrepreneur was essential in the successful norm socialization and diffusion (Davies and True 5). Hague understood the importance of male leadership in this area. He never

acknowledged his masculine elite power, but used it deliberately to transform the gender hierarchies where women's issues were not part of the discourse of real security issues. As such, True and Davies conclude that the identity and the positioning of the norm entrepreneur is essential when the norm promoted challenges conventional foreign policy decision-making and action (Davies and True 17). Similarly, Aggestam, Rosamond and Kronsell also interpret the success of the Swedish feminist foreign policy model on the leadership style of Margot Wallström. It is Wallström's leadership, they argue, which places the focus of Sweden's feminist foreign policy on women's participation in global politics, women's empowerment and their contribution to sustainable peace (Aggestam, Rosamond and Kronsell 3). This leadership focus ultimately defines a country's identity and its foreign action. In the case of Sweden, Aggestam and Rosamond argue this has allowed the country to establish mediation networks with women from the Global South focusing on conflict mediation, peacebuilding and negotiation (Aggestam and Rosamond 7).

The leadership component in feminist foreign policy is therefore, an essential factor in the norm diffusion and norm transformation process. Leaders, acting as norm entrepreneurs, continuously engage in framing and reframing of existing understandings of particular problems in order for them to resonate with key audiences. This makes them a key figure during the agenda-setting phase. Their positioning in favor of a particular policy or against a certain norm in society, both legitimizes the issue and brings it to the mainstream. This in turn, opens up opportunities for other actors to engage with the topic and provide their own solutions to the problem. As such, the leader acting as the norm entrepreneur, is the first step in the norm diffusion and norm change process meant to generate norm change and foster the implementation process of pro-gender equality policies.

3.1.2. Increased emphasis on human rights and gender equality - Gender mainstreaming and the internalization processes of gender analysis

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines gender analysis as a systematic methodology which is used to identify "differences between and among women and men in terms of their relative position in society and the distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power in a given context" ("EIGE Europa"). Gender analysis is of particular importance in the policy making process because it allows for the development of interventions

which specifically address gender inequalities, and targets the needs of women and men. In Section 1, Peterson stated that the implementation of gender analysis in international politics shows how much effort it requires to keep gender and gender-issues off of the agenda. Thus, it is important that the use and applicability of gender analysis be extended to all fields of decision-making and policy formulation. Logically, gender analysis is followed by the formulation of gender-sensitive policies aimed towards the reduction or complete elimination of practices eliciting gender inequalities. One of these very well-known policies is the gender mainstreaming approach.

In the foreign policy context, gender mainstreaming has received increased acceptance and implementation in international institutions, international and multinational organizations and states. Informed by the framework of the WPS agenda and the SDGs, the implementation of gender mainstreaming has allowed gender equality and women's rights to be mainstreamed across key political issues, (including security and defense, economic development, trade and aid) and at all levels of foreign policy-making (Aggestam and True, 2020; Thomson, 2020; Sundstrom and Elgstrom, 2019). Its use allows policy makers to better understand gender orders, gender subordination and power relations and determine their impact on foreign policy (Williams 6).

From a norm diffusion perspective, gender mainstreaming is both a mechanism of norm diffusion as well as a result of norm diffusion practices. In "Explaining the global diffusion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda", True states that the reason for the diffusion of gender mainstreaming in institutions is the influence played by transnational feminist networks which localized international norms into a domestic context. This, according to True, was done purposefully to bring about norm change (True 10). Specifically in the development context, gender mainstreaming's norm changing potential has been implemented as an advanced technique in the policy analysis, impact assessment and monitoring processes of development strategies (True in Tickner 74-75). When applied in rural development, gender mainstreaming has allowed for the recognition of new identities and agency for women as rural entrepreneurs. This type of policy focus has the potential for undermining men's hegemony in both the public (labor market) and private (household) sphere by redefining gender roles (True in Tickner 75). However, gender mainstreaming's wide applicability and elastic definition has made IR scholars

and development scholar rather skeptical towards its potential as a norm changing approach (Caglar 339). For instance, gender mainstreaming is differently interpreted in the development context than it is in the security context (Caglar 339). Moser and Moser illustrate this by stating that international development agencies, such as the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank, see gender mainstreaming as a means to development rather than gender equality. The gender mainstreaming policies in this case are framed to focus on women's employment and access to the labor market, thus directly favoring neoliberal market policy goals (Caglar 339). For Caglar, however it is the neoliberal system which traps women in the private (household) sphere. She criticizes this model by saying that it is the neoliberal paradigm which is incapable of transforming gender relations (Caglar 339). According to her, implementing gender mainstreaming in institutions which are not interested in breaking down gendered structures, is not a wise use of the gender mainstreaming method. True similarly criticizes gender mainstreaming when applied in the development context. According to her, international development agencies, such as the World Bank, rarely address structural or institutional barriers which govern the work schedules and childcare demands of women and men in developing countries (True in Tickner 76). Hence, while gender mainstreaming claims to eliminate gender inequality enforcing practices, it essentially fails at addressing institutional inequalities and power structures. From a norm diffusion perspective, its use may "persuade" politicians and decision-making actors to implement certain gender sensitive policies and practices, but from a long-term norm changing perspective the approach significantly fails at addressing underlying structural inequalities. It intends to smooth out the surface while ignoring the root cause of the problem. Nevertheless, the use of gender mainstreaming is not entirely futile. According to Aggestam and True, gender mainstreaming has pushed for the de-politicizing of technocratic approaches. While, it cannot directly dismantle gendered structure, Aggestam and True still argue that its applicability has the potential to shed light on to gendered relations and patriarchal power practices (Aggestam and True 9).

It is this flexibility of gender mainstreaming, its ability to fit into different policy frameworks, which make it such a popular approach to be used in development cooperation strategies. While it is true that some international development agencies, such as the World Bank, might use gender mainstreaming solely as a means of eliciting economic development, that alone cannot be used as an excuse to diminish the inherent positive aspects of gender mainstreaming.

Specifically, in the development context, the use of gender mainstreaming and gender analysis can have a two-fold impact, both on economic development and the progress of gender equality in the country or the region. Sweden is particularly known to be using gender mainstreaming as a norm diffusion mechanism within its development cooperation strategies. In its most recent strategy on human rights, women's rights and gender equality, Sweden incorporates gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and gender equality as a cross-cutting issue within their development strategies. Gender mainstreaming is diffused within their cooperation strategies as a direct method of targeting economic development (Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation for Global Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Rights 2018–2022).

3.1.3. Gender and Security: Redefining security in feminist terms

Security as it is understood in traditional IR theory, is still grounded on gendered understandings of masculinity and femininity (Basu in Tickner 105). International security privileges perceived masculine values such as rationality and autonomy over perceived feminine values such as emotions and dependence. Moreover, the response to security threats according to Basu, are rarely designed to address the political practices that give rise to the threats in the first place (Basu in Tickner 100). According to Basu, after a conflict states want to immediately move back to the status quo ante in relation to their "enemy". By doing so, they completely ignore the factors that actually brought them to this security threat in the first place. To reprimand this fallacy feminist IR scholars have begun to "rethink" security in feminist terms. Their recommendations involve redefining security in "multi-dimensional and multilevel terms with the primary focus on the elimination of all forms of violence, including physical, structural and ecological" (Basu in Tickner 98). This is done in order to separate security from national state interests and military dynamics. An all-inclusive security would take into account the physical well-being of citizens (protecting them from hate-speech, physical violence and conflict related violence), the elimination of structural insecurity (access to healthcare, education, freedom of speech and assembly) and the preservation of the local ecosystem (preventing climate related insecurity). In order to establish this type of all-inclusive security, feminist IR scholars, among them Enloe and Basu, advise decision makers to bring individuals to the center of security analysis.

People should be treated as the ends not the means to an end, Basu states. Defining security as the security of the individual brings back the ethical component to security analysis, meaning that “progress and achievement are measured in terms of emancipatory ideals and not as the reaffirmation of a possibly disempowering status quo” (Basu in Tickner 101). For Haastrup the implementation of a feminist foreign policy has resulted in precisely this increased focus on the individual. According to Haastrup, defining security in feminist terms means including the experiences of women as agents in the security and foreign policy field (Haastrup 1). Through the use of decolonial thinking, Haastrup argues that states implementing a feminist foreign policy are more capable of providing agency to marginalized subjects in international relations. These states are attributed with the ability to take into account the security needs of everyone in society, both domestically and internationally. Similarly, they are also perceived as more conscious towards the gender-security nexus, meaning that they increasingly link women’s security to national and international security (Aggestam and True 2). When women’s security becomes a state’s priority, a state will also become less willing to engage in violent/belligerent foreign policy. “When women are not secure in their states, neither are their states secure” (Williams 16). From the legislative aspect, True argues that this translates in an increased willingness of states to implement National Action Plans (NAPs) for the protection and promotion of women’s rights. NAPs allow for security policies to be redefined as more comprehensive gender-responsive policies with the focus on women’s security and human rights (True 3). The implementation of NAPs also fit into Scheyer and Kumskova’s concept of gender and security. In “Feminist Foreign Policy: A fine line between adding women and perusing a feminist agenda”, Scheyer and Kumskova argue that when drafting security policies, states should be asking this fundamental question: “security for who and by whom?” Listing which groups in society are more prone to having their rights limited allows states to implement more inclusive policies and making sure that the needs of their citizens are being met.

When analyzing the security issue in light of a feminist foreign policy, the feminist scholars presented above touch upon several security topics interrelated to other areas of FFP. The issue of security is as much related to gender equality as it is to development assistance. By relating security to gender equality, feminist scholars shine light to actions which elicit insecurity and threat. By brining security and development together, FFP is capable of extending the reach of inclusive security to involve the protection of basic human rights (freedom of speech, dignified

work, access to education), to ecological security (environmental protection, access to clean water and sanitation, reducing air pollution). Similarly, in terms of traditional security, FFP is capable of providing solutions to states and government actors to shift the focus from emergency mode to normal bargaining process of the political sphere (Aggestam and Rosamond 4).

Envisioning security in feminist terms therefore, includes much more than preventing states from being stuck in a repetitive cycle of security threats. Rather, it involves making sure that all factors leading to a possible security threat or conflict are dealt with at the root cause, before they expand in reach and severity.

This redefinition of security in feminist terms, can also be observed in the development cooperation field. Especially noticeable are the development cooperation strategies drafted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden. In past decade, the development strategies of Sweden have moved on to include the issue of climate change as a new type of security threat. One of the most recent strategies drawing attention to environmental degradation as the new human security dilemma, is the Strategy for Sweden's global development cooperation in the areas of environmental sustainability, sustainable climate and oceans, and sustainable use of natural resources 2018–2022. Similar to the authors listed above, the strategy also includes a multidimensional analysis of the dangers of climate change on human security. It particularly pays attention to people living in poverty and vulnerable members of society, women and girls, who might face more difficulties as environment degradation and climate change progresses. Moreover, it brings together issues such as the growth of slums, the lack of freshwater sources, limited access to electricity and pollution as some of the major causes of human insecurity to be faced in the following decade (Environmental Strategy 2018-2022, 2). As such, it urges implementing partners to be aware of these issues when drafting environmental policies and legislation. While the issue of security had previously been defined as involving militarization, these strategies draw the attention of insecurity towards the environment and climate change. By emphasizing climate-resilient sustainable development and the sustainable use of natural resources, the strategy places the climate impact as the primary prerequisite for combating poverty and ensuring long-term sustainable development and gender equality. From a norm diffusion perspective, Sweden's new definition of human security is grounded on feminist theories of ethics and care. Its inclusion within its development strategies, is evidence for the implementation of Swedish normative beliefs within its development cooperation agendas.

3.1.4. Civil Society and Social Networks: A top-down and bottom-up approach

Lastly, the indicator on civil society and social networks includes a separate goal within feminist foreign policy. As a matter of fact, Aggestam and Rosamond argue that the implementation of a feminist foreign policy itself has evolved through a “mixture of elite-led and bottom-up practices” (Aggestam and Rosamond 10). As has been explained in Section 2, grassroots movements, civil society and networks are important actor in norm violating states. Working in opposition to the norm-violating state, these grassroots actors have the unique chance of proposing alternative methods and gain wide attention. Moreover, scholars agree that strengthening local civil society organizations (CSO) further increases the chances for the internalization of pro-gender equality norms.

From a norm diffusion perspective, the strengthening of CSOs goes hand in hand with the coalition building model and the boomerang effect. Local CSOs and networks through the use of coalition building and the boomerang effect can build connections with INGOs and transnational actors, and simultaneously be supported by them financially and politically. With regards to states directly implementing a FFP the connection with CSO and local networks further reinforces the likelihood of the internalization of pro-gender equality norms. Similar to the context of development and security, the presence of a strong civil society advances the promotion of women’s rights and empowerment which ultimately work towards economic efficiency and longer lasting peace (Thomson 7). Feminist scholars argue that the involvement of civil society in domestic and foreign affairs is needed to emancipate women and men at home and abroad (Aggestam et al 6). For Aggestam, Rosamond and Kronsell, civil society actors are seen as key players of ethical transformation. They say that a critical investigation into the “transformative potentials of feminist foreign policy must take into account the linkages between political elites and civil grass root movements” (Aggestam et al 5). Only then will actors be able to challenge widely held assumptions about the “prevalent differences between the interests held by ordinary people and those espoused by political elites” (Aggestam et al 5).

From the perspective of development cooperation, the role of civil society is equally as important. Swedish development cooperation strategies continuously stress the relevance of civil society in legislative processes. Of particular relevance in that regard is the Strategy for support via Swedish civil society organizations for the period 2016–2022. The strategy aims to

strengthen civil society in developing countries by offering them support and guidance by Swedish civil society. Two of the main goals include: strengthened capacity among civil society actors in developing countries, and a more enabling environment for civil society organizations in developing countries. By achieving these two goals, the strategy intends to foster an environment where civil society in developing countries has the capacity to draw attention to human rights issues, mobilize people and increase their involvement in decision-making. This way, the strategy aims to strengthen democratic development (Strategy for support via Swedish civil society organizations. 2-3).

3.2. How effective is Feminist Foreign Policy really?

The subsections above have attempted to illustrate how influential norm diffusion practices are in the development of the methods and practices found within feminist foreign policy. Informed by feminist IR theory, FFP through its normative framework intends to raise moral consciousness by implementing a combination of ethically informed policies working towards changing state behavior. This theoretical embedding moreover, provides it with the tools and knowledge needed to identify gendered and patriarchal hierarchies. The use of norm diffusion mechanisms on the other hand, allow it to spread its political influence to partner countries. For Aggestam and Rosamond a feminist foreign policy is an unbeatable concept for it emphasizes “consistent leadership, inclusive ownership, guidance, support and training” (Aggestam and Rosamond 10). This is moreover, strengthened by FFPs ability to balance traditional power politics and ethically informed foreign policy, becoming thus a smart and effective foreign policy solution. FFPs ability to maintain gender and gender issues on the agenda and supporting local grassroots movements allow it to maintain a distant, but yet consistent influence over state agents. Through the implementation of policies such as gender mainstreaming, FFP ensures that it keeps a certain amount of pressure and persuasion on fellow international actors. The norm diffusion mechanisms of coalition-building, coercion and competition have shown how states in the international arena are constantly looking out for their self-image and trying to be on the same step with other international actors. In that regard, the implementation of gender mainstreaming can be perceived as one of those policies quicker to be implemented by states wanting to show their modern status. On the other hand, the norm diffusion mechanisms of the boomerang effect and the spiral model, provide FFP with the necessary steps to also assist local grassroots movements (CSOs and social networks) in norm violating states unwilling to change their

actions. Therefore, it can be argued that the structure, the theoretical embedding and its use of norm diffusion mechanism allow feminist foreign policy to exercise a unique influence in international politics. However, it is yet important to analyze this assumption on the ground. The rest of this thesis will therefore, use the information provided in the literature review to analyze the effectiveness of the use of norm diffusion within FFP. Deriving from my research question, I will specifically look into the Swedish feminist foreign policy model to determine how its normative frameworks implemented via its development cooperation strategies are effective in eliciting the implementation of pro-gender equality policies in partner countries.

Methodology

The research question is informed by academic literature on norm diffusion, the issue of feminist foreign policy and development cooperation. The development strategy, the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020 used in this analysis has been derived from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in Sweden. I am interested in the perceptions of decision-makers, policy experts and CSOs, who have first-hand experience in implementing development strategy objectives and working together with the Swedish foreign action service in achieving their development goals. The aim is to assess how the impact of feminist foreign policy, the projects and policy frameworks it supported through its development strategies, were understood and experienced by government representatives and civil society actors responsible for executing them on the ground.

To help frame the analysis, academic literature and the current development strategies implemented in the Western Balkans, were used to identify the main points of analysis. For that, two countries, respectively Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, were selected as countries in which the case studies would be conducted. The two countries were chosen for several reasons, the primary of which is Sweden's involvement in both countries and the development assistance they have offered to both Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The in-depth reviews, conducted in light of the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020 implementation in Kosovo and BiH concluded that both countries appear to be moving to the right direction. In terms of human right and gender equality, the review report states that both countries have very

advanced gender equality and anti-discrimination legislation. Nonetheless, the strategies that ensure non-discrimination are generally underfunded in Kosovo, and institutional mandates aimed to safe-guard human rights are unclear and overlapping (In-depth Strategy Report for Kosovo, 12). Similarly, by not being a member of the United Nations, Kosovo cannot formally report on the state of implementation of UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Conflict nor the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), even though these international conventions are already integrated into Kosovo's constitution and legislation. The report further states that the presence of discriminatory practice in Kosovo is the result of patriarchal customs and tradition, and are further perpetuated by the weak rule of law in the country (In-depth Strategy Report for Kosovo, 3). To combat this, the report states that Sida has been supporting both CSOs and government institutions in effectively challenging these patriarchal structures. Especially its support to CSOs is deemed to have been rather successful. The review report states that, following Sida's support CSOs have gained more confidence and abilities in raising important societal causes and working jointly with citizens (In-depth Strategy Report for Kosovo, 10). In the third and last area of intervention, enhanced environmental responsibility, the review report states that this area still faces great challenges in Kosovo. The report states that some progress has been achieved however, more effort is needed to implement and enforce legislation in all environment and climate change areas. By not being a UN member state, Kosovo is not able to sign or include the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change into its National Action Plans (NAPs) as such, even civil society engagement in this field is rather slim.

Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other hand, as a UN member state, has adopted both UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW into its NAPs. However, the implementation process still remains a problem. With regards to the representation of women in politics and local and municipal council, women's representation remains low in all levels of government, despite the obligatory 40% gender quota (Women's rights in the Western Balkans, Kvinna till Kvinna, 13). Moreover, the shrinking space of civil society is noted as a key problem in challenging conservative norms with regards to gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence (Strategy Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 9). Of great concern is specifically this reduced space for civil society and advocacy movements in advocating for freedom of speech and assembly of underprivileged and minority groups in BiH (i.e., LGBTI gatherings). In that regard, the review report states that Sida

has been investing heavily into increasing the watch-dog abilities of CSOs, and building their capacities with regards to proposing amendments to legislation (i.e., Anti-Discrimination Law). However, more work still needs to be done. Lastly, with regards to the environment, the review report notes that central strategies and legislation are still missing in many environmental areas.

Having followed the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020 when drafting policy intervention areas and having received funding and assistance from Sida, Kosovo and BiH are chosen as the two primary case studies for this research. Both countries share similarities with regards to the legislative landscape and involvement and assistance offered by Sida. In addition, they also share similar positive developments and areas of improvement followed by the implementation of the development strategies. As such, they provide the adequate framework for analyzing the impact of FFP on the implementation of gender sensitive legislations in the Western Balkan region.

4.1. Process-Tracing

The use of FFP in the implementation of gender sensitive legislation, shall be based loosely on the method of process-tracing in the two case studies in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Process-tracing has been selected as the research method in this study because of its ability in making strong within-case inferences about the causal processes (Beach and Pedersen, 1).

Process-tracing allows me to conduct a systemic examination of the evidence collected and allows me to analyze that evidence in light of research questions (Collier, 1). By using process-tracing, I will be able to identify the intervening causal processes between the independent variable (FFP intervention in development cooperation) and the outcome of the dependent variable (implementation of gender sensitive legislation).

In Figure 1, I have illustrated the steps involved in using process-tracing in this qualitative case study. As mentioned previously, X illustrates the causal condition (the use of norm diffusion in FFP and development cooperation) and Y illustrates the policy end result (implementation of pro-gender equality policies/legislature). The in-between processes between X and Y, in this case Activity 1, 2 and 3 will be further elaborated in the following section. The Entities 1, 2 and 3 represent the organizations which by engaging in these activities transfer causal forces from one part to the next. The goal of this investigation is to find enough evidence (observable manifestation) for the Activities 1, 2 and 3 which are impacting the outcome Y.

Based on the literature review and the analysis on norm diffusion and FFP, I was able to identify three activities with the potential of eliciting the occurrence of outcome Y (implementation of pro-gender equality policies/legislature). In Activity 1, using the information from Sections 2 and 3 of the literature review, I have selected targeted partnerships as a cause for analysis to determine the impact of norm diffusion on development cooperation. Similarly, the causes under analysis for Activity 2 and 3 have also been selected based on Section 1 and 3 of the literature review. Activity 2 and 3 will try to determine whether norm diffusion implemented through a top-down and bottom-up approach is effective in eliciting the implementation of gender perspectives into legislation. Using expert interviews, I will be collecting evidence which serves to answer the research question.

Theoretical level	Part 1 of causal mechanism	Part 2 of causal mechanism	Part 3 of causal mechanism	
Causal condition (X) <i>The use of FFP in development cooperation</i>	Activity 1 Targeted partnerships as means of extending normative influence	Activity 2 Policy stakeholders (institutional level) adopt national strategies based on Sida strategies	Activity 3 Non-elite stakeholders (CSOs and NGOs) use of Sida's development objectives allows them to mobilize and advocate for more gender sensitive policies	Outcome (Y) <i>Implementation of pro-gender equality policies/legislature</i>
	Entity 1 Sida	Entity 2 Sida + Government institutions	Entity 3 Sida + CSOs NGOs	
Observable manifestation	Observable manifestation	Observable manifestation	Observable manifestation	Observable manifestation

Step 1 Infer existence of causal mechanism

Step 2 Infer existence of manifestations

Step 3 Collect evidence

Figure 1. Causal mechanism for how FFP affects policy framing and agenda-setting *Source* Adapted from Lintelo et al (2019)

As a research method, process-tracing includes three different methods: Theory-Testing Process-tracing; Theory-building Process-Tracing; and, Explaining-Outcome Process-Tracing (Beach and Pedersen 11-19). For this study, I will be using theory-testing process-tracing. Theory-testing process-tracing allows me to evaluate whether the evidence collected shows that X and Y are linked together and that this functions accordingly to the theoretical embedding of my research question (Beach and Pedersen, 56). Theory-testing involves four tests: Straw-in-the-wind; Hoop-Tests; Smoking-Gun Tests; and, Doubly Decisive Tests (Collier, 4-5). Each one of these tests is used to either confirm or reject the hypothesis of this research. This is determined based on whether there is sufficient and necessary evidence for affirming causal reference. Straw-in-the-wind tests provide the weakest criterion for accepting or rejecting an argument (Collier, 4). Hoop Tests on the other hand, set a more demanding standard. Similar to straw-in the-wind tests, hoop tests cannot confirm an argument, however it can be used to eliminate one (Collier, 4). Smoking-gun tests provide the sufficient criterion for accepting the causal inference, yet they do not provide the necessary criterion for accepting them (Collier, 5). And lastly, doubly decisive tests, are tests which are rarely accomplished in the social sciences. The test provides strong causal inference for confirming one argument and eliminating all others. The doubly decisive test therefore, provides evidence which is sufficient and necessary for affirming the causal inference.

Since my analysis only includes the perspectives of a limited number of experts, I will be using hoop-tests to determine whether (a) Sida's development cooperation strategies were platforms for the implementation of norm diffusion mechanism, and (b) whether these strategies functioned as expected in eliciting the formulation / implementation of gender sensitive legislation. From this it follows that the observed impact shall be understood in terms of gender sensitive policy formulation.

As previously highlighted, development cooperation strategies and expert interviews will be my main source for collecting evidence. The hoop tests are built are as follows:

1. Hoop test I: Targeted partnerships as means of extending normative influence
2. Hoop test II: Policy stakeholders (institutional level) adopt national strategies based on Sida strategies
3. Hoop test III: Non-elite stakeholders (CSOs and NGOs) use of Sida's development objectives allows them to mobilize and advocate for more gender sensitive policies

4.1.1. Expert Interviews

The process-tracing method will be informed using expert interviews. Expert interviews, rather than a material discussion, were chosen for this study because the amount of literature developed on this topic is very limited. The only available literature which analyzes the impact of Sweden's FFP on development cooperation and gender equality in developing countries are review reports of Sida's projects. From an academic perspective there is no empirical study so far which has analyzed Sweden's normative power within development cooperation. This being the first case study conducted on this topic, expert interviews were deemed the most adequate source to determine the actual situation on the ground. However, it needs to be remarked that expert interviews alone won't be able to capture the complete scope of the Swedish normative power exercised in the Western Balkans. The results presented below are preliminary results and they are prone to individual bias. Nevertheless, the use of expert interviews can still be considered an effective method for understanding the current perceptions of actors involved in the two case studies. As such, at the core of my analysis is a series of 10 semi-structured expert interviews with civil servants, government officials, civil society actors and INGO representatives. All these actors have cooperated with Sida or implemented Sida funded projects in the years 2015-2020. Moreover, these participants are expected to further implement projects fully or partially funded by Sida in the years following 2020. The respondents were interviewed virtually between April and May 2021. Respondents were selected based on proven record of having worked together with Sida, their professional position, and their relevant experience and perspectives in working in the institutional level in Kosovo and BiH and their involvement in the civil society sector.

The interview followed strict data protection procedures. The University of Vienna Data Protection Clause for expert interviews was shared with the experts prior to the interview. The experts were informed about their rights and the use of their data according to the Data Protection Act (Section 7, Paragraph 2, Item 2). The Data Protection Clause also states that the nature of expert interviews does not allow for the anonymization of names. However, because of the sensitivity of this study, I have excluded legal names and only maintained professional titles and the names of organizations. Since this research is inspired by feminist literature and feminist methodologies, during the interview session I have also implemented feminist strategies for interviewing participants. The key strategy includes paying close attention to the subtle shades of language (Devault, 4). During the interview session, I paid close attention to using gender

sensitive language when interviewing my participants. I also made sure that I properly understood and captured each participant's individual experiences. Since I held the interviews on a one-on-one basis, however the majority of the participants felt free and welcome to share all their experiences and hurdles with me.

The interview started with general questions about the respondent's area of work. This was followed by a discussion on their cooperation with Sida (the guidance Sida provided them during the formulation and implementation process of the programs implemented on the institutional level, and the funding offered to them during the project execution phase on the civil society level). The respondents answered to interview questions prepared in advance, but they were also free to guide the conversation towards the topics they saw most important. At the end of the interview, respondents were asked to explain their perceived long-term impact of the cooperation with Sida. The interview transcripts were then analyzed in order to generate codes. I was able to identify a series of codes which all corresponded to the research question.

In reporting the results (Sections 6 and 7), I will compare the results strategy informing Sweden's development cooperation in the Western Balkans against the answers of the respondents. The responses together with the literature will be used as evidence during the hypothesis tests. I will also provide selected quotations from respondents to exemplify their views and experiences and report disagreement where necessary.

4.1.2. Resource Material - The Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020.

As literary basis for the empirical analysis, I have used the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020. The three areas of the strategy (including the issue of gender equality) will be compared against the interviewee responses. This is done in order to determine whether the experiences illustrated by the experts reflect the Swedish development objective of gender equality.

As previously stated, Sweden's development cooperation agenda and humanitarian assistance is governed by strategies developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden. The strategies developed are based on geographical settings and themes. Under the geographical setting, the strategies include country strategies (bilateral strategies) or regional strategies. These are

strategies that are country specific, and are meant to target issues relevant to the individual country. Under thematic strategies, Sweden targets the issue of human rights, democracy and rule of law (Sida, n.d.). The content of the strategies is based on a needs assessment and drafted directly by the MFA. The strategy which was analyzed in this research, has been drafted post-2014 following Sweden's declaration that the country would be pursuing a feminist foreign policy (Sida, n.d.). As such, the strategies reflect Sweden's feminist foreign agenda.

With regards to the Western Balkans, in the year following 2014, Sweden implemented one regional strategy, the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020. Within the Western Balkans, the strategy covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Within this geographical area, the strategy targets three thematic areas, namely: (1) Enhanced economic integration with the EU and the development of a market economy; (2) Strengthened democracy, greater respect for human rights and a more fully developed state under the rule of law; and, (3) a better environment, reduced climate impact and enhanced resilience to environmental impact and climate change. Throughout the strategy, the issue of gender equality is reemphasized and the strategy urges partners to fulfill their national and international commitments to gender equality (Results Strategy 2014-2020, 4). Moreover, it urges partners to implement the issue of gender equality in all activities foreseen within the strategy. "Gender equality should also be a recurrent theme that should be promoted via targeted and integrated measures and dialogue" (Results Strategy 2014-2020, 6). Gender equality is therefore, understood as a cross cutting issue throughout the strategy.

Relevant to this research are the thematic areas, Area 2: Strengthened democracy, greater respect for human rights and a more fully developed state under the rule of law; and Area 3: A better environment, reduced climate impact and enhanced resilience to environmental impact and climate change. These two areas are selected based on primary research conducted in Section 3, which identified that increased emphasis on human rights and security defined as environmental security encompassed two of feminist foreign policy pillars.

Under Area 2, the strategy calls upon implementing partners to work towards strengthening the role of civil society as a catalyst for democratic development in the Western Balkans (Results Strategy 2014-2020, 9). Partners must work towards increasing the capacity and sustainability of

CSOs and other grassroots actors working towards democracy and human rights. Swedish support in this area is to contribute to protecting human rights and the strengthening of democratic institutions and public administration at national, regional and local level.

Under Area 3, the strategy envisions Sweden's support towards contributing to strengthened capacities of partners in implementing international agreements on the environment, climate change and energy. It urges partner countries to work towards increasing environmental responsibility among the general public and civil society sector, including raising awareness on the unequal impact environmental insecurity has on women and girls.

Recurring themes in these two areas include, increased capacities in working towards human rights issues, strengthened civil society and increased awareness on the importance of environmental legislation. As previously stated, in both of these areas the issue of gender equality is a cross-cutting issue. The results strategy therefore, also reflects the key areas identified in Section 3: (a) increased emphasis on human rights and gender equality; (b) the strengthening of civil society actors; and (c) security defined as environmental security. The Results Strategy will therefore, create the basis in which the rest of the analysis will be based on.

Case Study I: Kosovo

6.1. Hoop-Test I: Targeted partnerships as means of extending normative influence

Hoop-Test I proposes that targeted partnerships at the institutional and civil society level are platforms through which Swedish development objectives are incorporated into national strategies and programs. The hoop-test looked for evidence of bilateral agreements with government agencies and cooperation's with civil society actors, which were in line with norm-diffusion mechanisms listed in Section 1. This means that the evidence collected had to show that the partnership agreements were signed with partners sharing the same convictions or development goals as Sweden. One way to determine this, was to look at current Swedish development strategies implemented in the region and determine whether the partners selected for cooperation were (1) already implementing similar objectives, and (2) were willing to align their objectives with Swedish objectives. This hoop-test used the Results Strategy for Sweden's

Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020 and interview responses as the primary basis for analysis.

6.1.1. Evidence for Hoop-Test I

To determine the ways partnerships with local actors are established and what criteria are used for establishing these partnerships, I interviewed the Head of Sida in Kosovo. The answers from the following interview will also inform the evidence collection for hoop-test II. The first section of this hoop-test will provide the evidence collected with regards to the types of partners selected for cooperation. The second, will provide evidence for partners extending and aligning their development objectives following their cooperation with Sida.

The interview began initially with very basic questions around the types of targeted partnerships Sida established in Kosovo. According to the Head of Sida in Kosovo the partnerships are based on whether the partners projects or programs align with Swedish development objectives. “Any project that we work with, has to be addressing development needs in the society that is also an objective under our strategy” (interview Sida). This means that when partners approach Sida for a cooperation, Sida only agrees to work together if the partners strategy resembles that of the development strategy being implemented in the region. Once this has been established, the partnership begins. The interviewee stated that these are predominantly partnerships in the form of donor and grantee. They include the provision of grants from Sida for a project or program implemented by the institutional or civil society partner. As donors Sida exercises a certain amount of influence in the structure of these strategies and programs (determining objectives, indicators, activities). The interviewee stated that “as donors they have the right to push for certain things” (Interview Sida). They support the partners in developing the “origination of their ideas” and they ask them to follow a results-based framework (Interview Sida). According to the interviewee, this framework includes a number of objectives and measurable indicators, and partners are expected to follow it. “In the end we decide a lot, but this approach has been very much about partnership and dialogue and listening about what the partner is saying” (Interview Sida). The interviewee confirmed that 1) Sida does select partners based on shared beliefs and objectives and 2) that it does assist them in the development of their project objectives. The latter however, does not necessarily prove that local stakeholders align all strategic objectives to Sida objectives. The statement that this form of partnership is based on dialogue and cooperation,

implies that not all Swedish development objectives are streamlined within local strategies. On the contrary, this implies that local stakeholders still possess ownership over their projects, and the partnership with Sida is seen as a means of further developing those objectives, rather than completely changing them to fit the donors' perspective.

Having established that the evidence collected for point (1) had been satisfactory, I proceeded to ask more in-depth questions regarding the long-term impact of this partnership in generating outcome Y (Implementation of pro-gender equality policies/legislature).

When asked about their cooperation with institutional actors, specifically the Agency for Gender Equality as a means for achieving greater recognition for gender equality and achieving development goals, the interviewee stated that "...we support the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) because the government doesn't support them and because it is not prioritized. But for example, through our support, we can see that over a period of time, the allocation of the government budget for AGE has increased. This most probably wouldn't have happened if we hadn't supported them with capacity building and giving them attention" (Interview Sida). By demanding the participation of AGE in bilateral discussions, Sida ensures that the issue of gender equality is not side-tracked from government discussions. "What we do, is we include them in discussions we have with the government, we make sure that they are there when there is an important topic being raised" (Interview Sida). As previously stated, this is aligned with Sida's development objectives, where gender equality is perceived as a means to development.

The Swedish results strategy in the Western Balkans, also emphasizes the importance of a pluralistic civil society as a means for strengthening democratic values and the protection of human rights. According to the Head of Sida in Kosovo, Sida selects partner CSO based on their representation at the constituency level. This means that CSOs are selected based on whether they have members and links to the community. "The best CSO are close to the community; they not only talk about the financing and their thematic areas but also listen to the challenges that the communities are facing" (Interview Sida). This emphasis on a membership-based approach from civil society actors, is a means of ensuring that CSOs cooperating with Sida have enough following to understand underlying problems but also to influence discussions on specific topics. A members-approach guarantees that CSOs are aware of the inherent challenges the community faces. By being close to them they know what the community needs to overcome these

challenges. By strengthening and supporting the growth of these organizations, Sida ensures that some of the support provided to bigger organizations will also trickle down to the community the CSOs represent.

By increasing the importance of gender equality in decision-making and increasing the visibility of women in politics, Sida indirectly uses normative influence with the aim of changing the perception of women's roles in society. Similarly, by increasing the visibility of gender agencies such as the AGE, and by insisting on their participation in government dialogues, Sida also exercises a certain amount of normative pressure. By financing their projects and including them in government discussions Sida raises the level of institutional importance of the AGE.

With the evidence collected, hoop-test I passes. The targeted partnerships in the form of grant distribution served as means of establishing cooperation with local partners but also as means of exercising normative influence. This form of partnership includes three of the norm diffusion mechanisms listed in Section 1, namely the coalition-building, the teaching and the emulation model of norm diffusion. The teaching model of norm diffusion, in this case resembles the unidirectional communication and two-way communication and teaching developed by Bjorkdahl. Sweden's unidirectional communication includes promoting their development strategies through their Embassy in Kosovo. This is followed by the coalition building model, and this model is particularly noticeable within cooperation's with CSOs. Through this coalition building model, Sida is also able to engage in dialogue and knowledge exchange with both institutional organizations and CSOs. By establishing these partnerships and sponsoring their projects, Sida ultimately engages in empowering domestic stakeholders. This is shown in Sida's partnership with AGE. Their partnership has resulted in AGE increased institutional importance. The government has shown itself more willing to distribute more budgetary resources to the agency, which is in line with Kravtsov's definition of coalition building. The governments increased willingness to offer more support to an agency working on gender equality, is a direct result of the emulation model of norm diffusion. The Kosovo government and its institutions see the benefits of such a cooperation (in terms of increased capacities) and begin to align themselves with Swedish objectives. While this evidence proves that the causal mechanism (X) and hoop-test I are true, it still doesn't satisfy the occurrence of outcome (Y). Therefore, the following two hoop-tests will further collect evidence for the occurrence of (Y).

6.2. Hoop-Test II: Policy stakeholders (institutional level) adopt national strategies based on Sida strategies

Building on Hoop-Test I, Hoop-Test II proposes that policy stakeholders at the institutional level adopt Swedish development objectives to underpin and adjust their strategies and programs.

Absence of such evidence, or explicit statements that partners have no commitment to implementing these areas, or explicit statements that these two areas have been implemented but have not resulted in any noticeable change would weaken the argument. On the other hand, evidence that shows increased output in legal documents which align with Swedish development objectives, and increased institutional and political willingness to continue including the two Swedish strategy areas would affirm the argument.

6.2.1 Evidence for Hoop-Test II

As the evidence in Hoop-Test I shows, at the institutional level Sida has assisted in funding two national programs: the Kosovo Program for Gender Equality (KPGE) 2020-2024 and the Kosovo Environmental Program (KEP). The KPGE is implemented by the AGE and the KEP is implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Transport. Both programs are fully funded by Sida. Moreover, according to the representatives from the AGE and KEP, during the design and the development of the programs both institutions received extensive assistance by Sida experts. Hoop-test II needed to prove that the targeted partnerships laid the foundation for increased involvement with Swedish development objectives, and that the partnerships not only increased the capacities of institutional stakeholders, but also their willingness in maintaining those lessons learned for future national strategies and programs.

First set of evidence to be collected included evidence of capacity building resulting in increased outputs in documents incorporating the gender equality perspective. According to the Head of the Legal Unit from the AGE, the KPGE is the only program that is foreseen by law in the government of Kosovo. The funding coming from Sida, specifically the consulting days Sida offered to them, made the program more inclusive. The interviewee stated that the program was developed by a working group consisting of 50 government representatives. Of those 50 participants, 6 were consultants / experts assigned by Sida to assist in the objective setting, indicator selection and activities assigned to the KPGE. To remark this is the second round, the KPGE is being drafted and implemented. There is an older version of the program, the KPGE

2008-2013. According to the interviewee although the previous KPGE also envisioned that government institutions would start implementing the program, real implementation and usage of the program only started once Sida got involved as a donor. “Sida has helped us a lot and I think from the moment they started to get involved and came to help and contributed to AGE we have gained in importance” (Interview AGE). This increase in institutional relevance has also resulted in the AGE ability to exert a lot more pressure upon government institutions, ministries and agencies to adhere to the legal obligation outlined in the Law on Gender Equality and the KPGE (Interview GFP KEP). One such obligation outlined in the KPGE is the development of gender equality actions plans at the municipal level. According to the official from the AGE, the KPGE has so far resulted in the implementation of such action plans in three municipalities in Kosovo (Interview AGE).

As previously stated, Sida offered the AGE consultants to help them out with developing the KPGE. Consulting days are days assigned to the grantee by the donor organization as means of assisting them in project development. According to the interviewee, Sida’s project team leader served as in-house consultant to the agency. This consultant assisted the AGE team during the development of the KPGE but was also responsible for connecting them with additional Sida experts / consultants from their team. The expertise that the Sida consultants offered also helped in developing the skills of the AGE staff (Interview AGE). “Sida has also influenced our capacity building. We had trainings, we raised ourselves professionally with the Sida project. I had the opportunity to take both legal and ordinary officials with me on study visits so that their capacities would also increase” (Interview AGE). The capacity building opportunities offered by Sida during the KPGE project was used by agency staff to draft a manual for the inclusion of gender perspectives in school textbooks. According to the interviewee, the funding for the KPGE activities also included a clause where the agency would be allowed to use the grant to fund additional projects by gender focal points at the ministerial level. The interviewee stated that, for the first time since their founding the agency had been able to reach out to the Ministry of Education and offer trainings and workshops “for reviewers and text writers on what gender equality means, and how to get rid of gender stereotypes in textbooks” (Interview AGE).

So far, the evidence collected shows that institutional stakeholders are increasingly producing output in documents aligned with Swedish development objectives under area 2. Similarly, the

AGE increased capacities in implementing the KPGE and pressuring other government institutions to do so, shows that there is political willingness to continue implementing the objectives under area 2. The evidence also shows that the funding offered to the AGE for the KPGE has increased the perceived importance of the agency at the institutional level, therefore increasing its ability to extend pressure to ministries and municipalities in following the legal obligations outlined by the Law on Gender Equality and the KPGE. This has resulted in the implementation of gender action plans at three municipalities in Kosovo.

However, the KPGE is not the only program implemented at the institutional level which received extensive support by Sida. The other program directed towards area 3 environmental protection, is the Kosovo Environmental Program. The goal of the program is to support the development of the institutional capacity for the implementation of environmental legislation in compliance with EU directives. It is the biggest program implemented in Kosovo which is fully financed by Sida. It includes eight components, among others, “capacity building for the implementation of environmental legislation at local and central level; strengthening the capacity of the environmental protection agency for monitoring, evaluation and reporting; and gender equality” (Interview KEP). It is also the only environmental program implemented in Kosovo which contains a component requiring the mainstreaming of gender equality throughout its working framework. Two officials from KEP were interviewed for this section, including the gender focal point assigned for the program. Similar to KPGE, I needed to confirm whether Sida’s support to the program resulted in increased output of concept documents and policy proposals which also incorporated a gender perspective. According to the GFP of the program, Sida’s assistance to the program was essential. By including gender as a cross-cutting issue on an environmental strategy, Sida has directly supported the unit of human rights and gender equality within the Ministry of Environment and Transport, and has opened up the doors for the GFP in KEP to be involved in the drafting of concept notes. “...when they used to draft concept documents of laws, they never used to include our unit. Now they include us with the help of Sida” (Interview KEP GFP). This has resulted in increased involvement of the GFP and the unit of human rights and gender equality in offering their recommendation on the inclusion of gender perspectives in environment legislation. “For the first time, gender equality is involved in the drafting of concept papers, and it is not easy because we are doing it for the first time. From a law that has never included gender equality, we have moved to a law that generally includes

gender equality. Gender impact assessment is a very new task for us” (Interview KEP GFP). The GFP further stated that, “every concept document that is made in the ministry (Ministry of Environment and Transport), I am now also a drafting member of” (Interview KEP GFP). For the first time they have the opportunity to include their comments on gender equality and human rights in national laws. The GFP stated that prior to Sida involvement, the unit of human rights and gender equality at the Ministry of Environment and Transport had been sidelined. The Ministry had not issued them with a budget and the directors were unwilling to participate in meetings and training on gender equality.

The evidence thus far, proves that hoop-test II stands and that Sida’s targeted partnerships have increased the capacities of institutional stakeholders and have also increased their willingness to maintain a gender perspective and even in some cases also amend legislation to incorporate a gender perspective.

6.3. Hoop test III: Non-elite stakeholders (CSOs and NGOs) use of Sida’s development objectives allows them to mobilize and advocate for more gender sensitive policies

Building on Hoop-Test II, Hoop-Test III proposes that civil society actors are capable of exerting an increased amount of pressure and influence on institutions as a result of their cooperation with Sida. Evidence for this validity would include statements from CSOs that their recommendations and ideas are being forwarded and accepted by decision-makers. Similarly, statements that Sida’s assistance has helped them mobilize and work towards increasing awareness raising around the issues targeted by the Swedish development objectives. Lastly, an even tighter hoop-test would include the observation of evidence where CSO awareness raising is showing to be increasingly effective in mobilizing people to campaign and lobby for gender issues.

6.3.1. Evidence for Hoop-Test III

Hoop-test I established that Sida through its core grant scheme had supported several programs and strategies at the civil society level. Through their core grant scheme, Sida has established partnerships, among others, with the Kosovo Women’s Network (KWN) and the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF). In these two partnerships, Sida offered funding to KCSF EJA Kosovo program and recently also to Kosovo Women’s Network Strategy 2019-2022.

When speaking to the Program Director of the Grant Forwarding unit at KCSF about their EJA Kosovo program and their cooperation with Sida, the interviewee remarked that Sida's core grant issued to them in 2015 had been essential for their organizational development. Since KCSF is a foundation, they forward grants to other organizations in Kosovo. According to the interviewee in the past 5 years since Sida's core grant was issued to them they were able to support over 150 organizations working on various social issues. The interviewee stated that initially they had used the core grant to increase their own capacities. The managerial staff had attended workshops and trainings on various issues including best practices on gender mainstreaming and gender analysis at the civil society level. The core grant had also opened up doors for them to also increase their networking opportunities. The program director stated that since the core grant, they have established an even closer cooperation with Civicus² and other organizations working to support the sustainability of CSOs. "In addition to organizing concrete activities, trainings, grants, a good part goes to staff development, i.e., strategic development and personal capacity building of staff. The objectives are then generated from the inside, but since we are well-connected with European platforms, Civicus, European Movement, we simply follow the global trends, see what is currently happening and we invest in advancing our own capacities in order to be up-to-date with current developments" (Interview KCSF). The trainings combined with the closer connections to leading organizations in the civil society sector, provided the incentive for KCSF to forward these lessons to their own grantees. Some of the organizations they have supported were able to influence policy-making in areas such as gender equality, property rights, human rights and women's rights. Working with Sida, made them even more conscious of the importance of women's representation in the civil society sector. "We are trying to push this mentality with all those who work with us. In order to empower women, it is only possible if we highlight them in the statistics". They have begun to increasingly demand from their grantees to "pay close attention to keeping statistics of women's involvement" (Interview KCSF). When asked how the EJA Kosovo program would increase citizens involvement in decision-making, the interviewee stated that the EJA program is "aiming to build a constituency base" (Interview KCSF). By emphasizing the importance of constituency-based interventions, KCSF aims to increase the involvement of organizations with the citizens they are serving. "If a

² CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organizations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world.

dedicated and empowered civil society through membership and citizens seeks its own space in policy-making, whether at the central and local level, it becomes more effective, participatory, more sustainable, more inclusive and generally contributes to the democratic functioning of Kosovo” (Interview KSCF). When asked how relevant Sida’s support had been in strengthening the work of the EJA program, the interviewee stated that Sida had enabled them to grow and develop but simultaneously had transmitted to them the importance of impact.

So far, the evidence was able to prove that Sida’s involvement helped civil society actors mobilize and work towards increasing awareness around the issues targeted by the Swedish development objectives. In KCSFs case, the core grant issued by Sida was used to develop their own capacities, and the new knowledge acquired was shared with their grantees. This allowed KCSF to support over 150 organizations, some of which were even able to influence policy-making in areas such as gender equality, property rights, human rights and women’s rights. This proves the hoop-test requirement that the recommendations and ideas of civil society are being forwarded and accepted by decision-makers. Moreover, the evidence provides proof even for the tighter hoop-test which required evidence showing that CSO were becoming increasingly more capable at mobilizing people to campaign and lobby for gender issues. Overall, the evidence collected supports the hypothesis tested under hoop-test III.

Case Study II: Bosnia and Herzegovina

7.1. Hoop-Test I: Targeted partnerships as means of extending normative influence

The same hoop-tests as were implemented in the Kosovo case study, will also be used in the analysis of Sweden’s development cooperation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hoop-Test I proposes that targeted partnerships at the institutional and civil society level are platforms through which Swedish development objectives are incorporated into national strategies and programs. The hoop-test will look for evidence of norm-diffusion mechanisms used in bilateral agreements with government institutions and civil society actors. Similar to the Kosovo case study, this case study will also use the Results Strategy for Sweden’s Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020 and the interview responses as the primary basis for analysis. Hoop-tests include the collection of evidence showing that the

partners have aligned their national development objectives to Swedish regional development objectives as a result of the norm diffusion mechanisms used during the establishment of partnerships.

7.1.1. Evidence for Hoop-Test I

Collecting proof of the use of normative power in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina proved rather difficult. In discussion with the Head of Sida in BiH, it became clear that the political situation in the country, and specifically the government structures had made it very difficult for foreign actors to exert any sort of normative influence over politicians and decision-makers. According to the interviewee, to respect the system in place Sida has to consult with decision-makers from different levels of government, who oftentimes are not on the same page as their colleagues. This makes it difficult to exert any sort of normative affect at the institutional level. The only real direct partnership Sida has established at the BiH is with the Agency for Gender Equality. “The AGE is one of the very, very few direct supports to government structures that we have” (Interview Sida). The agency in itself derives its mandate and power from the Law on Gender Equality, as such it is obliged to assist government institutions in following the legal requirements posed by the law (Interview Sida). However, according to the interviewee the agency lacks the power to push for some of the legal obligations the law on gender equality requires. Moreover, political divides at the other two gender centers³ at the entity level in BiH, cause extensive delays in decision making. This lack of harmonization at the political level also influences the work of the AGE. The interviewee stated that there is still much work to be done to be able to observe any sustainable change happening. While human’s rights and gender equality are two perspectives which are mainstreamed throughout the work of the Swedish cooperation agencies, in the case of BiH and especially at the institutional level, assisting in the harmonization of systems, procedures and policies remains the top priority.

Nevertheless, this doesn’t mean that the two perspectives are ignored in the case of BiH. While the interviewee didn’t remark on any direct cooperation with government institutions (except the AGE) on the issue of women’s rights and gender equality, they nonetheless do work to fund projects which work towards this change in perspective. “We work through UN Development

³ At the Entity level in BiH there are two Gender Center, the Centre for gender equity and equality (Gender Centre) of the Government of the Republic of Srpska and the Gender Center of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Both centers are expected to cooperate with the AGE in BiH and with each other.

banks and civil society” (Interview Sida). One of these projects, working on area 2 of the results strategy, implemented by UN bodies and funded by Sida, is the UNDP project Women in Elections. Similarly, another project in area 3 of the results strategy implemented by UN bodies and funded by Sida is the Green Economic Development Project (GEP). The cooperation with the UN allows Sida to mainstream its gender perspectives into the projects which are then implemented by the UN at the institutional level in BiH.

When asked about their cooperation with the civil society sector and whether Sida was directly involved with offering capacity building to CSOs, the Head of Sida in BiH stated that Swedish civil society organizations, such as Kvinna till Kvinna, are the ones which directly cooperate on the ground with civil society actors in BiH. “What we do is work with partners who are able to offer that” (Interview Sida). It is Kvinna till Kvinna which with Sida’s funding offers capacity building to CSOs and strengthens their organizational structures. “We (Sida) are financiers, the thing for us is to identify, to finance and to have a dialogue on what is supposed to be achieved and how through our dialogue and our work we can add credibility and strength to the partners, and make them reach their objectives” (Interview Sida). However, Sida does try to provide the conditions for creating a meeting ground between CSOs and government institutions “We’ve had some activities where we bring together or where both civil society organizations and the gender agency are present” (Interview Sida). Nevertheless, according to the interviewee the inability of the AGE to push through to politicians and decision-makers has made many CSOs skeptical over the AGE ability to elicit any concrete changes.

To prove that hoop-test I in the case of BiH holds true was very difficult. There are a lot of political restrictions which make it hard to observe the direct normative influence of Sweden’s involvement in BiH. In contrast to Kosovo, BiH is a UN member state. It is obligated to follow and report on UN conventions, among others UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW. Because of the complicated political situation on the ground and the lack of political will, the issue of gender equality, women’s rights and women’s representation in politics in the country has been sidetracked. This is where the work of Sida and UNDP becomes relevant. Through cooperating with UNDP, Sida indirectly exerts pressure on the BiH government to follow its obligations under its own laws and under UN conventions. Through its direct support to the AGE, it works to increase its capacities so that the agency itself tries “to implement the law on gender equality

and to achieve a strategic role in influencing this” (Interview Sida). By being itself an actor on the ground and by funding Swedish CSOs to assist Bosnian civil society, Sida strengthens the citizens movement in holding their government responsible for following the law on gender equality and the UN conventions. Nevertheless, the statements from the Head of Sida in BiH suggest that there is still much work to be done. The use of normative power requires a longer period of time to show its results. Unless there is a sudden increase in political will to take these issues seriously, it will take a long-time for these approaches to be noticeable.

7.2. Hoop-Test II: Policy stakeholders (institutional level) adopt national strategies based on Sida strategies

Building on Hoop-Test I, Hoop-Test II proposes that policy stakeholders at the institutional level adopt Swedish development objectives to underpin and adjust their strategies and programs. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, since the Agency for Gender Equality is the only Sida partner at the institutional level, evidence of UN projects (Women in Election and GED project) at the institutional level supported by Sida will also be collected. Similar to the Kosovo case, absence of evidence that policy stakeholders adopt Swedish development objectives to underpin and adjust their strategies and programs, or explicit statements that these two areas have been implemented, but have not resulted in any noticeable change, would weaken the argument. On the other hand, evidence that shows increased output in legal documents which align with Swedish development objectives, and increased institutional and political willingness to continue including the two Swedish strategy areas, would affirm the argument.

7.2.1. Evidence for Hoop-Test II

Since 2015, the Government of Sweden and Sida have supported a series of projects in BiH. In the area 2 and 3 of the results strategy, these projects have included gender equality as either a principal objective or a significant objective of the project. In the majority of these projects the implementing organization has been UN agencies. Some of the projects implemented by UN agencies in BiH since 2015 include: Strengthening Local Communities in BiH (EMZED); COVID-19 Women in Elections; Green Economic Development; Energy efficiency with UNDP; Justice for Children; Environmental strategy of Bosnia and Hercegovina (Openaid).

At the government level, as previously stated, Sida partners with the Agency for Gender Equality. At present Sida is financing the Financial Instrument for the Implementation of the

Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina - FIGAP II program (2018-2022) implemented by the Agency for Gender Equality. Other projects which are financed by Sida but are also implemented by the central government include the Judicial Efficiency Project implemented by the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) and HJPC Judicial and prosecutorial efficiency (Openaid). The data available on the projects supported by Sida and implemented by central government institutions is very slim. Most projects covering area 2 and 3 of the results strategy are implemented by UN agencies or other multinational organizations. When discussing the issue of implementation with representatives from the Agency of Gender Equality in BiH, the Senior Advisor of the agency remarked that the importance of FIGAP is because it is fully implemented by the agency. This means that it is guided by the agencies rules and it is fully integrated into the government budget and program (interview AGE). The government of BiH and the AGE have complete ownership over the execution of the project. In contrast, having UN agencies implement projects oftentimes means that the majority of the funding goes directly to their administration. There is almost no local ownership. Whether the use of this middleman is effective in changing the normative beliefs in the long-term will be debated in the discussion of results section.

During the interview with the Senior Advisor of the AGE about their cooperation with Sida and the implementation of FIGAP, the interviewee stated that Sida has been essential in drafting FIGAP 2018-2022. According to the interviewee, the first FIGAP was implemented in 2006. At the time the first GAP had 15 areas with no strategic goals, activities or any outcome or outputs assigned. It was an informational document rather than a strategic document (Interview AGE). The Sida experts assigned to this program assisted them in the drafting of the current GAP and with their help the agency was able to draft their current three strategic goals⁴. According to the interviewee Sida's assistance was also appreciated in the creation of a reporting format which would simplify the reporting procedures of institutions as they implement the GAP 2018-2022. "If you make it readable, if you demystified it, if you make it simple and understandable for institutions, then it's easy to implement. These kinds of formats can help through the process of mainstreaming. If you have a strategy, that is really leading you from the top to the bottom, in

⁴ The three strategic goals include (1) Development, Implementation and Monitoring of the Programme of Measures for Advancement of Gender Equality within Governmental Institutions, as per priority areas; (2) Establishing and Strengthening the System, Mechanisms and Instruments for the Achievement of Gender Equality Coordination and supervision over implementation of the Gender; (3) Establishing and Strengthening Cooperation and Partnership, [GAP 2018-2022](#).

terms of what you really want to achieve, then it is easy to understand and to implement” (Interview AGE). Their position as an institutional agency has also improved. According to the senior advisor, the agency has become more influential in enforcing the legal requirements posed by the Law on Gender Equality. She also stated that they are increasingly more involved in the drafting processes of legislation. “All laws, strategies and programs being drafted, have to come to the Agency and gender centers for their suggestions and opinions before being send to the government for approval and adoption” (Interview AGE). On the hand other, the agency has also profited from Bosnia and Herzegovina’s current process towards EU integration. Since BiH is a recipient of the 2018-2020 EU pre-accession funding IPA (Instrument for Precession Assistance) and intends to apply for the next IPA fund, they are required to mainstream the gender component in all of their documents. According to the senior advisor, in each of these documents the agency has been able to refer to the gender action plan as proof for Bosnia’s understanding of the gender component at all levels of government. “What is very important is that Sida really raised the visibility for our institution and the FIGAP program. I think we get the kind of, let’s say authority, because we can also give that fund to civil society and to institutions” (Interview AGE).

The funding simultaneously worked towards the agencies increased capacities (knowledge and human resources) but also increased institutional importance in the inclusion of gender perspectives in legal documents. Nevertheless, the senior advisor also remarked that the political situation leaves much room left for improvement. While FIGAP is used a means for indicating to the EU that BiH is cognizant of the importance of gender equality, the institutional structure and the political situation make it difficult to mainstream the entire scope of work of the agency. FIGAP is one step forward in this, for it embodies a framework in which the government itself is responsible for its successful implementation. “If you go through a systemic approach doing that through the institutional normative setup, then we can have more chances. Sometimes something that is not regulated, nobody feels responsible to implement” (Interview UN Women).

However, a single program alone cannot achieve a change in normative beliefs needed for increased implementation of the gender perspective in legislative documents. For this reason, I needed to look into the projects implemented by UN agencies to see whether their projects had been more successful in incorporating gender equality and women’s rights into legislation.

One of the projects selected for this research is the Women's Election project implemented by UNDP and funded by the Swedish government (UNDP Transparency Portal). The project aims to strengthen women's leadership and participation in political life, therefore directly working for one of the three R's guiding Sweden's feminist foreign policy. While the project is implemented by UNDP it also works in cooperation with UN Women which is responsible for partnering with national and entity institutions, and serves as the "supporting organization or responsible party" in this project (Interview UN Women). In the interview with the UN Women Governance and Leadership Coordinator of the project, the coordinator stated that the project covers two output levels. Under output one, UNDP covers local levels of governance (including all 10 municipalities and cities from BiH). Under output two, UN Women partners with national and entity institutions, such as the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH, the Central Election Commission, the Parliamentary Assembly and its respective committee on gender equality as well as the two gender centers of the Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska (Interview UN Women). The project itself covers all levels of government. "It's very broad, theme wise, it covers women's leadership and women's political participation, but also women's participation in elections" (Interview UN Women). The primary focus of the project is to create an enabling environment for women to practice their leadership and gain skills and capacities (UN Women). According to the governance and leadership coordinator the project works with political parties, the National Assembly of BiH and the Central Election Commission to incite them to change their internal rules and structures. The interviewee stated that they work with the BiH Assembly in legislative changes, and with the Central Election Commission in determining the terms and conditions for the creation of more inclusive and democratic gender balanced and gender sensitive electoral processes. In terms of working together with political parties, the interviewee stated that it is rather difficult to reach out to the heads of political parties and to approach individual strategic developments in terms of gender equality (Interview UN Women). In their attempts to reach out to heads of political parties and incite them to work closer together with women leaders of women's organizations within each political party in BiH, they are continuously redirected to individuals in the party with no decision-making power in that regard. It seems that the heads of parties are avoiding the discussion around gender equality within their own ranks. "So, you have a lack of political will on one hand, but also a lack of understanding, of political understanding of the importance of addressing these issues jointly by both women and men in all

spheres of life” (Interview UN Women). It is important here to note that political parties are the first step towards deciding who gets to be in the ballot list during elections. If the heads of political parties are not interested in the issue of gender equality, it is also harder for the women in these parties to be elected in leading and decision-making positions.

With regards to the impact of the project, the interviewee stated that Sweden’s feminist policies and their emphasis on top-down and bottom-up processes have been taken as role models to follow in the implementation of this project. During the Women in Election project, UN Women has extensively cooperated with the AGE and the two gender centers as well the gender equality committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH. The Governance and Leadership Coordinator of UN Women stated that while this top-down and bottom-up approach of the project has been very important in reaching out to all levels of government, the impact is yet to be determined. She stated that due to the political constraints, the lack of political will, and the short time frame in which this project has been implemented, it is difficult to state any concrete impact. “These are very firm structural challenges that we’re facing. They’re very external. They’re mostly based in political parties, but also in some other stakeholders, such as in media, in voters, the electoral body. Not to mention the electoral management organizations, such as Central Election Commission” (Interview UN Women).

At the institutional level, Sida has only one direct partner and that is the AGE. The evidence, while it proves that the funding offered to Sida for the development and implementation of FIGAP increased the AGE institutional relevance it doesn’t clearly state whether the Swedish development objectives had been incorporated into government strategies. The political situation in BiH make it difficult to come to a conclusion whether institutional actors are truly convinced over the importance of the areas covered under the results strategy. The interview with UN Women showed that the structural challenges still run deep and the lack of political engagement with these issues, implies that the projects are still not impactful enough to change normative understandings.

7.3. Hoop test III: Non-elite stakeholders (CSOs and NGOs) use of Sida's development objectives allows them to mobilize and advocate for more gender sensitive policies

Building on Hoop-Test II, Hoop-Test III proposes that civil society actors are capable of exerting an increased amount of pressure and influence on institutions as a result of their cooperation with Sida. Evidence for this validity would include statements from CSOs that their recommendations and ideas are being forwarded and accepted by decision-makers. Similarly, statements that Sida's assistance has helped them mobilize and work towards increasing awareness raising around the issues targeted by the Swedish development objectives. Lastly, an even tighter hoop-test would include the observation of evidence where CSO awareness raising is showing to be increasingly effective in mobilizing people to campaign and lobby for gender issues.

7.3.1. Evidence for Hoop-Test III

As established in hoop-test III in the Kosovo case study, when cooperating with civil society Sida issues core grants aimed to assist CSOs in their core activities. The same procedure is also implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through their core grant scheme, Sida has established partnerships, among others, with Sarajevo Open Centre (SOC). In this partnership, Sida has offered funding to SOC Strategic Plan 2018-20, but has also supported other projects within the organization, including educational programs such as the Žarana Papić School of Feminism (Interview SOC). According to the Executive Director of the Sarajevo Open Centre, the core grant issued by Sida has helped them in terms of limiting their administrative burdens and using the funding to work on results-based strategies. On the organizational part, Sida's support was described as effective in three working areas of SOC. Firstly, with Sida's support SOC has managed to establish themselves as an expert on the issues of human rights, women's rights and gender equality. "With Sida's support, we have managed to establish ourselves as somebody who these institutions see, although we're coming from the civil society, and the civil society doesn't always have this credibility and this kind of image, but we have managed to be seen as somebody who's an expert" (Interview SOC). With Sida, the Executive Director stated that they have gained a partner who is ready to talk to decision makers and push for the issues SOC is advocating for. "There's somebody who joins us in the advocacy, they always ask us whenever

they're having meetings, what are our priorities are, what we're working on and what they can actually relate to decision makers” (Interview SOC).

Secondly, this increased perception of their expertise has allowed SOC to be included in advisory positions in the development of cantonal gender actions plans. “Together with the gender central of Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina, we are seen as somebody who's an expert and somebody who needs to be there for the advisory role, or participatory role, and who can contribute with their knowledge and ideas on how the gender action plans should be formed and what kind of measures should be taken, and who should be consulted from the civil society” (Interview SOC). Sida’s assistance here has also been relevant in SOC’s ability to also reach out and assist other CSOs. “We have supported other civil society organizations; we have tried to give support to activists outside Sida’s funding scheme; we're really trying to make the movement more sustainable” (Interview SOC).

Lastly, Sida’s assistance has allowed them to conduct educational programs offered to citizen as means of raising their knowledge about feminist issues. Through Sida’s funding SOC has implemented the yearly School of Feminism, as a means of engaging the community around issues of feminism and women’s participation in politics. When asked how impactful these educational programs have been in increasing political will on issues of gender equality, the executive director of SOC stated that, the issue of quotas “and the issue of political participation of women here in Bosnia Herzegovina has been hampered by our own political system and how ethnic quotas are taking the first seat. And I think we have managed to raise awareness, generally within the political and public life of the need for more engagement of women. But the effects so far have been, I think, really limited” (Interview SOC). While there is increased involvement of civil society actors around the issues of women’s representation in politics and gender equality, concrete results, according to the executive director of SOC, are still “far away” from being achieved (interview SOC).

So far, the evidence was able to prove that Sida’s involvement helped civil society actors mobilize and work towards increasing awareness raising around the issues targeted by the Swedish development objectives. In SOC’s case, the core grant issued by Sida was used to limit their administrative burdens and focus more on the implementation of activities and project impact. This allowed SOC to become perceived as an expert in the field of human rights,

women's rights and gender equality. They are also increasingly being engaged in the role of advisor at the institutional level when it comes to the drafting of documents and gender action plans. Lastly, Sida's funding has been used to establish educational programs and campaigns promoting the rights of women and women's representation in politics. This proves the hoop-test requirement that the recommendations and ideas of civil society are being forwarded and accepted by decision-makers. Moreover, the evidence provides proof even for the tighter hoop-test which required evidence showing that CSO were becoming increasingly more capable at mobilizing people to campaign and lobby for gender issues. Overall, the evidence collected supports the hypothesis tested under hoop-test III.

Discussion of Results

The two presented case studies set out to answer the question of how Sweden's feminist foreign policy exercised through its development cooperation strategies influenced the adoption of gender perspectives in legislation in partner countries. The thesis argued that feminist norm diffusion mechanisms were used in development strategies as means of increasing the implementation of gender perspectives in legislation. To prove how effective the use of these normative mechanisms had been in the implementation of gender perspectives in legislation, selected Sida partners from both the institutional level and the civil society sector were interviewed.

In both cases studies, three hoop-tests were used in order to determine how Sweden's development cooperation strategies and their normative mechanisms had impacted the implementation of gender perspectives in legislation. The first hoop-test sought out to gather evidence which would indicate that targeted partnerships with local partners were used as platforms for extending Swedish normative influence in the country. The second hoop-test collected evidence showing that the Swedish development objectives had been used to underpin and adjust local strategies resulting thus in increased implementation of gender perspectives in legislation. Lastly, the third hoop-test looked at civil society actors to determine whether Sida's financial support had been effective in helping them mobilize and raise community awareness around issues of human rights and gender equality. All three hoop-tests were held constant for both case studies.

8.1. Results: Kosovo

In the case of Kosovo, the Swedish development strategies are implemented in the country through the Swedish Embassy and Sida. The evidence collected through the literature review and the expert interviews indicates that to realize these development objectives Sweden, through Sida, implements a top-down and a bottom-up approach. A top-down approach means that Swedish foreign service establishes bilateral partnerships with Kosovo government institutions. A bottom-up approach means that Sida establishes partnerships with civil society, advocacy groups and local grassroots movements. In both case studies, the evidence showed that Sida partners up with like-minded organizations, which share its normative beliefs. In the case of Kosovo, it is the Agency for Gender Equality which derives its mandate from the Law on Gender Equality. However, evidence also shows that Sida also partners with other ministries within the Kosovo government. The evidence established that Sida fully financed the Kosovo Environmental Program which is implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Transport. By aligning themselves with government agencies and providing financial support to the agencies and government programs, Sida ensures that the longevity and the work of these programs is reinforced within the Kosovo government.

8.1.1. Evidence for the use of norm diffusion mechanisms in the Kosovo case study

From a norm diffusion perspective, the mechanisms identified under hoop-test I, resemble the coalition-building model, the teaching model, the emulation model, and the world polity model. The coalition-building model is present when Sida establishes partnerships with government institutions and finances programs which follow their own development objectives and normative ideals. The teaching model, is seen in the case of the KPGE and KEP, where Sida officials participate in the working groups drafting these programs, in the consulting days offered to AGE officials and in the trainings and workshops held at the Swedish embassy for the staff of the Ministry of Environment and Transport implementing the KEP. The emulation model, while it is for now only present in the agenda-setting phase in Kosovo, its impact is noticeable when looking at the evidence provided by AGE. With Sida's funding and support, the AGE slowly began to implement more projects which resulted in increased institutional relevance. Sida's engagement with the agency (inviting AGE representatives to bilateral meetings with government heads) also exerted a certain amount of pressure to decision-makers to pay closer

attention to the agency and grant it more space to fulfill its requirements as mandated by the Law on Gender Equality. Both the process of emulation and the world polity model can be observed in this case. Decision-makers and institutional actors, noticing this pressure, tend to align with the requests posed by Sida. This is evidenced by the GFP in the KEP. The GFP stated that while they had issues to attract male directors of units at the ministry, upon Sida's request to the Office of the Secretary, more men began to attend (Interview GFP KEP). This shows that institutional actors are bending towards the requests of the foreign experts. Part of this can be explained by the world polity model. As defined by True in Section 2, the world polity model argues that states comply to international norms as a means of increasing their own international reputation and identity as a modern state. While, this might be true in certain cases in Kosovo, such as in the two examples (AGE and KEP) which were taken for this research it doesn't however, prove that this is the case with all institutional bodies. Similarly, neither the emulation model nor the world polity model is able to justify norm internalization. Most of the norm diffusion mechanisms observed in Kosovo, are still in the early phases of norm internalization. Nevertheless, the evidence collected by the interviews suggests that there is political will to push these issues forward.

8.1.2. The effectiveness of norm diffusion mechanisms at the institutional and civil society level

To trace the effects of the norm diffusion mechanisms on legislation, hoop-test II and hoop-test III were used to trace the process from the causal mechanism (X) to the output (Y). Hoop-test II looked at the process from the establishment of the partnership with Sida to the potential implementation of legislation, or the amendment of legislation to include gender perspectives. In the case of Kosovo, I was able to identify two intuitional partners implementing two programs which reflected Swedish regional development objectives. The Kosovo Program for Gender Equality (KPGE) implemented by the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) and the Kosovo Environmental Program (KEP) implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Transport. Using the process-tracing method, hoop-test II traced the effect of Sida's financial support and partnership with AGE to the agencies increased impact in legislative reforms. The evidence in hoop-test II showed that Sida's financial support to AGE allowed the agency to implement more projects, which resulted in the agencies increased capacities as well as improved institutional relevance. With this new sense of competency, the agency became stronger in demanding

compliance with the Law on Gender Equality. The law demands that for every strategy, public policy, law or bylaw the AGE must be consulted prior to adoption. This, as stated by the Head of Unit at the AGE, is to ensure that the gender perspective is included in every law (Interview AGE). Moreover, Sida's financial assistance to the KPGE (the only program foreseen by law in the Kosovo government), ensures that Kosovo possesses its own national program which works towards equal economic opportunities for women, the elimination of gender inequalities, and the implementation of a rights perspective in decision-making. This ensures that, although Kosovo is not a UN member state and cannot report on UN Conventions, it still possesses legal documents which work on the same human rights issues as the UN Conventions. In addition, while the agencies gained increased ability to demand compliance with the law on gender equality, it also gained power to demand compliance to the KPGE. The evidence shows that three municipalities in Kosovo are already implementing their municipal gender action plan. Similarly, evidence collected during the expert interview, also shows AGE increased institutional relevance resulted in it being able to train gender focal points at other ministries, therefore extending its influence at all government levels.

In working on area 3 of its results strategy for the Western Balkans, Sida also provided financial support to environmental programs in Kosovo. One of the biggest programs financed by Sida in Kosovo, was the Kosovo Environmental Program. In an interview with the KEP program coordinator, the interviewee confirmed that while the program was drafted to resemble the needs of the country, it nonetheless also took inspiration from the regional development objectives within the results strategy. This resulted in the issue of gender and gender equality gaining increased importance in the KEP. The program coordinator stated that for the first time in the ministry's history, the KEP drafted gender impact assessments on the environmental situation in Kosovo. The gender focal point interviewed for this research stated that Sida's funding to her Human Rights and Gender Equality Unit, resulted in her finally being taken seriously by the ministry. She became a steady participant during the drafting processes of legal documents and was increasingly more involved in providing recommendations and advice for the inclusion of gender perspective in environmental legislation. The KEP produced a series of legal provisions and amendments to environmental legislation which now include a gender perspective and are at present awaiting approval by the Kosovo government (Interview KEP).

From the civil society sector, Sida's use of core grants directly impacted the organizational growth of civil society organizations. In the case of the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation, Sida's core grant allowed KCSF to provide financial support to the development of smaller, grassroots organizations. Since the start of Sida's support five years ago, KCSF has been able to support over 150 organizations in Kosovo. These organizations work on various topics, but each one of them has a proven record of participant and community engagement. This is ensured by KCSF's EJA Kosovo program. The membership-based approach highlighted in the EJA Kosovo program, further incites smaller organizations to develop closer connections with the communities they represent, and therefore directly work on the issues and challenges faced by the community. The objectives underlined in the Swedish results strategy for the Western Balkans, have been incorporated into KCSF's own strategic objectives (Interview KCSF). Providing organizations, such as KCSF, with core grants not only allows them to grow it also influences them to take into account the development objectives highlighted by the donor. Only organizations which share the same strategic objectives are able to establish a partnership with Sida. This goes back to the coalition building model. However, the core grant serves an additional purpose. The establishment of this sort of partnership, profits both parties simultaneously. On one hand, Sweden ensures that its regional development objectives are being worked on from the community level. Secondly, allowing complete ownership and implementing power to the grantee, Sida is raising their personal responsibility to work on impact. This has resulted, not only in KCSF increased awareness of the importance of gender-equality as a means of sustainable and democratic development in Kosovo, they have also transmitted these lessons to the organizations they have provided financial and advisory support to. The evidence collected during the interview with the program director of the grant forwarding unit of KCSF, shows that this method has already begun showing successes, as some organizations supported by KCSF were able to mobilize communities and push for the amendment of laws.

8.1.3. Final Remarks

The first case-study therefore suggests that the use of normative power at the institutional level and civil society sector in Kosovo, was effective in inciting the increased implementation of gender perspectives in legislation. It also proved effective in inciting the amendment of laws to include a gender perspective. While the results of this first study conducted in Kosovo appear promising, they should nevertheless still be considered preliminary findings. Being the first time,

this analysis is being conducted with this type of methodology, more accurate results can be produced in additional studies where more participants are interviewed and the impact of norm diffusion mechanisms is analyzed over an extended period of time.

8.2. Results: Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the second case study, Bosnia and Herzegovina was analyzed to determine how Swedish development cooperation had impacted the implementation of gender perspectives in legislation. However, the government structure and the political environment in BiH couldn't be more different from Kosovo's. While Kosovo has a single government, Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided into two Entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska. There is also one smaller district called the Brčko District which is jointly administered by both entities. The entities are politically autonomous and have their own constitutions. The government represents the countries three major ethnic groups who all have guaranteed share of power (Interview AGE; Sida). This structure, in contrast to Kosovo's system, complicates a few things. According to the executive director of the Sarajevo Open Centre, when it comes to gender issues at the intuitional level, ethnic quotas are privileged over gender quotas (Interview SOC). This means that politicians and decision-makers in BiH would rather see that the ethnic quota guaranteeing representation of all three ethnicities is respected, rather than ensuring that those ethnic quotas are followed by gender quotas as well. The situation in BiH therefore is very different from Kosovo's.

8.2.1. Evidence for the use of norm diffusion mechanisms in the BiH case study

As evidence in hoop-test I shows, the effect of normative influence in BiH was very hard to spot. Since there are so many layers of government and so many different political beliefs, in BiH Sida has opted to cooperate with other multinational organizations rather than establishing direct partnerships with government institutions. The only direct partnership Sida has established is with the Agency for Gender Equality. The rest of the development cooperation is conducted through United Nations agencies. From a normative perspective it is hard to analyze how the use of a middle-man, United Nations bodies, could direct the Swedish normative influence. While funding UN projects which align with Sweden's regional development goals is a means of cooperating with BiH institutions, the use of a middle-man limits the extend of Sweden's normative influence overall. As evidence collected in hoop-test II showed, while the UN projects

have worked to increase capacities of institutional actors, the political environment and the lack of political will remains one of the major obstacles towards the implementation of gender perspectives in legislation (Interview UN Women). The only two norm diffusion mechanisms which fit into Bosnia and Herzegovina's case are the logic of world culture model and the spiral model. Using the logic of world culture model, it can be assumed that Sweden's cooperation with the UN and other multinational organizations, can be attributed to prior analysis on the domestic conditions which would have determined the likelihood of the successful Swedish development cooperation in BiH. In a government system that is so divided, where there are so many different players, and visible lack of political will to push for gender issues, having multiple international actors working together on the same issue can be perceived as more effective than having one single partner exert normative pressure. Similarly, the use of the spiral model can be observed in the cooperation between Sida and UN bodies and Sida and civil society actors in BiH. For the spiral model to be successful in eliciting norm internalization, a steady bilateral and multilateral network pressure needs to be sustained. This allows local networks to mobilize and expand into new political spaces where they can assume centerstage in societal discourse revolving around gender equality.

8.2.2. The effectiveness of norm diffusion mechanisms at the institutional and civil society level

To trace the effects of the norm diffusion mechanisms on legislation, hoop-test II and hoop-test III were used to trace the process from the causal mechanism (X) to the output (Y). Hoop-test II looked at the process from the establishment of the partnership with Sida to the potential implementation of legislation, or the amendment of legislation to include gender perspectives. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sida has established one single direct partnership with the Agency for Gender Equality. As stated previously, other projects working on the results strategy for the Western Balkans are implemented by UN agencies. For this research, I collected evidence through interviews conducted with the AGE and UN Women. Using the process-tracing method, hoop-test II traced the effect of Sida's financial support and partnership with AGE, to the agencies increased impact in legislative reform. The same hoop-test was also conducted with regards UN Women's impact in eliciting legislative reform in the institutional level. The evidence in hoop-test II, showed that Sida's financial support to AGE allowed the agency to become the implementing body of several Sida funded project and programs, including FIGAP

2018-2022. Having AGE fully implement FIGAP as a program listed under the government program and budget increased the level of personal responsibility of the agency staff. They used the FIGAP budget to implement more projects envisioned under the GAP, which ultimately resulted in the improved public image in the eyes of institutional actors (Interview AGE). The funding was used to develop a series of reporting formats which would simplify the process of GAP implementation and reporting at institutional level. According to the senior advisor, being able to provide these step-by-step guides to all levels of government made it a lot easier to advance the mainstreaming process. The senior advisor also remarked that due to Sida's funding their authoritative position in government also improved. They have now more capacities to demand compliance with the Law on Gender Equality. However, as noted by the senior adviser herself, the political environment is so that a lot of issues become politicized quickly. Including the issue of gender equality. As stated by the senior advisor, this is making the situation more difficult to progress further.

As the evidence has shown, at the institutional level Sida partners up with UN agencies as means of reaching more government bodies and influencing the implementation of their regional development objectives. One of the projects working on these objectives, is the Women in Elections project implemented by UNDP, with UN Women serving as supporting organization. In hoop-test II, the governance and leadership coordinator of UN Women was interviewed on the project implementation and impact. Serving as implementing organization of the project, UN Women follows the regional objectives posed by Sweden's results strategy for the Western Balkans. These objectives are then translated into UNDP and UN Women project activities and goals implemented at the institutional level in BiH. According to the governance and leadership coordinator, the project has been able to train and develop the capacities of members of parliament and other decision-makers at the institutional level. Some of the project results have shown that actors within these institutional levels have become more active in demanding the implementation of the 40 percent gender quota in parliament (Interview UN Women). However, the evidence also shows that the political polarizations at the party level and the lack of political will to engage with gender issues have complicated the situation greatly. While the approach in itself was called effective by the UN Women representative, the results of the project are still not noticeable. No information was provided as to what concrete legislation was amended. Neither was any evidence provided that the incentive for the gender quota was improved following the

implementation of the project. Overall, the political situation, makes it difficult to predict any level of norm internalization. Not even at the agenda-setting phase.

Hoop-test III covered the process of the implementation of gender perspective in legislation from the civil society perspective. Same as in Kosovo, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sida had also issued core grants to civil society organizations. In the case of the Sarajevo Open Centre, Sida had issued them with a core grant which allowed SOC to implement more projects and expand its strategic objectives. This increased output in project implementation resulted in SOC taking up a new role as experts in the field of human rights, women's rights and gender equality. The evidence provided shows that SOC is being invited to serve as advisors to the drafting of legislation, and providing their recommendations to the amendment of laws. They are currently advocating for the adoption of cantonal gender action plans and are working in cooperation with the gender center of the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina (Interview SOC). According to the executive director of SOC, Sida had been essential in them reaching this point. She stated that Sida had always represented their ideas and recommendations to government decision-makers and had advocated on their behalf. The evidence also showed that with the help of Sida funding, SOC was able to develop projects which increased the awareness of the communities around women's rights and gender equality. One of these projects is the School of Feminism. The school is a yearly non-academic program which provides educational opportunities for citizens interested in the issues of feminism, women's rights and women's political participation (Interview SOC). With Sida's funding, SOC not only managed to carve itself a role as an expert on these issues, they also managed to become involved in the drafting of legislation, government action plans as well as the mobilization of the community around issues of gender and gender equality. The evidence for hoop-test III confirms the argument that Sida's direct assistance to civil society organizations increased their capabilities to demand for the amendment of legislation to include gender perspectives. It is the only hoop-test in the BiH case which provided all the evidence for confirming the hypothesis.

8.2.3 Final Remarks

The case study in BiH was not able to confirm the argument that the use of normative power at the institutional level in BiH, was effective in inciting the increased implementation of gender perspectives in legislation. Evidence of this being the case was only able to be established at the

civil society level. This is primarily due to the fact that the political situation and political party structure make it difficult for a single agency to exert enough influence in changing normative beliefs. Sida's cooperation with UN agencies further weakens their direct normative influence over institutional bodies in BiH. At the civil society level however, Sida's support resulted in increased capacities of CSOs to mobilize and exert pressure from the bottom-up. Whether this can result in increased willingness to listen to community demands and speed up the internalization of new norms is too early to predict. There is at present no evidence to indicate the level of impact.

The major finding to be taken out of this case analysis, is that institutional frameworks are immensely important when engaging in norm dissemination. While Sweden may implement both a top-down and a bottom-up approach to the dissemination of its normative power, their involvement and the extent of their influence depends nonetheless on government and the institutional structures which either concede to popular demand, or continue pursuing their own political interests. In the case of BiH, the evidence shows that while civil society can gain in strength, their influence at the institutional level still remains fairly limited. Even the extent of influence exercised by the AGE (which cooperates directly with civil society) is limited in light of the lack of political will. The BiH case analysis thus shows that the extend of normative power exercised by one country over another is dependent on the institutional structure of the implementing country.

Conclusion

This thesis developed two case studies around the use of feminist foreign policy in development cooperation and its impact in eliciting the implementation of gender perspective in legislation. The thesis wanted to determine whether the use of norm diffusion mechanisms within feminist foreign policy was influential enough in eliciting the increase of gender perspectives in legislation. It therefore started with an overview of norm diffusion mechanisms used in international relations and in feminist foreign policy. Seeking a way to analyze the impact of feminist norm diffusion mechanisms on development cooperation, this thesis then used the method of process-tracing to determine how the implementation of gender perspectives in legislation implemented in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina came to be. Collecting evidence for the use of norm diffusion mechanisms in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina

presented me with two different outcomes. On one hand, the evidence collected in Kosovo supported my argument that norm diffusion mechanisms were indeed used by Swedish foreign service to elicit the increased implementation of gender perspectives in legislation. On the other hand, in Bosnia and Herzegovina I wasn't able to confirm my argument beyond any reasonable doubt.

In Kosovo, the influence of Swedish feminist norm diffusion mechanisms was observed in the partnerships which Sida had established with institutional and civil society partners. This direct cooperation with both institutional actors and civil society, allowed Sida to establish the right amount of influence where they were seen as partners and counselors. This method was influential enough to guide institutional actors and CSOs to follow the same development objectives as Sweden. This was initially done through capacity building opportunities financed by Sida grants, and was followed by consulting and expertise sharing by Sida experts. Like the participants in this interview stated, Sida had initially helped them to raise their skills and knowledge, reinforced them in developing their own needs assessments and then supported them in achieving their goals. In the case of Kosovo, the interviewees all stated that Sida's help and funding was essential to achieving their strategic goals. Since most of the people interviewed for this research were involved in the drafting of legislation and national programs, the evidence was able to prove that following Sida's gender perspectives were indeed implemented into legislation. However, while this means that the situation is heading into the right direction, the interviewees also remarked that there is still more work to be done. Not all laws or programs have been amended to include gender perspectives.

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Swedish feminist norm diffusion mechanisms were observed in two cases; in Sida's cooperation with the Agency of Gender Equality and Sida's cooperation with civil society organizations. The evidence showed that Sida only established one direct partner at the institutional level in BiH. The rest of its development cooperation projects are implemented by UN agencies.

Being the only institutional partner, the Agency for Gender Equality, received full ownership over the implementation of the projects financially supported by Sida. This increased the AGE institutional relevance and authority. However, while the agency was able to mainstream the Law on Gender Equality, the political situation in BiH is such that their influence ends at a

certain point if it contradicts political and party interests. The same phenomenon is also observed in the projects implemented by the UN. United Nations bodies which cooperate with government institutions in BiH including the Agency for Gender Equality, remark that the extent of their impact depends greatly on the political situation. There is very little political will to push issues of gender equality forward. While some achievements have been recorded, such as the implementation of gender action plans at cantonal level, statements indicating that amendments to laws have been conducted were not recorded. On the other hand, great normative influence was able to be noticed at the civil society sector. Here Sida established direct partnerships with organizations as well as worked through Swedish CSOs to strengthen the abilities of civil society actors in mobilizing and raising awareness. I was able to observe that Sida's assistance to CSOs resulted in increased capacities of CSOs in implementing projects, educating communities and mobilizing around legislative reform. CSOs in BiH are increasingly more involved in advisory positions in public policies. They're increasingly more united and are demanding from the parliament and the government to follow the legal obligations under the law on gender equality.

During this research I encountered a few difficulties. The impact of feminist norm diffusion mechanisms has never before been analyzed in the context of the Western Balkans. At times, it was difficult to identify the norm diffusion mechanisms being used. While Sweden's use of normative power is apparent in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the full extent of its impact is yet to be seen. So far in the case of Kosovo, norm diffusion mechanisms have managed to put the issue of gender equality on the agenda. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, due to the complicated political and government structure, Sweden uses its normative influence to achieve change from the bottom-up by strengthening civil society. This indicates that Sweden not only uses its normative power, it also modifies it based on the domestic situation it is being applied to. Nevertheless, as stated previously the results are only preliminary. More in-depth analysis needs to be conducted in order to accurately capture the extent of the norm diffusion mechanisms used in Kosovo and BiH, and their long-term impact in both countries.

The results of this study are important because they illustrate how the use of norm diffusion in development cooperation can be a method of achieving political influence while allowing local actors to exercise complete ownership over their development initiatives and objectives. The use of feminist norm diffusion mechanism has the potential of becoming a more cooperative and

inclusive method of development cooperation. As the Swedish model shows, development partners can extend their normative beliefs in a way that their cooperating partner sees as beneficial and implements it on their own terms.

List of Interviewees

1. Head of Sida in Kosovo, 22.12.2020, Zoom
2. Program Coordinator, Kosovo Environmental Program (KEP), 15.04.2021, Zoom
3. Program Director for Fund Forwarding, Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF), 16.04.2021, Zoom
4. Gender Focal Point, Kosovo Environment Program (KEP GFP), 19.04.2021, Zoom
5. Program Manager, Kosovo Women's Network (KWN), 26.04.2021, Zoom
6. Senior Advisor, Agency for Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AGE), 27.04.2021, Zoom
7. Head of Legal Unit, Agency for Gender Equality in Kosovo (AGE), 27.04.2021, Zoom
8. Governance & Leadership Coordinator, UN Women, 04.05.2021, Zoom
9. Head of Sida in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 06.05.2021, Zoom
10. Executive Director, Sarajevo Open Centre (SOC), 07.05.2021, Zoom

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